JOHN DOWLAND:

BALLAD TUNES AND SIMPLE PIECES IN TABLATURE FOR THE GUITAR

Arranged by Clive Titmuss

John Dowland Ballad Tunes and Simple Pieces in Tablature for the Guitar

selected and arranged by Clive Titmuss

Foreword

The lute music of John Dowland has been a source of inspiration for students of the guitar at all levels. While the lute has many superficial similarities to the guitar, the musical properties that made it a dominant medium for centuries, from the end of the Crusades until the middle of the 18th Century, are very different from the natural character of the guitar.

The modern guitar in E, developed in the latter part of the 19th Century, is an instrument pitched in the baritone register, one that emphasizes the fundamental harmonics of its single strings; while the lute in G is higher pitched, a tenor/alto instrument that emphasizes the upper partials of its double-string courses—differences of size, architecture, stringing, tension, and technique. The ornaments, thin-textured chords and rapid subdivided decorative passages that are easy to play on the lute are a challenge to render lightly and easily on the guitar. While we may play the notes on the guitar more or less as Dowland wrote them, the effect will not be what he heard. Still, it is important for students of the guitar to have experience of lute music first hand through transcription of music for early fretted instruments (including the guitar and lute), a long-standing source of repertoire for guitarists.

In looking at currently available resources and sources of the music of Dowland, I noticed that there are many transcriptions of the greatest virtuoso pieces—the highly elaborated fantasias, galliards, pavans, almains and ballad-tune variations from the better-known sources such as the carefully-edited Varietie of Lute Lessons (1610).

A repertoire of simple pieces attributed to Dowland from more informal sources in Elizabethan and later manuscripts and prints, properly edited in tablature for the guitar in the normal tuning, is not readily available.

For the advanced pieces, most transcribers have opted to follow the practice of keeping the lute's tuning. While this is fine for advanced players, beginning and intermediate students are often reluctant to re-tune their guitars, and quickly become frustrated with reading because they are learning only one or two examples.

This collection addresses this problem by using modern tablature and the normal guitar tuning, providing a selection of pieces in their simpler or simplified versions. This is intended to make the transition to the more complex music of Dowland considerably easier if the student wishes to undertake further study.

The amateur lutenists who kept lute books and copied their teachers' versions of famous ballads or composed melodies, are the focus of the group, and provide an introduction into the compositional technique used by the lutenists of the early 17th Century.

The collection adheres to these basic guidelines:

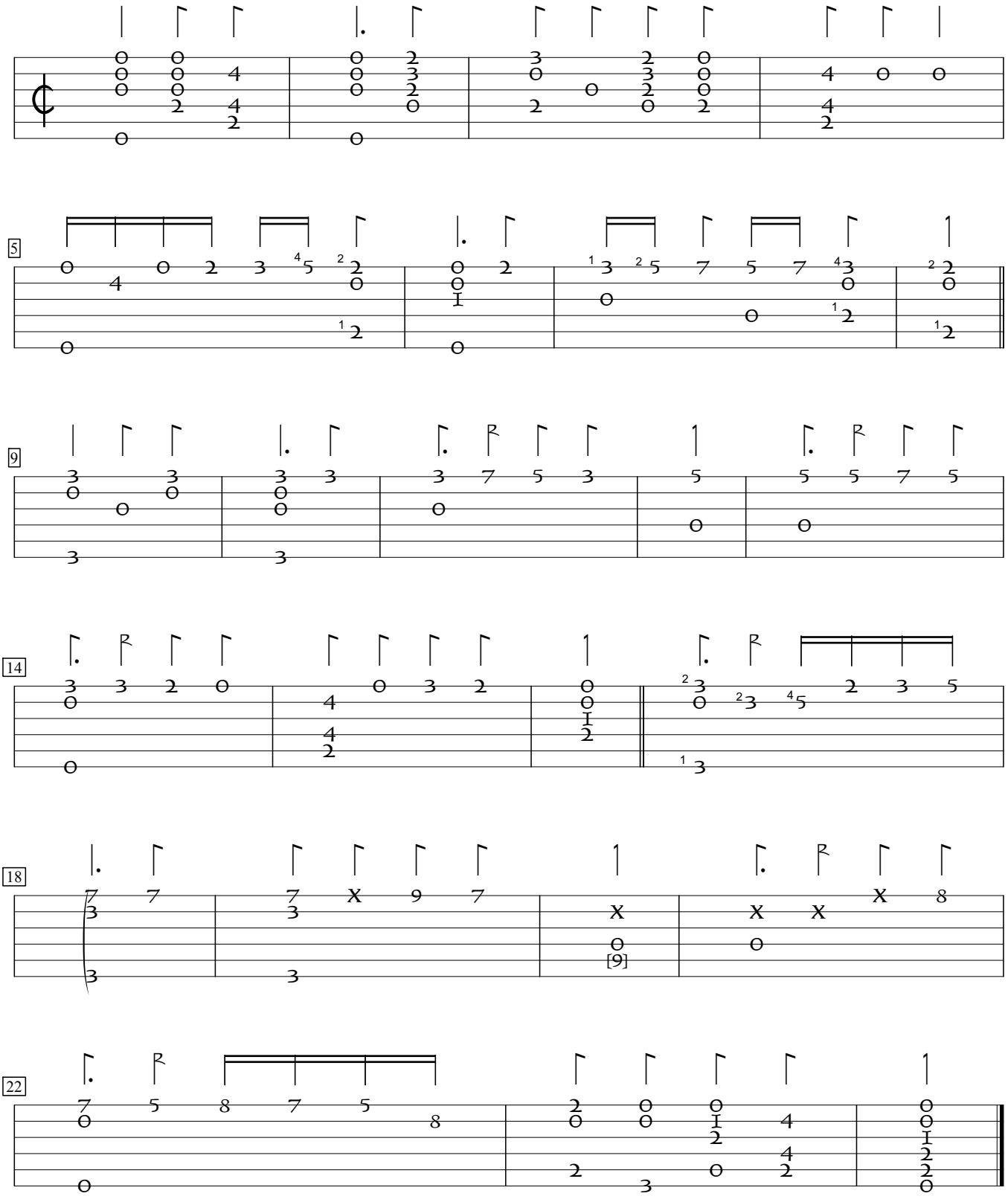
- approximately ordered by difficulty
- in the normal guitar tuning
- notated in modern guitar number tablature (but using the clear and easy-to-read beamed rhythmic notation of the period, half the modern note values)
- keeping many, but not all, ornaments (the "double cross")
- featuring the chordal ballad-tune style which is the basis of Dowland's music
- simplifying chords if necessary
- occasional transposition of the bass to preserve the clarity and colour of lute idiom
- adding fingering to make for easier reading
- lastly, being freely available on the internet in pdf format singly and as a collection

Clive Titmuss, West Kelowna, 16/01/16

Complaint

[Fortune, My Foe: A Ballad Tune]

