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WALTER D. NAVIN, JR.

On November 10, 1972, his 48th birthday, death came to Professor Walter D. Navin, Jr., a member of our Law Faculty since 1965.

Born in California, he was "raised" (his word and my preference) in Iowa. Except for his LL.M. at New York University, he was also educated in Iowa—at the Davenport public schools, Cornell College (Business Manager and Editor of the college paper, which received the highest possible rating in national competition), and the State University Law School (first recipient of the Law School Foundation's scholarship award, moot court finalist, and contributor to the *Law Review*).

Between college and law study there was a hiatus during which he published a weekly newspaper in West Branch, Iowa. He married Suzanne Swift before his Cornell graduation and, by the time of his decision to change from journalism to law, they had three children—with a fourth subsequently added. This family responsibility necessitated part-time work, which makes his student record the more remarkable.

After the practice of law in Kansas City, Missouri, he joined the faculty at Washburn University Law School, where he founded the *Washburn Law Journal* and began his co-authorship—completed after his removal to Chapel Hill—of Kansas Annotations to the Uniform Commercial Code.

This impeccable Midwestern background seemed somehow to prepare him perfectly for life, both professional and personal, in North Carolina. From 1965 until his death his professional career matured with fine teaching, promotion in rank, election to the Faculty Council, publication of valuable articles, fruitful service as draftsman of pattern instructions to juries in contract cases, and the application of his calm, common sense to a variety of faculty problems.

Only a few months ago the Navins completed building a second home at Oriental where, in addition to relaxing while bird-watching, he could indulge his love of sailing—an activity he valued both for the opportunities it presented for contemplative solitude and for the attendant sense of self-reliance.

In losing almost a quarter of a century of anticipated service, the Law School and the University have suffered a grievous blow. But his great professional abilities were almost overshadowed by his personal qualities. Through their sharing of interests, love, respect, ambitions, tribulation and triumph, he and his wife had achieved as perfect a union as seems possible, as well as an enviable relationship with their children.

A gentle man (though with iron in his soul), he bore, without pride or anger, the deep and troublesome scars of combat wounds received at Anzio when he was barely nineteen.

The highest virtue to which individual man may aspire is common decency toward his fellow man. Walter Navin—with humility and grace—manifested that virtue to a superlative degree. Particularly for that reason he leaves a glow in our hearts which his death can neither quench nor dim.

At my age, death is no stranger to my circle of friends. But, in my experience, never more appropriate were those lines from *Hamlet*:

Now cracks a noble heart:—good night, sweet prince;
And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!

HENRY BRANDIS, JR.