The Manchester Lyra Viol Book

27 Solos in Violl Waye Tuning

(ffeff)

English tablature and standard notation for bass viol

Dick Yates

January 2021

> *"He who shall Neglect, or be Ignorant in the Way of the Right Playing such Compositions … must needs be counted Deficient in Judgment, and Skill; and not fit to be owned, as a Master, or Teacher."*
>
> —Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument*, 1676

A century ago Dr. Henry Watson of Manchester, an enthusiast of old music, purchased from an amateur musician of Kew a manuscript even then nearly three hundred years old. It contained more than two hundred solos for the lyra-viol meticulously organized and transcribed by an unknown hand. History has preserved neither the details of the transaction nor the provenance of the manuscript, but it provides us with both excellent music and a window into a time dominated by an instrument that was soon nearly forgotten until its recent resurrection.

Watson himself wrote:

> "*This much can be said of the viol that cannot be said of any one who plays the small tune of historian to it: that it lived some hundreds of years ago, a happy, generous, cheery, domesticated life; that it died lamented; and that it left behind it not only a pleasant memory, but an offspring and an offshoot that have enriched the world of music beyond all estimation.*"

The manuscript volume that Dr. Watson purchased was left, after his death in 1911, to the City of Manchester, England, where it resides today. In 1978 Paul Furnas completed a transcription and analysis of it while he was a graduate student at Stanford University, and the facsimile, with his introduction, is available from Peacock Press. Excerpts are available on the Viola da Gamba Society of America website. His investigation of ornamentation is especially useful for anyone approaching this music. The collection draws on the compositions of the brighter lights of the time—John Jenkins, William Lawes, Alfonso Ferrabosco—as well as those more obscure. At least one composer is known to history solely through the six pieces in this manuscript. The pieces are organized in groups, progressively, by tuning—22 different systems in all.

The present collection includes the 27 pieces that are in "Violl Waye" tuning, the standard tuning of the viol with the strings all tuned in fourths except for a major third between the third and fourth strings. Each piece is presented in two staves: one in the original tablature and one in a standard notation transcription. This format may thus provide an easy introduction to tablature and lyra viol music for those viol players not yet familiar with it. A table of ornaments is included on the last page, although few are used in these pieces.

Dick Yates
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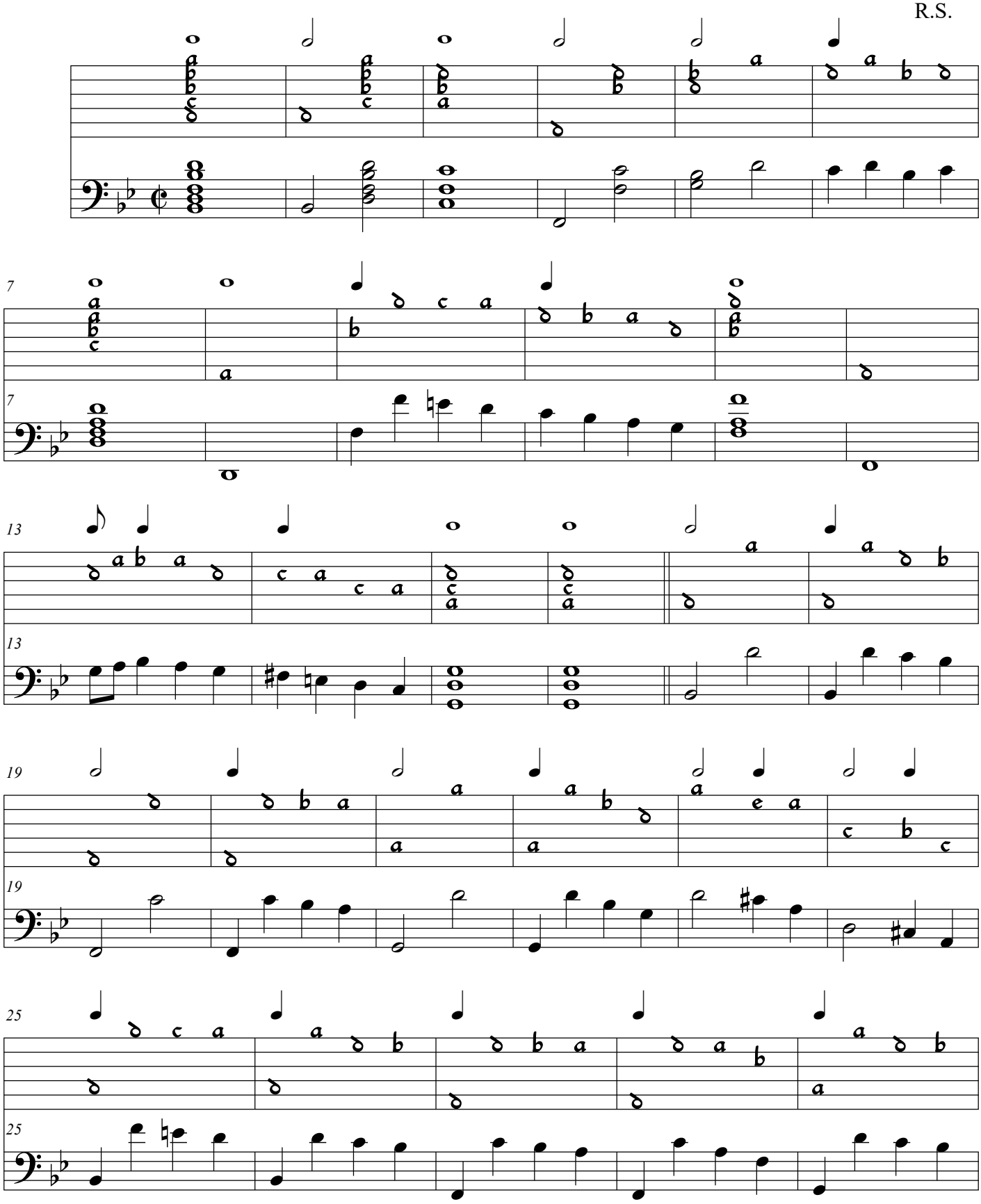
Contents

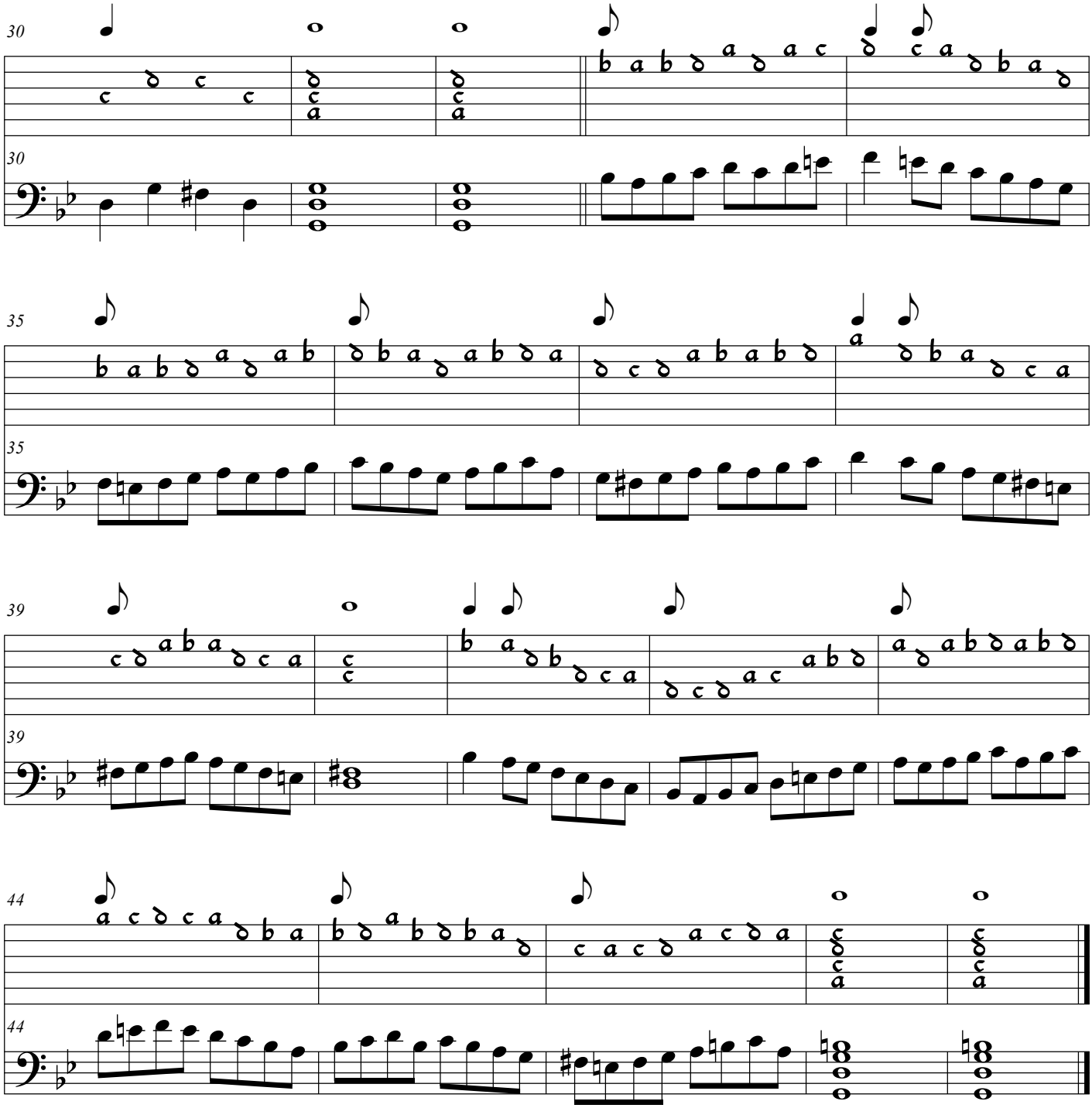
Queen Marie's Dumpe, R.S. 4
What if a Daye, R.S. 6
Fortune, R.S. 8
Roben is to the greens-woode gon, R.S. 10
Whoope doe me no harme, R.S. 11
Daphne, R.S. 12
Monusier's Allman, R. Sumarte 14
Salte pitts R.S. 16
Lachryme, R.S. 18
The Buildings, R.S. 20
Solus com sola, R.S. 22
The Nightengale, R.S. 24
Preludiũ, R.S. 26
Preludium, R.S. 28
Preludiũ, R.S. 30
Untitled, Stephen Goodall 32
Untitled, Mr. Elliot, Oxon. 33
Untitled, Mr. Younge 34
Untitled, Stephen Goodall 35
Untitled, Stephen Goodall 36
Untitled, Mr. Elliot, Oxon. 37
Untitled, Stephen Goodall 38
Untitled, Stephen Goodall 39
A Saraband, Mr. Willm Younge 40
Preludiũ, Mr. Rich. Sumarte 42
Untitled, Mr. Willm Younge 44
Saraband, Mr. Thomas Woodson 45
Graces on the Violl 46

Queen Marie's Dumpe

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-1

R.S.

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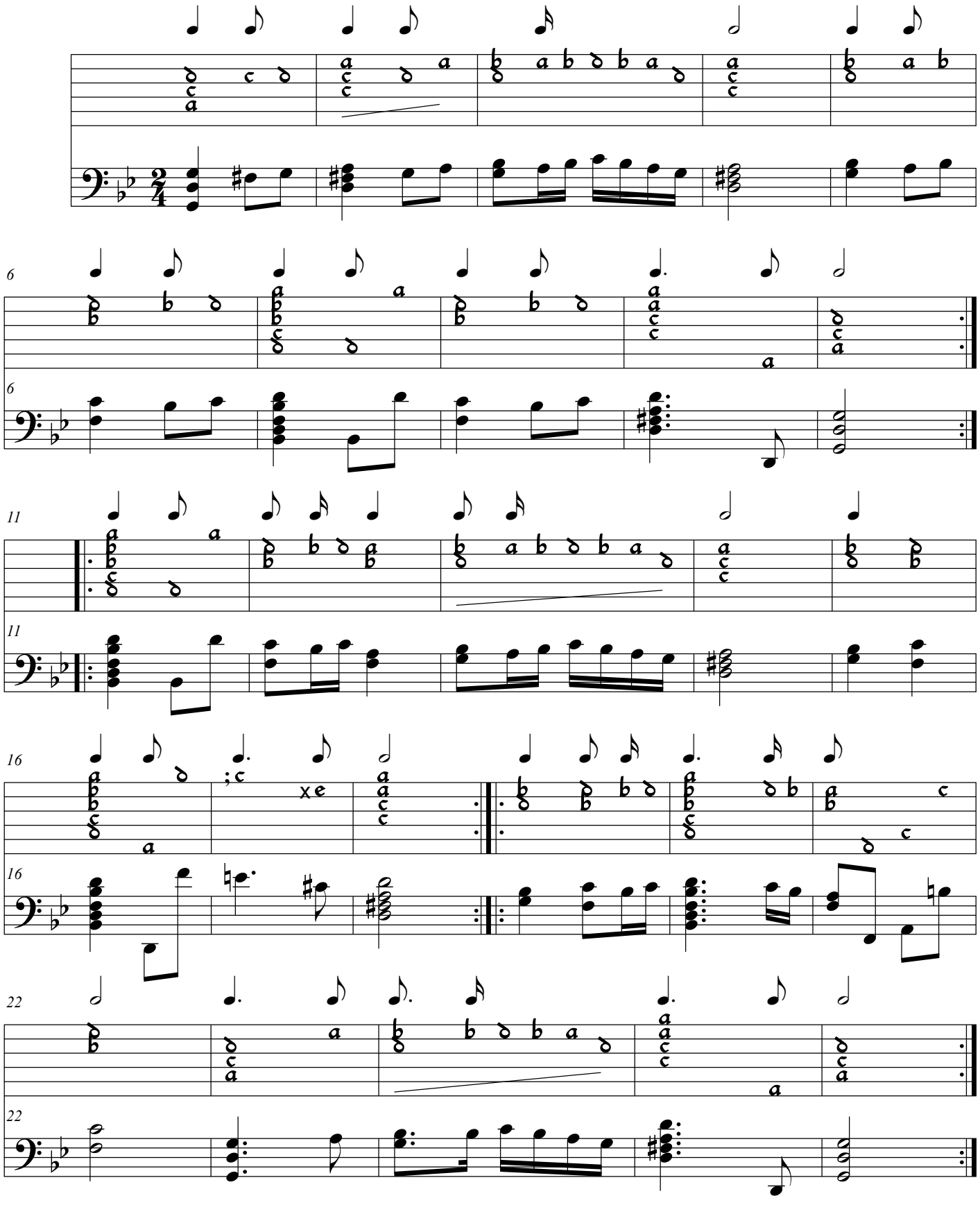
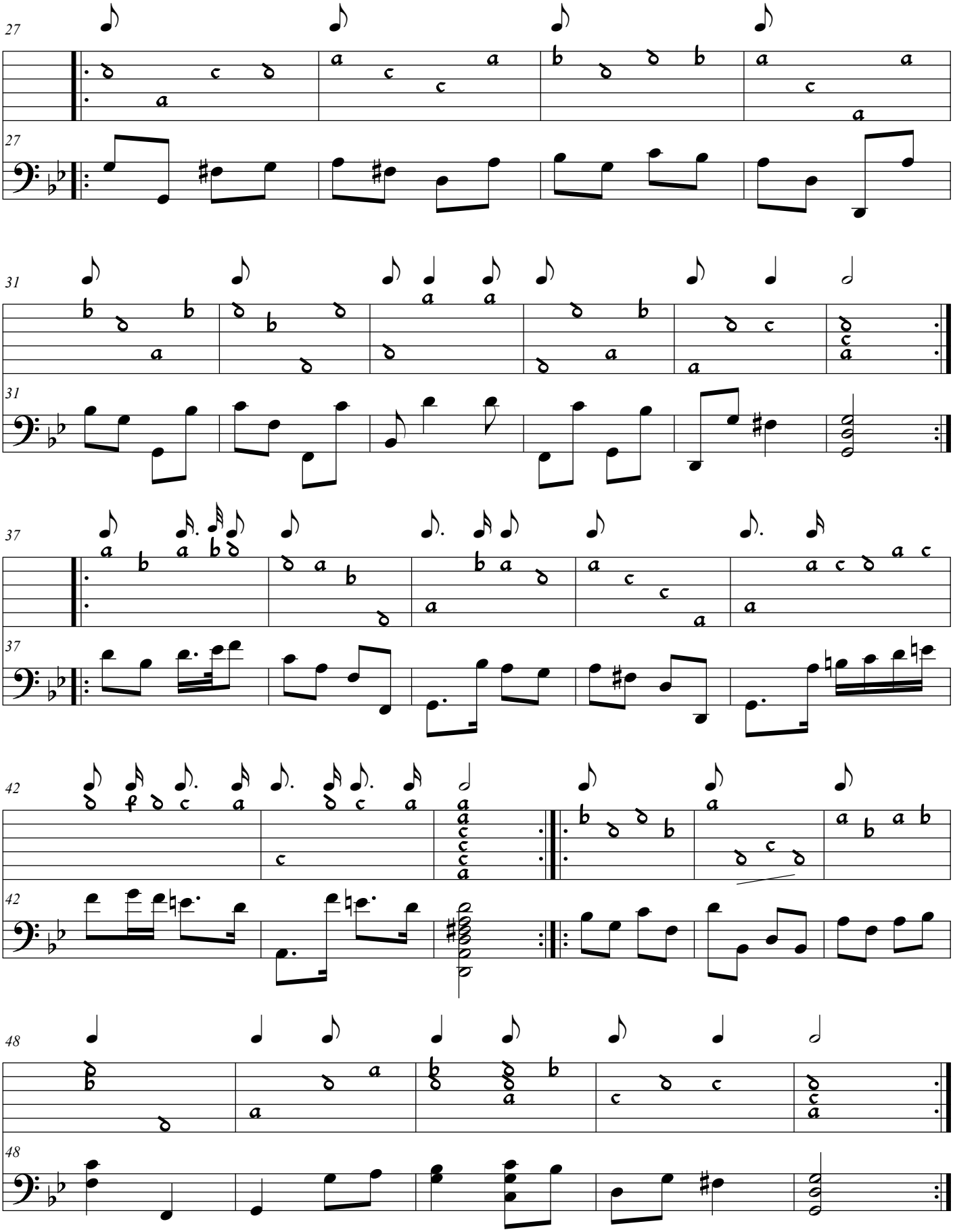
What if a Daye

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-2

R.S.

