Dances of Old England, arranged by Andrew Haxell

Here are some transcriptions of country dances for renaissance lute, mostly 7-course, from Playford's *The English Dancing Master*.

I have not closely followed 17th/18th century harmonic practice except for the two items by Purcell (Hole in the Wall, and Old Bachelor) where I have researched and reproduced his harmony. His music is in another league compared to the other pieces, though they all have some interesting features.

The aim has been to provide intermediate level pieces that above all are fun to play and attractive to the ear. I selected tunes which offered the possibility of modulation and interesting harmony or rhythm. Most pieces are from the earlier editions, as the quality distinctly dropped off as the years passed.

I have included variations/divisions with a few of the shorter numbers.

Where I have been able to discover historical information about the music or the titles, I have written a paragraph about it, which I trust will be of interest to UK and international members. - *Andrew Haxell.*

The pieces are:

All in a Garden Green, (7 & 10-c versions), Barn Elms, Camberwell, Chestnut, Childgrove, The Chirping of the Nightingale, Churchill's March. The Country Farmer, Dick's Maggot, Excuse Me, Fain I would, Hole in the Wall, Joan's Placket, Kemp's Jig, The Ladies' Maggot, Lady Cullen, Mr Lane's Minuet, Lull Me Beyond Thee, The Marriage Hater, More the Merrier, Old Bachelor, Petticoat Wag, St. Martin, The Siege of Limerick, Touch and Go, The Twins, The King of Poland, Wallingford House, The Irish Lady, Dissembling love.

The English Dancing Master by John Playford published 1651-1728

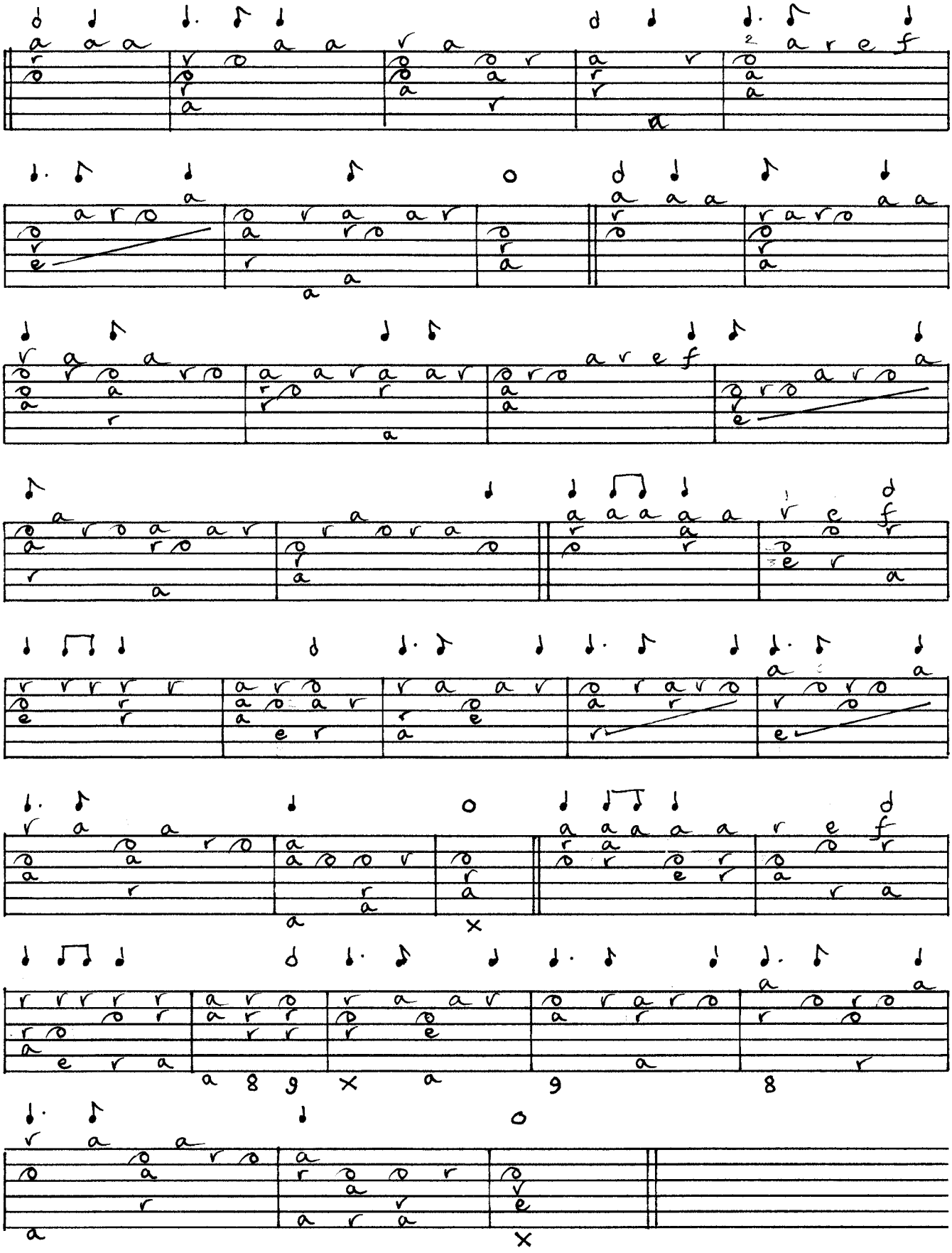
Lute, 10-course

All in a Garden Green (1651)

(Gathering Peascods)

Trans. T Andrew Haxell

All in a garden green two lovers sat at ease
As they could scarce be seen among, among the leafy trees.



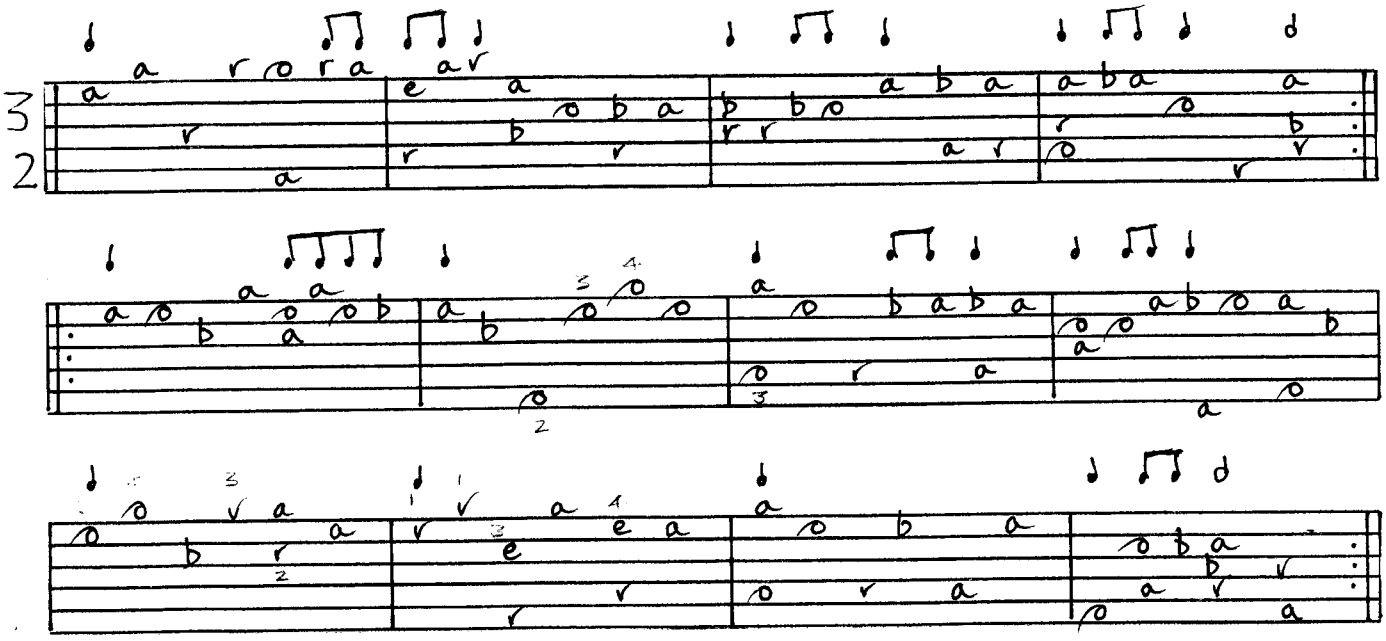
The English Dancing Master by John Playford, published 1651-1728.

Lute, 7-course

Barn Elms 1710

Trans. T Andrew Haxell

Barn Elms is an area of West London situated in a loop of the Thames in the Borough of Richmond. Elizabeth I paid three visits to her spymaster, Sir Francis Walsingham who lived there. In the 1660s it was a popular picnic spot reached by boat, mentioned by Samuel Pepys. Barn Elms is the name of a later Georgian house and estate where Handel stayed in 1711. The house was much altered and enlarged over the years but fell into disrepair and finally burnt down in 1954 and was demolished. The estate is now open space mostly given over to playing fields and sports clubs. The London Wetland Centre is nearby, a bird and nature reserve centred on four disused Victorian reservoirs.



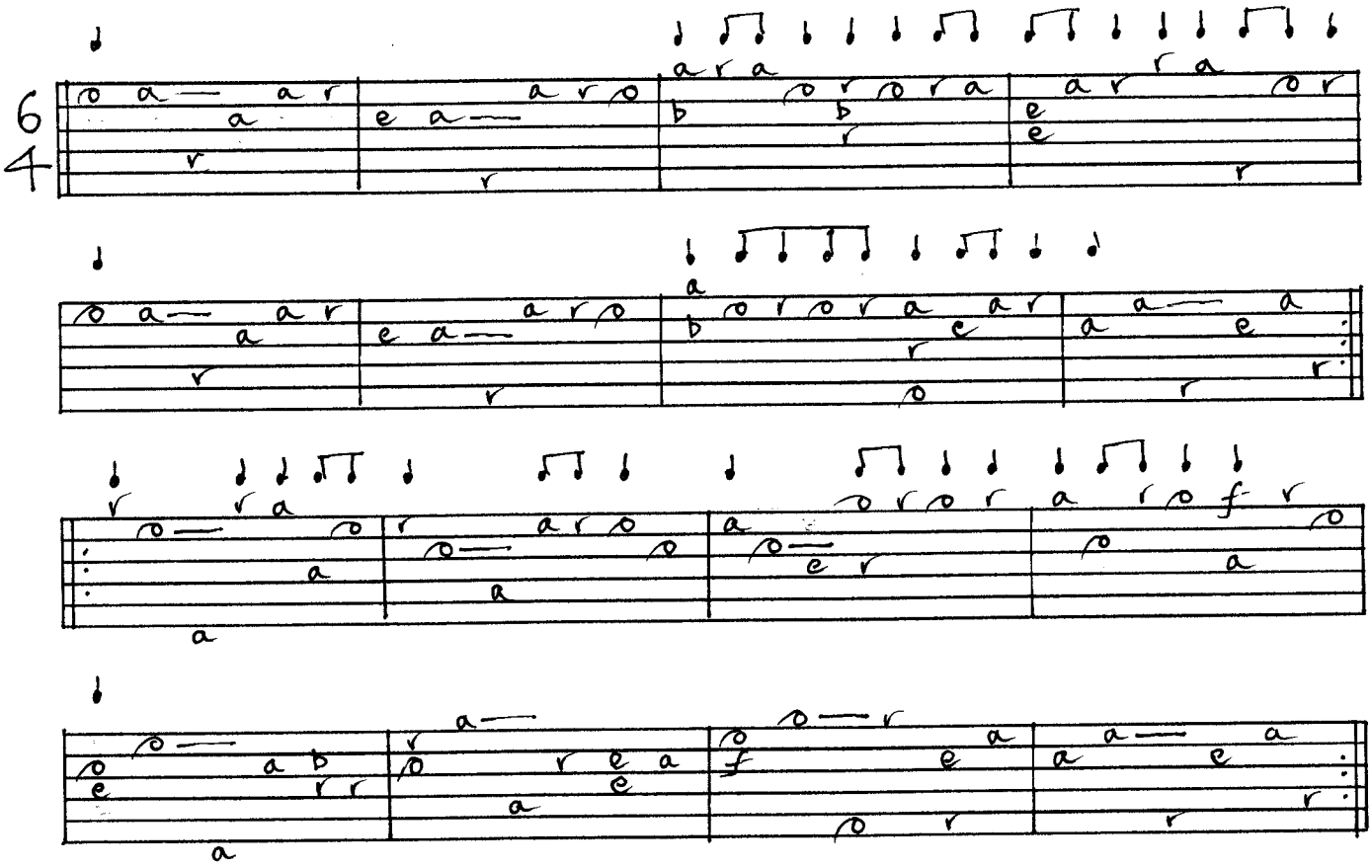
The English Dancing Master by John Playford, published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course

Camberwell (1710)

Trans. T Andrew Haxell

Camberwell: an area of London, about three miles south-east of Nelson's Column. It is a settlement of long standing, described in the Domesday Book. It was the location of springs and wells that were believed to heal the sick.



