

The Empty Bunk

(For John Kirkman Huff, CTM)

There's an empty bunk tonight  
In the room where the chiefs sleep,  
For the one of the hair so fair  
Has gone to the blue and the deep.

He went in the way he had lived,  
With an honest, carefree gait;  
He's gone where the men of the sea  
All bide their time while they wait.

He took from us when he went,  
Not only a shipmate and friend;  
We lost, too, his infectuous spirit  
That he carried until the end.

Yes, his was a cheerful voice,  
And his was a helping hand;  
His was a crisp, "Aye, Aye, Sir",  
In answer to any command.

His was a life as short as  
The one of Whom he served.  
Now that they both have met, I  
Am sure he has all he deserved.

So pause with me for a moment;  
Let us pray for him who is gone,  
Though he no longer is with us,  
His memory lingers on.

For who is there among you  
Who hasn't a catch in his throat,  
A vacant place in his heart for  
The empty bunk in the boat.