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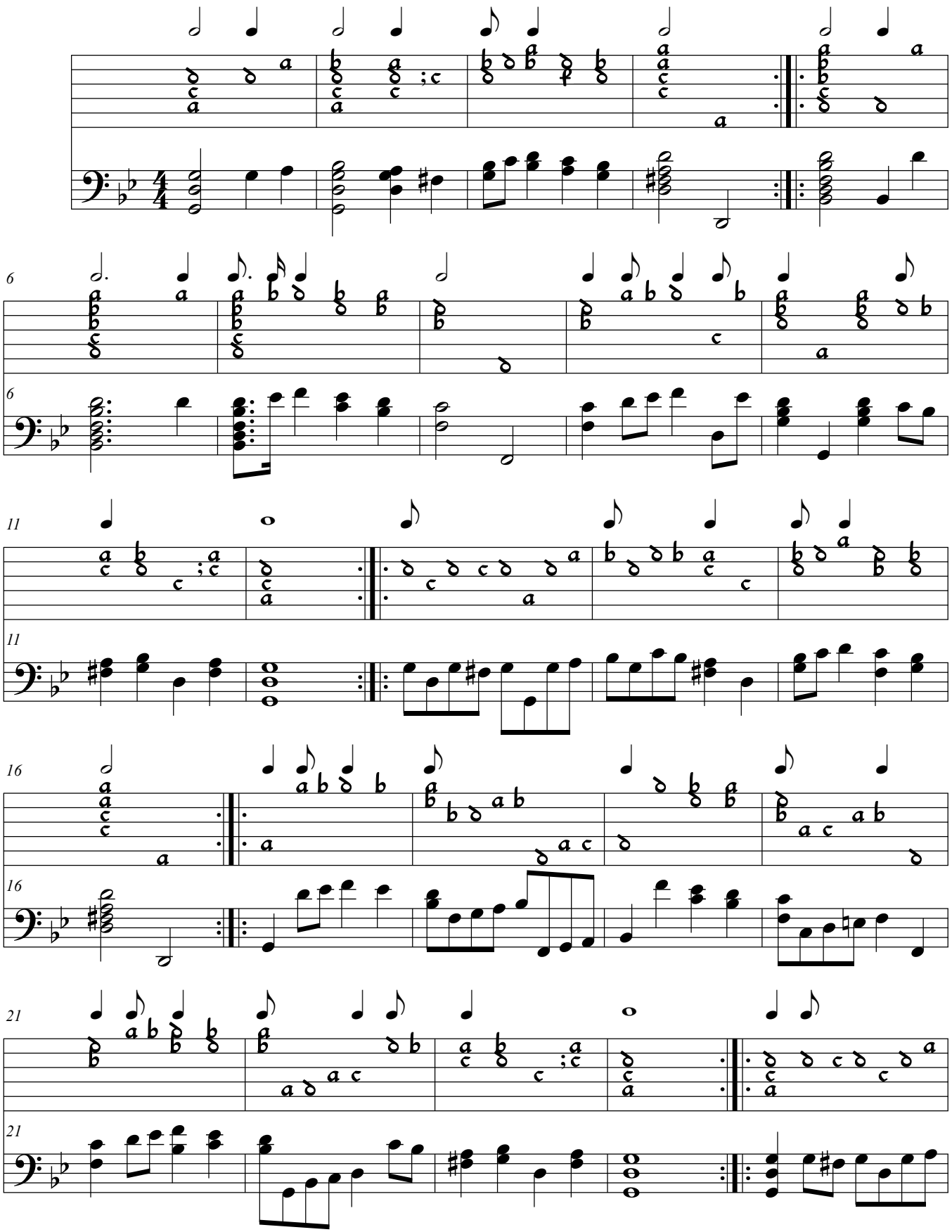
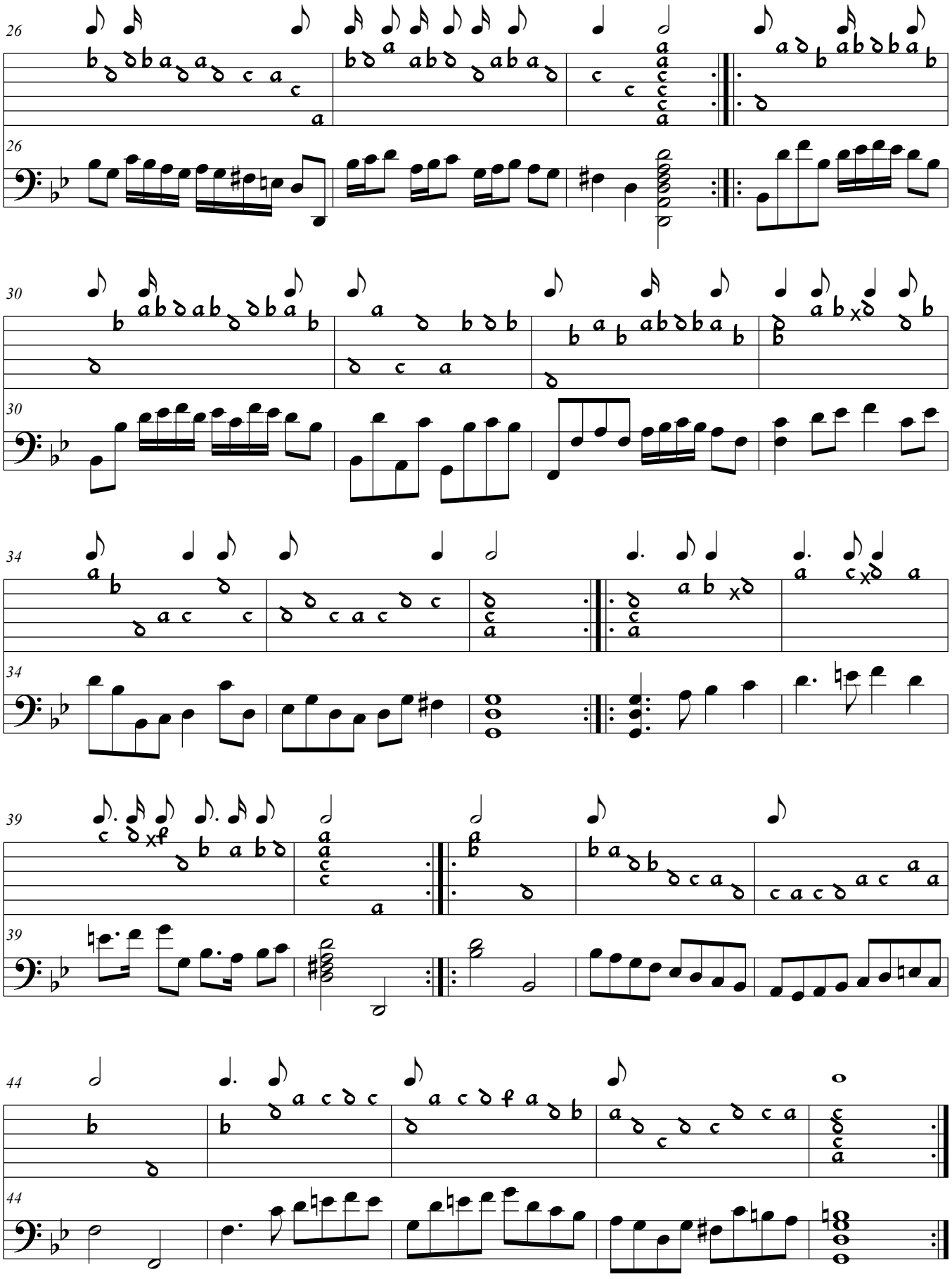
Fortune

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-3

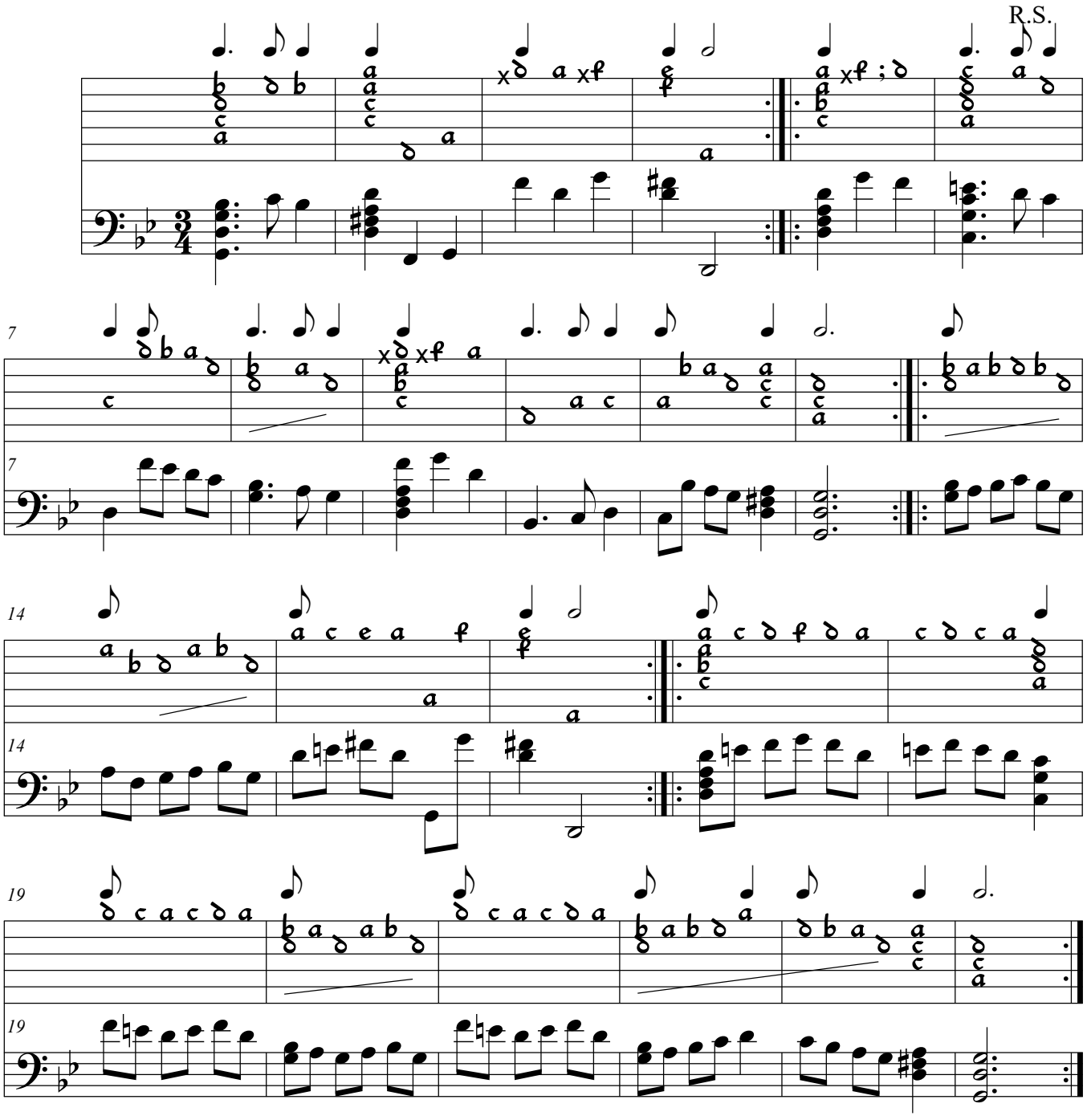
R.S.





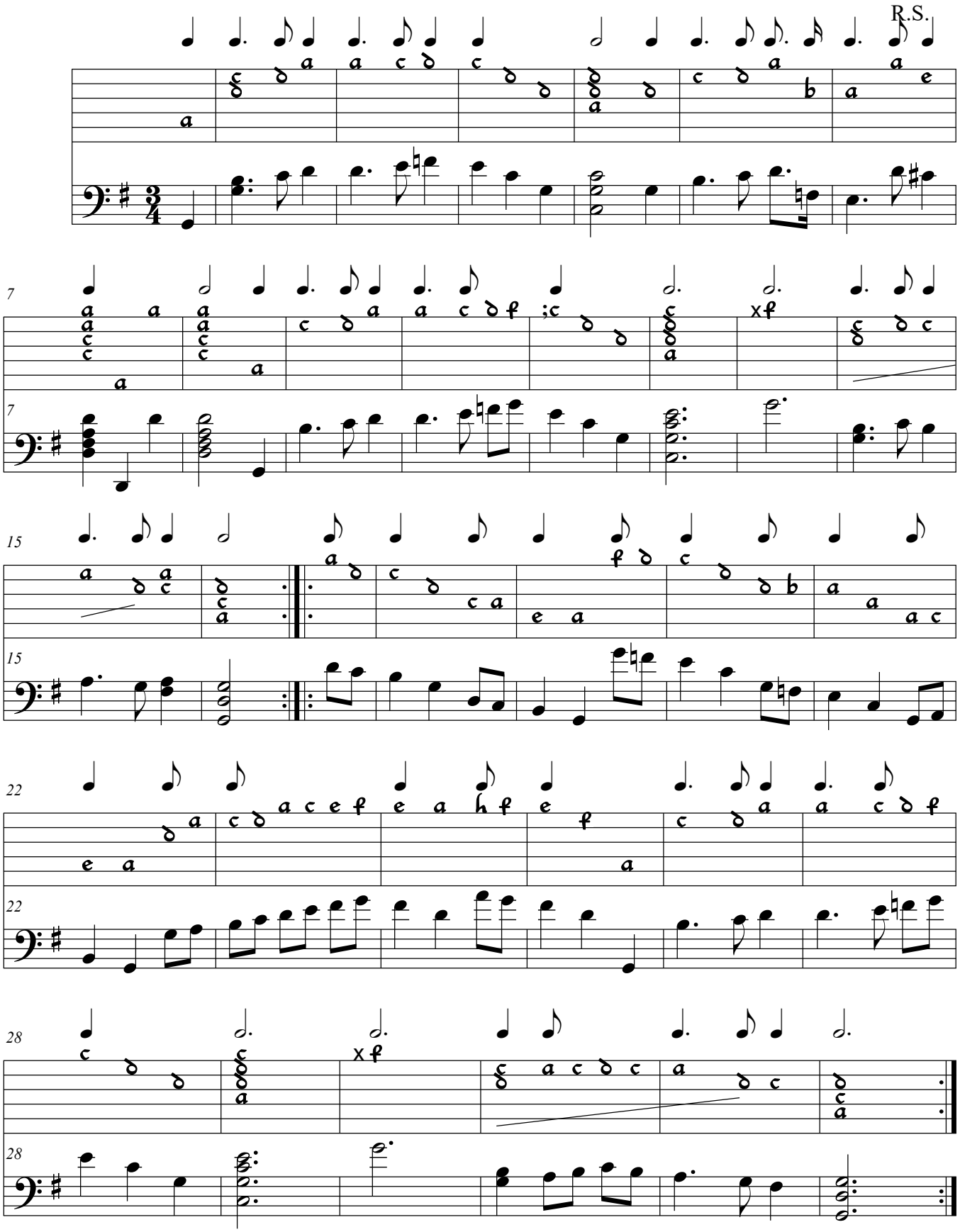
Roben is to the greens-woode gon

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-4



Whoope doe me no harme

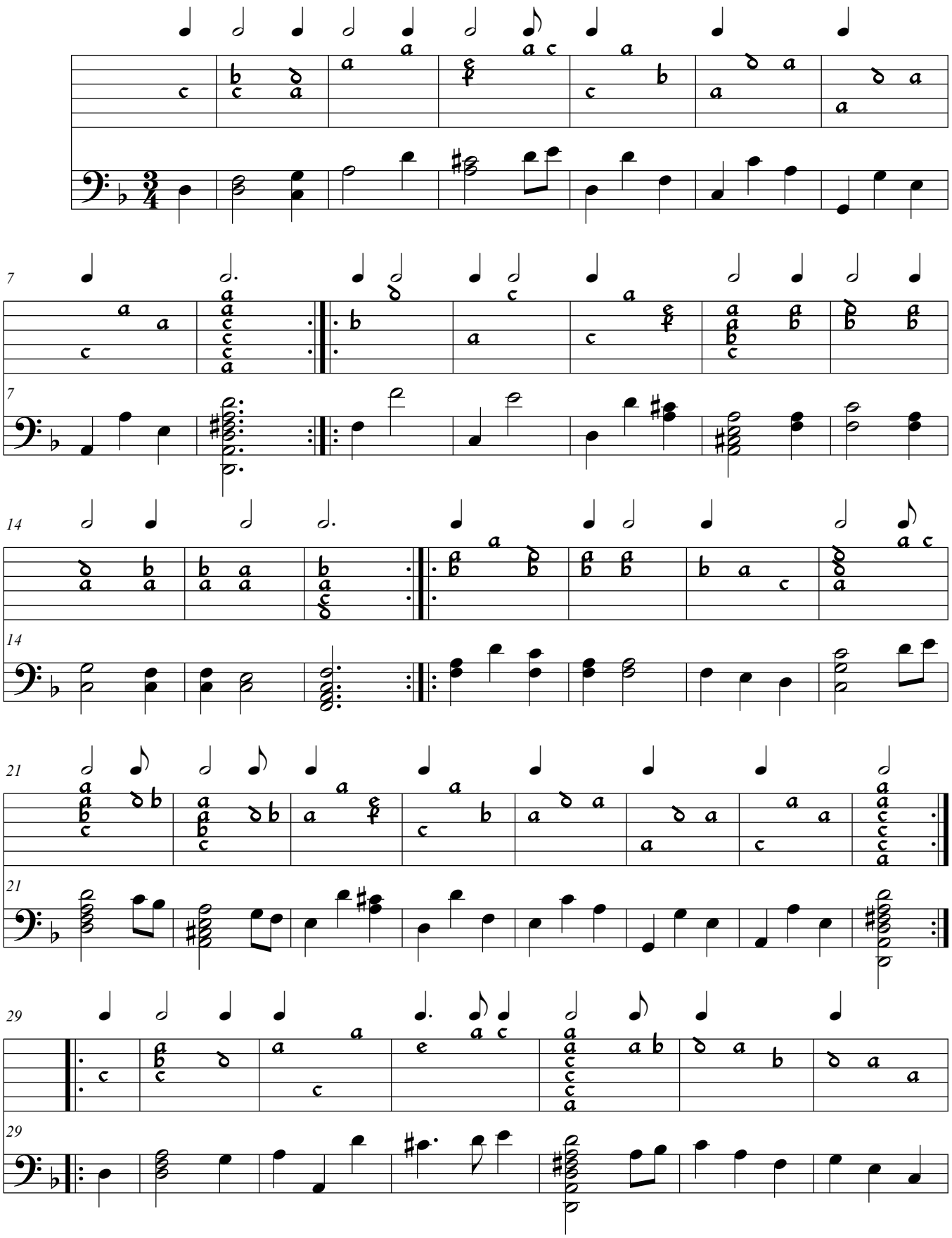
Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-5

