THE MATTHEW HOLMES CONSORTS

(The Cambridge Consort Books c.1588 - ?1597)

Matthew Holmes was responsible for compiling the largest body of surviving English lute, bandora and cittern music, together with music for 'consort-of-six'. His interest in consort music seems to have begun around 1588 when he became precentor and a singing man at Christ Church, Oxford, and associated with another singing man, Richard Reade, whose interest in the form led him to compose numerous pieces. (Lyle Nordstrom, *Journal of the Lute Society of America*, 1972)

The expression 'consort-of-six' as used here refers to that special grouping of instruments (treble viol or violin, flute or recorder, bass viol, lute, cittern and bandora) which was a favourite of Queen Elizabeth I and is represented by four major sources: printed publications by Thomas Morley (The First Booke of Consort Lessons, 1599 & 1611) and Philip Rosseter (Lessons for Consort, 1609) and manuscript collections: The Walsingham Consorts *c.*1588 and The Matthew Holmes Consorts *c.*1588 – ?1597 (often known as 'The Cambridge Consort Books').

The term 'Consort' originally denoted any music whereby different families of instruments come together in a group, but in the 20th century a non-historical distinction was made between 'whole' consorts of like instruments and 'broken' consorts' of different families.

Holmes' consort music was written out in the following manuscripts which are in the possession of Cambridge University Library:

Dd.3.18 Mainly lute duet trebles and consort lute parts.
Dd.14.24 Cittern solos and consort parts.
Dd.5.20 Bass consort parts and an inserted section of lyra viol tablature and music for division viol, including a number of divisions on consort lesson bass parts, including 'James's Galliard' and Dowland's 'Lachrimae')
Dd.5.21 Mainly recorder consort parts but with two pages of parts for 'treble violan'. (the smallest size of violin used at the time), mistakenly copied by Holmes into his recorder book.
The main 'treble violan' book and the bandora book**,** which we can assume would have originally existed**,** are not extant.
The Matthew Holmes consort books are, nevertheless, one of the richest sources of Elizabethan consort music, particularly by virtue of having the largest number of fine lute parts to accompany consorts in this and other collections, such as Thomas Morley's *The First Booke of Consort Lessons* (1599 & 1611) for which the lute book is missing. The set is also interesting in that treble violan (treble violin) and recorder are specified rather than the more usual treble viol and flute.

For a fuller introduction and list of sources for the individual pieces, see the introduction in the Score.

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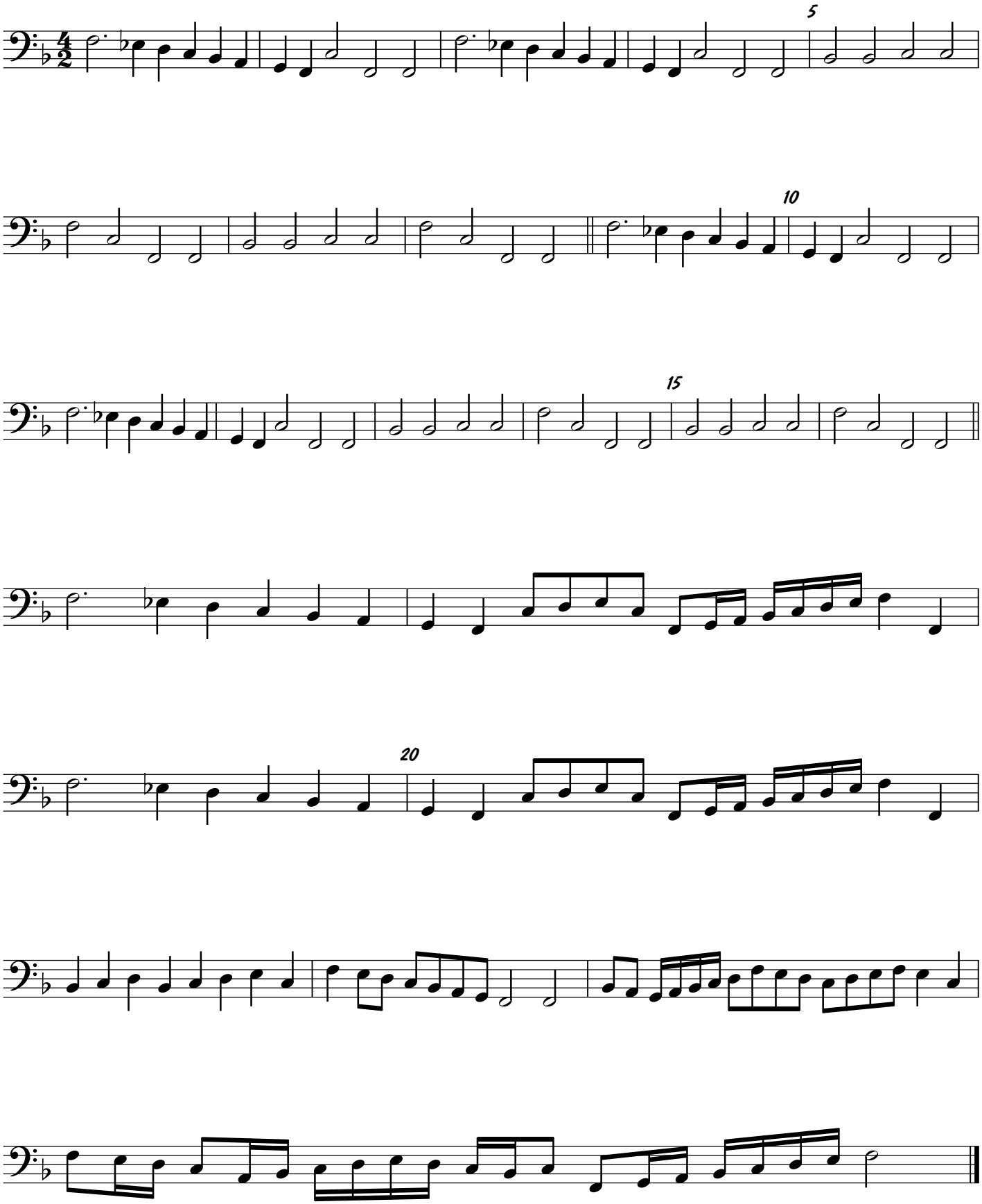
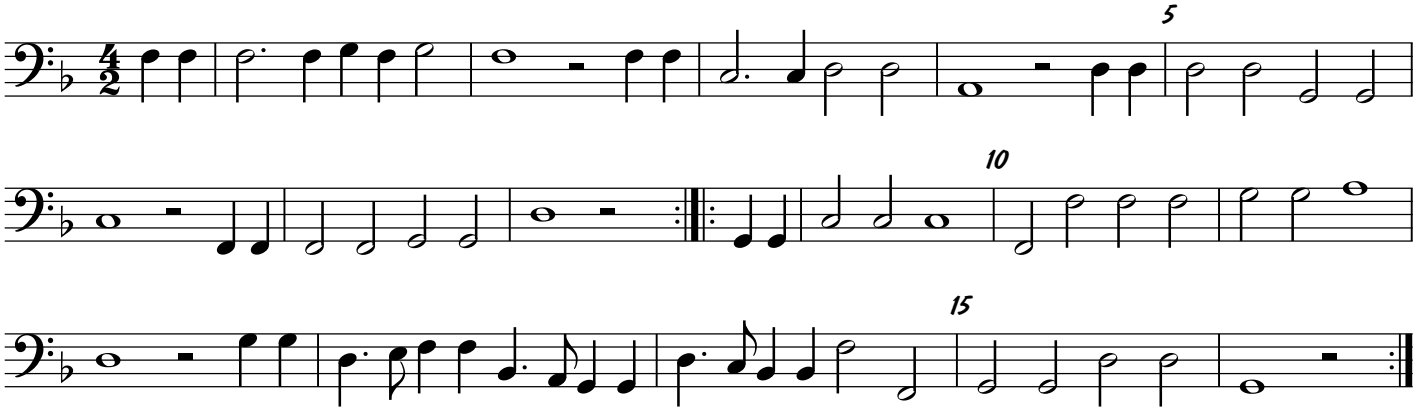
1	The French kings maske	Anon
2	Alfonsoes paven	?Augustine Bassano or Alfonso Ferrabosco II
3	La Bergera galliarde	Anon
4	Nightingale	Anon
5	Complainte or Fortune (Fortune my foe)	Trad. Hanging ballad tune
6	Primiero	Anon
7	Duncombs galliarde	Anon
8	Tarletons jigg	Anon
9	Long paven	John Johnson
10	Dowlands round Battell galliarde	John Dowland
11	Katherine Darcies galliarde	John Dowland
12	The Jewes Daunce	Richard Nicholson
13	De la Tromba paven	?Richard Allison
14	James Galliarde	?James Harding
15	The Sprytes songe	Anon
16	Reades first paven	Richard Reade
17	Reades second paven	Richard Reade
18	Reades galliarde	Richard Reade
19	Dowlands first galliarde	John Dowland
20	Nutmigs and ginger	Anon

