

STREETS OF LAREDO

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Words: TRADITIONAL (Author Unknown)

Music: IRISH FUNERAL MARCH (1711)

Arrangement: DEKOWSKI / REDMON

Intro

Musical notation for the Intro section, featuring Tenor Lead and Bari Bass staves. The Tenor Lead staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The Bari Bass staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The music consists of a series of chords and melodic lines, with measures numbered 1 through 8. The lyrics 'Loo' and 'As' are written below the Tenor Lead staff.

Verse 1

Musical notation for Verse 1, measures 9-12. The Tenor Lead staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The Bari Bass staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The lyrics are: I was a ri - din' the streets of La - re - do' as

Musical notation for Verse 1, measures 13-16. The Tenor Lead staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The Bari Bass staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The lyrics are: I was a ri - din' La - re - do one day I

Musical notation for Verse 1, measures 17-20. The Tenor Lead staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The Bari Bass staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The lyrics are: spied a hurt cow - boy all dressed in white lin - en all

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 "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"

Musical notation for measures 41-44, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

Interlude

45 46 47 48

Loo Loo Loo Loo Loo Loo Loo Loo "Please

Musical notation for measures 45-48, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

Verse 3

49 50 51 52

bring me a cu - up of co - ol clear wa - ter to

Musical notation for measures 49-52, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

53 54 55 56

ease my parched li - ps" the cow - boy then said But

Musical notation for measures 53-56, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

57 58 59 60

when I came back his poor soul had then left him He'd

Musical notation for measures 57-60, including vocal line and piano accompaniment.

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

wrong. _____

81 82 83 **Tag** 84

He knew he'd done

85 86 87 88 89 90

dead wrong. _____

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