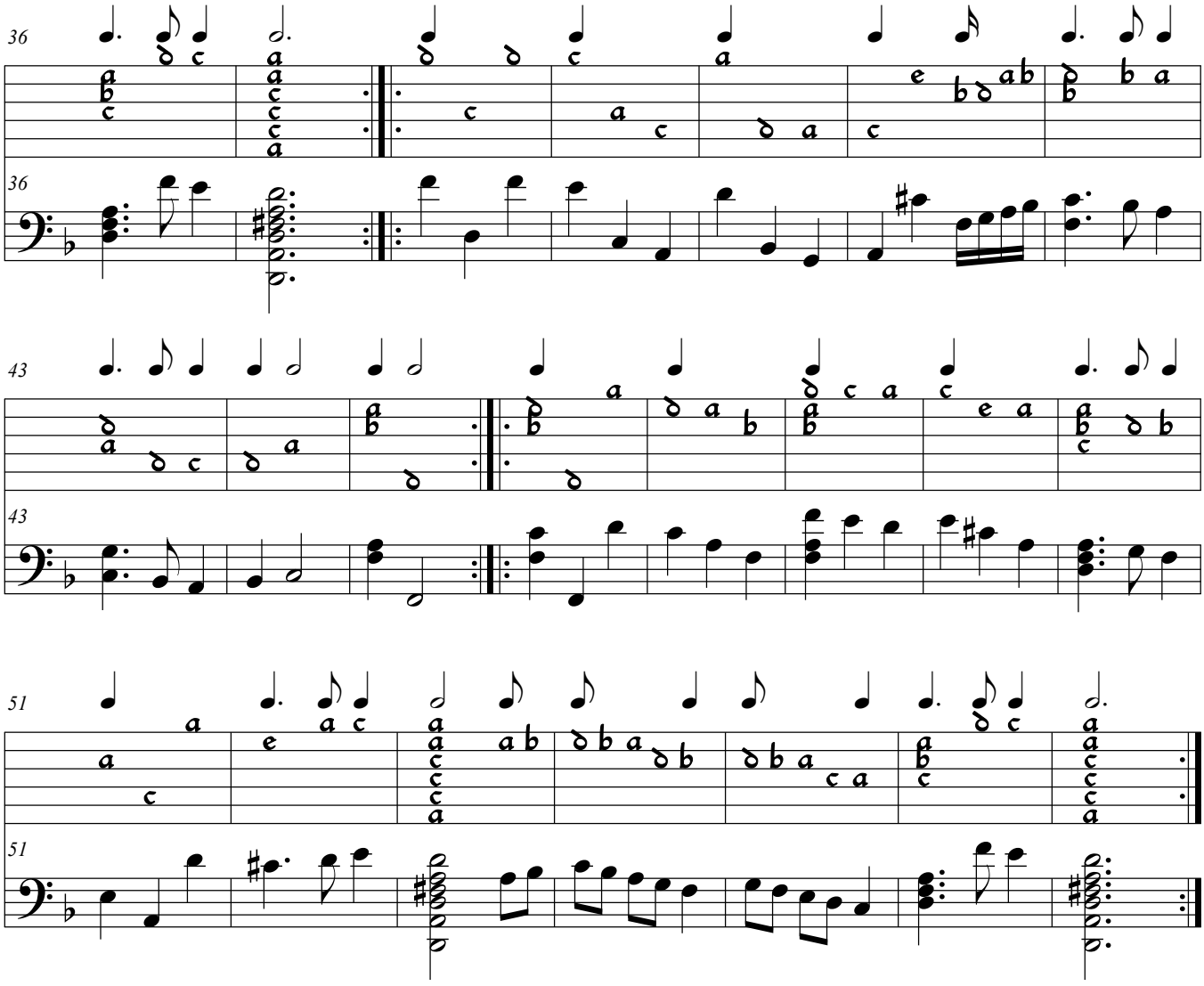


Daphne

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-6

R.S.

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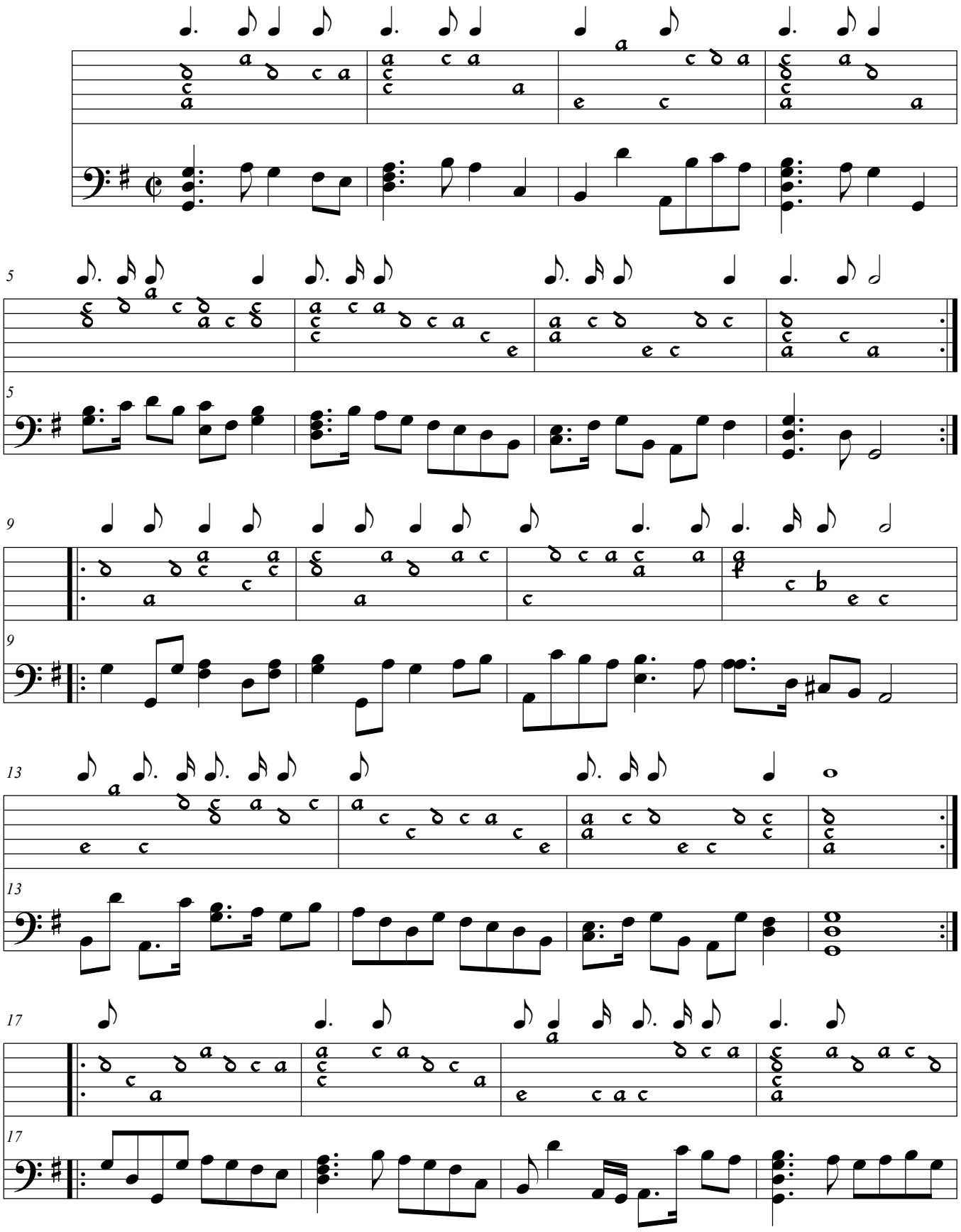
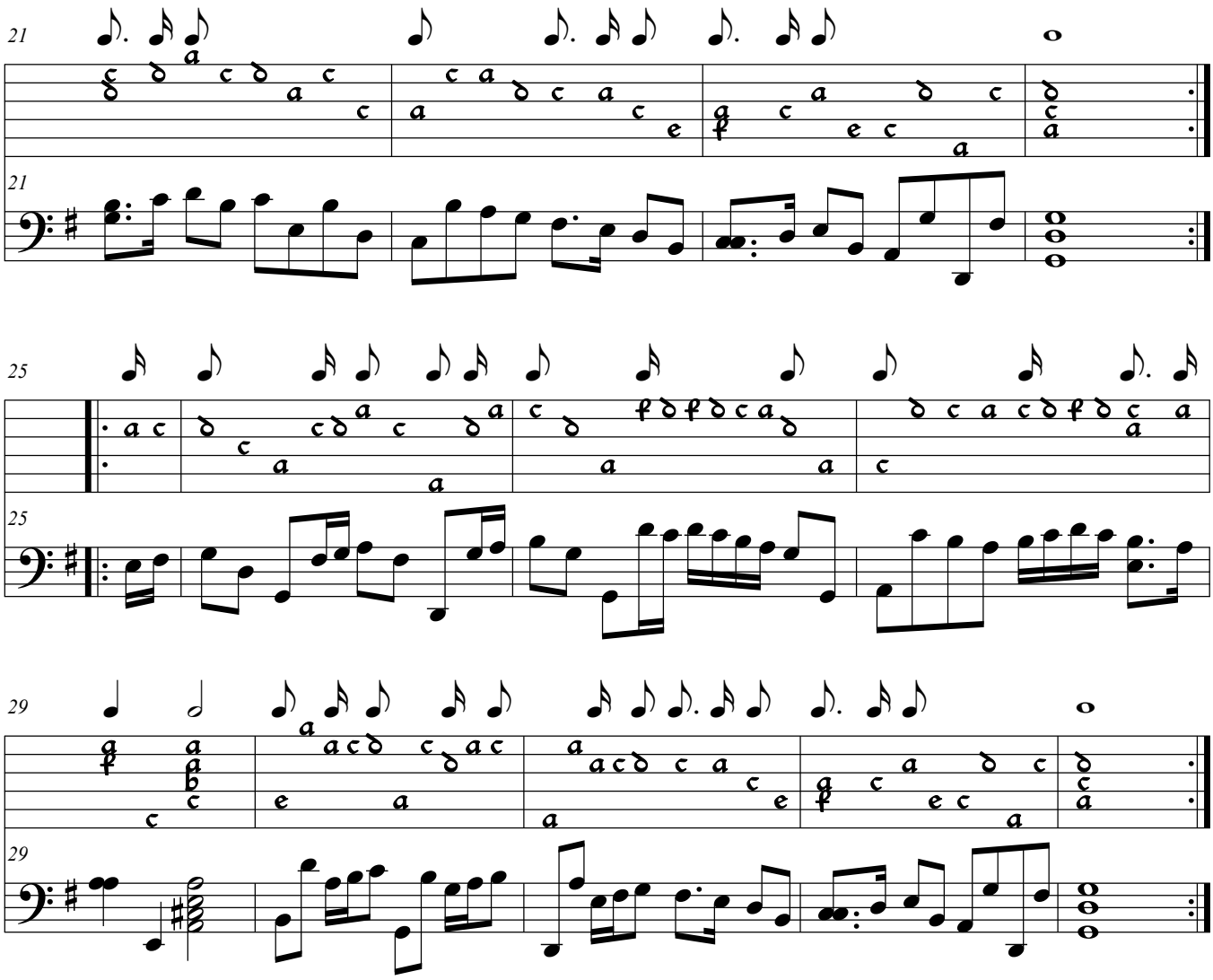
Monusier's Allman

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-7

R. Sumarte

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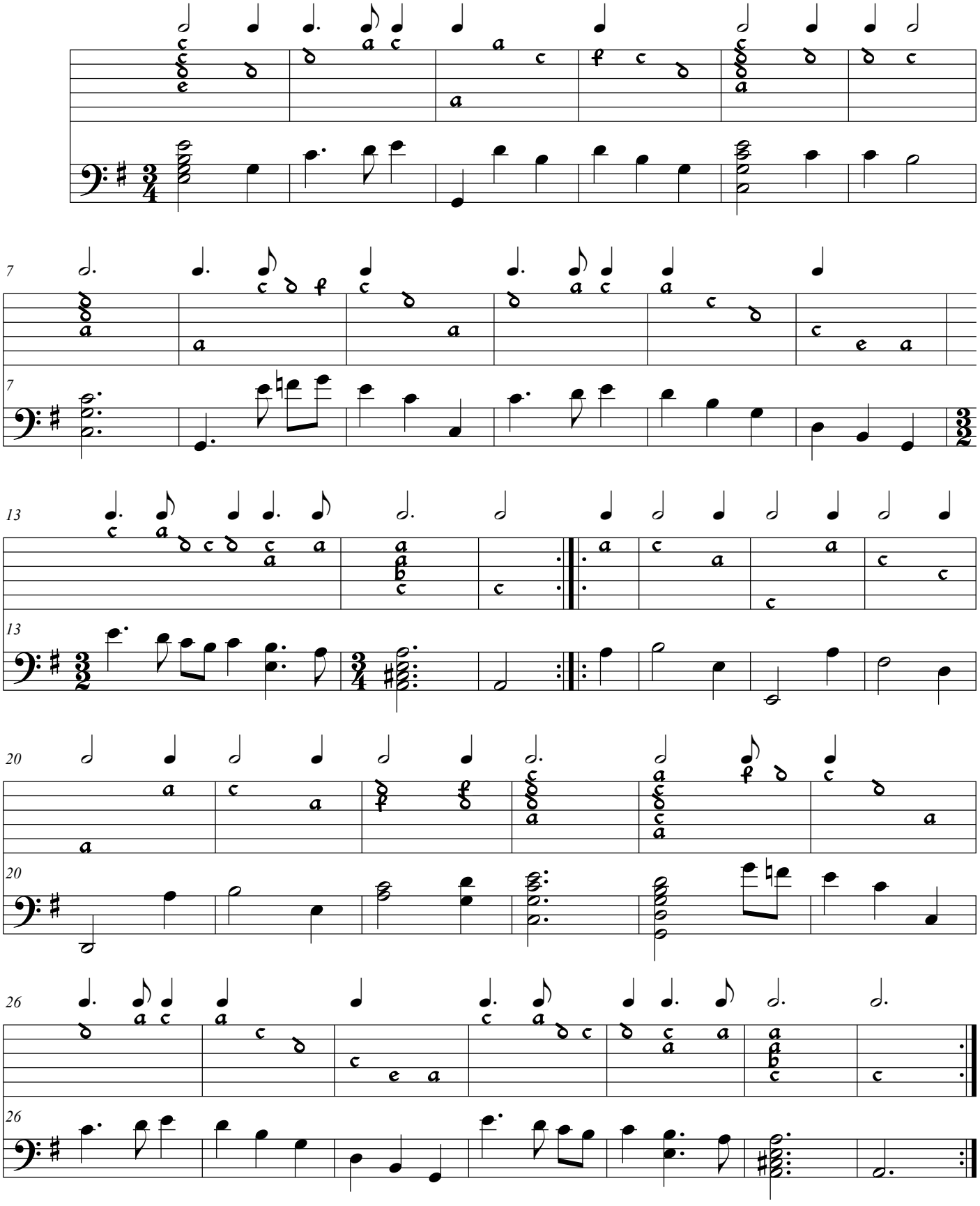
Salte pitts

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-8

R.S.