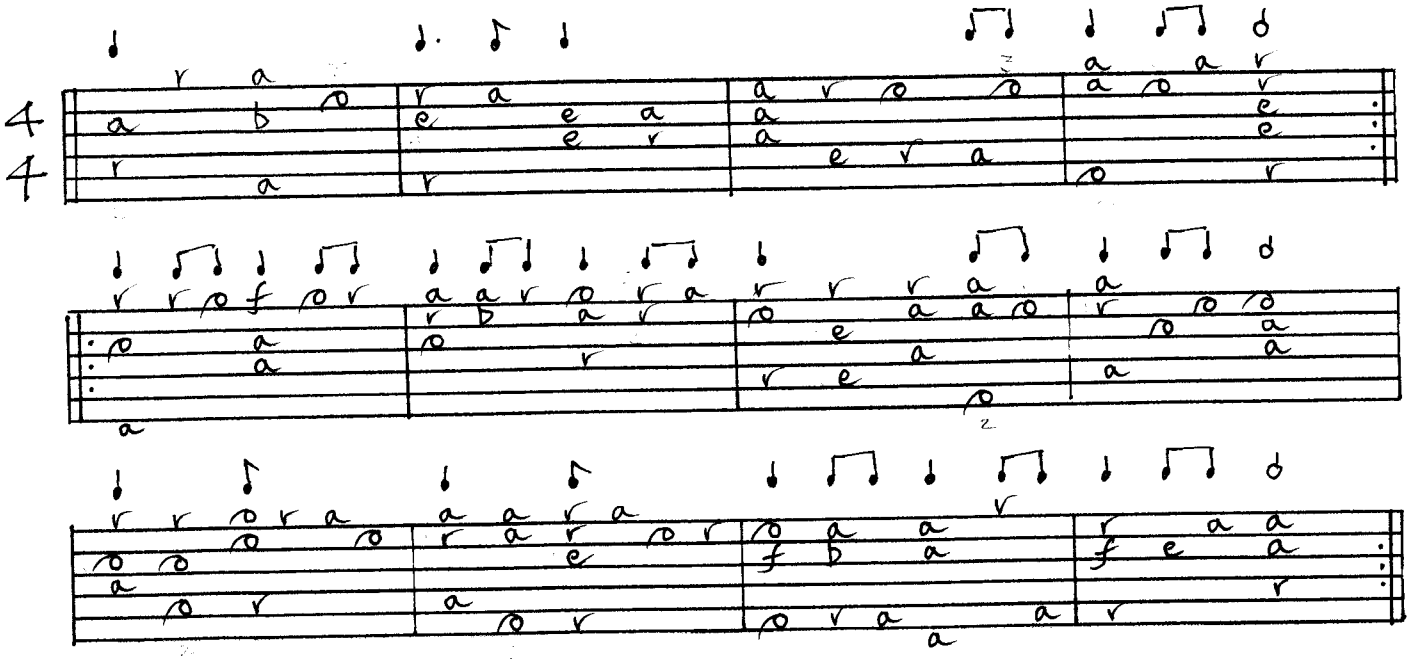
The English Dancing Master by John Playford, published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course

Chestnut (1651)

Trans.T Andrew Haxell

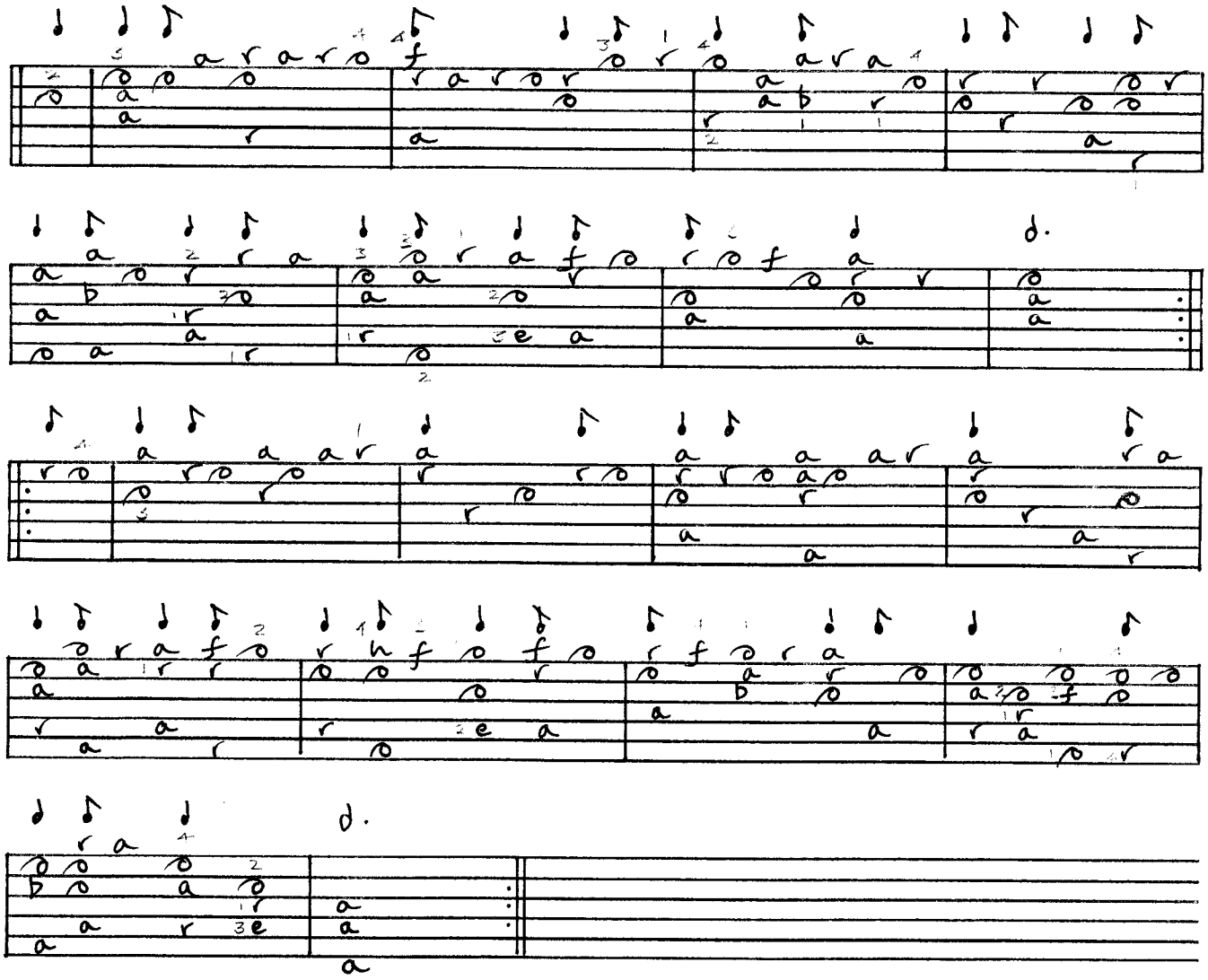
(later called Dove's Figary)



The English Dancing Master by John Playford published 1651-1728

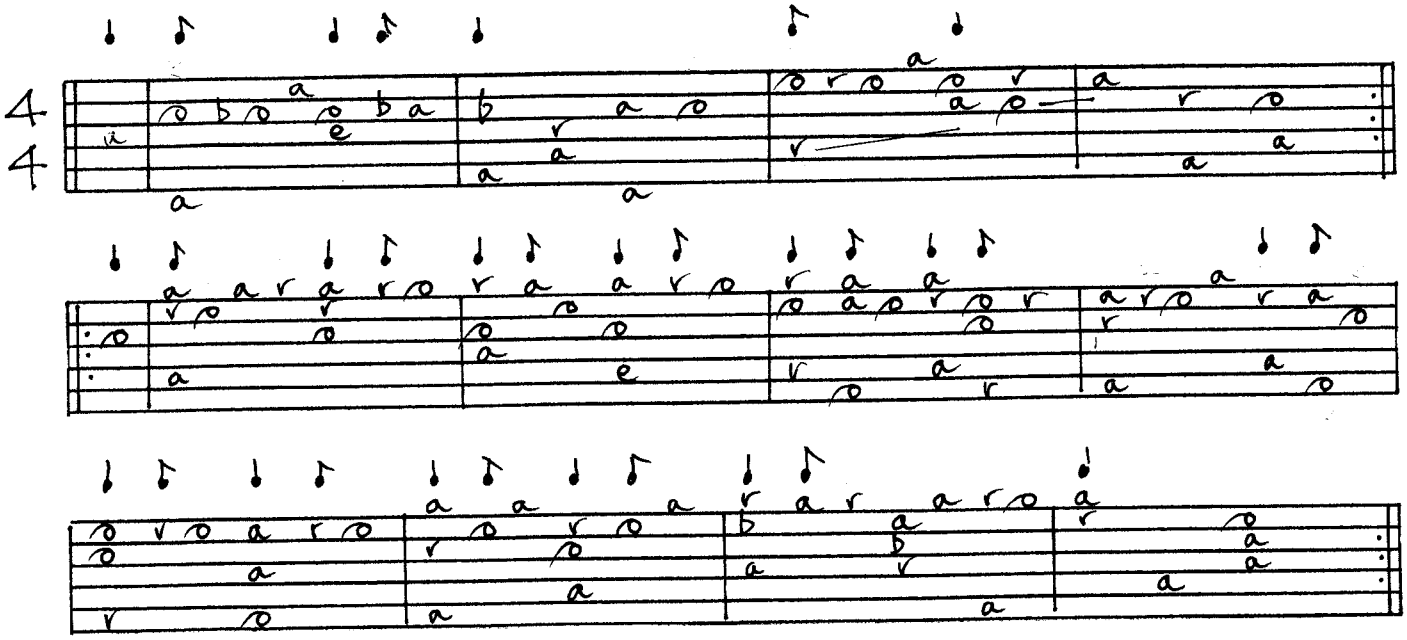
Lute, 7-course **Churchill's March** (1710) Trans. T Andrew Haxell

Named for John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, 1st Prince of Mindelheim, 1st Count of Nellenburg, Prince of the Holy Roman Empire, (1650-1722). He was a prominent English military leader and statesman active across the reigns of five royals, (notably during the War of the Spanish Succession), who in 1704 was given Blenheim Palace by a grateful monarch and nation. His direct descendant, Sir Winston Churchill, was born there in 1874.



The English Dancing Master by John Playford, published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course **The Country Farmer (1702)** Trans. T Andrew Haxell



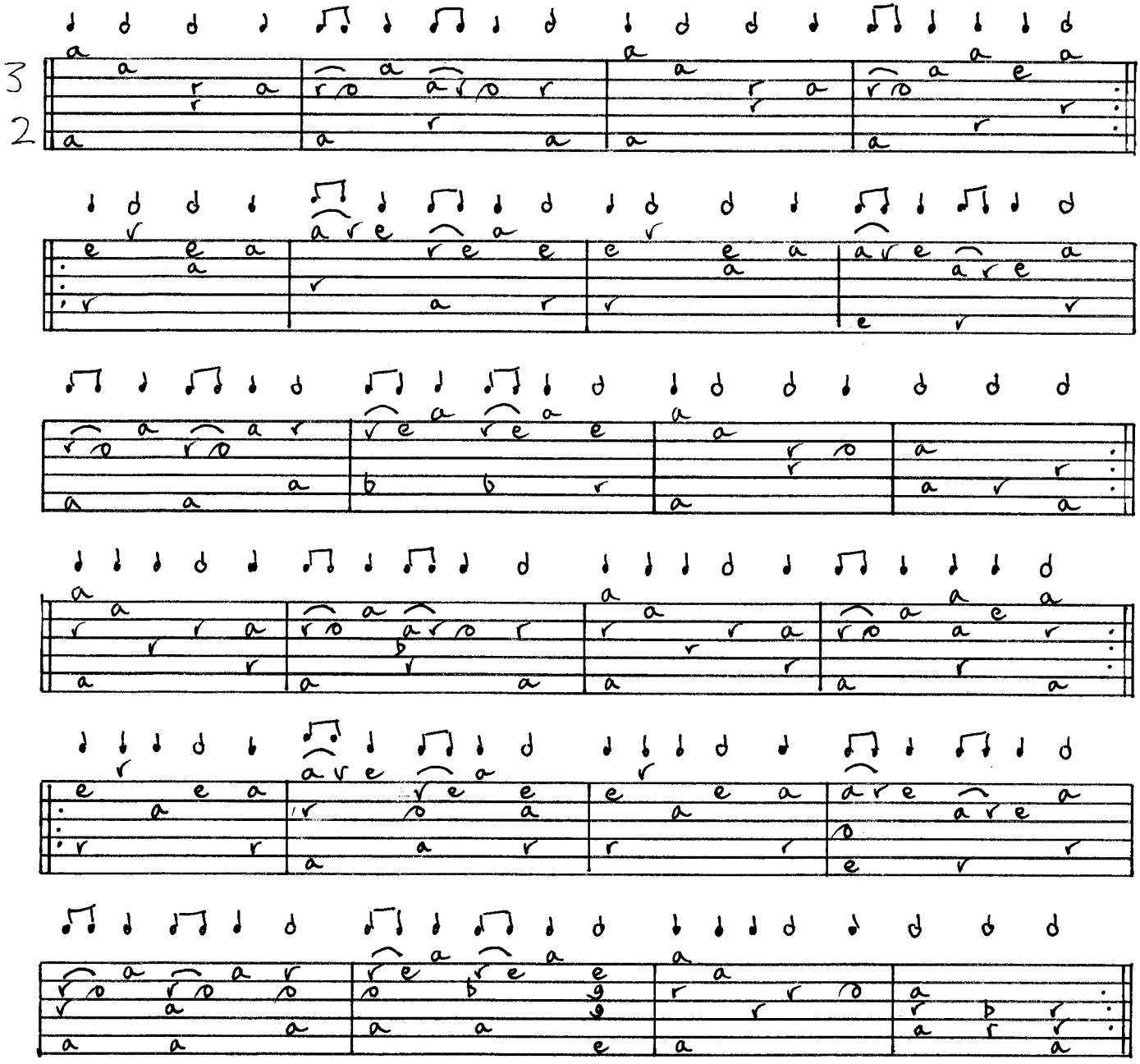
From The English Dancing Master by John Playford, published 1651-1728.

