

to Roger Roe
Letters Home

With text from letters by Alan Seeger (1888-1916)

Zachary Wadsworth (b. 1983)

Freely within a steady tempo ♩ = 60 00:08

Oboe

Freely within a steady tempo ♩ = 60
October 23, 1914, 17 kil. south-east of Reims, Dear Mother,

Tape

Nature sounds

mp simply

9 00:21

Ob.

I am sitting on the curbstone of a street at the edge of the town.

Tape

pp *mp*

15 00:34

Ob.

Half of our regiment have left already for the trenches. We may go tonight.

Tape

pp *mp* *pp* (echo)

19

Ob.

mf *p* *mp* espress.

Tape

p 3

23

Ob.

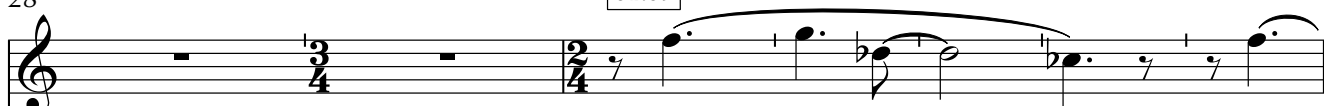
mf

Tape

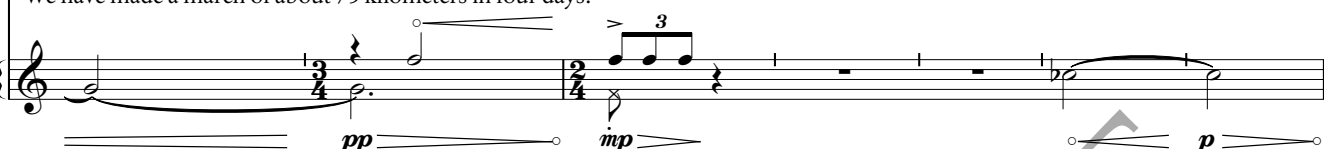
pp (echo)

The score is written for Oboe and Tape. It consists of five systems of music. The first system (measures 1-8) is in 2/4 time, marked 'Freely within a steady tempo' with a quarter note equal to 60. The Oboe part begins with a rest, followed by a melodic line starting on G4. The Tape part features 'Nature sounds' (represented by a wavy line) and a melodic line starting on G4. The second system (measures 9-14) has a key signature change to one flat (Bb) and a time signature change to 3/4. The Oboe part has a rest, then a melodic line starting on G4. The Tape part has a rest, then a melodic line starting on G4. The third system (measures 15-18) has a time signature change to 2/4. The Oboe part has a rest, then a melodic line starting on G4. The Tape part has a rest, then a melodic line starting on G4. The fourth system (measures 19-22) has a time signature change to 3/4. The Oboe part has a rest, then a melodic line starting on G4. The Tape part has a rest, then a melodic line starting on G4. The fifth system (measures 23-26) has a time signature change to 2/4. The Oboe part has a rest, then a melodic line starting on G4. The Tape part has a rest, then a melodic line starting on G4.


28 01:03

Ob.  *mp*

We have made a march of about 75 kilometers in four days.


Tape  *pp* *mp* *p*

35 01:19

Ob.  *mp* *molto*

On this slope the grape pickers
are singing merrily at their work,

on the other the batteries are roaring.

Tape  *p* *p*

44 01:32

Ob.  *f* agitated, passionate

Tape  *f* *f* *sim.*

46

Ob.  *ff*

Tape  *ff*

49

Ob. *f*

Tape

51

Ob. *ff* *f*

Tape

55

Ob. *ff*

Tape

58

Ob. *fff*

Tape *ff* Explosion filtering

02:11

61

Ob.

mp *espress.*

Tape

mf *p* *mp*

65

Ob.

p *mp* *p*

Tape

Distant war sounds

68

Ob.

mp *sf*

December 8, the trenches. Dear Mother,

Tape

72 03:01

Ob. *mp* simply

Tape *mp* *pp*

76

Ob. *mp*

Tape *mp* We left our camp in the woods

79

Ob.

before daybreak this morning, and marched up the hill in single file, under the winter stars.