Lachryme

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-9

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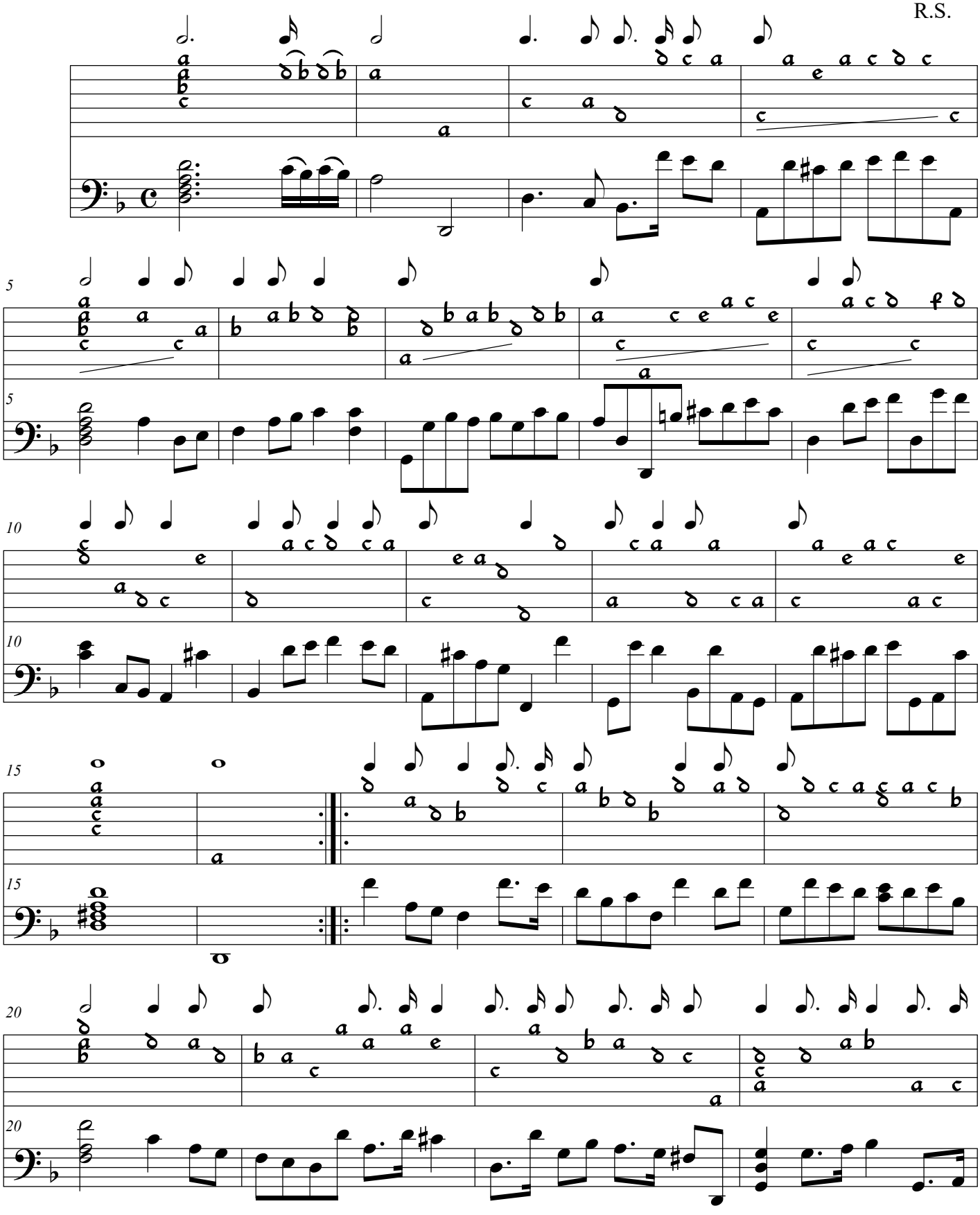
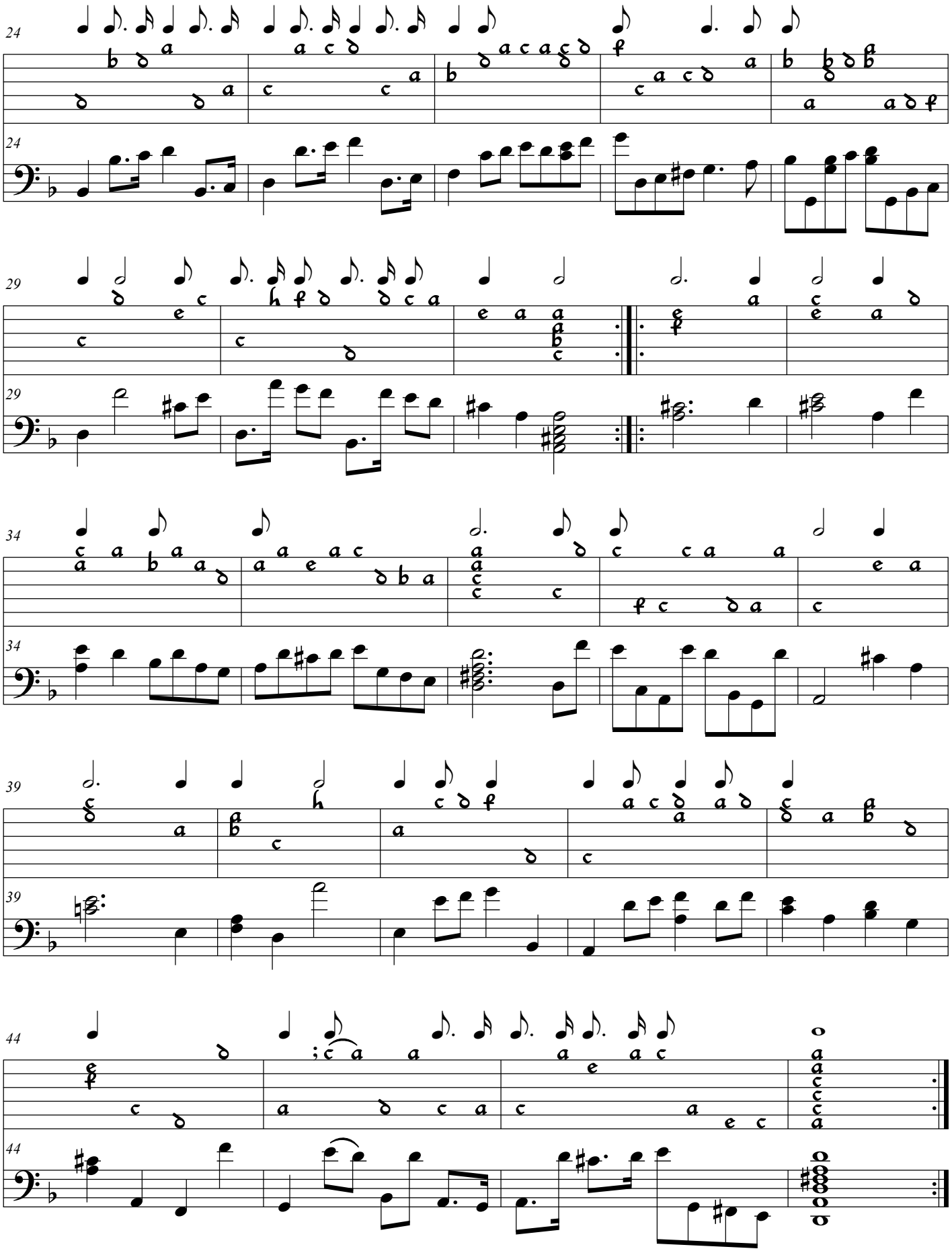
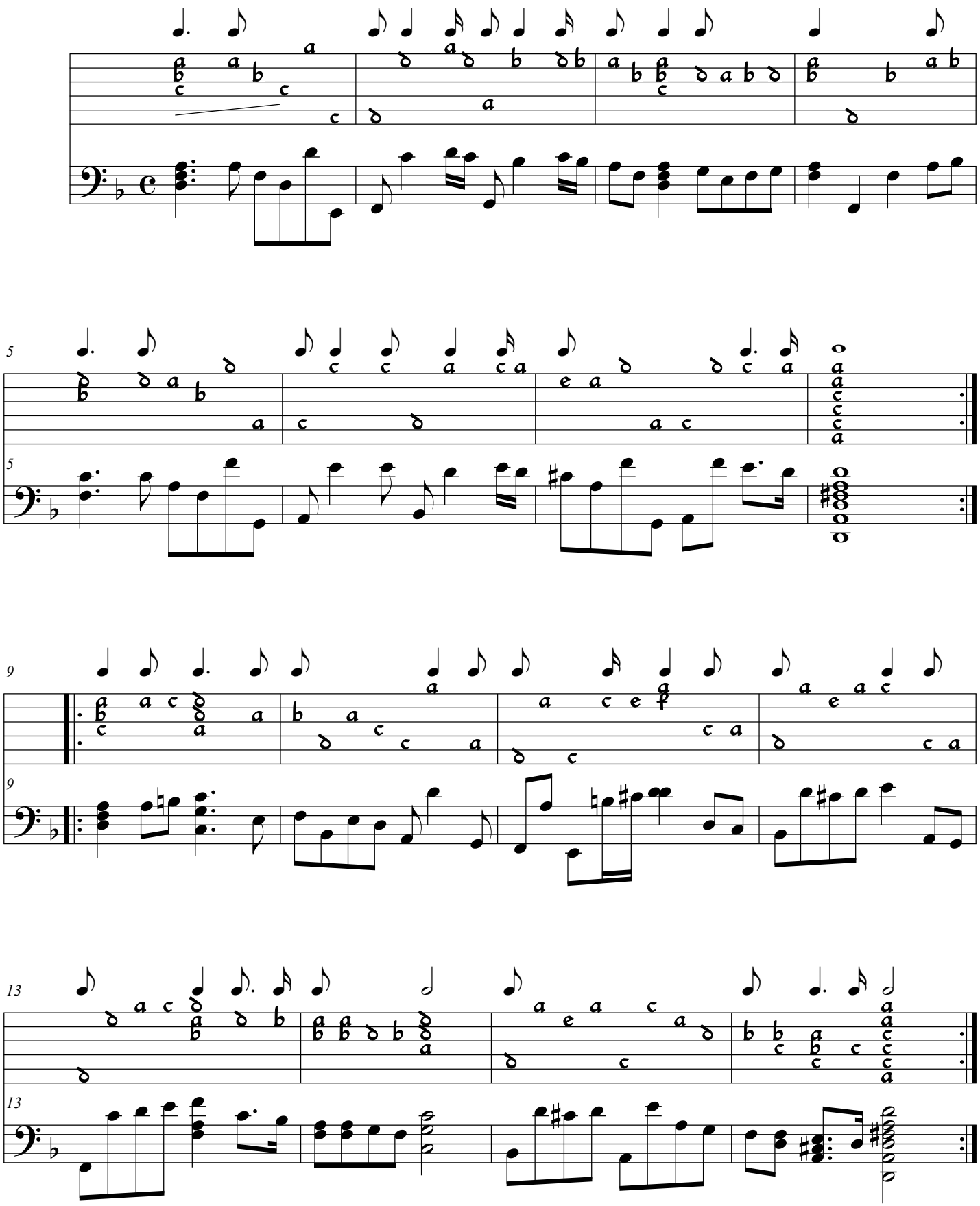




The Buildings

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-10

R.S.



Solus cum sola

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-11

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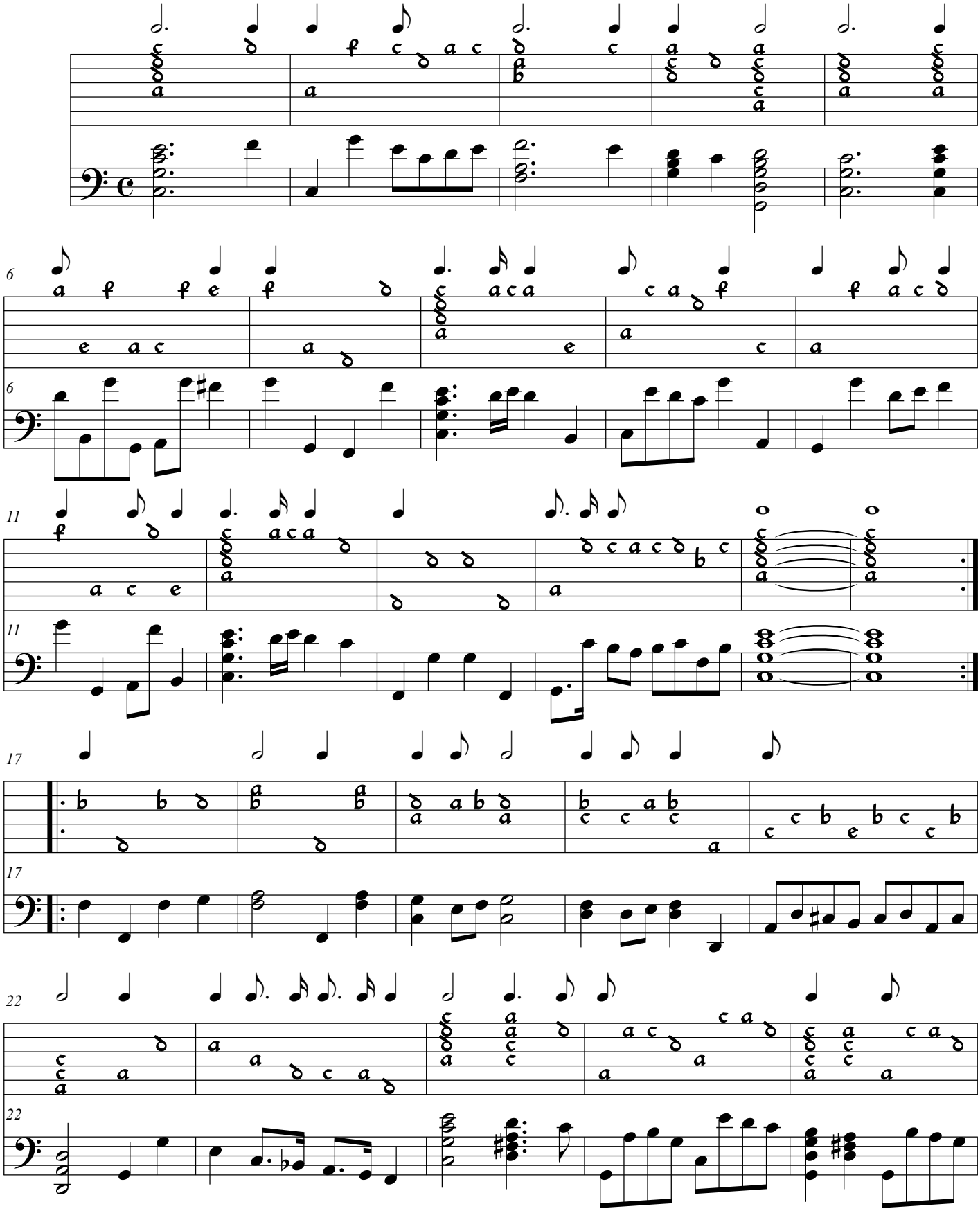

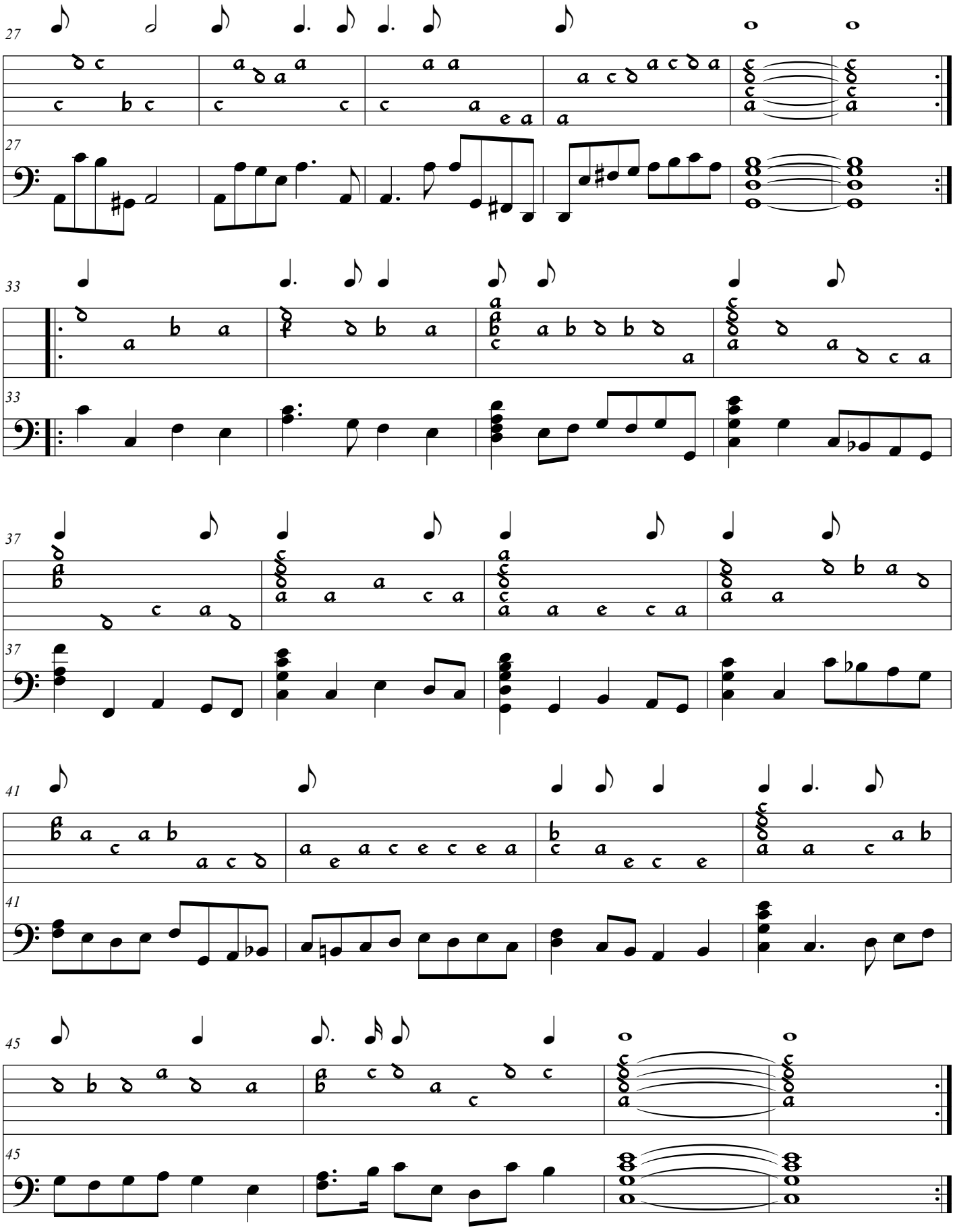
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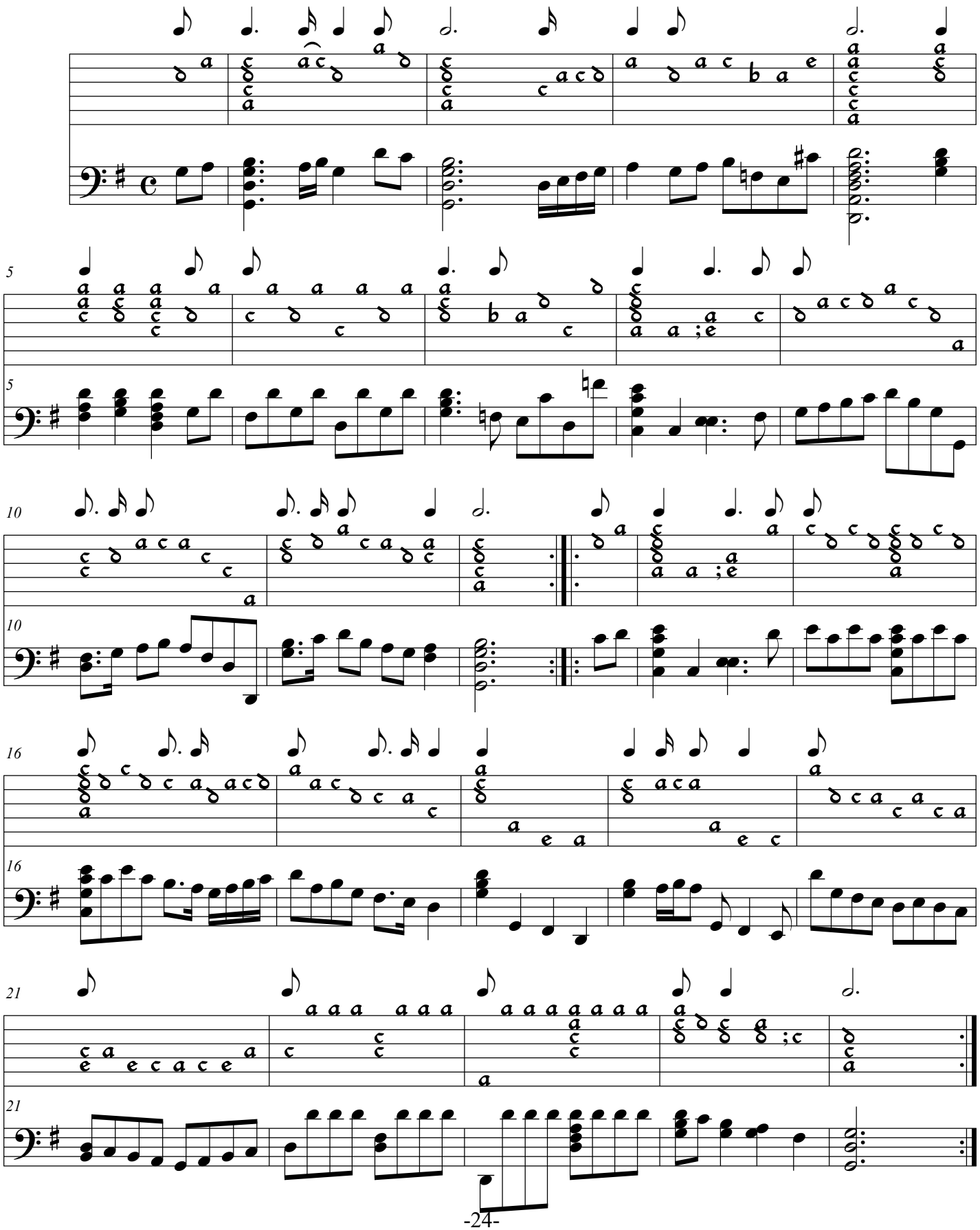
The Nightengale

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-12

R.S.



