

## A Winter's Journey

for tenor, clarinet, viola, harp and two percussionists

- I. Prologue
- II. "...by a hair's breadth..."
- III. Interlude I
- IV. "My last hope is gone..."
- V. Interlude II
- VI. Epilogue

18 minutes

Brooke Joyce (1996)

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Winner, National Federation of Music Clubs Composition Competition, 1997

### Program Note:

Inspector Fitzgerald of the Royal Canadian North West Mounted Police was the leader of the "lost patrol" of December, 1910. Fitzgerald and three men left Fort McPherson, above the Arctic Circle in Canada's Northwest Territories, carrying mail and dispatches south to Dawson City in the Yukon Territory. Through a series of setbacks and poor judgments, the patrol lost their way looking for a divide to take them over a mountain pass; the wasted time forced the patrol to turn back, fearing their supplies would run out. They came within fifty miles of Fort McPherson, but the bitter cold and lack of supplies proved to be fatal. Their bodies were found March 22, 1911, by Corporal W.J.D. Dempster.

The text for *A Winter's Journey* originates from three original sources. The second movement is drawn from the dispatch Corporal Dempster received in March, 1911, indicating that Fitzgerald's patrol had been unsuccessful and that a rescue mission would be required. The fourth movement is taken from one of the final entries in Fitzgerald's diary, written shortly before he would make the decision to return to Fort McPherson. The last movement contains the last will and testament of Inspector Fitzgerald, scribbled with a piece of charcoal on a scrap of paper found near his body.

### II.

You will leave tomorrow morning for a patrol for a patrol over the Fort Mac Pherson Trail  
To Locate the whereabouts of Inspector Fitzgerald I cannot give you any specific instructions  
You will have to be guided by circumstances and your own judgment bearing in mind that nothing is to stand in your way  
I demand that neither hardship suff'ring privation nor fear of death should move you by a hair's breadth from carrying out your duties.

### IV.

We have now only ten pounds of flour and eight pounds of bacon and some dried fish  
My last hope is gone and the only thing I can do is return.  
We have now been a week looking for a river to take us over the divide but there are dozens of rivers

and I am at a loss.

VI.

All money in dispatch bag and bank, clothes

I leave to my dearly Beloved Mother

Mrs. John Fitzgerald, Halifax

God Bless All