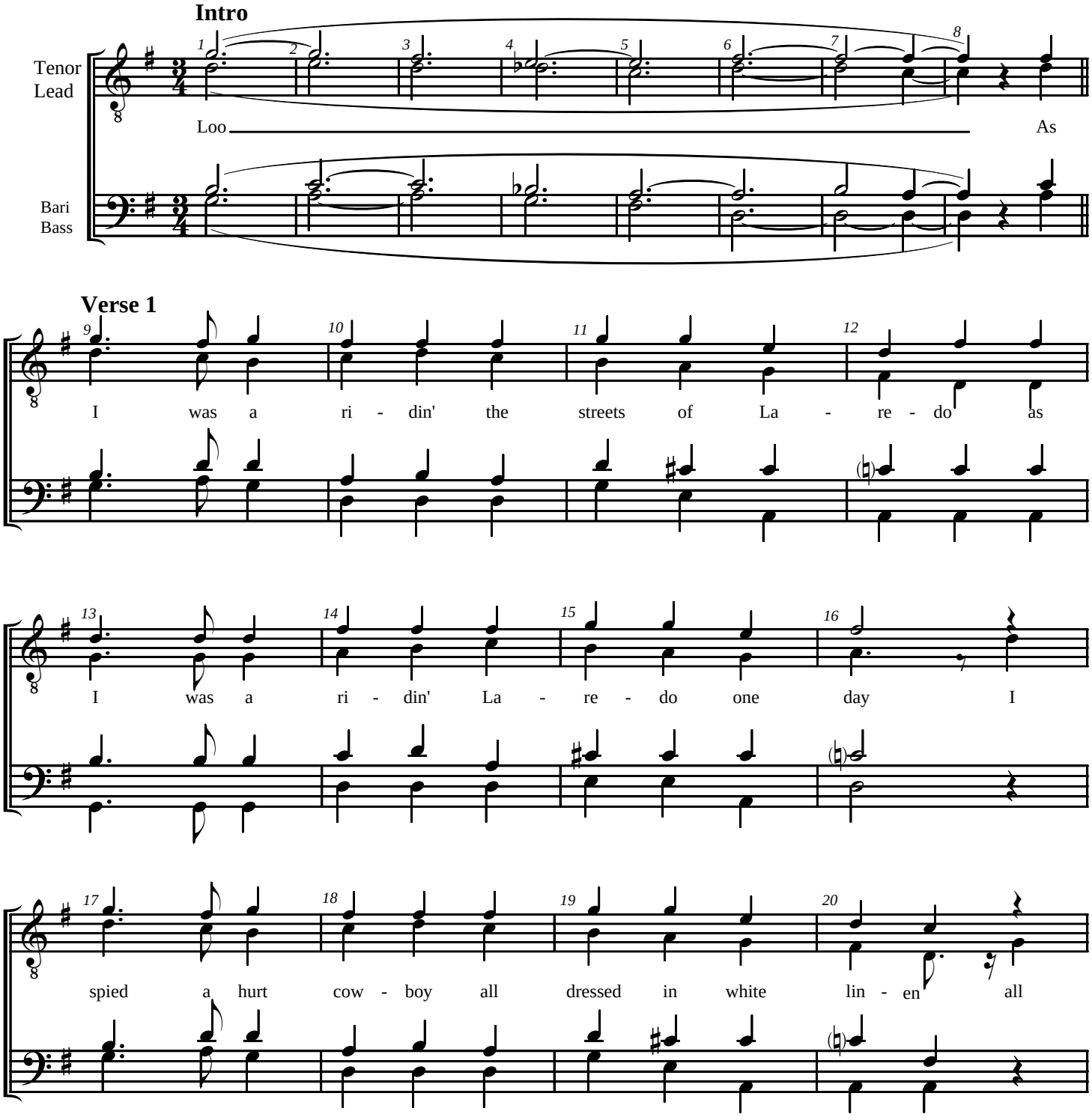
STREETS OF LAREDO

Words: TRADITIONAL (Author Unknown)

