William and Rose Smith Drueke Family

William Born in 1883

Grand Rapids, 1883-1906. William Francis Drueke was born October 7, 1883, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In 1883, there were 38 states in the Union. Chester A. Arthur was President of the United States. Colorado was the last state admitted to the Union, in 1876.

Y-Chromosome DNA

DNA test results for Paul Drueke, a grandson of Wilhelm, show that he matches up fairly closely with people whose ancestors are from England (Arnold, Bennett, Lowder, Ozment, Scott, Sell, Wooten), Wales (Ellis, Price), Scotland (Armstrong, Russell), and Ireland (Moore). Many people with English names have Germanic origins. The term Anglo-Saxon is used by some historians to designate the Germanic tribes who invaded and settled the south and east of Britain from the early 5th century up to the Norman conquest in 1066. Wilhelm is from Westphalia, which was part of Old Saxony. See Drueke Saxon Roots.

William Francis was known as Will. He was the first child of William Peter and Elizabeth Berles Drueke, who were married on November 23, 1882. Until Will was 3, they lived over the grocery store owned by his mother's family.

Will's mother Elizabeth was a second generation American of German descent. She was born in Grand Rapids, the daughter of Franz and Regina Green Berles. His grandfather Franz Berles was from Dorlar, Westphalia, Germany. Dorlar is 80 miles east northeast of Cologne.

Rose Born in 1882

Grand Rapids, 1882-1906. Rose Viola Smith was born May 23, 1882, in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In 1882, there were 38 states in the Union. Chester A. Arthur was President of the United States. Colorado was the last state admitted to the Union, in 1876.

Rose was the only child of Cris J. and Christine Koch Smith. They were married in Grand Rapids on June 17, 1880. They lived with Christine's parents at 109 California Street, at the corner of Straight Street. This was nine blocks west of the Grand River and six blocks south of Bridge Street.

Rose's father Cris was a second generation American of German descent. He worked practically his whole life as a musician. The 1882 Grand Rapids directory lists him as a musician at Smith's Opera House. The 1883 directory shows him as a partner with James W. York in Smith & York, a company that manufactured and sold musical instruments. Cris was at one time euphonium soloist with the Patrick Gilmore Band, and was one of the leading theater orchestra directors of Grand Rapids and Chicago.
in a region known as the Sauerland. Franz owned a grocery store at 57 W. Bridge Street (347 Bridge Street NW after 1912). This was on the northeast corner of Bridge Street and Turner Street in a building called the Berles Block, where they also lived. Franz Berles died at age 56 of "Bright’s Disease of the heart" on August 2, 1884, less than a year after William was born. Will's uncle Frank Berles continued to run the grocery story, with Adolph Wurzburg. Will's grandmother, Regina Green, was born in Schönholthausen, Westphalia, about 16 miles west of Dorlar.

Will's father, William Peter, was a wholesaler of liquors and bar supplies. An advertisement on the front cover of the 1914 Grand Rapids City Directory proclaimed that Druke-Lynch was "Grand Rapids' Leading Liquor Store." William Peter came to America from Germany in 1871 with his sister Anna Sophia Drueke and her fiancé Frederick William Wurzburg and Frederick's five children. They all lived in New York for two years, where Frederick had a dry-goods business, before all moving to Grand Rapids. William Peter was 18, his sister was 25. They took the steamship Thuringia from Hamburg to Castle Garden, New York. They came from Niederhelden, Westphalia, Germany. Niederhelden is 58 miles east northeast of Cologne and 16 miles southwest of Dorlar. Will's paternal grandfather, Johann Wilhelm Drüeke, had died in Helden in 1854. His grandmother, Josephina Bernardina Heller Drüeke, died there in 1887.

Will was the first of eight children.

In 1886, Will's sister Antoinette was born. That same year, Will's family moved from the Berles Block a half mile south to 122 Summer Street (116 Summer Avenue NW after 1912).

On March 17, 1887, Will's grandmother, Bernardina Heller Drüeke, Rose's paternal grandparents were John and Mary Augusta Schickell Schmitt. Her grandmother had come over from Bremen to Baltimore with her parents on the sailing ship Johannes in 1834. They were from Kassel, which is 32 miles east northeast of Frankfurt. At that time, Kassel was in the north of the Kingdom of Bavaria. Now, Kassel is in the Kinzig-Main-Kreis region in the south of Hesse. They settled in Tiffin, Ohio. Rose's grandfather John Schmitt also was from Kassel. He had come to Tiffin in 1838, married Rose's grandmother in Tiffin in 1847, and moved to Grand Rapids with her in 1851. He was listed as a saloonkeeper in the 1860 census. Rose's grandfather John died in 1861 when her father Cris was only 9.

In 1889, Rose and her father Cris moved in with Cris' sister Rosa Smith Hauser, who was married to Charles Hauser. Charles was a mason with his father during the summer and a turner in the Widdicombe furniture factory during the rest of the year. They were married on Rose's birthday, May 23, 1882. They had no children of their own. Rose called them Tante and Uncle Charlie. Tante is the German word for aunt. Tante and Uncle Charlie had moved in with Rose's grandmother, Mary Augusta Schickell, when they were married. So, Rose's father was moving into the house he lived in before he married Christine. The house was at 105 Gold Avenue (151 Gold Avenue NW after 1912). This is the southwest corner of Gold and Sibley Street, two blocks east and two blocks north of where Rose lived with her Koch grandparents.

http://www.peterspioneers.com/WRSD.htm
died in Helden, Germany. She was 75. She had been a widow for 32 years.

In 1887, Will's brother Frank was born.

In 1889, Will's sister Louise was born.

In 1893, Will's sister Bernice was born.

In 1895, Will's brother Richard was born.

In 1897, Will's brother Edwin was born.

In 1899, Will's brother Clarence was born.

In 1901, at age 18, Will was listed for the first time in the Grand Rapids directory. He was living at home and working as a clerk for D. Lynch. In 1902, he was promoted to salesman and in 1903 to traveling salesman. In 1904, he went to work as a traveling salesman in his father's wholesale liquor business. His daughter Marian recalled that as a salesman "he traveled all of Northern Michigan by train and horse and buggy."

Will met his future wife in 1904 or earlier. In 1904, he was on a business trip 85 miles north of Grand Rapids and wrote her a letter that read as follows.

The Crosby
All Trains Stop for Meals and Lunches
Best Trout Fishing in Michigan

Baldwin, Michigan, October 18, 1904 5:30 PM

Dear Rosa,

Have just a little time so thought I would print you a few lines.
I had a little hard luck this week making connections, so I won't get home until Thursday noon and will have to leave again in the afternoon at 3 o'clock so the best I can do is to call you up.
Business so far this week has been a little quiet.
6:45 PM just finished an elegant supper--had some Beefsteak, Baked hash, Fried Oysters, Fried Lake Trout, Baked Potato, Toast and Coffee--everything tasted fine.
No more news so will close, hoping to see or at least hear your sweet voice "through the Telephone, From Your Will

In 1889, Rose's father Cris was listed in the Grand Rapids directory as a musician with the Redmond Grand Opera House.