1. The French kings maske

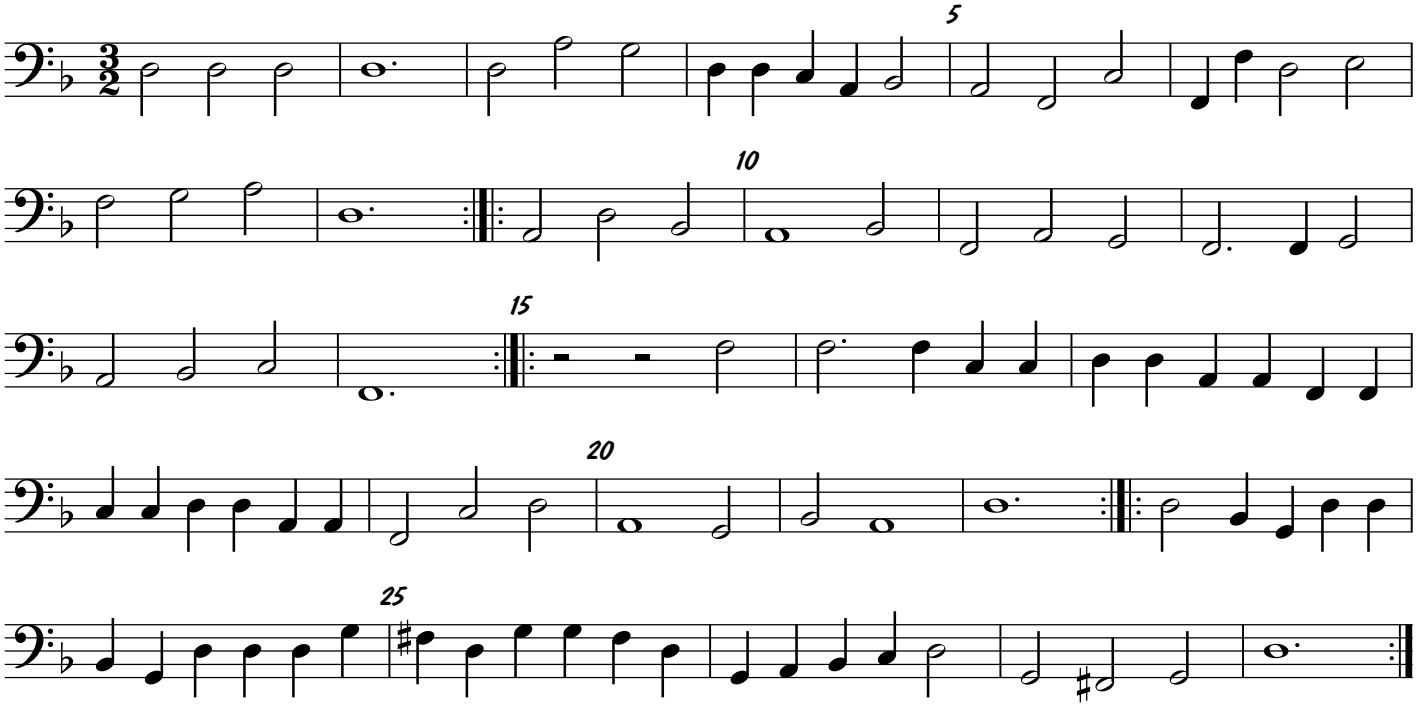


2. Alfonsoes paven

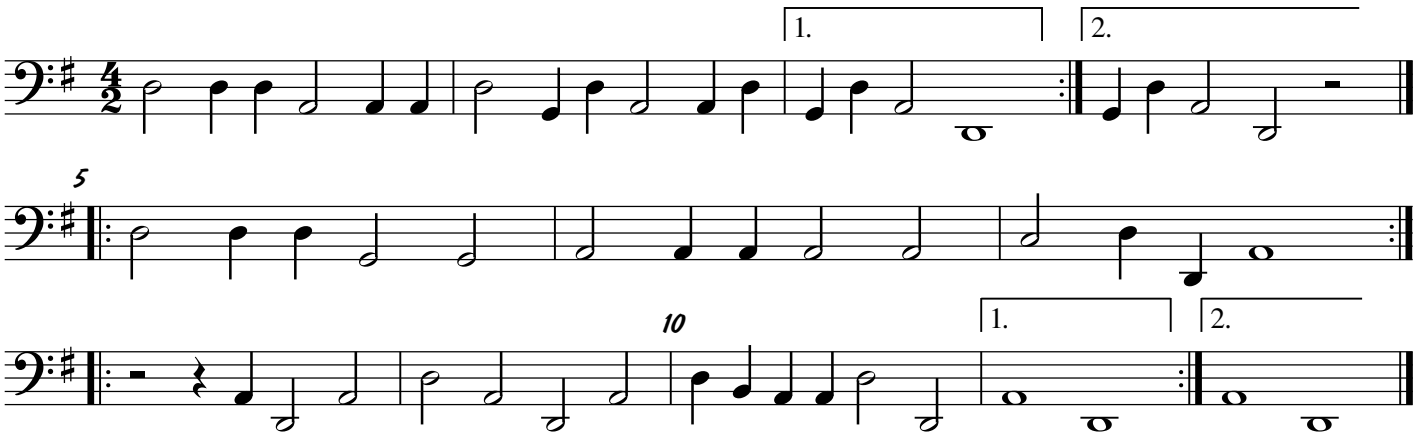
? Augustine Bassano or Alfonso Ferrabosco II



