The Officers at Shi Hao – by Du Fu (Complicated Chinese script version)

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http://www.tsoidug.org/Literary/Shi_Hao_Ofcr_Comp.pdf
(To Simplified Chinese 到简体版: http://www.tsoidug.org/Literary/Shi_Hao_Ofcr_Simp.pdf)

(Note: this poem was written some time during the terrible An Lu Shan Rebellion of 755 - 763 C.E. when civil war wracked China.)

In the evening we stopped at Shi Hao Village; officers came at night to pressgang people.

The old man climbed the wall and fled; the old woman opened the gate and looked.

How angrily the officers shouted; how bitterly the woman wept.

We heard the woman go forth and say, "Our three sons are garrisoned at Yeh City." One son's letter has arrived: the other two sons have just died in battle.

1 Yeh City: a once great metropolis that no longer exists, in the northernmost part of the present day province of Henan, about 90 miles due north of the present Yellow River. Yeh City served as the capital for a number of states and dynasties set up in north China by originally nomadic peoples from the 300's C.E. to the 500's C.E.
存者且偷生，死者长已矣。
cun' zhe^ qie^ tou- sheng- si' zhe^ chang' yi' yi^  "The live one still hangs onto life; the dead ones are gone forever.

室中更无人，惟有乳下孙。
shi` zhong- geng- wu' ren' wei' you' ru^ xia' sun-
"There's no one else in the household, except for a grandson still at the breast.

有子孙未去，出入无完裙。
you' sun- wu^ wei` qu` chu- ru` wu' yuan' qun'
"The grandson's mother has not left yet; she hasn't got a whole dress to wear to come outside.

老妪力虽衰，请从吏夜归。
lao' yu` li` sui- shuai- qin' chong' li` ye` gui-
"Although this old lady's strength is waning, Officers, I'll come with you tonight.

急应河阳役，犹得备晨炊。
ji' ying` he' yang' yi` you' de` bei` chen' chui-
"I will answer the urgent He Yang draft, and I can still prepare the morning meal."

夜久语声绝，如闻泣幽咽。
ye` jiu^ yu^ sheng- jue` ru` wen' qi` you- yan-
The night was long; we heard no more words, just what seemed like quiet sobbing.

天明登前途，独与老翁别。
tian- ming' deng- qian' tu` du` yu^ lao' weng- bie'
In the morning when we left for the road, we parted with only the old man.