In 1889, Rose's father Cris remarried. His new wife was Mary A. Hauser, Uncle Charlie's sister. In 1890, they had a son Crescenz, Rose's half brother.

In 1890, Uncle Charlie started his own construction business with William Hayden. In 1891, they were joined by Edwin Owen. The company, now known as Owen-Ames-Kimball Co., continues in existence today.

In 1892-93, Charles Hauser built a new house on the site of 105 Gold Avenue and 50 Sibley Street. The new address was 113 Gold Avenue (151 Gold Avenue NW after 1912).

In 1893, Rose's father Cris moved to Chicago to further his career as a musician. He took his wife Mary Hauser Smith, but Rose, age 11, and her half brother Crescenz, age 3, stayed in Grand Rapids with Tante and Uncle Charlie. In 1894, Mary Hauser Smith had a second son LeRoy. In 1896, a third son, Karl, was born in Chicago.
mother, was ordained at age 25 at St. Andrew's Cathedral in Grand Rapids. He said his first Mass at St. Mary's Church. Fr. Zugelder had immigrated from Königheim to Grand Rapids in 1888 at age 19 to study for the priesthood. Grand Rapids was a new diocese and had not yet established its own seminary, so he attended St. Francis Seminary in Milwaukee and the Grand Seminary at Montreal. He served as a pastor in four Michigan towns: Cadillac for eighteen months, Proveumont for four years, Beaver Island for six years, and Beal City. He was transferred to Beal City in 1905.

In 1898, Otilia Leuchtweis, Rose's second cousin, immigrated to Grand Rapids from Königheim at age 9 to live with her great uncle, William Koch and his second wife Elizabeth Lavo. Rose was seven years older than Otilia, but they became lifelong friends. Rose had lived with the Kochs herself and now only a few blocks away with Tante and Uncle Charlie. In the 1900 census, Otilia was living with the Kochs. In the 1910 census, she was living in Beal City with her uncle, Father Zugelder, and attending college. Otilia's mother, Mary Magdalena Zugelder Leuchtweis, had died in 1893, when Otilia was only four years old. Otilia's father, Michael Joseph Leuchtweis, remained in Königheim when Otilia emigrated.

In 1903, Rose's grandmother, Mary Augusta Schickell Schmitt, died in Grand Rapids.

In 1905, Rose's grandfather William Koch died in Grand Rapids.
Rose V. Smith at the piano and Uncle Charlie with valve trombone in the parlor at 151 Gold Avenue. Circa 1905.

Rose was a pianist. From 1903 to 1906, at age 21 to 24, she was listed as a music teacher in the Grand Rapids directory, still living with Tante and Uncle Charlie. Eventually, she would become a member of the St. Cecilia Society and the Grand Rapids Symphony Society.
William and Rose Marry in 1906, Have 6 Children

William Francis Drueke, 22, and Rose Viola Smith, 24, were married on June 28, 1906, at St. Mary's Church.

Rose Smith Drueke.

Wedding Invitation.

St. Mary's Church, 1907. Source: History of St. Mary's Church in Grand Rapids, Mich., 1907.

Grand Rapids, 1906-1883. After the wedding, Will and Rose lived for a couple years at 101 Cass Avenue (441 Cass Avenue SE after 1912). Will continued to work as a traveling salesman in his father's liquor business.

The first of their six children, Irene Elizabeth, was born May 1, 1907.

In 1907, St. Mary's Church celebrated its golden anniversary. St. Mary’s parish was established in 1857 to meet the spiritual needs of the German population in the Grand Rapids area. The original church building, erected in 1857, was replaced in 1873 by the current building, a Gothic-style structure. The pastor in 1907, Father Joseph Schrembs, went on to become Archbishop of Cleveland. Among the founding parishioners of the church in 1857 were:

- Will's grandfather Franz Berles,
- Will's great grandfather John Green,
- Will's uncle Eberhard Drueke,
Rose's great grandfather John Adam Schickell, Rose's grandfather William Koch, and Rose's adoptive grandfather Hubert Hauser.

Hubert Hauser was the masonry contractor for the 1873 church. The first bell for the 1873 church was a donation of John Green. Rose's mother's cousin, Father Alexander F. Zugelder, said his first Mass at St. Mary's Church in 1894.

In 1905, Rose's cousin once removed, Father Zugelder, was transferred to St. Philomena's Church in Beal City, Michigan. Sometime after that, he built two cottages on Coldwater Lake, a few miles west of Beal City. The land was leased from Robert C. Hyslop, who had a store and hotel-type place at the southeast end of the lake. After the lease was up, Will and Rose bought the cottage that was on the northeast side of Coldwater Lake between the 4H Club and the Isabella County Park, about 80 miles northwest of Grand Rapids. The address of the Park is now 1703 N. Littlefield Road in Weidman. Father Zugelder's cottage was on the north side of the lake.

In 1908, the family moved to 96 Grand Avenue, which became 120 Grand Avenue NE with the renumbering that took place in 1912. They were to live here for 45 years and raise six children.
In September 1912, Otilia Leuchtweis became the first Chapter president of Theta Phi Alpha, a Catholic sorority started by Otilia and others at the University of Michigan.

In 1913, Will left Worden Grocery and went into a retail grocery partnership with James DeBoer and Glenn E. DeNise, called the James DeBoer Co. It was located on the west side of the river at 967 Bridge Street NW, on the northeast corner at the intersection with Lane Avenue.

In 1913, Tante and Uncle Charlie moved across the Grand River from 151 Gold Avenue NW to 251 Union Ave NE, a few blocks northwest of Will and Rose. The Hauser family and the Smith family before them had lived at 151 Gold since at least 1867.

In 1914, Will left the grocery business and became President and Treasurer of Quinn Stationery Co. at 131 Ottawa Avenue NW. This was between Pearl and Monroe across from the Michigan Trust Building, where Hauser-Owen-Ames and Uncle Charlie had their office.

Will's daughter Marian wrote concerning her father that "he and Mr. Quinn bought out a stationery store that had been in business many years - it was on Monroe Avenue "downtown" - they had a big inventory to dispose of - dolls that were slightly imperfect and rum boxes." Marian went on to say that "Dad went on the road to sell rum boxes in 1914. At this time Germany and France and England were at war." She then says that "the buyer of Marshall Fields told Dad that they could not get chess sets and she gave him sample pieces of different sized sets. Dad came back to Grand Rapids and talked to Mr. Waddel about making these sets - he took his sample pieces - made in Grand Rapids - and went to New York to sell - business was so good he had Mother join him in New York. When he returned home he had to set up a factory to manufacture what he had sold."