7-course lute

Dick's Maggot (1702)

Trans. T Andrew Haxell

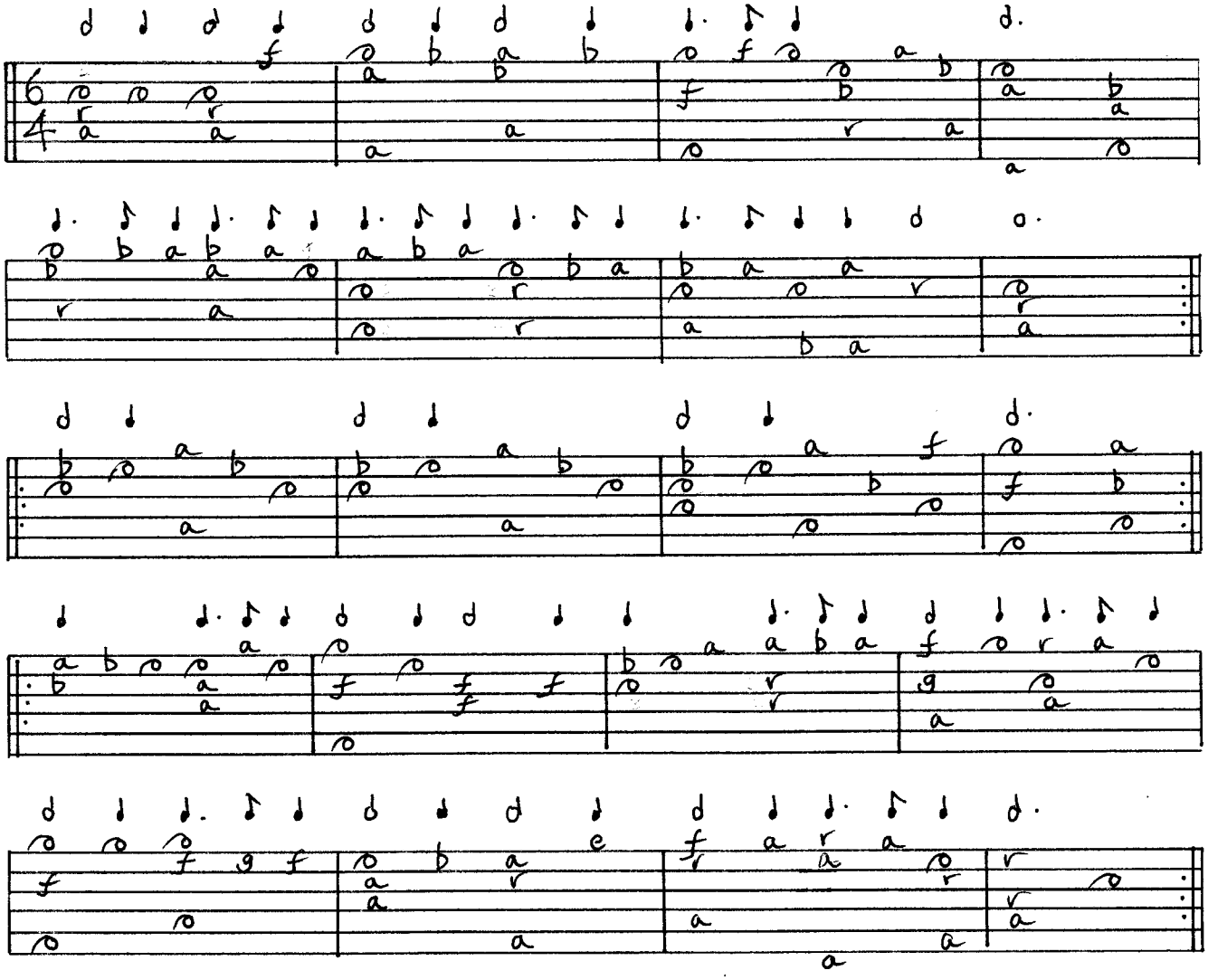
The title's meaning is uncertain but might refer to the folk belief that a maggot in the brain will cause eccentric behaviour. Thus, a maggot is a piece of whimsy or a fancy.



The English Dancing Master by John Playford published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course **Excuse Me (1686)** Trans.Andrew Haxell

Loosely based on John Dowland's "Can she excuse my Wrongs with Vertues Cloak". This was a very popular tune and appears in many 18th-century ballad operas.



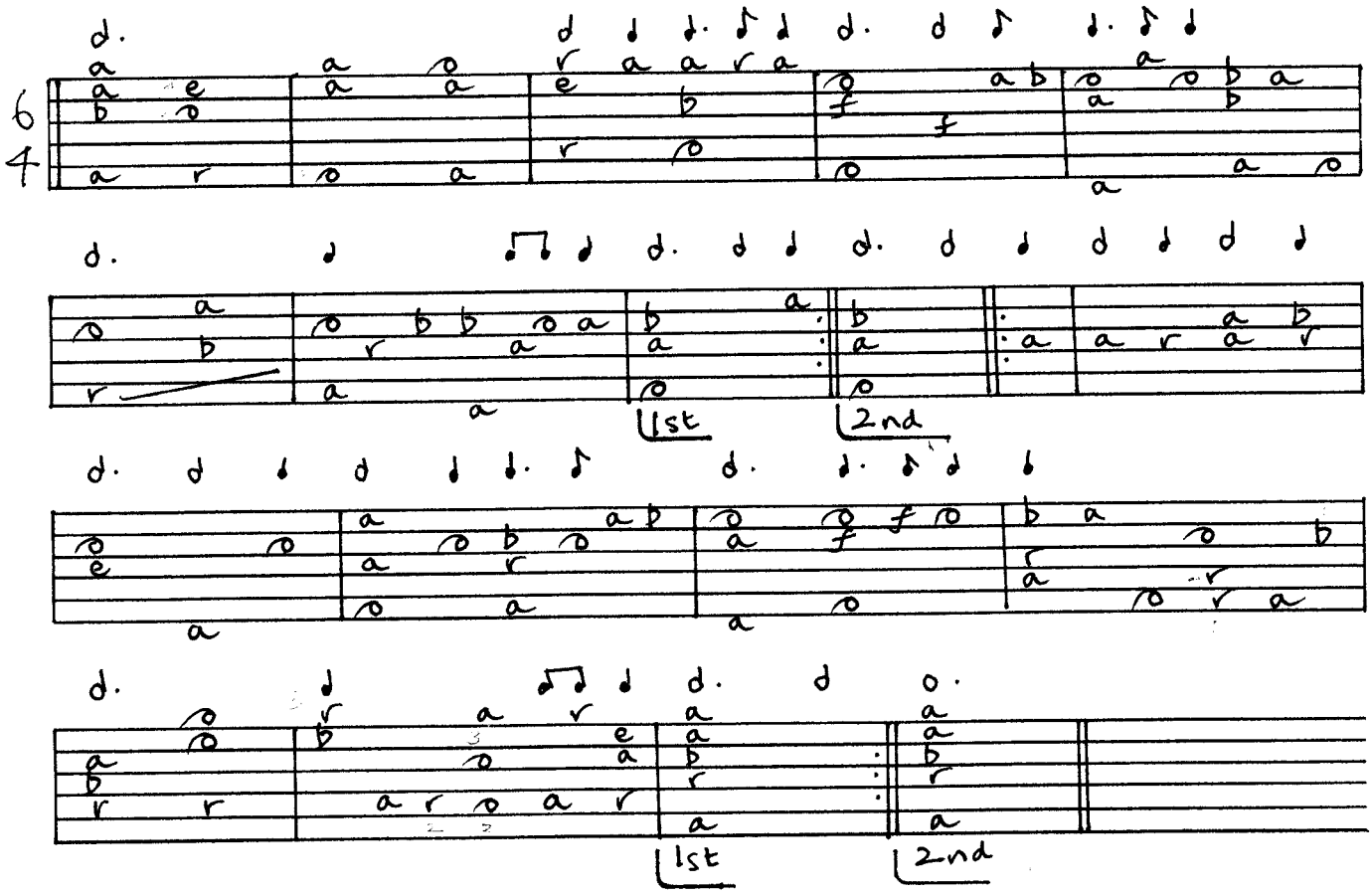
From The English Dancing Master by John Playford, published 1651-1728.

7-course lute

Fain I would (if I could) (1651)

Trans. T Andrew Haxell

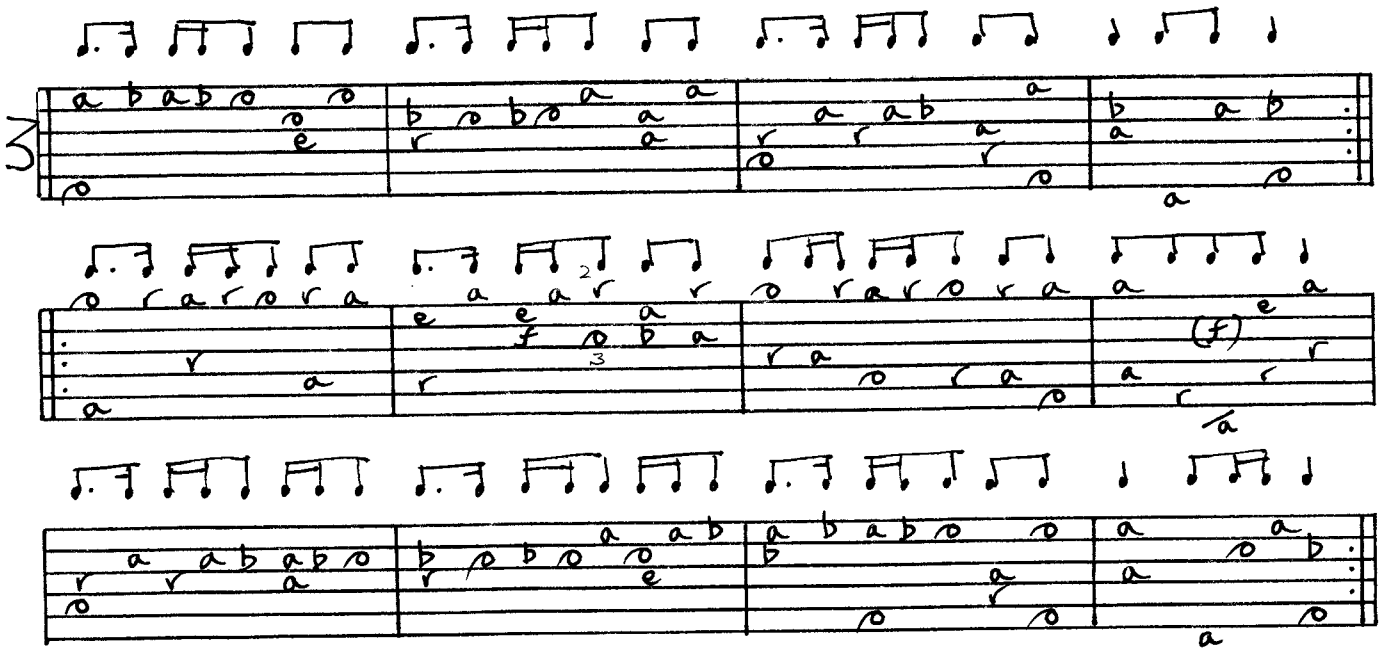
This tune is also known as The King's Complaint, the words of which are lost. Fain is an archaic word meaning variously: "glad, joyful, eager", also "compelled", and "content for want of better". "Fain I would, if I could by any means obtain leave of my masters to sit with them again. They say tis such a thing for the worst of them's a King. We will rule still in spite of cavalieres O brave House of Commons, O brave House of Peers".



The English Dancing Master by John Playford published 1651-1728

7/8-course lute **Hole in the Wall (1698)** Trans.T Andrew Haxell

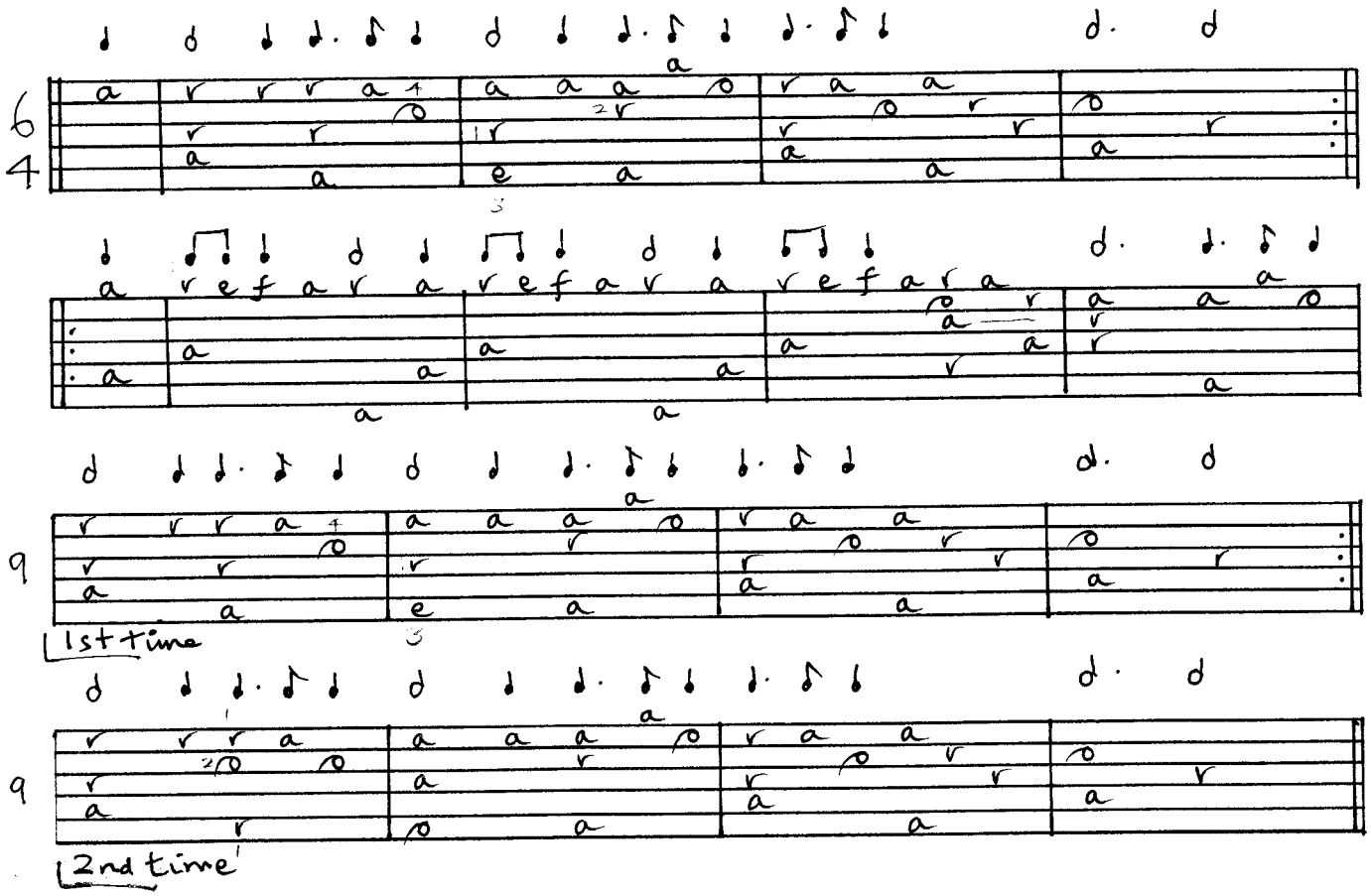
The Hornpipe from Henry Purcell's music for *Abeldazer or The Moor's Revenge,* a tragic play by Aphra Behn, first performed at the Dorset Garden Theatre in 1676. At one time a spy in Antwerp for Charles II, she was one of the first English women to earn a living by writing, under the *nom de plume* Astrea.



