The Balcarres Lute Book

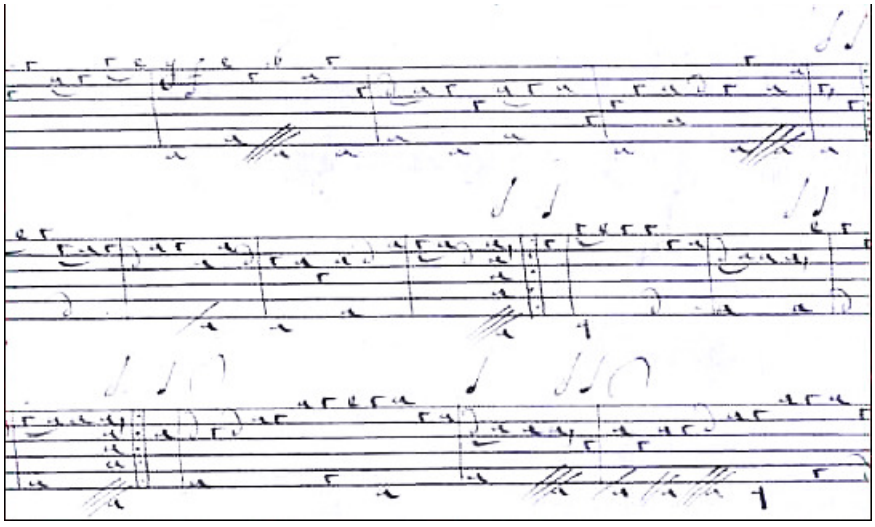
With 252 pieces for an 11-course Baroque lute

by

John Beck, David Grieve, Gallot, John Morison, John Red, et aliem

Originally compiled in Scotland ca. 1700

Volume I: Tablature



Transcribed by Peter Steur, 2022

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The Manuscript:

Copied out in Scotland at the close of the seventeenth century, the Balcarres Lute Book is the largest and most important post-1640 British source of lute music. It contains 252 compositions arranged for an eleven-course Baroque lute in D minor tuning, among them settings of native Scots airs and of English popular tunes, and French baroque lute music by mid- and later seventeenth-century masters. Possibly compiled by or for Margaret Campbell, fourth wife of Colin Lindsay, third Earl of Balcarres, the manuscript has remained in the Lindsay family, who has deposited it in the National Library of Scotland.

The creation of this manuscript coincides with the beginning of a growing popularity of Scottish music, boosted by several publications for the violin by the Playford family in London starting in the 1650s. One of those publications, A collection of Scotch tunes, published in 1700 in London by Henry Playford, shares an important number of tunes with the Balcarres MS and helped identify its date of compilation to the very beginning of the 18th century rather than the late 17th century.

The manuscript includes primarily Scottish and well-known English popular tunes, such as Greensleeves or Johnny come kiss me now, as well as Scottish tunes extracted from collections for violin, transposed an octave down with the addition of a simple bass line. About two thirds of the pieces mention a Mr Beck in their title. He is now thought to have been an active lutenist in Edinburgh and was probably the arranger of the tunes for the 11-course lute. About 20 pieces, attributed to Gallot, Mercure, Mouton, and a Mr Leslie - i.e. Jean-Baptiste Lully! - claim a French origin.

The connection between the Balcarres lute book and the Lindsay family, if it exists, would certainly be meaningful from a political point of view given the strong allegiance of Colin Lindsay with the Jacobite party. Colin Lindsay returned to Scotland from his exile in France, at the court of James II in Saint Germain in 1700. Whether this might explain the survival of a very continental style of tablature for an instrument virtually extinct elsewhere by then is moot.

Tablature style:

The manuscript bears a strong formal relationship with French Baroque music of the latter part of the 17th century. Written in French tablature, with stylised note flags reminiscent of those found in the Milleran MS, and using typically French ornaments glyphs, the manuscript could easily be mistaken for a continental collection, were it not for the British titles and contents. The Balcarres MS uses three main music ornaments:

1) a comma following the tablature letter to indicate an ascending shake.
2) a curved line immediately under the note indicates a descending shake.
3) the scribe uses a glyph that resembles the number '7', possibly indicating an ascending appogiatura, or a backfall/forefall sometimes referred to as the "Scotch snap".

Editorial considerations:

There are few errors in the original MS. In keeping with the spirit of the original MS which minimizes page turns, the presentation follows a piece by piece order, each one starting on the beginning of a page. Double barlines |:| in the original MS serve both as variation delimiters and repeat indications. No effort was made to distinguish between the two in this transcription.

Sources and useful links:

The Balcarres Manuscript, by Matthew Spring, published in The Lute, vol. 32, pp. 2-45 (1992).
Sylvain Bergeron's CD and CD booklet (itself based on Matthew Spring's research and article)
Concordances: See Music for Lute Instruments, a Database by Peter Steur and Markus Lutz

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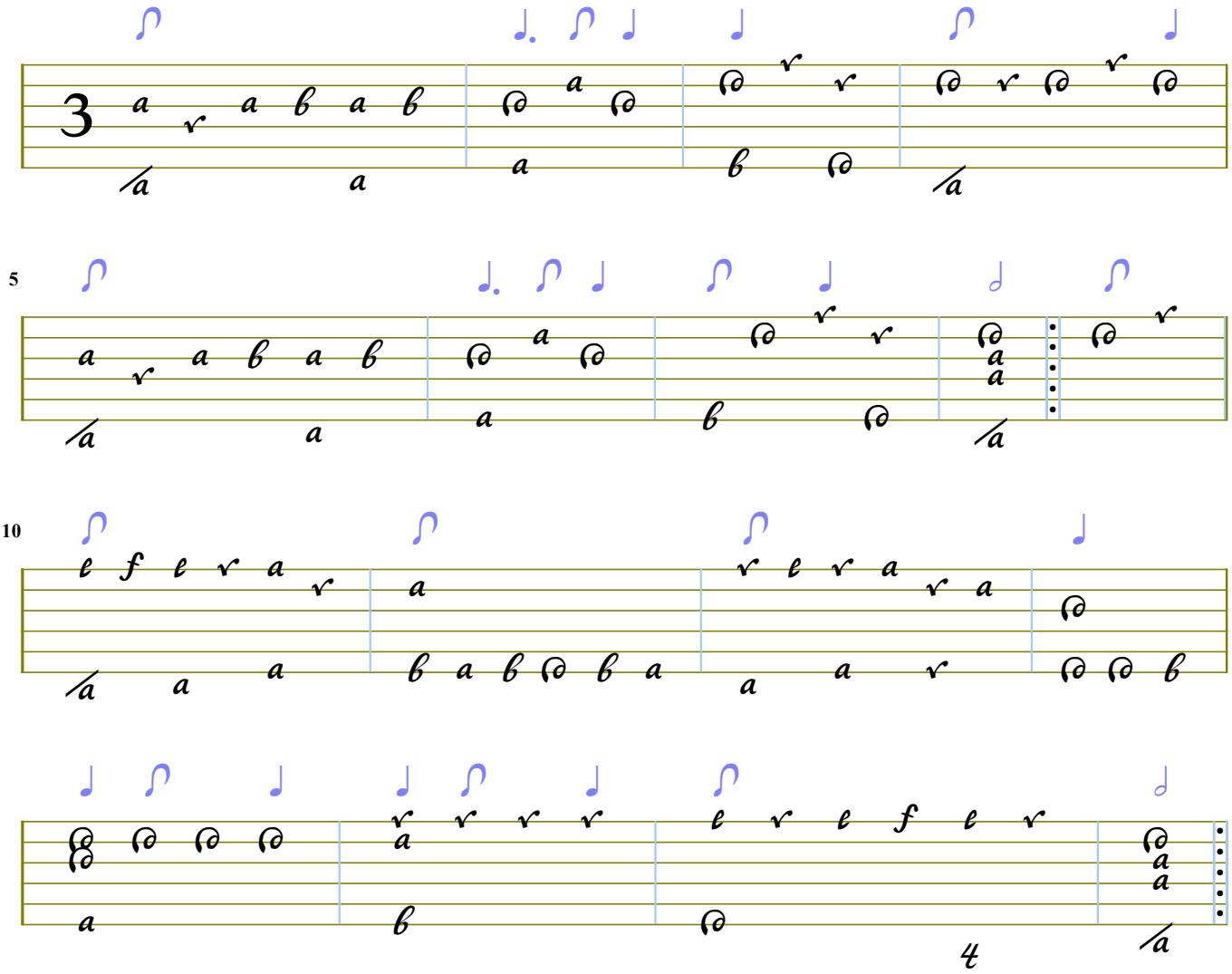
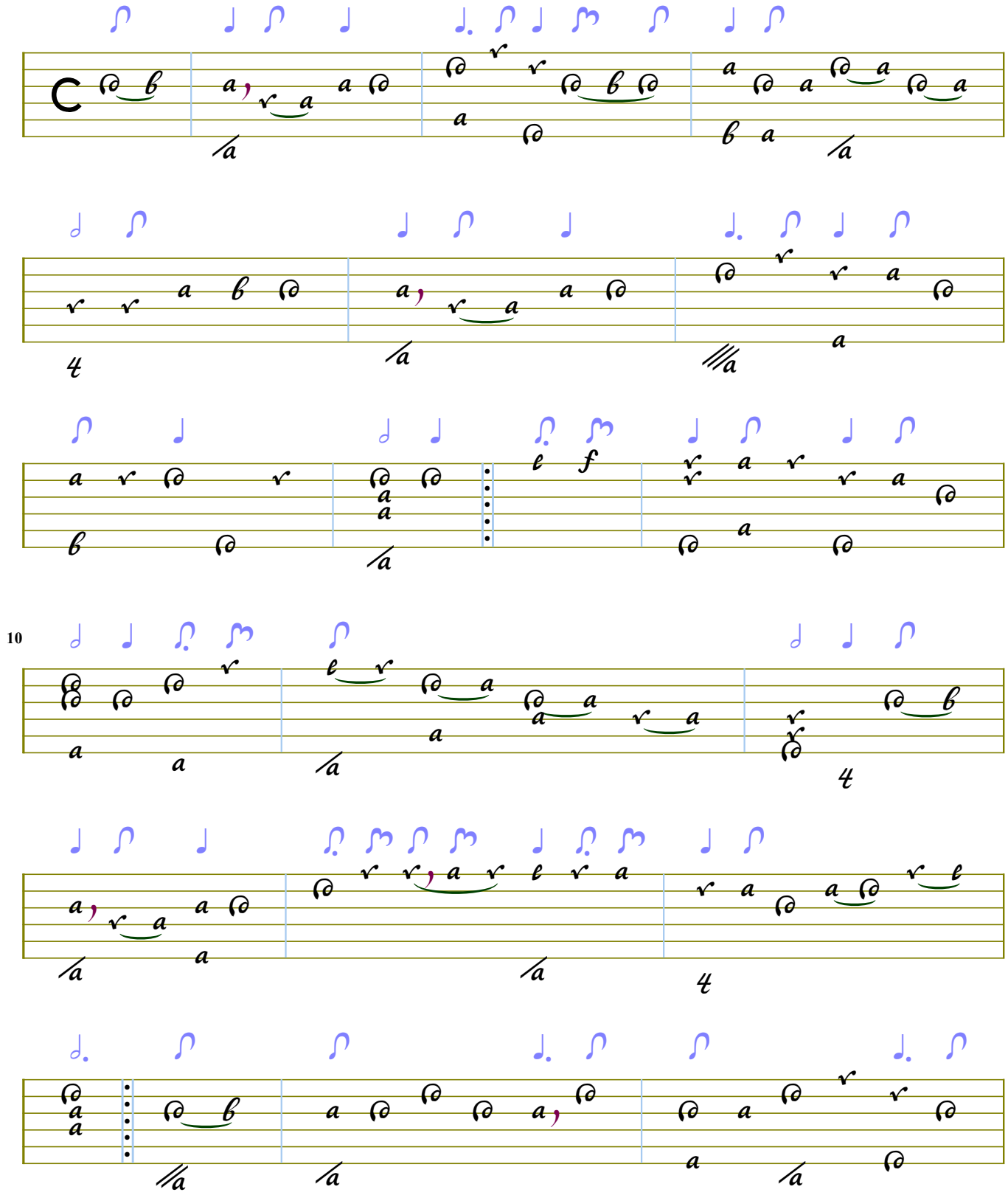
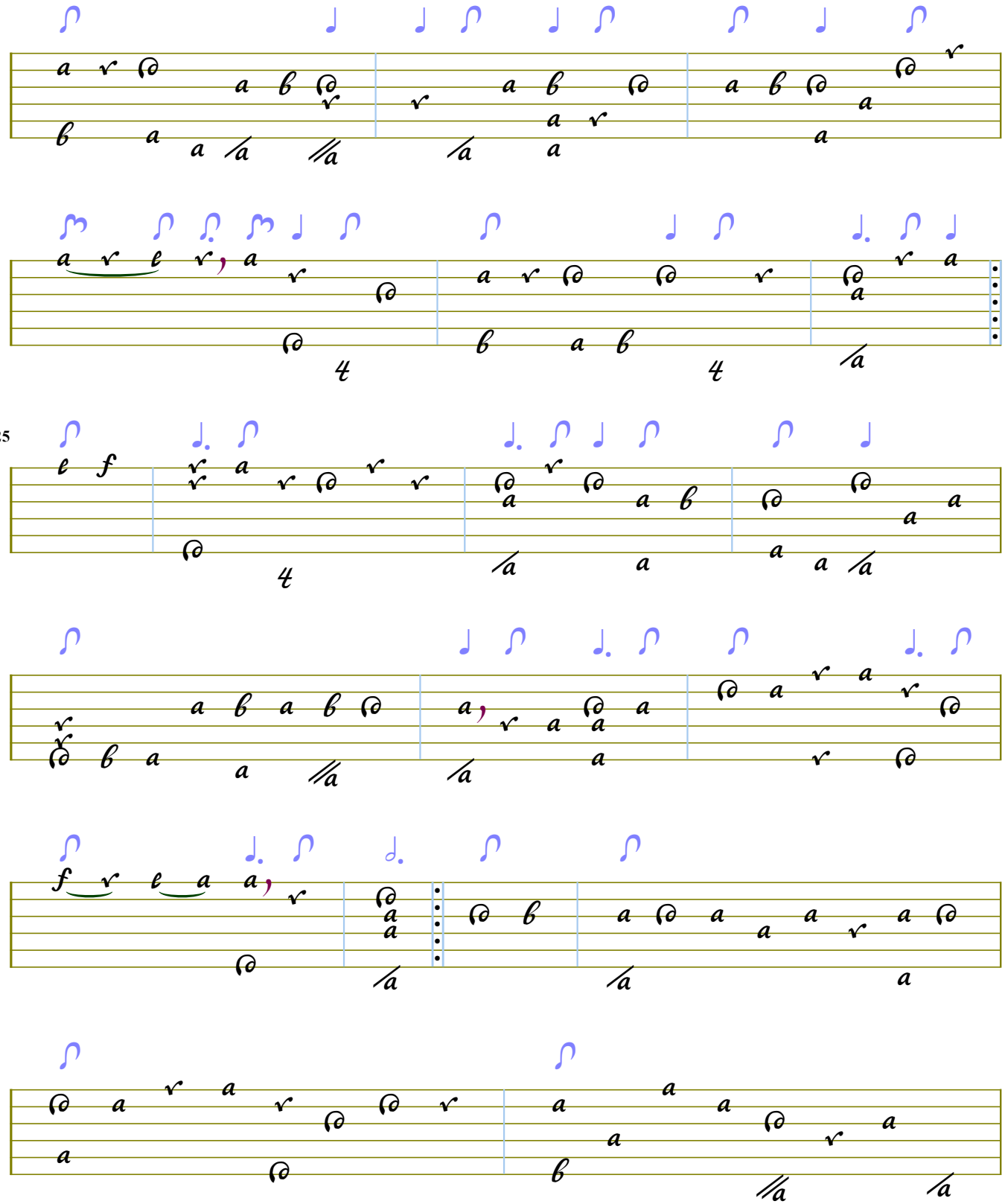
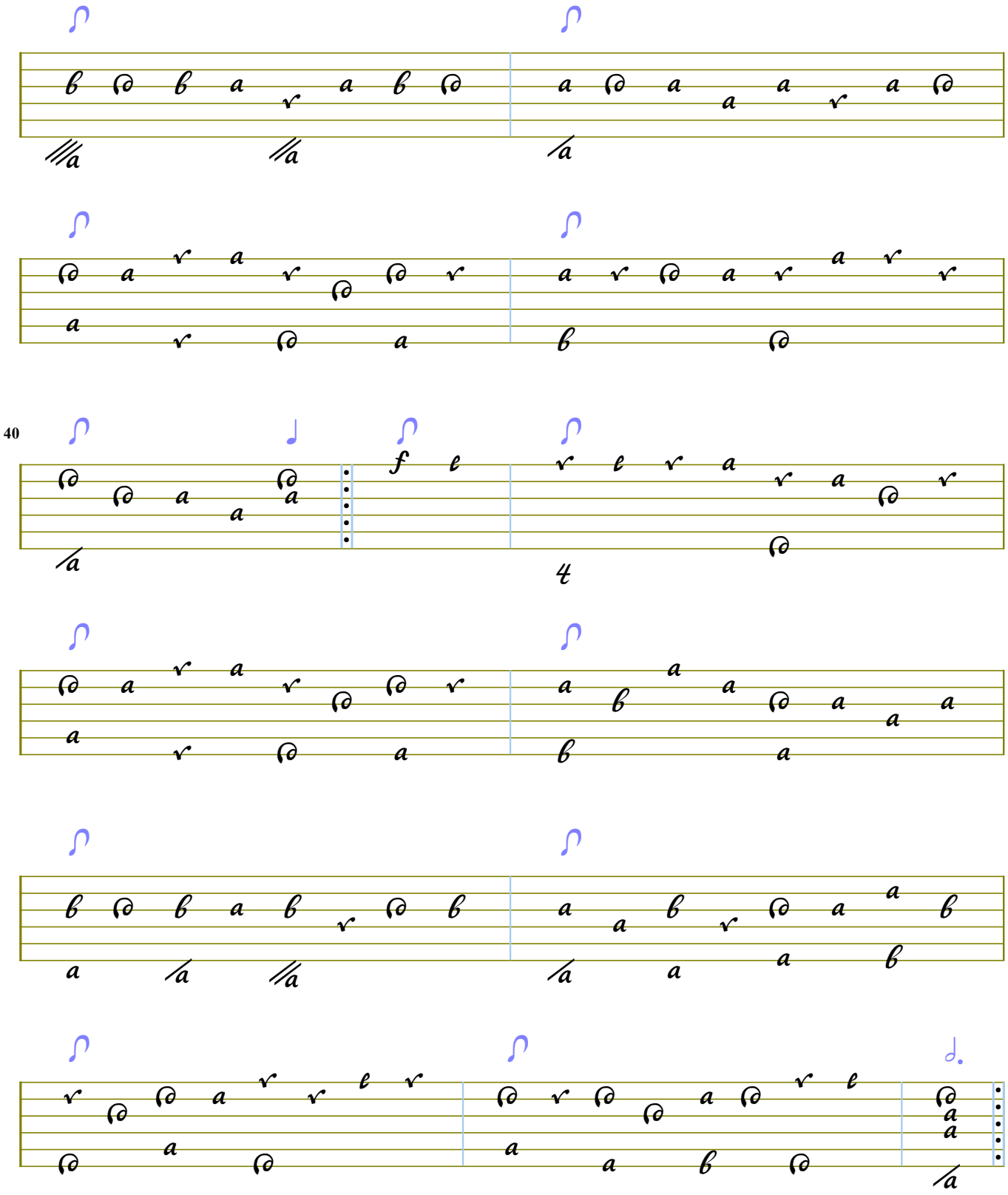
Minuett, mr. Beck's way



The Lass of Petties Mill, mr. Beck's way



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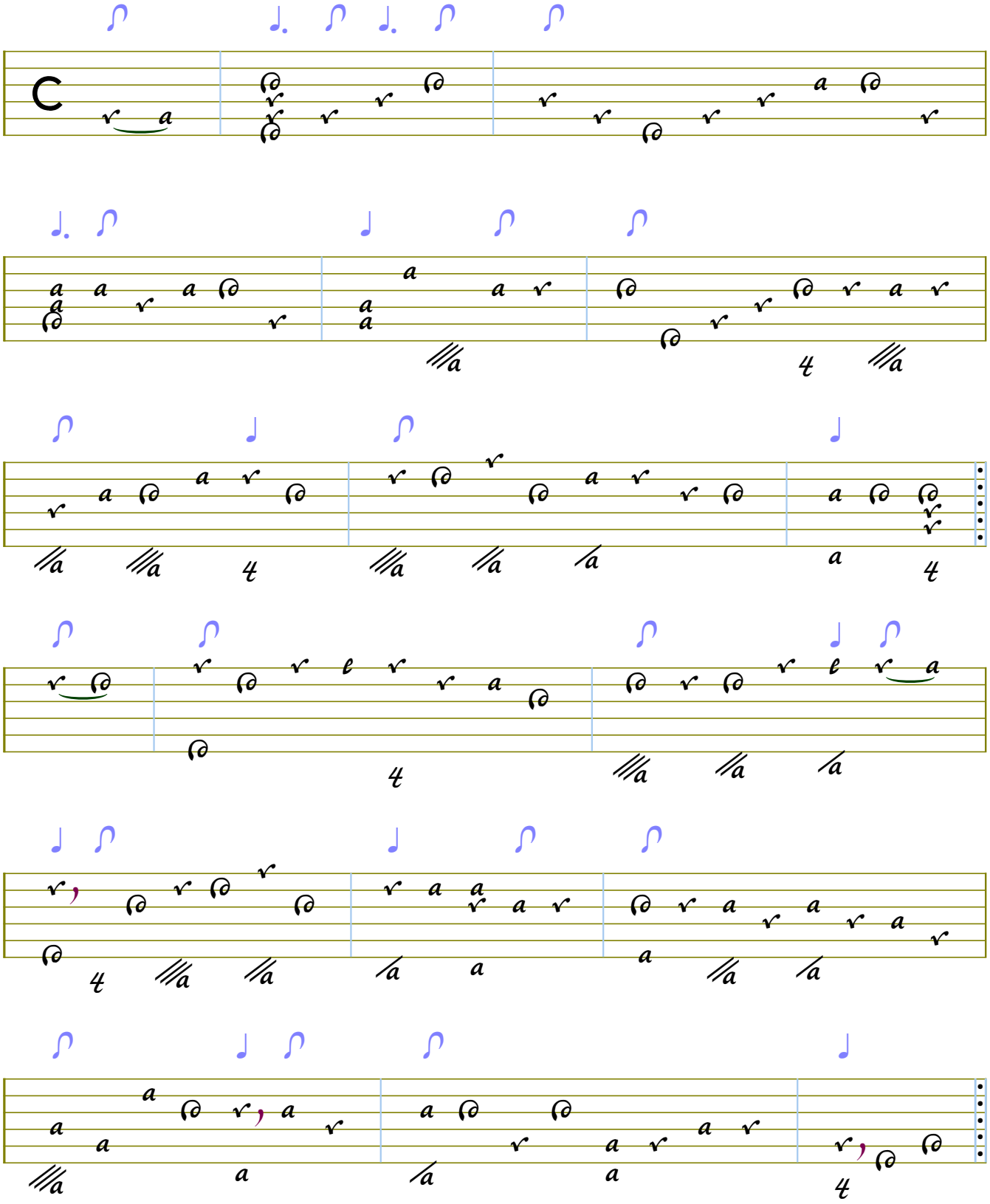
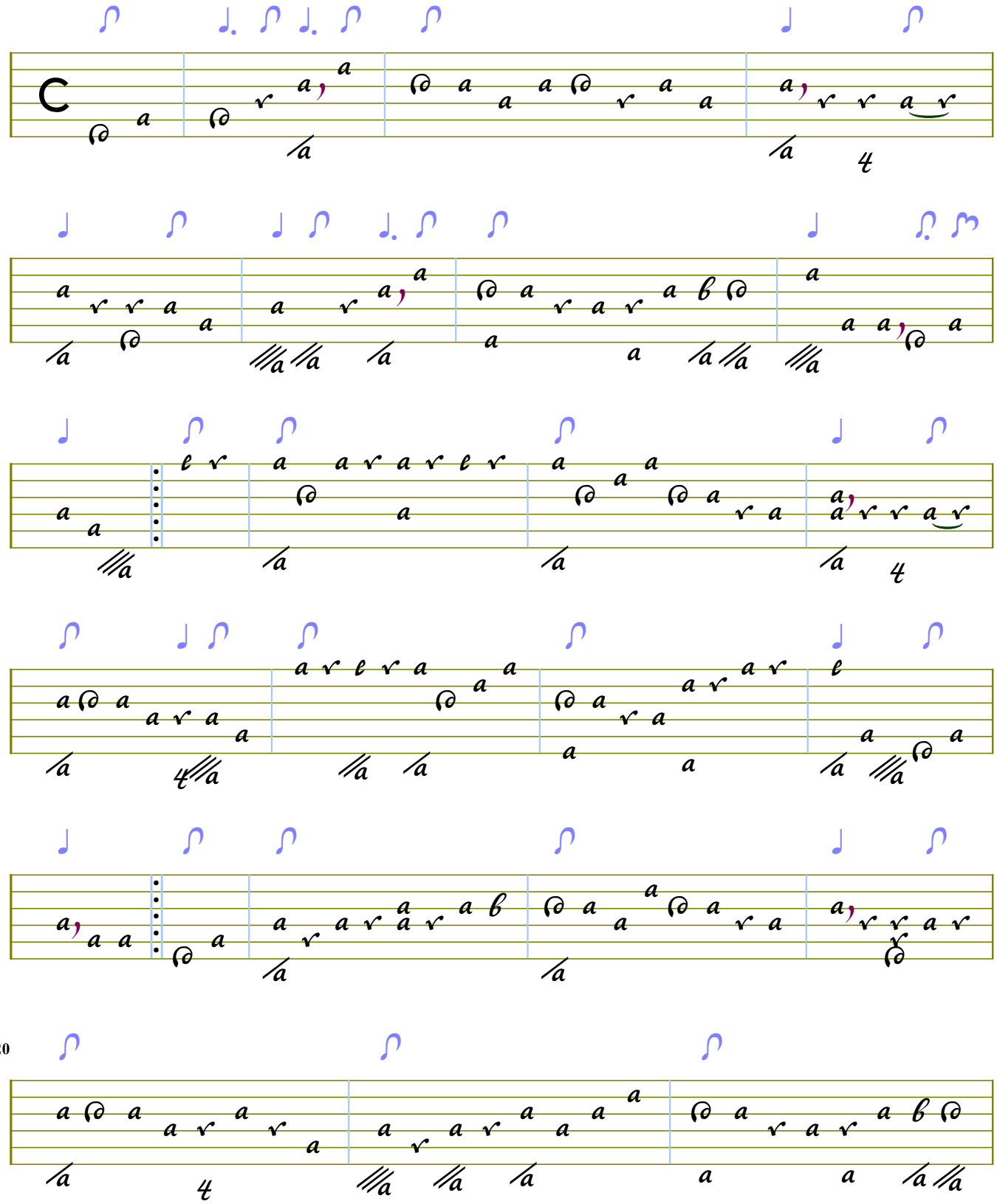
Maclelies scotts measure, mr. Beck's way



