

Britten's War Requiem – a musical/textual overview
(Wilfred Owen texts in bold)

I. REQUIEM AETERNAM (Eternal rest)

Beginning – Choir – Requiem aeternam

Reh. 3 – children – Te decet hymnus (Thou shalt have praise)

7 – choir – Requiem aeternam (Eternal rest)

9 – T – Anthem for Doomed Youth (“What passing bells”)

16 – choir – Kyrie eleison (Lord have mercy)

II. Dies Irae (Day of Wrath)

17 – choir – Dies irae (Day of wrath)

24 – B – Bugles sang

28 – S – Liber scriptus (The written book)

30 Chamber Choir – Quid sum miser (What shall I, a wretch))

31- S & chamber choir – Rex tremendae (King of awful majesty) & Salva me fons pietatis (Save me, fount of pity)

33 – TB – The Next War (“Out there, we’ve walk’d”)

40 – women – Recordare (Remember, gentle Jesus)

45 – men – Confutatis maledictis (When the damned are cast away)

49 – B – Sonnet on Seeing a Piece of Our Heavy Artillery Brought into Action (“Be slowly lifted up”)

52 – choir – Dies irae (Day of wrath)

54 – choir – Lacrimosa (Tearful)

56 – T & choir – Futility (“Move him into the sun”) & Lacrimosa (Tearful)

60 – choir – Pie Jesu (Blessed Jesus)

III. Offertorium (Offertory)

Beginning – children – Domine Jesu Christe (Lord Jesus Christ)

63 – choir – Sed signifer sanctus Michael (But the holy standard-bearer Michael)

64 – choir – Quam olim Abrahae promisisti (As was promised to Abraham)

69 – TB – Parable of the Old Men and the Young (“So Abram rose”)

77 – TB & children - . . . half the seed of Europe & Hostias et preces (Sacrifice and prayer)

79 – choir – Quam olim Abrahae (As was promised to Abraham)

IV. Sanctus (Holy)

Beginning – S – Sanctus (Holy)

85 – choir – Pleni sunt coeli (Heaven and earth are full of thy glory)

87 – choir – Hosanna (Osanna)

89 – S & choir – Benedictus (Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord)

92 – choir – Hosanna (Osanna)

93 – B – The End (“After the blast of lightning”)

V. Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)

Beginning – T & choir – At a Calvary Near the Ancre (“One ever hangs where shelled roads part”) & Agnus dei (Lamb of God)

100 – T & choir – Dona nobis pacem (Lamb of God)[not normally found in the Requiem text]

VI. Libera me (Free me)

Beginning – choir – Libera me (free me)

105 – choir – Dum veneris judicare (when shall come to judge)

108 – S & choir – Tremens factus sum ego (I am seized with fear) & dum discussio venerit (until the trial shall be)

110 – choir – Libera me (Free me)

113 – choir & S – Dies irae (Day of wrath)

116 – choir & S – Libera me (Free me)

118 – TB – Strange Meeting (“It seemed that out of battle I escaped”)

128 – children – In Paradisum (Into Paradise)

131 – children & choir & S, plus TB – In Paradisum (Into Paradise), plus Let us sleep now

137 – choir – Requiescant in pace (May they rest in peace)