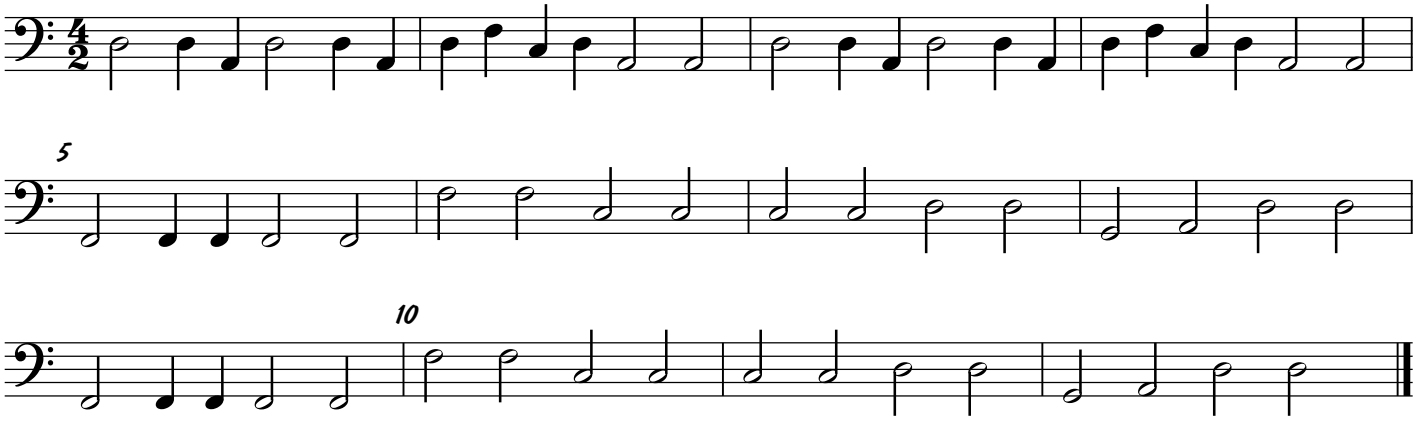
3. La Bergera galliarde



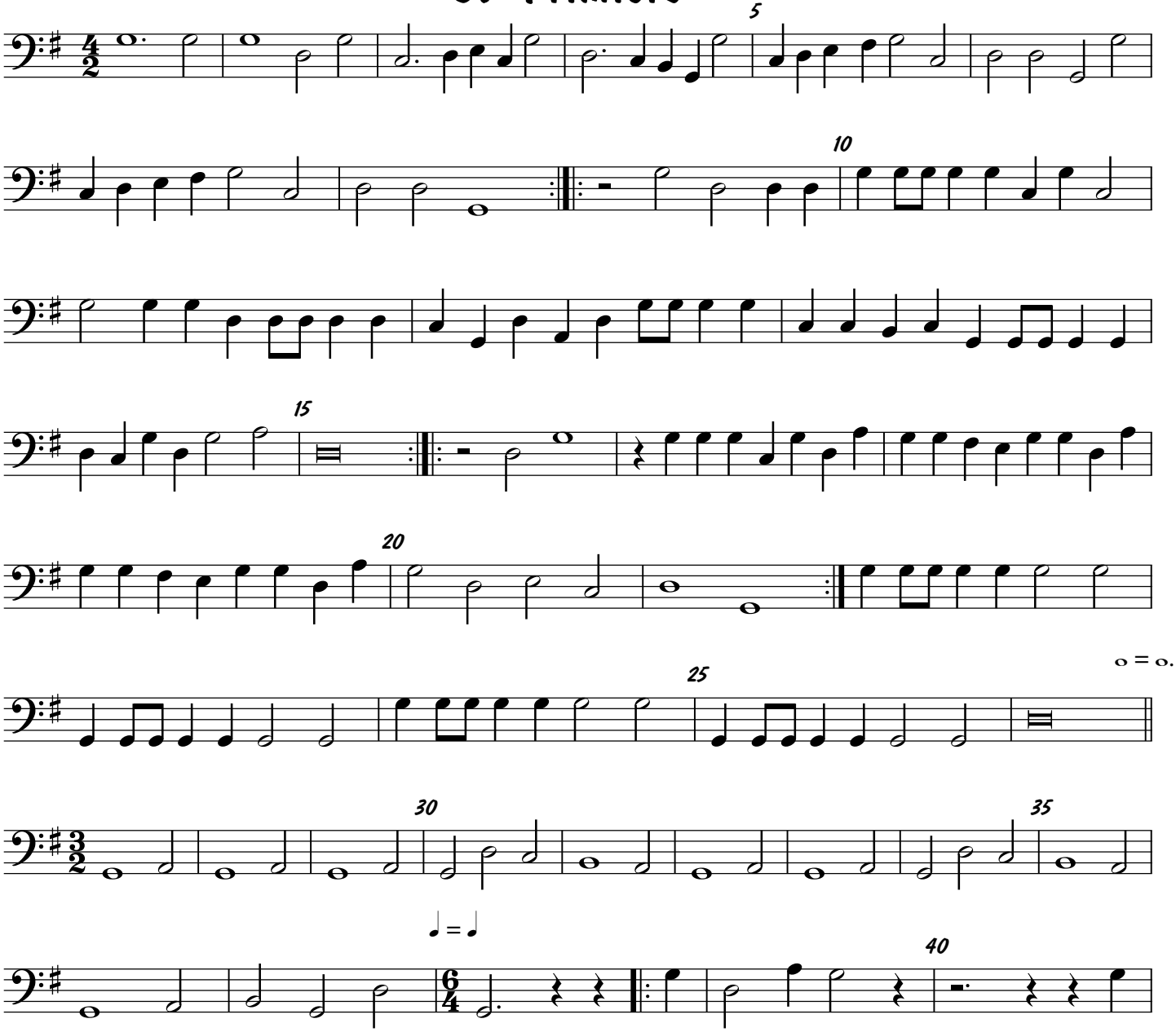
4. Nightingale

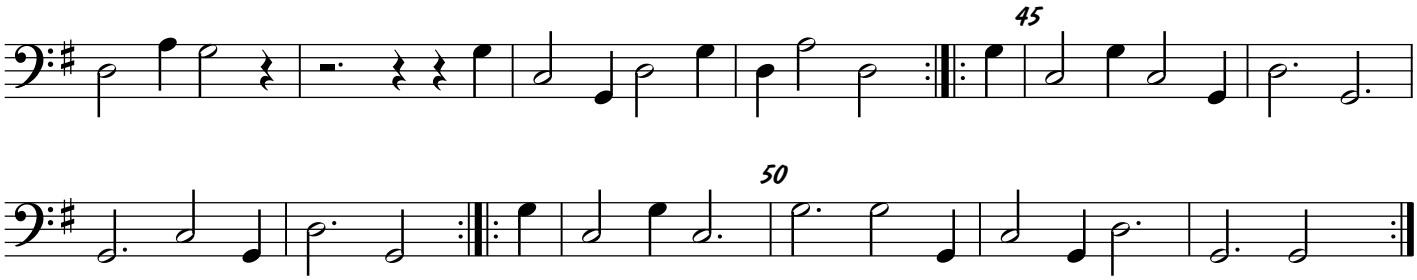


5. Complainte or Fortune (Fortune my foe)