The New Highland Lady, mr. Beck's way



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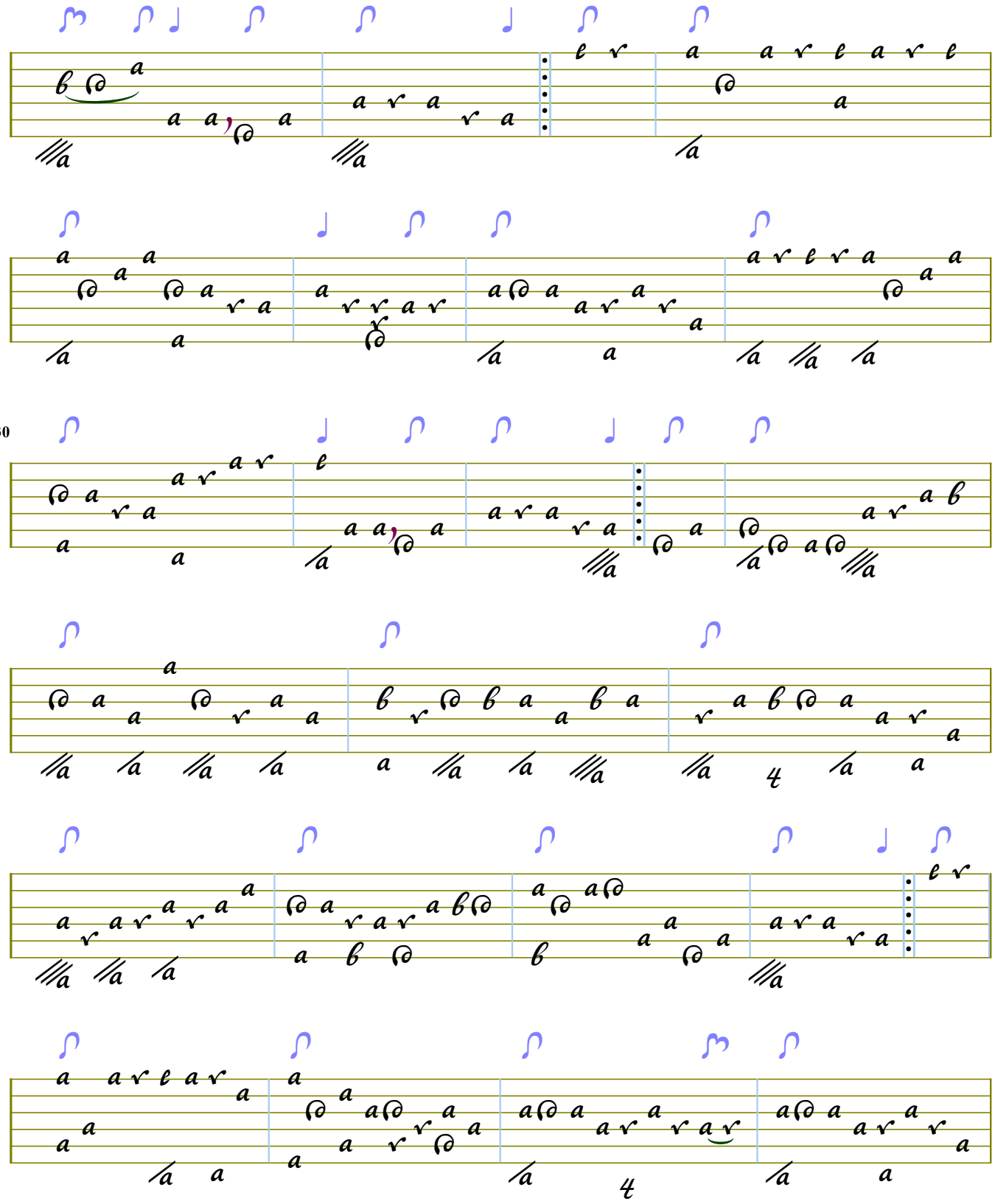
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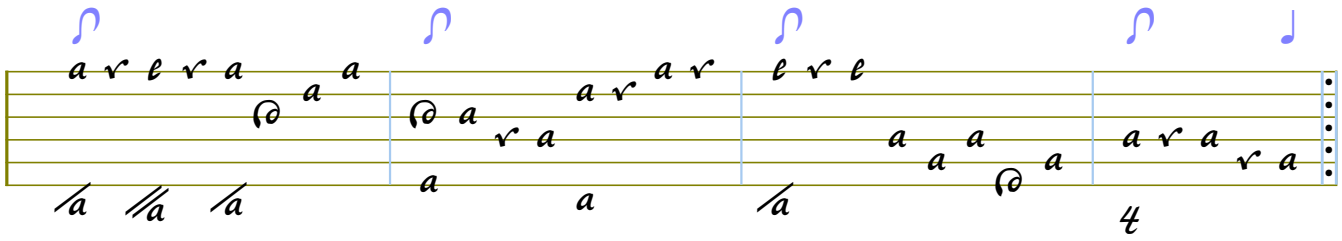

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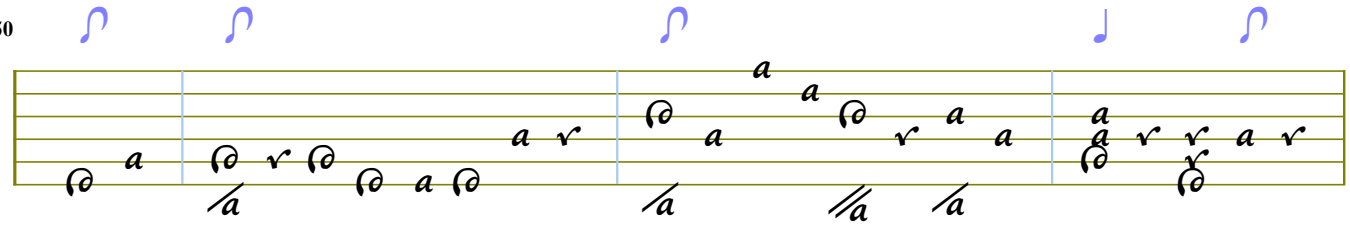

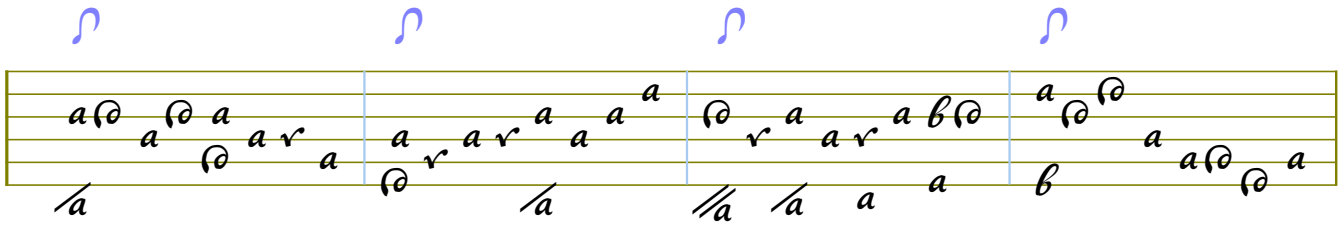

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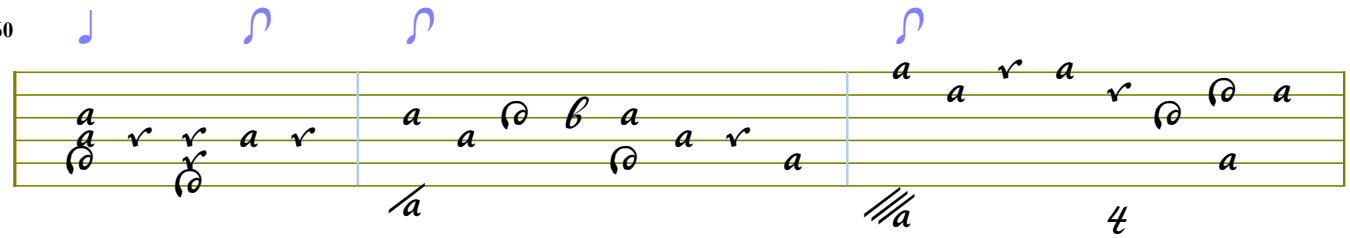
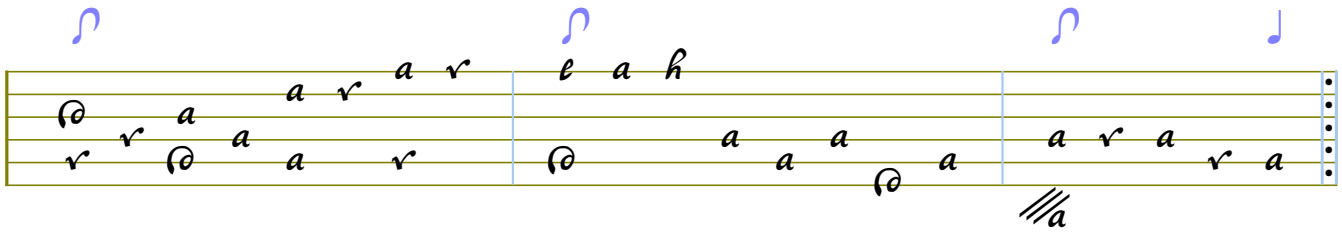
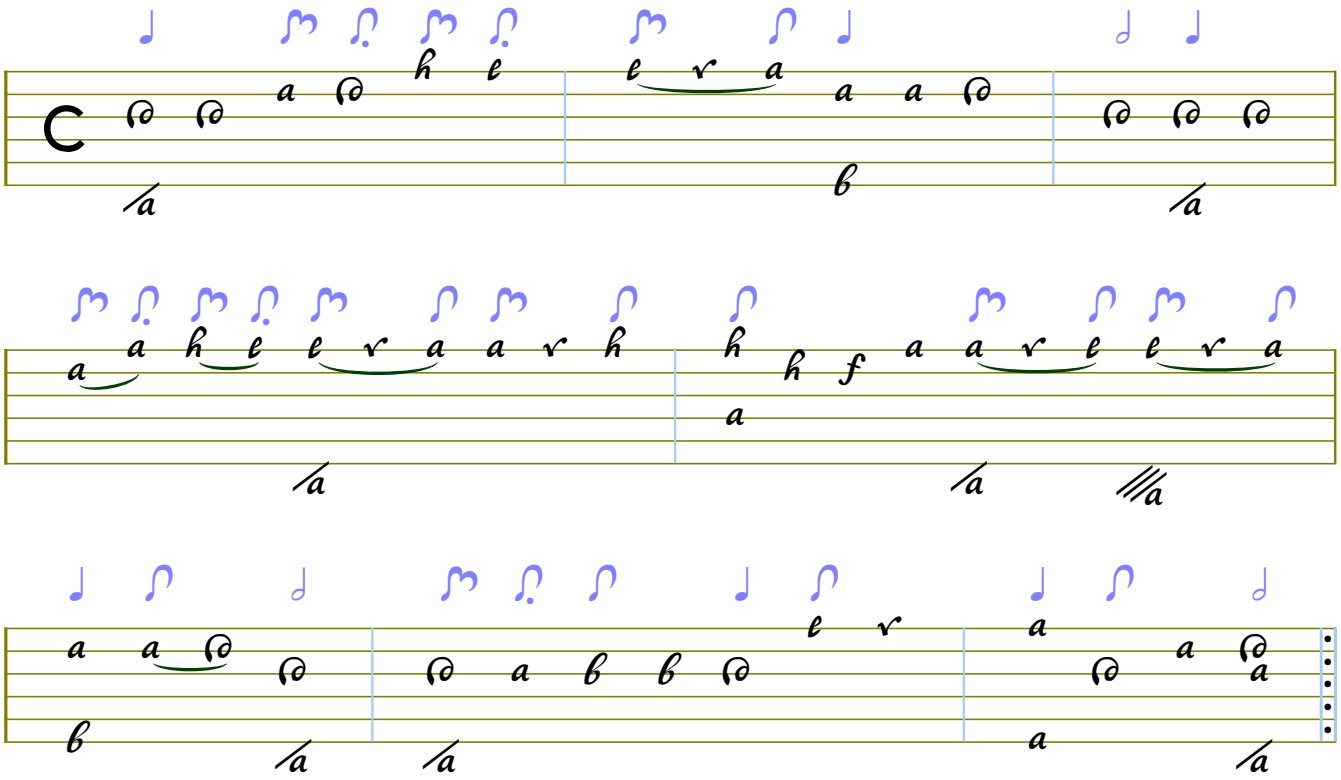
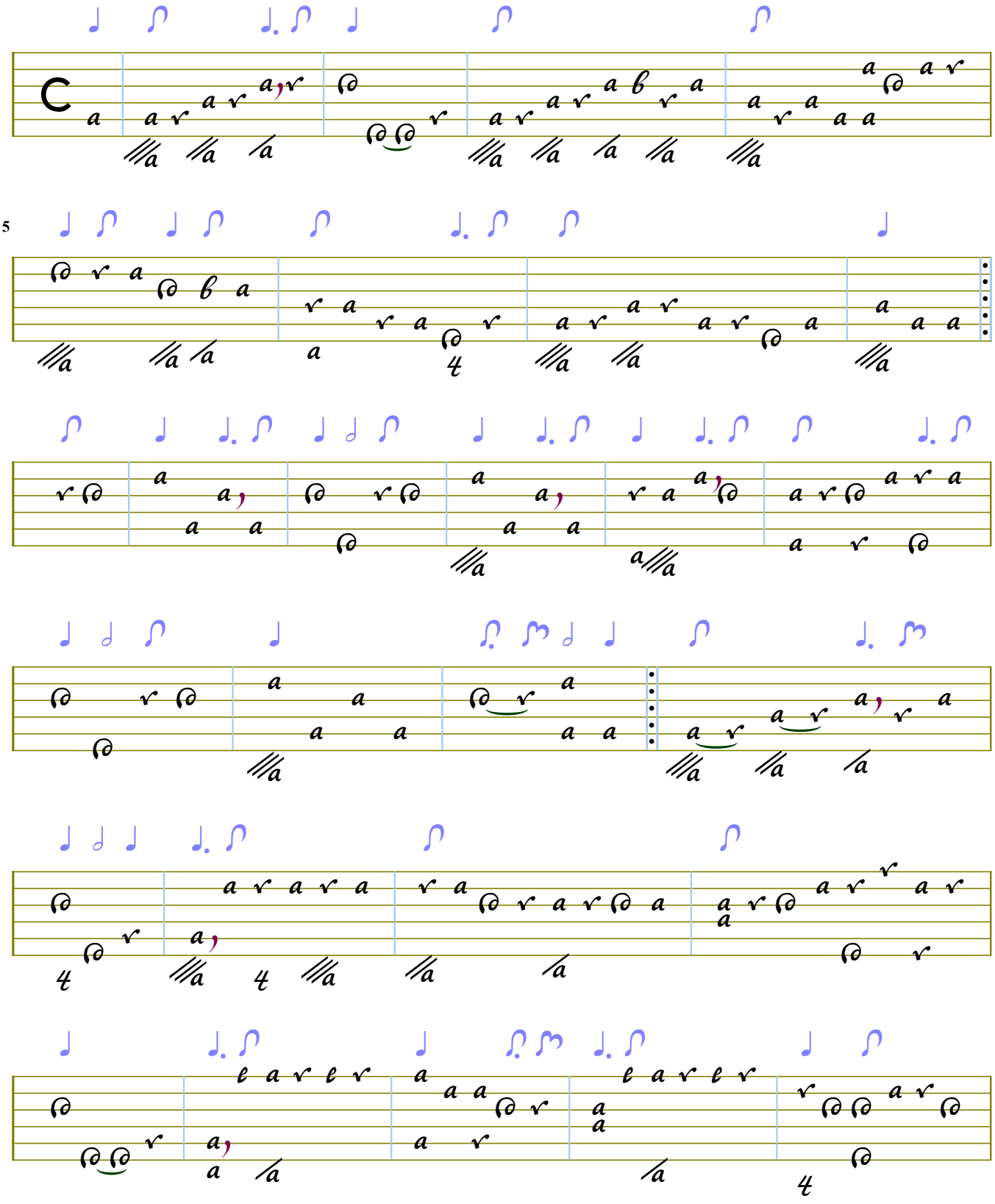