Rose and Will's fifth child, Jane Marie, was born November 4, 1914, at St. Mary's Hospital. She was baptized at St. Mary's Church by Father Felix Vogt, first cousin of Will. Jane's godfather was her uncle Joseph Hesse, who had recently married her aunt Louise Drueke. Godmother was her aunt Annette Drueke Matthews.

Sometime in the early 1900s, Will joined the Peninsular Club at 120 Ottawa Avenue NW, about a mile west of 120 Grand Avenue. The Pen Club began in 1881 as a club for local businessmen.

By 1916, Mr. Quinn was bought out by Albert G. Dickinson, a man whom Will had gotten to know. The company name was changed to Wm. F. Drueke & Co. and described in the Grand Rapids directory as a novelty manufacturer. The business grew to include backgammon, cribbage, and many other games. Albert probably was more of a financier than an active participant in the business because his name does not appear in the company name (Wm. F. Drueke Co.). The 1920 census shows Albert, 50, manufacturer, born in Ohio, living at 38 Lafayette Avenue with his wife, 4 children, and 2 servants. Albert G. Dickinson and his brother, H. Randel, established Dickinson Brothers (now Dickinson Press) in 1884 in Painesville, Ohio. In 1886 they moved the company to Grand Rapids.

In 1917, Will decided that demand was great enough that he could afford to make instead of buy his products. Wm. F. Drueke & Co. moved from Downtown to a small building he rented at 122 Scribner Avenue NW, which was back on the west side of the river. Wm. F. Drueke, Jr. recounts that bought the equipment necessary to make chess and hired his own workforce. At that time Grand Rapids had a big supply of skilled woodworkers. The war in Europe was still going on, and Will got a big contract to make breech sticks to clean guns for the U.S. Army.

Cribbage set possibly manufactured by Wm. F. Drueke & Co. sometime from 1914 to 1928. Included is a case, a cribbage board cut in half and fixed to the case, six pegs in a pouch, and a deck of cards. The board is made of some sort of cardboard. The backs of the cards have a Furniture City penant logo and triangles containing the initials GPM for Grand Rapids, Michigan. The faces have all different Grand Rapids city scenes and the name "Dickinson Brothers" in small print. One of the Dickinson Brothers was Albert G. Dickinson, who was associated with the Drueke company. Dickinson Brothers printed catalogs for many furniture companies in Grand Rapids. The set is owned by Richard Owbridge. It was given to him circa 1970 by an Army buddy who was leaving the Army to study for the ministry.

Also in 1917, A Beginner's Book of Chess was written to instruct beginning players.

Rose and Will's last child, Rosemary, was born November 20, 1916. Rose was 34. Will was 33.

On May 2, 1917, Rose's second cousin, Otilia Leuchtweis, 27, married John O'Hara, 27, Otilia's uncle, Father Zugelder, presided over the marriage in Detroit. Witnesses were Edward O'Hara of Ann Arbor and Mary Smith of Grand Rapids. John was a lawyer, born in New York. His parents were Martin and Elizabeth Dean O'Hara. Otilia's parents were Carl and Magdelina Leuchtweis. In the 1920 census, Otilia and John had a child, John, and were living at 1149 Virginia Park in Detroit. There is a biography of John O'Hara in the 1922 History of Detroit.

On April 30, 1918, Will's father, William Peter Drueke, was forced out of business by a Michigan prohibition law that preceded the 18th
Amendment to the U.S. Constitution by almost two years. He was 65.

Wm. F. Drueke, Jr. recounts that when the war ended Will was left with a big supply of breech sticks. So he decided to make toy rakes, hoes, and shovels using the breech sticks for the handles and sell them to toy departments. By 1919, the business had outgrown the small building at 122 Scribner on the west side, so Will bought a larger building back on the east side of the river at the southeast corner of Marshall Avenue and the Pere Marquette Railroad. The Pere Marquette is now CSX.

Soon after moving to Marshall Avenue, Will added a furniture line of tables, desks, and other items for the home. The product line included spinet desks, secretary desks, bookshelves, and tables. Drueke was one of the first companies to put an electric light in a desk. Richard Drueke has 50-60 original photographic plates from the Drueke furniture catalogue. The Grand Rapids Public Library has a number of them, as well as price lists.

On November 3, 1920, Samuel Reshevsky, chess prodigy, age 8, moved to the United States from Poland with his parents, where they made a living from the talent of their child. William Drueke wrote Samuel Reshevsky, a Child Prodigy, an account of his relationship with Sammy Reshevsky. He says that he acted as Sammy's advance agent and had Sammy "playing two games in every city west of Chicago, one in a store and one in a club. Starting in Chicago and playing at the Fair Store, it took 44 police to take care of the crowd." The playing had been done only in clubs until Will suggested trying department stores. The idea was tested at Strawbridge and Clothier in Philadelphia, and it was "a tremendous success." Will wrote that "I, being the only manufacturer of a line of Chessmen in this country at that time, became interested in him, not only as a business promotion of the game, but his ability to interest people that had never played the game." In 1924, philanthropist Julius Rosenwald made Sammy give up exhibition chess at the age of 13 so he could get an education. He graduated from the University of Chicago in 1933 with a degree in accounting. After finishing school, he worked as an accountant for a Manhattan engineering & construction firm. He never played chess professionally, but won the U.S. chess championship seven times. In 1958, he was beaten in the U.S. championship by 14-year-old Bobby Fischer, who in 1972 would become the first American to win the world chess champion. Samuel Reshevsky died April 8, 1992. The New York Times wrote at the time of his death, that he astounded the world with his feats as a boy, dominated American chess for four nearly decades, and scored spectacular victories in international tournaments.

On July 22, 1920, the New York Times reported the results of the Masters' chess tournament on the Million Dollar Pier in Atlantic City. The article noted that William Drueke of Grand Rapids was one of two donors of special prizes.

In 1921 Sammy met the world's most famous movie star and a posed publicity photo showed them playing chess while Charlie Chaplin was editing "The Kid" in his Hollywood studio. MY AUTOBIOGRAPHY penned by him in 1964 at age 75 recalls this encounter. The American Chess Bulletin for January 1922 includes a picture on page 2 and the following:

PLAYING CHESS WITH CHARLIE CHAPLIN

What boy with "red blood" in his veins would not envy little Samuel Rzeschewski in the above pose, which shows him seated opposite to Charlie Chaplin? The world's most famous fun-maker is doing his best to suppress a smile while he studies intently the position before him. It does not appear from the records that Charlie knows ought of chess, but 'tis plain he is doing his level best against the tiny wizard of the chessboard. The picture was taken while both were in Los Angeles, home of the "movie" studios. The inscription at the top is in Charlie's own hand writing. While this is not intended as a "Ad," it is only right to mention that the success of Sammy's far Western tour is due to the personal interest and effort of William F. Drueke of Grand Rapids, Mich., who traveled ahead as advance agent. Close scrutiny of the picture makes it clear that Charlie and Sammy are playing with a set of the famous Drueke chessmen.