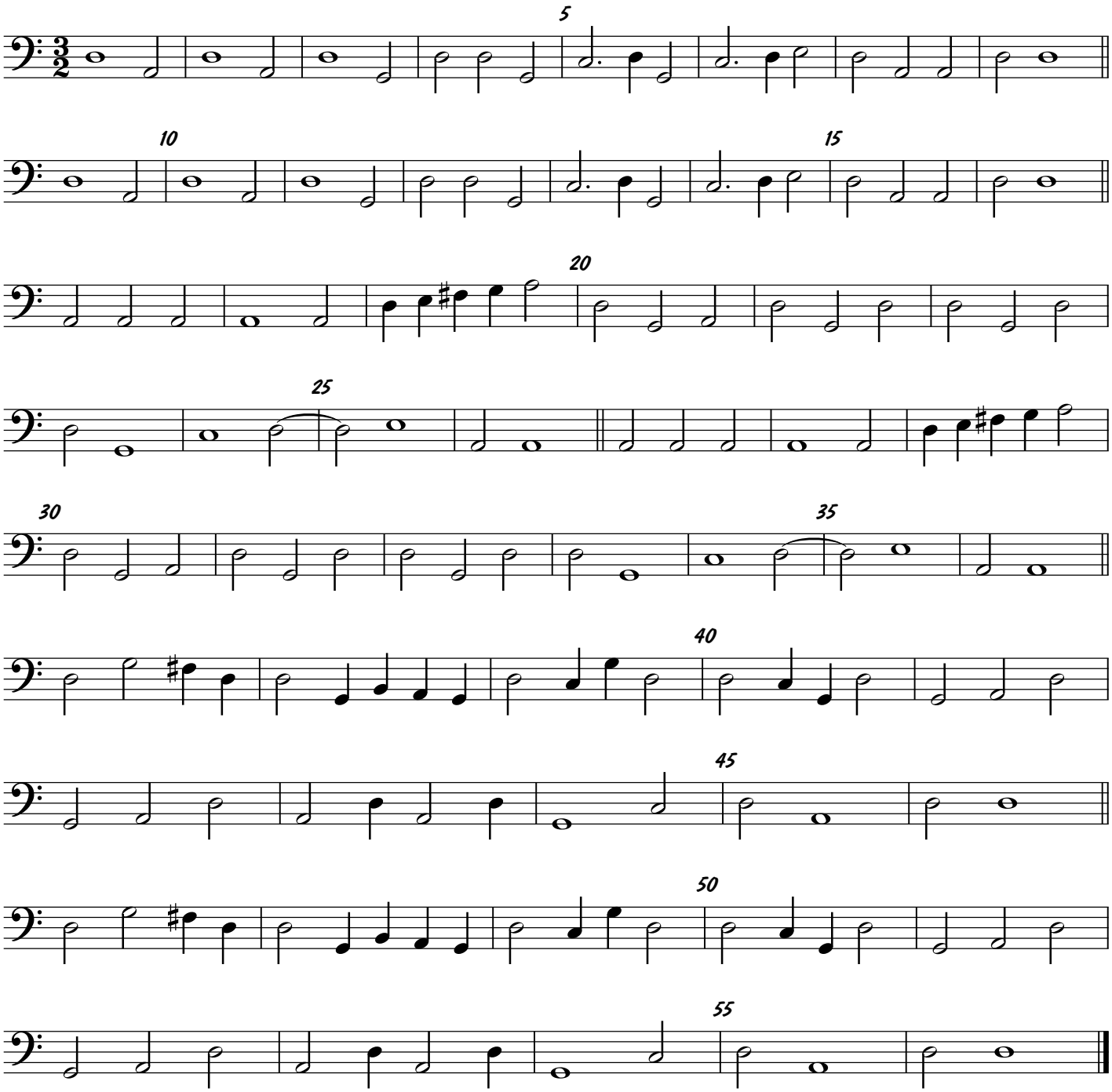


6. Primiero

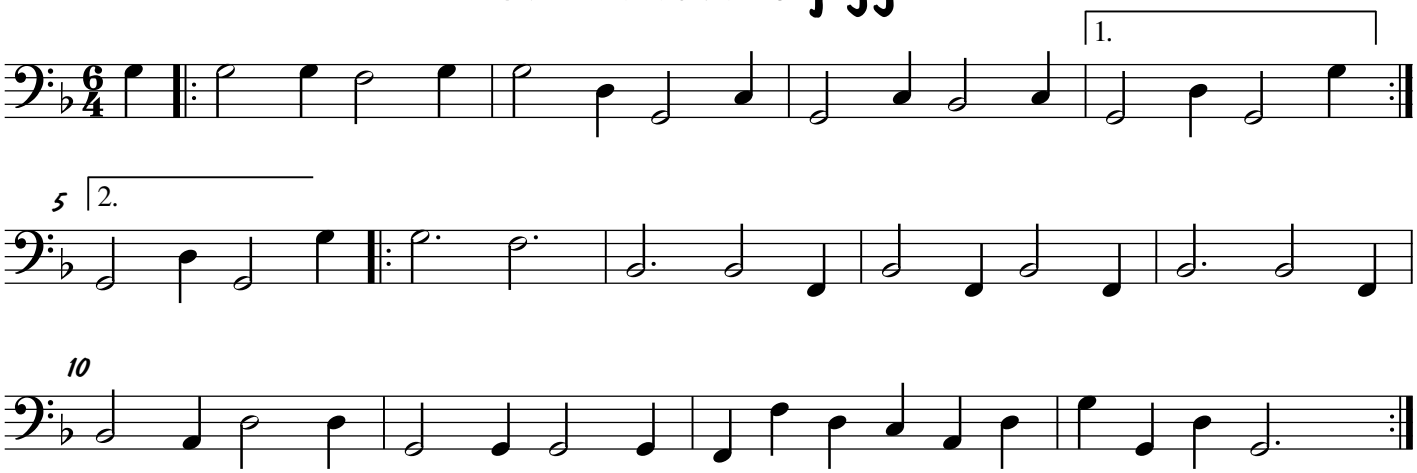




7. Duncombs galliarde

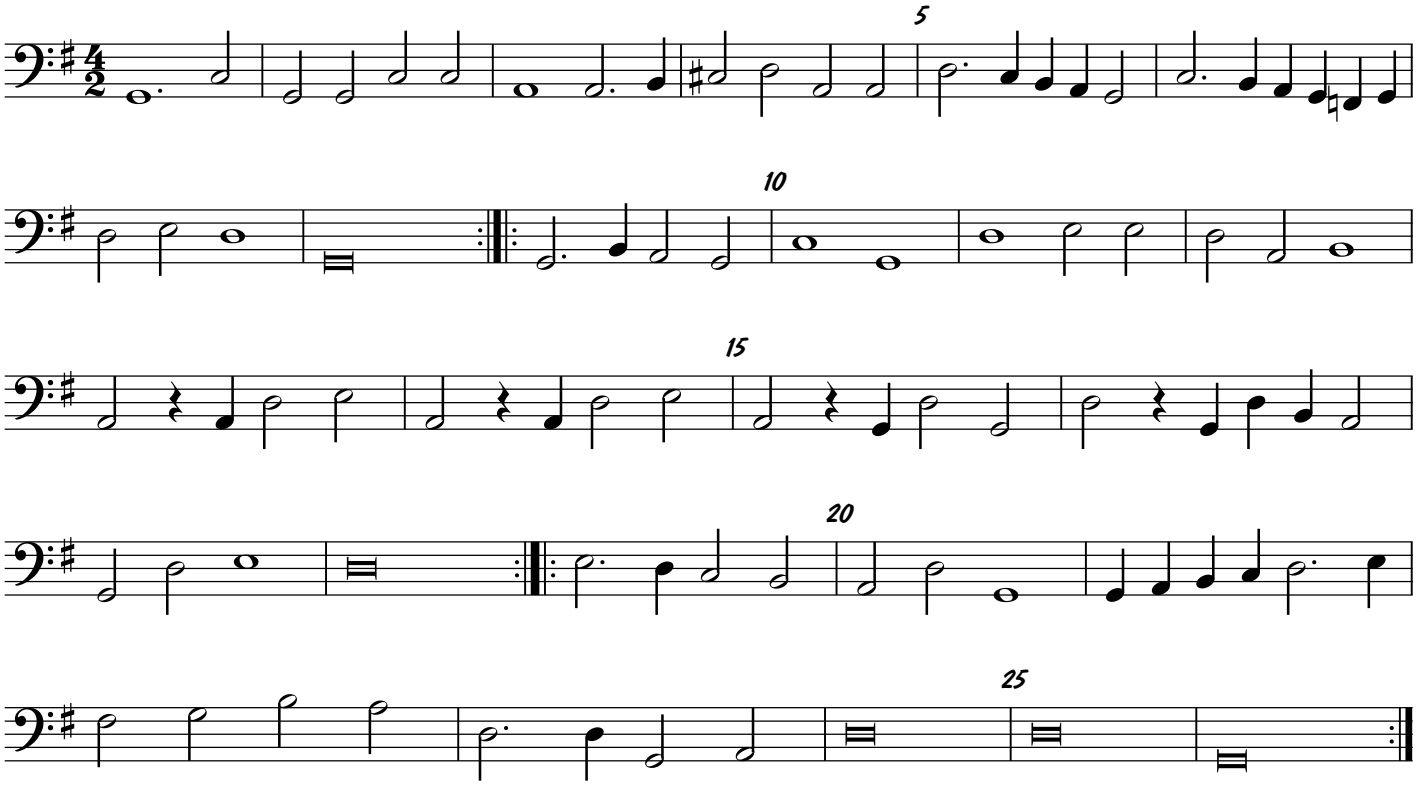


8. Tarletons jigg



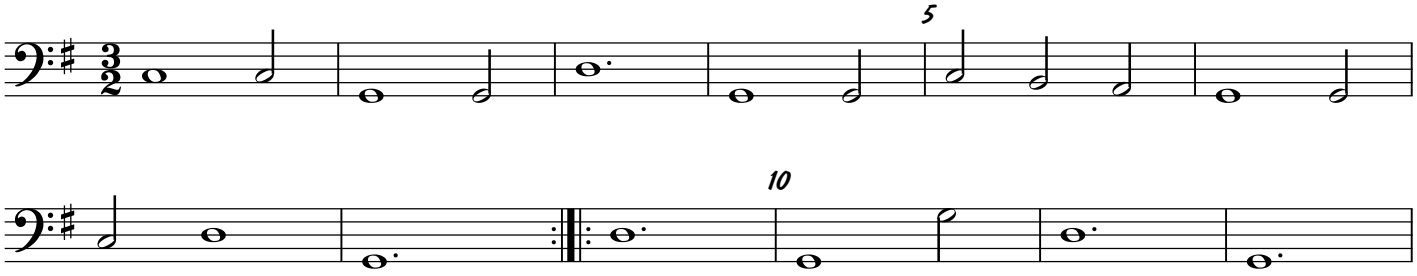
