



Malcolm Hill

(1944 -)

The Field of Agincourt

**Soprano and Baritone soli,
Semichorus of 4 sopranos
and 1 alto, mixed chorus
(SSATTB) and organ
manual (L.H. only)**

Text by Caroline Heaton

mj341 2015

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The Field of Agincourt was composed to mark the 600th anniversary of the English King Henry V's execution, against all the rules of chivalry, of all the French Prisoners of War during the battle of Agincourt.

The text was written by Caroline Heaton in 2014 and published in *The French Literary Review* (edited by Barbara Dordi) Issue 26; Autumn 2016, © Caroline Heaton, 2016.

The first performance took place on the 21st March 2015 at the Magdalen Chapel in Bath, sung by the Chandos Singers, with the main solos sung by Katharine Adams and Simon Caldwell.

Performance Notes

Much of the quasi-plainsong passages can be a little rubato, always legato and only those syllables stressed which would be naturally stressed if spoken. Mid-beamed notes must never be stressed unless marked.

The two passages of S1, S2 and A (starting at bars 19 and 36) can be sung either by three soloists (but not including the main soprano soloist who enters at bar 71) or a small group. The Coda's semi-chorus of Beldame and her four women compatriots can all be members of the general chorus.

The accompanying Drone should sound only at the pitches written; it could be played on an organ or extended keyboard just using the left hand (leaving the right hand free for conducting if useful), preferably with a string-sound rather than flute.

*In memory of the P.O. Ws who were all executed
by the English King Henry V at the Battle of Agincourt*

The Field of Agincourt

Caroline Heaton

Malcolm Hill
2015 mj341

1 $\text{♩} = 120$ *sempre legato*

S.+A. Full
Let the field lie fal - low a year be neath a co - ver

Drone

5

S.+A.
of marl, Mea - sure the days of sun and rain, mark the sea -

Drone

9

S.+A.
- son's sweet for sow - ing,

T.
8 take a brace

B.
take a brace

Drone

12

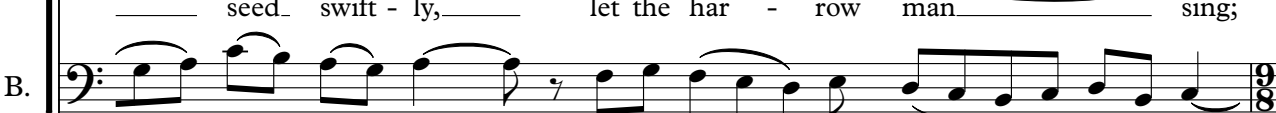
T.
8 of plough hor-ses, two men to flight the crow, scat - ter the flax

B.
of plough hor-ses, two men to flight the crow, scat - ter the flax

Drone

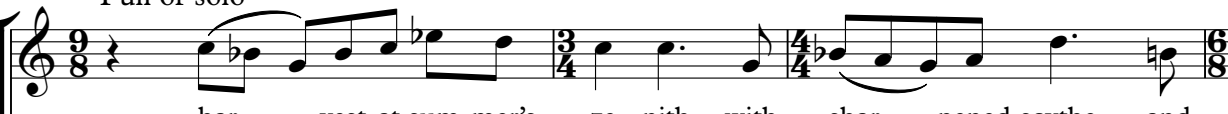
16

T.  seed_ swift - ly, let the har - row man sing;

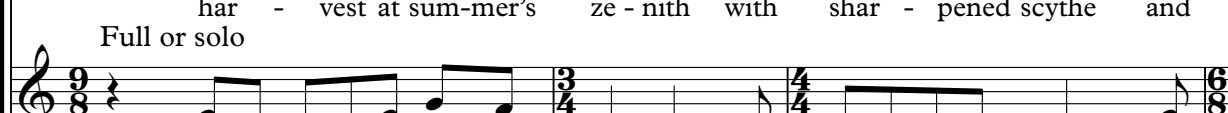
B.  seed_ swift - ly, let the har - row man sing;

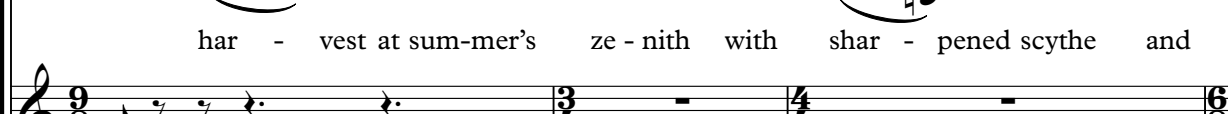
Drone 

19 Full or solo

S.1  har - vest at sum-mer's ze - nith with shar - pened scythe and

S.2 Full or solo  har - vest at sum-mer's ze - nith with shar - pened scythe and

A. Full or solo  har - vest at sum-mer's ze - nith with shar - pened scythe and

T.  har - vest at sum-mer's ze - nith with shar - pened scythe and

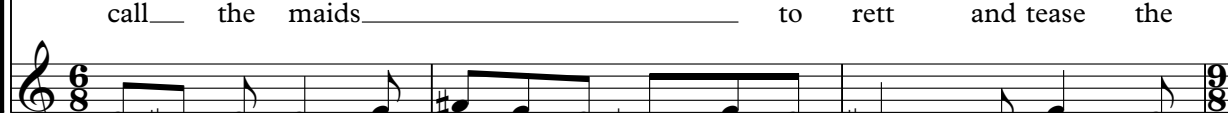
B.  har - vest at sum-mer's ze - nith with shar - pened scythe and

