

James W. "Jim" Parker  
Pensacola Pre-Flight Class 7-48

MEMORIALS

Dear Kenneth ...

We mourned for Leland this afternoon,  
Heard muted rifles fire staccato salutes  
Above his new casket at Arlington, and  
Agonized privately as the bugler  
Plaintively echoed Taps  
Across misty access roads,

Curving between white marble stones.

Then tonight we visited a memorial  
At rest high on a green hill  
White Doric columns offset  
A great alabaster image  
Of the seated President Lincoln.

Majestic in quiet dignity.

We walked down at almost midnight  
To look for your father's name.  
Others were there also.

People strolled slowly,  
Lost in respect ...

Coppered bronze statuary  
Of our men in jungle gear stood there,  
Guarding hallowed ground.

Glistening, black granite wings  
Yielded name after name after name,  
Slab upon slab of names, rising in height  
From tapered tips to central heavy count.

We searched for Ed's name, for his slab -  
That old war eagle we loved so much  
Was there, his spirit soaring,  
Dignified by the utter quiet  
Of solemnity, and dark wilted roses.

His worn Navy wings now shine again,  
And symbolize each feature, name and slab,  
Of the newer memorial wall wings  
Seen at this special place.

They honor all the fallen engraved here.

Dear Kenneth, we owe him, and them,  
So very much.

Jim Parker, 1990

