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A Song of the Road

for SATB chorus, trumpet,
and piano four hands

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Jonathan Santore

A Note on the Text

Robert Louis Stevenson's poem "A Song of the Road" was published in his collection *Underwoods* in 1887. In an earlier publication, his *Edinburgh Picturesque Notes* (1878), Stevenson tells the story behind this poem. Please note that a *gauger* or *officer of excise* is a tax assessor.

"Below, over a stream, the road passes Bow Bridge, now a dairy-farm, but once a distillery of whisky. It chanced, some time in the past century, that the distiller was on terms of good-fellowship with the visiting officer of excise. The latter was of an easy, friendly disposition, and a master of convivial arts. Now and again, he had to walk out of Edinburgh to measure the distiller's stock; and although it was agreeable to find his business lead him in a friend's direction, it was unfortunate that the friend should be a loser by his visits. Accordingly, when he got about the level of Fairmilehead, the gauger would take his flute, without which he never travelled, from his pocket, fit it together, and set manfully to playing, as if for his own delectation and inspired by the beauty of the scene. His favourite air, it seems, was 'Over the hills and far away.' At the first note, the distiller pricked his ears. A flute at Fairmilehead? and playing 'Over the hills and far away?' This must be his friendly enemy, the gauger. Instantly horses were harnessed, and sundry barrels of whisky were got upon a cart, driven at a gallop round Hill End, and buried in the mossy glen behind Kirk Yetton. In the same breath, you may be sure, a fat fowl was put to the fire, and the whitest napery prepared for the back parlour. A little after, the gauger, having had his fill of music for the moment, came strolling down with the most innocent air imaginable, and found the good people at Bow Bridge taken entirely unawares by his arrival, but none the less glad to see him. The distiller's liquor and the gauger's flute would combine to speed the moments of digestion; and when both were somewhat mellow, they would wind up the evening with 'Over the hills and far away' to an accompaniment of knowing glances. And at least, there is a smuggling story, with original and half-idyllic features."

-- RLS

Commissioned for the Manchester Choral Society (NH) in honor of Myfanwy Morgan

A Song of the Road

Jonathan Santore

Distantly (♩ = 58)

Soprano Alto

1) *p*

The gau - er walked with wil - ling foot, And —

Tenor Bass

1) *p*

Trumpet

2)

Distantly (♩ = 58)

Primo

pp

Piano

Distantly (♩ = 58)

Secondo

pp

Ped. col L.H.

- 1) When only one note (instead of two) appears on one of the vocal staves, it should be sung in unison by both parts.
- 2) Parts for Bb and C trumpet are included with the score.

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S
A
T
B

aye the gaug - er played the flute; And what should Mas - ter Gaug - er

P

S

8

S
A
T
B

play But — O - ver the hills and far a - way?

Jauntily (♩ = 88) (Tempo II)

8

Tpt.

non legato sempre

mp

P

S

Jauntily (♩ = 88) (Tempo II)

Jauntily (♩ = 88) (Tempo II)

(Ped.)

81
S
A
one and all, or high or low, _____ Will lead you where you wish to go; _____
T
B

51 non legato
Tpt. *mf*

51 *mf*
P

51 *mp* *mf* sub. *mp*
S
Ped. col L.H. Ped. col L.H.

54
S
A And one and all go night and day
T
B *cresc.* *cresc.*

54
Tpt.

54 *f*
P

54 *mf*
S
Ped. col L.H.

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57 *f* *ff* S div.

S
A

O - ver the hills and far a - way!

f *ff* B div.

T
B

57 *ff*

Tpt.

57 *ff*

P

57 *ff*

S

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3/25/06
Plymouth, NH