On April 11, 1926, after eight years of retirement, Will's father William Peter Drueke died. He was survived by his wife Elizabeth. They had been married 44 years.

In September 1926, daughter Irene started college at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. She joined Theta Phi Alpha, a Catholic
On September 15, 1926, the New York Times reported that the Federal Trade Commission had accused Wm. F. Drueke & Co. and 26 other furniture companies in Grand Rapids of advertising oak, maple, and walnut veneer furniture without mentioning that it was veneer. The Furniture Manufacturer for October 1928 reported that the FTC had dismissed its complaint against William F. Drueke & Company because of dissolution of the firm. The article said that gumwood furniture veneered with a thin covering mahogany or walnut was advertised as "walnut and gumwood" or "mahogany and gumwood" without disclosing that the mahogany or walnut in each case was only veneer.

Wm. F. Drueke, Jr. recounts that, the Wm. F. Drueke Co. was sold in 1926 when Will's friend, Albert Stickley offered him a job as sales manager for the much larger Stickley Brothers Furniture Company in Grand Rapids. Will's stay with Stickley Furniture was short-lived as they had a disagreement over the purchase of some Stickley stock. Will was out of a job. After that, as his son tells it, Will sold hospital furniture, steel cabinets, and whatever to keep Irene in college at the University of Michigan, Marian at the University of Illinois, and feed the rest of the family.

The Drueke Company was not listed in the 1926 Grand Rapids directory. In 1927, Wm. F. Drueke & Co. is listed at 1600 Bishop SE. From 1928 to 1934, the Drueke company name was not included in the Grand Rapids directory.

Son Joseph played tackle on the Catholic High School football team. On Sunday, December 2, 1928, the Grand Rapids Herald named him first-team All-City Tackle. Also selected for that team was Gerald Ford, the center on the South High School football team. Gerald Ford became President of the United States in 1974. Full Team.

According to son William, Will bought stock on margin in 1926 and 1927. Following the 1929 stock market crash, he lost $7,000. In the 1930 census, Will was listed as a salesman for a furniture factory.

In 1929, daughter Irene graduated from the University of Michigan with a B.S. in Architecture (Decorative Design). Irene was a member of Theta Phi Alpha, a Catholic sorority started by Otilia Leuchtweiss, her mother's second cousin. The Michiganensian for 1931 shows that Irene was an active participant in activities at the University. She was a member of Alpha Alpha Gamma, an honorary fraternity for women in architecture founded in 1922 and now called the Association for Women in Architecture. Junior women elected Irene to Wyvern (Welsh for protecting dragons), a society started in 1910 whose goal was bring Junior women together to assist Freshman women (see Michigan Alumnus, Vol. XVII, October 1910, page 5). In addition, Irene worked on the university's yearbook, the Michiganensian. She participated in the Freshman Pageant (see photo above), the Sophomore Circus, and the Junior Girls' Play.

The Furniture Manufacturer for September 1931 reported in "Michigan Matters" that Irene had written a history of furniture in connection with her work for an advanced degree at the University of Michigan.

In 1931, Marian graduated from the University of Illinois.

In 1932, Joe graduated from college.

In January 1932, William, Jr., graduated from Central High School. He attended Grand Rapids Junior College (now Grand Rapids Community College) until 1933.

When Jane reached college age in 1931, the family decided not to send her to a four-year college because of the economy. Instead, Jane attended Grand Rapids Junior College from 1931 to 1933.

Rosemary attended the University of Detroit.

Three Drueke brothers, three Berles sisters, and families in the backyard of 120 Grand Avenue, 1931. Adults, from left: Frank Drueke, 45, and wife
In November 1932, Rose's father Cris J. Smith died at age 80 in Kansas City, Missouri, where he was living with his son Karl. He was buried in Greenwood Cemetery in Grand Rapids.

In 1932, Will re-established the Drueke game business in their home. He resumed making cribbage and chess sets. For a time, he imported chess pieces from France. After refinishing and repackaging them, the pieces were sold with the Drueke label.

William, Jr., recounts that the basement was used for chess dipping, boxing, and other assembly work, which was done after school by Jane, 16, and Rosemary, 14. The attic was used for an office, which was run by Marian, 24. William, Jr., hooked up a phone line from the basement to the attic. The Grand Rapids Chair Co. cut, shaped, and sanded the cribbage boards. The Sterling Brush Co. drilled the peg holes, put in a peg pocket in the bottom, and buffed a wax finish on the boards. The John Seven Co. supplied the shellac. Imperial Metals made the pegs. The Grand Rapids Box Co. made the boxes.

Around 1932, Drueke's Chess Primer was written to instruct beginning players. The primer was composed by William A. Shinkmann (1847-1933), a life and fire insurance agent who was in business with Peter Schickell, a son of John Adam and Maria Eva Schumm Schickell, and whose brother Joseph had married Emilene Boxheimer, a granddaughter of John Adam and Maria Eva Schumm Schickell. The primer is similar to A Beginner's Book of Chess, prepared in 1917 for the original Drueke game company. Both booklets were obtained by William Biggins on eBay.

By 1935, the business was doing well enough to rent space in the Shaw Building at 640 Front Avenue NW, on the west side of the Grand River. The company added poker chips and pipe racks, dice, dominoes, roulette racks, gavels and a variety of small hand games. The company was listed in the Grand Rapids directory as Wm. F. Drueke, Inc. Wm. F. Drueke was listed as President, Joseph W. Drueke as Vice President, Jane, M. Drueke as Secretary, and William F. Drueke, Jr., as Treasurer.

During the Great Depression, in 1935, Rose's brother, Crescenz L. Smith, 45, went to Detroit to look for work. He left his wife Ethel and three young children and never returned. A private investigator was hired but never found him. Ethel and the children went to live with Charles and Rosa Smith Hauser, who had raised Crescenz. Social Security records indicate that he joined Social Security in New York City in 1937. His 1942 WWII draft registration shows his residence as the S.S. Namba and his employer as ALCOA Steamship Lines, New York City. Social Security records indicate that he died in New York in 1962.

From 1936 to 1941, Will's brother Clarence worked for the Drueke company. Clarence's wife Ethel also worked for the Drueke company in 1936 and 1937.