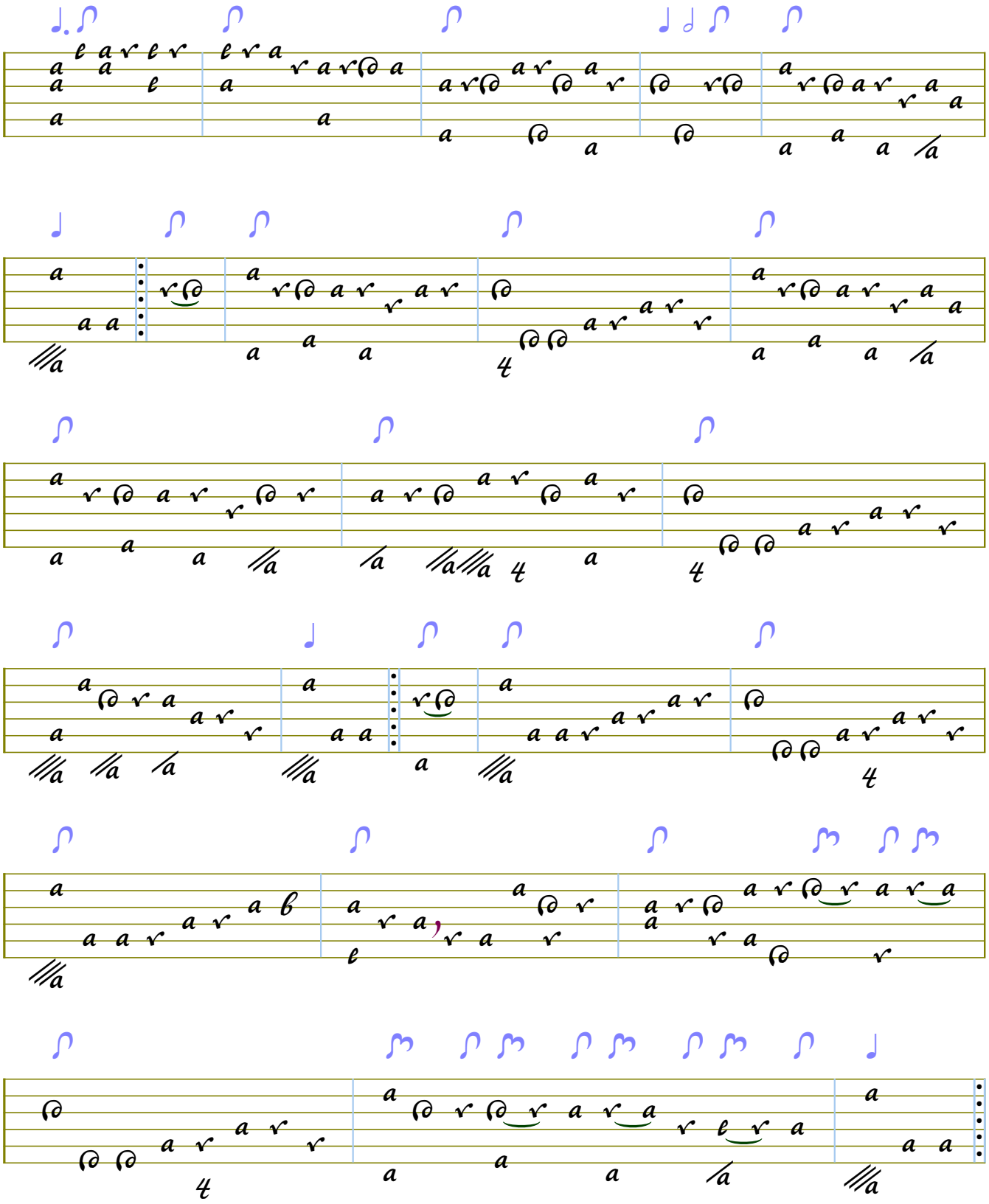


Sweet Willie, mr. Beck's way

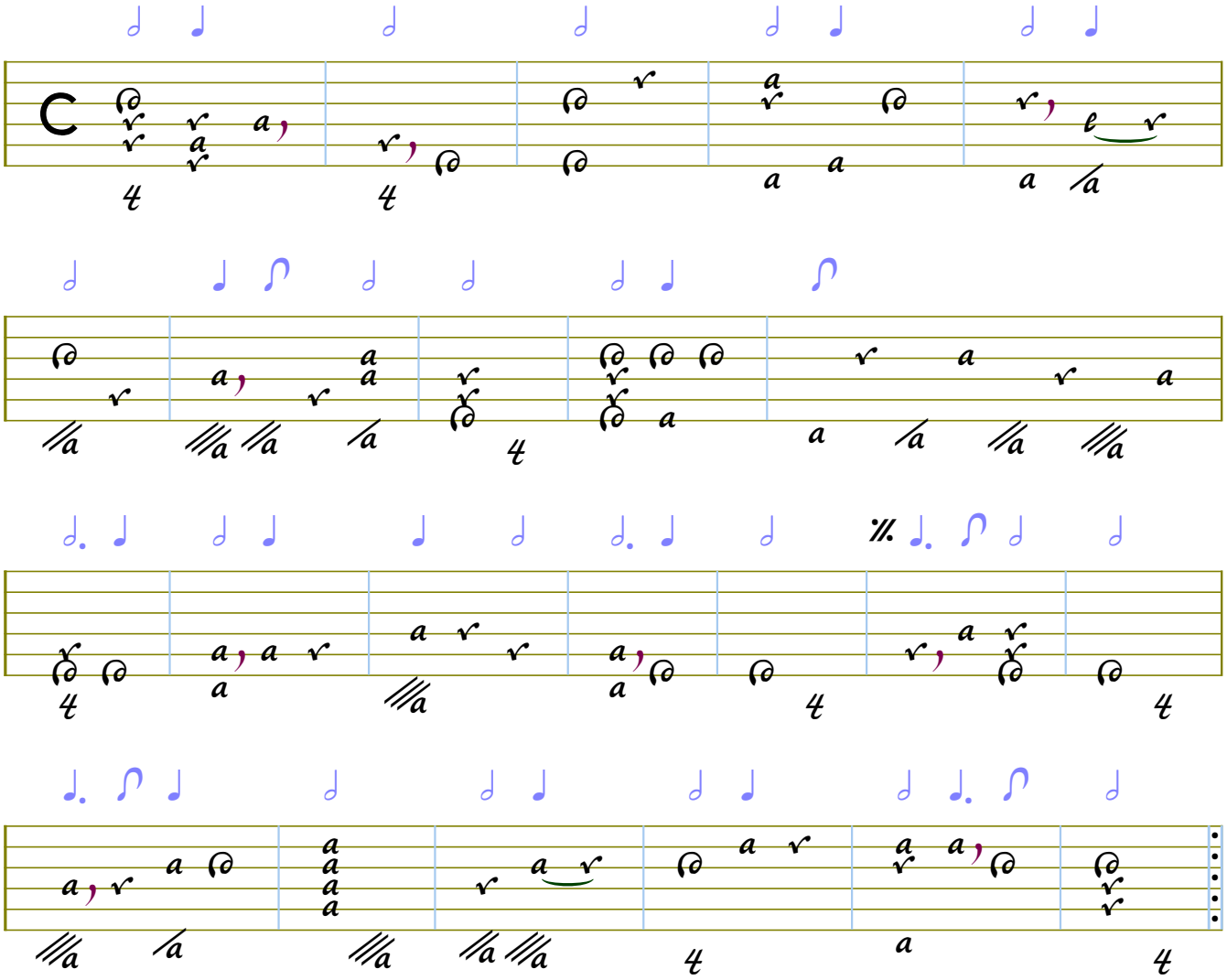


The more descreet, the wellcomer, mr. Beck's way

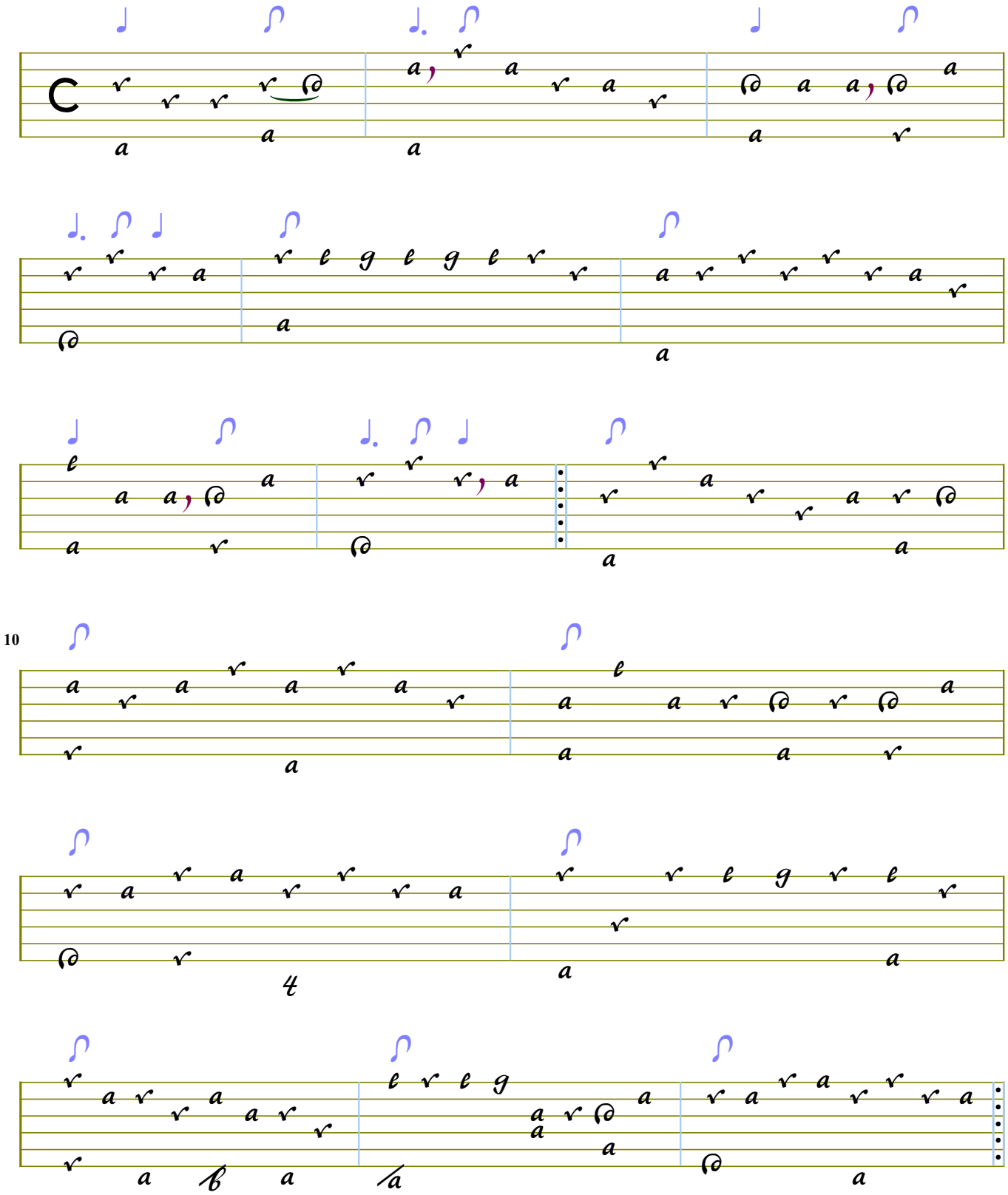




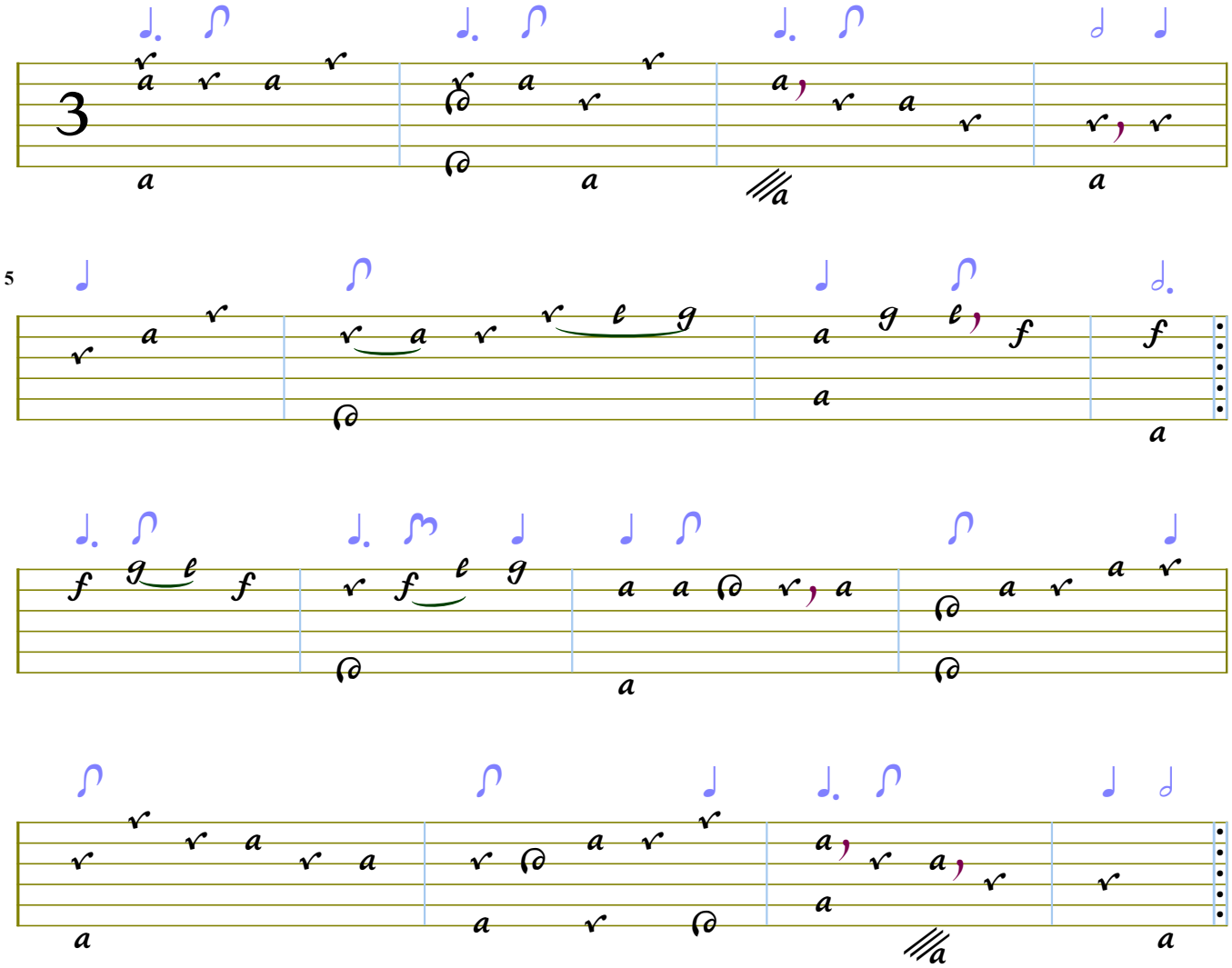
You minor beauties, mr. Beck's way



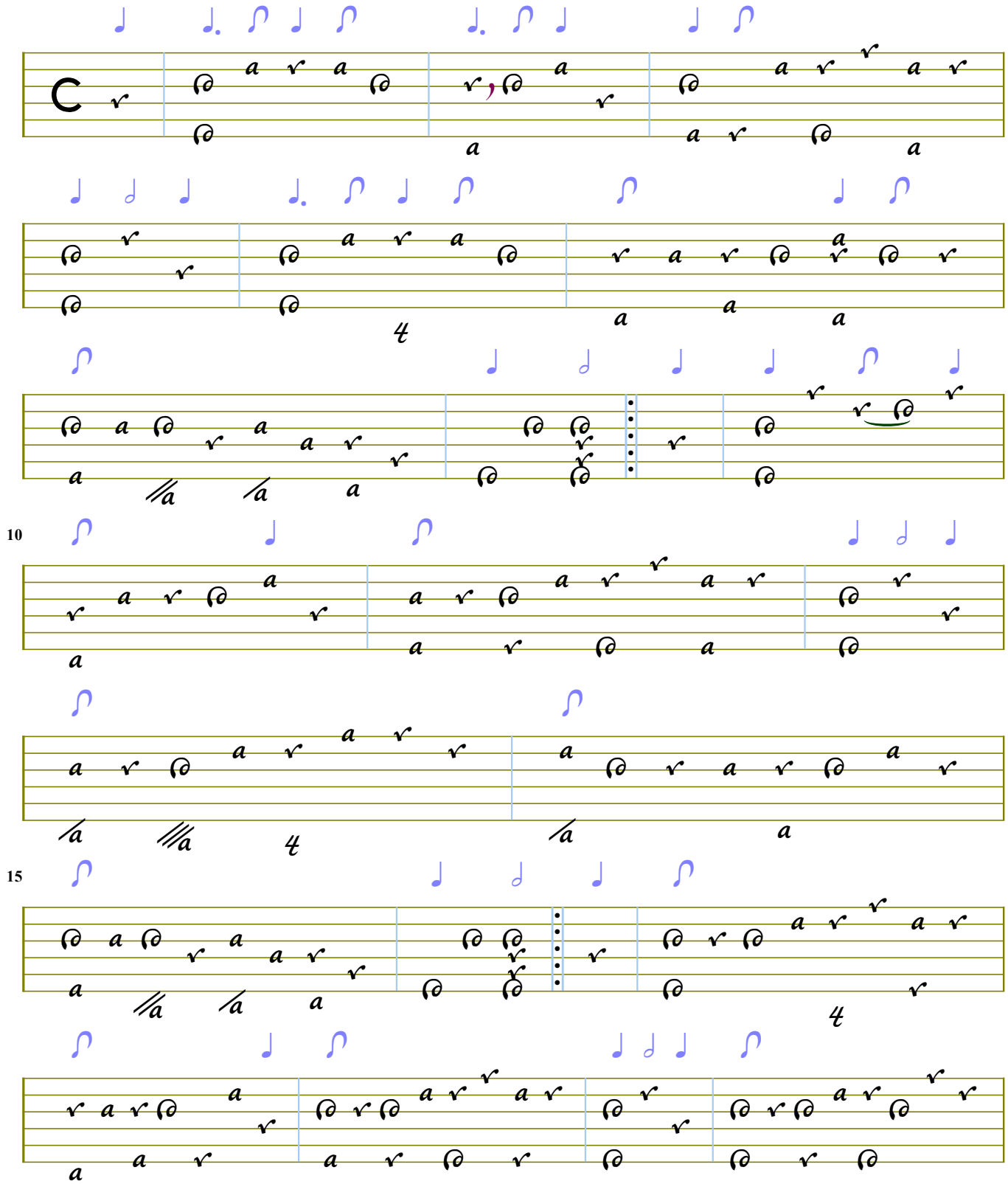
The lads of gallowater, mr. Beck's way

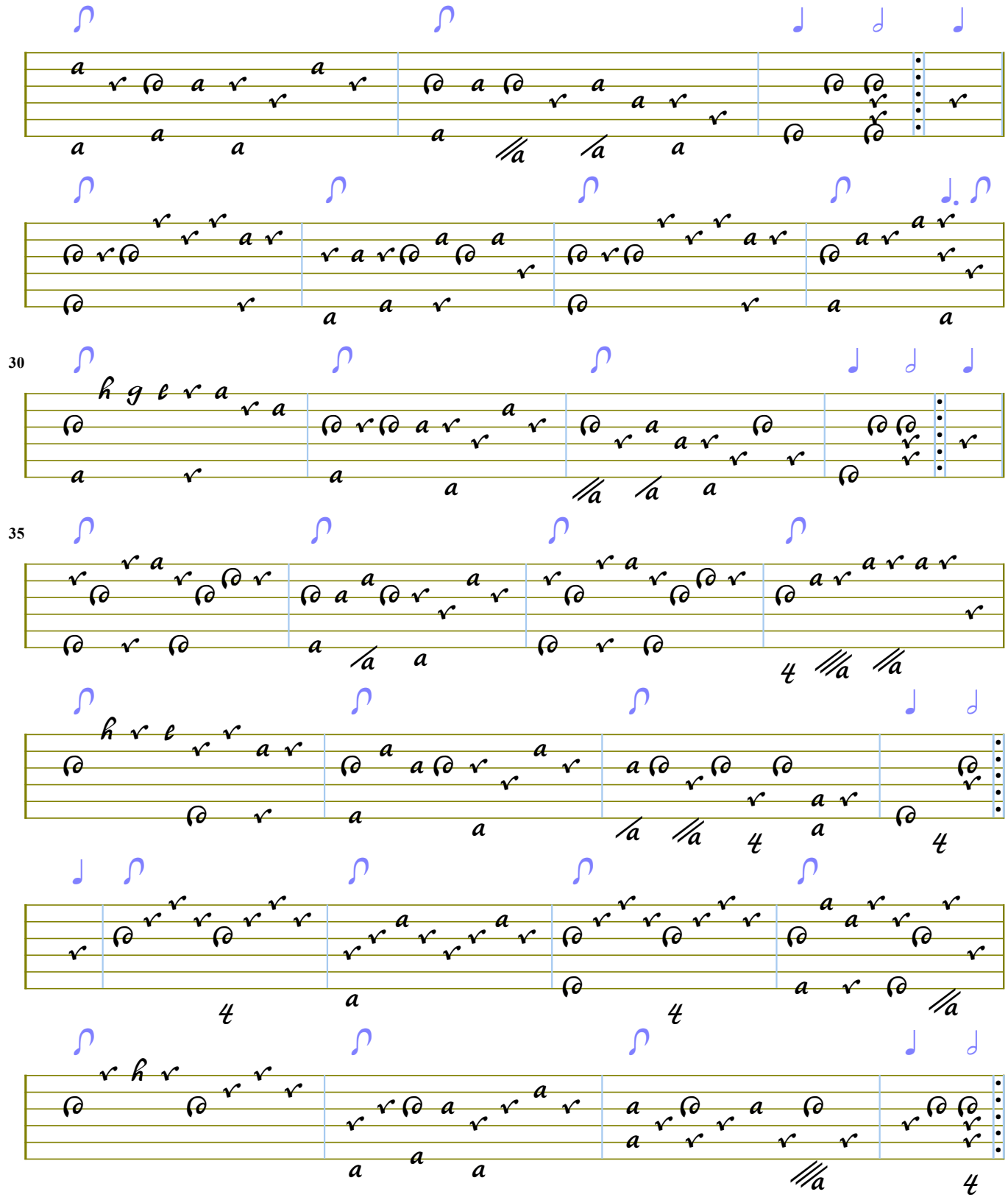


Cromlick's Lilt, mr. Beck's way



Corn riggs are bonnie, mr. Beck's way

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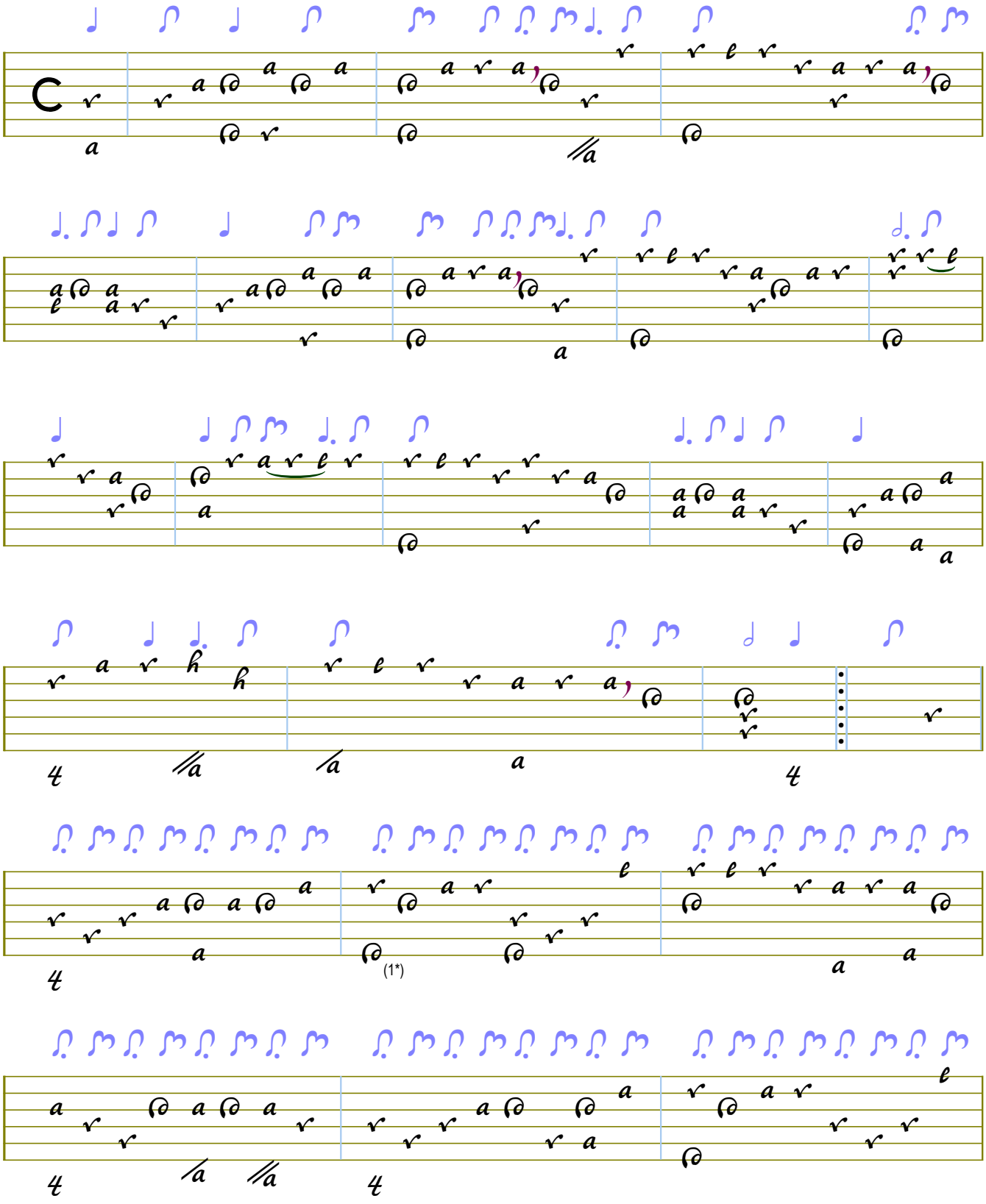
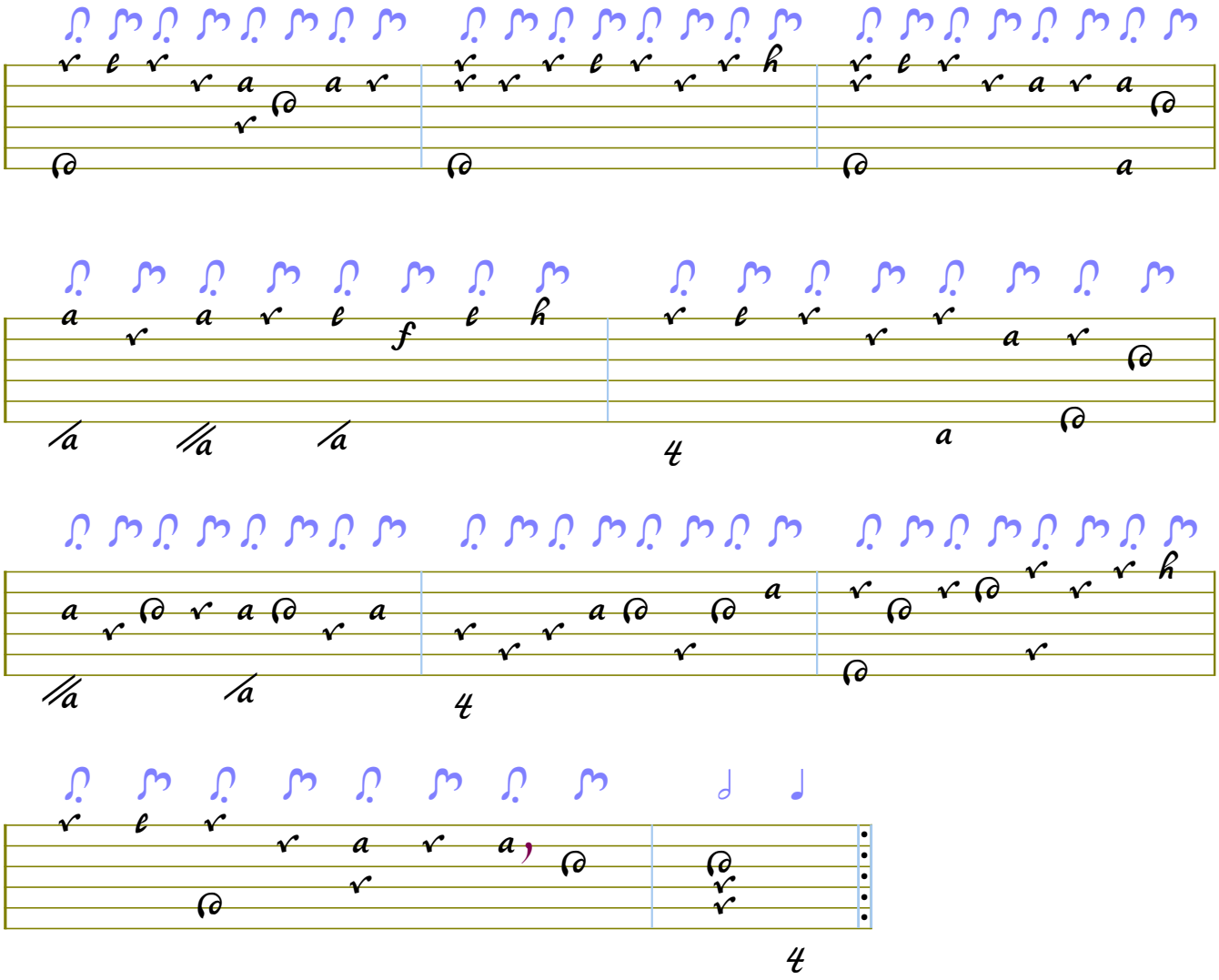
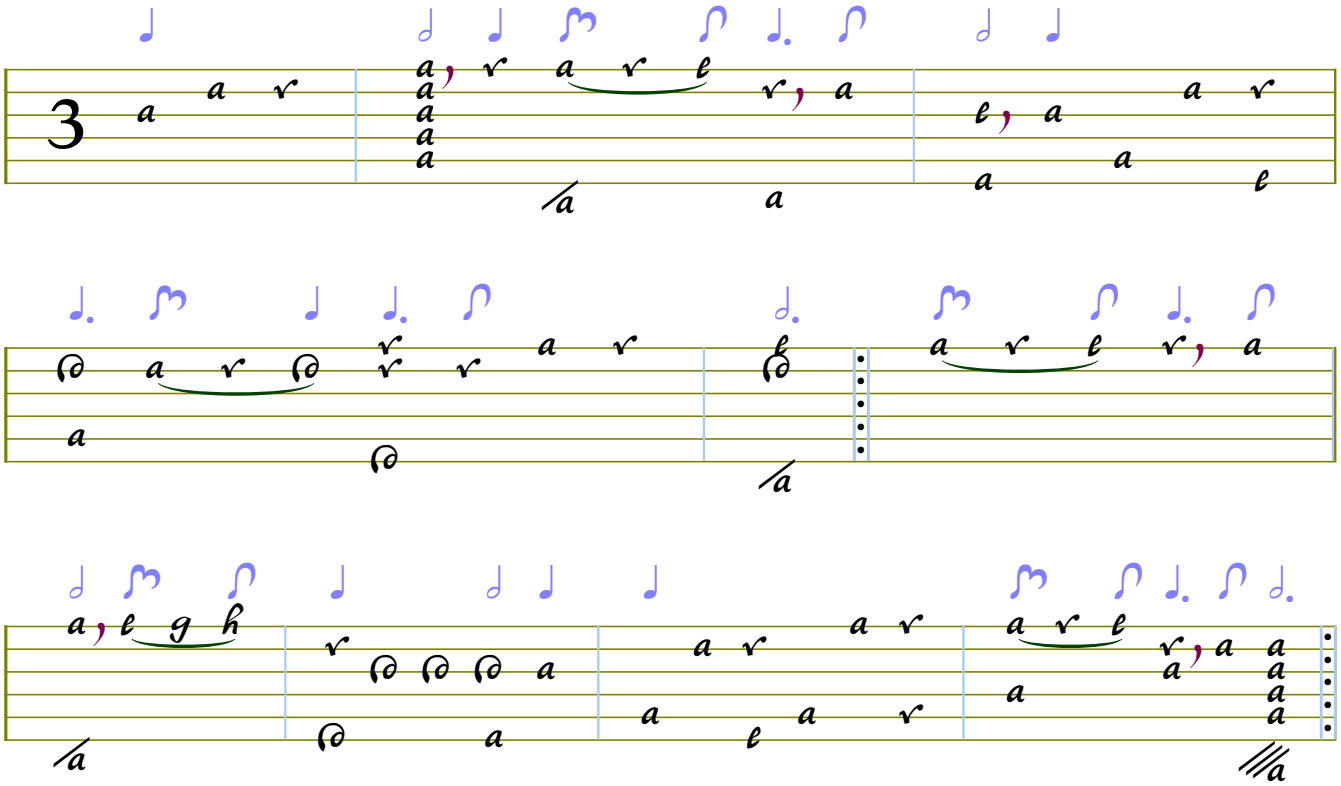
Montroses' tune



