

*To John and Myfanwy Piper*

# Benjamin Britten

## Winter Words

Op. 52

Lyrics and Ballads

*of*

Thomas Hardy

*for*

*High Voice and Piano*



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# 1. At day-close in November

Quick and impetuous (♩. = 69)

PIANO

*f* *dim.*

Red. \*

*f* *p*

The ten hours' light is a - ba - ting,..... And a

*pp* *f* *Red.* \*

late bird wings..... a - cross, Where the

*dim.* *pp* *f* *Red.* \*

pin - es, like walt - zers wait - ing, wait - ing,.....

*dim.*

*p* Give their black heads a toss. *cresc.* Beech leaves,

The first system of music features a vocal line starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The lyrics are "Give their black heads a toss. Beech leaves,". The piano accompaniment includes triplets and a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking.

..... that yel - low the noon - - time, Float..... past

The second system continues the vocal line with the lyrics "..... that yel - low the noon - - time, Float..... past". The piano accompaniment features triplets and a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking.

like..... specks, like specks in the eye;.....

The third system continues the vocal line with the lyrics "like..... specks, like specks in the eye;.....". The piano accompaniment includes triplets and a forte (*f*) dynamic marking.

*f* I set ev-'ry tree..... in my June time,.... And now they ob - *p*

The fourth system concludes the vocal line with the lyrics "I set ev-'ry tree..... in my June time,.... And now they ob -". The piano accompaniment includes triplets, a forte (*f*) dynamic, a diminuendo (*dim.*) marking, and a piano (*p*) dynamic marking.

- scure ..... the.... sky. *pp sweetly* And the chil - dren ..... who

*pp ppp sempre*

*with Ped.*

ram - ble through here ..... Con-ceive that there ne - ver has been A

*sempre pp* time when no.... trees,.... no tall trees grew here,.....

*sempre ppp*

That none ..... will in time be.... seen.

*dim.*

*ppp* *pp*

*Ped.*

# Midnight on the Great Western

(or The Journeying Boy)

Very slow

*gradually pushing forward*

PIANO

Introduction for piano. The piece is in 3/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It begins with a *sf* (sforzando) dynamic, followed by a *pp* (pianissimo) section. The tempo is marked 'Very slow'. The introduction consists of several measures of chords and single notes, with a *cresc.* (crescendo) marking towards the end. Pedal markings include 'Ped.' and asterisks indicating where to use the pedal.

With deliberate movement (♩ = 88)

Verse 1 *p*

In the third - class

Verse 2 *p*

In the band of his

*marked*

Vocal and piano accompaniment for the first two verses. The vocal lines are in treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in bass clef. The tempo is 'With deliberate movement' (♩ = 88). The piano part features a *fp* (fortissimo piano) dynamic and is marked 'without pedal' and 'sim.' (sostenuto). The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

Vocal and piano accompaniment for the third and fourth verses. The vocal lines are in treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in bass clef. The piano part features a *fp* dynamic and includes triplet markings (3). The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note accompaniment.

Vocal and piano accompaniment for the fifth and sixth verses. The vocal lines are in treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in bass clef. The piano part features a *fp* dynamic and includes triplet markings (3). The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note accompaniment.

*with pedal*

\*) The notes in brackets should be silently depressed before releasing the pedal.

1. on his list-less form and face,..... Be - wrapt past

2. bore the key of his box, That twink - led

The first system of the musical score features two vocal staves (1 and 2) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal lines are in a treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The piano accompaniment is in a bass clef. The lyrics are: "on his list-less form and face,..... Be - wrapt past" for the first voice, and "bore the key of his box, That twink - led" for the second voice. The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings such as *mf* and *Red.* (ritardando).

1. know-ing to what ..... he was go - ing,.... Or whence he

2. gleams of the lamp's ..... sad beams ..... Like a liv - ing

The second system continues the musical score. The vocal lines are in a treble clef with a key signature of two flats. The piano accompaniment is in a bass clef. The lyrics are: "know-ing to what ..... he was go - ing,.... Or whence he" for the first voice, and "gleams of the lamp's ..... sad beams ..... Like a liv - ing" for the second voice. The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings such as *mf* and *p* (piano). There are also asterisks and *Red.* markings in the piano part.

1. came, or whence ..... he came.

2. thing, a liv - - ing thing.