9. Long paven

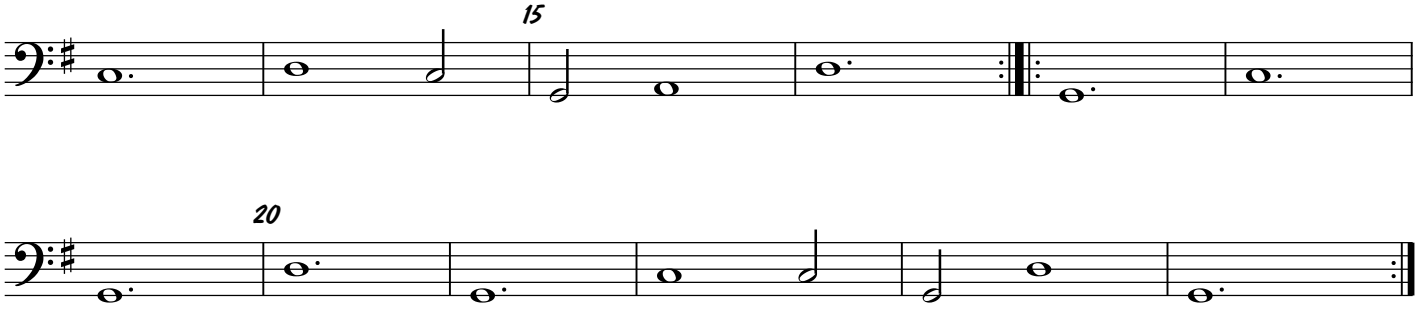
John Johnson



10. Dowlands round Battell galliarde

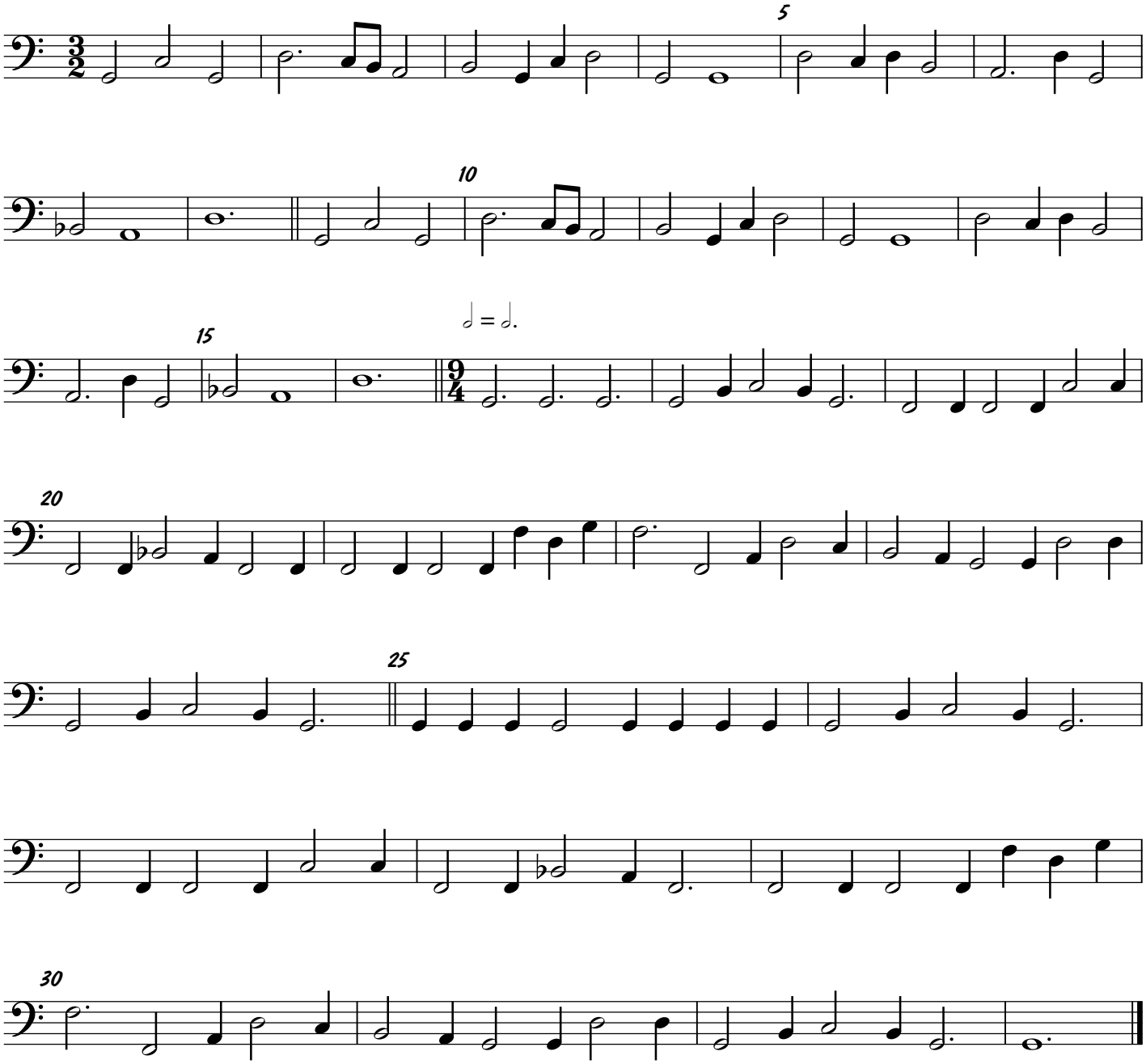
John Dowland





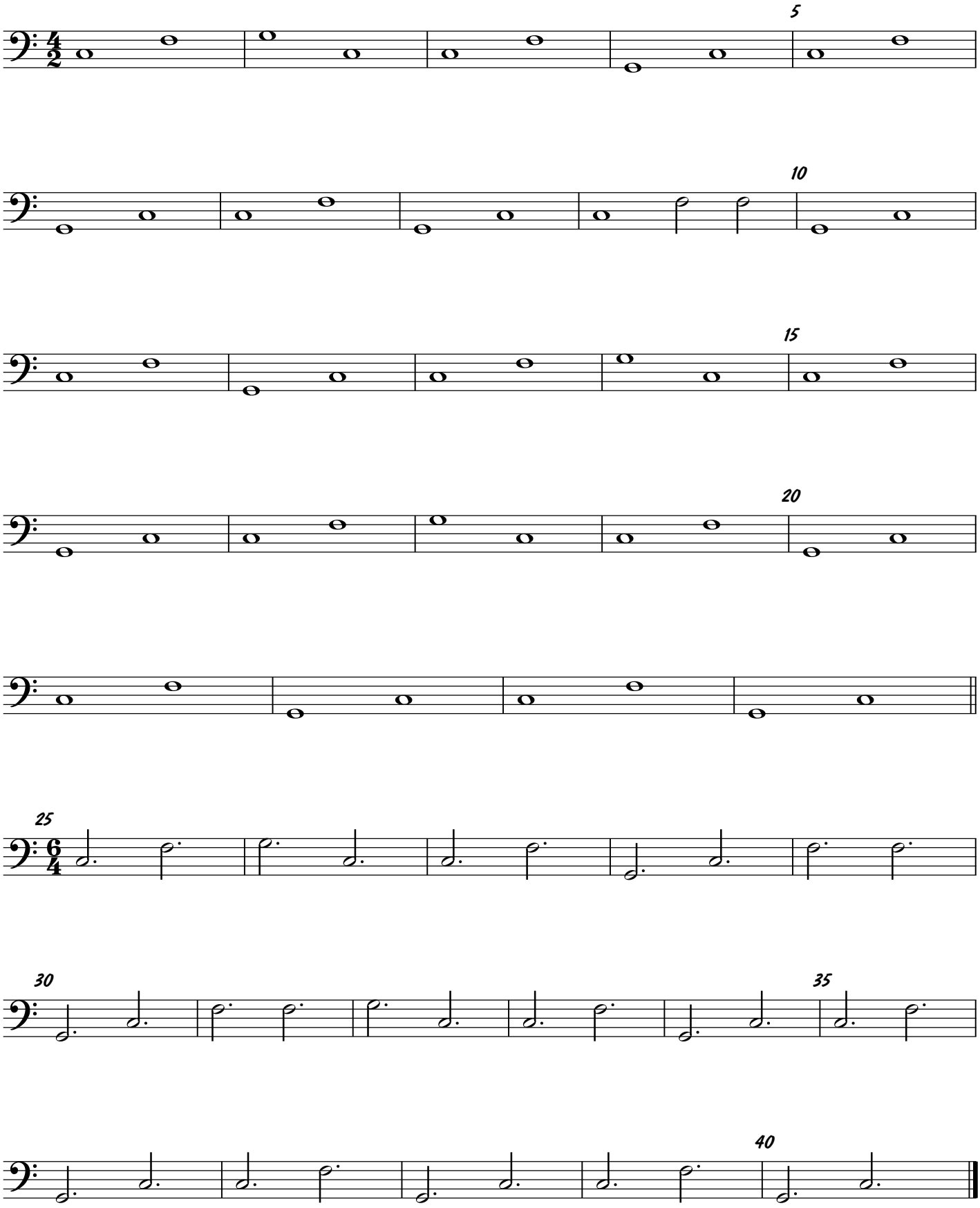