John Dowland

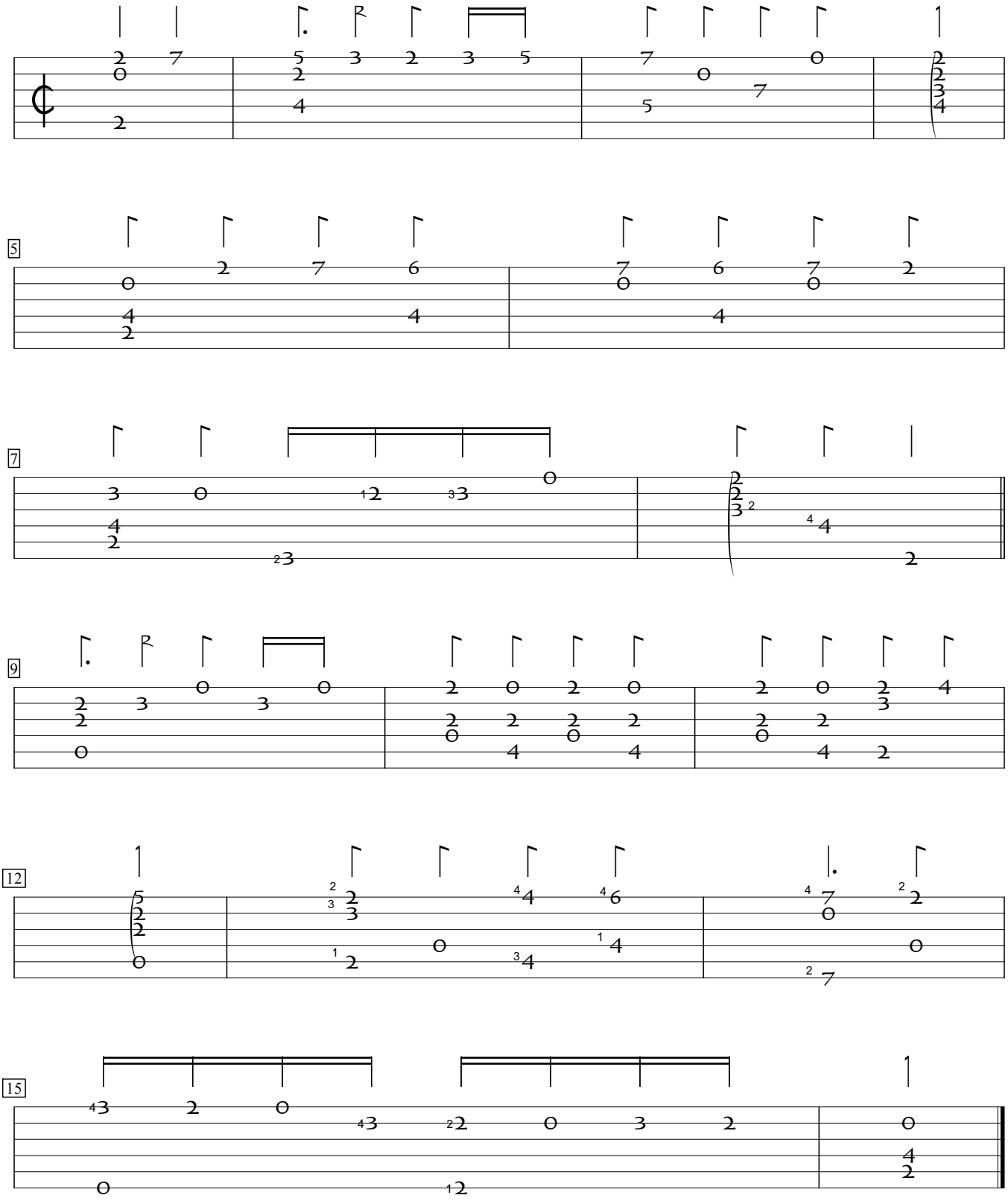


Cambridge Dd.2.11 (c. 1600), f.56b. arranged for guitar by Clive Titmuss

My Lord Willoughby's Welcome Home

[A Ballad Tune, simple version]