The third system concludes the musical score. The vocal lines are in a treble clef with a key signature of two flats. The piano accompaniment is in a bass clef. The lyrics are: "came, or whence ..... he came." for the first voice, and "thing, a liv - - ing thing." for the second voice. The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings such as *pp* (pianissimo) and *dim.* (diminuendo). There are also triplets and a *b* (basso) marking in the piano part.

Slow

*p freely*

What past can be yours, O

*sf* *pp* *sf* *pp*

Red. \* Red. \* Red. \*

With deliberate movement

*p*

Slow

jour - - - - - neying boy

*p* *sf*

Red.

*freely*

*pp*

*mf*

*cresc.*

To-wards a world un-known, Who calm-ly, as if in-cu-rious

*pp* *sf* *pp*

\* Red. \*

quite On all at stake, can un-der-take This plunge..... a - lone?

*pp* *sf*

Red. \* Red.

pushing forward

pp sf pp

Ped.

With deliberate movement

*p*

Knows your soul ..... a sphere, ..... O jour -

*sfp* *fp*

\*

*express.*

*express.*

- - neying... boy, ..... Our rude realms

*fp* *mf*

with Ped.

*marked*

*marked*

far a - bove, Whence with spa - cious vis - ion you mark and

*marked*



*cresc.*  
 mete This re - gion of sin that you find you in,.....  
*f*  
*fp* *cresc.* *f*  
 Ped.

.....  
 But.....  
*f* *dim.*  
 \* Ped. \*

*pp*  
 are not of, but are..... not of?  
*pp*  
 3 3

Slow  
*pp (from afar)*  
 Ped. \*

# 3.

## Wagtail and Baby (A Satire)

Gently moving (♩ = ♩. = 80)

VOICE

A ba - by

*sweetly*

PIANO

*ped.*

*(half ped.)*

watch'd a ford, where - to..... A wag-tail came for

*ped.*

*(sim.)*

drink-ing; A blar - ing bull went wa - ding

*ped.*

*ped.*

through, The wag - tail showed no

The first system of music features a vocal line on a single treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on two staves (treble and bass clefs). The vocal line begins with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter rest, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, a quarter note C5, and a quarter note B4. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and block chords in the left hand. The key signature has one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 4/4.

shrink - ing.

*Red.*

The second system continues the vocal line with a quarter rest, a quarter note D5, and a quarter rest. The piano accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note pattern and block chords. The key signature changes to two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature remains 4/4.

*mf* > A stal - lion splash'd his way a - cross,

*mf*

*Red.*

The third system features a vocal line starting with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note D5, a quarter note E5, a quarter note F#5, a quarter note G5, a quarter note F#5, a quarter note E5, and a quarter rest. The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern and block chords. The key signature remains two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 4/4.

*p* The bir - die near - ly sin - king; .....

*p*

*Red.*

The fourth system features a vocal line starting with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note F#4, a quarter note E4, a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, and a quarter rest. The piano accompaniment continues with the eighth-note pattern and block chords. The key signature remains two sharps (F# and C#) and the time signature is 4/4.

*mf*

He gave his plumes a twitch and toss,

*mf*

*Red.*

And held his own un - blink - ing.

*p*

*Red.*

Next saw the ba - by

*pp*

*pp*

*Red.*

round the spot A mon - grel slow - ly slink - ing;

*p*

The wag - tail gazed, but fal-tered

not In dip and sip and prin - -

king.

*p* *rall.*

A per-fect gen - tle-man then neared;

*mf* Quick

The wag-tail, in a wink-ing, With ter-ror rose .....

*molto rall.*

and dis - ap - peared; The

Tempo I

ba - by fell a - think - ing.

*rall.*

*express.*

## 4

## The little old table

Quick and light ( $\text{♩} = 108$ ) *p*

VOICE

Creak, creak, lit-tle

PIANO

*pp* (always smoothly)

wood thing, lit-tle wood thing, creak, creak, When I

touch you with el-bow or knee; That..... is the way you

*cresc.*

*cresc.*





..... at me with a thought, look'd at me with a thought

This system contains the first two staves of music. The vocal line is on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The lyrics are "..... at me with a thought, look'd at me with a thought". The piano accompaniment consists of two staves: a right-hand treble clef staff and a left-hand bass clef staff. The piano part features chords and moving lines in both hands.

That I did..... not un - der -

*warm* *dim.*

*sf* *dim.*

This system contains the next two staves of music. The vocal line continues with the lyrics "That I did..... not un - der -". Above the vocal line, there are performance markings: a triplet of eighth notes, a hairpin crescendo leading to the word "warm", and a hairpin decrescendo leading to "dim.". Below the piano accompaniment, there is a dynamic marking of *sf* (sforzando) and another *dim.* marking. The piano part continues with complex harmonic textures.