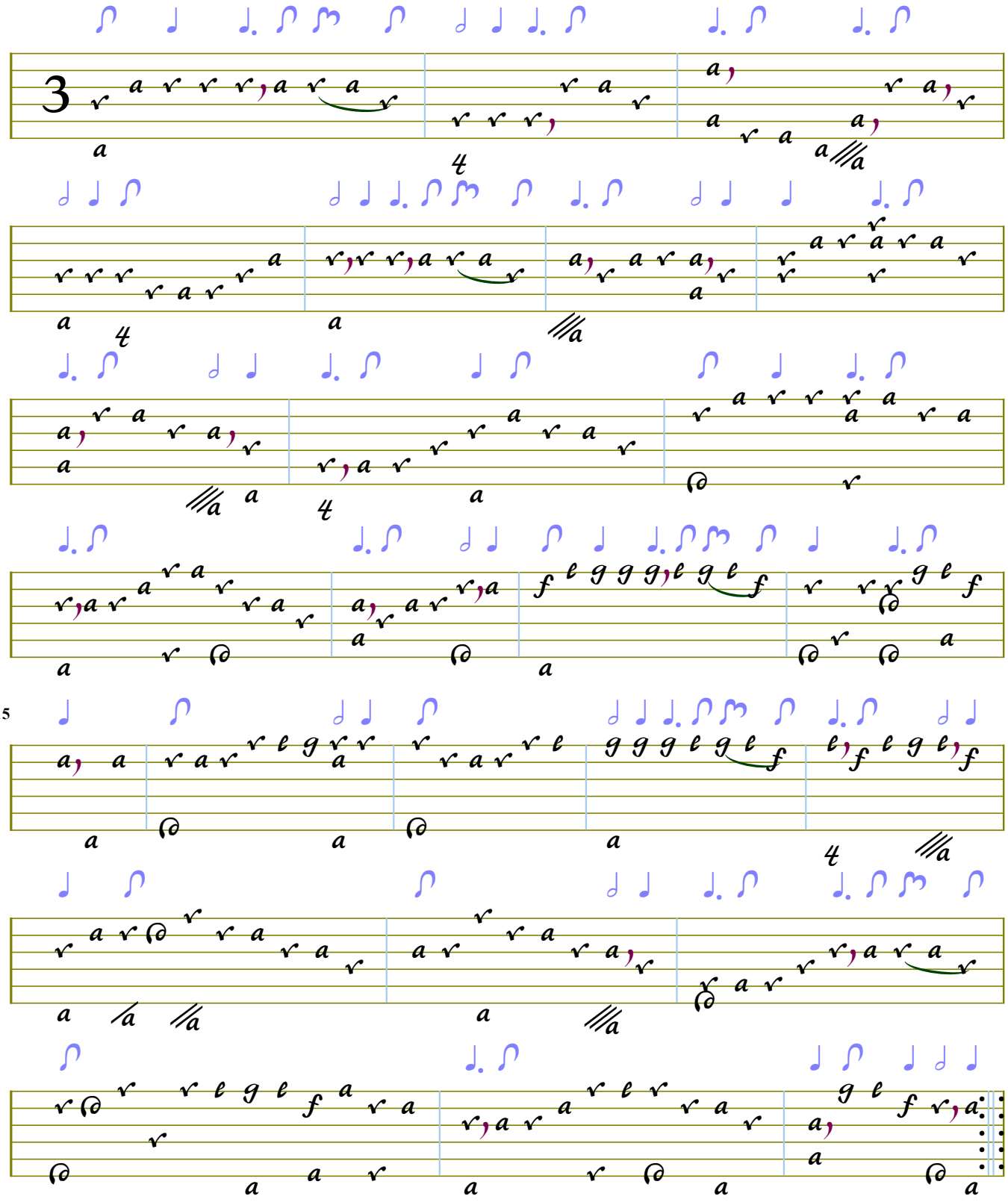
1. Added note on 6th course



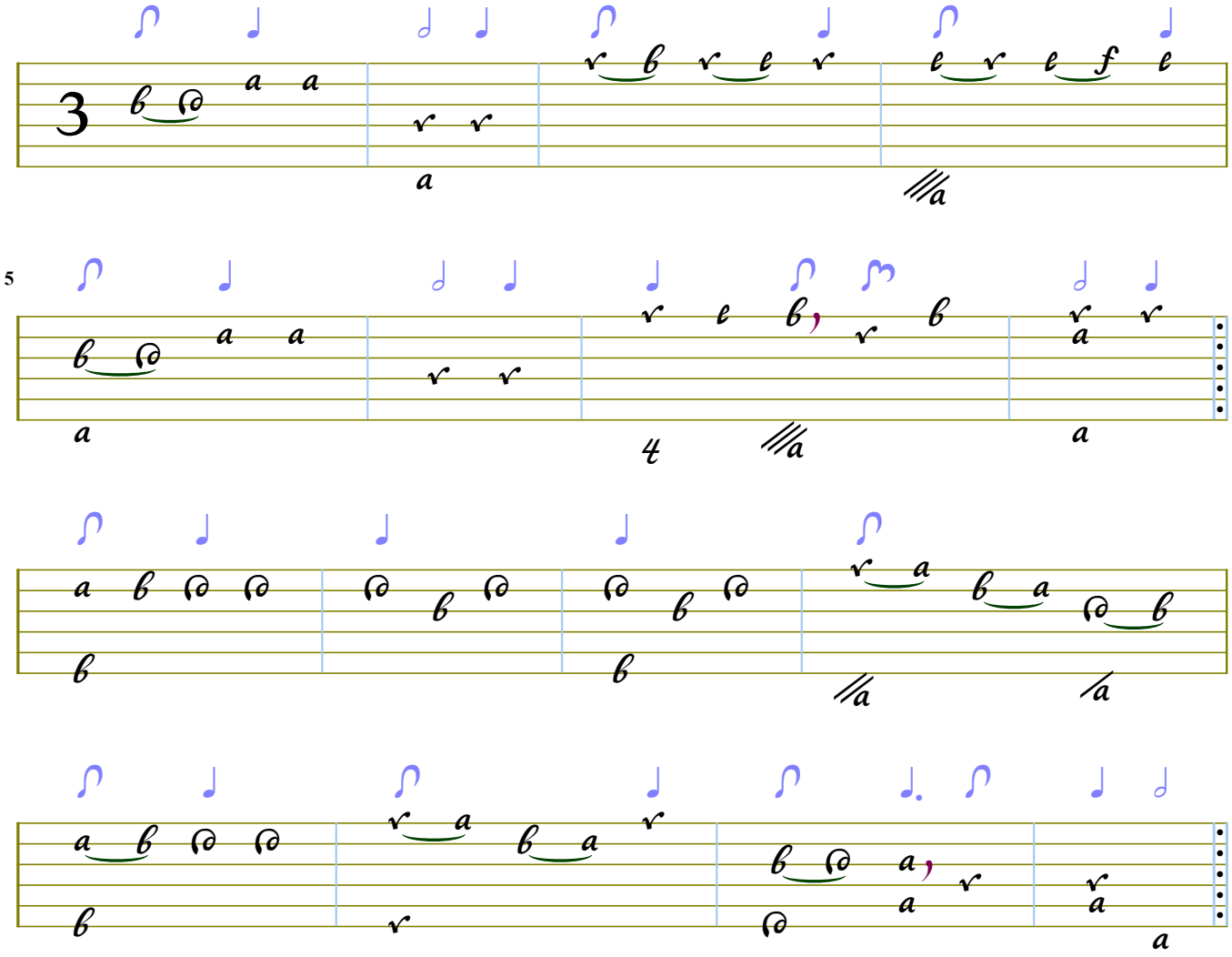
Amarillis, mr. Beck's way



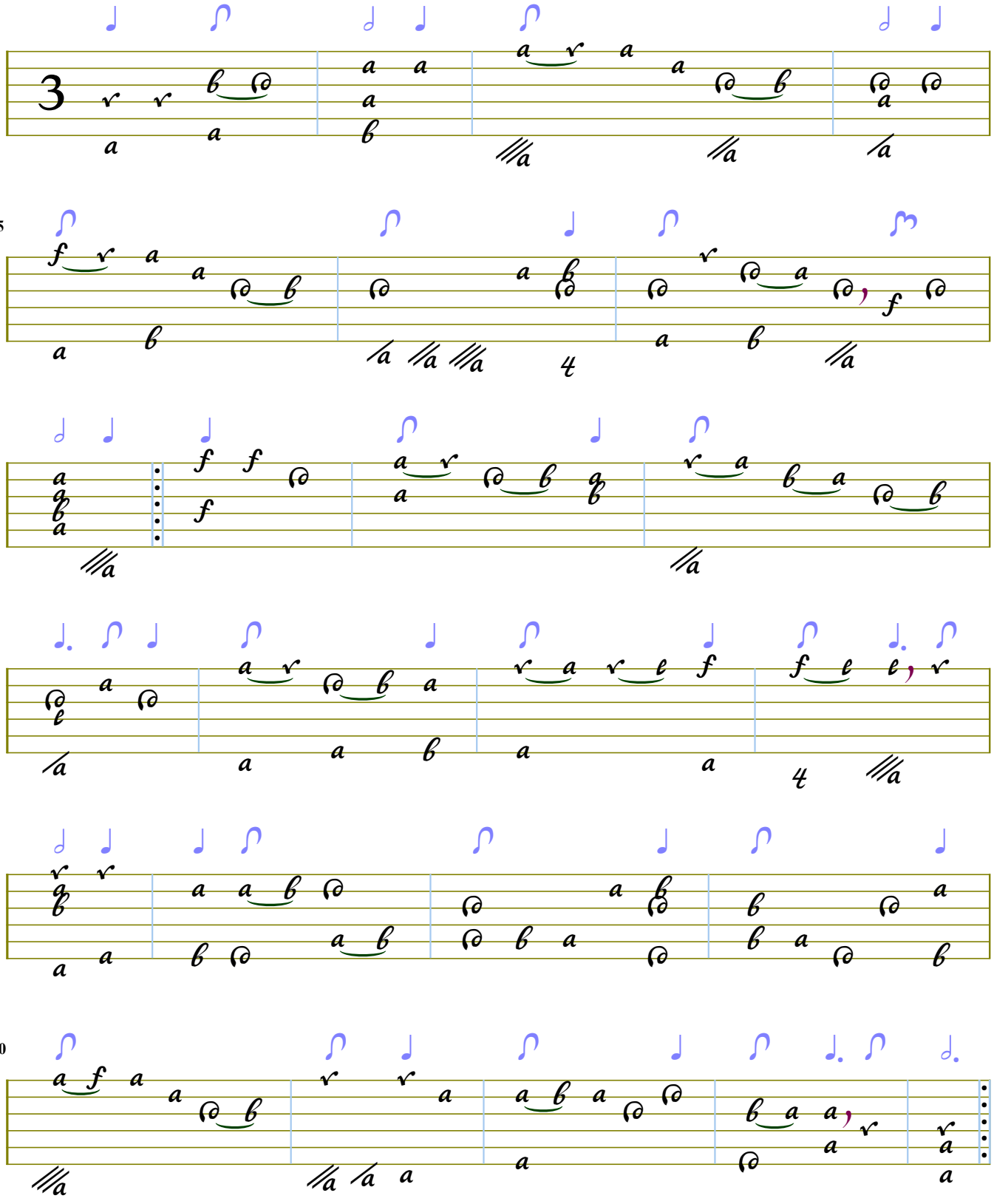
Port Atholl, John Morrison's way, by mr. Beck



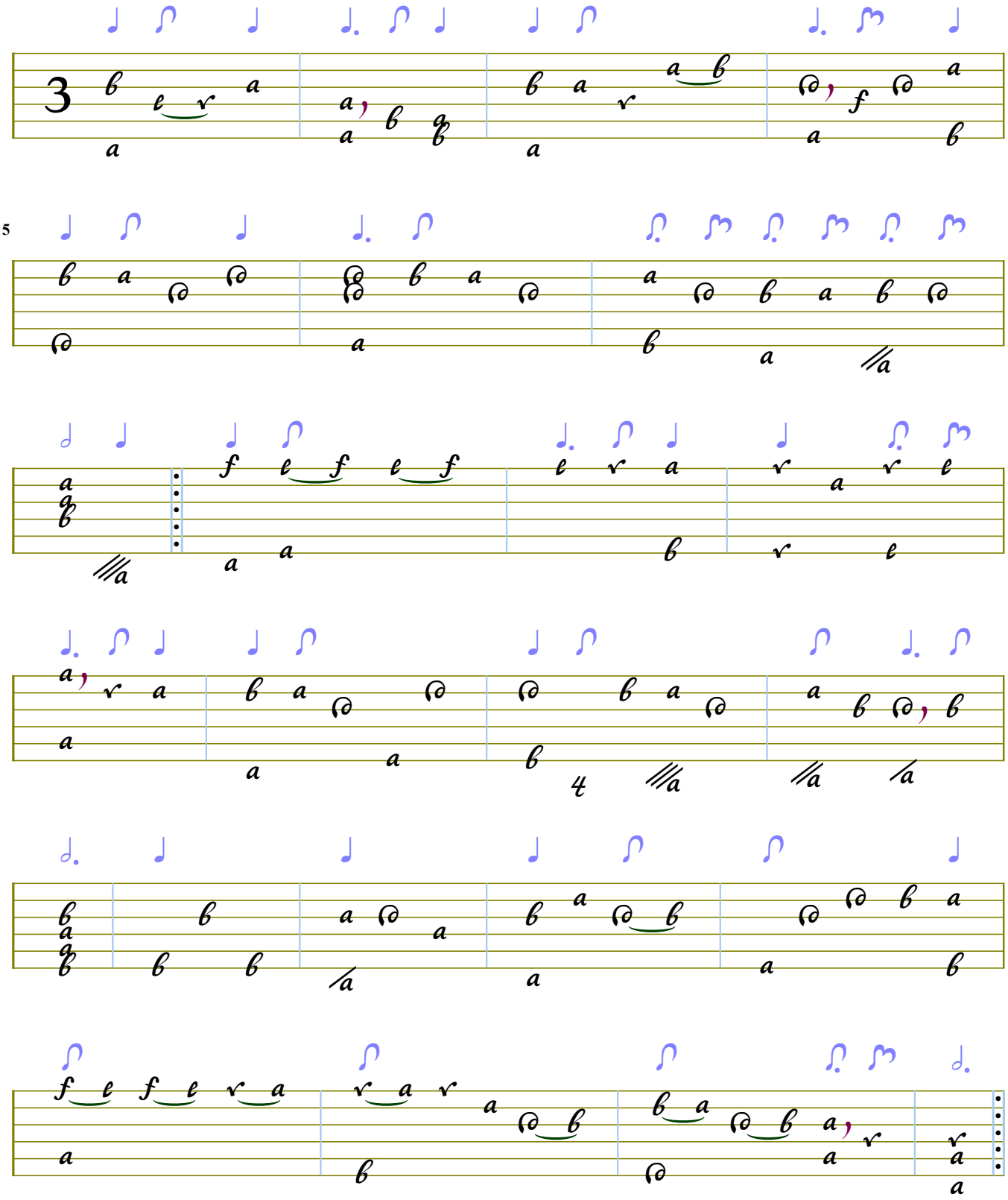
Minuett, with the 9th lowed halfe a note, by mr. Beck



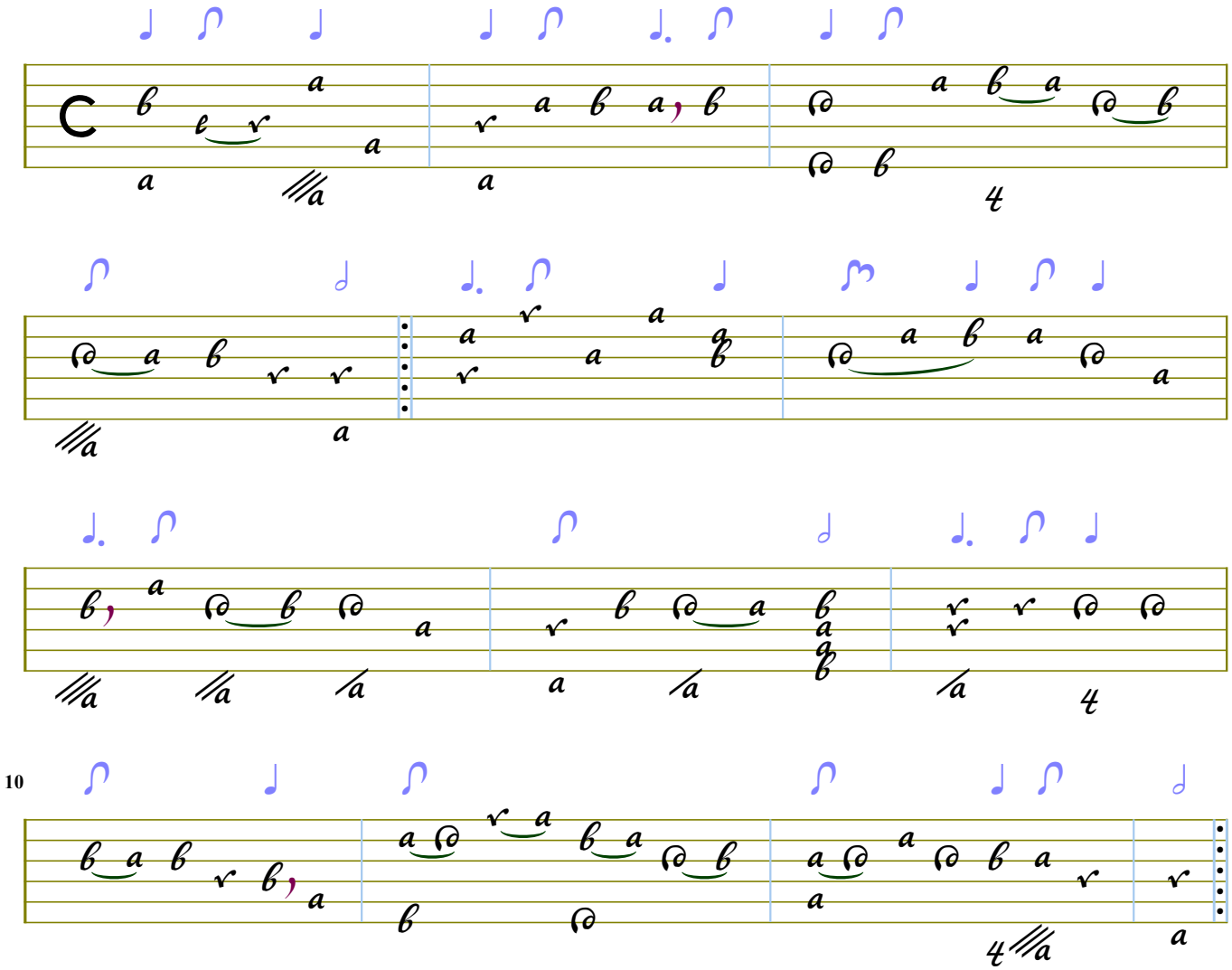
The prince's air, the 9th lowed halfe a note, mr. Beck's way



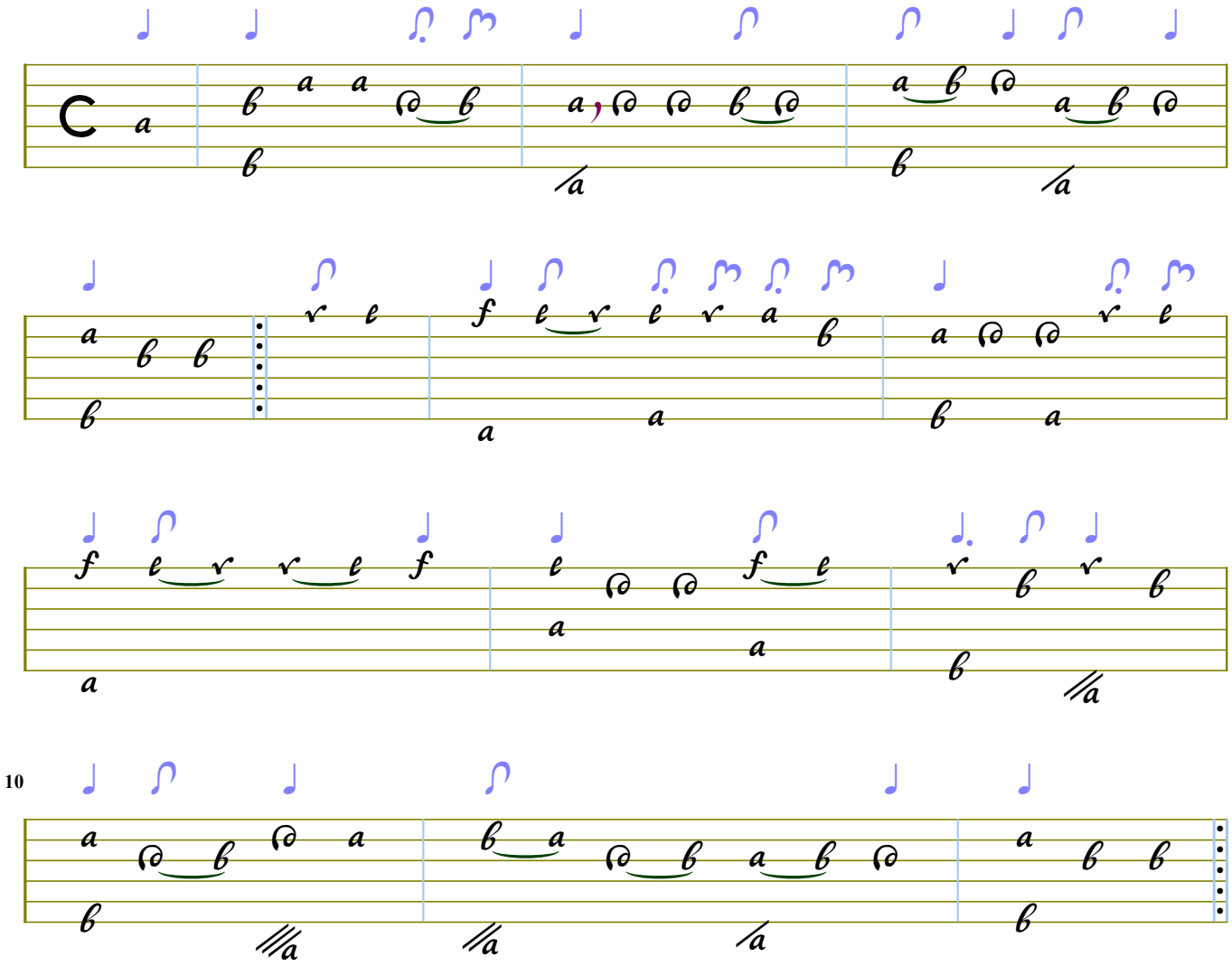
Dolas air, with the 9th lowed halfe a note, mr. Beck's way



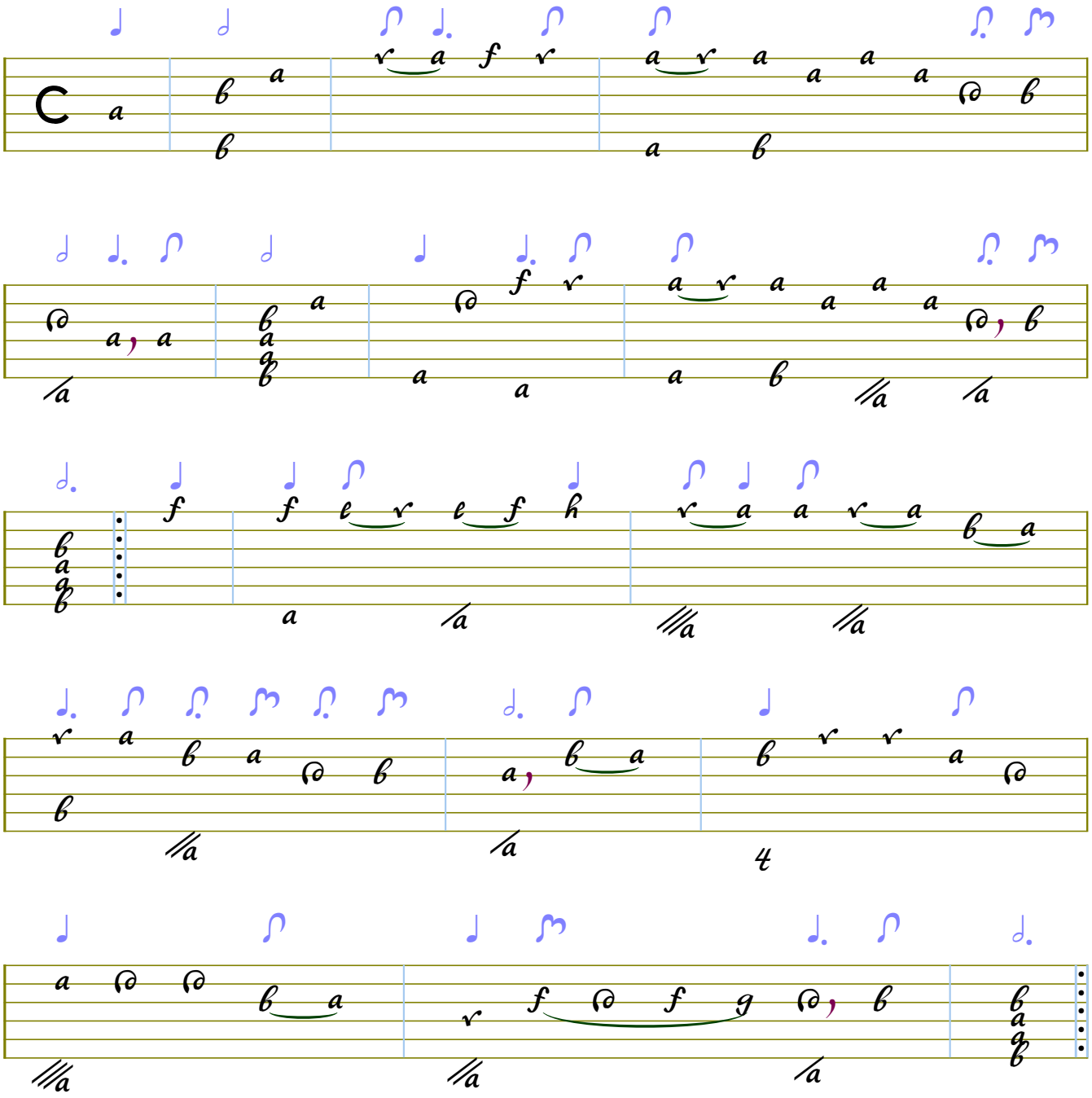
Celia, that once was blesst, with the 9th string lowd halfe a note, by Mr. Beck