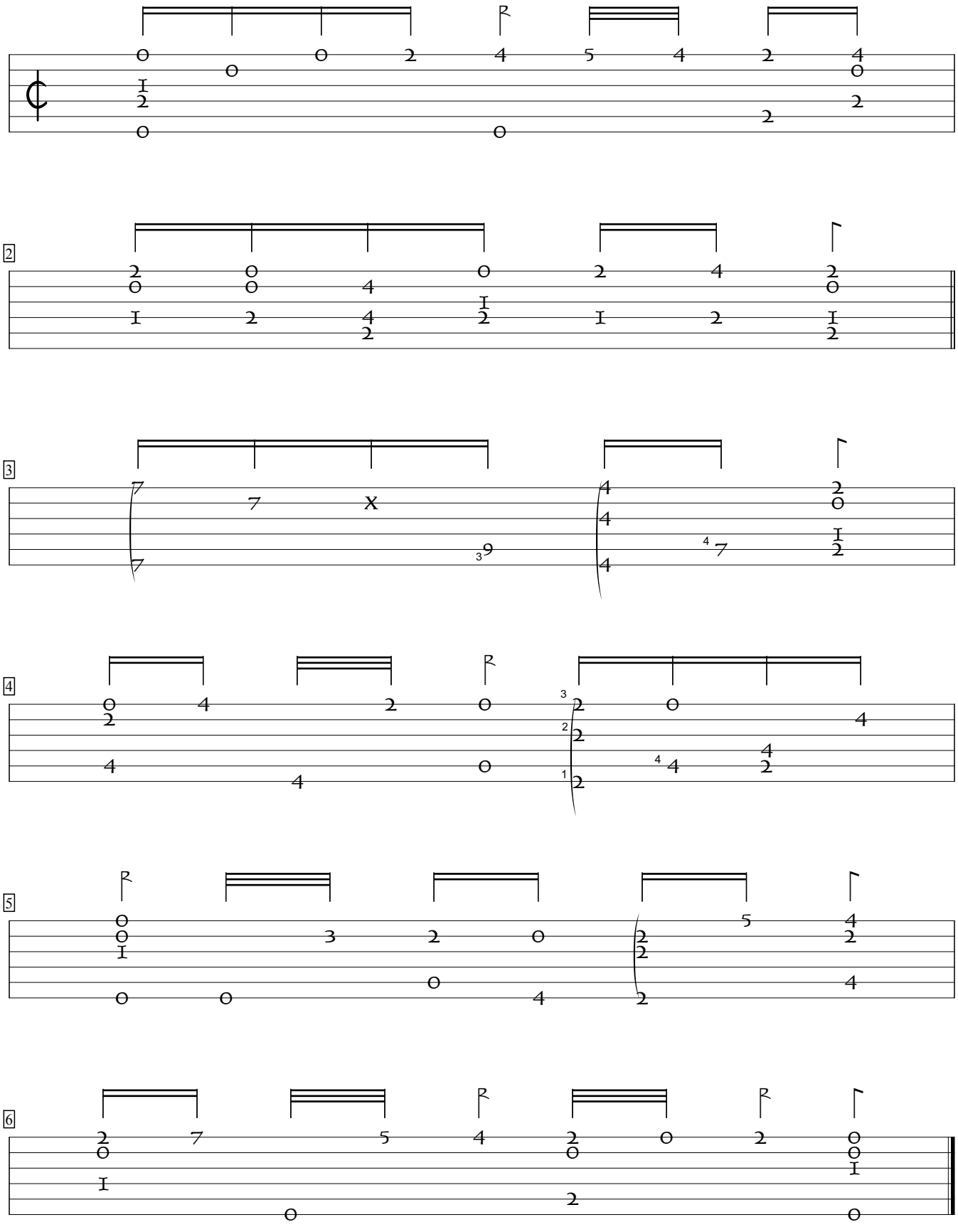
John Dowland



Jane Pickering's Lute Book (c. 1616), f.25v. Arranged for guitar by Clive Titmuss