11. Katherine Darcies galliarde

John Dowland



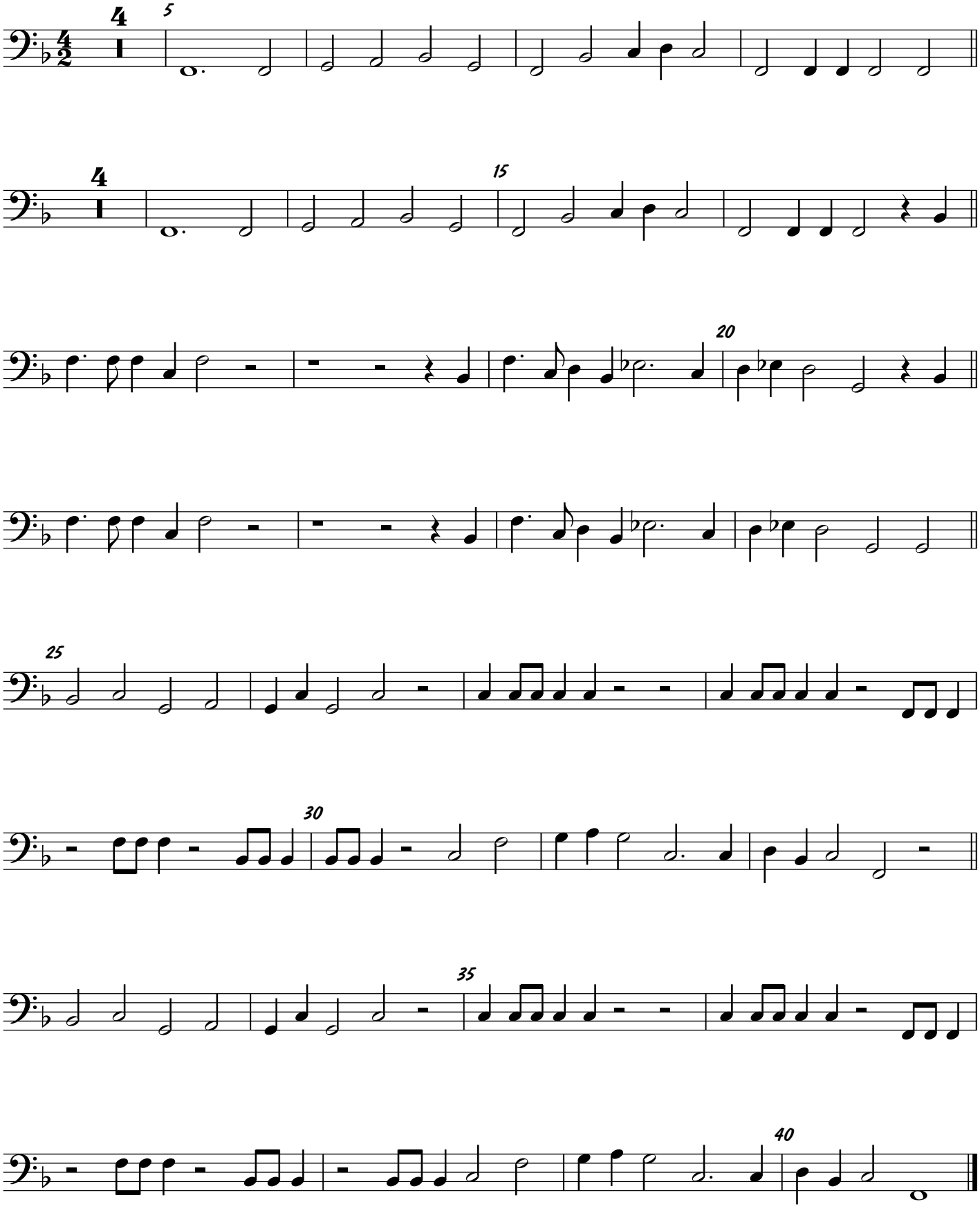
12. The Jewes Daunce

Richard Nicholson



13. De la Tromba paven

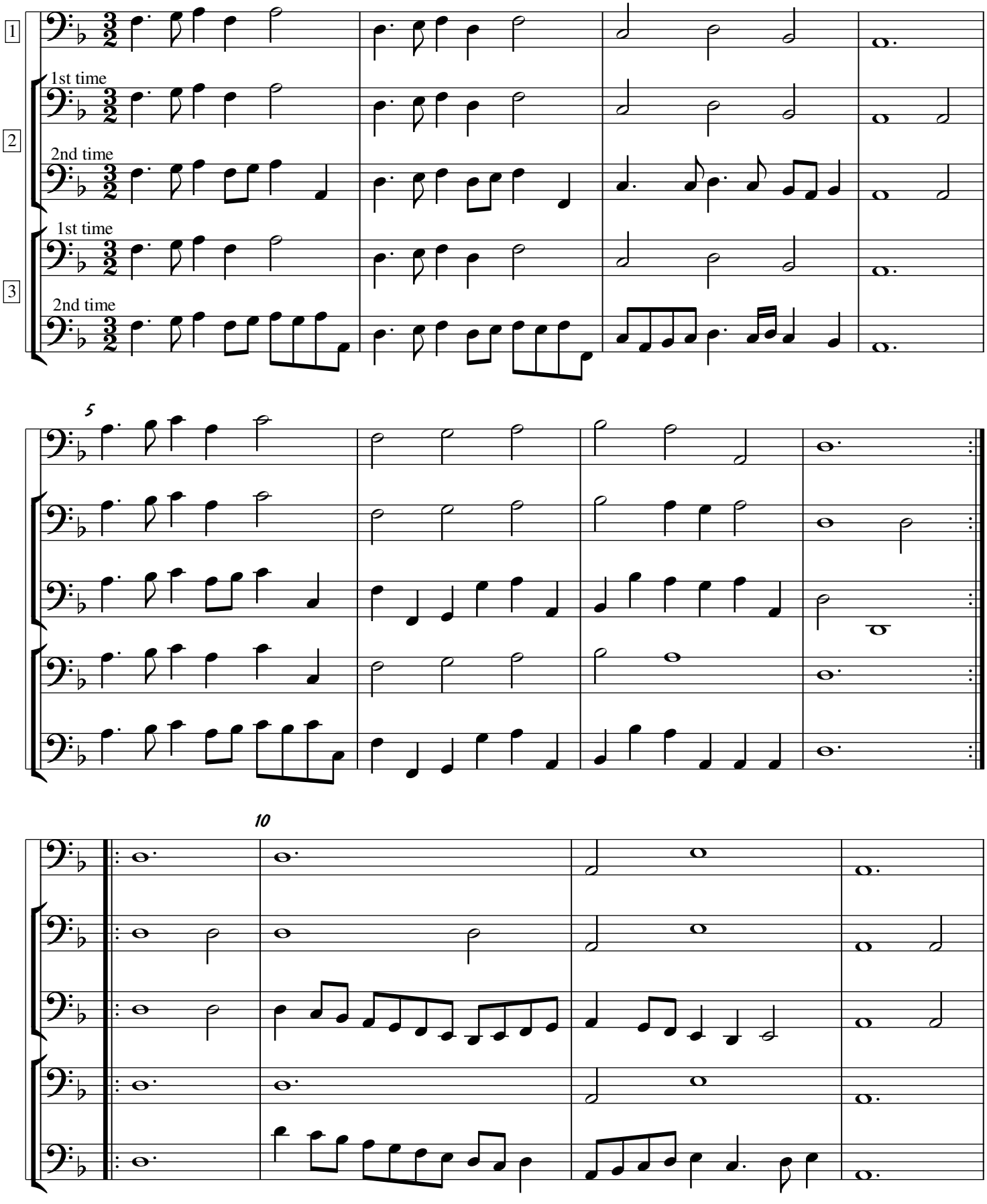
(Richard Allison)