Drone 

22

S.1  call the maids to rett and tease the

S.2  call the maids to rett and tease the

A.  call the maids to rett and tease the

25

S.1 gold - - - - - en strands:

S.2 gold - - - - - en strands:

A. gold - - - - - en strands:

Drone

28

Full S+A All now is mirth and re-vel af-ter la - bour, the fer-tile field

Drone

32

Full S+A of A - gin-court bathed in am - - - - - ber light.

Drone

36 As bar 19

S.1 At year's turn - ing, plant fine strands of win-ter wheat: pale young shoots,

S.2 At year's turn - ing, plant fine strands of win-ter wheat: pale young shoots,

A. At year's turn - ing, plant fine strands of win-ter wheat: pale young shoots,

Drone

39

S.1 — up-right as a field of spears, cast - ing sha-dows sharp as in - ta - ken

S.2 — up-right as a field of spears, cast - ing sha-dows sharp as in - ta - ken

A. — up-right as a field of spears, cast - ing sha-dows sharp as in - ta - ken

42

S.1 breath on bat - tle's eve, when men fal - ter in - to line and

S.2 breath on bat - tle's eve, when men fal - ter in - to line and

A. breath on bat - tle's eve, when men fal - ter in - to line and

46

Bar. Solo

Solo

Saint Cris-pin's Eve, ev-er af ter

S.1 — trees on ei-ther side close ranks.

S.2 — trees on ei-ther side close ranks.

A. — trees on ei-ther side close ranks.

50

Bar. Solo

— of ill re - pute, and the rain falls and falls in

54

Bar. Solo



sil-ver ar rows pierc-ing hau berks and no-ble's wool-len cloaks, a - like.

59

Bar. Solo



All___ is si lent. in the En - glish camp, as graves that all___ too soon.

64

Bar. Solo



___ will gape in___ the sod - den ground, bro- ken___ by thou - sand

68

S. Solo



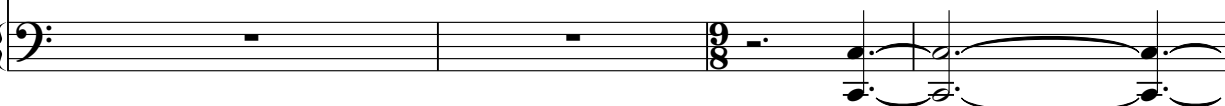
Now Fran-ce's fires

Bar. Solo



feet the ner-vous stamp of hor-ses' hooves._

Drone



72

S. Solo



gut ter,___ and songs choke___ on men's lips

T.



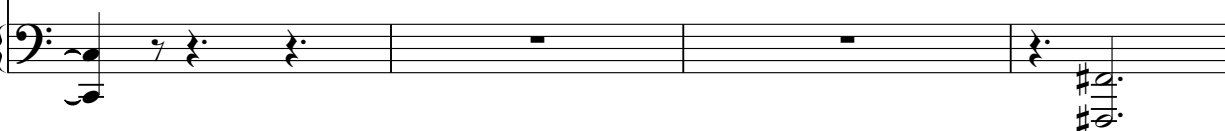
pe - ter out,___ songs choke

B.



pe - ter out,___ songs choke

Drone



76

S. Solo

A sul-len day-break, chi-

T.

mm mm mm

B.

mm

Drone

80

S. Solo

val-ric stand-still, a last ob-ser vance be-fore the grey dawn of con

Drone

84

S. Solo

fu - sion, up-rear-ing mounts, scream - ing in

T.

mm

Drone

88

S. Solo

a - ni - mal ter - ror, as a storm cloud of ar - rows

Drone

90

S. Solo

black - en the sky, a dead - ly rain

T.

Ah

B.

Ah

Drone

sf dim. *p*

sf dim. *p*

$\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

92

S. Solo

pours down u-pon the French,

T.

Ah pin-ion'd by their own

B.