The Winter 1937 edition of The Compass, official publication of Irene's sorority, Theta Phi Alpha, had an article about interesting Detroit alumnae that featured Will and Rose's daughter Irene. The article was written by Ruth Brady (who later married Harvey Russell Wickes of the Wickes Corporation and has a public library named after her in Saginaw). The article noted that Irene had graduated from the University of Michigan in 1931 with a degree in decorative design and went on to say "most of us wouldn't have had the courage to attempt a career in this field, knowing its limitations, but this did not concern Irene. Coming as she does from a Grand Rapids family that had long been associated with the finest traditions in furniture design and craftsmanship, she had learned much that was necessary to her training long before she began her college course. " The article said Irene took a position at J.L. Hudson Co. Department Store and eventually was made decorating consultant for the store with headquarters in their model home. "It is her job to help plan the furnishings and decorating for all types of homes, from mansion to cottage, and she is called upon to give advice on every kind of interior decorating problem from period designs in furniture to harmonizing rag rugs, or as Irene puts it, she is sought as an authority on everything from where to build a stairway in a house to the correct shade to paint a bathroom scales."

On August 3, 1937, Will and Rose's daughter Irene Elizabeth married Philip Edward Cowan of Detroit in Grand Rapids. Because Philip was not a Catholic, they were married in the rectory of St. Andrew's Cathedral. Jane's sister Marian was maid of honor. Philip and Irene established their home in Detroit. Philip was a graduate of the University of Michigan, as was Irene. They were married by Father Andrew F. Zugelder, who was a first cousin of Jane's grandmother Christine Koch.

On Friday, November 12, 1937, Will and Rose's daughter Jane married Al Biggins, a corrugated box salesman for Container Corporation of America.

On Thursday, November 4, 1937, Jane's birthday, and a week before Al and Jane were married, Irene was killed in a car being driven by Al. They were on their way to a rehearsal dinner. Irene had been married just two months earlier. The accident was in the headlines of both Grand Rapids dailies. Following are excerpts.

The Grand Rapids Press, Friday, November 5, 1937
Mrs. Philip E. Cowan, 29, married here in August and since that time a resident of Detroit, was killed outright and her sister, Miss Jane Drueke, 23, of 120 Grand-av., N. E., and J. Alfred Biggins, 27, Chicago, whom she was to marry Saturday, were severely injured when their automobile crashed into a stalled trailer on US16, a mile and one-half east of Coopersville in Ottawa county, Thursday evening. At St. Mary's Hospital, where the two injured persons were taken, it was reported Friday their injuries were severe but that both probably would recover. Miss Drueke suffered a fracture of her right arm and head injuries.

Biggins received head injuries, hospital attendants said. Miss Drueke and Biggins had planned their wedding for Saturday morning at St. Andrew's cathedral. Funeral services for Mr. Cowan will be held at St. Andrew's cathedral Monday. Biggins and his guests were on route to Coopersville to attend a prenuptial dinner in honor of Miss Drueke and Biggins at the home of Dr. and Mrs. J. M. Wenger. Driving behind the car which struck the trailer was a car containing Mr. and Mrs. William F. Druke of 120 Grand-av., N. E., Grand Rapids, parents of Mrs. Cowan and Miss Drueke. Also in the Drueke car were William, jr., Joseph, Marian and Rosemary Druke, brothers and sisters of Mrs. Cowan and Jane Drueke.

**The Grand Rapids Herald, Friday, November 5, 1937**

Collision of an auto with a heavily loaded truck Thursday evening one and one-half miles east of Coopersville on US-16 while en route to a birthday party brought death to Mrs. Philip Cowan, 29, of 8634 Dunbarton ave., Detroit; critical injury to her sister, Miss Jane Drueke, 23, of 120 Grand av., NE., and lesser injuries to the latter's fiance, John A. Biggins, 27, of Chicago, whose local address is 1310 Lake dr., SE. Mrs. Cowan, a bride of last August and Miss Drueke, who was to have been married Saturday at St. Andrew's church to Mr. Biggins are daughters of Mr. and Mrs. William Drueke. The trailer truck which had gone into the ditch at the side of the highway Wednesday night had been pulled onto the highway and the driver, Floyd Woodward, 41, of 8722 Brandt st., Detroit, had gone to Coopersville to get some flares, to place around the track, according to state police and Ottawa county sheriff's officers. Woodward left Jack Blonschine, Coopersville, the only witness to the accident, standing about 70 paces from the truck with a burning flare in his hand to ward traffic. According to Blonschine who, it was reported, waved his warning flare, the car driven by Biggins came along at a rapid speed bound west. As the Biggins car neared the truck on the north side of the road another going east passed the disabled trailer at the same time. In an instant the Biggins auto had struck the trailer killing Mrs. Cowan almost instantly. Mr. and Mrs. Drueke, closely following the ill fated car, were soon at the scene and gave every aid possible. The trailer truck carried a heavy load of bottled beer and was being driven to Muskegon by Woodward.

The funeral for Irene Drueke Cowan, 1907-1937, was held on Monday, November 8. Father Zugelder, Rose's cousin who married Irene and Philip, said the Mass at St. Andrew's Cathedral, assisted by Monsignor D. E. Malone and Father Felix Vogt of Saginaw, Will's cousin. Irene was buried in Mount Calvary Cemetery in Grand Rapids.

Philip E. Cowan, 1906-1981, moved to Highland Park, Michigan, in 1939 and remarried. Children were born in 1944 and 1949. He was active in the community. In 1954, while he was general manager of a pharmacy on Woodward Avenue, he was appointed to complete the unexpired term of the mayor of Highland Park, who had moved to another city.

Al and Jane were married by Monsignor D. E. Malone on Friday November 12, 1937, at St. Stephen's Church in Grand Rapids. It must have been a somber event because of Irene's death. Originally, the wedding was to be on Saturday November 6 at St. Andrew's Cathedral.

Al and Jane lived in Grand Rapids after they were married, and their first child, Emily Jane, was born there. In 1939, Al and Jane moved to Kalamazoo. Their second and third children Peter and James were born there. In 1942, Al was transferred to St. Louis, where their fourth child, Sarah Jane, was born. From 1944 to 1946, Al served as a Lieutenant in the U.S. Navy Supply Corps. The family lived in Chicago and Lake Bluff, Illinois. After the war, the family moved back to St. Louis, where their last child William was born in 1947. In 1948, Al and Jane moved to Wilmette, Illinois. In 1963, they bought and operated a motel in the Florida Keys.

Will's mother Elizabeth Berles Drueke celebrated her 80th birthday on January 13, 1838. Her children gave a big party for her at the Peninsular Club in Grand Rapids.

In 1939, the Drueke company was listed in the Grand Rapids directory as Drueke Novelty Co., novelty manufacturers.

On May 8, 1939, Will and Rose's son Joseph, age 28, married Joan Pke, age 24, at St. Andrew's Cathedral in Grand Rapids. Joe worked for the Drueke company, focusing on sales, and also had his own game company. Joe and Joan lived in Grand Rapids their whole life. In 1940, their first child Irene was born. In 1942, their second child Joseph was born. In 1943, their third child Kathleen was born. Kathleen was professed in 1968 as Sister Mary Joseph, a Carmelite nun. In 1945, their fourth child Frederick was born. In 1948, their fifth child Susan was born. And in 1952, their sixth child Paul was born.