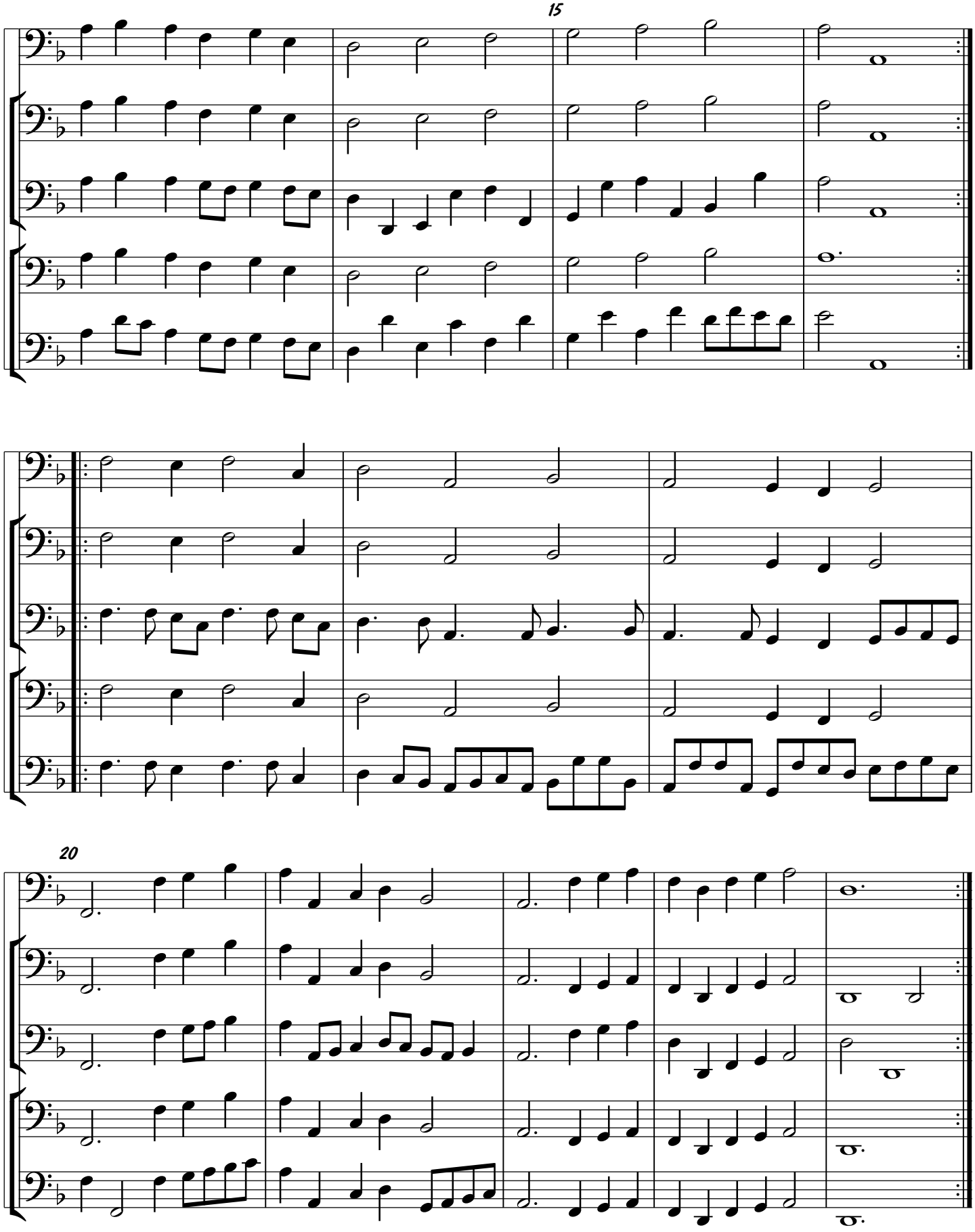


14. James galliarde

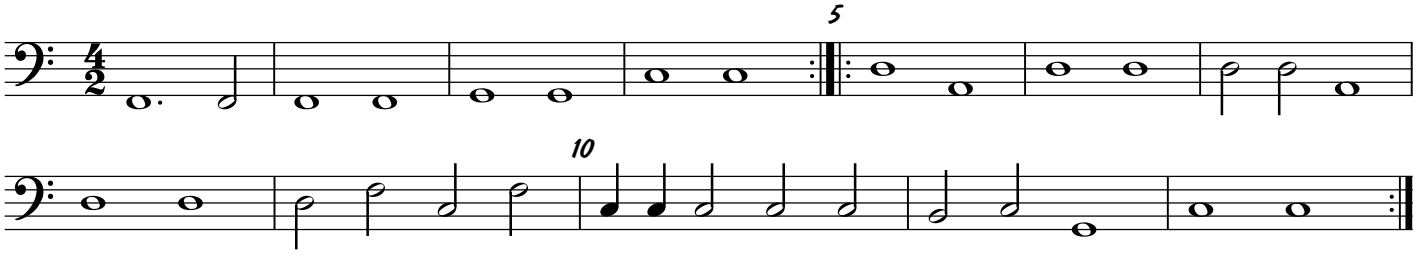
3 versions

(James Harding)