Music: IRISH FUNERAL MARCH (1711)
Arrangement: DEKOWSKI / REDMON



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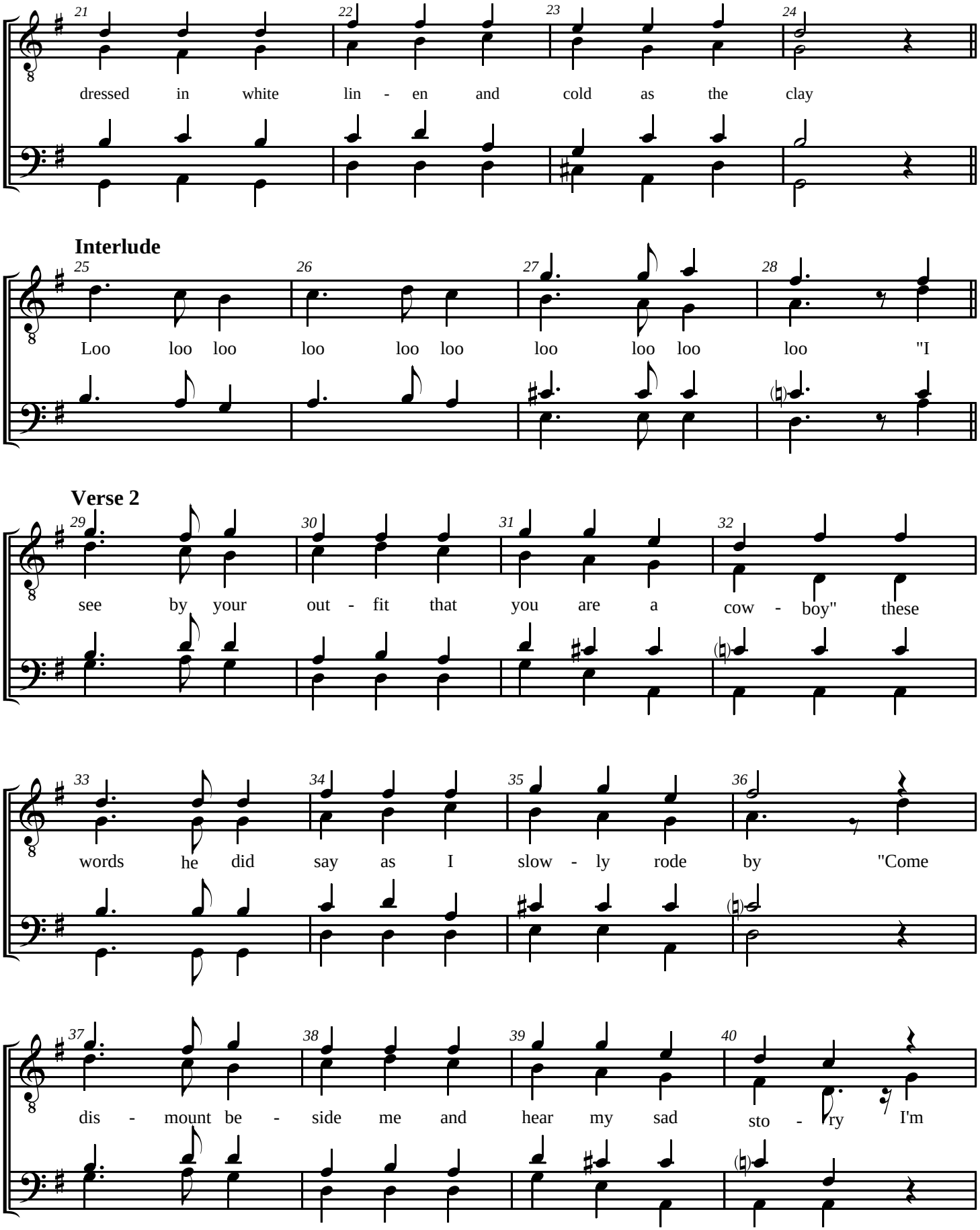
21 22 23 24
dressed in white lin - en and cold as the clay
Interlude
25 26 27 28
Loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo loo "I
Verse 2
29 30 31 32
see by your out - fit that you are a cow - boy" these
33 34 35 36
words he did say as I slow - ly rode by "Come
37 38 39 40
dis - mount be - side me and hear my sad sto - ry I'm

