

Passing of Our Chum

Of the three men who were responsible in the large way for the coming of Naeter Brothers to Cape Girardeau and remaining here, two are still actively in business and one has gone to his reward. Messrs. E. W. Flentge and M. E. Leming are as young in spirit and active as ever, and are as loyal to the publishers as ever. Edward F. Regenhardt, closest personal associate of the publishers, died in 1926.

When Naeter brothers came to Cape Girardeau in 1904, they soon met Edward F. Regenhardt, who was then building the Normal school plant. He was one of the first men, if not the first, to step into the office and lay down a five dollar bill to pay for subscription and advertisement. And from that day Mr. Regenhardt was a continuous patron of this newspaper, not only in a financial way but in personal support, and he was the most intimate personal friend of the publishers. Such support as he gave this newspaper is more than can be described.

Regenhardt and Taft

In 1904 Mr. Regenhardt qualified as a building contractor, although he was known throughout Missouri as a Republican politician. He never but once sought office and then it was because of a personal friendship with the president of the United States.

When Taft was a candidate, Regenhardt made a trip across the state with him. A mutual friendship developed from this two-day association. When Taft became president some one suggested that Regenhardt should be United States Marshal at St. Louis. He made application and although the man who had held the place before had the greatest endorsements. President Taft appointed Regenhardt as a personal action and frequently thereafter the two had long visits at the White House.

After serving as marshal from June 1910, to August 1914, Regenhardt retired from politics and organized a paving concern with himself as president and his two sons, William and Theodore, as partners. This concern did much paving in Poplar Bluff, Kennett, Chaffee, DeSoto, and other towns, and then took up highway work. The company continues to operate with the two sons in charge.

"Big Ed" and "Bill"

"Big Ed" Regenhardt, as he was popularly known to thousands, being six feet seven inches tall, and weighing 312 pounds when in "fighting trim," was probably the only man who ever addressed the president of the United States by his first name and then slapped him on the knee to impress it.

When Regenhardt was United States marshal he took one of the publishers of The Missourian with him to Washington on an official errand. While there the two called on President Taft. A large number of people were waiting in the outer office to see the

president and suddenly the president passed through a hall that gave him a view of the crowd.

He spied Regenhardt and turning suddenly he stepped into the room and took him by the hand, leading him and the others of the party into his office. While sitting there at the big desk, President Taft was recounting a political experience and with a thunderous chuckle slapped Ed. on the knee. Evidently wishing to be as complimentary as the chief executive, Ed. addressed him as "Bill" and gave him a whack on the knee that made a noise like blasting rock.

After a while Secretary Chas. Nagle of the Interior Department, reminded the president that the Cabinet was waiting for the regular weekly meeting, and President Taft then invited Regenhardt and the others to step into the Cabinet room and see his official family. Every member of that body was standing by his chair when the president stepped in and after a round of introductions President Taft invited Regenhardt to call often.

The next day, while Regenhardt and his party were walking down a side street in Washington, a loud voice was heard calling "Ed." It was President Taft out for a morning walk with his aide, Percy Butt. A street visit followed. It was another case of "Bill" and "Ed."

When Mr. Regenhardt died Mr. Taft was among the first to send condolences.