The English Dancing Master by John Playford, published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course **Joan's Placket (is Torn, 1698)** Trans. T Andrew Haxell

A placket is an opening at the waistband of a skirt or petticoat to enable it to be put on or removed. The earliest written mention of this tune (though it may be much older) was in Samuel Pepys's diary in 1667, in connection with the Dutch Navy's humiliating capture of the English flagship *Royal Charles* during their raid on the Medway. The Dutch sailors reportedly played this tune as a taunt as they towed it away. The melody exists in various forms and under different names; it was used in several 18th century ballad operas, by when it had become associated with political lampooning.



The English Dancing Master by John Playford published 1651-1728

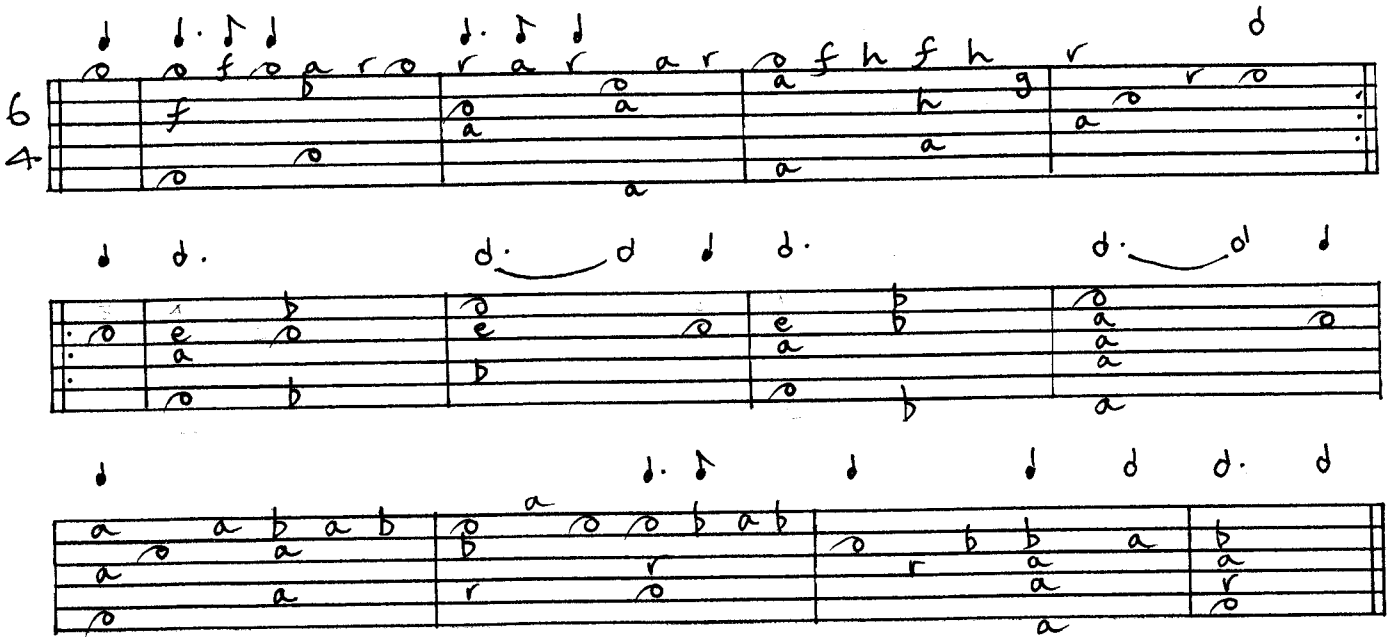
Lute, 7-course

Kemp's Jig (1651)

Trans. T Andrew Haxell

Will Kemp, or Kempe (died c.1603, aged 43) was Shakespeare's clown who famously won a wager that he could not dance for one hundred miles. He danced (in stages) with a musician from London to Norwich, at that time England's second city, and won the bet.

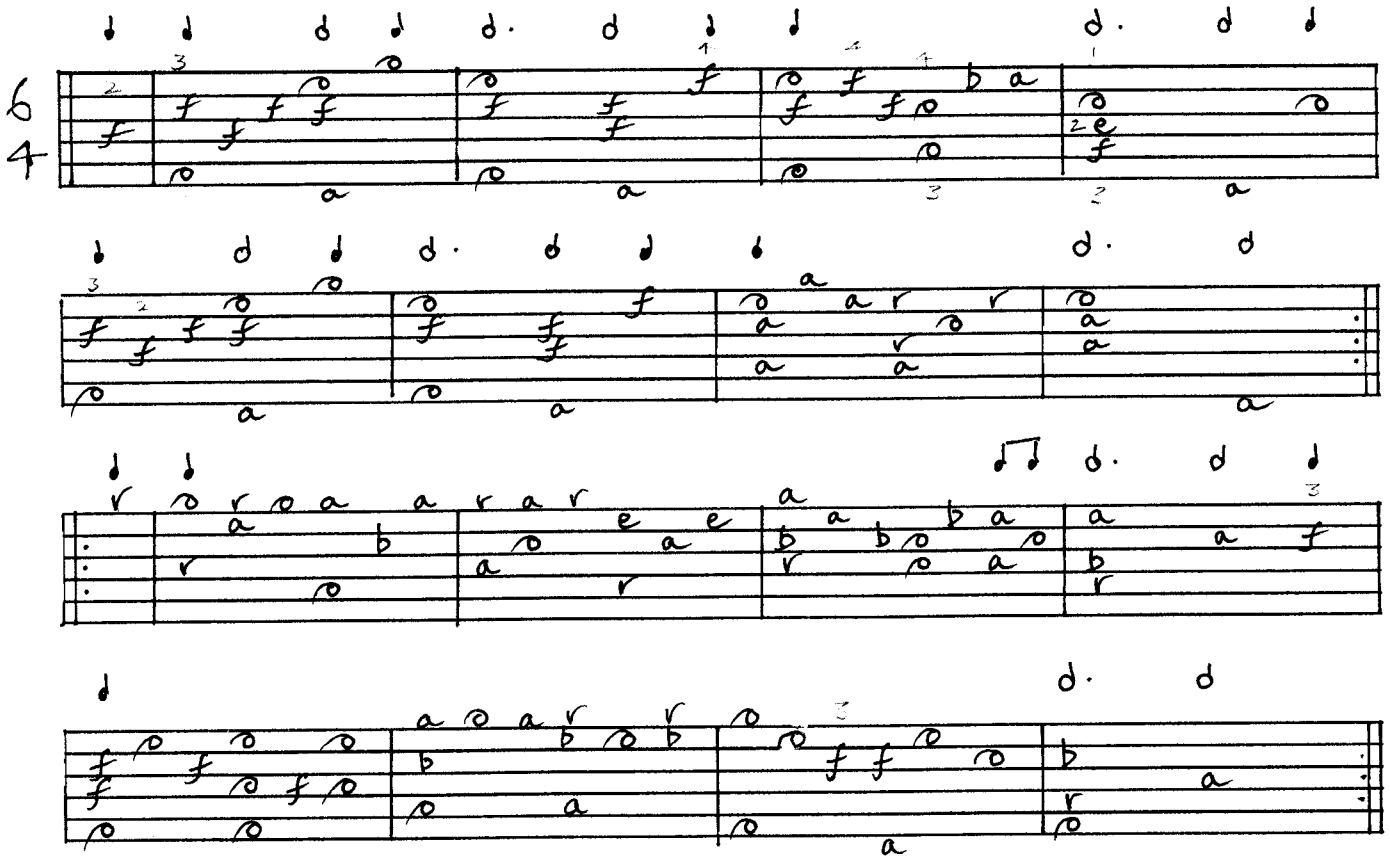
The Elizabethan jig was an often bawdy entertainment by the clowns, featuring costumes, song, dance and rough humour, that followed the main play. This musical jig may have been written after his lifetime.



The English Dancing Master by John Playford, published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course **The Ladies' Maggot (1701)** Trans. T Andrew Haxell

The title's meaning is uncertain but might refer to the folk belief that a maggot in the brain will cause eccentric behaviour. Thus, a maggot is a piece of whimsy or a fancy.



The English Dancing Master by John Playford published 1651-1728

Lute, 6-course **Lady Cullen** (1651) Trans. T Andrew Haxell

Also known as "My Lady Cullen's Delight". Lady Cullen may be Lady Mary (née O'Brien d.1686), wife of Charles Cokayne, (1602-1661), 1st Viscount Cullen.

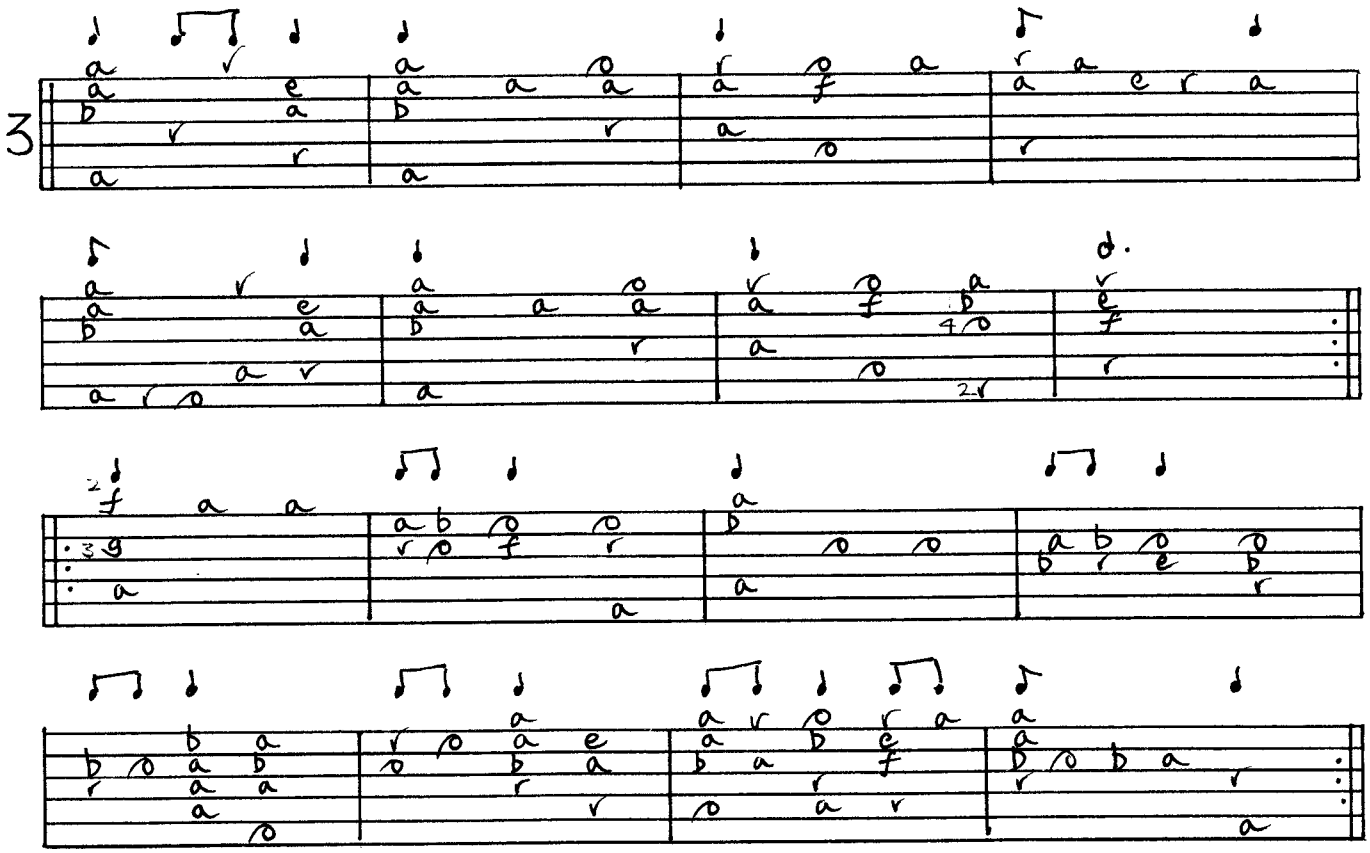
From The English Dancing Master by John Playford, published 1651-1728.