- stand. Who - ev - er

*pp* *sweetly*

*pp* *(with pedal)*

This system contains the third and fourth staves of music. The vocal line has a rest for the first two measures, followed by the lyrics "- stand. Who - ev - er". Above the vocal line, there are dynamic markings *pp* (pianissimo) and the instruction *sweetly*. The piano accompaniment in the right hand consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The left hand has a more active line. At the end of the system, there is a marking *(with pedal)*.

owns it a - non,..... And hears it,

*p*

This system contains the final two staves of music. The vocal line has a rest for the first two measures, followed by the lyrics "owns it a - non,..... And hears it,". Above the vocal line, there is a dynamic marking of *p* (piano). The piano accompaniment continues with the same accompaniment pattern as in the previous systems.

will ne-ver know What a his-to-ry hangs .....

*ppp*  
up-on This creak, creak, creak, creak,

*warm*  
creak from long .....

..... a-go.

## 5

## The Choirmaster's Burial

(or The Tenor man's story)

Simply ( $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 52$ )

VOICE *p*

He oft-en would ask us That,.... when he died,

PIANO *pp sustain*

Af-ter play-ing so ma-ny To their last rest, If out.... of us a-ny

Should here a-bide, And it would not task us, We would with our lutes Play

*pp*

o-ver him By his grave-brim.... The psalm he liked best..... The

*cresc.*

one whose sense suits "Mount E - phra-im".... And per -

- haps we should seem To him, in Death's dream, Like the

se - - - - - ra-phem, the se - ra-phem.

*mf* Quicker  
As soon as I knew That his spi-rit was gone I thought this his due, ...

..... And spoke thereu-pon. "I think," said the vi-car,...

*(heavily)*

*f*

*with Ped.*

Detailed description: This system contains the first two lines of music. The top line is the vocal melody, starting with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 3/2 time signature. The lyrics are "..... And spoke thereu-pon." followed by a measure rest, then "I think," said the vi-car,..." with a dynamic marking of *f*. The bottom two lines are the piano accompaniment, starting with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) and a key signature of two sharps. The piano part features a *f* dynamic and includes the instruction *(heavily)* above the first measure and *with Ped.* below the first measure. The piano accompaniment consists of a bass line with eighth notes and a treble line with chords and some melodic fragments.

"A read service quicker ..... Than viols out-of-doors ....

Detailed description: This system contains the second and third lines of music. The top line is the vocal melody, continuing from the previous system with the lyrics "A read service quicker ..... Than viols out-of-doors ....". The bottom two lines are the piano accompaniment, featuring a bass line with eighth notes and a treble line with chords. The piano part includes a *f* dynamic marking and uses a variety of note values and rests to support the vocal line.

..... In these frosts and hoars. That old-fashioned way

Detailed description: This system contains the third and fourth lines of music. The top line is the vocal melody with the lyrics "..... In these frosts and hoars. That old-fashioned way". The bottom two lines are the piano accompaniment, continuing the bass and treble lines from the previous system. The piano part includes a *f* dynamic marking and uses a variety of note values and rests to support the vocal line.

..... Re - quires a fine day, And it seems to

*dim.*

*f*

*dim.*

Detailed description: This system contains the fourth and fifth lines of music. The top line is the vocal melody with the lyrics "..... Re - quires a fine day, And it seems to". The bottom two lines are the piano accompaniment, continuing the bass and treble lines from the previous system. The piano part includes a *f* dynamic marking and uses a variety of note values and rests to support the vocal line. The system concludes with a *dim.* (diminuendo) instruction in both the vocal and piano parts.

me It had bet-ter not be"..... Hence, that

*p* *3* *pp*

*p* *p stacc.*

af-ter-noon, Though ne-ver knew he That his wish could not be, .....

*3* *3* *3* *pp*

..... To get through it fas-ter They buried the master With-out a-ny

*p* *3* *3* *3*

tune. But....

*pp*

Tempo I

..... 'twas said that, when .... At the dead of next night The vi-car looked out,

*pp*

There struck on his ken Thronged..... round-a - bout, Where the

*p*

frost was gray-ing The head-stoned grass, A band .....

*ppp*

\*

..... all in white Like the saints in church-glass, ..... Sing-ing and play-ing .....

