

Tom Bowling

The Sailor's Epitaph

By Charles Dibdin (1740-1814)
Arranged in four parts for unaccompanied male voices
by Rilla Paterson - 2026

Also available as SATB,
with or without piano accompaniment

Tom Bowling

The Sailor's Epitaph

Charles Dibdin (1740-1814)
Arr: Rilla Paterson for TTBB April 2026
A cappella.

*The song, also known as "The Sailor's Epitaph",
was written to commemorate the death
of the composer's older brother, Thomas Dibdin,
a captain of a ship in the East India trade,
who died at sea.*

*The tune for Tom Bowling is the fourth movement
from the Fantasia on British Sea Songs, a medley arranged
by Sir Henry Wood in 1905 to mark the centenary
of the Battle of Trafalgar.*

*It has for many years been an indispensable
item at the BBC's Last Night of the Proms concert.*

*An earlier arrangement by Rilla Paterson for SATB and piano was written in July 2023,
recorded by Bethany Partridge (soprano) and Josh Cooter (tenor), and published on YouTube.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TK0d6NzFfIU>

*The piece received its first performance by the Stanmore Choral Society
at St John's Church, Stanmore, on 29th June 2024.*

This earlier arrangement was then adapted for unaccompanied male voices.

The lyrics in this arrangement differ occasionally from the original.

<https://rillapaterson.com>

Tom Bowling

The Sailor's Epitaph Four part song for male voices

Charles Dibdin arr. Rilla Paterson 2026

♩=75 **mp** **A**

Tenor 1
1. Here lies the hulk of poor Tom Bow ling, the dar - ling of our crew, No more he'll hear the

Tenor 2
1. Here lies the hulk of poor Tom Bow - ling, dar - ling of our crew, No more he'll hear the

Baritone
1. Here lies poor Tom Bow - ling, dar - ling of our crew, No more he'll hear the
(Notes in brackets are optional)

Bass
1. Dar - ling of our crew,

♩=75 **mp** **A**
(For rehearsal only)

Piano

6 **p** **mf**

T.
temp- est howl ing, for death has broach'd him to; His form was of the man - liest beau - ty, his

T.
temp- est howl ing; death has broach'd him to; His form was of the man - liest beau - ty, his

Bar.
how - ling; death has broached him to; His form was of the man - liest beau - ty, his

B.
death has broached him to; His form was of the man - liest beau - ty, his

p **mf**

Pno.

11

T. *mp* **B**
heart was kind_ and_ soft, Faith - ful be-low, Tom did his du - ty, And

T. *mp*
heart was kind_ and_ soft, Faith - ful be-low, Tom did his du - ty, And

Bar. *mp*
heart kind and soft, Faith - ful be-low, Tom did his du - ty;

B. *mp*
heart kind and soft,

Pno. *mp* **B**

15

T. *mp*
now he's gone a - loft, and now he's gone a - loft.

T. *mp*
now he's gone a - loft, and now he's gone a - loft.

Bar. *mp*
now he's gone a - loft, and now he's gone a - loft.

B. *mp*
now he's gone a - loft, and now he's gone a - loft.

Pno. *mp*

19 *mf* C

T. 2. Ah his vir - tues were so rare, His friends were ma - ny,

T. 2. Tom nev - er from his word de part - ed, his vir - tues so rare His friends were ma - ny

Bar. 2. Tom nev - er from his word de - part - ed, his vir - tues were so rare, His friends were ma - ny,

B. 2. Ah, so rare;

Pno. *mf*

24 *p* *f*

T. and true - heart - ed, his poll kind and fair. And then he'd sing so blithe and jol - ly, Ah!

T. and true heart - ed, his poll was kind and fair. And then he'd sing so blithe and jol - ly, Ah!

Bar. and true - heart - ed, Ah! kind and fair. And then he'd sing blithe and jol - ly,

B. his poll kind and fair. And then he'd sing, blithe and jol - ly

Pno. *p* *f*

29

D

sub *p*

T. Ma - ny's the time and oft, But mirth is turned to mel - an - cho - ly, For

T. Ma-ny's the time and oft, But mirth is turned to mel - an - cho - ly, For

Bar. Ma-ny's the time and oft, But mirth is turn'd to mel - an - cho - ly, For

B. Ma-ny's the time and oft. For

p

Pno.

sub *p*

33

T. Tom is gone a - loft, For Tom is gone a - loft.

T. Tom is gone a - loft, For Tom is gone a - loft

Bar. Tom is gone a - loft, For Tom is gone a - loft.

B. Tom is gone a - loft, For Tom is gone a - loft.

Pno.

37 *mf* E

T. 3. Yet shall poor Tom find pleas - ant weath - er, when He who all com - mands shall give, to call life's

T. 3. Yet shall poor Tom find pleas - ant wea ther, when He who all com - mands shall give, to call life's

Bar. 3. Yet shall poor Tom find pleas - ant wea - ther, when He who all com - mands shall give, to call life's

B. 3. Yet shall poor Tom find pleas - ant wea - ther, when He com - mands shall give to

Pno. *mf*

42 *ff*

T. crew to - geth - er the word to pipe all hands: Thus death, who kings and tars dis - patch es, in vain Tom's life has.

T. crew to - geth - er the word to pipe all hands: Thus death, who kings and tars dis - patch - es, in vain Tom's life has.

Bar. crew to - geth - er the word to pipe all hands: Thus death, who kings and tars dis - patch es, in vain Tom's life has.

B. all the word to pipe all hands: Thus death, yea, death in vain Tom's life has

Pno. *ff*

48 **F** *mp espress.*

T. doff'd, For though his bo - dy's un - der hatch es, his soul has gone a -

T. doff'd, For though his bo - dy's un - der hatch - es, his soul has gone a -

Bar. doff'd, For though his bo - dy's un - der hatch - es, his soul has gone a -

B. doff'd, For though his bo - dy's un - der hatch - es, his soul has gone a -

F *mp espress.*

Pno.

52 *p*

T. loft, his soul has gone a - loft.

T. loft, his soul has gone a - loft.

Bar. loft, his soul has gone a - loft.

B. loft, his soul has gone a - loft.

p

Pno.