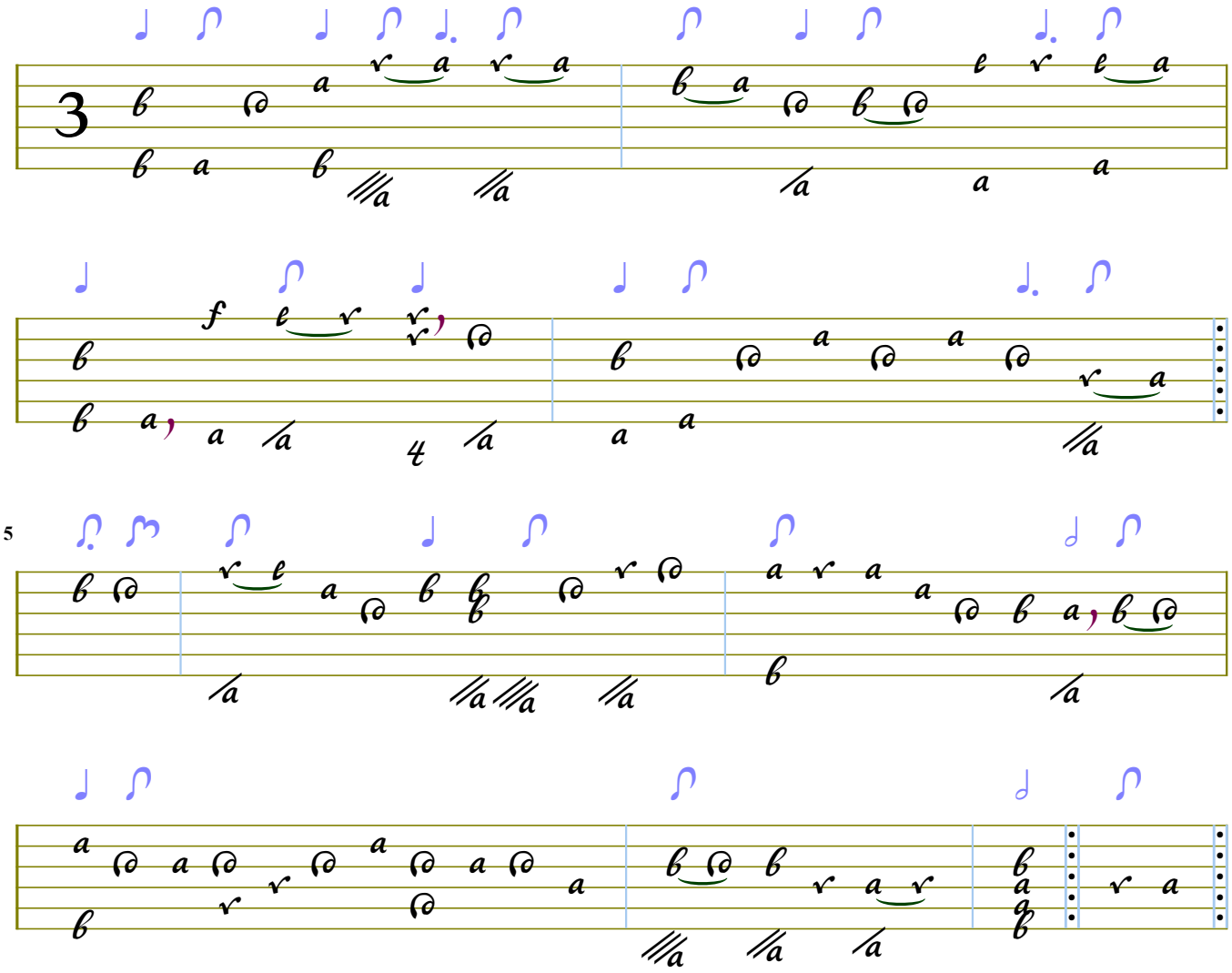
Another Celia, with the 9th string lowd halfe a note, mr. Beck's



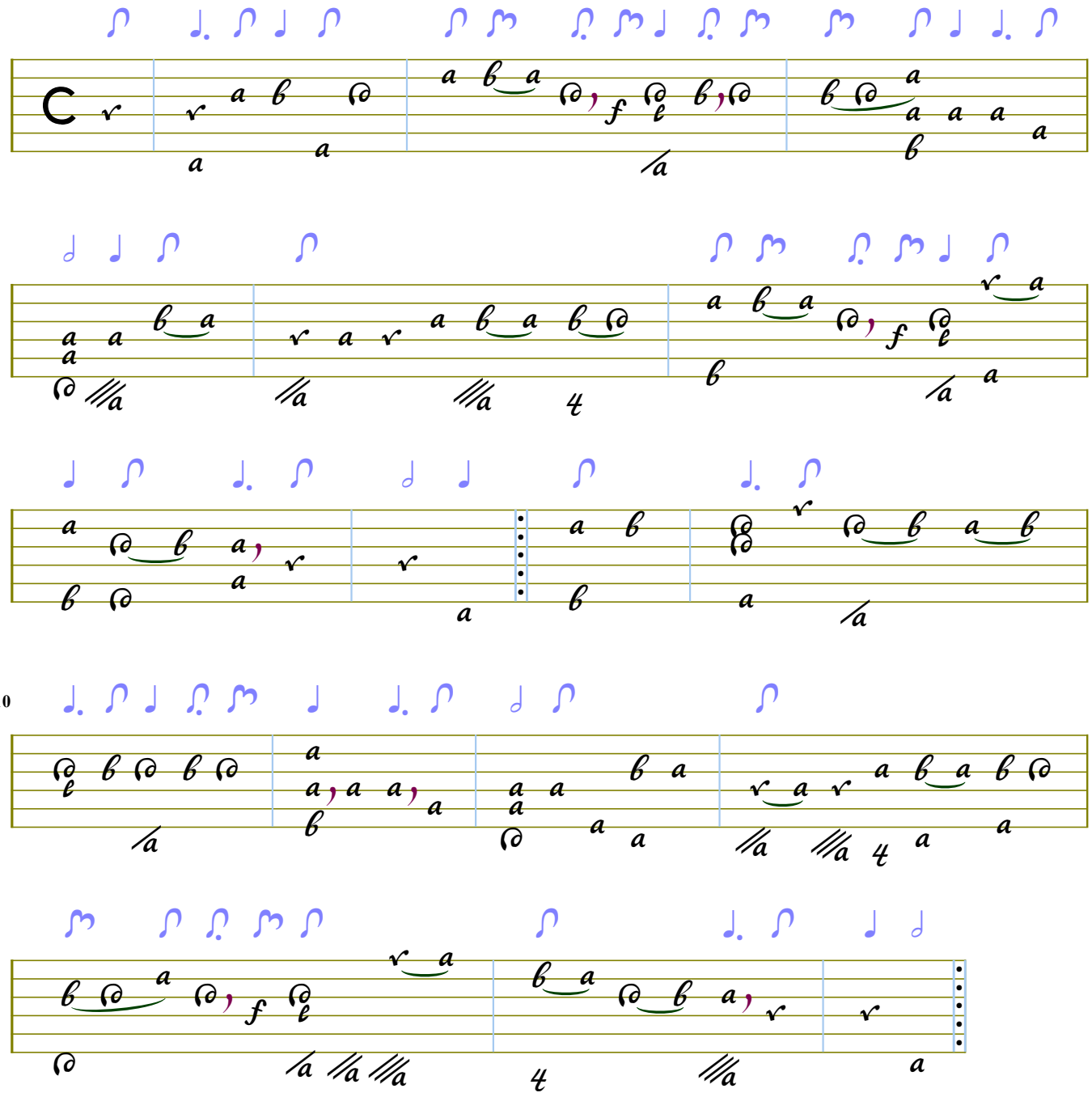
Another Celia, with the 9th lowd halfe a note, mr. Beck's way



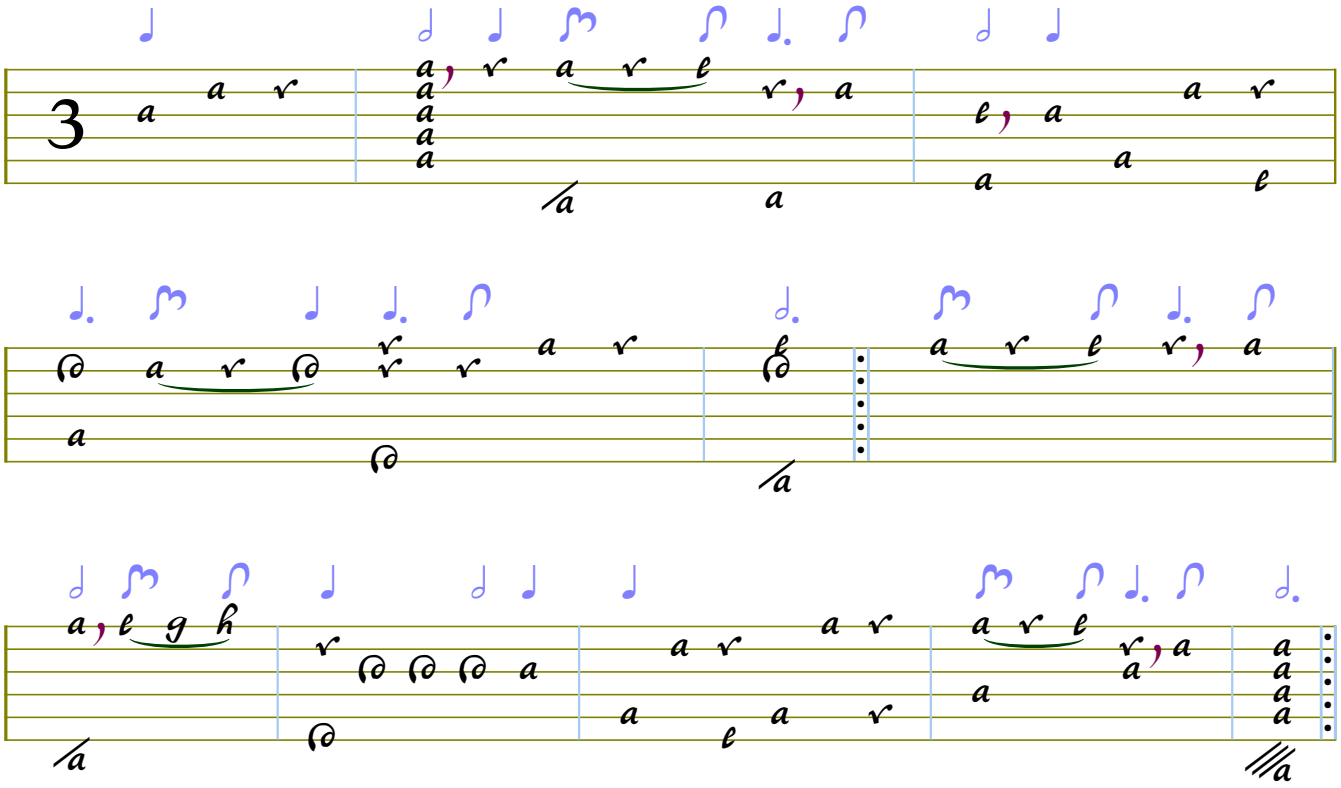
Since Celia is my foe, with the 9th string lowd half a note, by mr. Beck



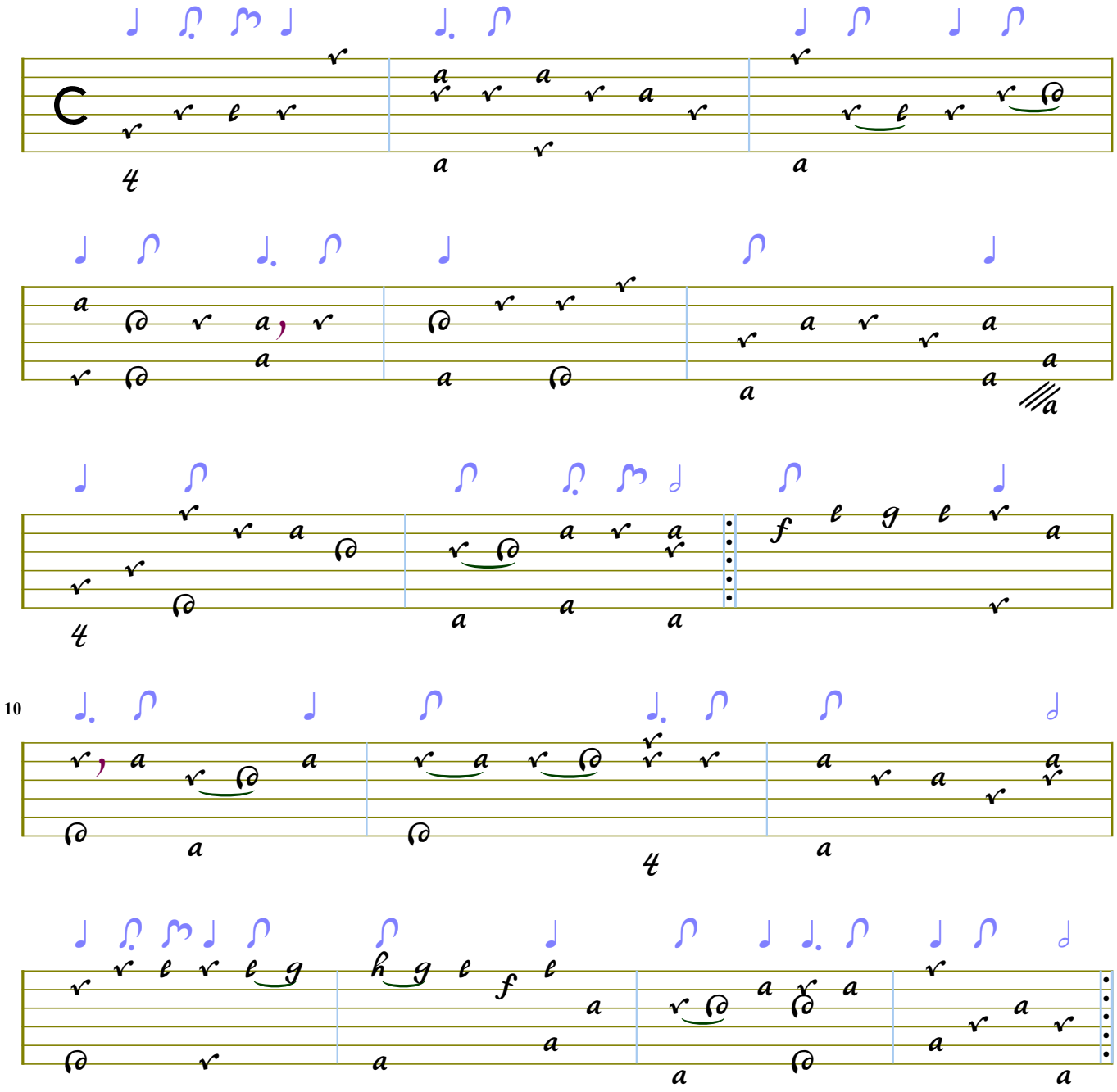
Gilderoy, with the 9th string lowd halfe a note, by mr. Beck



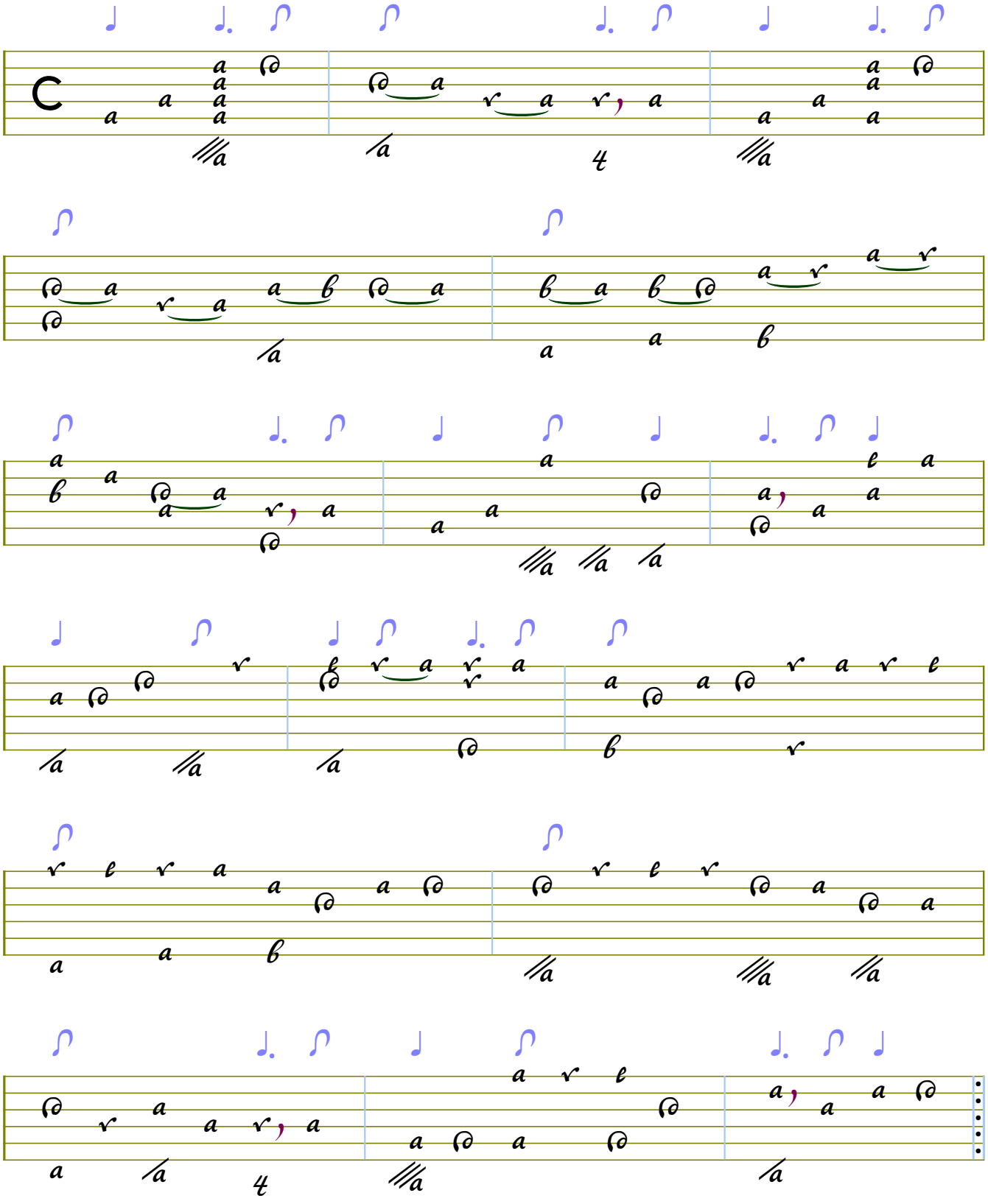
Amarillis, my daughters way, by mr. Beck



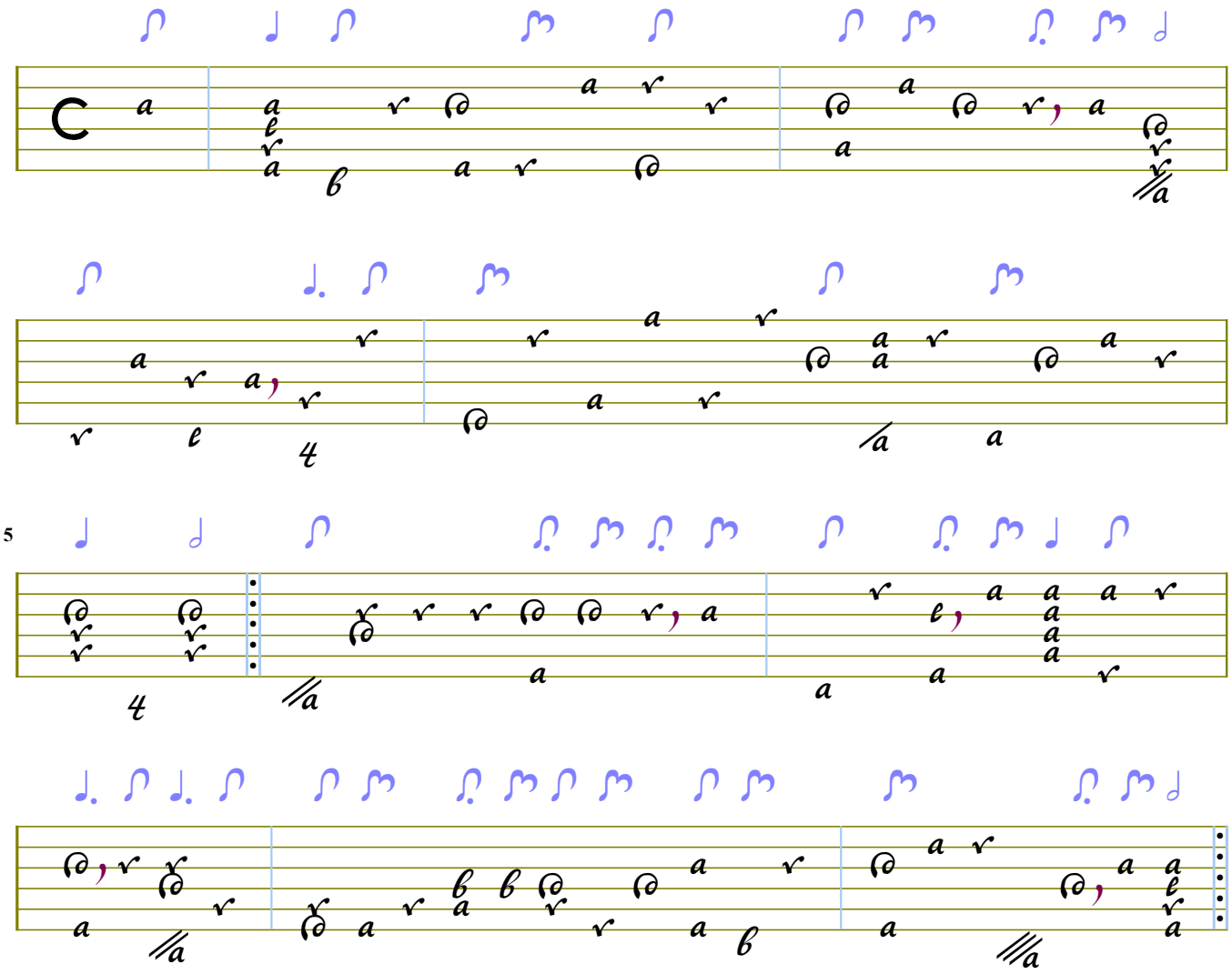
Dearest Jackie, mr. Beck's way



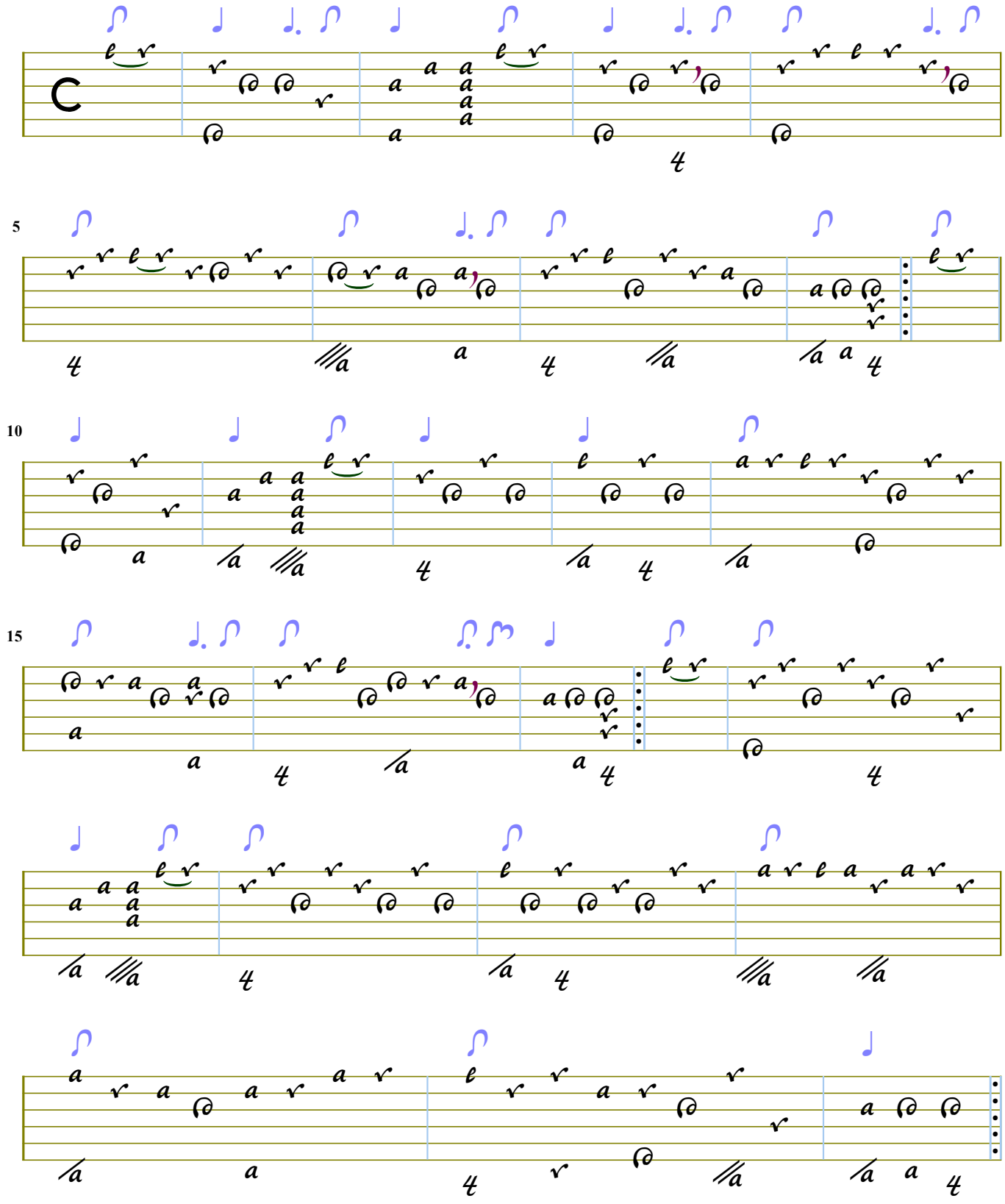
Over the Dyke, and kisse her ladie, mr. Beck's way