Preludiũ

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-13

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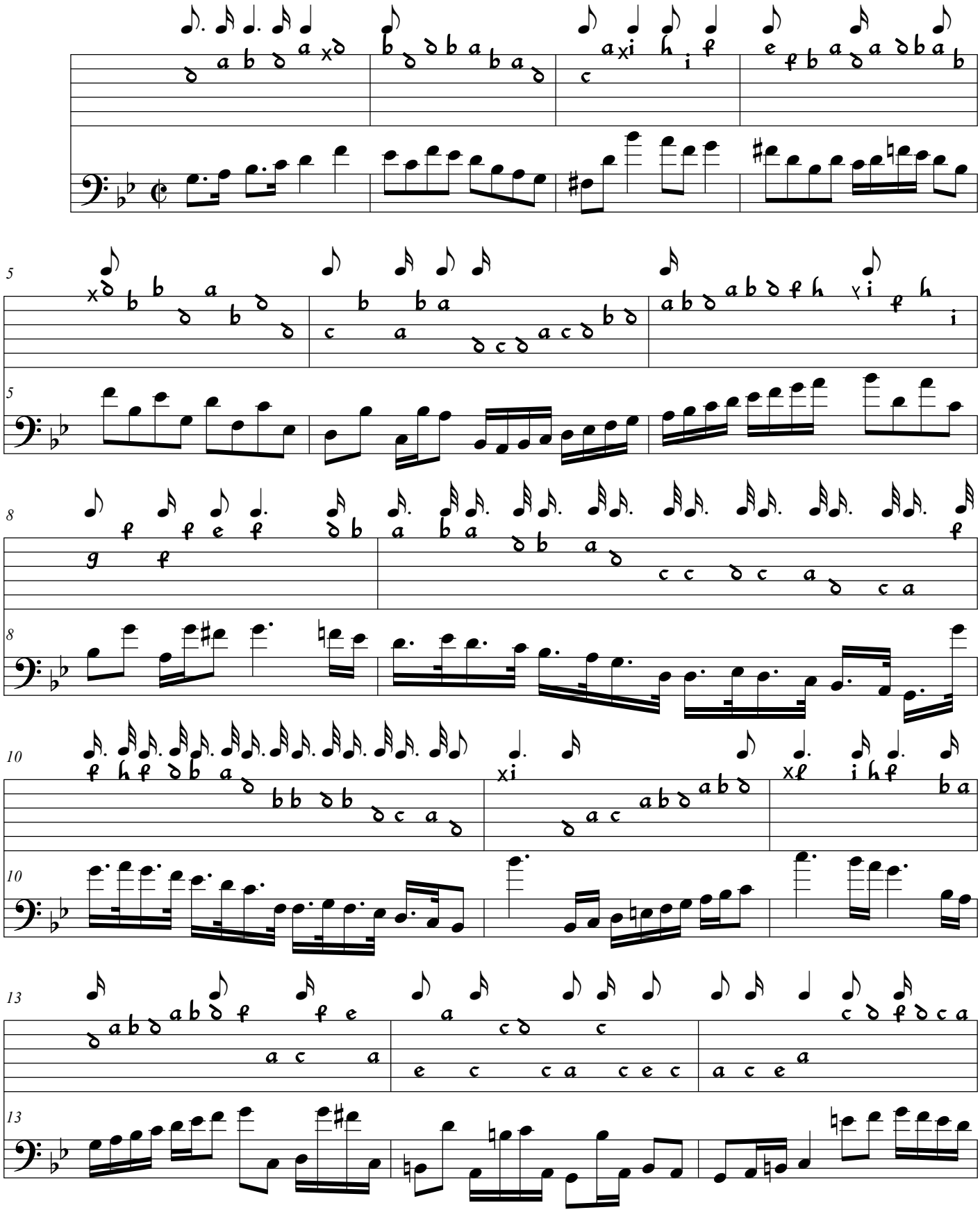

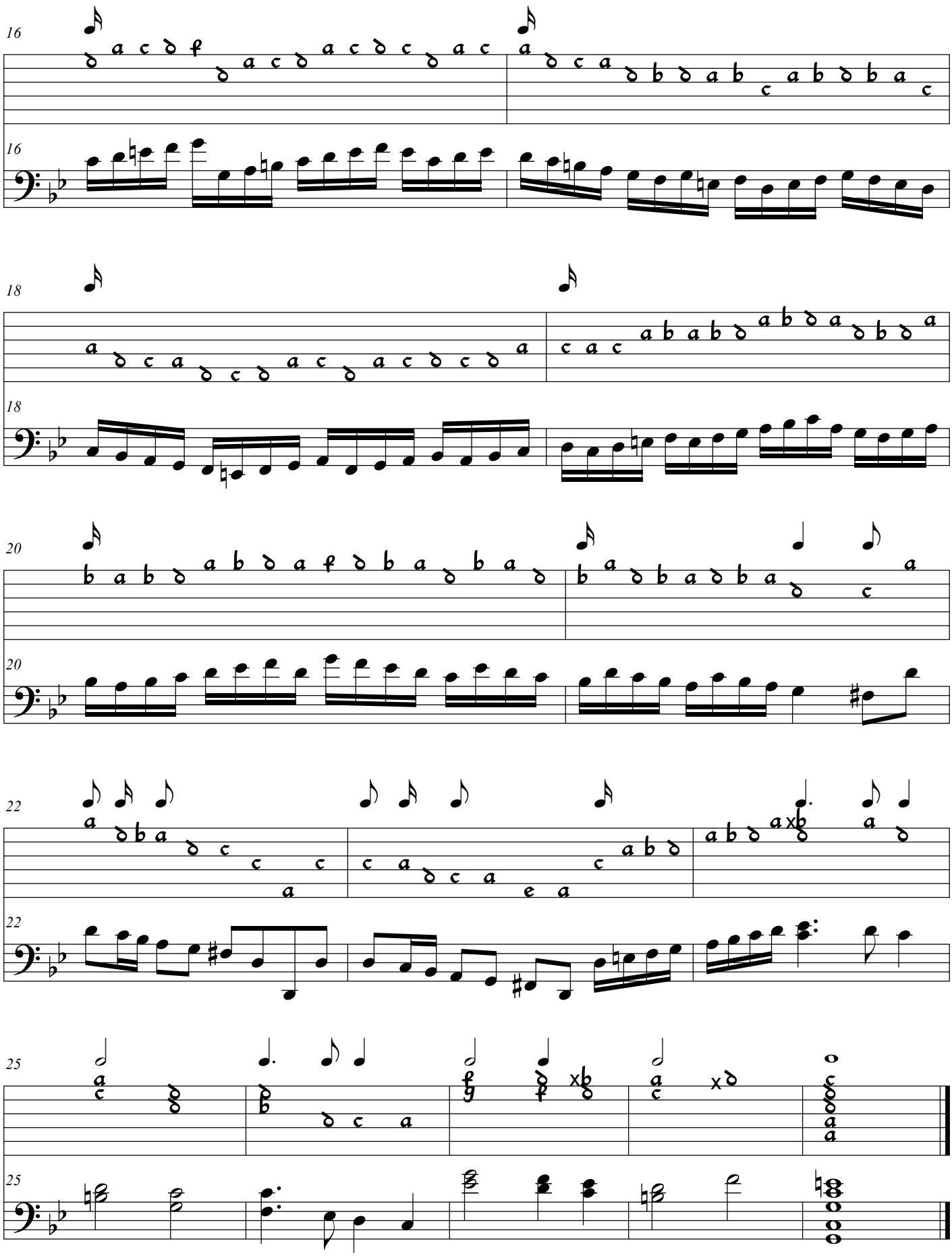

Preludium

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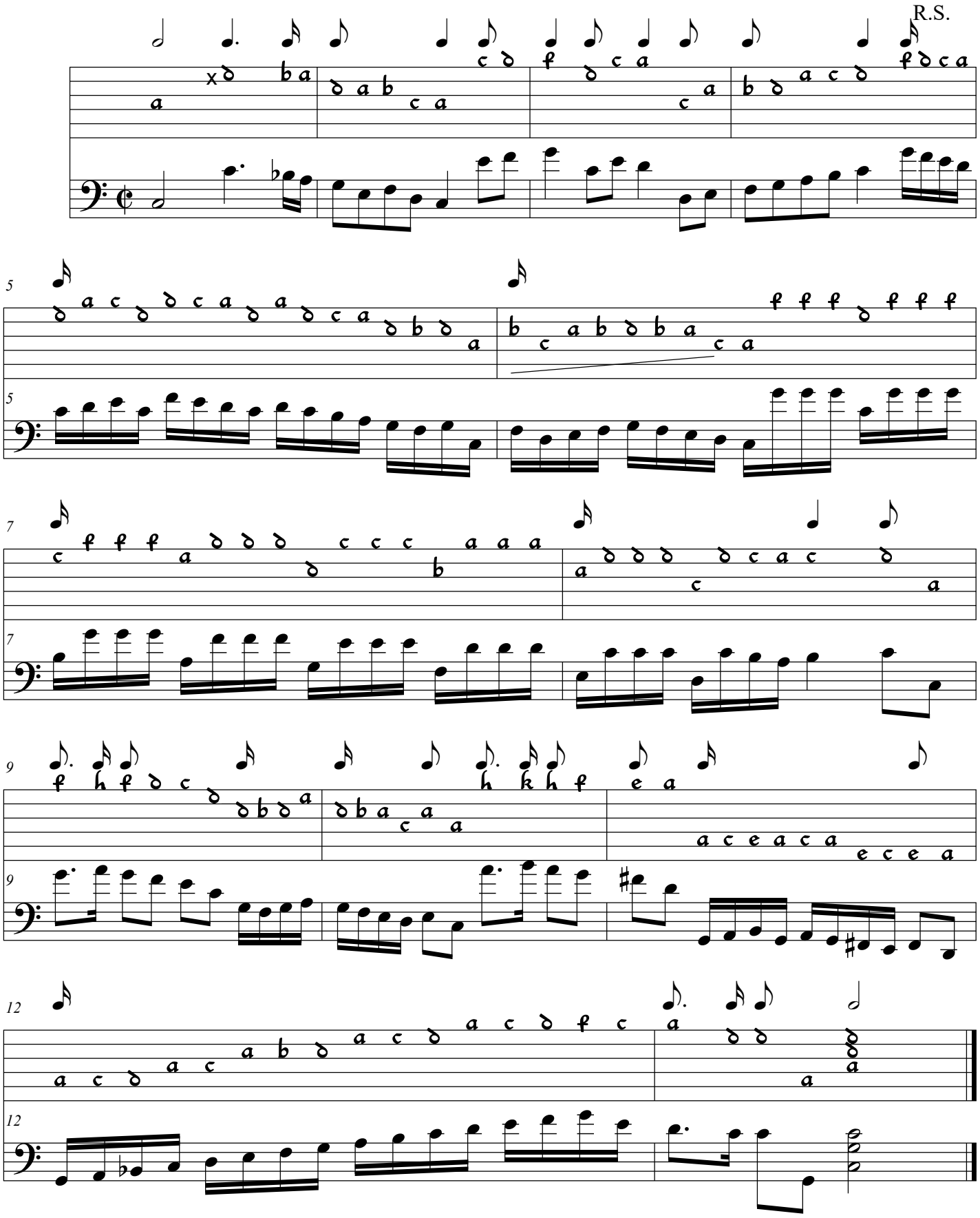

Preludiũ

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-15

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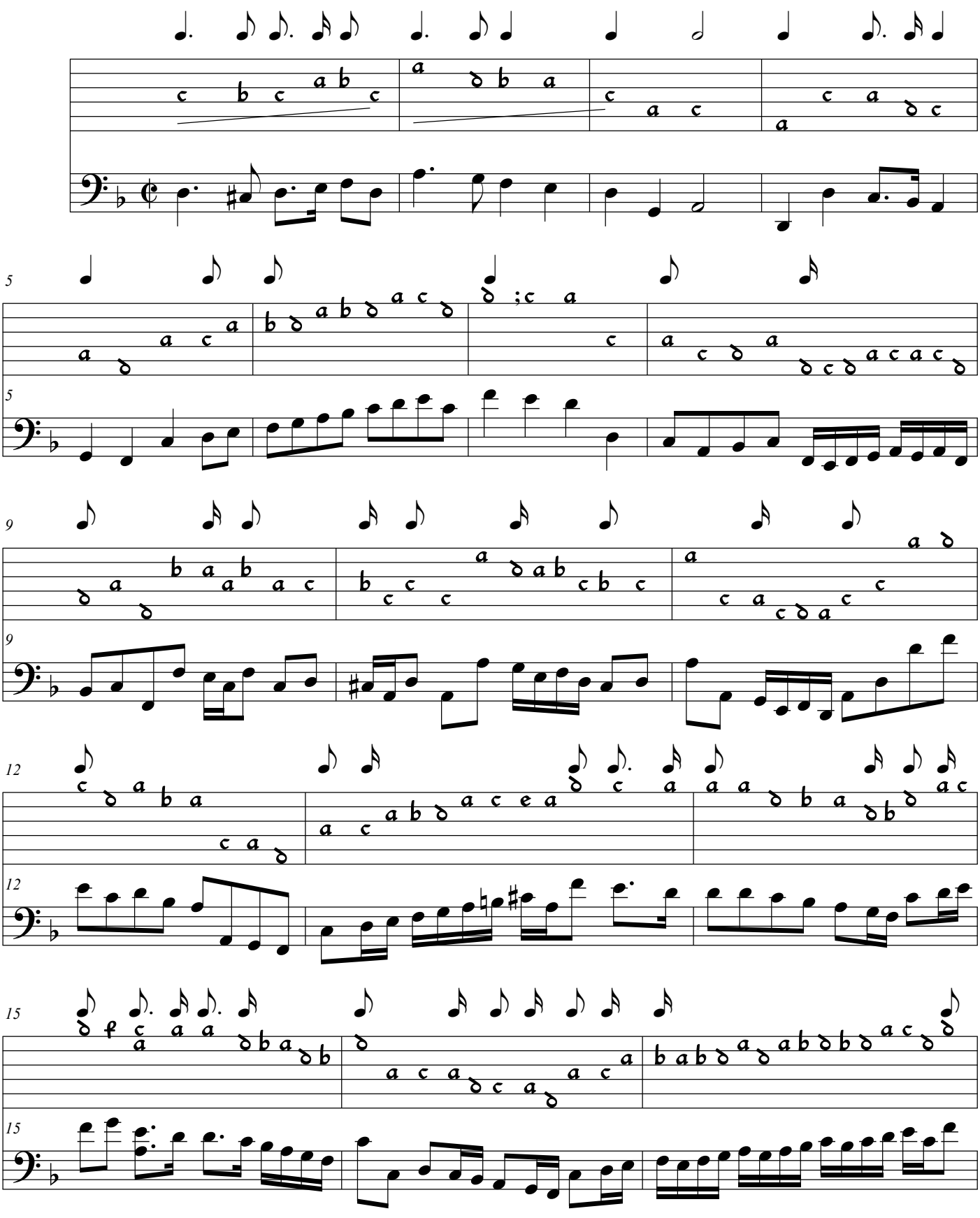