Mrs. Nichols' Allemande

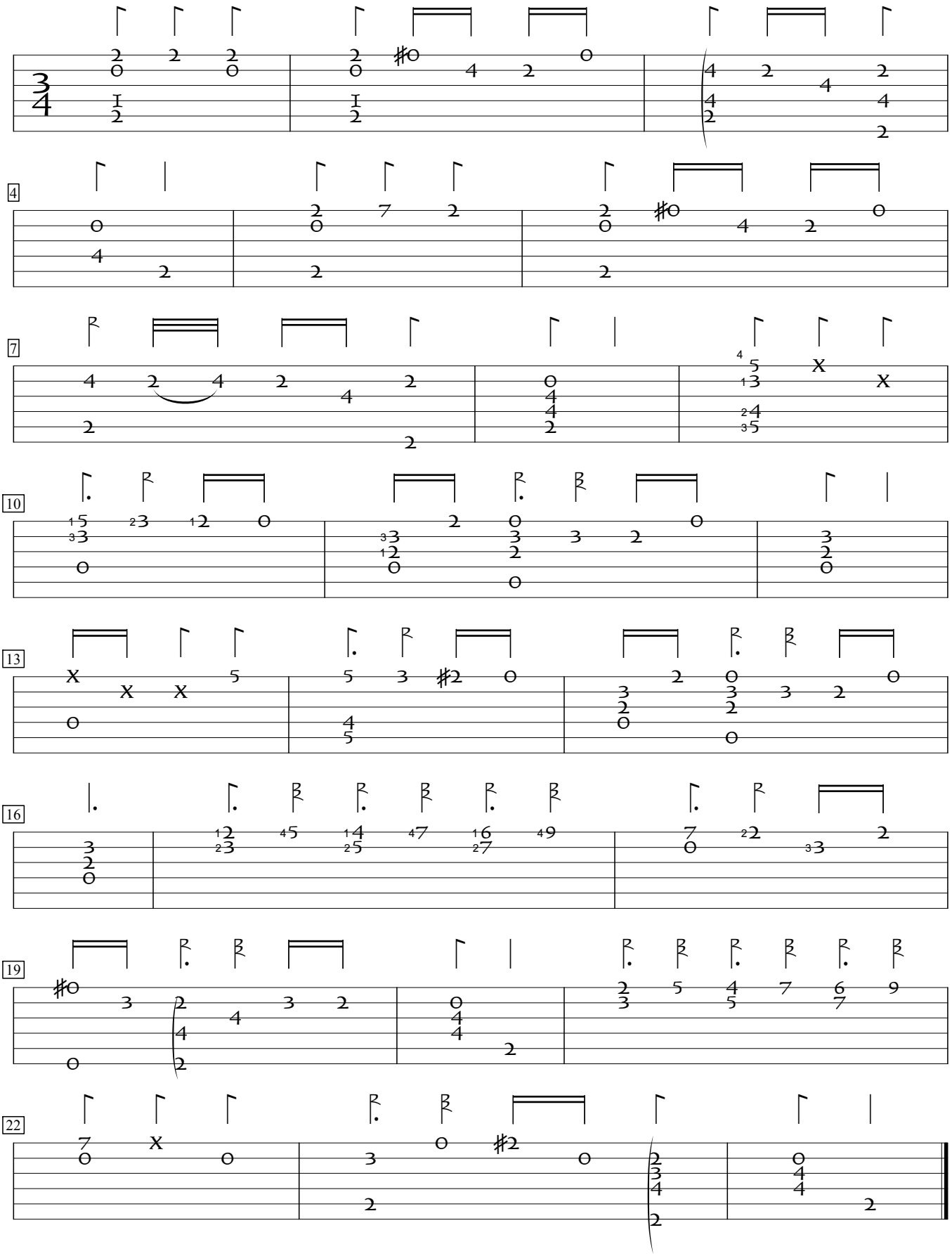
John Dowland



Cambridge Dd.2.11 (c. 1600), f.100v. Arranged for guitar by Clive Titmuss

The King of Denmark's Galliard

John Dowland

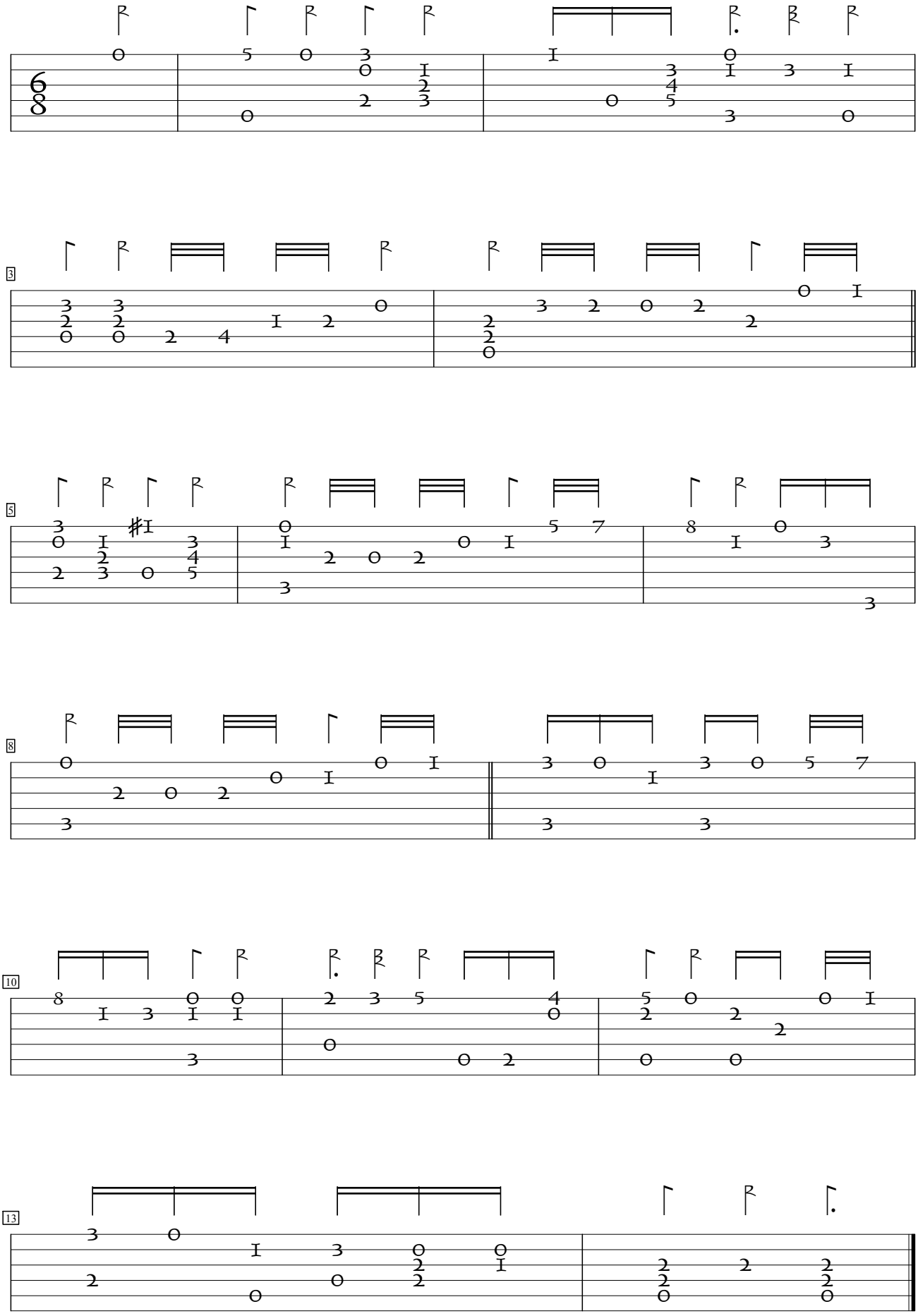


Simplified from Varietie of Lute Lessons, 1610, arranged for guitar by Clive Titmuss

A Coy Toy

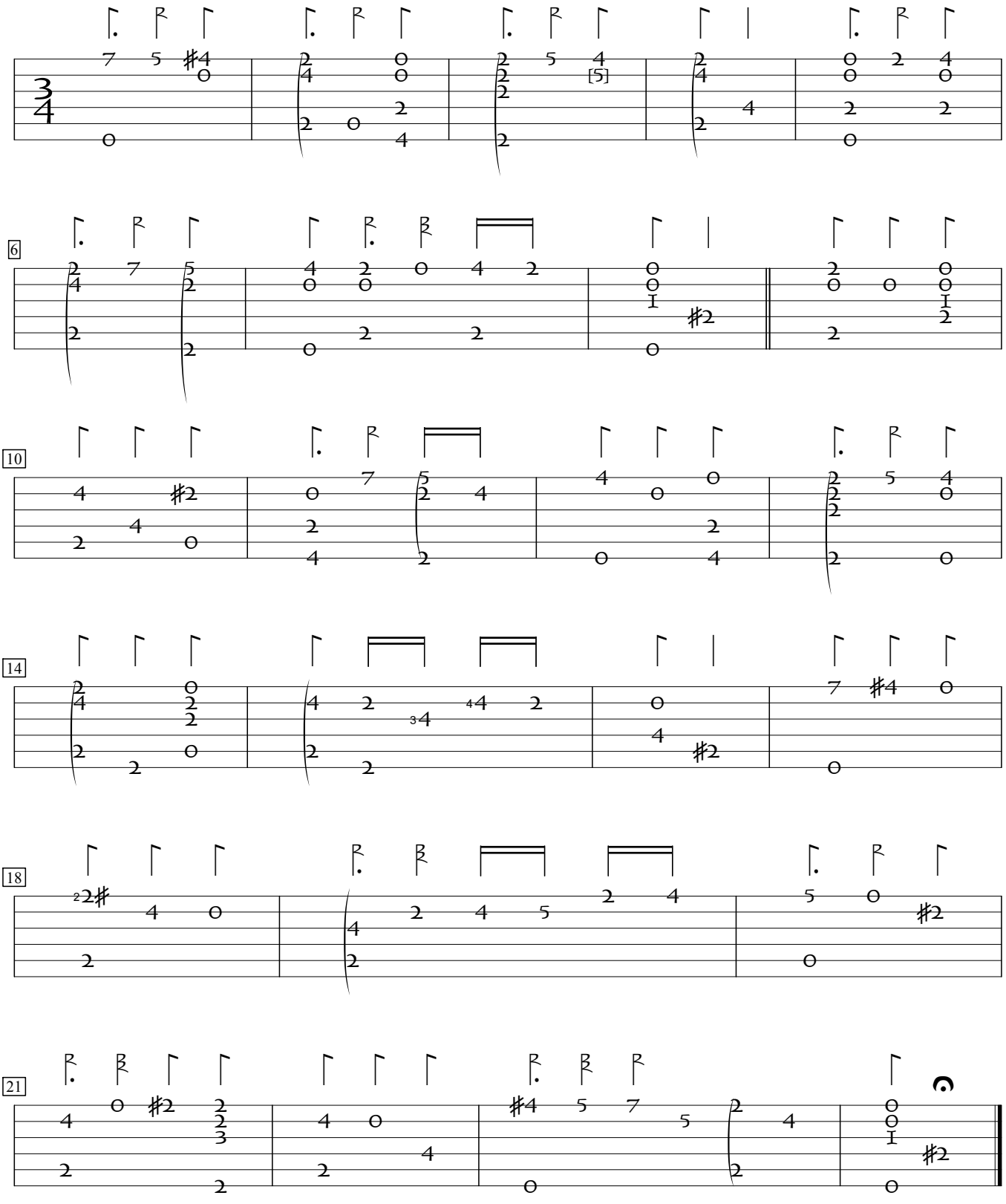
[a simple version of Mrs. Vaux's Jig]

John Dowland



Dowland's Bells (Lady Rich's Galliard)