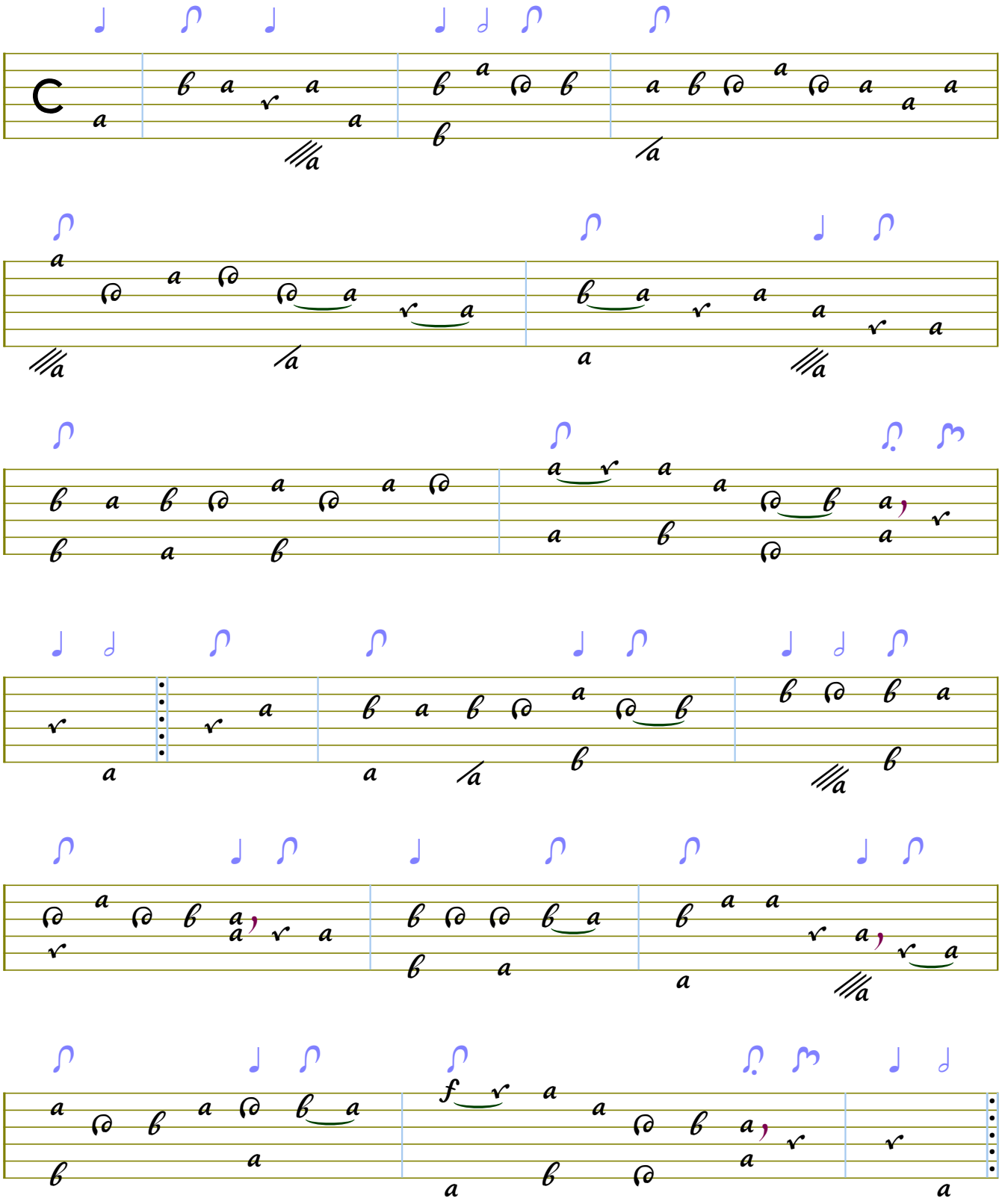
Gerard's mistress, Morison's way, by mr. Beck



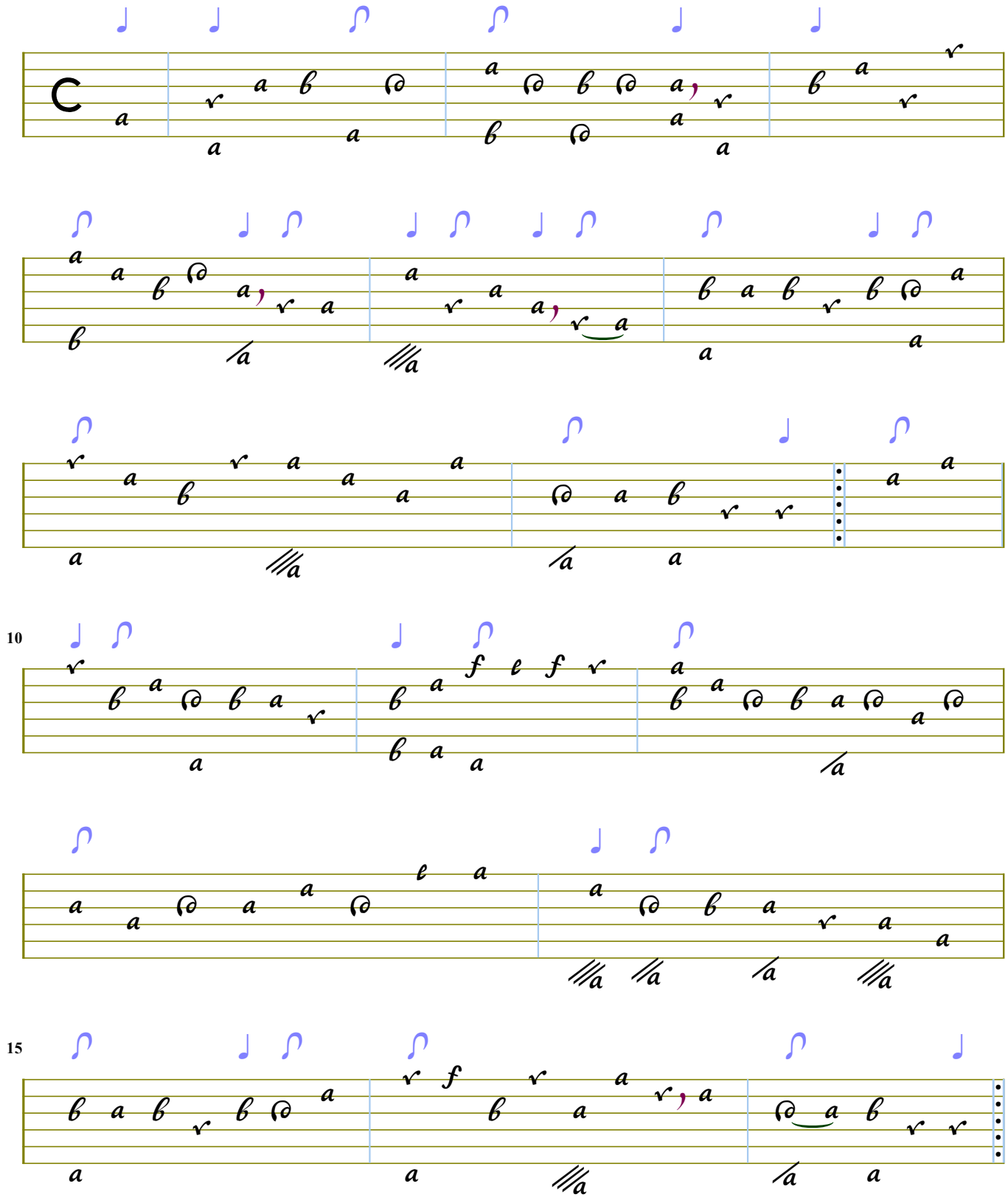
I love my love in secrett, by mr. Beck, Morison's way



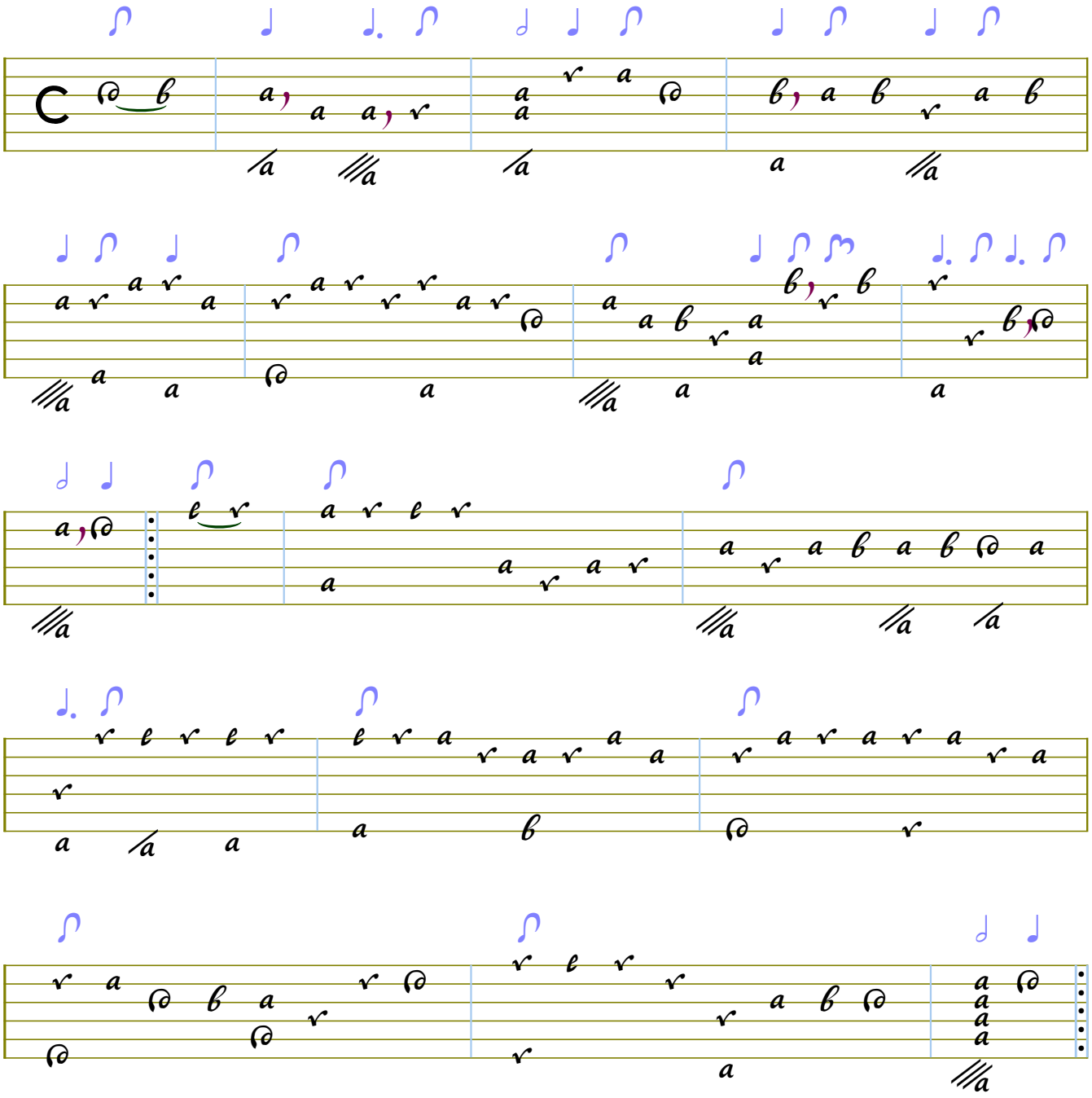
A new scots Measure, mr. Beck's way



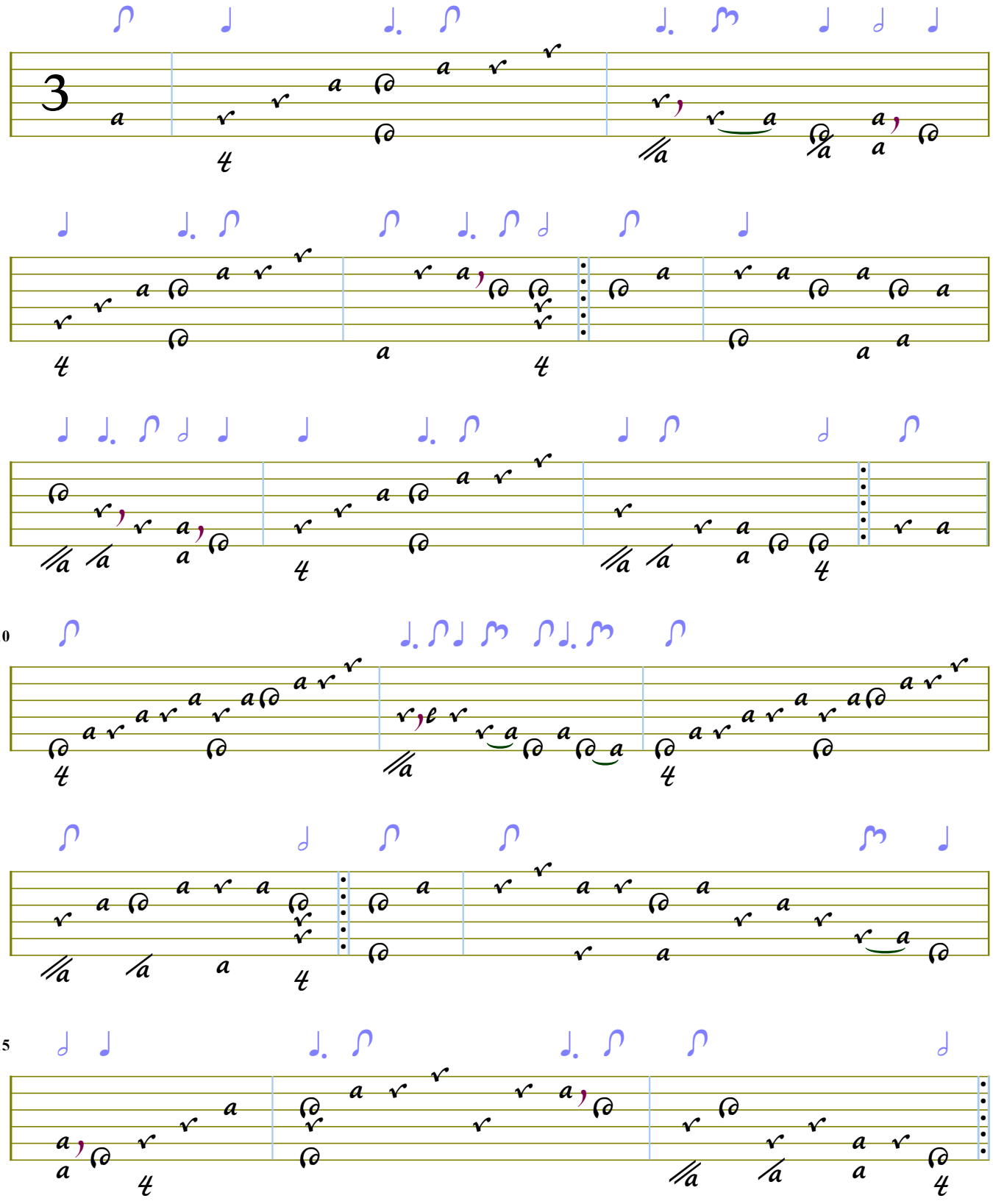
Another new Scots Measure, mr. Beck's way



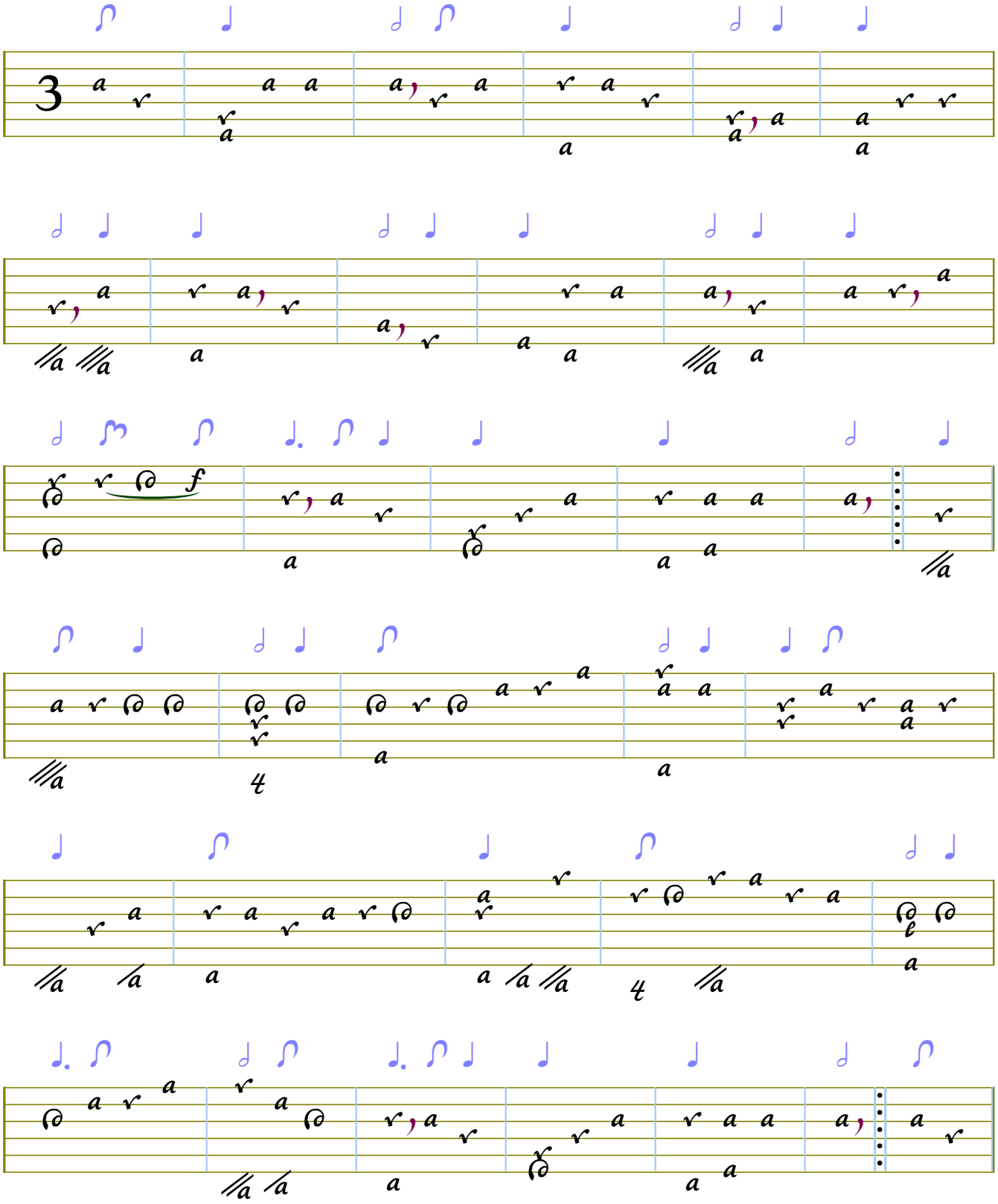
My bird, if I come near thee, mr. Beck's way