*cresc.*

*cresc.*

..... sing-ing, sing-ing and play-ing ..... The

an - - - - - cient stave ..... By the

choir - - - - - mas-ter's grave.....

Such the ten-or man told When he had grown old.



6

# Proud Songsters

(Thrushes, Finches and Nightingales)

Impetuous (♩ = 176)

VOICE

The thrush - es sing as the

PIANO

with Ped.

sun is go - ing, And the fin - ches whist - le in

ones and pairs, And as it gets dark loud

night - in - gales..... in bush-es Pipe, pipe, as they can when

*cresc.* *sf* *tr* *mf*

A - pril wears, As if all Time ..... were

*mf* *sf* *f* *tr* *sf* *p* *cresc.*

theirs. ....

*f* *ff* *sf* *tr* *sf* *dim.* *tr* *sf* *tr* *sf* *tr* *tr* *tr* *tr*

These are brand new birds.... of twelve-month's grow-ing,

*p* *pp* *tr*

Which a year a - go,..... or less than twain,.....

..... No finches were, nor night - in - gales, Nor

thrushes, ..... But on - ly par - ticles of grain,.... And earth, and

air, ..... and rain.

Red.

# At the Railway Station, Upway

(or The Convict and Boy with the Violin)

Lightly and like an improvisation (♩ = c. 72)

VOICE

PIANO

*pp*

(brilliant)

*mf*

3

3

6

*p simply*

"There is not much that I can do, ..... For I've no mo-ney that's quite my own!"

*pp*

*pp*

..... Spoke up the pi - ty - ing child - A

(sustained)

3

*pp*

lit - tle boy ..... with a vi - o - lin At the

3

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sta - tion ..... be-fore the train came in,

*mf*

*p* "But I can play my fid-dle to you, And a nice one 'tis,....."

*p*

..... and good in tone!"..... *pp cresc.* The

*pp*

*pp cresc.* (sustained) man in the hand-cuffs smiled; ..... The con-sta-ble looked, and

*moving forward* he smiled, too,..... As the fid-dle be-gan to twang;.....

*mf cresc.* *rhythmic*

..... And the man in the hand-cuffs sud-den-ly sang With grim-ful

*fp*

*f rhythmic*

glee: "This life so free Is the

*f*

*dim.*

thing for me! ..... This life so free, this

*dim.*

life so free!" .....

*mf* *dim.*

6

(as before)

*p*

And the con - sta - ble smiled, ..... and said no word, As

*p*

if un - con - scious of what he heard; ..... And

*pp*

*pp*

(sustained) so they went on ..... till the train came in \_\_\_\_\_ The

*pp*

*sweetly*

con - vict, and boy with the vi - - - o -

*pp*

- lin.

*ppp*

*E*

# Before Life and After

VOICE *Quietly moving* (♩ = 48) *always p and smooth*

A time there was — as one may guess And

PIANO *p very smooth*

*with Ped.*

as, in-deed, earth's tes-ti-mon-ies tell — Be-fore the birth of

con-scious-ness, .... When all went well.

*(sustained)* *p*

None suf-fered sick-ness, love, or loss, None knew re-gret, starved hope, or



heart-burn-ings; None cared what-e-ver crash..... or cross

The first system consists of a vocal line on a treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The vocal line begins with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note B4 with a bar line, then a quarter note A4, and continues with a melodic line. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand.

Brought wrack to things. If some-thing ceased, no

*p* *p*

*p* (sustained) *p*

The second system continues the musical piece. The vocal line has a rest for the first measure, then begins with a half note G4. The piano accompaniment maintains its rhythmic pattern, with dynamic markings of *p* (piano) and *p* (sustained) indicating the volume and texture.

tongue be-wailed, ..... If some-thing winced and waned, no heart was

The third system shows the vocal line continuing with a melodic line that includes a dotted quarter note. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and a consistent bass line.

wrung; ..... If bright-ness dimmed, and dark pre-vailed,

*dim.* *dim.*

The fourth system concludes the page. The vocal line features a melodic phrase with a dotted quarter note. The piano accompaniment includes dynamic markings of *dim.* (diminuendo), indicating a decrease in volume. The system ends with a final chord in the piano part.

*p* No sense was stung. But the di - sease of feel - ing germed,...

*pp cresc. and moving forward*

*p (sustained)* *pp*

..... And pri - mal right - ness took the tinct of wrong; Ere ne -

- science shall be re - af - firmed..... How long, how

*f (broadening)*

long, how long, how..... long, how long?

*dim.* *pp*