THE FINAL VOYAGE

My friends the ghost ships sail
to their haven with history.
The remaining few old men
Tell their tales,
embellishing more and more as
memory fails and the ghost ships recall their crews.
Tales of youth are magnified by the veil of time.
We who remain can pay no greater honor
to those who have rejoined their ships
than to lift a glass in joyful memory and
to expect that all will be ship-shape when
we too finish the remainder of our leave
and rejoin the shadow fleets and crews.
Then together in the coming years we will sail
out of living memory into the retold tales of faith, war,
courage, fun, friendship and survival written by learned historians
or novelists to whom we will be an abstraction to be readjusted and reborn for
the times at hand.