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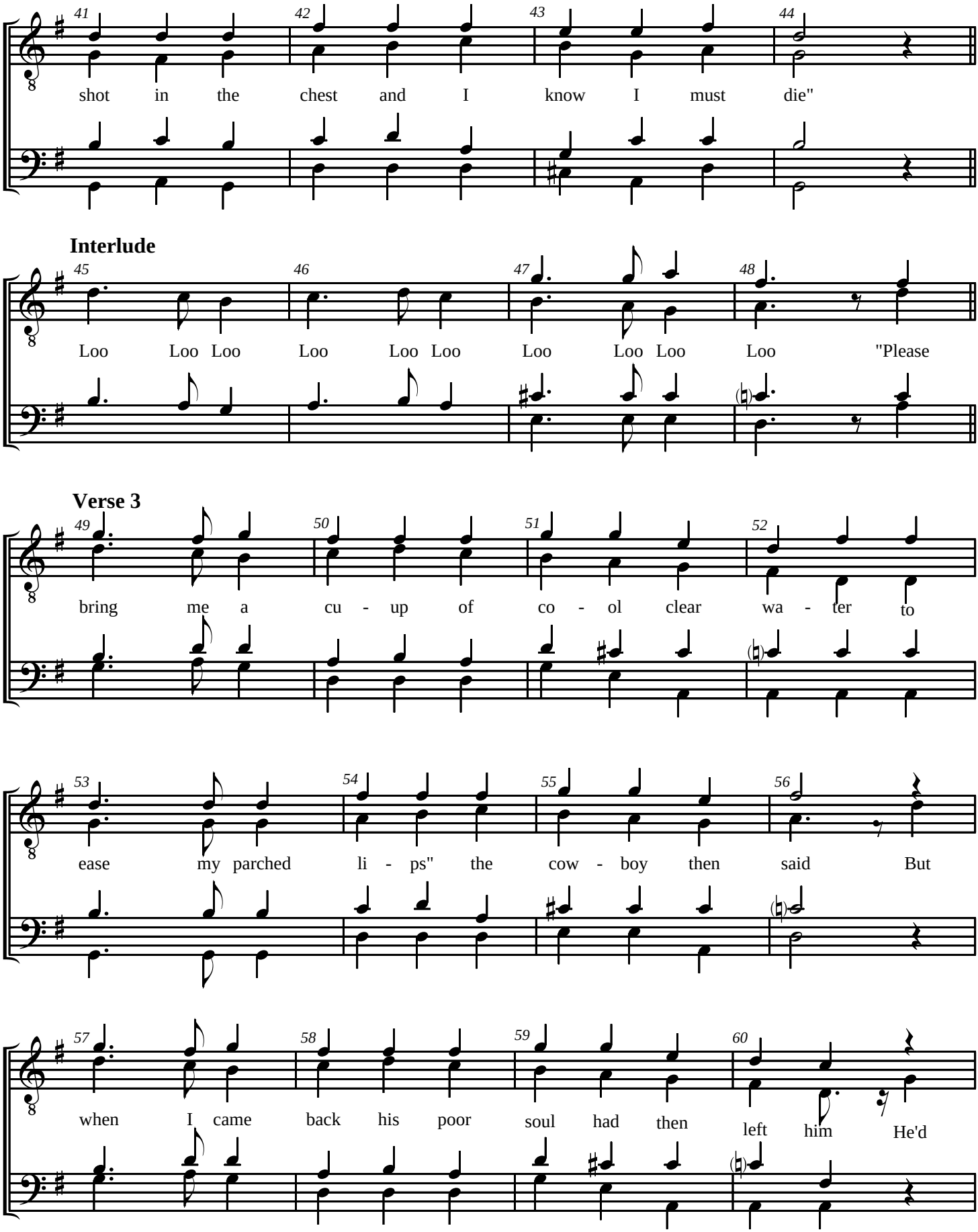