In 1940 and 1941, the Drueke company was listed in the Grand Rapids directory as Druke Brothers (Jos. W. and Wm. F., Jr.), toy manufacturers.

On June 22, 1940, Will and Rose's daughter Rosemary, age 23, married James Griffin, age 27, in Grand Rapids. Rosemary's sister Jane was maid of honor. They were married in the rectory of St. Andrew's Cathedral because Jim was not a Catholic. Jim's father Langford was manager of the Peninsular Club and a close friend of Rosemary's father. Following their wedding, Jim and Rosemary moved to Detroit, where Jim had a job working for the Statler Hotel in the Food and Beverage department. In 1941, their first child Mary Gretchen was born. In 1942, their second child James was born. In 1943, Jim joined the Navy, and Rosemary moved back to Grand Rapids and rented an apartment around the corner from 120 Grand. In 1945, Marian bought a house at 326 Benjamin SE in Grand Rapids and sold it to Jim and Rosemary. When Jim returned from the Navy he eventually went to work for Sealtest Ice Cream. In 1945, their third child Robert was born. In 1948, their fourth child Thomas was born. In 1951, their fifth child Marian was born. In 1954, their sixth child Christopher was born.
On January 25, 1941, Will and Rose's son William, age 27, married Doris McLaughlin, age 20, at Sacred Heart Church in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. Bill met Doris in the Summer of 1940. While staying at the cottage at Coldwater Lake that summer, he spent some time in nearby Mt. Pleasant, where he met Doris. Bill worked for the Drueke company, focusing on manufacturing, and eventually became president of the company. Bill and Doris spent their whole married life in Grand Rapids. In 1941, their first child Betsy was born. In 1943, their second child Bill was born. In 1944, their third child Carole was born. In 1946, their fourth child David was born. In 1949, their fifth child Mary Kay was born. In 1951, their sixth child Richard was born. In 1954, their seventh child Rose was born.

On December 27, 1941, Will's mother, Elizabeth Berles Drueke, died at age 83 in Grand Rapids. On the same day, Elizabeth Drueke was born to William and Doris McLaughlin Drueke.

In 1941, the Drueke factory was moved a few blocks west to a building purchased for $15,000 at 601 3rd Street NW. The building had formerly been occupied by the Grand Rapids Casket Co.

On December 3, 1943, the New York Times ran an advertisement for Esquire Magazine promoting its Holiday Issue for Christmas 1943 and listing its advertisers, including Wm. F. Drueke & Sons.

From 1941 to 1946, Will and his sons Joe and Bill applied for and received patents for the design of eight games. Click on the patent number in the table below to see the file at the U. S. Patent Office.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patent</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Applicant</th>
<th>Game</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D128794</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>William F. Drueke</td>
<td>Chessmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D134812</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>William F. Drueke</td>
<td>Chessmen (Play A Way game)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D135259</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>William F. Drueke, Jr.</td>
<td>Game Board (Play A Way game)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D135240</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>William F. Drueke, Jr.</td>
<td>Game Board (Play A Way game)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D135706</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Joseph W. Drueke</td>
<td>Game Device (Play A Way Roulette)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D135707</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>William Francis Drueke, Jr.</td>
<td>Game Device (Play A Way Gin Rummy)</td>
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<tr>
<td>D135848</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Joseph W. Drueke</td>
<td>Puzzle (Tree Puzzle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D2395174</td>
<td>1946</td>
<td>William F. Drueke</td>
<td>Game Apparatus (Play A Way game)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Travel games, called Play A Way, were shipped overseas to servicemen in the armed forces during World War II. These included chess sets and cribbage boards, roulette, and other games.

Beginning in 1942, the Drueke company was listed in the Grand Rapids directory as "Wm. F. Drueke & Sons (Wm. F., Wm. F., Jr., Jos. W and Marian L.)." Drueke cribbage sets included a brochure on How to Play Cribbage with a list of Pocket Games available at dealers. It also promotes Drueke Pocket Games as the ideal gift for men in service. The brochure was obtained by William Biggins on eBay.

Travel games, called Play A Way, were shipped overseas to servicemen in the armed forces during World War II. These included chess sets and cribbage boards, roulette, and other games.

In 1944, Rosa Schmitt Hauser (Rose's "Tante") died at age 90. In 1946 Charles A. Hauser (Rose's "Uncle Charlie") died at age 91.

The March 1946 edition of Playthings magazine contains an advertisement for Drueke products and an invitation to stop by the Drueke's room at the McAlpin Hotel in New York during the Toy Fair.

Sometime in the late 1940s, Will and Rose acquired Father Zugelder's cottage at Coldwater Lake and had it moved across the frozen lake during the winter to a new foundation built up the hill from their cottage. This second cottage accommodated their growing number of grandchildren.

In March 1950, Will and Rose had their children and grandchildren with them for a reunion at 120 Grand Avenue. The following pictures were taken at the reunion.
Several months later in 1950, Will and Rose took a vacation to Europe. They brought home Omega watches from Switzerland for their grandchildren. The photo of Will and Rose feeding the pigeons was taken in front of the Milan Cathedral, which was built from 1366 and 1485. While on this trip to Europe, Will and Rose went to Helden, in the Westphalia section of Germany, to visit Emma Henze. Will's father, William Peter, had an older sister, Anna Maria Klementina Drüeke, who married Clemens Henze in 1867. So, Emma was Will's first cousin. Here is a letter Rose wrote about their visit with Emma Henze.

**Brussels, Belgium - Sunday, July 16, 1950**

My dear Family:

Tuesday, July 11 - we checked most of our baggage at the Excelsior hotel, Koln and left at 11 A.M. to go to Niederwenigen. We changed trains at Hagen to get to Hattingen, had lunch there and then taxi to Niederwenigen. We had wired Victor and Anna so they were at a window waiting for us.

Their uncle, a bachelor, owns a little tavern and they live with him. You should have seen the food on the table for us - we were so sorry we had eaten. They are so hospitable! Their children, Ursala, age 4, and Mathew, age 9 months old, are darling. Had dinner with them at 6 o'clock and then went back to Hattingen to sleep.

Wed. July 12: Took an early train to Helden to see Emma Henze. Took a taxi to her grand big home high upon a hill. Her son and his wife were glad to see us but Emma was in a hospital. She had caught her finger in a sausage machine two weeks before, had to have it amputated and was having a bad time of it.

They gave us a grand meal and then we taxied to the hospital to see Emma.

They told us how the American soldiers came to their house and ransacked everything and how they stole everything - all their jewelry wedding rings and all at the point of their guns. It didn't sound very good. They have beautiful dishes and silverware which they saved as they buried it in their cellar.