7-course lute

Mr Lane's Minuet (1695)

Trans. T Andrew Haxell

Mr Lane was Charles II's dancing master. Mr Lane's Trumpet-Minuet and Mr Lane's Maggot also appear in *The English Dancing Master.*

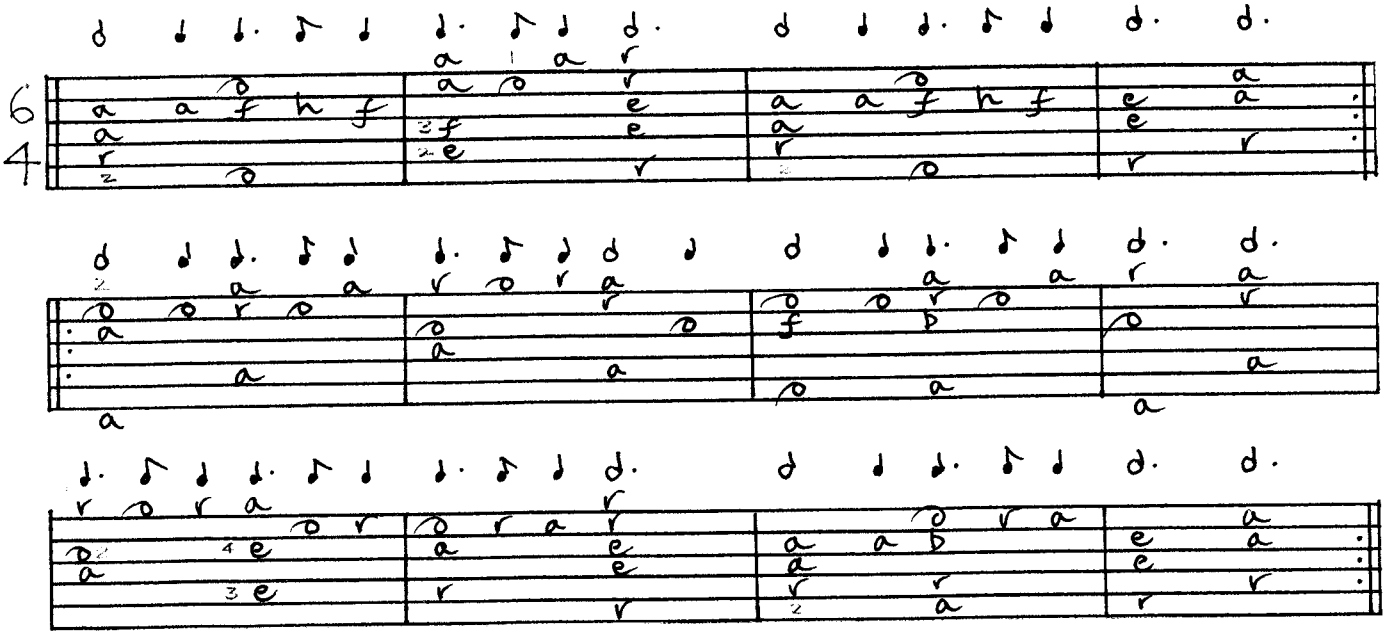


The English Dancing Master by John Playford published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course **Lull me Beyond Thee** (1651) Trans. T Andrew Haxell

Versions of this tune exist in many forms and under different names. More than a century later Robert Burns based a song on it, Craigieburn Wood, though his melody has wandered away from the original. The chorus retains part of the title;

Beyond thee, dearie, beyond thee, dearie,
And O to be lying beyond thee!
O sweetly, soundly, weel he may sleep
That's laid in the bed beyond thee!



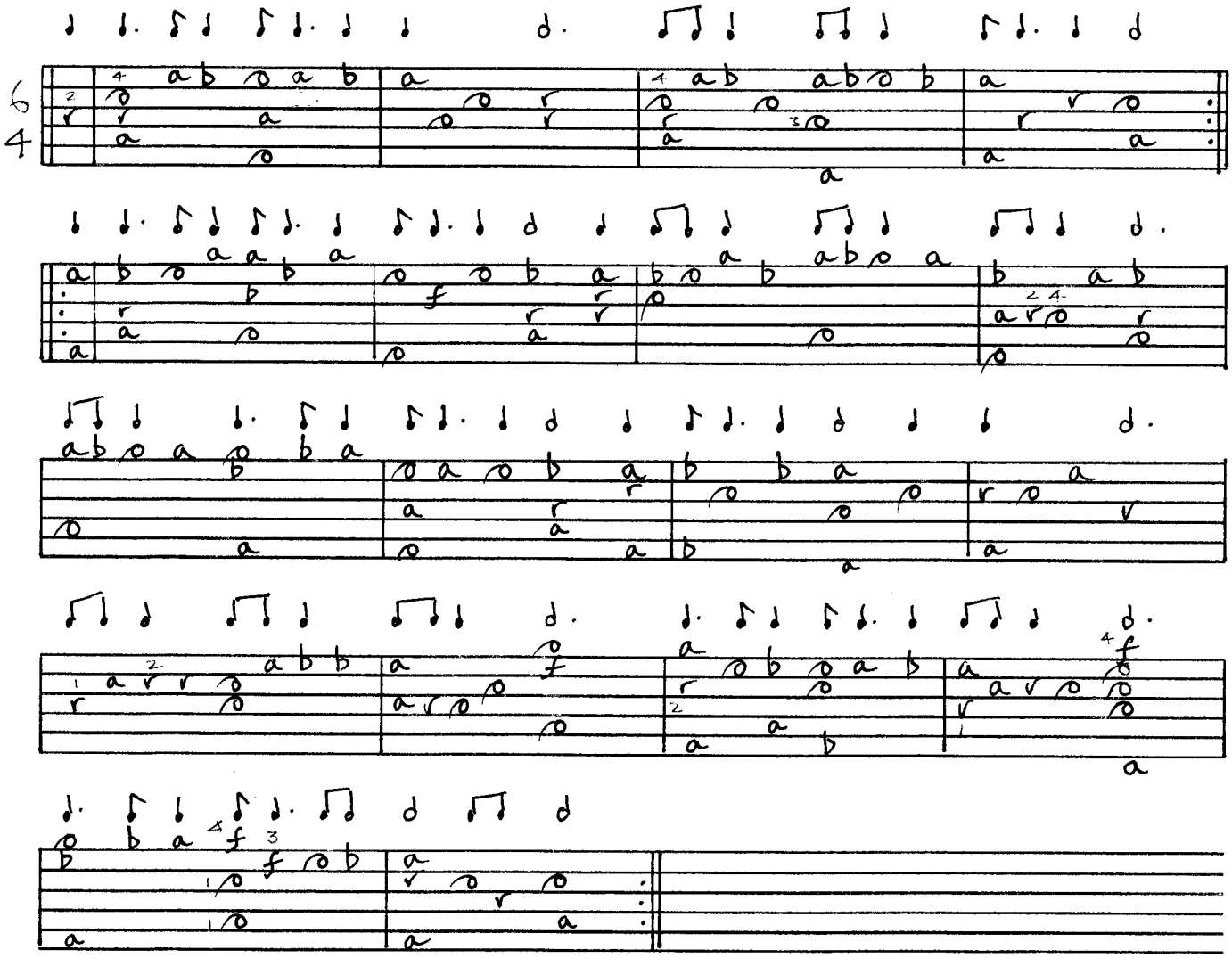
From The English Dancing Master by John Playford, published 1651-1728.

7-course lute

The Marriage Hater (1695)

Trans. T Andrew Haxell

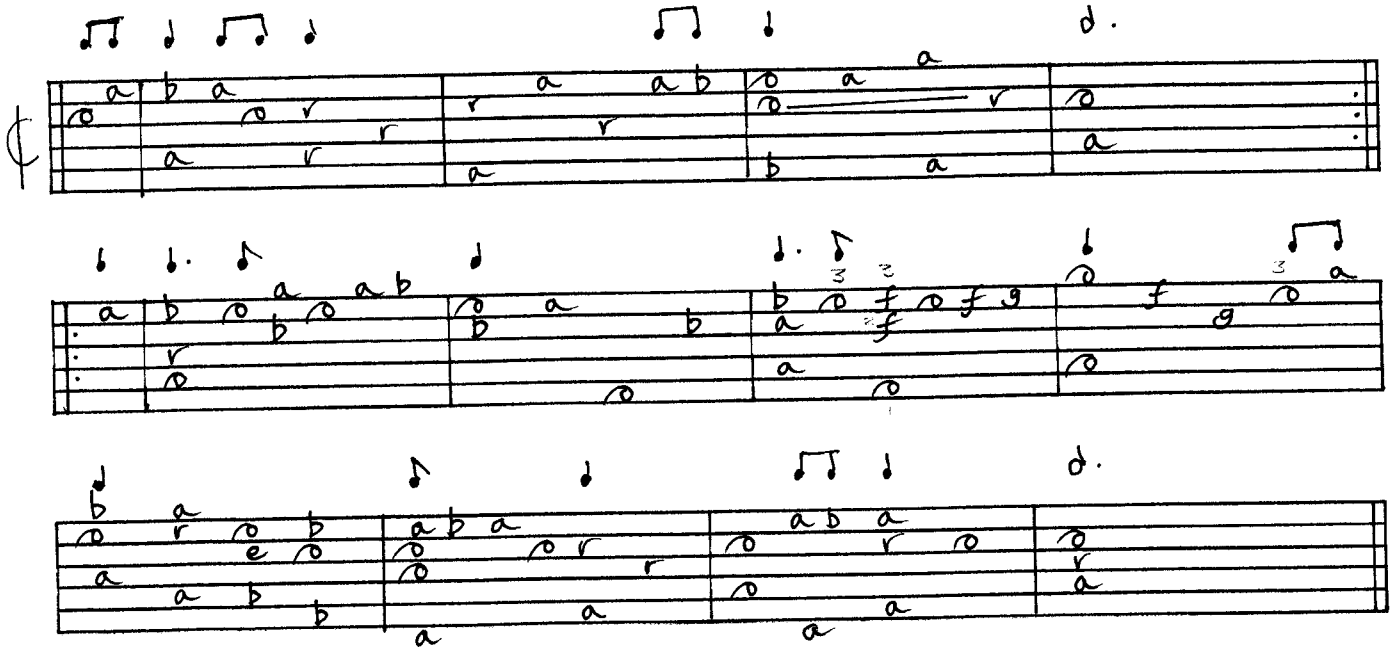
The Marriage-Hater Matched was a comedy first put on at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane in January 1692. The cast included the flamboyant actor-manager Colley Cibber, (autobiographer, notorious Shakespearean editor and later Poet Laureate whose verse now only appears in anthologies of bad poems), as Splutter, and the veteran Katherine Corey, admired by Samuel Pepys, one of the first professional female performers on the British stage, as Lady Bumfiddle.



The English Dancing Master by John Playford, published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course The More the Merrier (1696) Trans. T Andrew Haxell

This tune appeared in the *Dancing Master* until the final edition of 1728

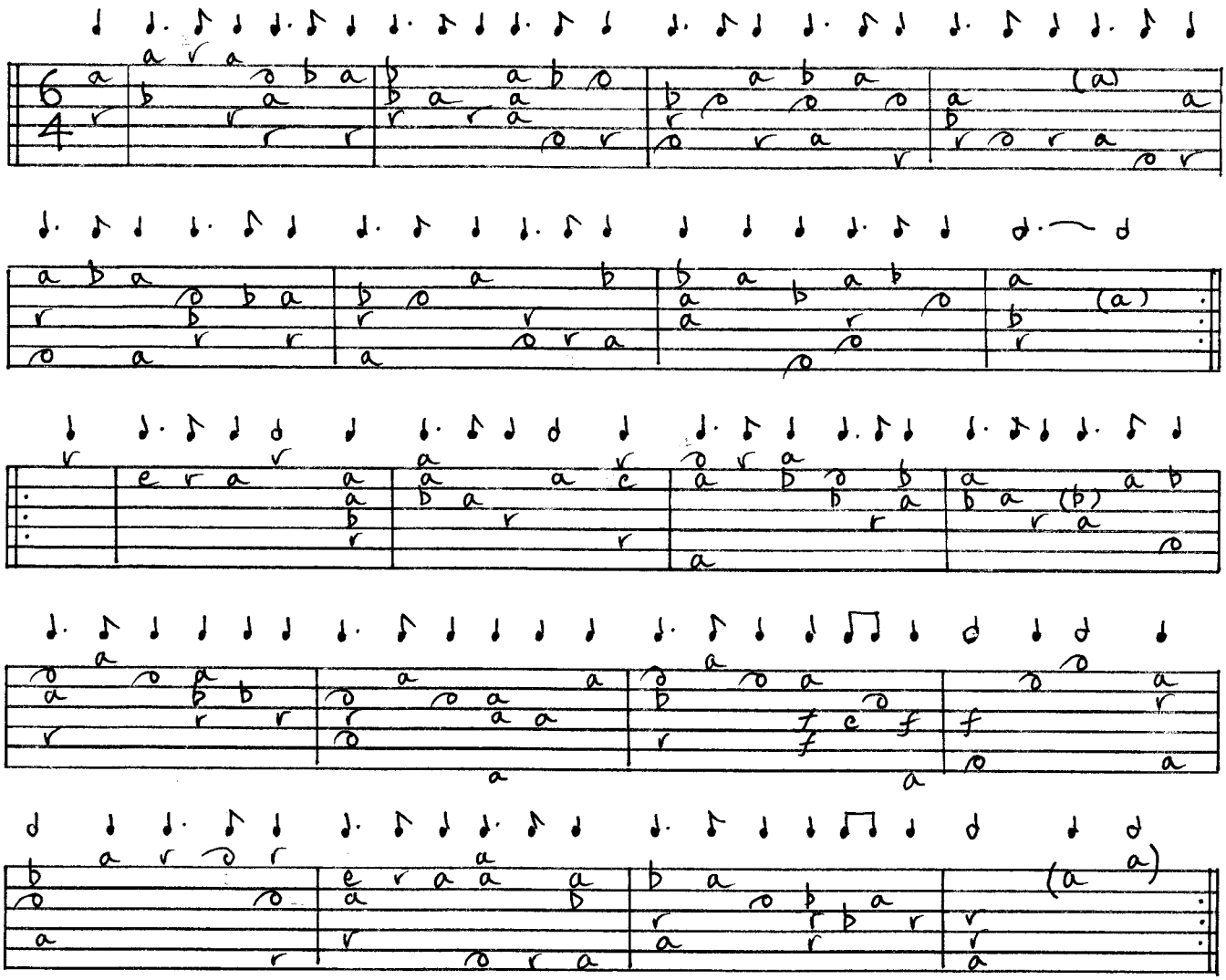


The English Dancing Master by John Playford published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course Old Bachelor (1695) by Henry Purcell Trans T. Andrew Haxell

The Old Bachelor was the debut play of William Congreve, a comedy first performed in 1693. Henry Purcell contributed eleven musical numbers including a jig - but not the one below. Instead, Playford's Old Bachelor is based on a jig from Act I of Purcell's *The Fairy Queen,* his semi-opera from 1692. The tunes are almost identical, and here I have used Purcell's harmonies, adapted from his four-part string orchestra setting.