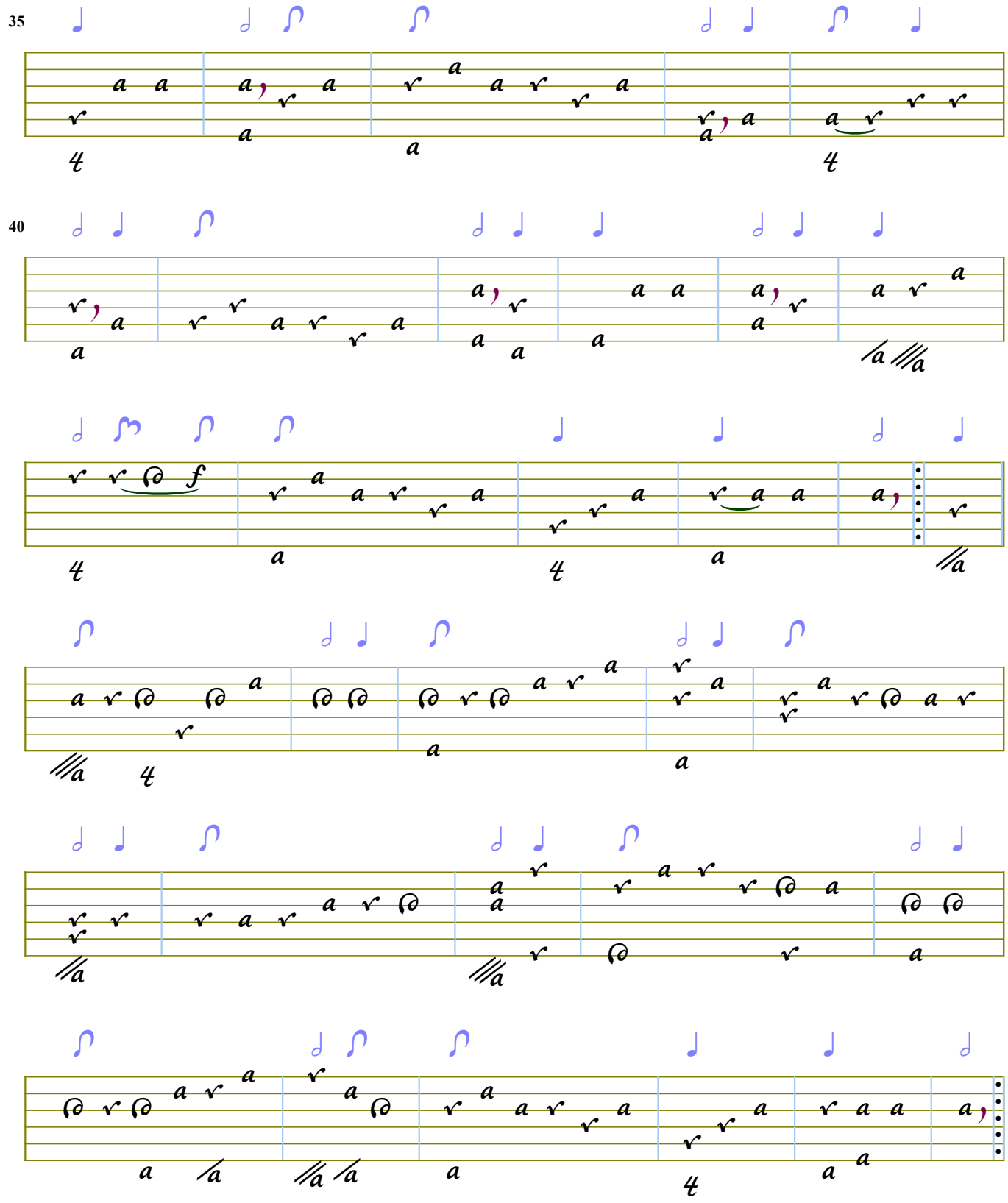


The yellow haired ladie, mr. Beck's way



The Gaberlunie man, mr. Beck's way

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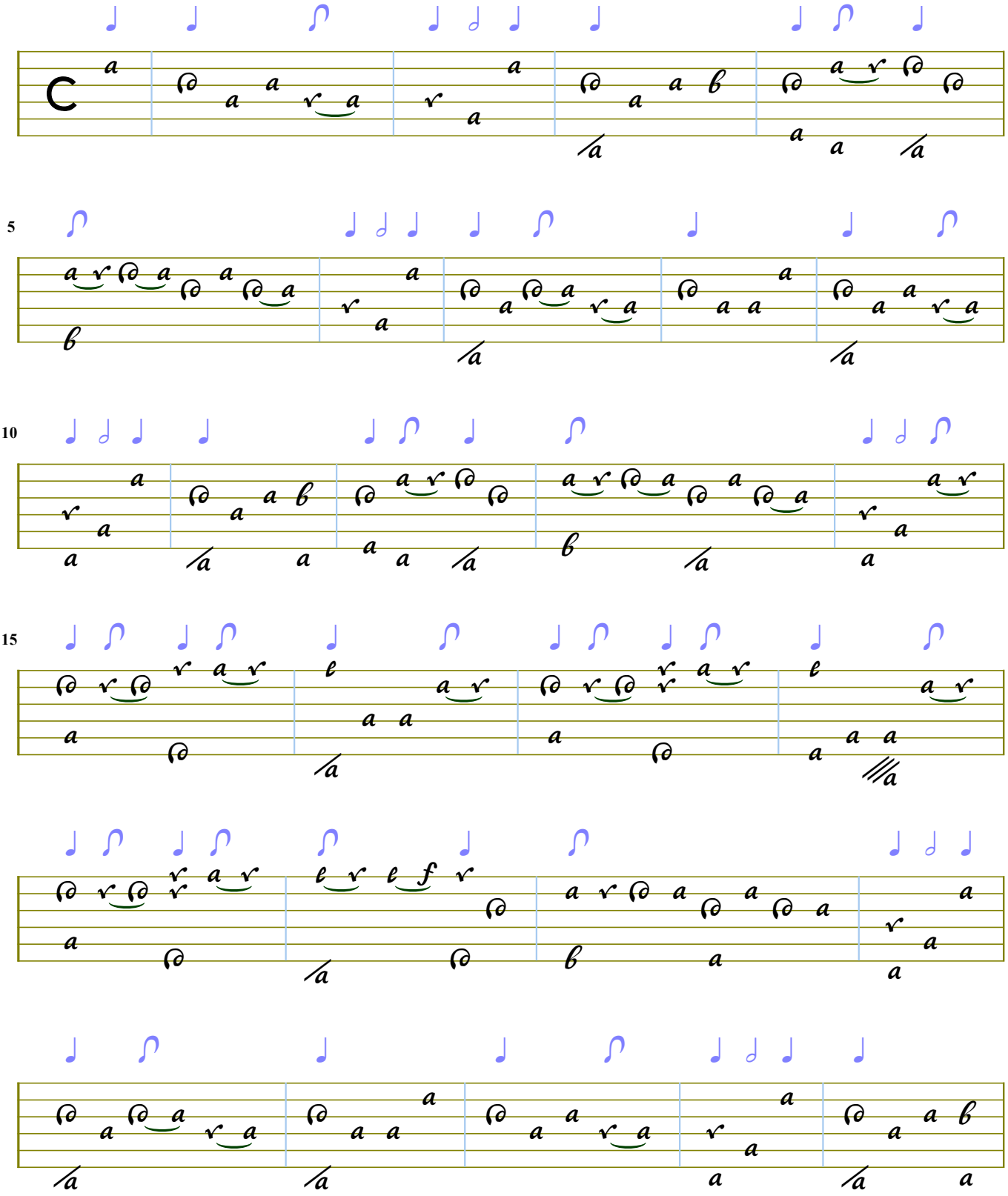
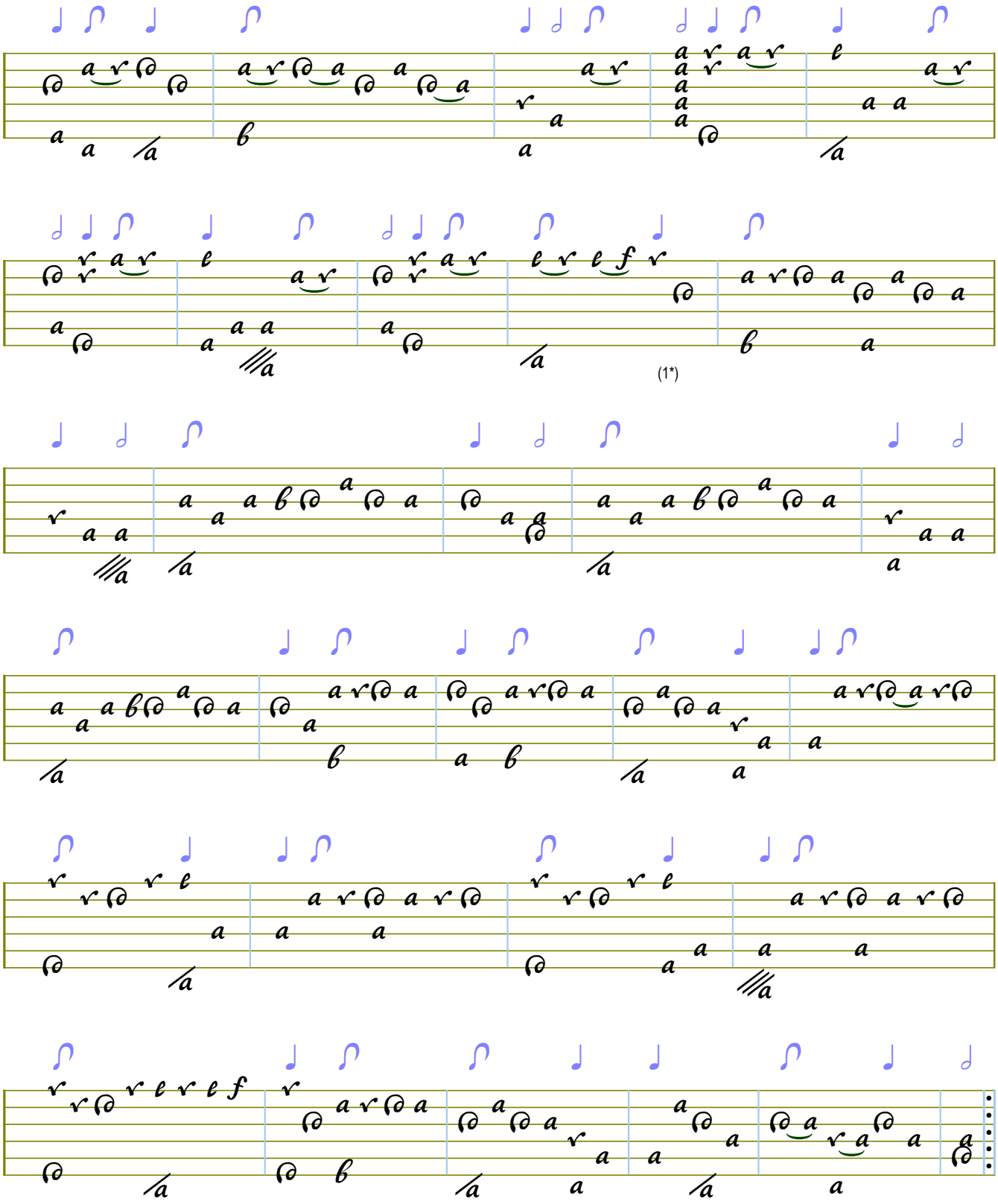
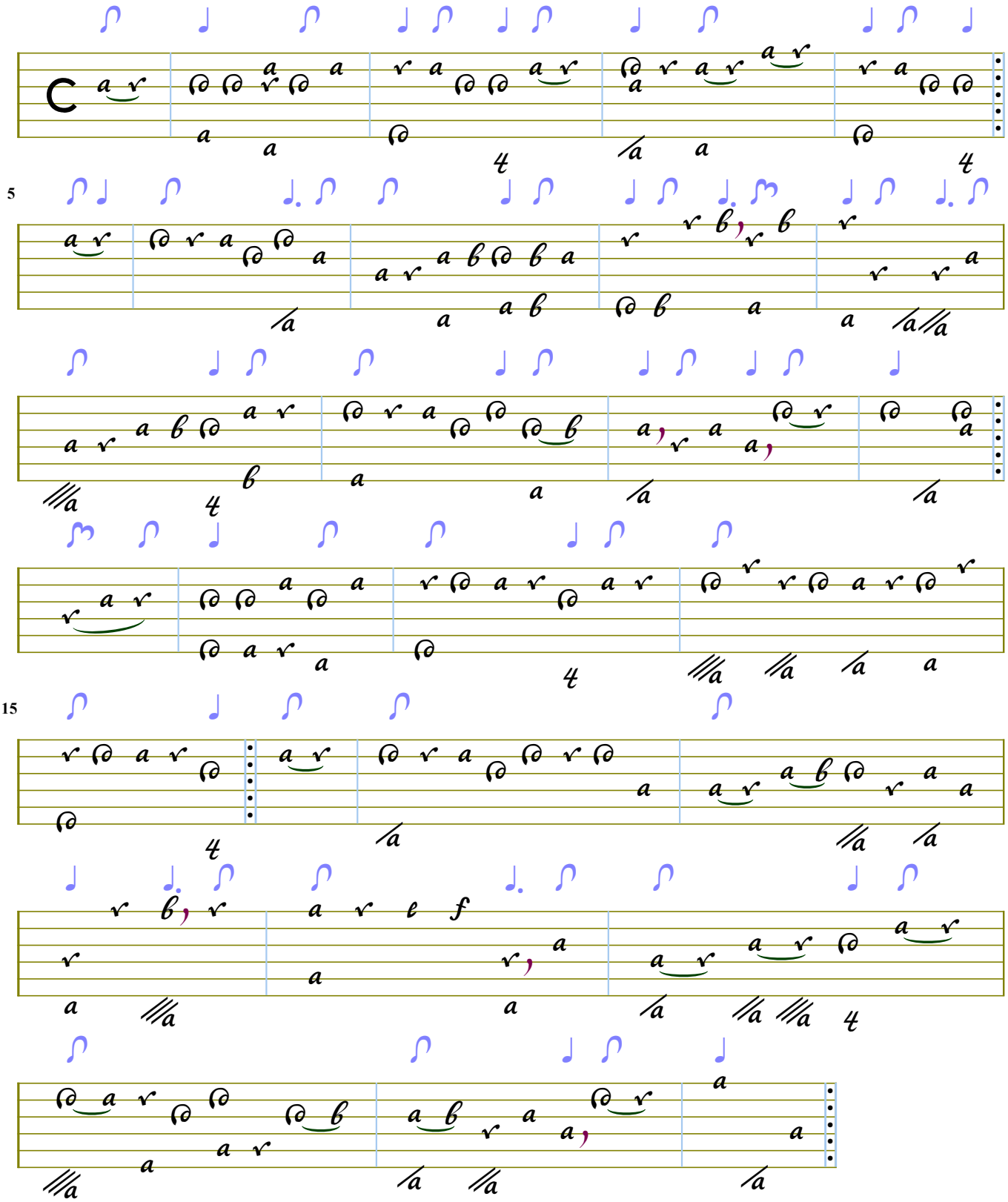
Willie winks, my daughter's way



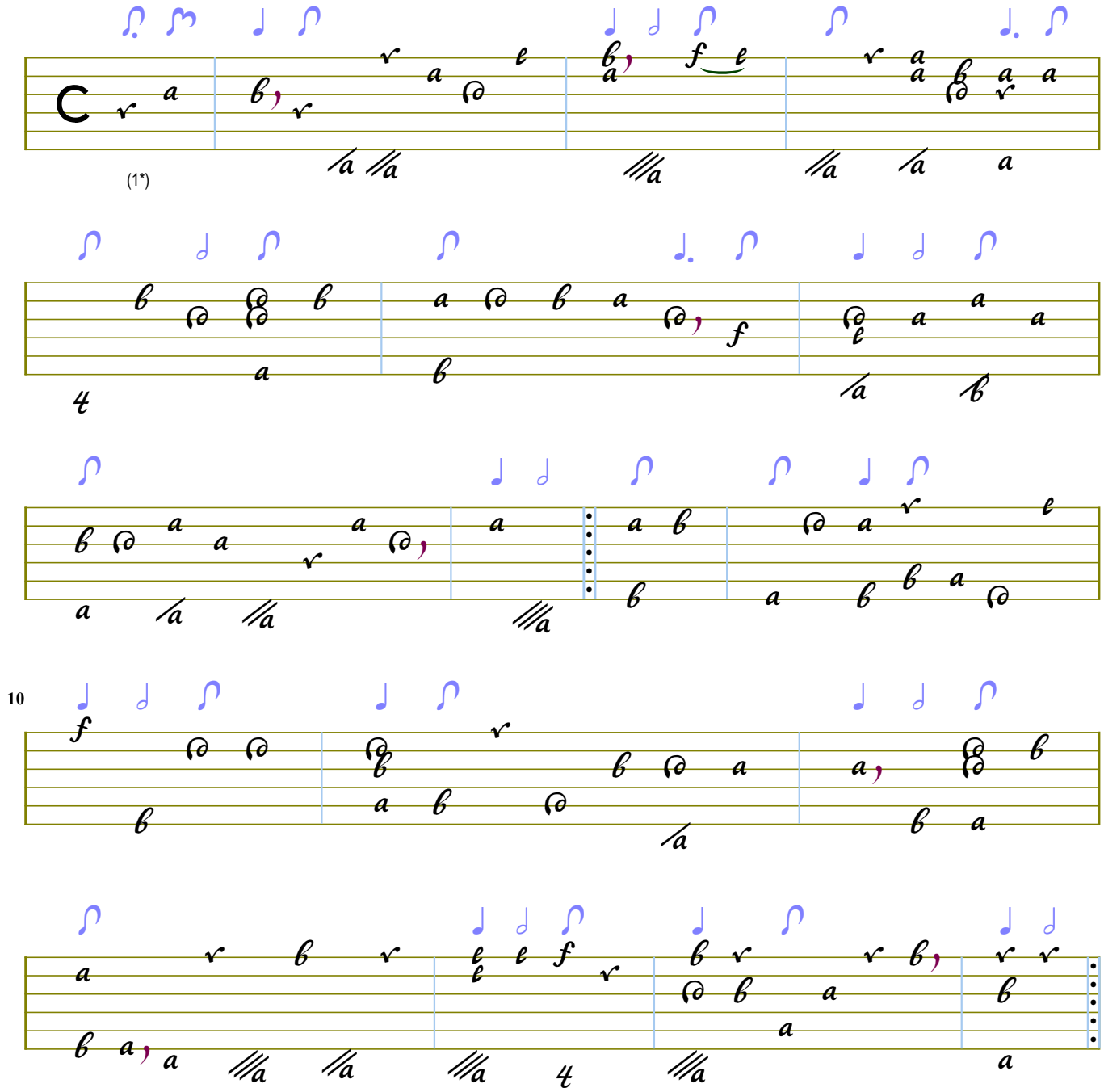


1. 'e' in original

The souldier's misery, mr. Beck's way

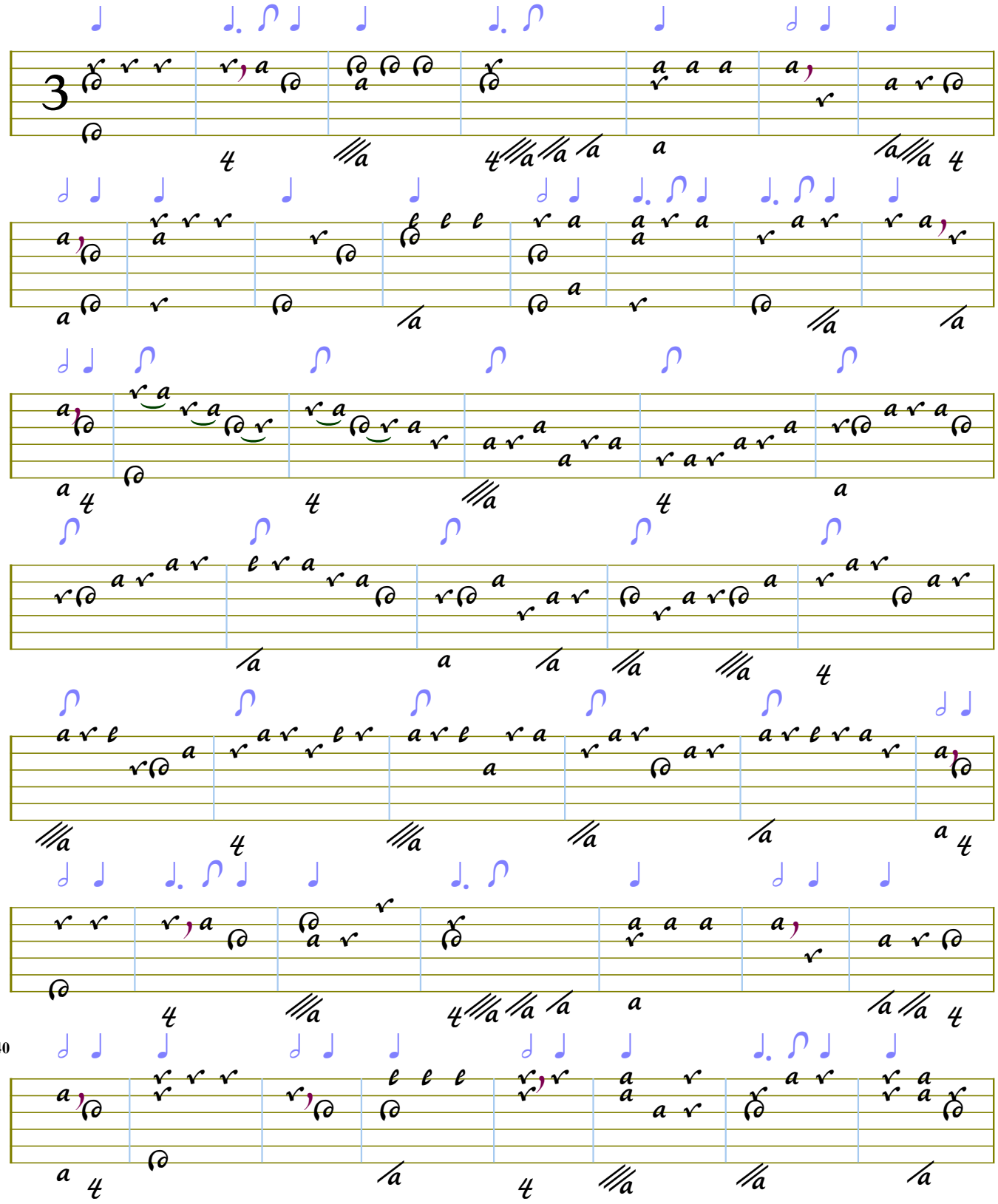


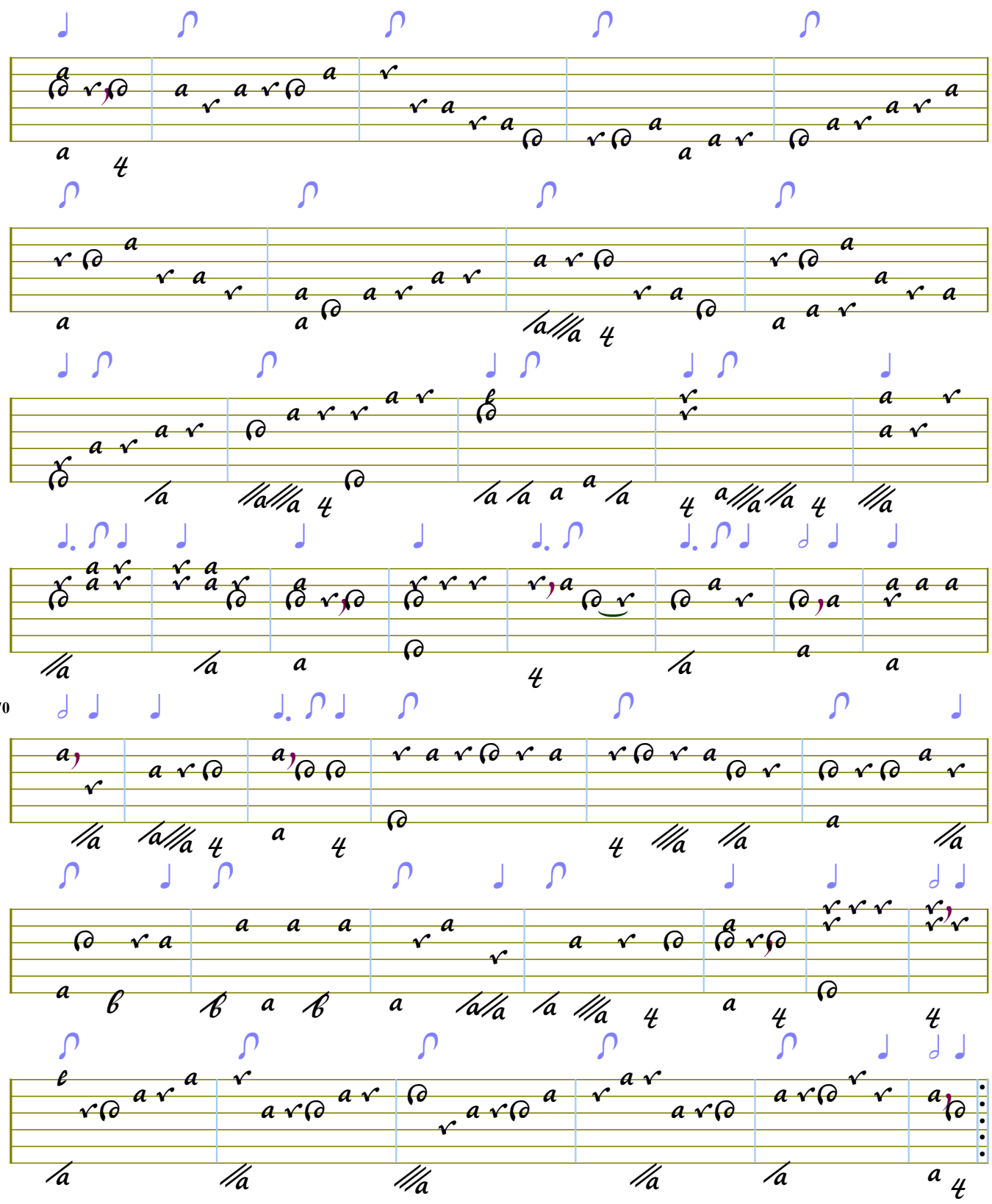
Belle heurese, with the 9th lowed half a note, mr. Beck's way



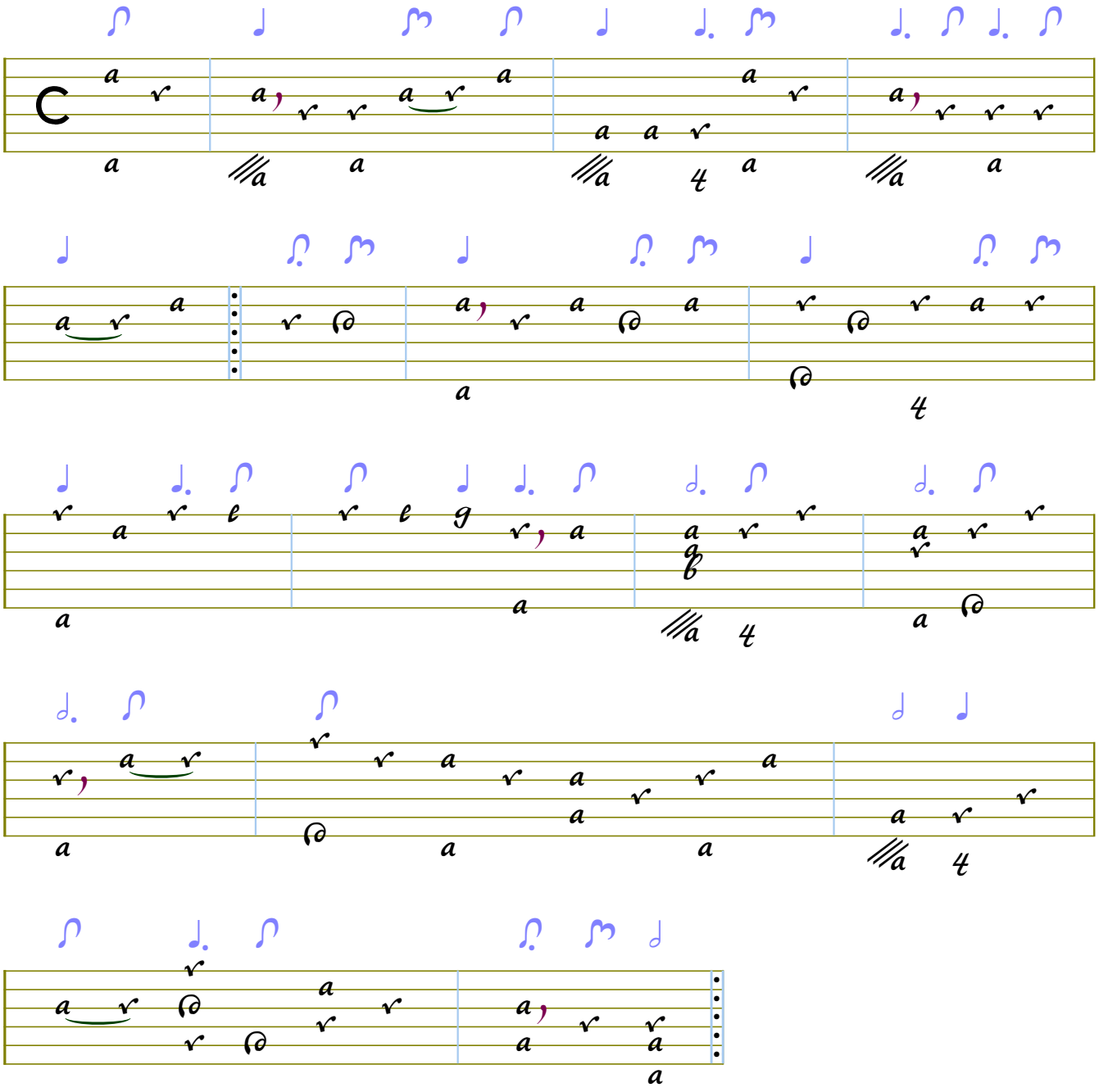
1. An arrangement of the air: « Sommes-nous pas trop heureux » from the Ballet de l'Impatience (1661) by Lully.