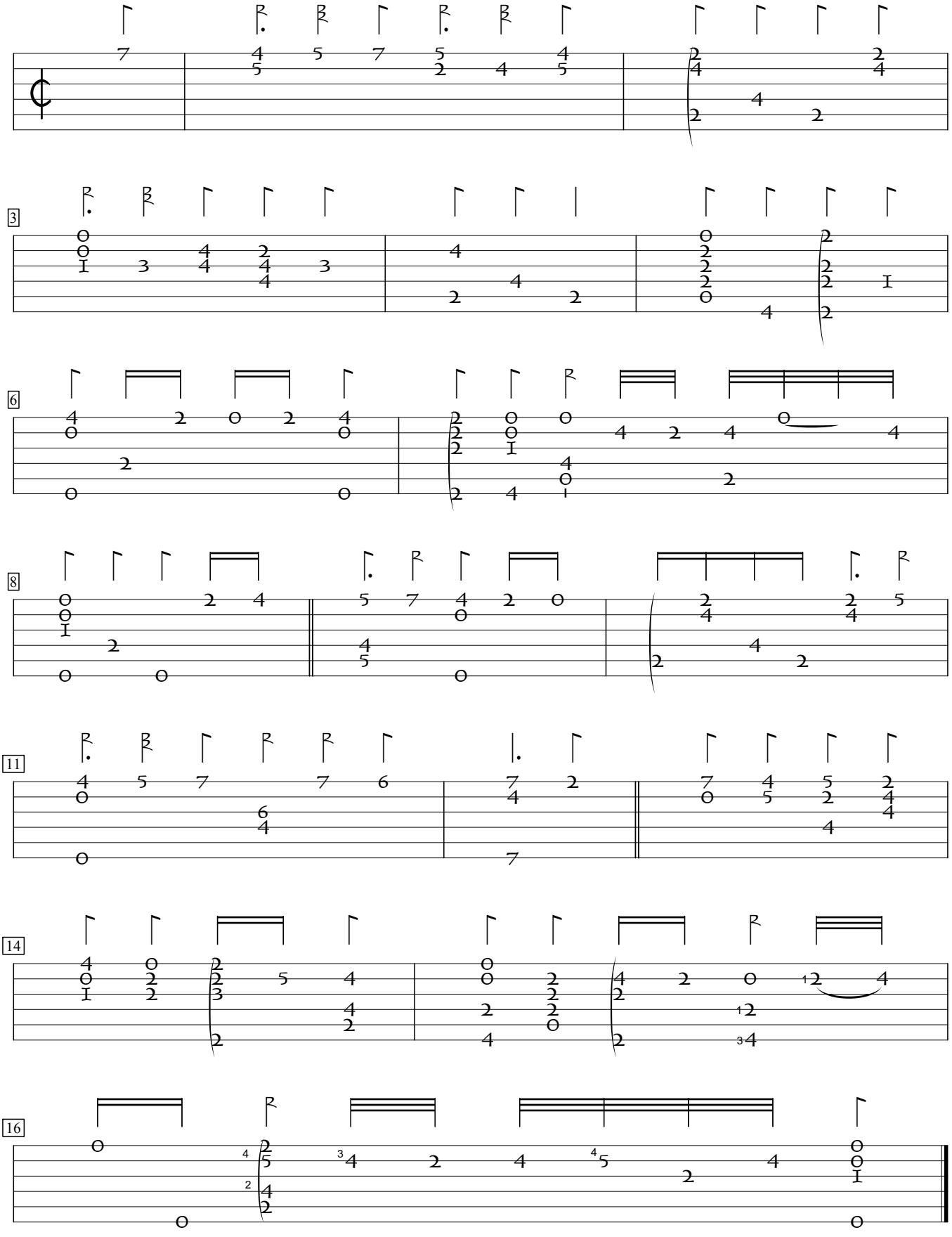
John Dowland



Richard Mynshall Lute Book (c. 1599), f.8c. with additions from the Folger Dowland Lute Book. Arranged for guitar by Clive Titmuss