(Playford's added melody notes in brackets)



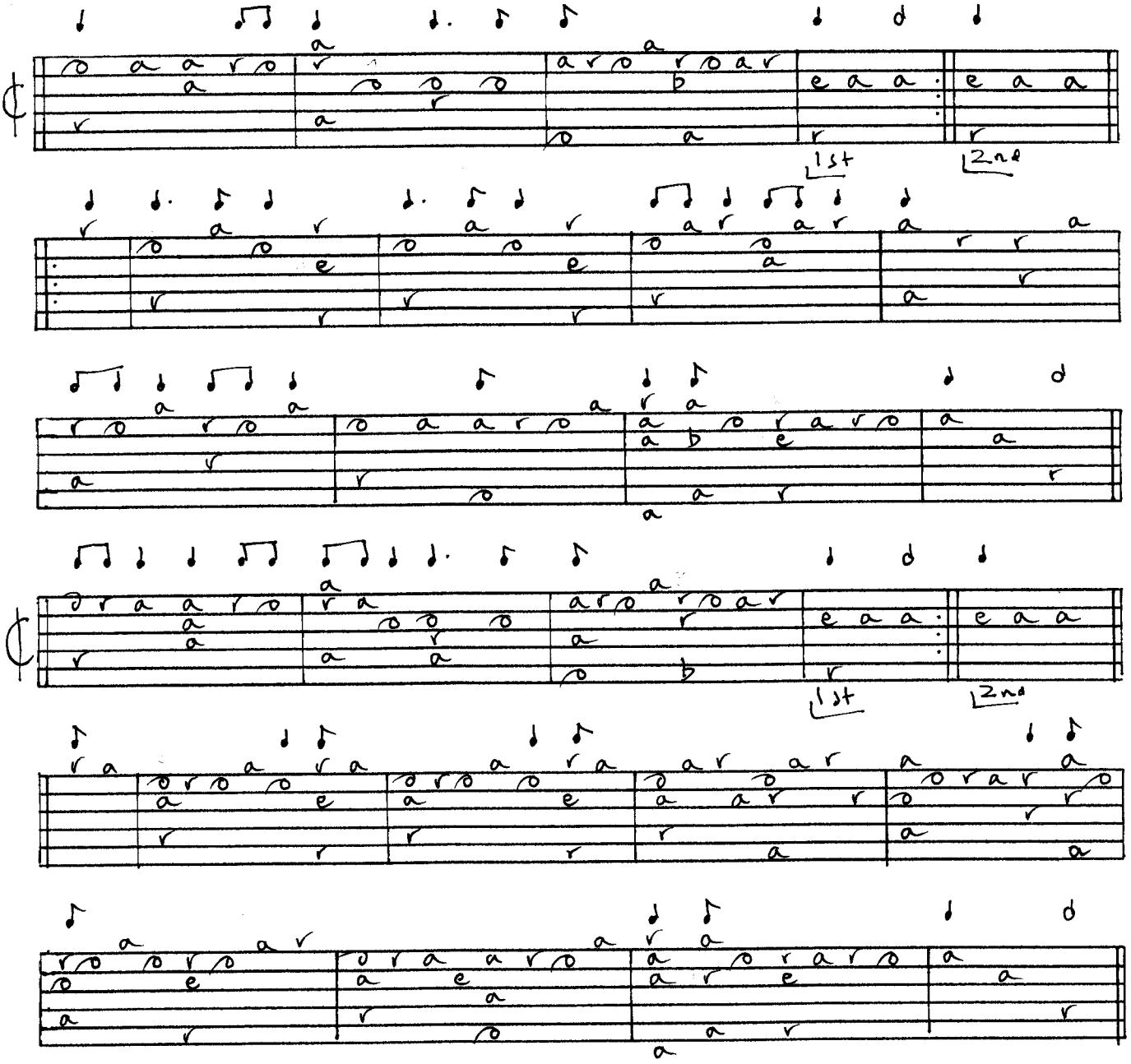
The English Dancing Master by John Playford, published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course

Parson's Farewell (1651)

Trans. T Andrew Haxell

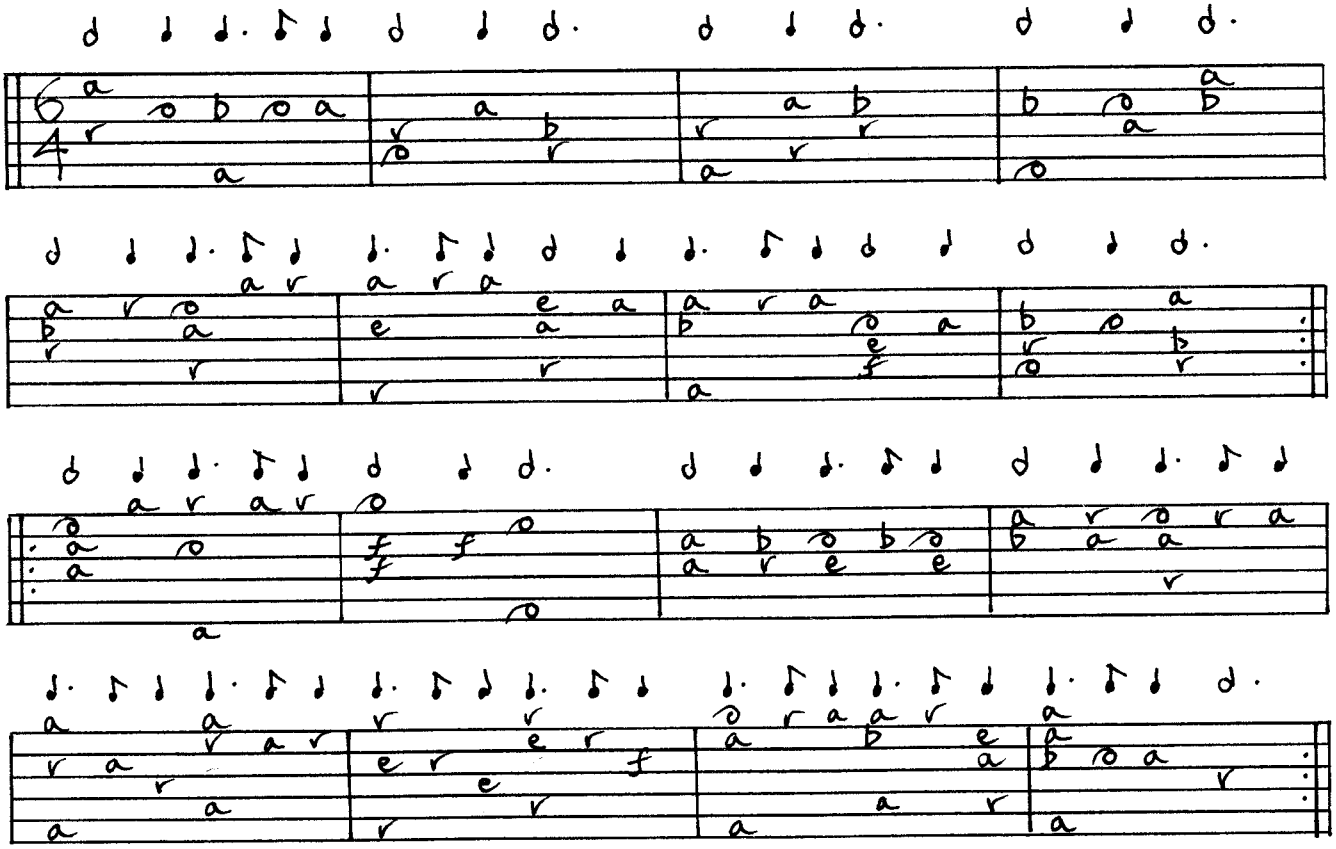
Described as a bourrée, this tune was in circulation for at least fifty years before the first edition of the *Dancing Master.*



The English Dancing Master by John Playford published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course **Petticoat Wag (1651)** Trans T. Andrew Haxell

This jig was also known as The Taylor's Daughter.

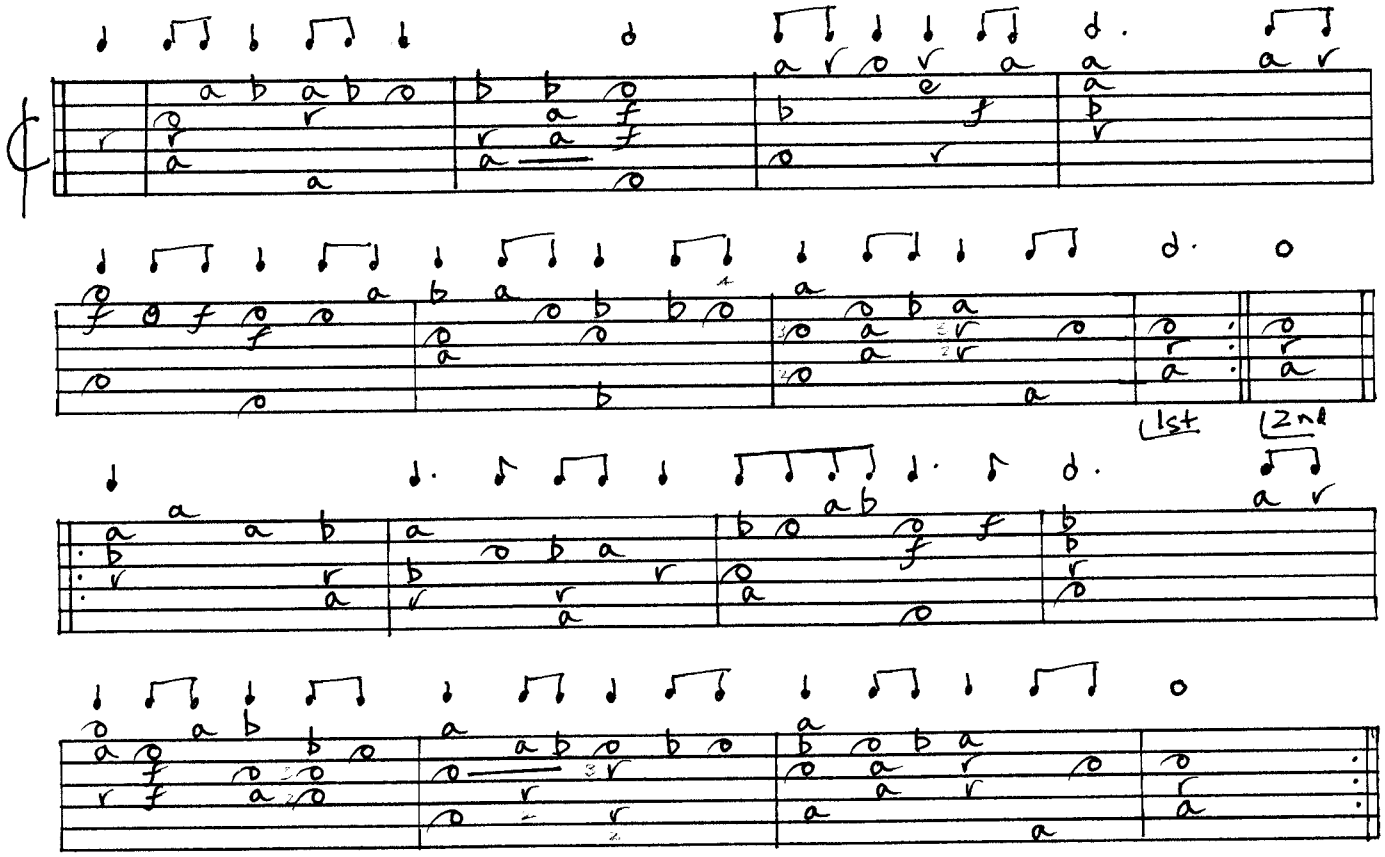


The English Dancing Master by John Playford, published 1651-1728

Lute, 6-course

St. Martin (1651)

Trans. T Andrew Haxell



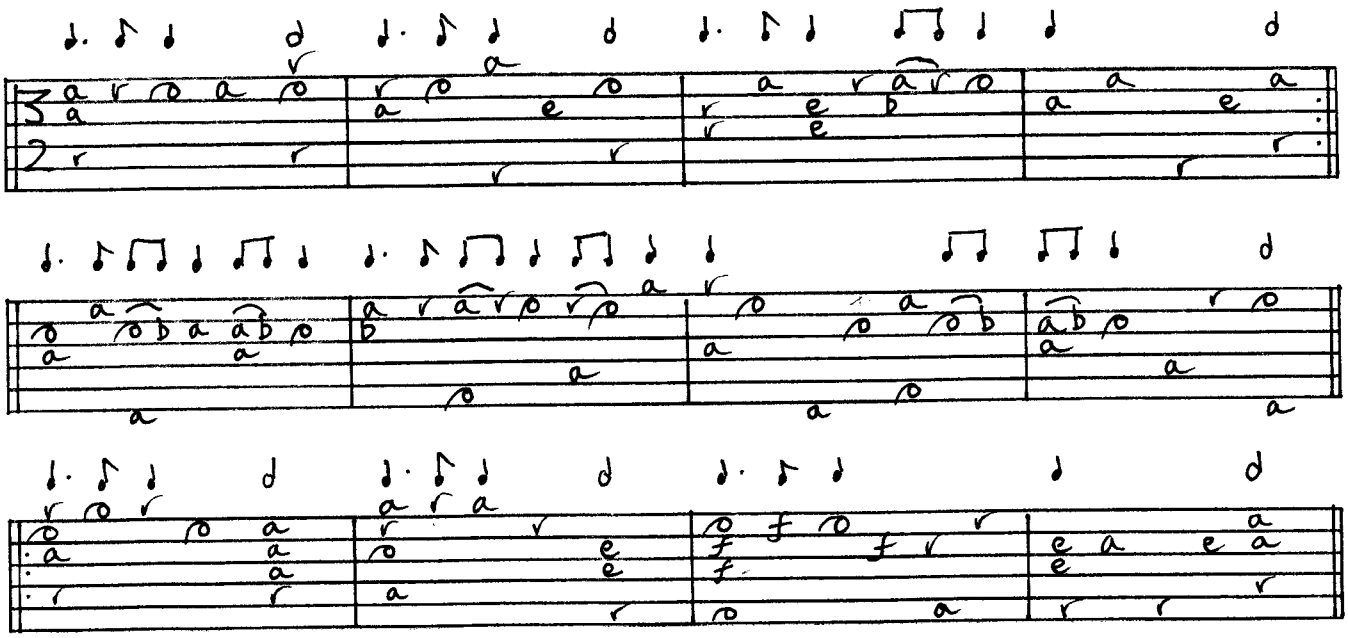
The English Dancing Master by John Playford published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course

The Siege of Limerick (1695)

Trans. T Andrew Haxell

The first siege of Limerick by the English in 1690 was bravely repulsed by the inhabitants including women. The following year the English returned under a Dutch commander and breached the city walls. The defenders surrendered and negotiated a favourable treaty which was later not honoured.