Then we took the train to Siegen and planned to stay there overnight. There were three hotels. But found the town was all shot to pieces. Couldn't get a room for love or money. We phoned several nearby towns and taxied miles and when we got to one and I saw the rickety patched walls, I told Dad I was afraid to stay there. We went back to Siegen and called Dr. Padberg where we were going to stay the next morning. It was 10:00 P.M. and he said "you come right over here".

So we taxied back in the other direction.

They were grand people and we visited late that night and they got us up at 5:30 the next morning as we had to taxi back to Siegen and take an early train back to Koln.

It was Thursday July 13. We stayed in Koln that night to rest. Friday, July 14, we left Koln at noon and were soon out of Germany and arrived in Brussels at 6 P.M. Found the letter Marian wrote on July 11th. Also a business letter to Dad.

Love from Mother and Dad

In 1953, Will, age 70, and Rose, age 71, built a new one-story brick house so that they would not have to climb stairs. The house was 2.5 miles southeast of 120 Grand Avenue SE, at 1624 Seminole Road SE in St. Stephen's parish in Grand Rapids. Their grandson Jim Griffin recalls that Will and Rose had the house built on Seminole because they were in a serious auto accident in Mt. Pleasant. Some teenage boy hit them broadside knocking Will out of the car and Rose almost lost her life. The vehicle hit them on her side of the car. Rose was told she would never walk again. A one-story house was built to accommodate a wheel chair. Rose fully recovered, however, and used her legs for many years after that.

In 1954, the Drueke company purchased the first of three plastic injection molding machines to manufacture plastic game parts for interlocking poker chips, chess pieces, and cribbage pegs. Prior to that, plastic game parts were contracted out.

On October 16, 1954, Marian, age 45, married John Ederer, age 47, in Grand Rapids at St. Stephen's Church. They lived in Saginaw and owned a cottage on Saginaw Bay at Fish Point. They rented a cottage on Drummond Island off the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, about 50 miles east of the Mackinac Bridge, where they fished a lot. Marian had land and a small home called Cherry Lane contiguous to her brother William's home on Plymouth Road. Because her property could not be sold for zoning reasons, she gave it to her brother when she moved to Saginaw.

In 1955, the Grand Rapids directory listed the officers of Wm. F. Drueke & Sons as Wm. F. Drueke, President; Jos. W. Drueke, Vice President; Mrs. Marian L. Ederer, Secretary, and Wm. F. Drueke, Jr., Treasurer.
William Dies in 1956 at age 72


On January 18, 1956, William Francis Drueke, died at age 72 of an abdominal aortic aneurism at Berea College Hospital in Berea, Kentucky. He and Rose were driving to Florida for a two-month vacation. Following a funeral mass at St. Stephen's Church in Grand Rapids, he was buried at Mount Calvary Cemetery.

The Grand Rapids Herald, Thursday, January 19, 1956
W. F. Drueke, Manufacturer, Is Dead at 72
GR Civic Leader Was Pioneer of Chess Games in U.S.
William F. Drueke Sr., of 1624 Seminole SE., manufacturer of chess and other adult games and a civic leader, died in Berea Ky., Wednesday, while on his way to Florida. He was 72.
Mr. and Mrs. Drueke left Grand Rapids Monday for a two-months trip. He had a physical examination before leaving and was believed in good health. Tuesday afternoon he complained of not feeling well and when examined by a physician in Berea was ordered to College Hospital there. Wednesday, at 11 a.m., he suffered a heart attack which proved fatal.
Mr. Drueke was a native of Grand Rapids. He was a furniture manufacturer and in 1914 began manufacturing a line of chess games. In this project he was a pioneer in America. Before that time all chess games were imported from Europe until their importation was stopped by World War I.
In 1932 he and his sons established the William F. Drueke and Sons Company, manufacturer of adult games. The plant is located at 601 Third NW.
Mr. Drueke was a member of St. Stephen's Church and Holy name Society. He also was a member, one of the earliest, of the Peninsular Club.
Beside his wife Rose, Mr. Drueke is survived by two sons, William F. Jr. and Joseph W. of Grand Rapids; three daughters, Mrs. James L. Griffin of Grand Rapids; Mrs. John E. Ederer of Saginaw and Mrs. J. Alfred Biggins of Wilmette, Ill.; a brother Clarence A. of Grand Rapids; three sisters, Mrs. Joseph A. Hesse, Mrs. Claude R. Cheney and Mrs. George A. Matthews of Grand Rapids, and 24 grandchildren.
The body will arrive at O'Brien's Colonial Home late Thursday. Funeral services will be in St. Stephen's Church at 10 a.m. Saturday. Burial will be at Mt. Calvary Cemetery.

The Grand Rapids Press, Thursday, January 19, 1956
W. F. Drueke, Manufacturer, Is Dead at 72

Rose Widowed at Age 73

Grand Rapids, 1956-1973. With Will's death in 1956, Rose was widowed after 49 years of marriage. Will and Rose missed their 50th wedding anniversary by five months.

In the 1956-1960 Grand Rapids directory listings for Wm. F. Drueke & Sons, Inc., William was President, Joseph was Vice President and Treasurer, and Marian was Secretary. In the 1967 directory, there is no company listing, but in their personal listings, Joseph was President and William was Vice President and Treasurer. In the 1968 directory listing for the company, William was President, Marian was Vice president and Secretary, and Willetta Potter was Treasurer. In their 1968 personal listings, William was President, and Joseph was Treasurer.

On July 13, 1963, Rose's second cousin Otilia Leuchtweis O'Hara died after a long illness. A tribute appeared in the Fall 1963 issue of The Compass of Theta Phi Alpha, the sorority that Otilia helped found at the University of Michigan in 1912. Otilia was 73, seven years younger than Rose. Both Otilia and Rose had had their mothers die when they were young girls. Otilia was survived by her husband Judge John P. O'Hara, three sons, and 14 grandchildren.

In July and August of 1972, American Bobby Fischer beat the Russian chess champion Boris Spassky in Reykjavik, Iceland. Drueke Games received a priceless promotion when photos showed Bobby Fischer practicing with Drueke chessmen. The match in Iceland between Fischer and Boris Spassky doubled orders for Drueke chess sets. An article on July 9, 1972 in the Sunday New York Times, mentioned increased demand for chess sets as a result of the match. The article mentioned that the William F. Drueke Company's Players Choice set was available for $9.50 by mail from the United States Chess Federation.

Rose Dies in 1973 at Age 91


On August 13, 1973, Rose Viola Drueke, died at age 91 in her home. She had been a widow for 17 years. Following a funeral mass
Florida vacation with his wife. Burial will be at Mount Calvary cemetery.

**The Grand Rapids Herald, Friday, January 20, 1956**

**Drueke Rites Will Be Held on Saturday**

Funeral services for William F. Drueke Sr., civic leader and manufacturer of chess and other adult games, will be held in St. Stephen's Church at 10 a.m. Saturday. Burial will be in Mt. Calvary Cemetery.