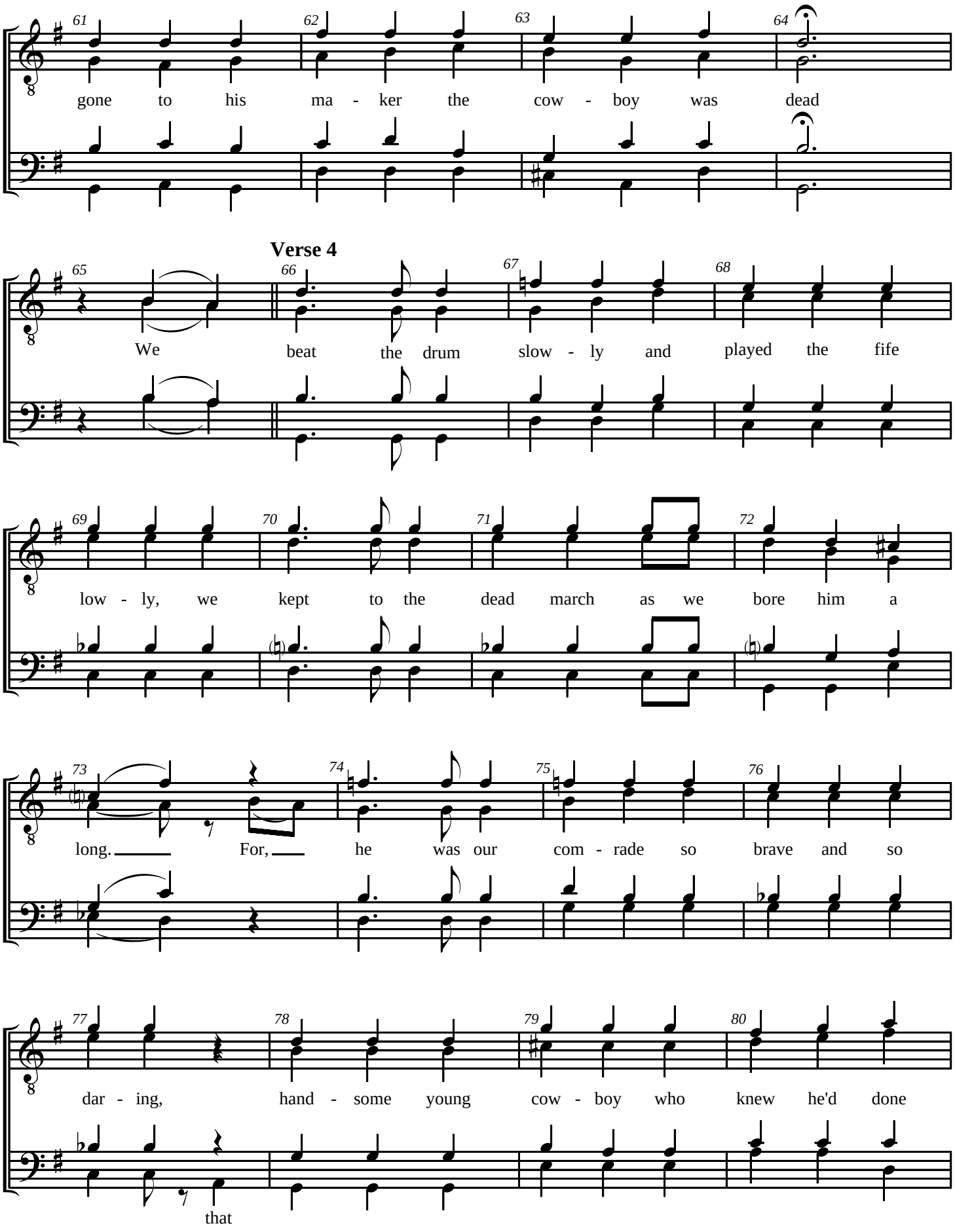
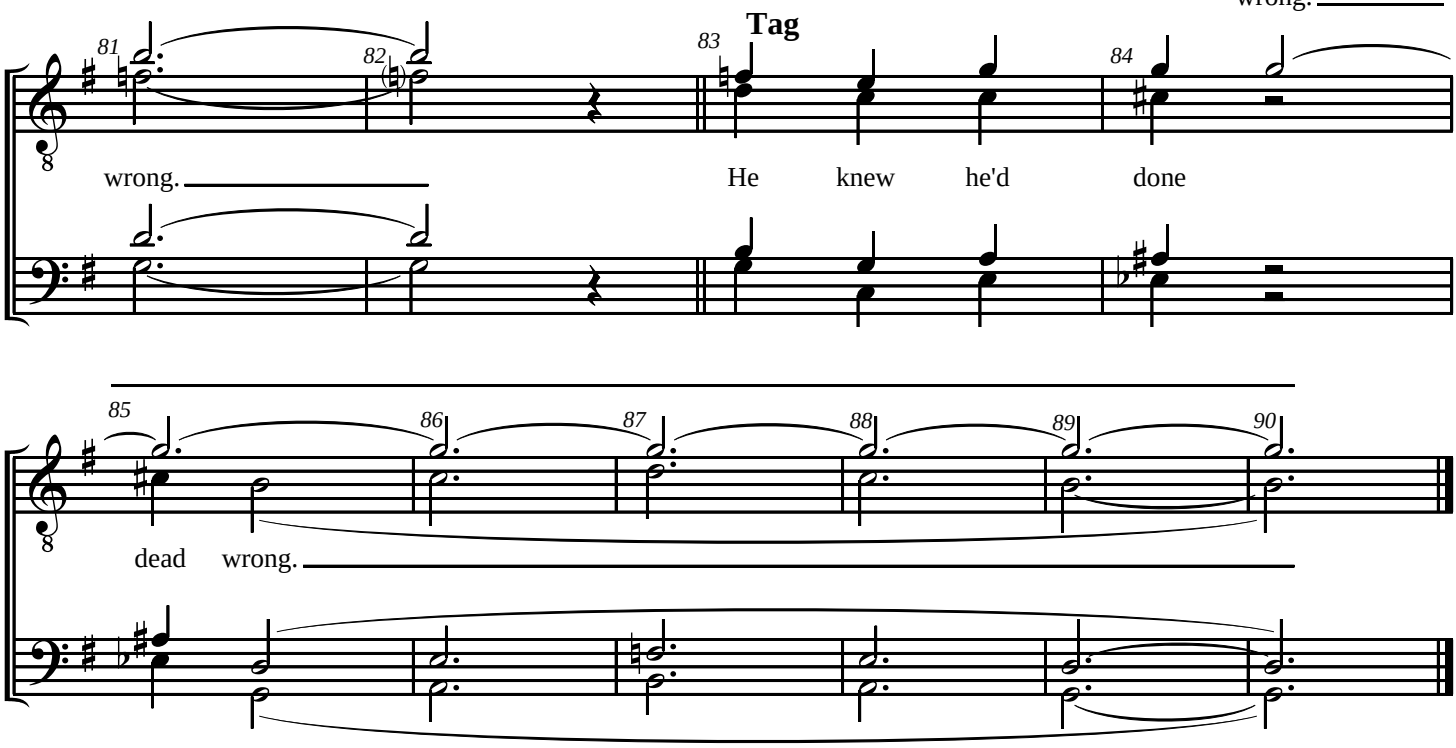