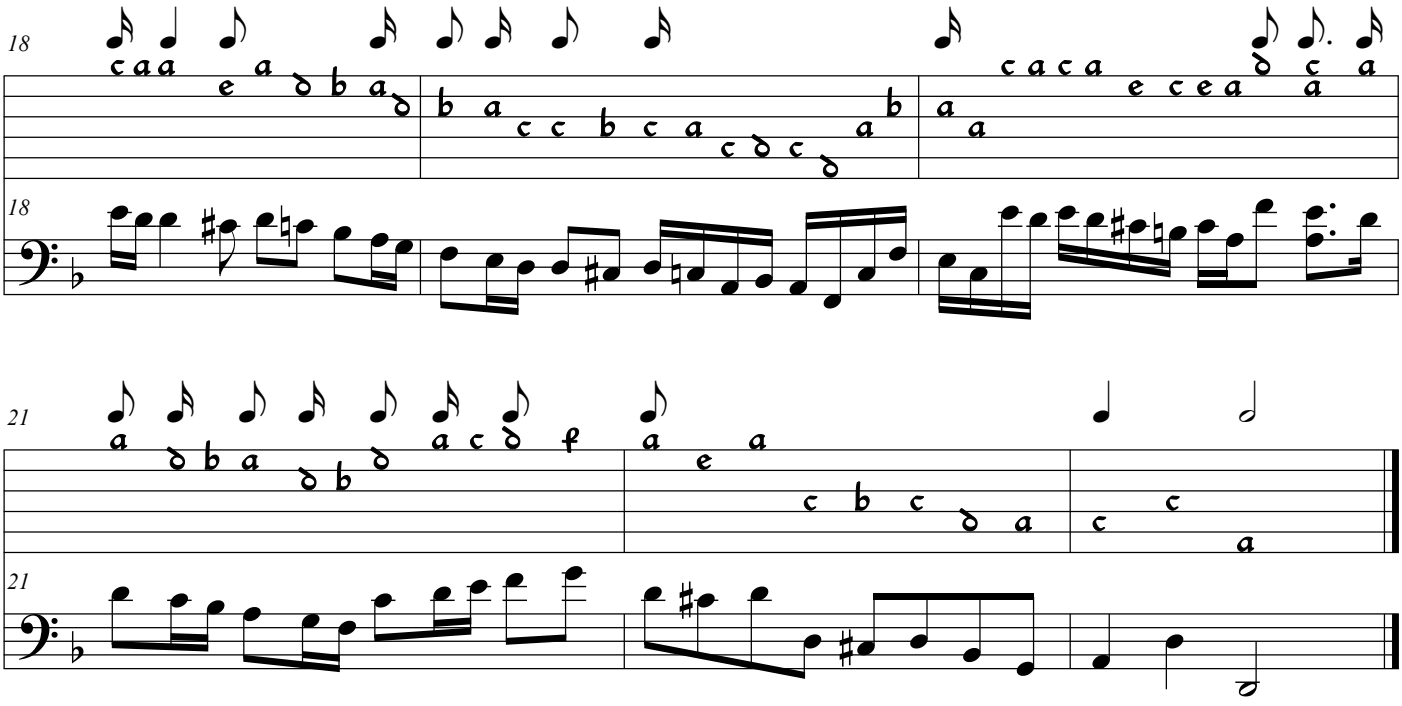
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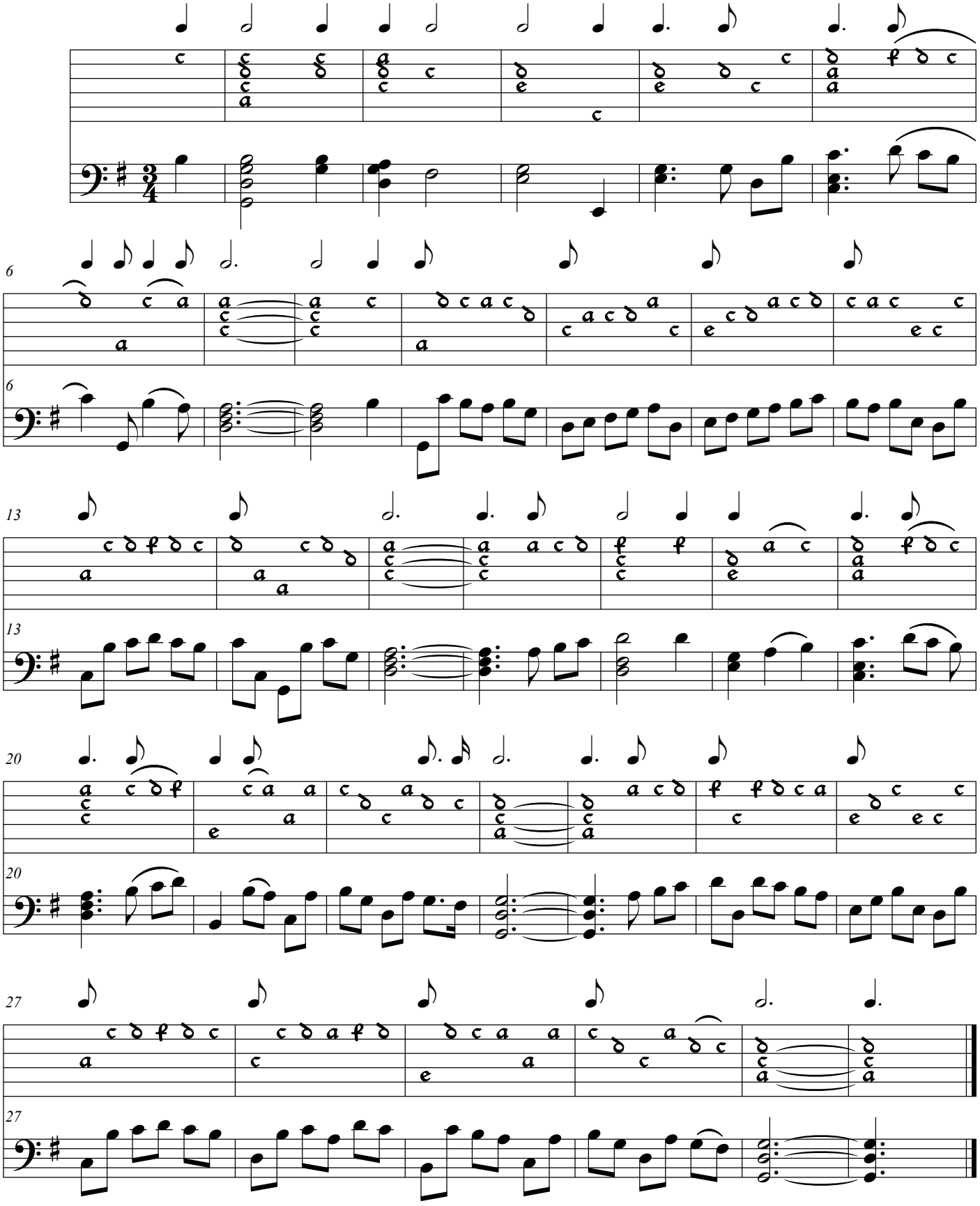
Untitled

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-16

Stephen Goodall



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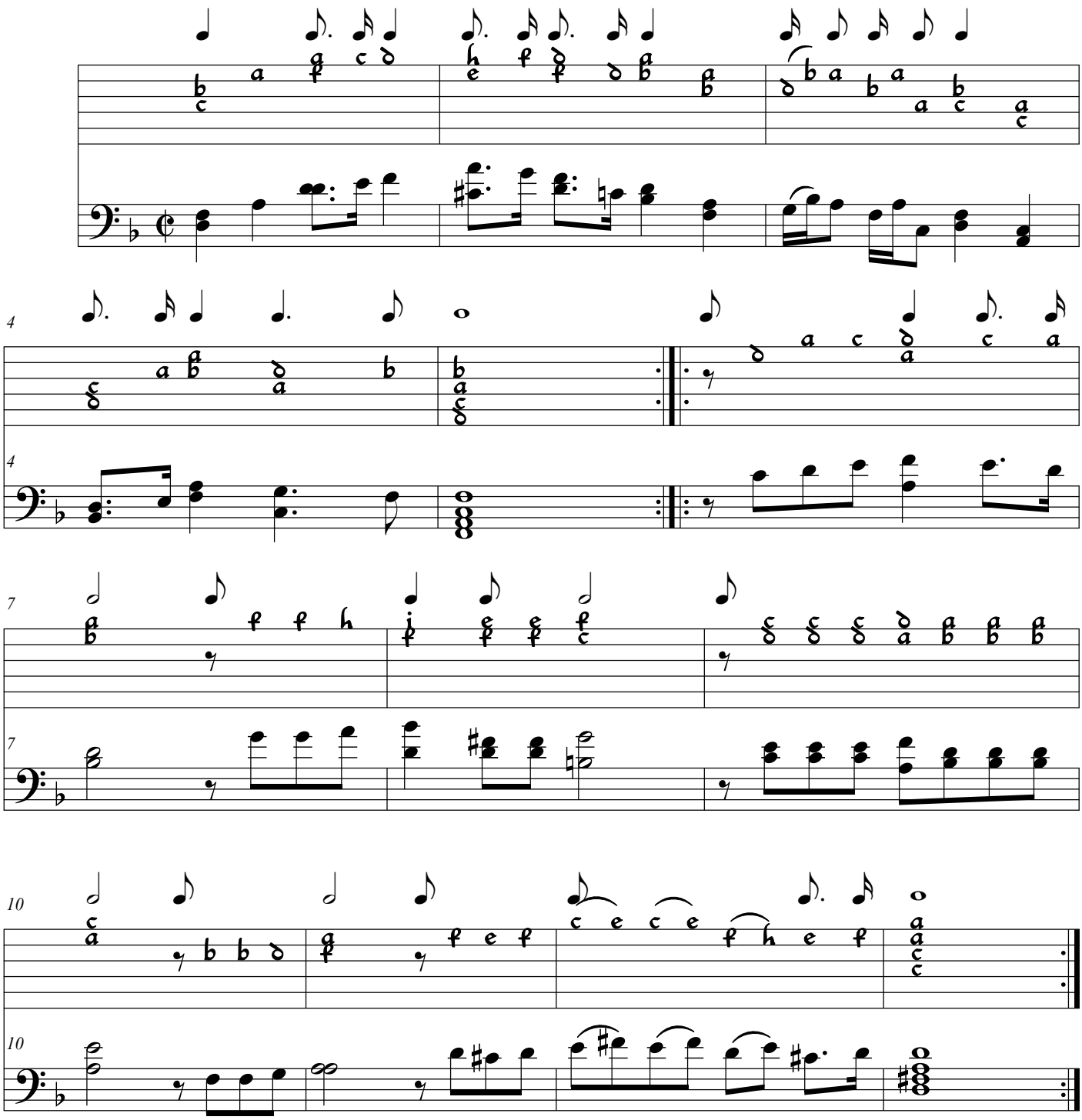
Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-17

Mr. Elliot, Oxon.



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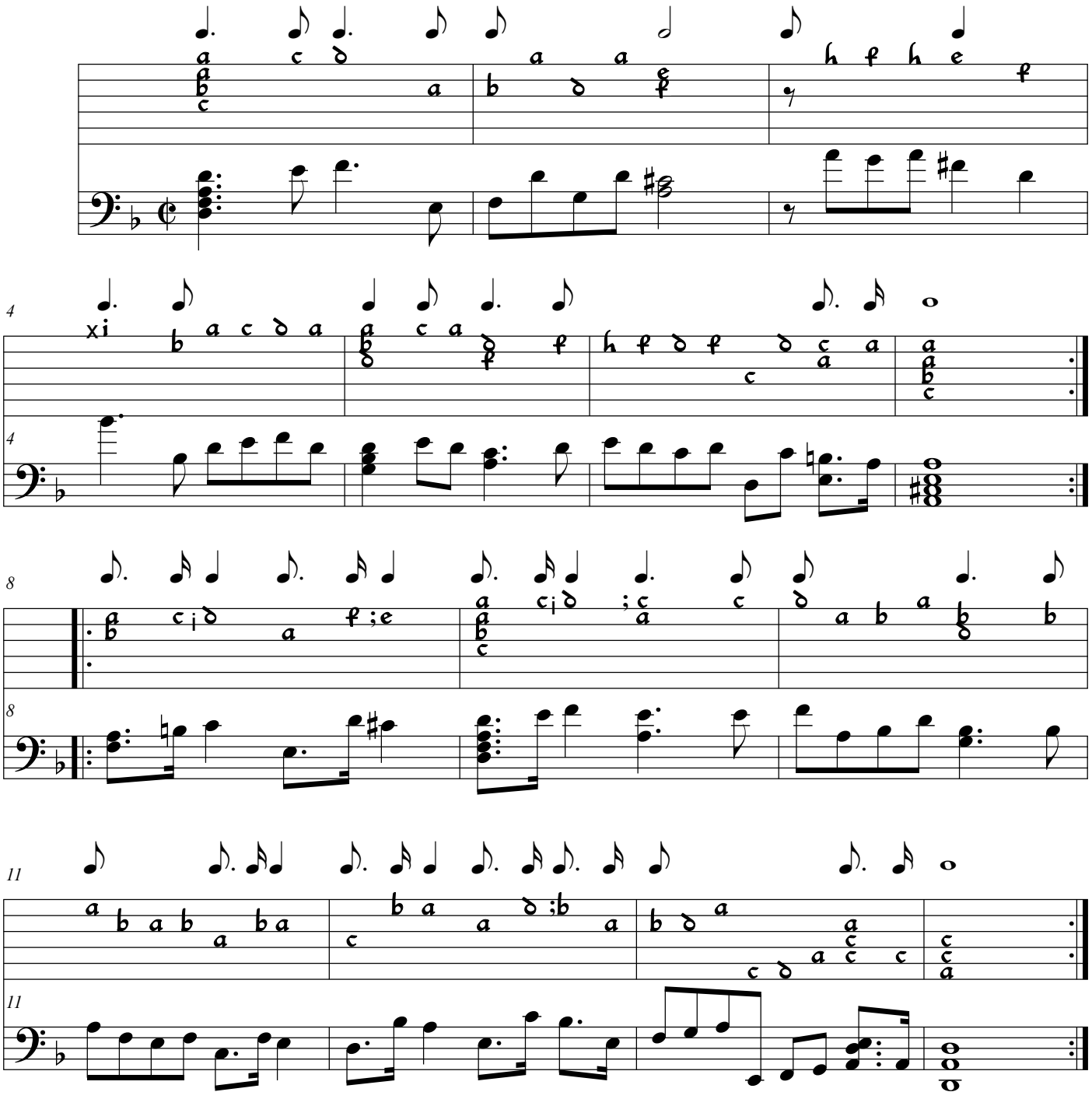
Mr. Younge



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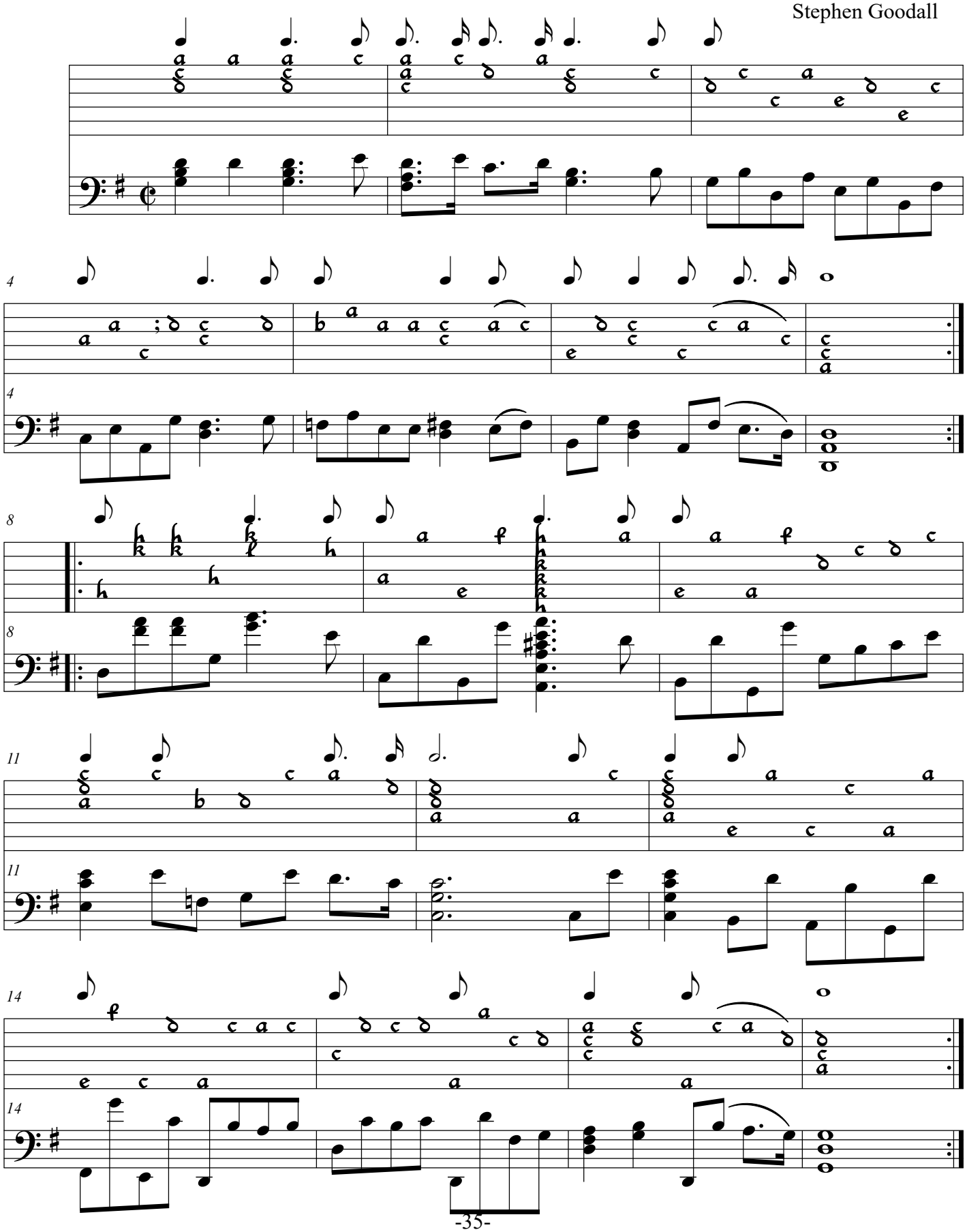
Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-19