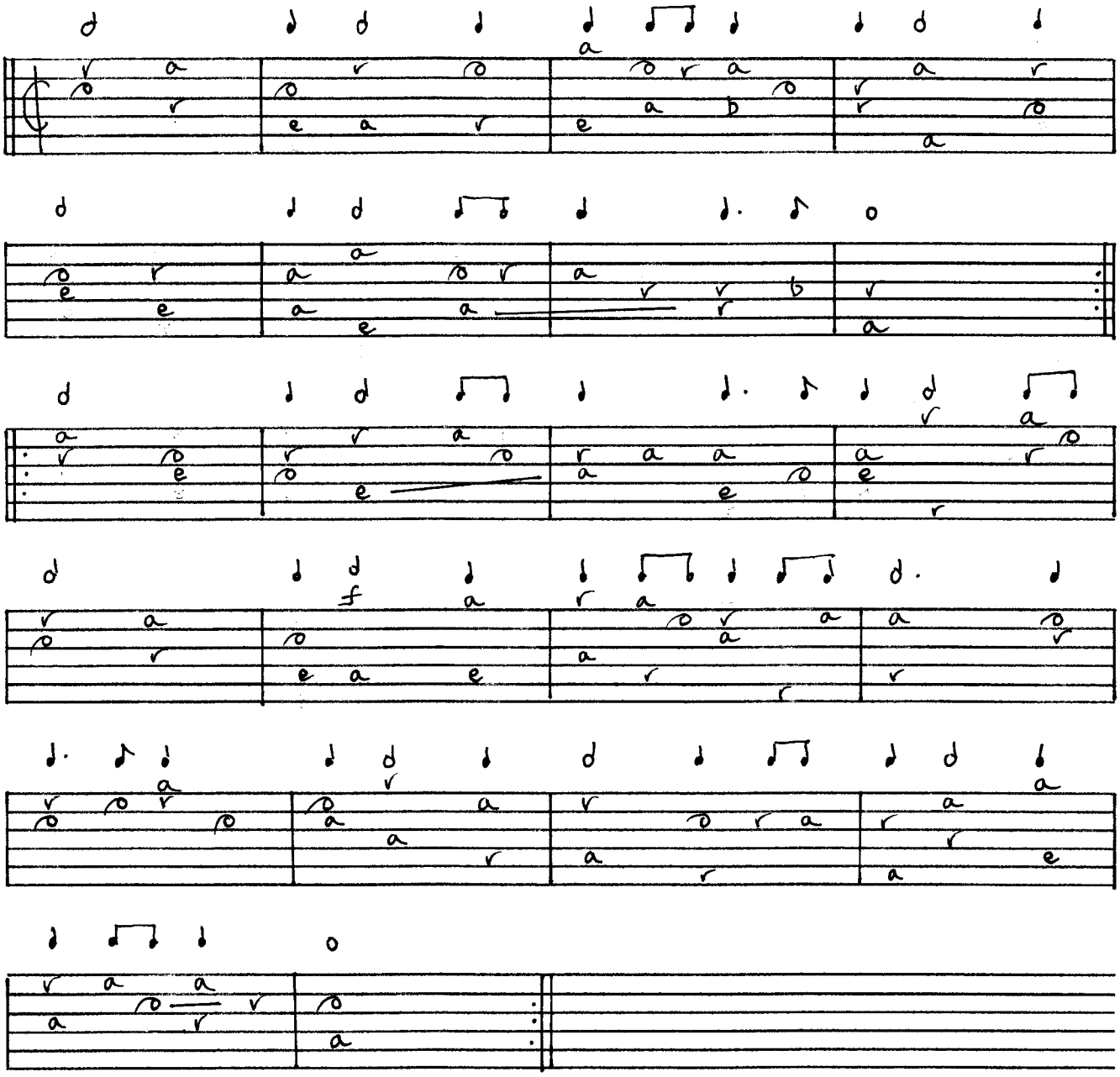
The English Dancing Master by John Playford published 1651-1728

Lute, 6-course

Touch and Go (1701)

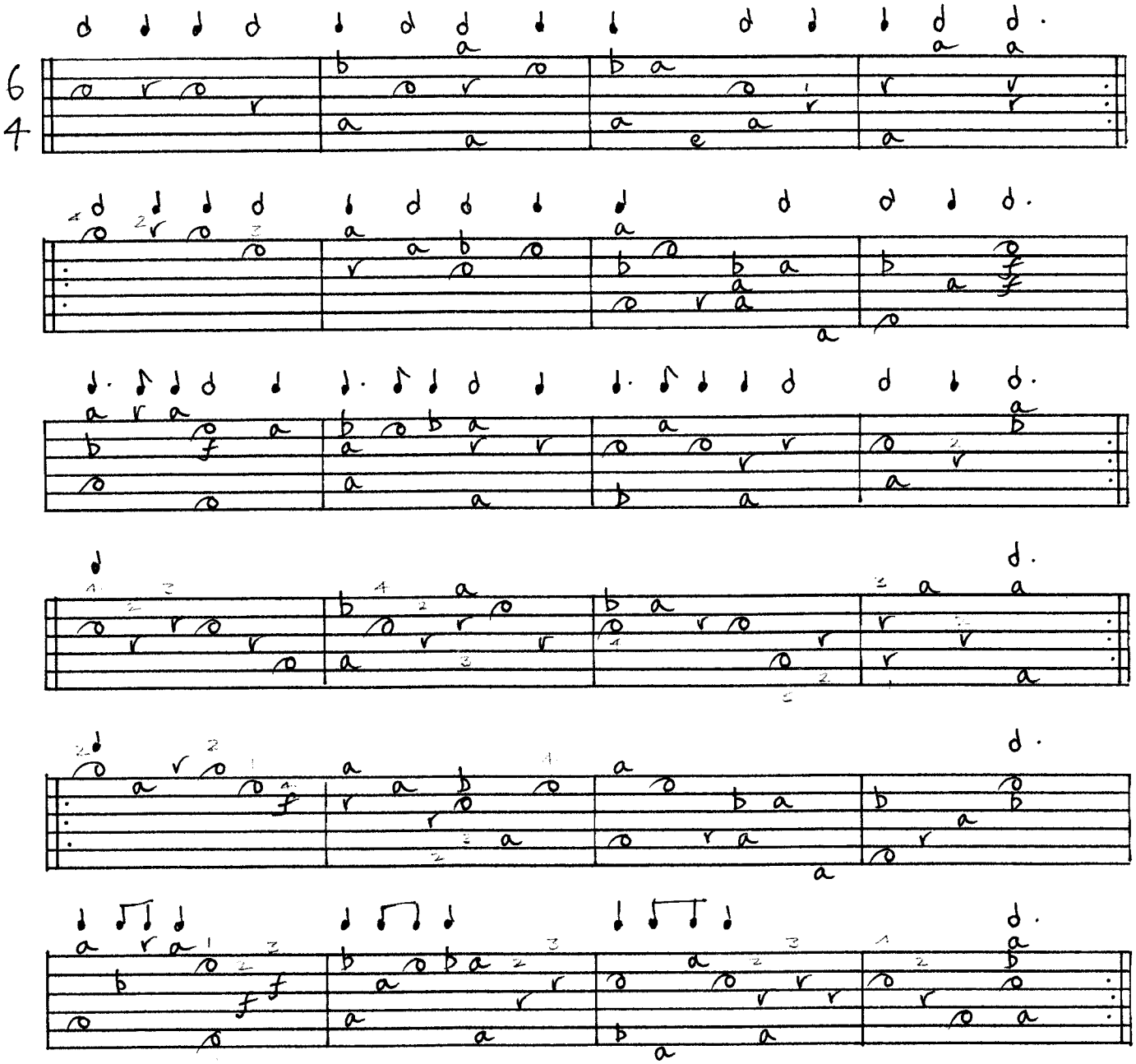
Trans. T Andrew Haxell

Touch and go: an alternative name for the children's game, tag.



The English Dancing Master by John Playford, published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course The Twins (1657) Trans. T Andrew Haxell



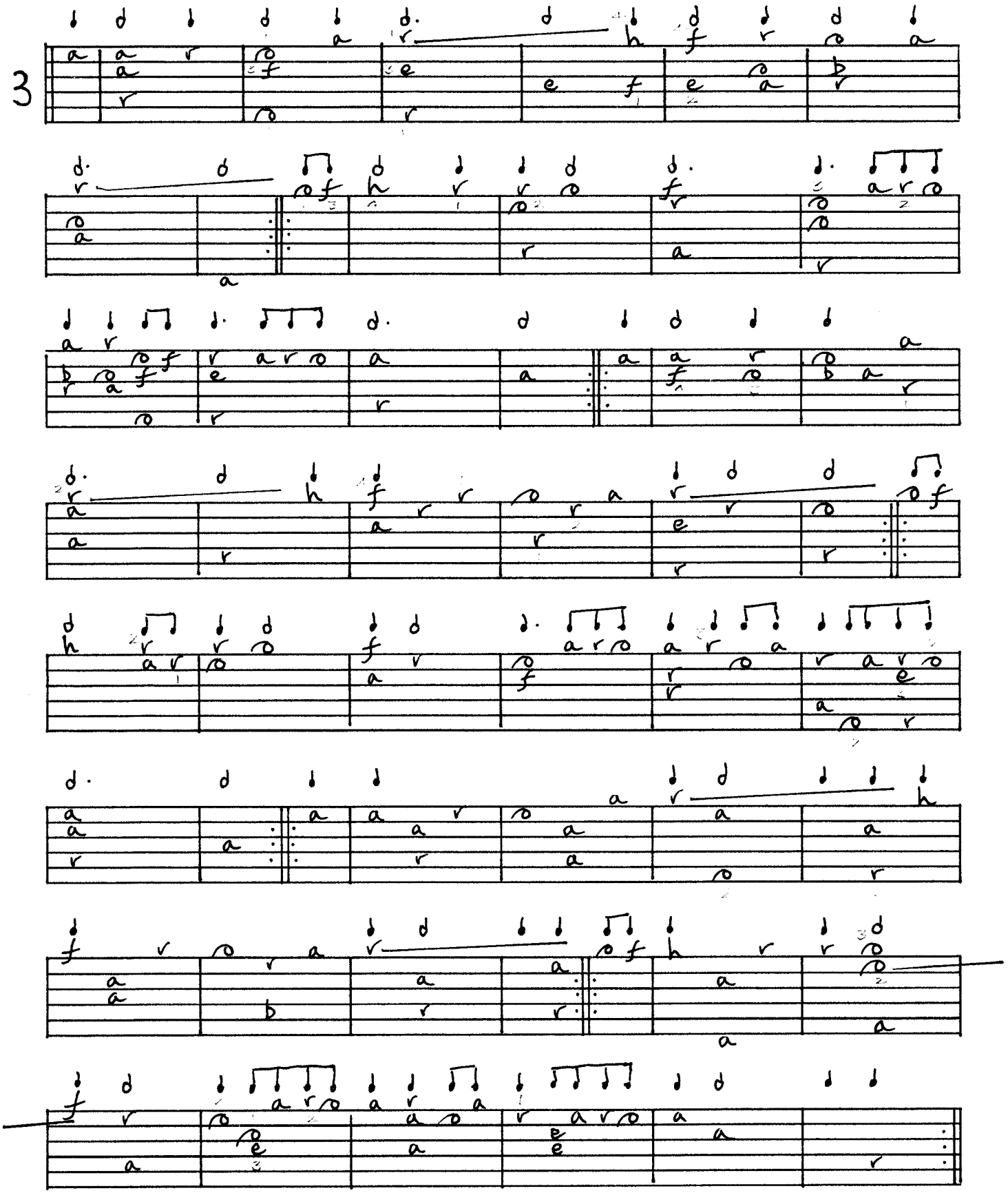
The English Dancing Master by John Playford published 1651-1728

7 -course lute

Dissembling Love (1651)

Trans. T Andrew Haxell

or "The Lost Heart"