Mr. Drueke died in Berea, Ky., Wednesday, while on his way to Florida. The body, which had been expected Thursday, will be at the O'Brien Colonial Home Friday.

Pallbearers will be his nephews Joseph J. Hesse Jr., William E. Hesse, Thomas E. Matthews, James Matthews, Francis J. DePauw and Robert F. Hake.

Honorary pallbearers will be Dr. A. Verne Wenger, Jay W. Linsey, Roland M. Shivel, Langford H. Griffin, James L. McInerney, A. Bonny O'Brien, William L. Berner, John E. Frey and Raymond F. Knape.

Mr. Drueke was 72 and lived at 1624 Seminole SE.

**Obituary in Grand Rapids Paper in January 1956**

Drueke--William F. Drueke sr., aged 72, of 1624 Seminole rd., SE, passed away Wednesday morning at Berea, Ky. Surviving are his brother, Clarence of Grand Rapids; three sisters, Mrs. Claude Ederer of Saginaw and Mrs. A. J. Biggins of Wilmette, Ill.; a brother, Clarence of Grand Rapids; three sisters, Mrs. Claude Cheney, Mrs. J. A. Hesse and Mrs. George Matthews of Grand Rapids, and twenty-four grandchildren. Requiem Mass will be sung Saturday morning at 10 o'clock at St. Stephen's church. Interment Mt. Calvary cemetery. Relatives and friends will recite the Rosary Friday evening at 8:30 at O'Brien's Colonial Home, where Mr. Drueke repose.

Funeral services will be at 10 a.m. Tuesday in St. Stephen's Church. Burial will be in Mount Calvary Cemetery. The body is at Metcalf Mortuary.

**Obituary in Grand Rapids Paper in August 1973**

Drueke--Mrs. Rose V. Drueke, aged 91, of Seminole Rd. SE, passed away Sunday night. Mrs. Drueke was a native and lifelong resident of Grand Rapids, the widow of William F. Drueke Sr., founder of William F. Drueke and Sons, Inc., a longtime member of the St. Cecilia Society, the Women's City Club, the Grand Rapids Symphony Society, the Mary Free Bed Guild and a member of Rose Society. Surviving are three daughters, Mrs. John E. (Marian) Ederer of Saginaw, Mrs. J. Alfred (Jane) Biggins of Long Beach, Calif., Mrs. James L. (Rosemary) Griffin of Grand Rapids; two sons, William F. and Joseph W. of Grand Rapids; 24 grandchildren and 30 great-grandchildren. Mrs. Drueke was taken to the Metcalf Mortuary where the family will receive friends Monday 7 to 9 p.m. The Rosary will be recited at 8 p.m. Funeral Mass at 10 a.m. Tuesday in St. Stephen's Church. Interment Mount Calvary Cemetery.

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**William and Rose Smith Drueke Family**

**Irene Elizabeth Drueke** 1907-1937 m. 1937 Philip Cowan 1906-1998

**Marian Louise Drueke** 1908-1991 m. 1964 John Elmer Ederer 1907-1980

**Joseph William Drueke** 1911-1994 m. 1939 Joan Elizabeth Pike 1914-1997

- Irene Drueke b. 1940
- Joseph Drueke b. 1942 m. 1979 Ann McDonald b. 1942
- Kathleen Joan Drueke 1943-1995
- Sister Mary Joseph
- Frederick Drueke 1945-2004 m. 1981 Susan Stephens b. 1945
- Susan Drueke b. 1948 m. 1977 Ned Wernette b. 1949
- Paul Drueke b. 1952 m. 1978 Mary Jo Roys b. 1953

**William Francis Drueke** 1912-2000 m. 1941 Doris McLaughlin 1920-1997

- Elizabeth Drueke b. 1941 m. 1963-1979 Michael Mabin b. 1944
- William Francis Drueke b. 1943 m. 1964 Bertha Tucker b. 1948 m. 1967 Mary Bialecki b. 1948 m. 1992 Mary Jo Exlebien b. 1942
- Carole Drueke b. 1944 m. 1964 Stanley Goht b. 1948 m. 1980 Richard Klein b. 1951
- Rose Drueke 1954-2003

On May 1, 2000, William F. Drueke died in Grand Rapids of pneumonia. He was 87, the last of the Drueke children to die. Following mass at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, he was buried at Woodlawn Cemetery in Grand Rapids. William learned photography as a young boy from his favorite uncle, Crescenta Smith. Many of his photos were donated to the Grand Rapids Public Library. The photos are in The Grand Rapids History & Special Collections Center, Collection No. 212. William bought a computer in 1985 and used it to record the Drueke family tree, a valuable source of information for this Web site.

58 great grandchildren

http://www.peterspioneers.com/WRSDu.htm
The Drueke Building

The Drueke game company was founded in 1914 by William F. Drueke. In 1941, needing more space, he bought a factory at 601 3rd Street NW that had been occupied by the Grand Rapids Casket Co.

Upon his death in 1957 at age 72, the Drueke company continued to be run by his son Bill. In 1987, when Bill was age 75, the Drueke company was sold to the Low Tec Co. In 1990, the Low Tec Co. sold the company to the Carrom Company, which moved manufacturing operations to its home in Ludington, Michigan, but continues to use the Drueke name. See Ludington Daily News, July 15, 1992.

Robert Israels purchased the vacant Drueke factory in 2008 and completed a $7 million renovation in 2010. The renovated factory is called the Drueke Building, a 24,000 square foot office building. The primary tenant is Open Systems Technologies, a privately-held IT company with 100 employees, founded in 1997.

In an interview published in the Commercial Quarterly, February 1, 2010, David Israels explained why they were keeping the Drueke name on the renovated building: "The Drueke family and the Drueke game company are part of the history of Grand Rapids, and we still have Druekes living in the city. So, it is important for us to maintain that and showcase that as we go forward. It's amazing how many people we've talked to who have a story about a Drueke game. That's why we want to keep that name as part of the community."

In an article in The Grand Rapids Press, July 13, 2010, Dan Behm, President of Open Systems Technologies, mentions that they have named their conference rooms in the former Drueke Company building after board games once made on-site, like backgammon and cribbage. The conference room inside the clocktower is named after the Drueke game, "Shoot the Moon." Drueke games are made available in the rooms named after them. The games are intended to make employees feel at home, along with a gym and locker rooms, a small library, comfy chairs near a fireplace, and two kitchens.

Drueke Salad. The nearby Fourth Street Deli makes a delicious Drueke Salad named after the Drueke Building: The deli is located a block north of the Drueke Building, at 528 4th Street NW.

Drueke Salad

- shrimp salad,
- roasted chicken,
- apple smoked bacon,
- white cheddar,
- green onions,
- cherry tomatoes,
- croutons, spring mix, and
- lemon pesto vinaigrette.