An Almain

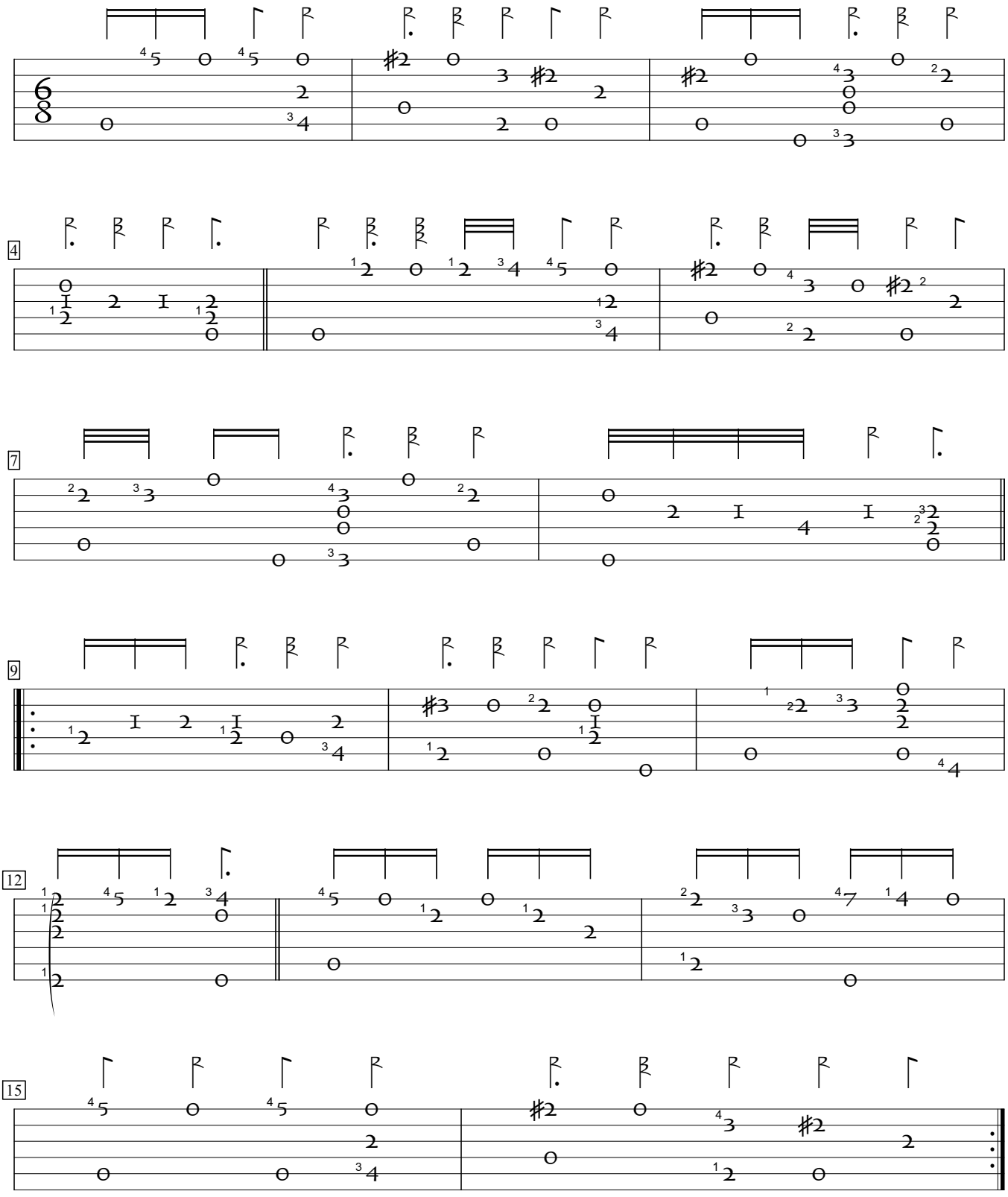
John Dowland



Cambridge Dd.2.11 (c. 1600), f.38. Arranged for guitar by Clive Titmuss

Mrs. Winter's Jump

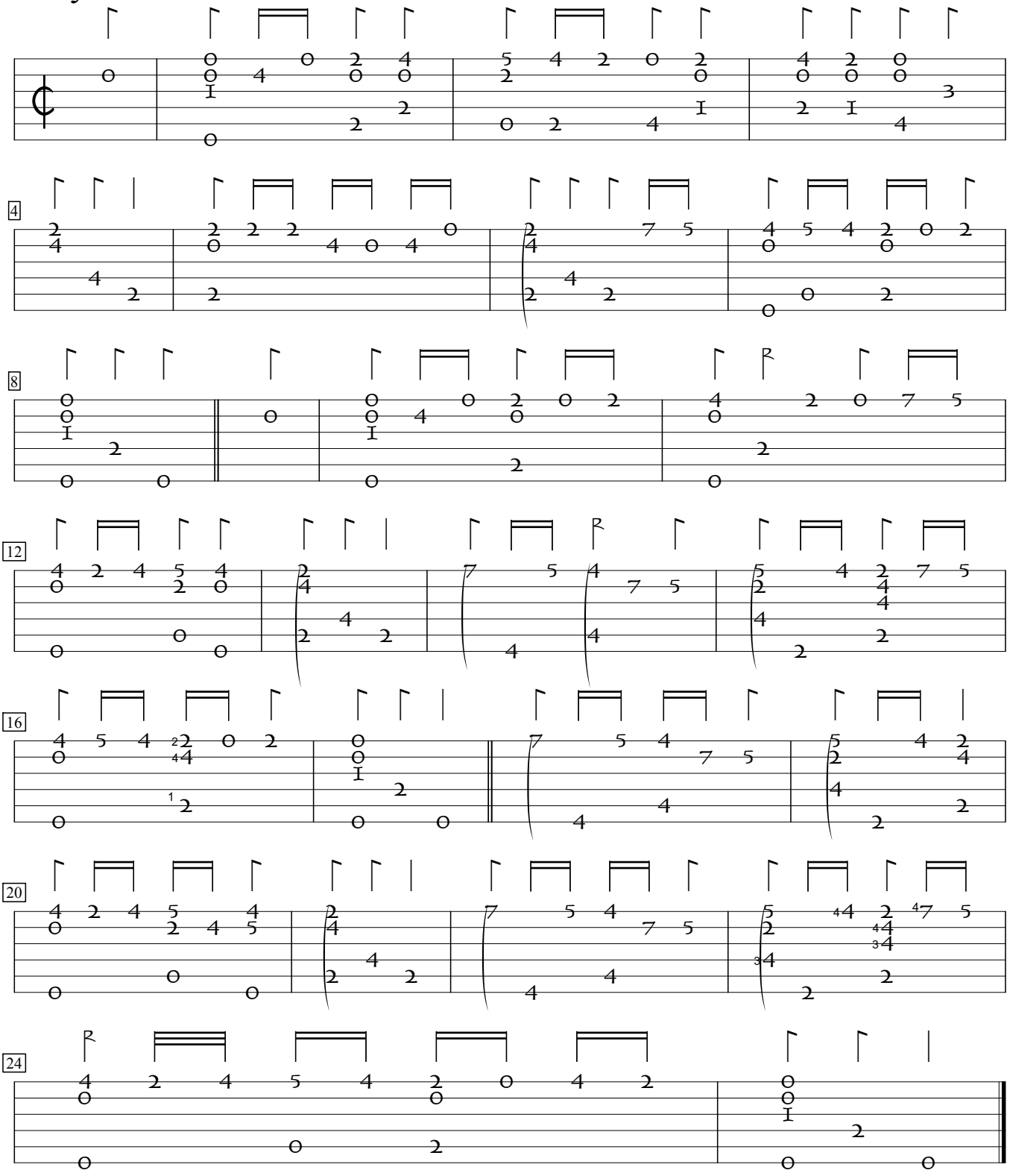
John Dowland



Folger Dowland Lute Book (c.1610), f.5v. Arranged for guitar by Clive Titmuss