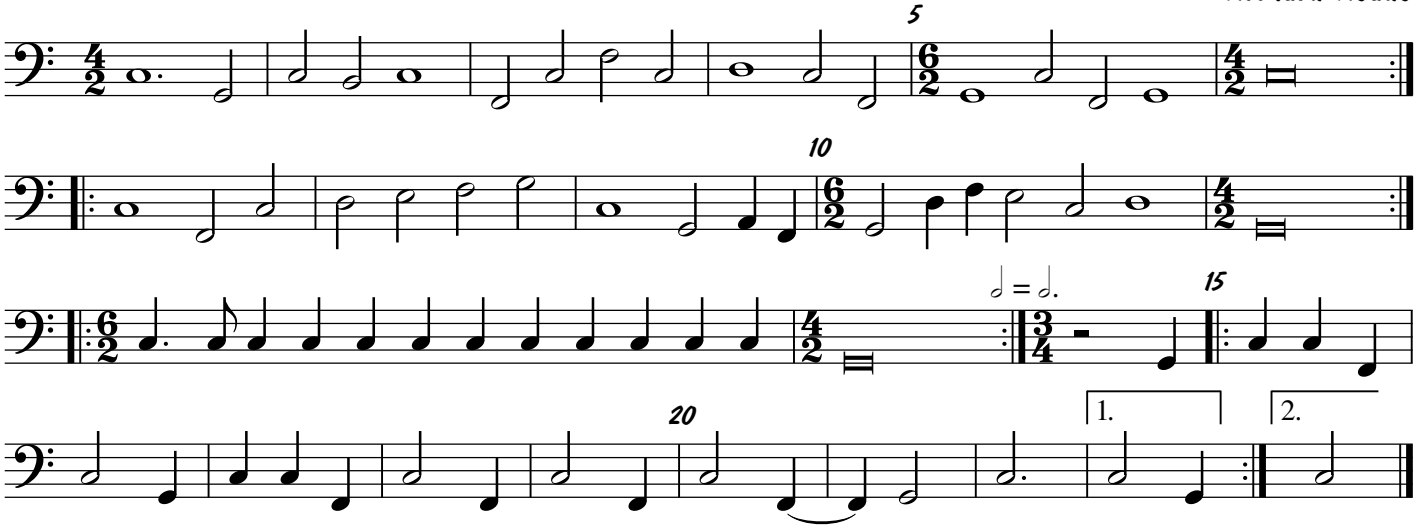

15
20

15. The Sprytes songe



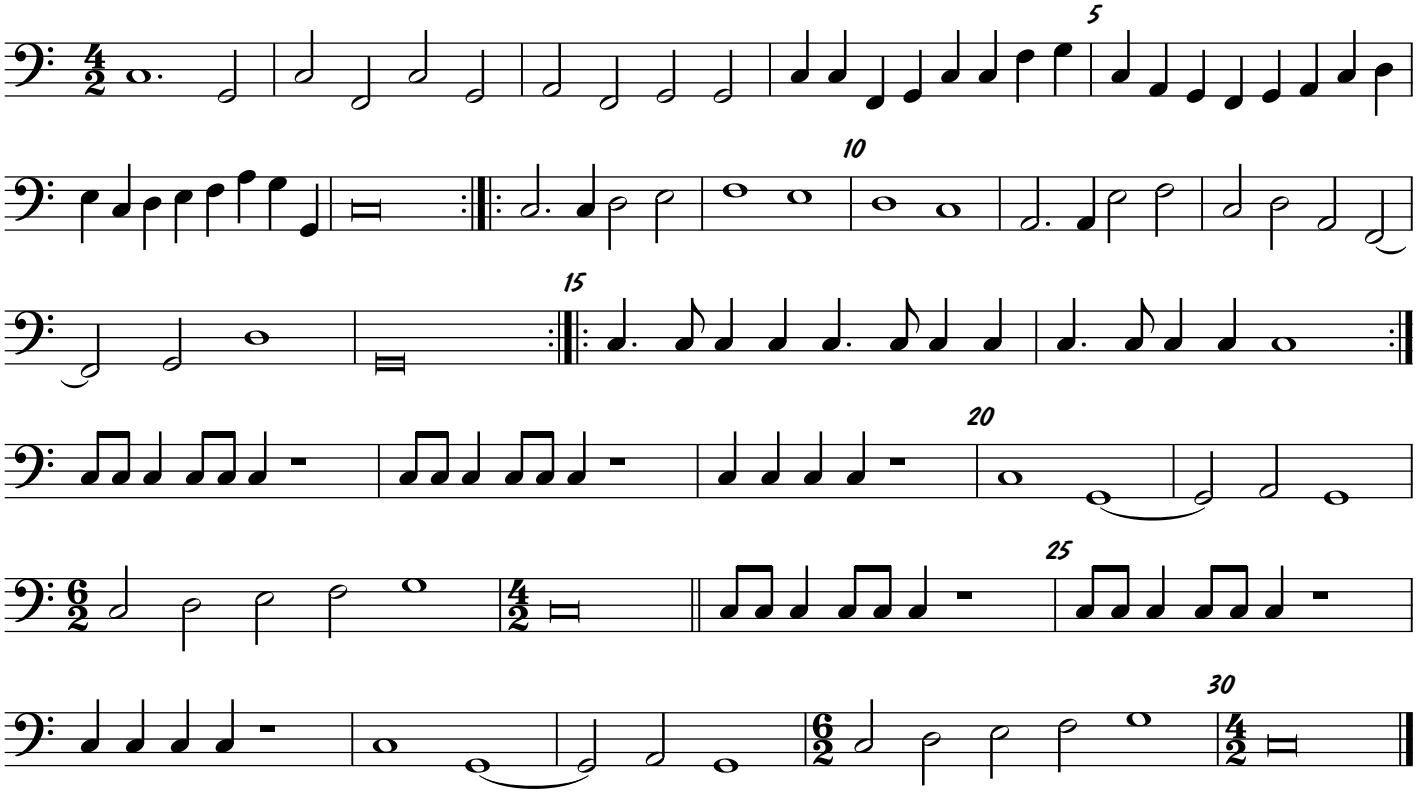
16. Reades first paven

Richard Reade



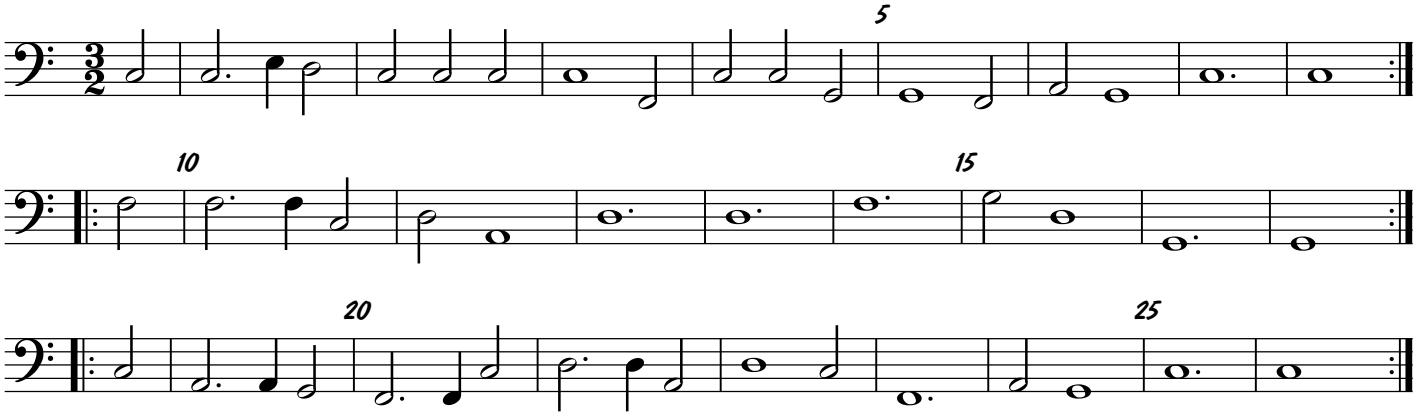
17. Reades second paven

Richard Reade



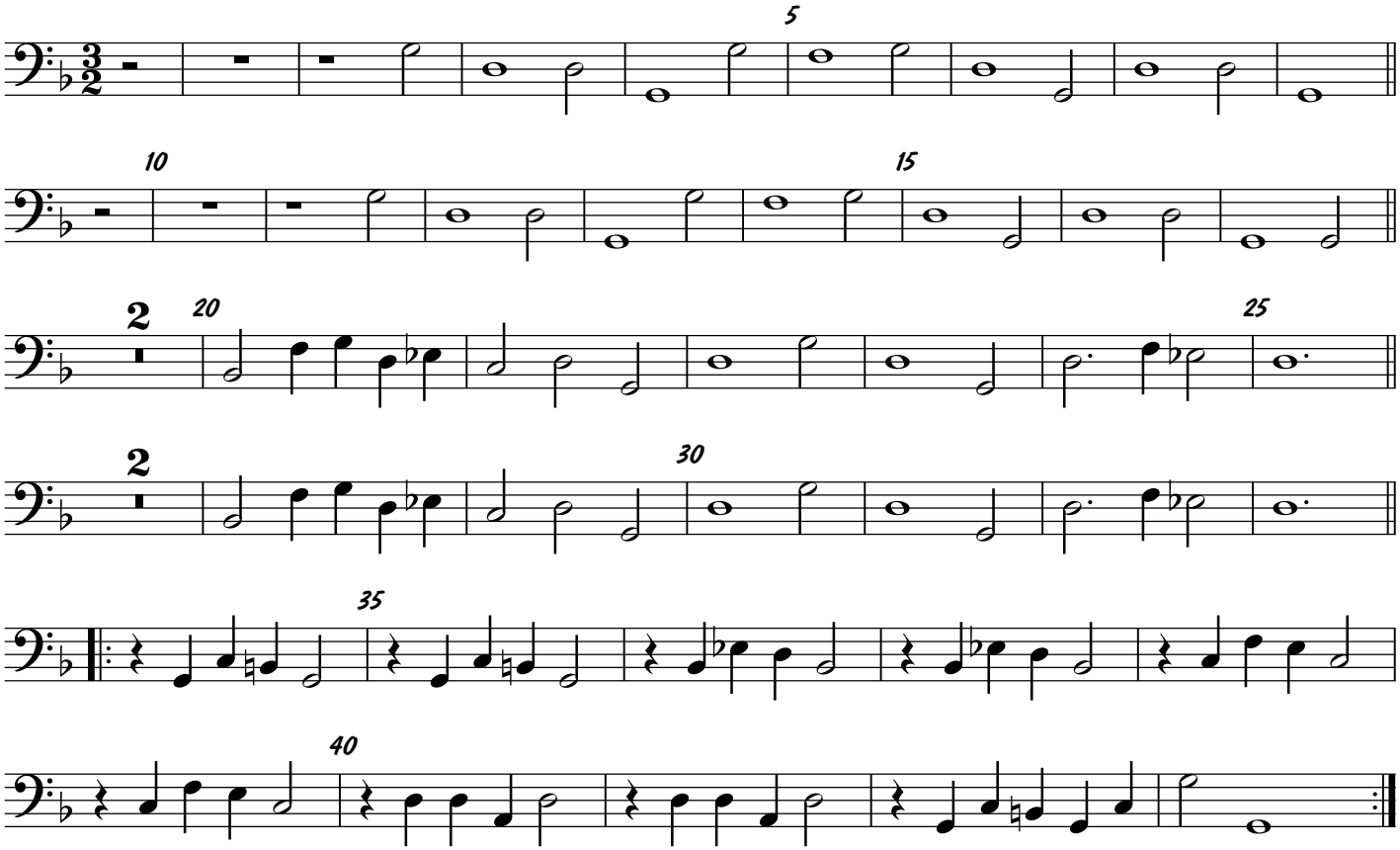
18. Reades galliarde

Richard Reade

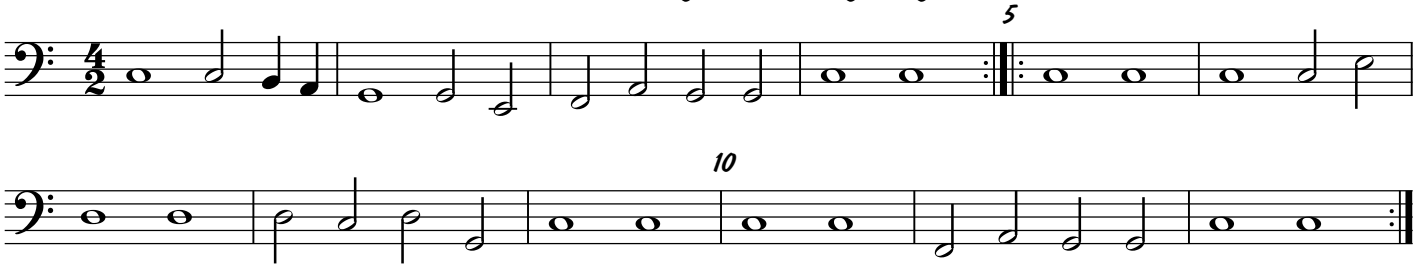


19. Dowlands first galliarde

John Dowland



20. Nutmigs and ginger



Variations from the source
The Bass Viol part

The list below shows notes as appear in the source and which were considered to require alteration.
The source is unbarred. Black notation, occasionally used in the source, is not commented on below.
Original clefs are all F4

1	**The French kings maske**	no change
2	**Alfonsoes paven**	no change
3	**La Bergera galliarde**	bars 9 and 10 are written all a third higher. bar 25 1st crotchet not sharpened.
4	**Nightingale**	bar 8 minim rest missing 3 and 4 c quaver not sharpened. bar 10 4th crotchet g a tone lower.
5	**Complainte or Fortune**	no change
6	**Primiero**	No sharp in key signature but accidentals are correctly notated.
7	**Duncombs galliarde**	bar 5 crotched d was c a tone lower
8	**Tarletons jigg**	no change
9	**Long paven**	bar 7 2nd minim e flat
10	**Dowlands round Battell galliarde**	no change
11	**Katherine Darcies galliarde**	Titled *Dowl. R.H. galliarde* in source bars 7 and 15 1st minim b natural bar 18 minim g then crotchet c then crotchet b then minim g bars 22 and 30 dotted minim and minim c appear to have been changed from the correct notes. bar 32 last dotted minim missing.
12	**The Jewes Daunce**	IG modified bergamasca bass.
13	**De la Tromba paven**	bar 40 last note is a breve.
14	**James Galliarde**	no change
15	**The Sprytes songe**	no change
16	**Reades first paven**	no change
17	**Reades second paven**	no change
18	**Reades galliarde**	no change
19	**Dowlands first galliarde**	Bars 34 and 35: b crotchets not naturalised.
20	**Nutmigs and ginger**	no change