41
42
43
44
shot in the chest and I know I must die"
Interlude
45
46
47
48
Loo Loo Loo Loo Loo Loo Loo Loo Loo Loo "Please
Verse 3
49
50
51
52
bring me a cu - up of co - ol clear wa - ter to
53
54
55
56
ease my parched li - ps" the cow - boy then said But
57
58
59
60
when I came back his poor soul had then left him He'd


61
62
63
64
gone to his ma - ker the cow - boy was dead
Verse 4
65
66
67
68
We beat the drum slow - ly and played the fife
69
70
71
72
low - ly, we kept to the dead march as we bore him a
73
74
75
76
long. For, he was our com - rade so brave and so
77
78
79
80
dar - ing, hand - some young cow - boy who knew he'd done
that



Although the music to this song is believed to be an Irish Funeral march dating to the year 1711, the first lyrics known using the music is thought to be an Irish Ballad known as *The Unfortunate Rake*. The ballad inspired many variants over the years including this Traditional Western song whose writer is unknown. The song is also known as *The Cowboy's Lament*.

In searching for the traditional song, 4 or 5 versions were found in as many song books of the American West. It is likely that the writer was an Irish immigrant who knew the song from his youth. In the original version, it is likely that the narrator was "walkin'" the Streets of Laredo rather than riding. The lyric "come dismount beside me" is one of many variations and it implies "riding". The song has 7 verses but only 4 are used here as they tell the entire story. Some poetic license has been taken to provide clarity such as substituting the word "hurt" instead of "poor" to avoid confusion among listeners.

To provide variety and emphasis, the harmony parts are encouraged to "OO" whenever the narrator is quoting the dying cowboy. (measures 28-32, 36-44, 48-54)

In this arrangement the first three verses are musically identical. The music for the fourth verse was written by Bill Redmon to provide a more somber mood for the funeral procession. The song was arranged for **Calliope** quartet for a 1993 Dundalk Chapter show with a western theme. As there were no known Barbershop Society quartet arrangements, the song was arranged out of necessity.

Have fun with this very old song. It's a beauty or it wouldn't have survived for 300 years.

Dan Dekowski
February, 2007