Lady Laiton's Almain

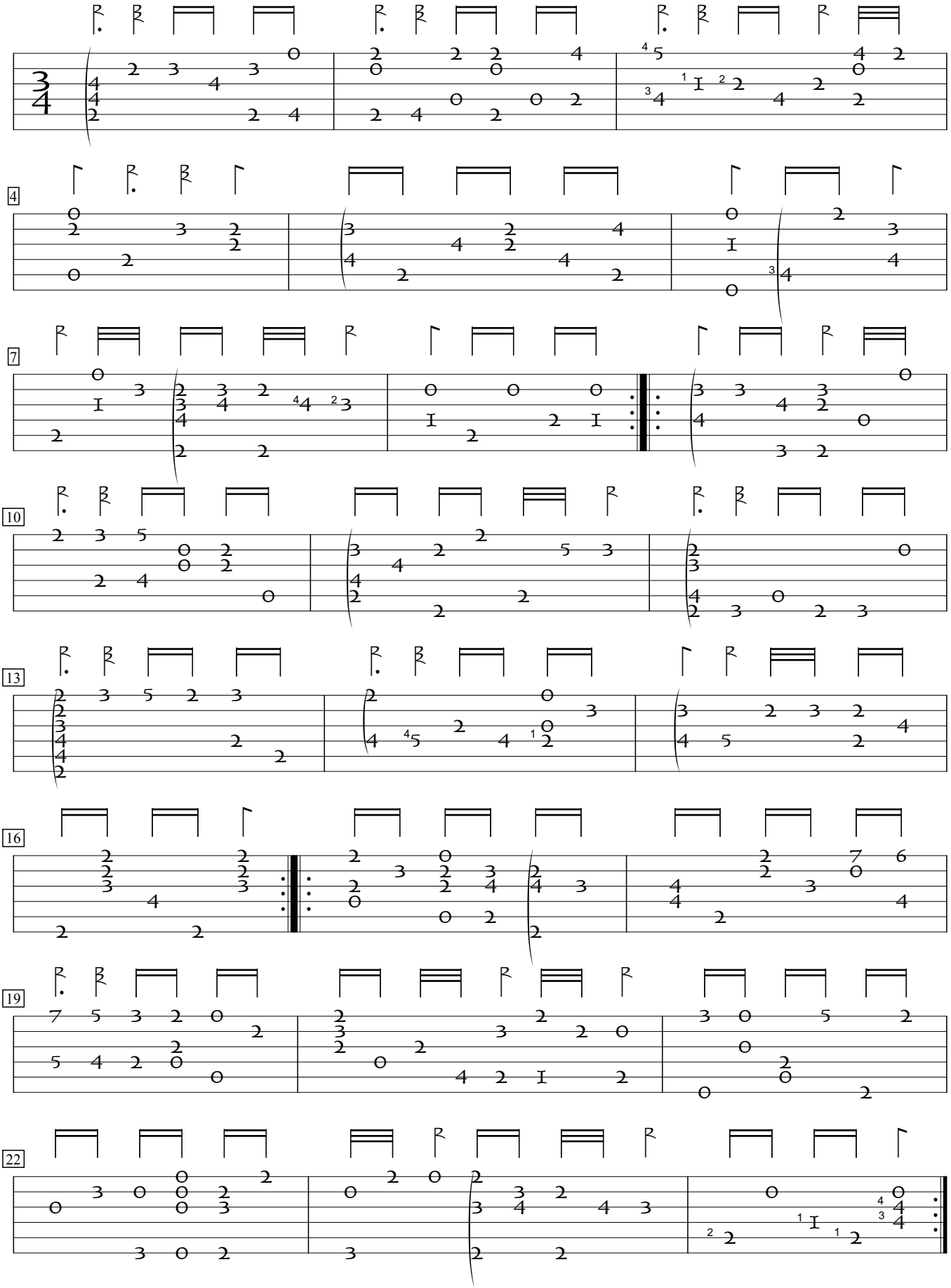
John Dowland



Cambridge Dd.2.11 (c. 1600), f.48. Arranged for guitar by Clive Titmuss

Mr. Knight's galliard

John Dowland

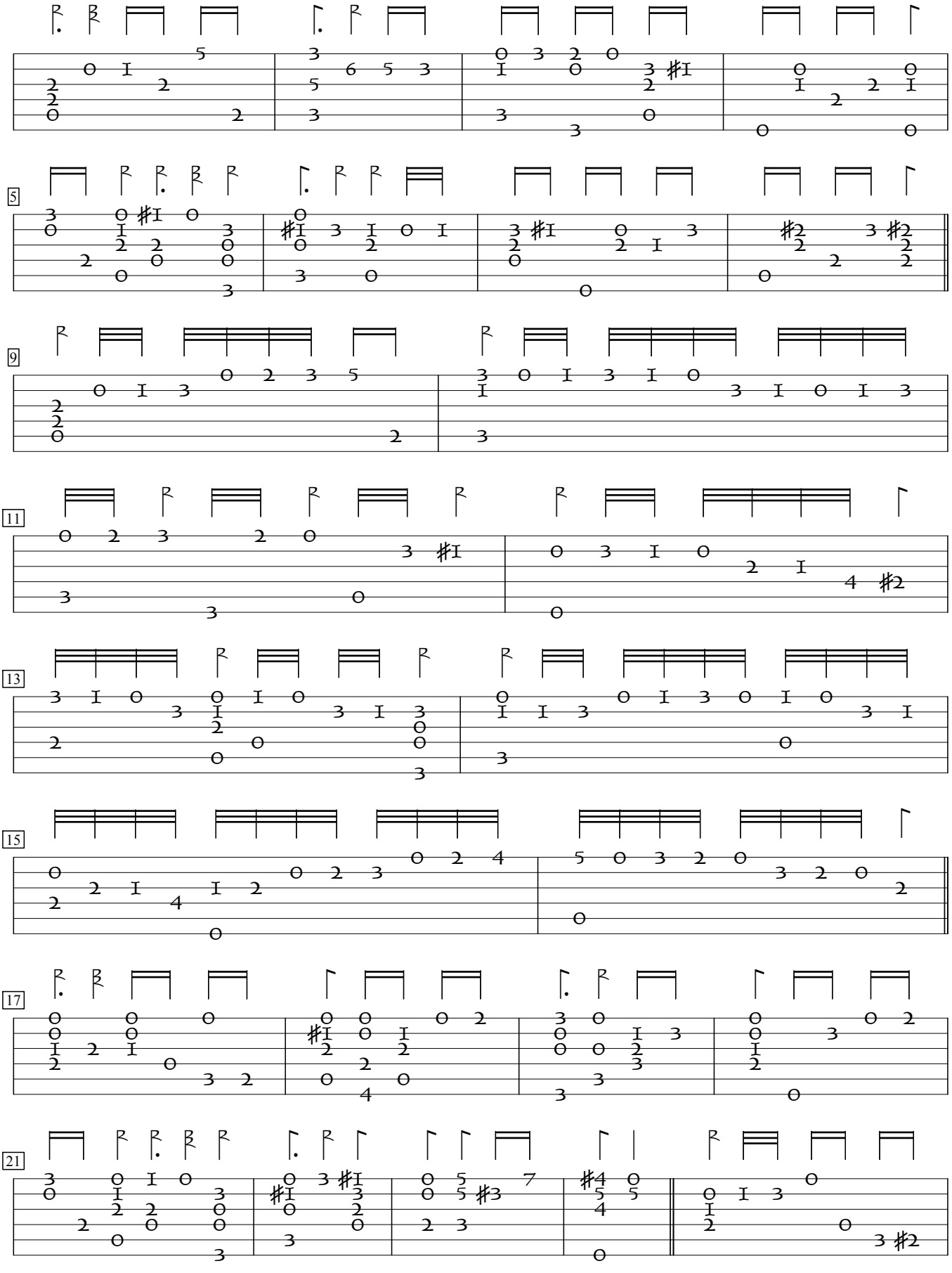


Cambridge Dd.9.33 c.1600, f.19va. Arranged for guitar by Clive Titmuss.

