

# Down by the Riverside

for TTB Voices with Piano\*

Traditional Spiritual  
Arranged by Lon Beery and  
Pamela Perc Lee

Contemporary Gospel Style (♩ = 92)

**Tenor 1** *mf*  
Gon-na

**Tenor 2**

**Bass**

**Piano** *f*

5

lay down my sword and shield, — Down by the riv - er - side, —  
join hands, with ev - 'ry one, —

Down by the riv - er - side, —

Down by the riv - er - side, —

*mf*

\* Also available for Three-part Mixed Voices (Opt. Bar.) (BL676).

Down by the riv - er - side, Down by the ri - ver - side, - Gon-na lay down my  
Gon-na join hands with

Down by the riv - er - side, Down by the ri - ver - side, -

Down by the riv - er - side, Down by the ri - ver - side, -

sword and shield, Down by the riv - er - side, - And stu-dy \_\_\_\_\_ war no  
ev - ry one,

Down by the riv - er - side, - And stu-dy \_\_\_\_\_ war no

Down by the riv - er - side, - And stu-dy \_\_\_\_\_ war no

19

more. \_\_\_\_\_ Stu-dy\_\_ war no more, \_\_

more, no more. \_\_\_\_\_ Stu-dy\_\_ war no more, \_\_

Melody

more, no more. \_\_\_\_\_ I ain't gon-na stu-dy\_\_ war no more, \_\_ I ain't gon-na

The musical score for measures 19-22 features three vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The first two staves are in treble clef, and the third is in bass clef. The piano accompaniment consists of a bass line in the left hand and chords in the right hand. The lyrics are: 'more. \_\_\_\_\_ Stu-dy\_\_ war no more, \_\_', 'more, no more. \_\_\_\_\_ Stu-dy\_\_ war no more, \_\_', 'more, no more. \_\_\_\_\_ I ain't gon-na stu-dy\_\_ war no more, \_\_ I ain't gon-na'. A 'Melody' label is placed above the third vocal staff.

23

stu-dy war no more. \_\_\_\_\_ Stu-dy\_\_ war no more. \_\_\_\_\_

stu-dy war no more. \_\_\_\_\_ Stu-dy\_\_ war no more. \_\_\_\_\_

stu-dy war no more. \_\_\_\_\_ I ain't gon-na stu-dy\_\_ war no more. \_\_\_\_\_

The musical score for measures 23-26 features three vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The first two staves are in treble clef, and the third is in bass clef. The piano accompaniment consists of a bass line in the left hand and chords in the right hand. The lyrics are: 'stu-dy war no more. \_\_\_\_\_ Stu-dy\_\_ war no more. \_\_\_\_\_', 'stu-dy war no more. \_\_\_\_\_ Stu-dy\_\_ war no more. \_\_\_\_\_', 'stu-dy war no more. \_\_\_\_\_ I ain't gon-na stu-dy\_\_ war no more. \_\_\_\_\_'.

studies  
I ain't gon-na

stu - dy war no more, stu - dy war no more. stu - dy war no more, stu - dy war no more. I ain't gon-na stu - dy war no more, I ain't gon-na stu - dy war no more.

This block contains the musical score for measures 28 through 31. It features four staves: two vocal staves (Soprano and Alto) and two piano staves (Right and Left Hand). The lyrics are: "studies I ain't gon-na stu - dy war no more, stu - dy war no more. stu - dy war no more, stu - dy war no more. I ain't gon-na stu - dy war no more, I ain't gon-na stu - dy war no more." The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand.

studies  
I ain't gon-na

stu - dy war no war no more, stu - dy war no war no more, I ain't gon-na stu - dy war no more.

This block contains the musical score for measures 32 through 35. It features four staves: two vocal staves (Soprano and Alto) and two piano staves (Right and Left Hand). The lyrics are: "studies I ain't gon-na stu - dy war no war no more, stu - dy war no war no more, I ain't gon-na stu - dy war no more." The piano accompaniment continues with chords in the right hand and a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand.

36 | 1. | 2. | *f* Gon-na Gon-na

1. 2. *f*

40 *f* ring out a song of joy, — Down by the riv-er - side, —  
*f* Down by the riv-er - side, —  
*f* Down by the riv-er - side, —

*f* *f* *f*

44

Down by the riv-er - side, - Down by the ri-ver - side, Gon-na

Down by the riv-er - side, - Down by the ri-ver - side, -

Down by the riv-er - side, - Down by the ri-ver - side, -

48

ring out a song of joy, - Down by the riv-er - side, - And

Down by the riv-er - side, - And

Down by the riv-er - side, - And

52

stu - dy war no more. stu - dy war no more, no more. I ain't gon-na

56

Stu-dy war no more, stu-dy war no more. stu-dy war no more, I ain't gon-na stu-dy war no more. I ain't gon-na

60

Stu-dy war no more. Stu-dy war no more,  
Stu-dy war no more. Stu-dy war no more,  
stu-dy war no more. I ain't gon-na stu-dy war no more,

65

stu-dy war no more. Stu-dy  
stu-dy war no more. Stu-dy  
I ain't gon-na stu-dy war no more. I ain't gon-na stu-dy



69

1. 2.

*f*

war no more, no more. — more. Gon-na

war no more, no more. — more.

war no more, no more. — I ain't gon-na more.

74

*f*

lay down my sword and shield, Down by the riv - er - side, \_

*f*

Down by the riv - er - side, \_

*f*

Down by the riv - er - side, \_

## Performance Notes

*Down by the Riverside* is one of the most beloved of all African-American spirituals. Spirituals are among the most important American folk songs. Written by slaves prior to the Civil War, these songs are often full of faith and hope in the midst of some of life's most difficult circumstances. Many spirituals have more than one meaning. Behind some of the religious texts are often coded messages meant to communicate with other slaves about escaping to freedom. Because of the recurring phrase, "I ain't going to study war no more," the spiritual has become especially popular during times of war, especially among those politically opposed to the current war.

It is not absolutely clear what is meant by going "down by the riverside." Certainly Riverside might be a place where slaves might have gathered for a baptism following a conversion. However, it may be that the author was thinking more figuratively, possibly referring to death for the believer looks forward to "crossing the river" to go to Heaven. Or, it might be referring to the time in the future where many look forward to a time of universal peace, as when the Biblical writers wrote, "They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore." (Isaiah 2:4, Micah 4:3 NIV). Whatever the exact meaning of the song, it is hopeful, joyful, and energetic. That joy and energy should come across to the audience through each choir member's joyful facial expression. As this arrangement is in a gospel style, feel free to sway back-and-forth using a simple step touch with the feet and adding some hand claps on beats two and four, perhaps beginning at the key change in m. 40. Have fun!

## About the Arranger

Lon Beery is a vocal music teacher at Spry Middle School in Webster, New York. Prior to returning to public school teaching, Dr. Beery taught at Syracuse University. He also taught Choral Arranging at the Eastman School of Music. Beery has served as the Eastern Division ACDA Jr. High/Middle School R & S Chair. He is a frequent guest conductor and clinician working with adolescent voices. His composition, *I Believe* was performed by the U.S. Army Chorus at President Reagan's Interment Service and also used in a PBS documentary. He has also written several articles for the Choral Journal and the Music Educators Journal.