Ah pin-ion'd by their own

f

f

96

S. Solo

be- fore pha - lanx u- pon pha - lanx of close - packed

T.

men, Ah

B.

men, Ah

p

p

101

S. Solo

spears, _

their line _

T.

mp *mp* *p*

mm_ mm_ mm_

B.

mp *mp* *p*

mm_ mm_ mm_

Drone

105

S. Solo

fal - ters, _ wave _ af - ter topp - ling _ wave _

Drone

107

S. Solo

break-ing on an in-land shore

ra-pid-ly crim-son-ing, crin-son-ing

Drone

Slower **rit**

p *pp*

110 **Slow**

S. Solo

as _ trees _ close like the fo-rest of an-cient fa - ble

Drone

113

S. Solo

in which _ a man _ wan - - - ders as the

115

S. Solo

sky— dark-ens, thick-ets tan gle— be - fore him and bram- bles en -

Drone

119

S. Solo

- snare — his feet. —

Bar. Solo

Now he falls to his

T.

8

legato

Ah—

B.

legato

Ah—

Drone

124

Bar. Solo

knees in-vo-king the ab-sent saints, yet the fo-rest does not end,

T.

8

B.

Drone

127

Bar. Solo

is a fo-rest of arms, of shat-tered limbs of a thou-sand cries

T.

B.

129

Bar. Solo

that are one la - ment,

T.

B.

133

Più mosso

cresc.

Bar. Solo

un heard of hea- ven, one loud com-plainte, from which he

135

rall molto

Bar. Solo

can - not, can - not wake.

CODA Pitches and rhythms only approximate until accompaniment enters

11

138 (Soprano solo) *f* 3

Beldame

Unpitched, in the distance Cursed be Hen-ri, King, brea-ker of bo-dies, slay-er of

B. *>*

God for Har-ry En-gland and Saint Geor...

141

Beldame

hearts__

1st Woman *mf*

The flo - wer of France de - spoiled.

2nd Woman *mp* Alto

All our war-ri-ors, bloo-dy-ing the

143

2nd Woman Alto

ground

3rd Woman *p*

A len-çon, Bar, Bra-bant, Fau-quemergue, Bla-mont Ne-vers, Rou-cy,

147

Beldame *f* 3

Why seek to name them,

1st Woman *p*

Grand - pré, Marle, Pou - saye

3rd Woman *dim.* 3

Vau-court, Vau-dé mont__

150

Beldame 3 3 3 3

when a thou-sand thou-sand lie__ tramp-led, Fea-tures hacked, all__some

Drone

153

Beldame

wo - man's son?

4th Woman

mf

My Jacques I begged him to tend our own

Drone

157

1st Woman

They would all go, no-bles, vil-

4th Woman

dim.

fields, but he would go

Drone

162

1st Woman

rit

Slower

lein, in stub-born pur-suit: the chi-me ra of chi-val ry!

2nd Woman Alto

No chi-val-ry was

Drone

165

2nd Woman Alto

here, but mur-der.

4th Woman

mp

dim.

And now their blood

Drone

170

4th Woman

wa - ters_ the field of_ A-gin - court, their flesh

Drone

174

Beldame

The En-glish car-ry their own dead

4th Woman

min - gles_ with the_ earth

Drone

178

Beldame

home for due ce-re-mo-ny, while our sol - diers rot_ in a massgrave.

Drone

183

1st Woman

A pri-so-ner, my_ man, and where shall we find_ the_

Drone

186

1st Woman

ran-som will sa-tis fy Har-ry's En-glish pride?

2nd Woman Alto

My hus-band is no-where to be found.

Drone

189

2nd Woman Alto

Am I wife, or wi- dow? And my un-born child, _____ is_ he with out_ sire?

Drone

192

3rd Woman

I_ am_ for - ev-er dis-hon-oured my man fled the_ field: no knight he.

Drone

196

Beldame

Ho- nour? What has A-gin-court do with ho nour? Here's bu-tche-ry and hack-work,

Drone

198

Beldame

har-vest with ar-row and axe;

1st Woman

And e-ven the land con-spired to

Drone

201

1st Woman

stum-ble our sons' feet, quag - mire with-out end...

2nd Woman Alto

the rain con-spired to blind them,

Drone

205

3rd Woman

the trees_ to con-found them,

4th Woman

most bit-ter har - vest of men, their

Drone

209

4th Woman

li-ne-age braid - ed, here_ the dead, En-glish or French meet in a fell em-brace.

Drone

213

Beldame

O ma - le- dict_ time, ma - le- dict_

Drone

216

rit. Slow

Beldame

land:_____ what earth_ swal-lows

Drone

221

Beldame

once_____ earth shall swal - - -

Drone

224

Beldame

low_____ a - gain_____

Drone

♩ = 58

228

SOPRANO

Sing 3 times

Ah

Sing until men finish

Ah

Mezzo-soprano

Ah

ALTO

Ah

♩ = 64

228 b

*Start singing as soon as
SSA rhythm established
in first two bars of this page.*

B.

And the wa - ters of the Somme,

234

T.

the marsh - lands of the Somme

B.

the marsh - lands of the Somme

240

T.

run crim - - - -

B.

run crim - - - -

243

T.

son with the blood of ge - ne - ra - tions to come.

B.

son with the blood of ge - ne - ra - tions to come.