Stephen Goodall



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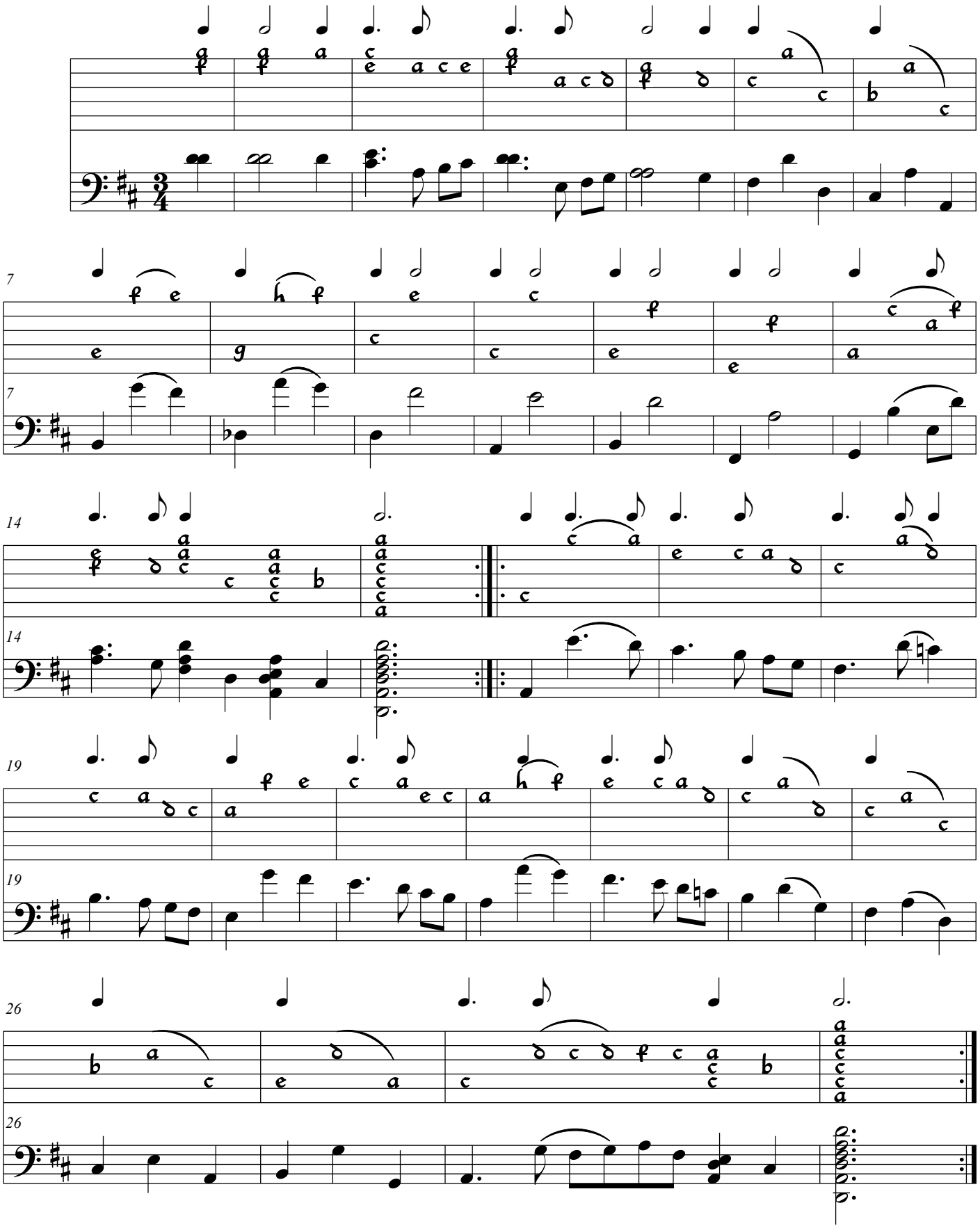

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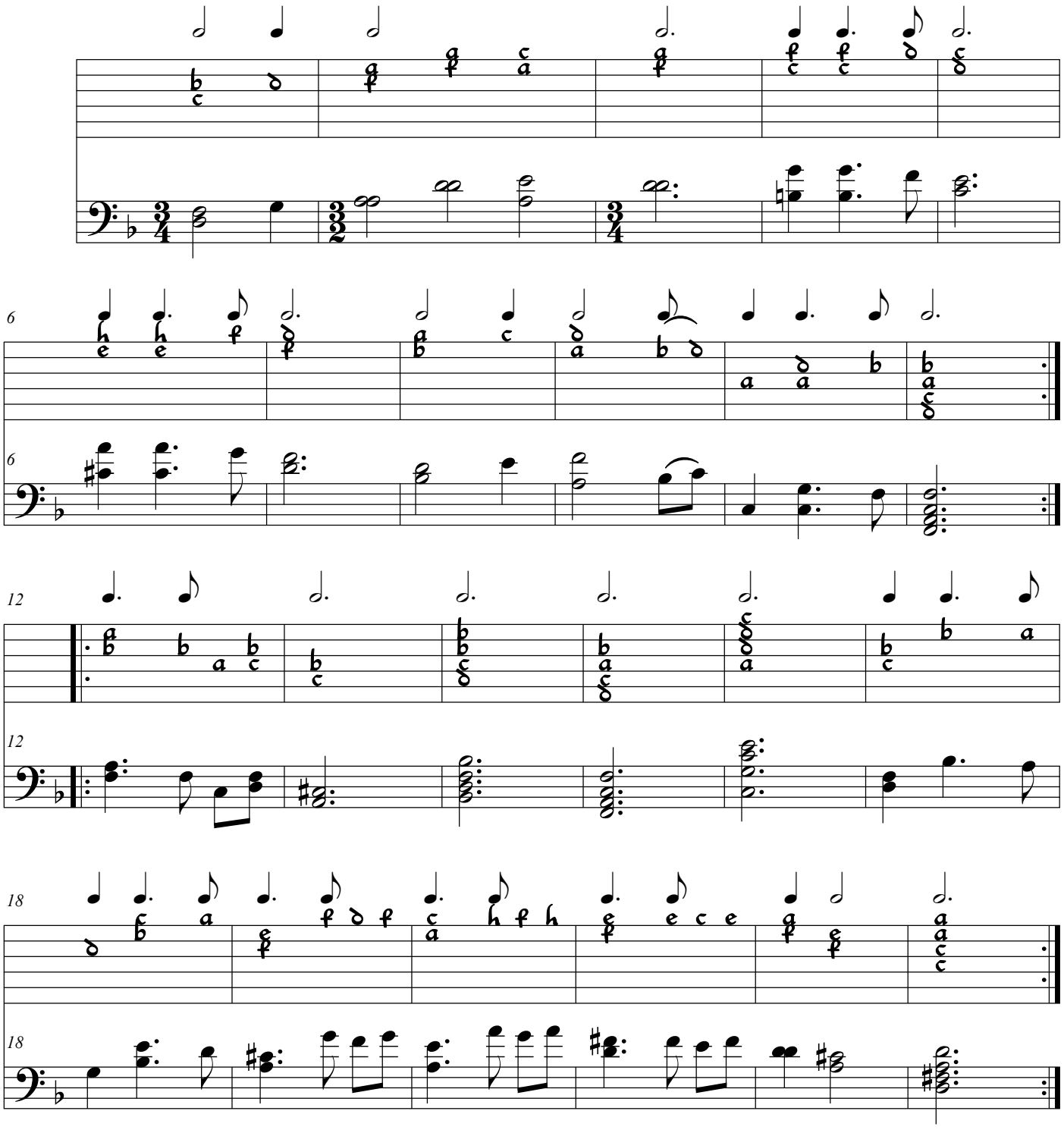

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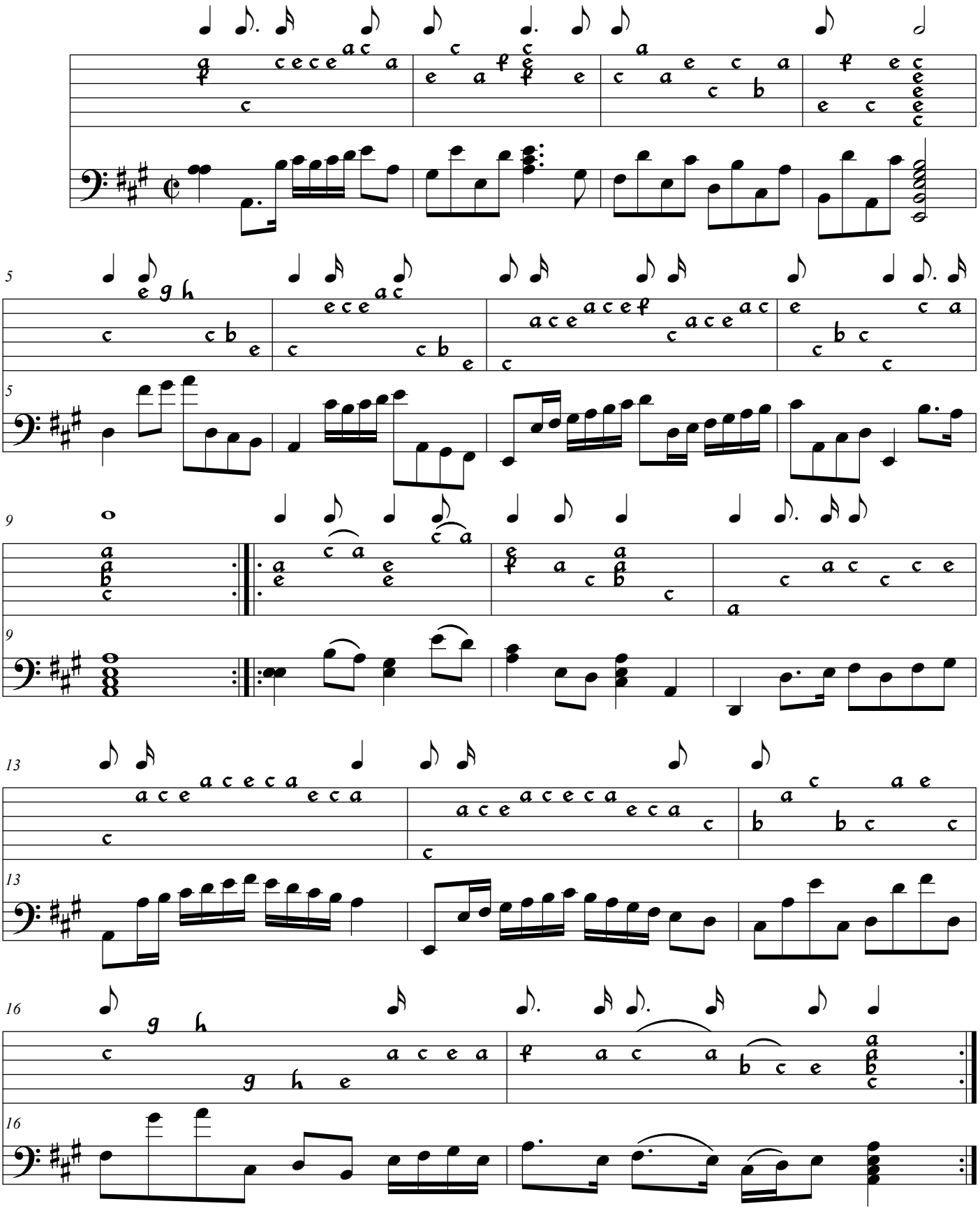

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Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-23

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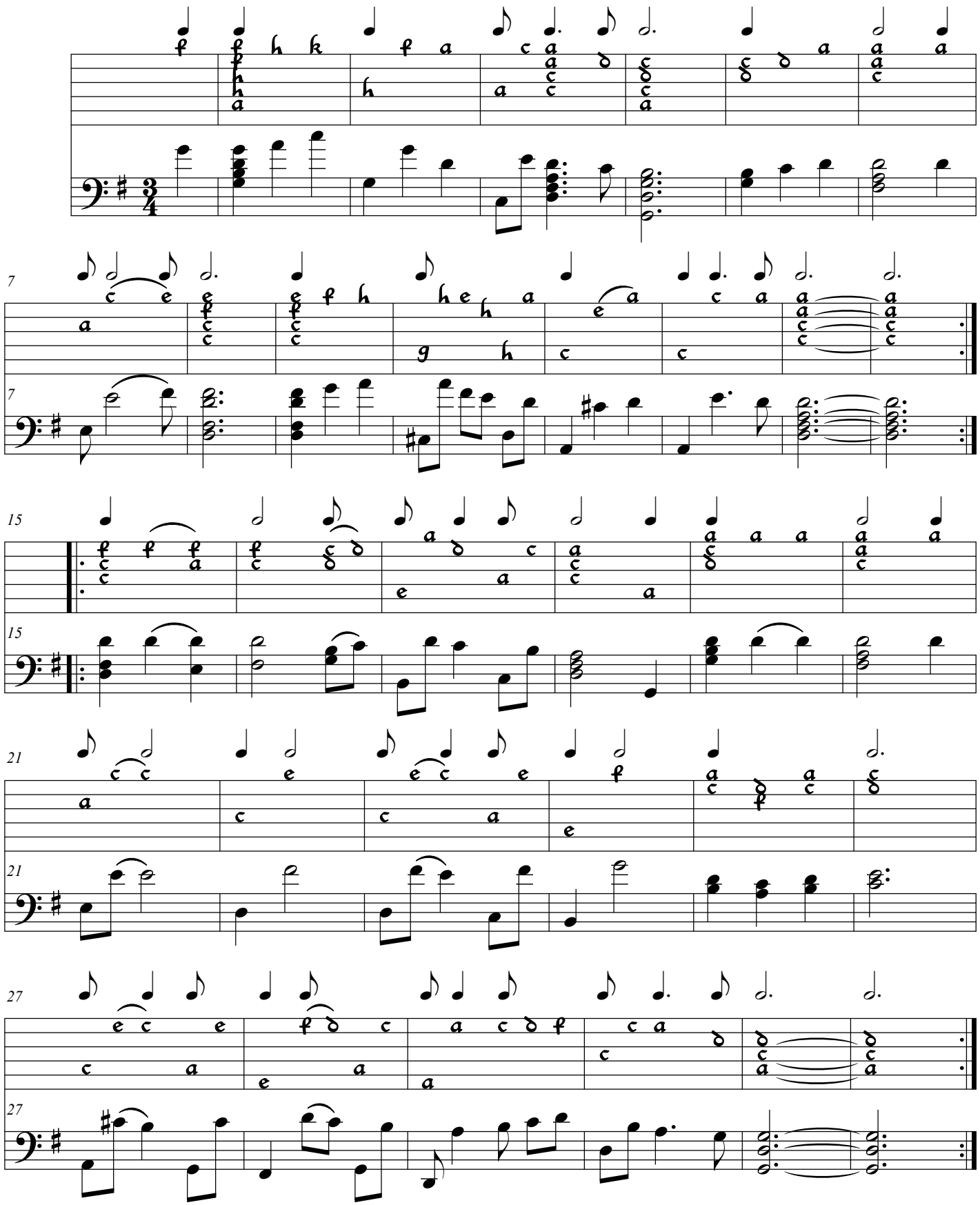
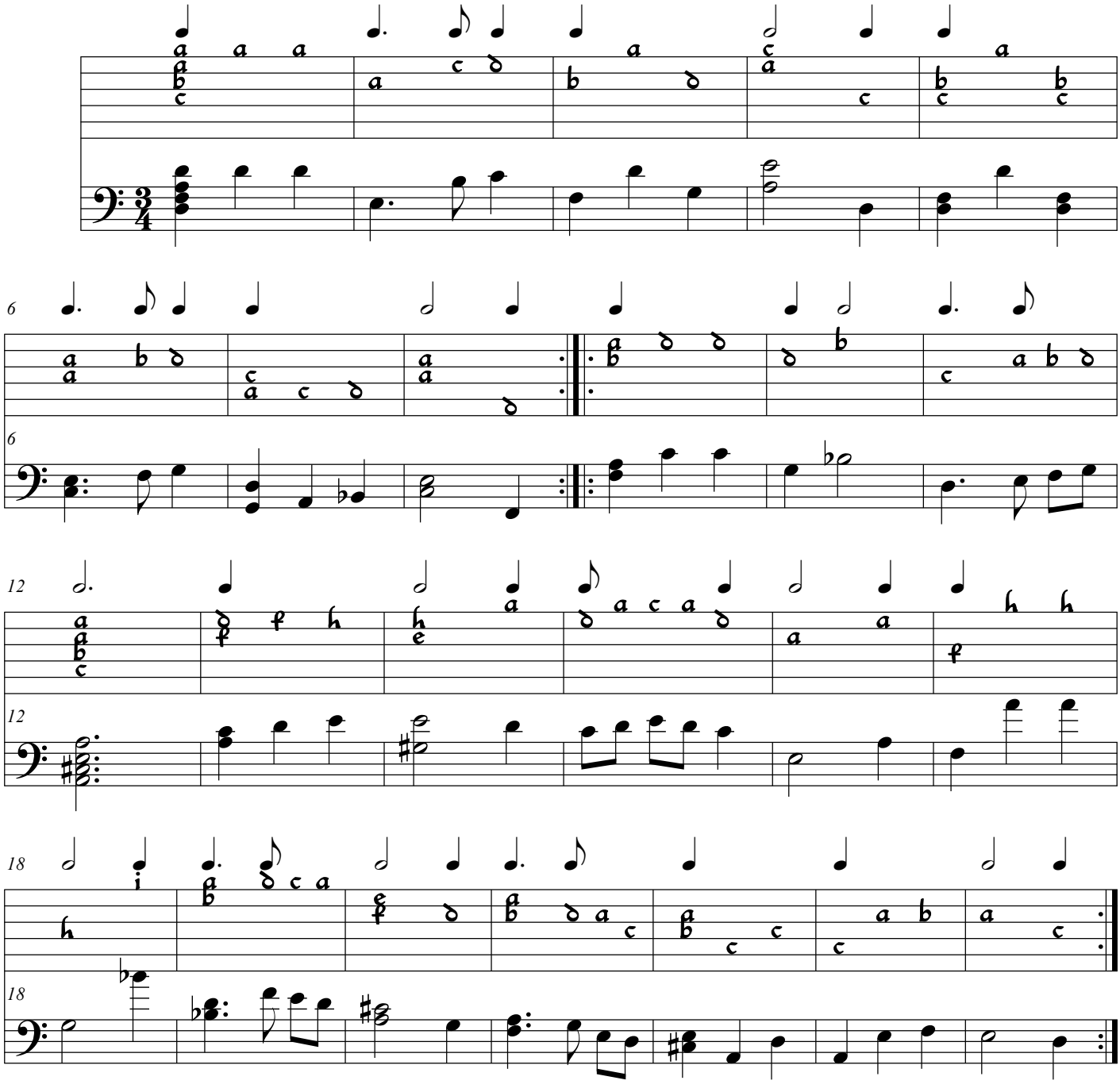