Tape *pp*

Ob.

Tape

Ob.

mp singing *mf*

There is something fascinating in watching the dawn slowly illumine one of these new landscapes, from a position taken up under cover of darkness.

Tape

p glittering

Ob.

mp *p*

Slowly the mystery that it shrouds resolves as the grey light steals over the eastern hills.

Tape

p

Ob.

mf

Like a photograph in the washing, its highlights and shadows come gradually forth. The light splash in the foreground becomes a ruined chateau,

Tape

p

92

Ob. *p*

Tape

the grey street a demolished village.

The details come out on the hillside opposite, where the silent trenches of the enemy are hidden a few hundred metres away.

95

Ob. *mf* *p*

Tape *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

99

Ob. *mf* *(p)*

Tape *mf* *mp* *p*

Dear Mother,

04:50

102 **Doppio movimento (strictly)** ♩ = 120

Ob. *f sub.*

Doppio movimento (strictly) ♩ = 120

Ever over our heads goes on the precise and scientific struggle of the artillery.

Tape *f* *f* *f* *f*

108

Ob. *with precision*

Tape *f* *f* *dynamics sim.*

114

Ob. *mf* *f*

Tape

121

Ob. *mf* *f*

Tape

127

Ob. *mf* *f* *ff*

Tape

134

Ob. *p*

We hear the voices of cannon of all
calibres and at all distances.

Near us are field batteries;
far away are siege guns.

Tape *p* *mp* *mp*

05:32

141

Ob. *f*

Tape

dynamics as before

147

Ob.

Tape

153

Ob.

Tape

158

Ob. *p*

Over all there is the unmistakable, sharp, metallic twang of the French 75, the whistle of its shell and the lesser report of its explosion.

Tape *p*

164 05:58

Ob. *f*

Tape *dynamics as before*

168

Ob.

Tape

172

Ob.

Tape

175

Ob. *ff*

Tape *ff* 25th. September.

06:18

Tempo I ♩ = 60

Ob. *ff* lamenting

Tape *sim.*

184

Ob.

Tape

189

Ob.

Tape

pp sub.

195 We received the order to advance. The German artillery had now begun to open upon us in earnest.

Tape

201 Amid the most infernal roar of every kind of fire-arms, and through an atmosphere heavy with dust and smoke, we marched.

Tape

Then a hail of grenades.

207 They let us come right up to the barbed wire without firing.

Tape

07:42

Ob. 212 *ff* furiously

Tape

Ob. 214

Tape

Ob. 216

Tape

Ob. 218

Tape

221

Ob.

Tape

224

Ob.

fff

p sub.

My comrade fell, shot through the leg,
got up, and the next moment had his

229

Ob.

08:39

ff

ff

ff

head taken off by a
grenade before my eyes.

distant war sounds

pp

pp

238

Ob.

09:11

mf

mp sweetly

mp

June 18, 1915. Dear Mother,

You must not be anxious about my
not coming back. If I should not,

245 09:23

Ob. *mp*

you must be proud. for I could not have done otherwise than I did,
and I think I could not have done better.

Tape *pp mp pp*

251 09:34

Ob. *mp mf p*

Tape *mp*

255 09:45

Ob. *p warmly mf*

Death is nothing terrible after all.

Tape *p mp*

261

Ob. *p*

It may mean something even more wonderful than life.

Tape *p*

268

Ob. *mf* *p* 3

Tape *mp*

274

Ob.

It cannot possibly mean anything worse to the good soldier.

Tape

281 10:37

Ob. *pp* *p*

If it must be, let it come in the heat of action.

Tape *pp*

286 (non rit.) (torn off)

Ob. *mp* *ff*

Why flinch?

(non rit.) *pp* *mp* *ff*

Tape