

Hyperborea

For voice and electronics

Charlie Lockwood

I: "Here are the hinges on which the world turns..."

II: "I love to sail forbidden seas..."

III: "We hoisted our topsail..."

IV: "A Hyperborean land..."

V: "Wintered in the ice..."

VI: "...and here are the limits of the circuits of the stars"

VII: Midnight Sun

VIII: "When we find this path..."

IX: Erebus and Terror

X: "Lat. 69°37'42" Long. 98°41'"

XI: The Road to the Assembly of the Hyperboreans

Notes for Performance

Performers are encouraged to treat the given text as a 'guideline' - improvisations, alterations, or reworkings are welcomed.

The first sung passage takes place alongside a pitched and rhythmic recorded instrumental part. The melody and words are given below - again, this should be taken as a guide rather than as prescriptive.

The second and third sung passages can be pitched more freely, and sung at a looser tempo.

H Y P E R B O R E A

(00:11)

Even in our day, science suspects beyond the Polar seas, at the very circle of the Arctic Pole, the existence of a sea which never freezes and a continent which is ever green.

(00:24)

Here are the hinges on which the world turns, and here are the limits of the circuits of the stars.

(02:03)

With other men, perhaps, such things would not have been inducements; but as for me, I am tormented with an everlasting itch for things remote.

(02:14)

I love to sail forbidden seas.

(02:58)

(Sung)

♩ = 210 Downbeat 02:58

On the nine-teenth day of May my boys, We hoist-ed our top-sail, Cry-ing

5 Heav'n a-bove pro-tect-us With a sweet and a pleas-ant gale. We nev-er was down-

10 heart-ed Nor let our cour-age fail, As we bore a-way to Green-land for to

15 sail a-round the Pole- For to sail a-round the Pole.

(05:01)

If the Greeks knew, in the days of Homer, of a Hyperborean land, a blessed land beyond the reach of Boreas, the god of winter and of the hurricane, an ideal region where nights were short and days long, and beyond that land a country where the sun never set and the palm grew freely — if they knew of all this, who then told them of it?

(07:12)

28th of May, 1847. Her Majesty's ships Erebus and Terror wintered in the ice at Beechey Island, after having ascended Wellington Channel and returned by the west side of Cornwallis Island. Sir John Franklin commanding the expedition. All well.

(07:59)

A party consisting of two officers and six men left the ships on Monday 24th May 1847.

(08:13)

(Sung)

*And when we came upon those islands
Where the bitter winds did blow
We tacked about all in the north
All among the frost and snow.
Our finger-tops were frozen off
And likewise our toenails
As we crawled out on the deck, brave boys,
Looking out for open seas
Looking out for the open sea.*

(09:15)

Beyond the north wind there dwells a happy race of people called the Hyperboreans, who live to extreme old age and are famous for legendary marvels. Here are the hinges on which the world turns, and here are the limits of the circuits of the stars, with six months' daylight and a single day of the sun in retirement.

(09:47)

For these people the sun rises only once in the year, at midsummer, and sets once, at midwinter.

(11:07)

Death comes to them only when, owing to satiety of life, after holding a feast and anointing their old age with luxury, they leap from a certain rock into the sea. This mode of burial is most blissful.

(11:23)

Sir John Franklin died on the 11th June 1847.

(15:02)

(Sung)

*We sailed up further north, boys
Where the mountains flowed with snow,
We tacked about all in the North,
Searching for a passage through.
And when we find this path, boys,
Westwards we shall steer.
We'll make the valleys ring, brave boys,
A-drinking of strong beer.*

(15:34)

*We'll make those lofty alehouses
In America to roar;
And when our money is all gone,
It's homewards we shall steer, boys
It's homewards we shall sail.*

(19:18)

Her Majesty's ships Erebus and Terror were deserted on the 22nd of April, five leagues north-north-west of this, having been beset since 12th of September 1846. The officers and crews consisting of 105 souls under the command of Captain F.R.M. Crozier landed here, latitude sixty-nine degrees, thirty-seven minutes of arc, forty-two seconds of arc, longitude ninety-eight degrees, forty-one minutes of arc.

(19:50)

This paper was found by Lieutenant Irving, under the cairn supposed to have been built by Sir James Ross in 1831, four miles to the northward, where it had been deposited by the late Commander Gore in June 1847. Sir James Ross' pillar has not however been found and the paper has been transferred to this position.

(21:40)

The total loss by deaths in the Expedition has been to this date 9 officers and 15 men. We start on tomorrow for Backs Fish River.

(25:24)

Pytheas also speaks of those places where land, properly speaking, no longer exists, nor sea nor air, but a mixture of these things, in which it is said that earth and water and all things are in suspension as if this was a link between all these elements, on which one can neither walk nor sail. Neither by ship nor on foot would you find the road to the assembly of the Hyperboreans. Yet, beyond the North, beyond the ice, beyond death... we know the road.