A Saraband

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-24

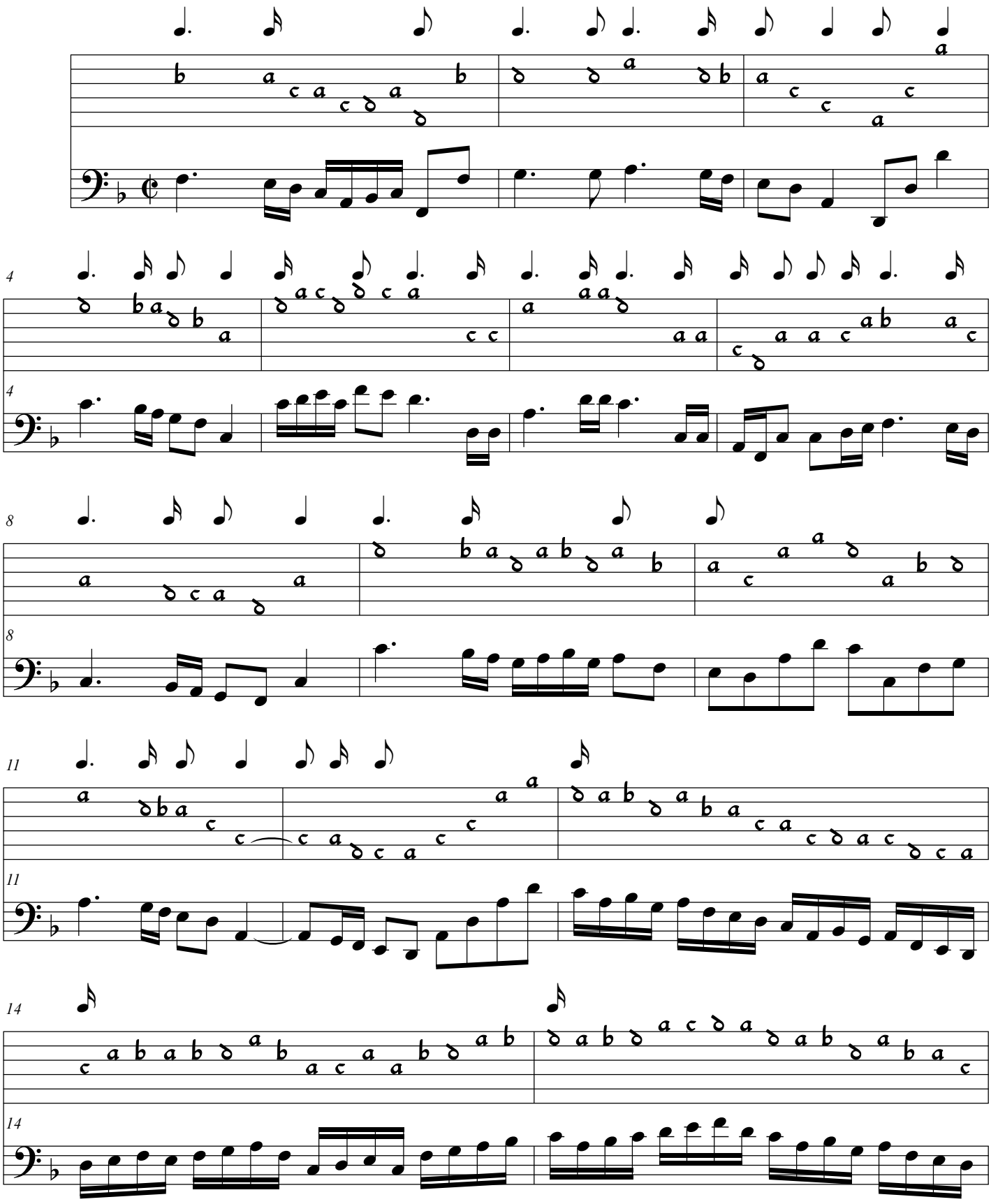
Mr. Willm Younge

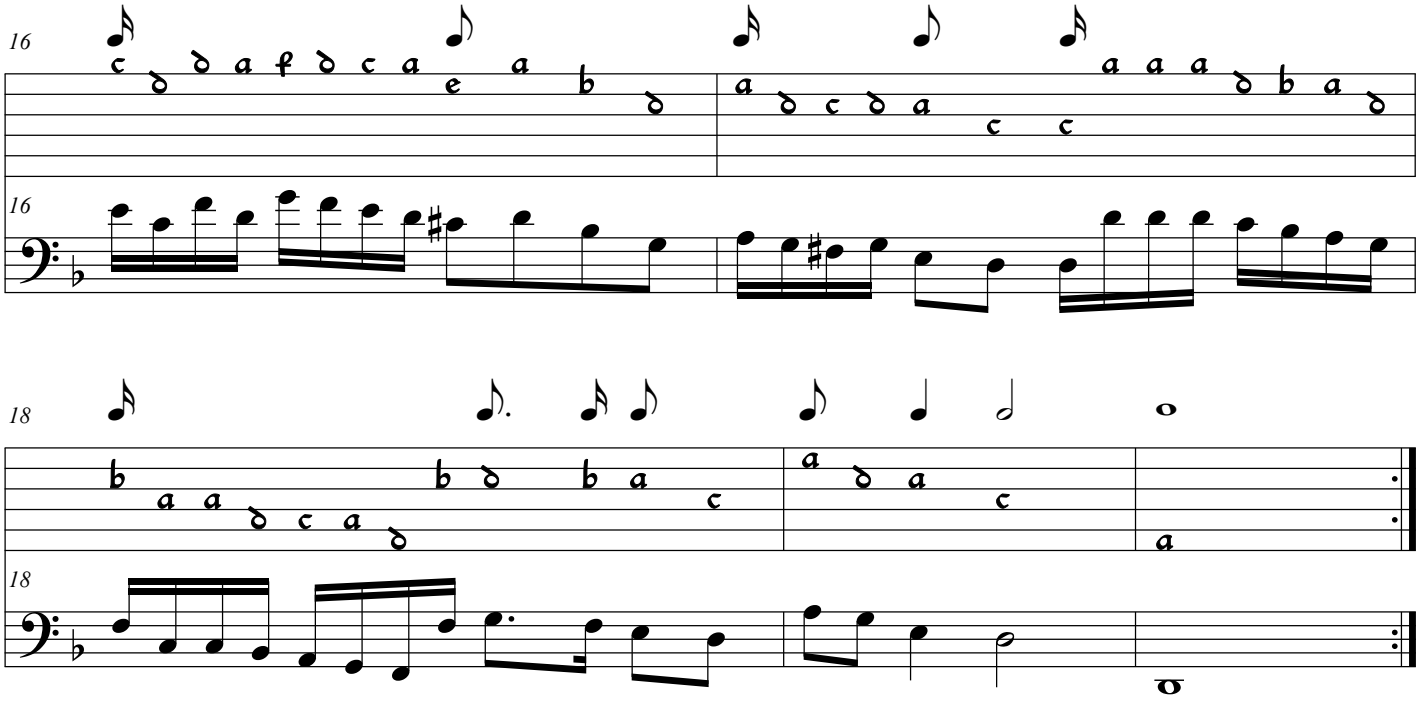


Preludiũ

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-25

Mr. Rich. Sumarte

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Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-26

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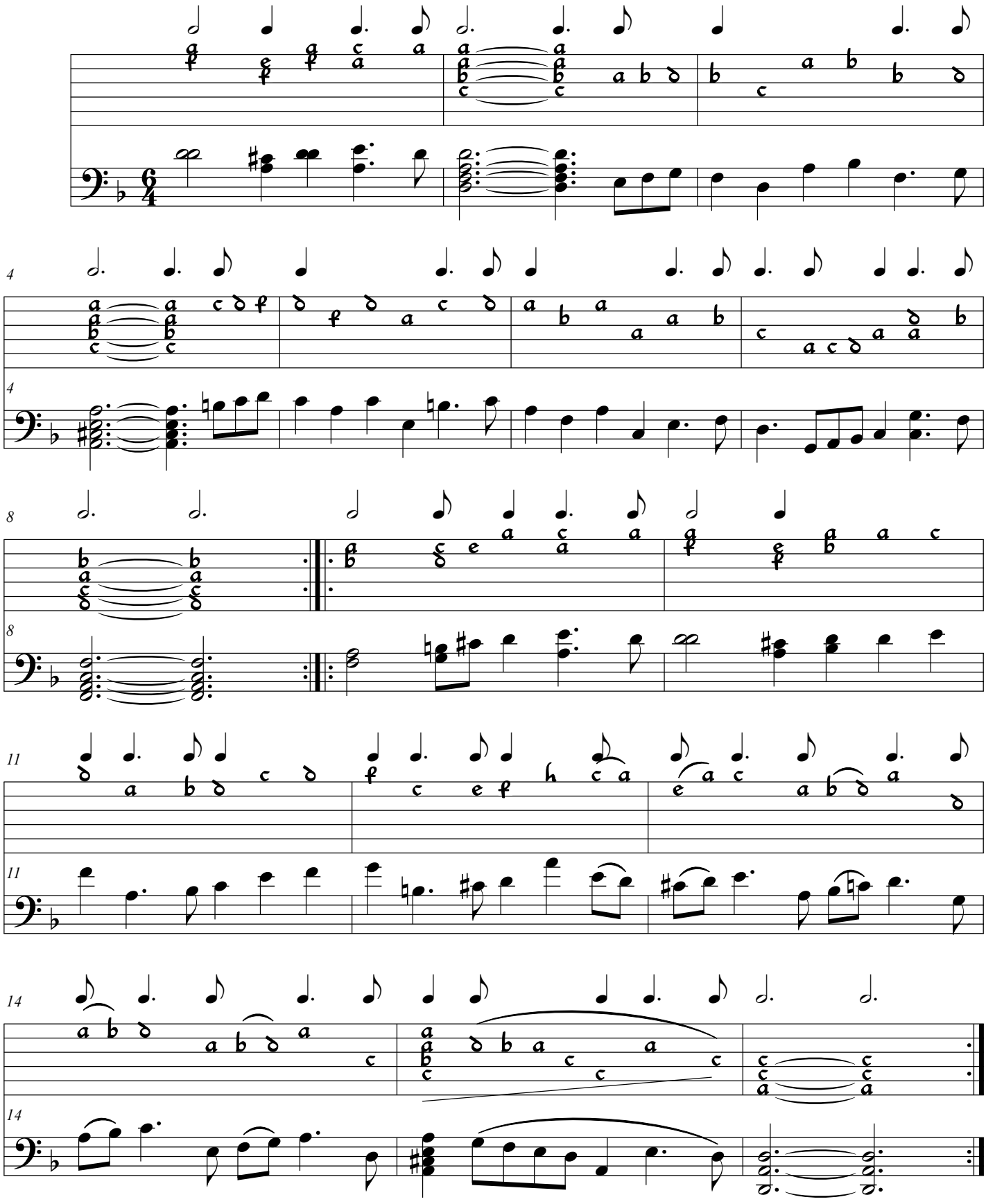
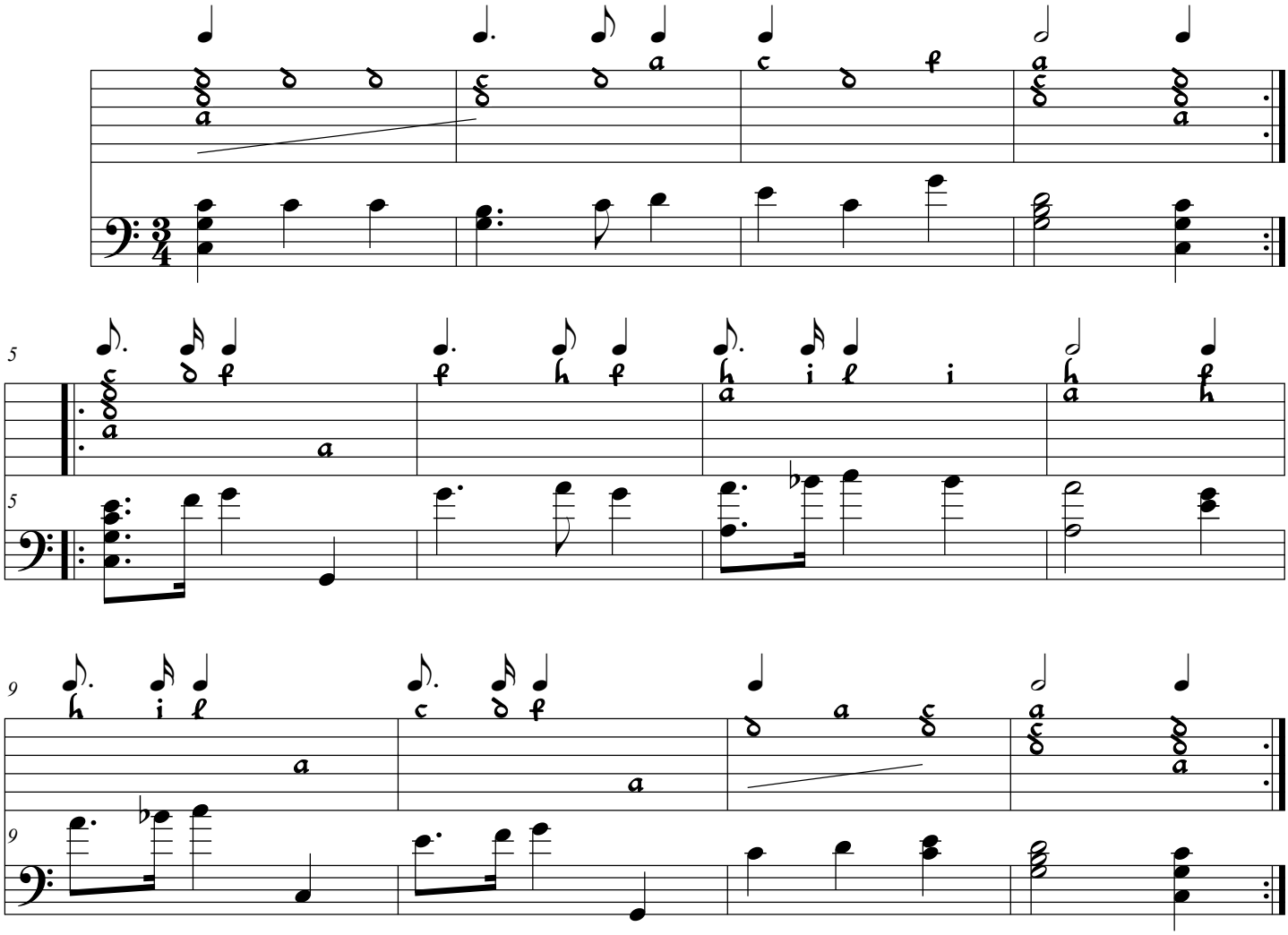


Saraband

Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript, I-27

Mr. Thomas Woodson

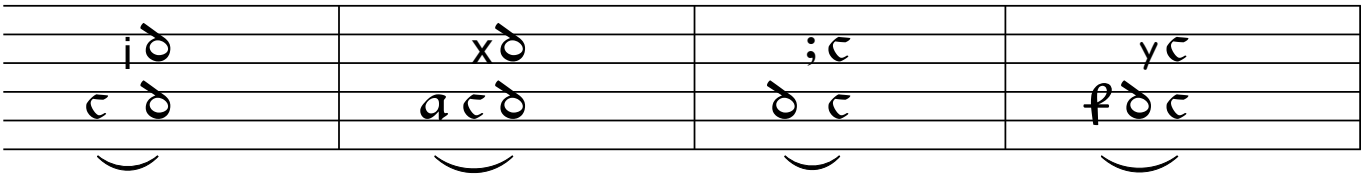


Graces on the Violl

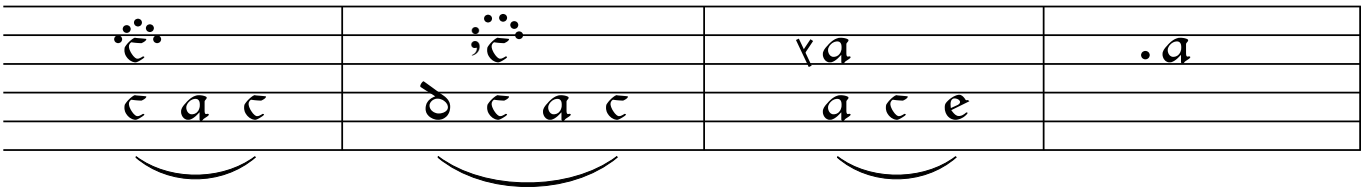
Manchester Lyra-Viol Manuscript

[Based on Paul Furnas, 1978]

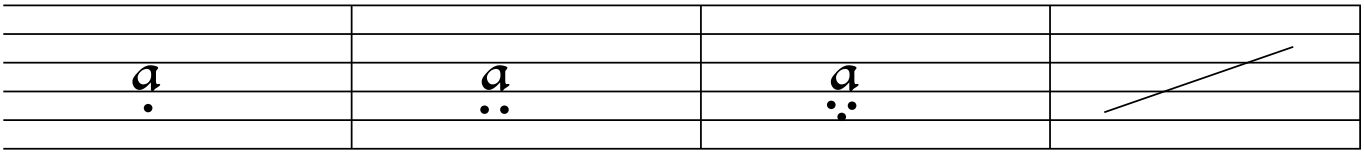
A beate *A fall* *A back-fall & beate* *A double back-fall*



A relishe *A [back]-fall & [relishe]* *An Elevation* *A shake*



A thumpe wth ye fore-finger *A thumpe wth ye middle-finger* *A thumpe wth ye ringe-finger* *A hold for the finger*



So many letters as are bound in wth these markes muste be slurde in one bowe *A slurre wth jobbinge, or juts at everie letter so inclosed* *A shake wth the bowe* *A pawse*