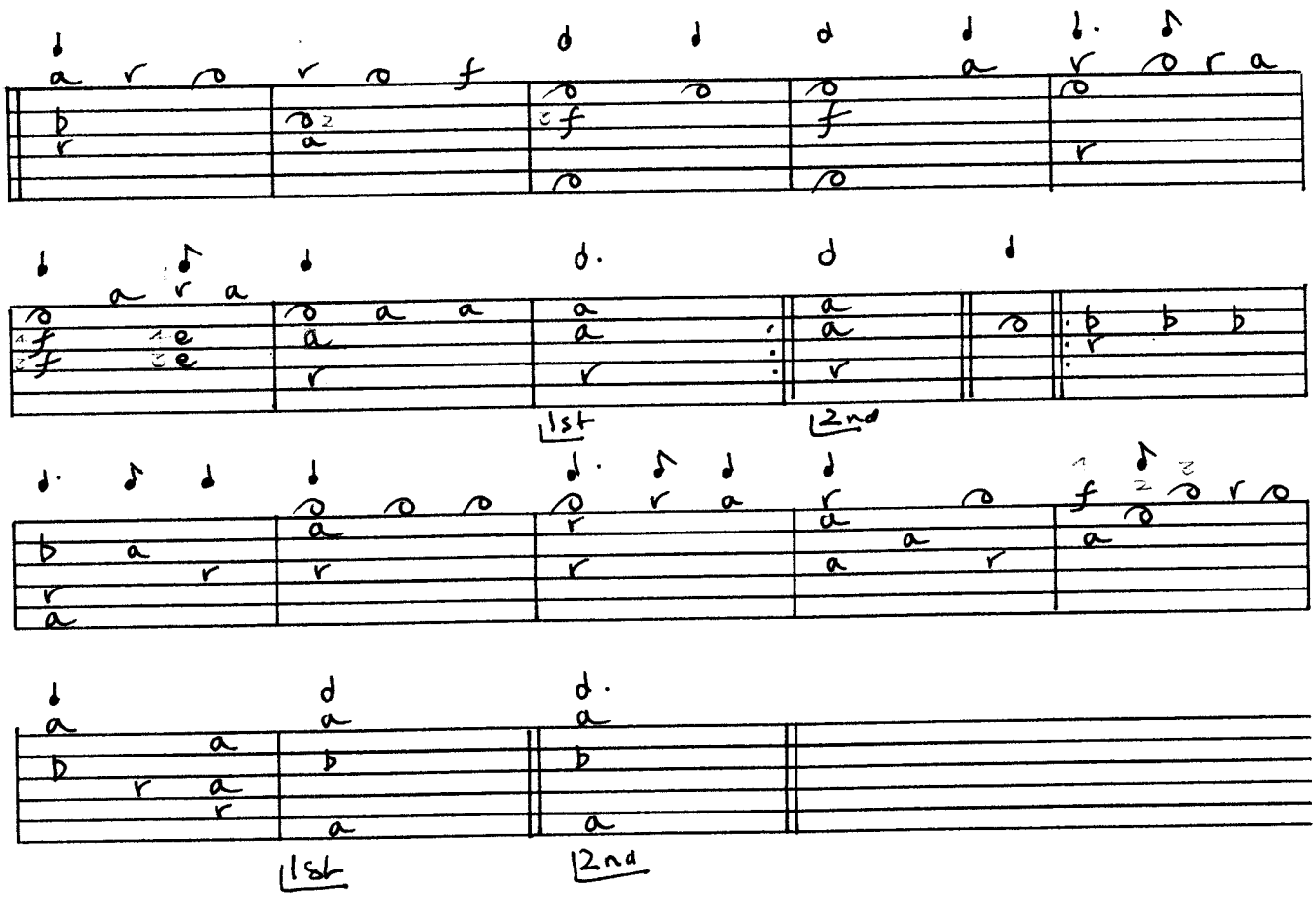
The English Dancing Master by John Playford published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course

The Irish Lady (1651)

Trans. T Andrew Haxell

Also known as Aniseed-Water Robin, (a well-known real person and most probably a hermaphrodite).



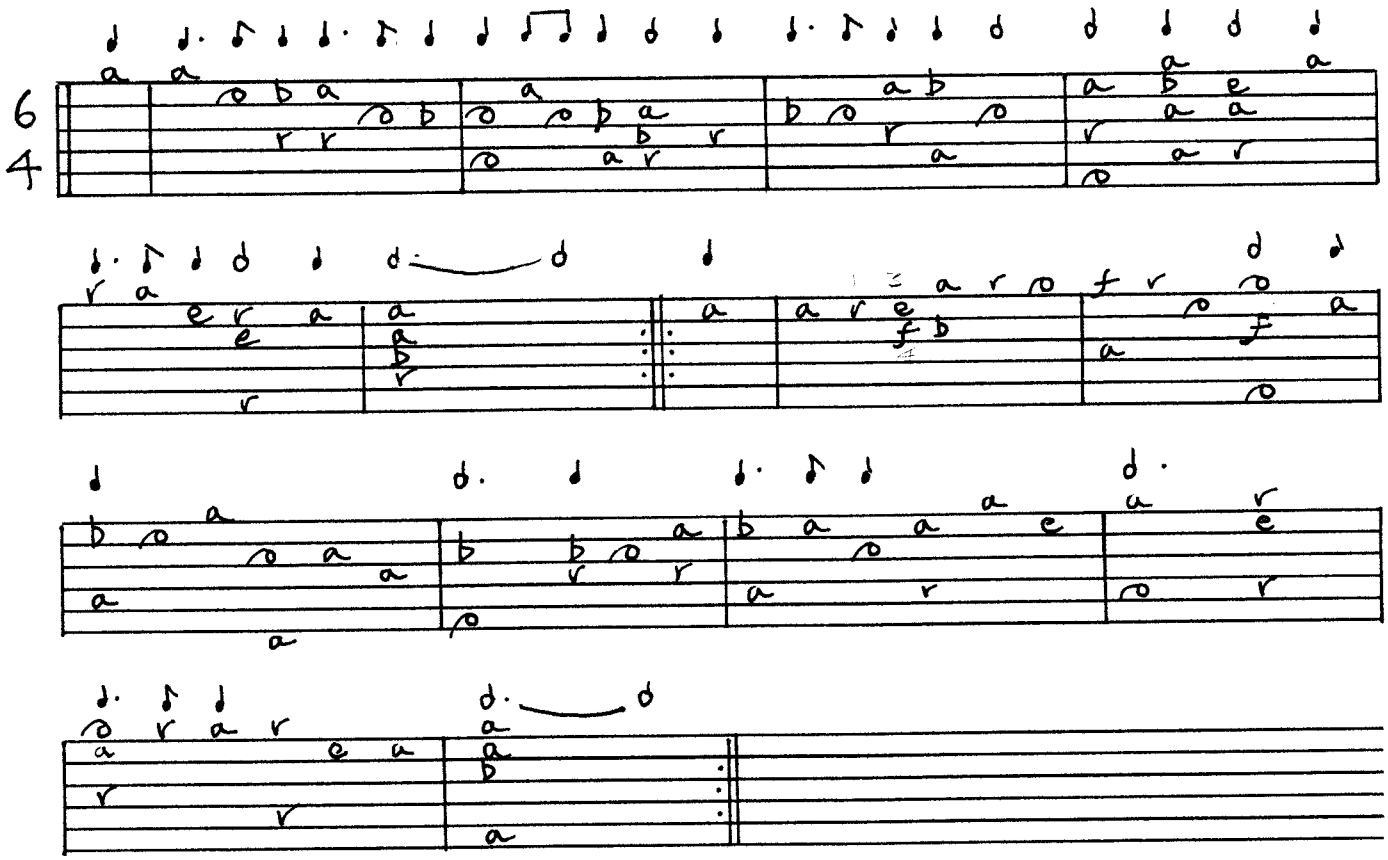
The English Dancing Master by John Playford published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course

Wallingford House (1670)

Trans. T Andrew Haxell

During the 1560s Sir Francis Knollys erected the building that became known as Wallingford House. In 1622, George Villiers, Ist Duke of Buckingham, Lord High Admiral of England, favourite and "lover" of James Ist, bought Wallingford House and so began its 350-year long association with the Navy. It was replaced by the Admiralty Office in 1695, which was quickly found to be inadequate for the rapidly growing Navy and was in turn replaced in 1726 by the Old Admiralty building that still stands today.



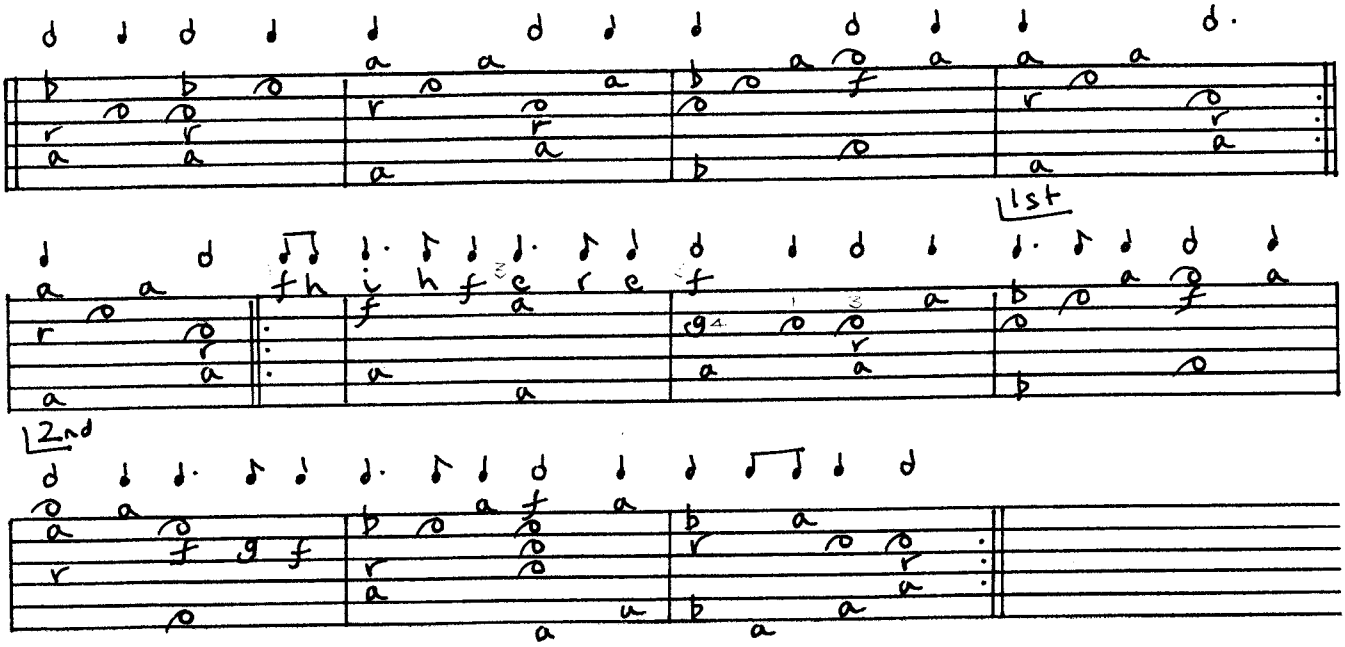
The English Dancing Master by John Playford published 1651-1728

Lute, 7-course

The King of Poland (1698)

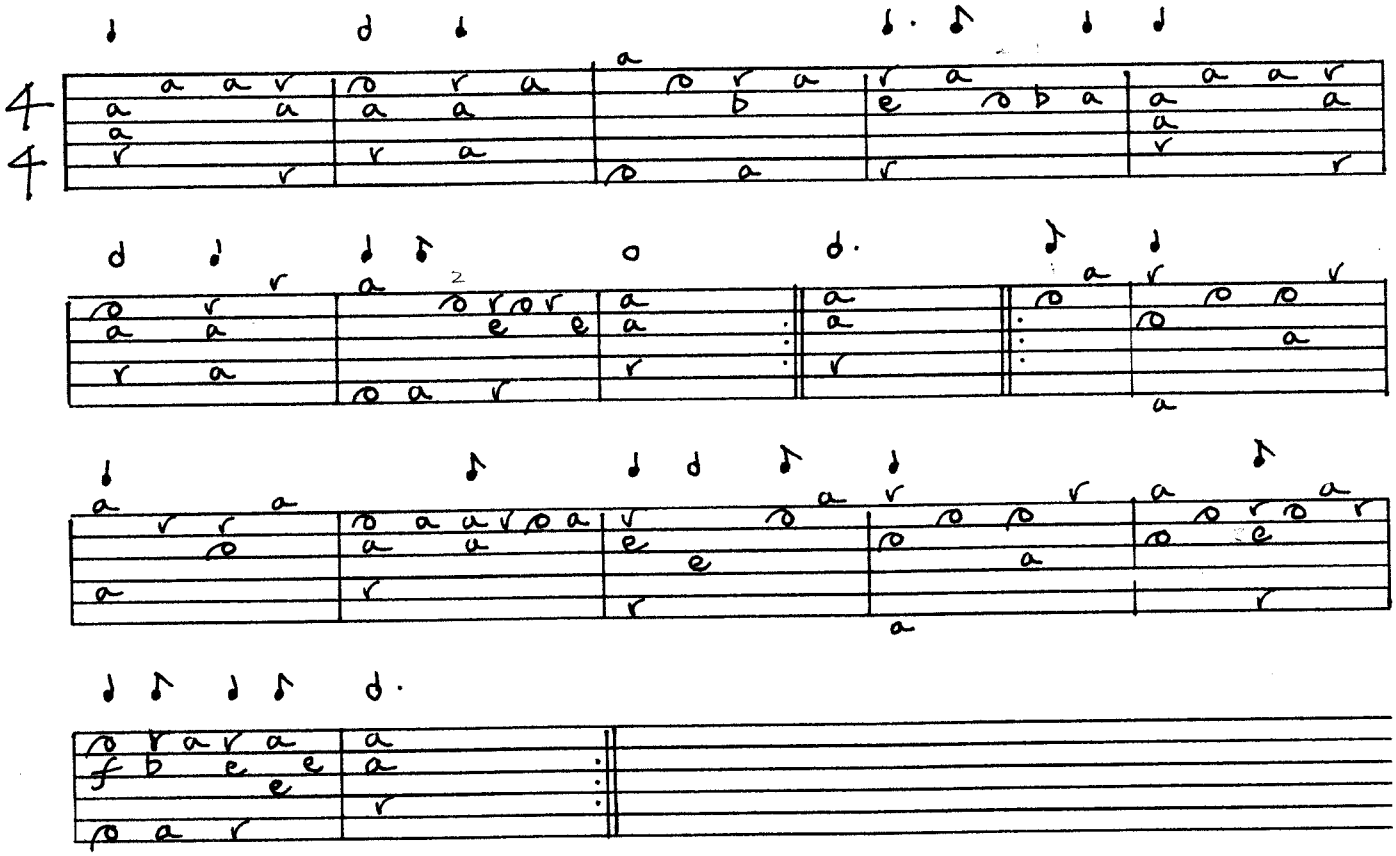
Trans. T Andrew Haxell

Also known as "Courtiers, courtiers"



Lute, 7-course

Childgrove (1701)

Trans. T Andrew Haxell

Also known as: Buff and Blue, Child Grove, Sic a Wife as Willie Had, Stick the Minister. Childgrove is the name village near Chichester in West Sussex. Alternatively, there is a slight possibility of a connection with Sir Josiah Child, the wealthy and powerful Governor of the East India Company.