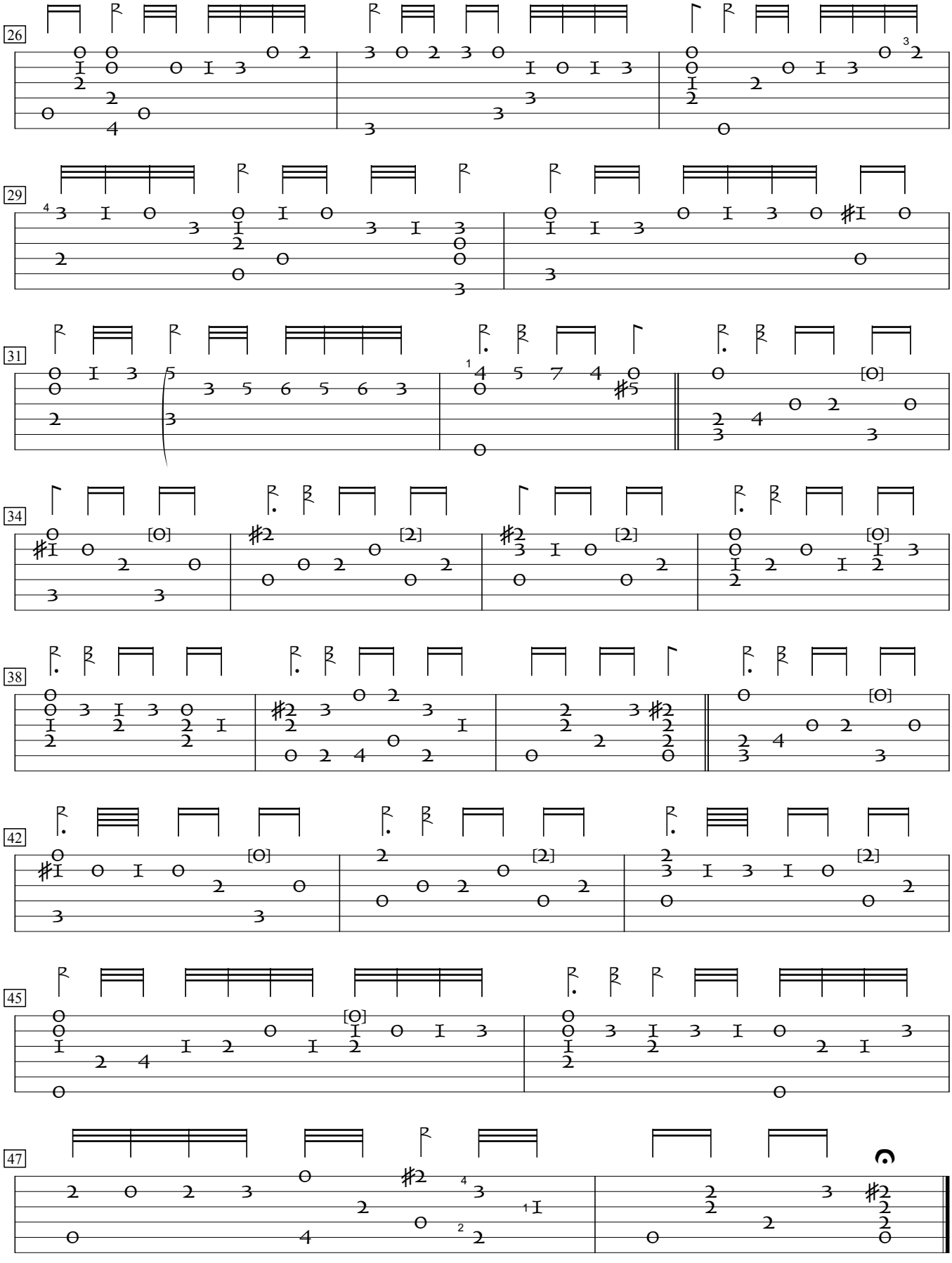
Can She Excuse (My Wrongs)

[A Galliard]

John Dowland



Folger Dowland Lute Book (c. 1610), f.16. Arranged for guitar by Clive Titmuss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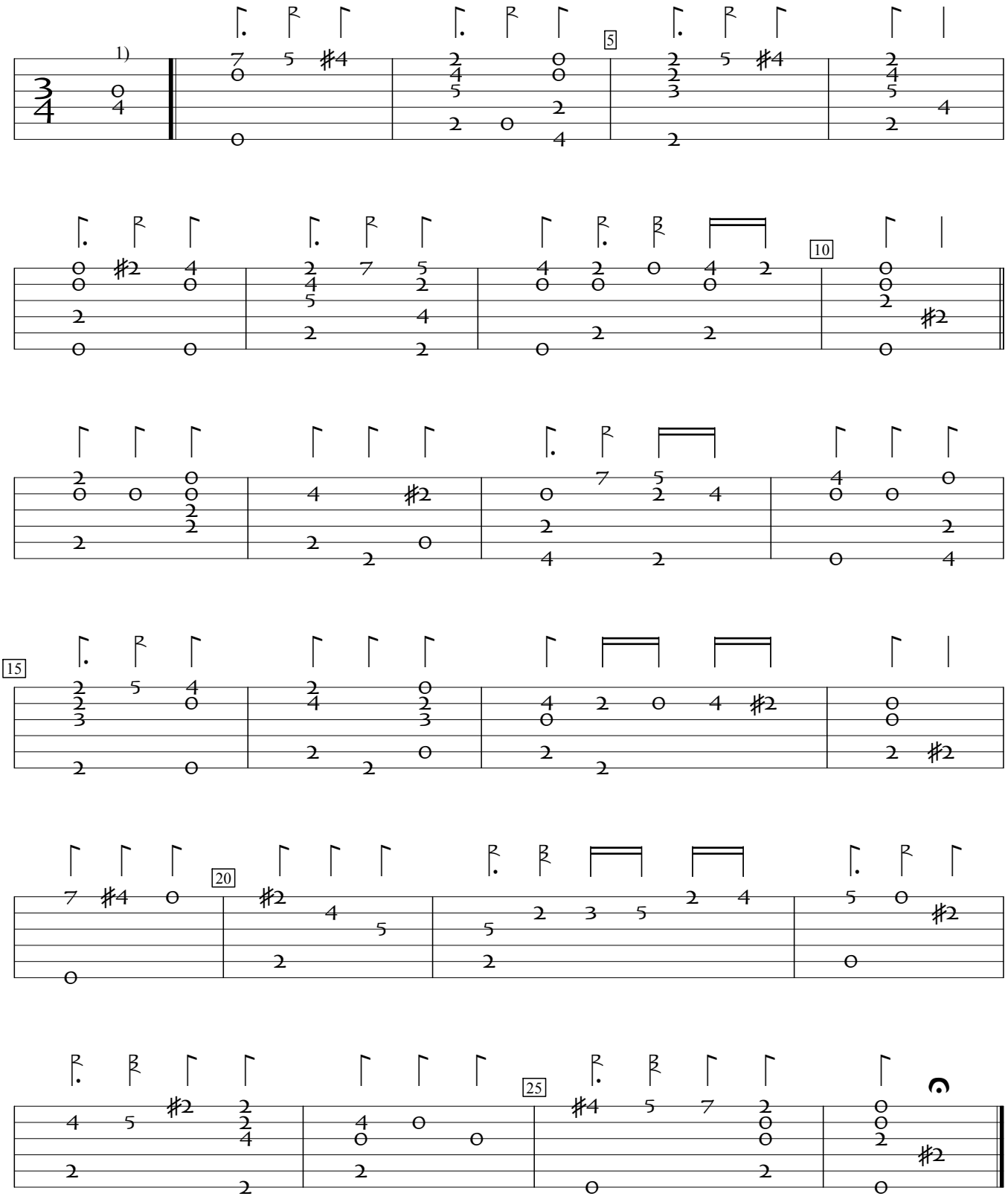
Lady Rich's Galliard

[Dowland's Bells, a version in lute tuning]

John Dowland



1) Tuning: third string to f#