Buckingham's Sarraband, mr. Beck's way

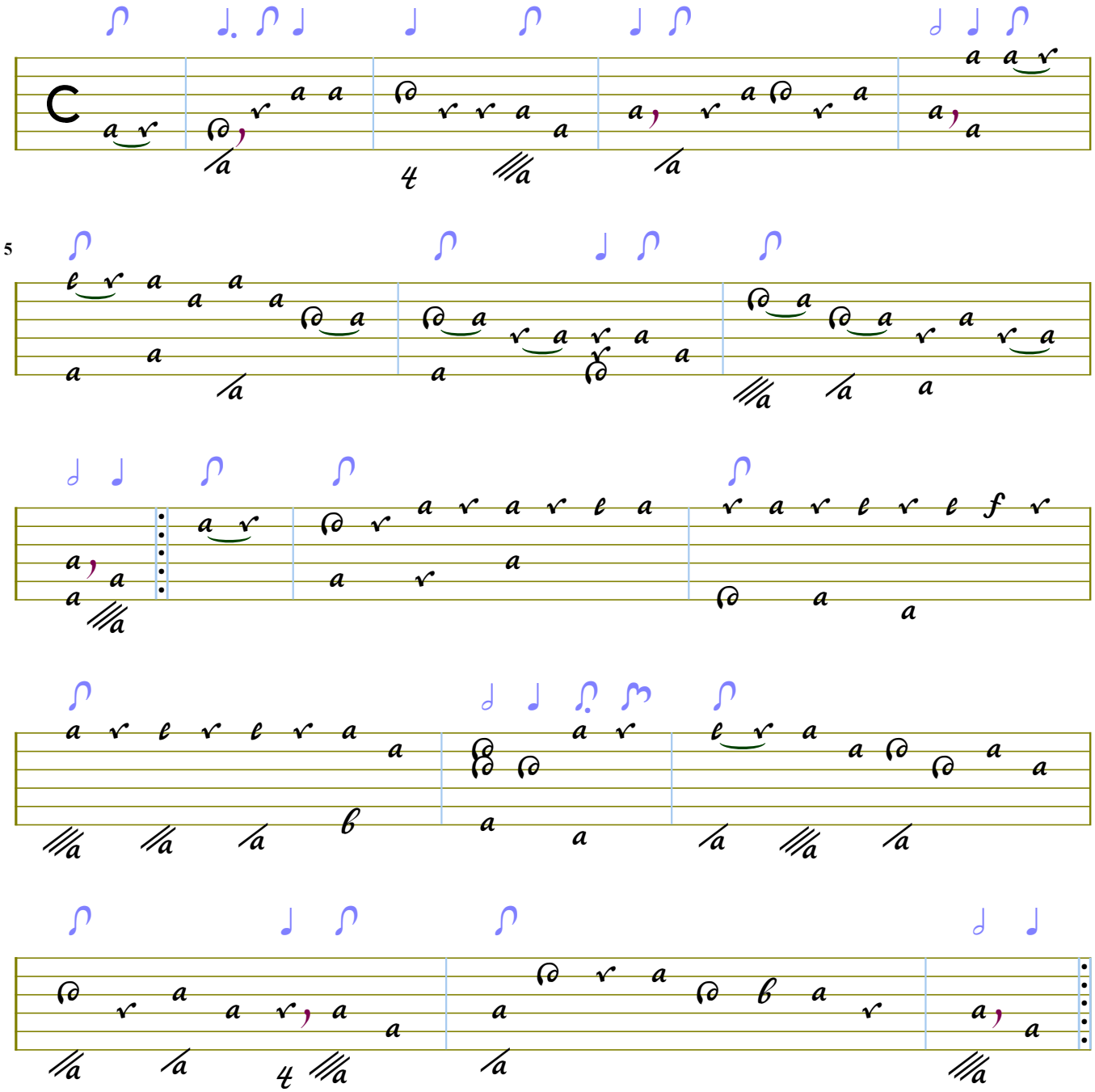



70

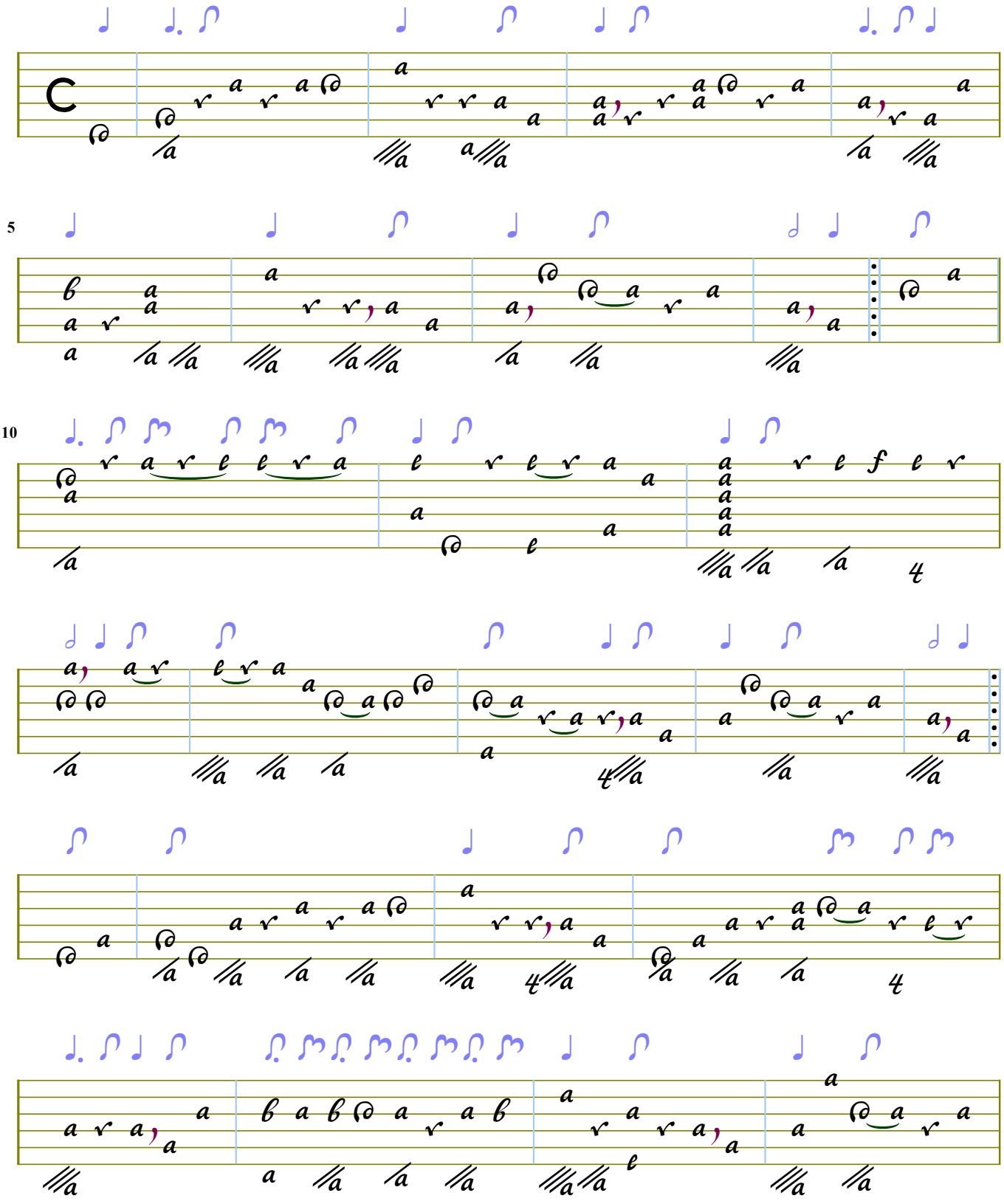
Balow, mr. Beck's way

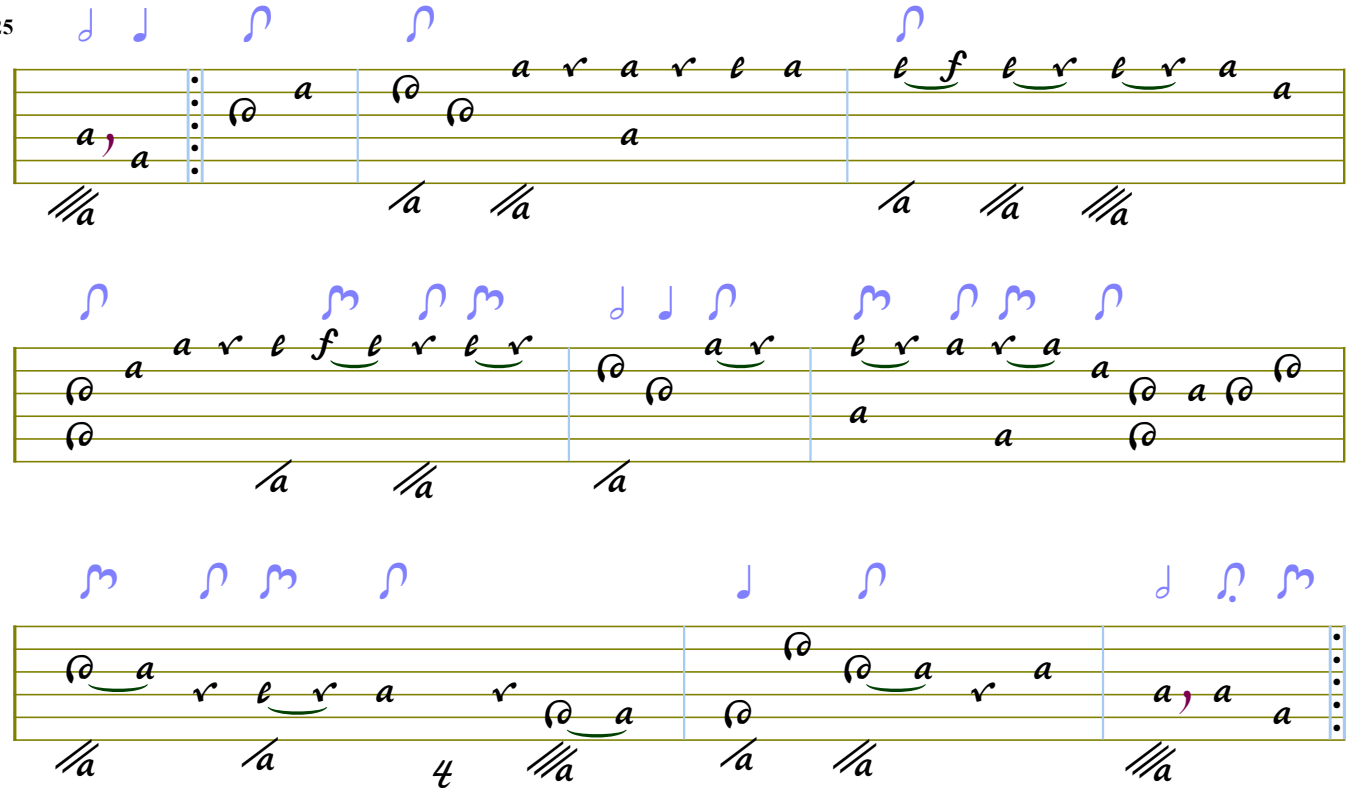


Nathaniell gordon, the old way, by mr. Beck

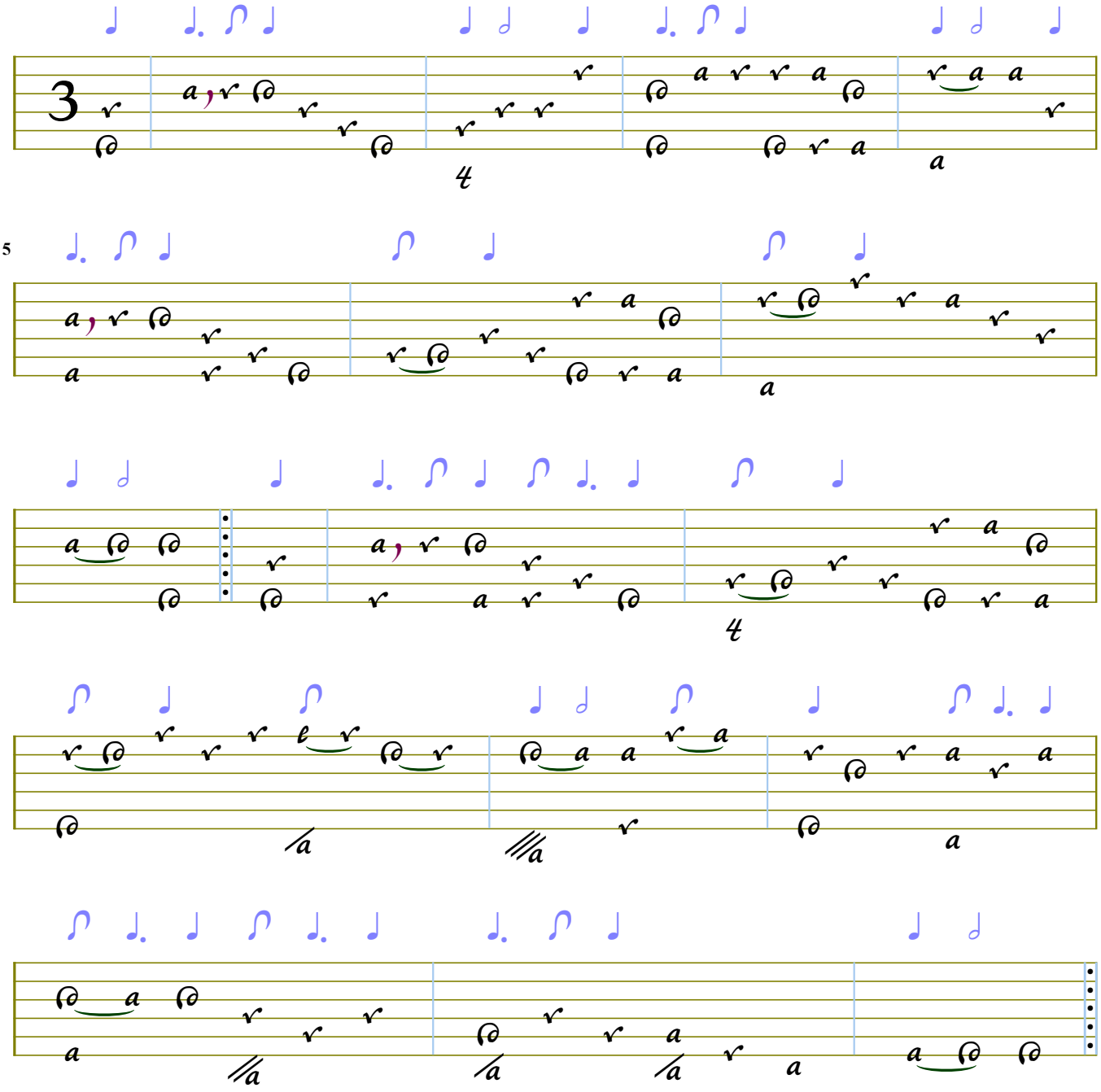


Nathaniell gordon, the new way, by mr. Beck

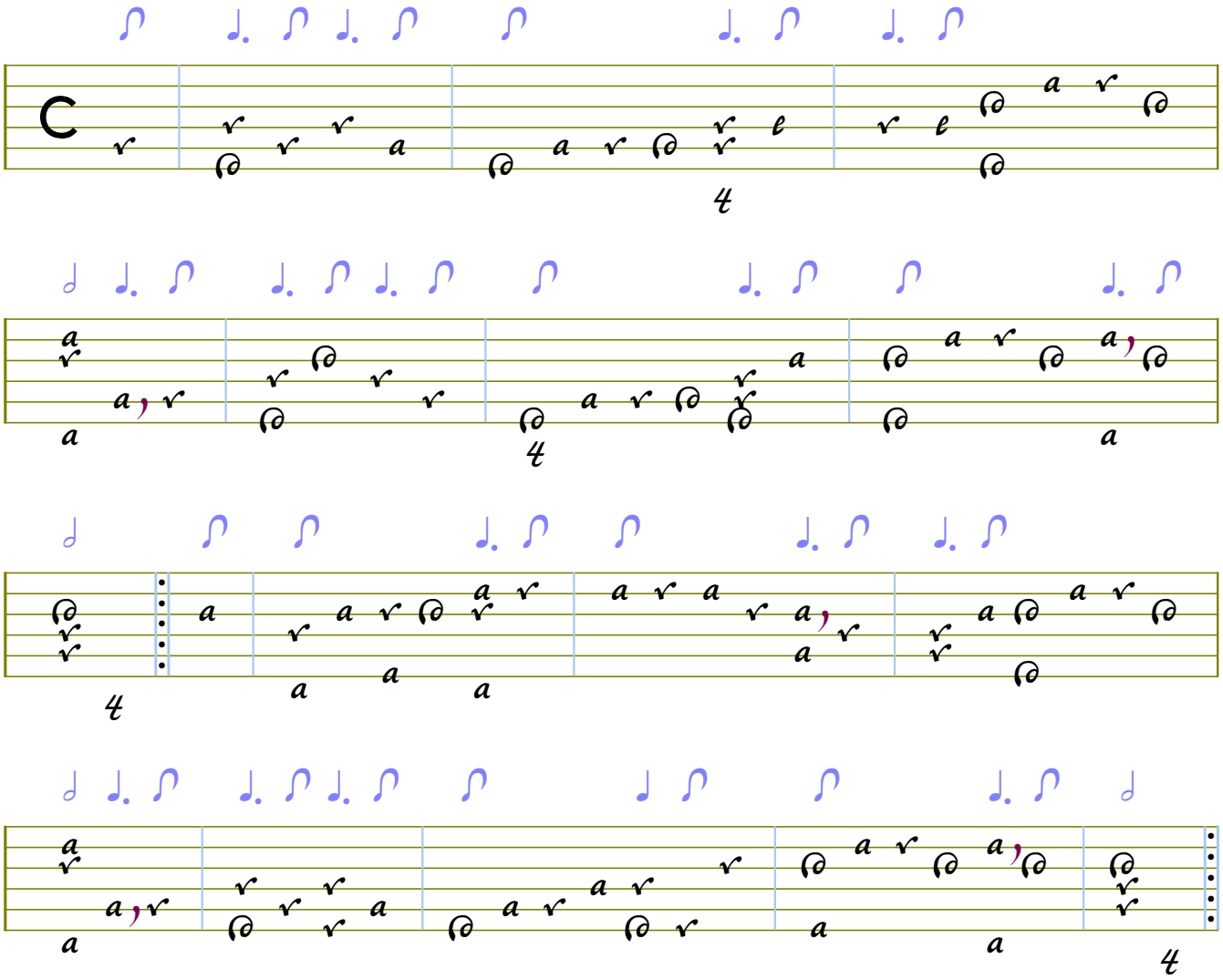



25

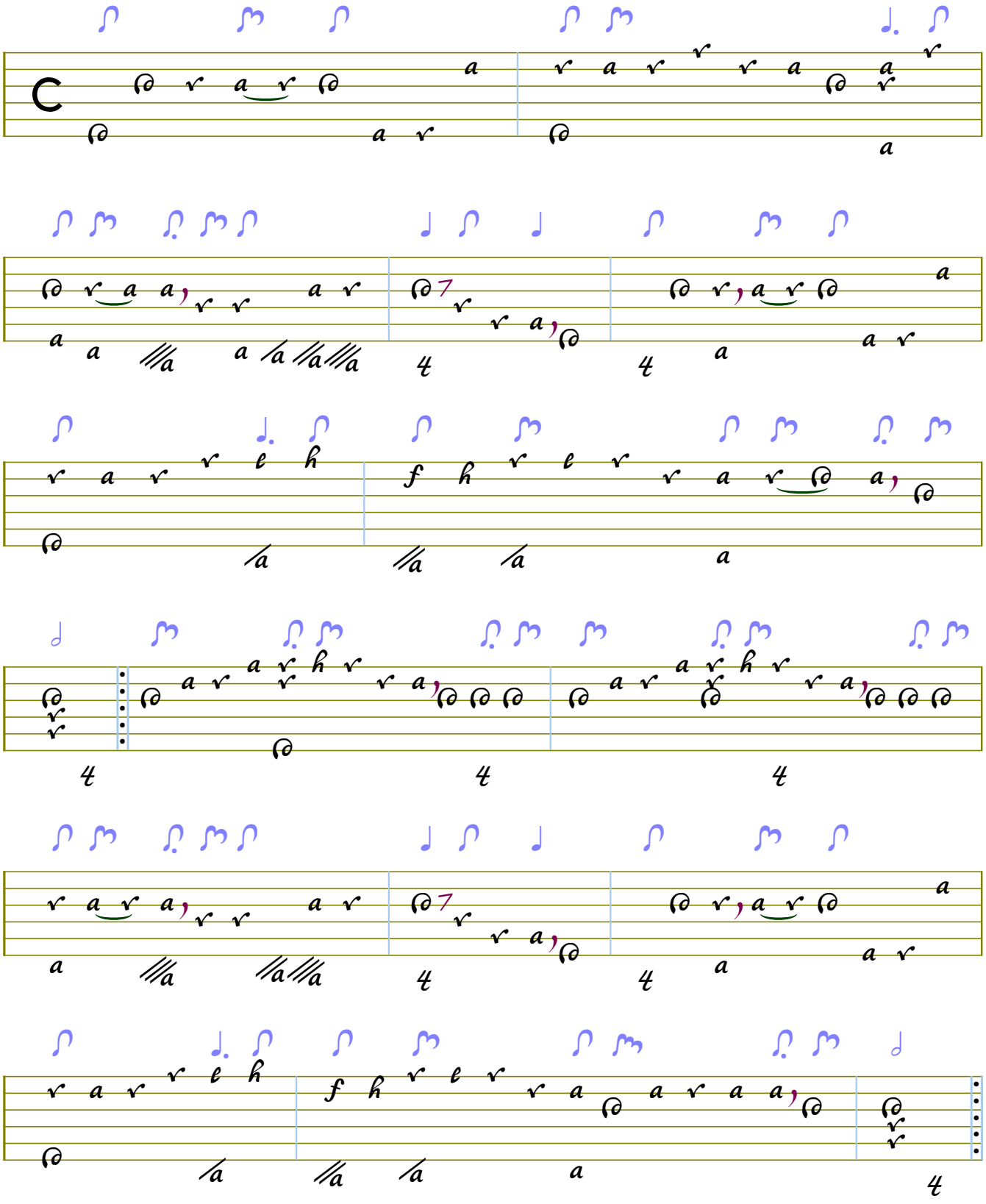
Tarphicken, mr. Beck's way



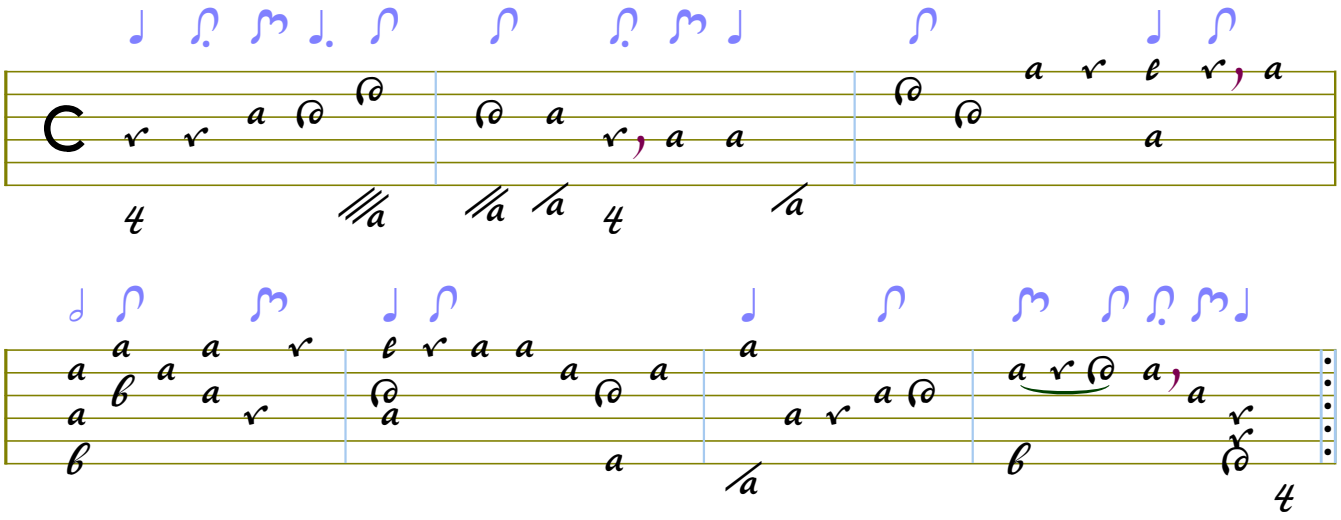
The bonnie boatman, mr. Beck's way



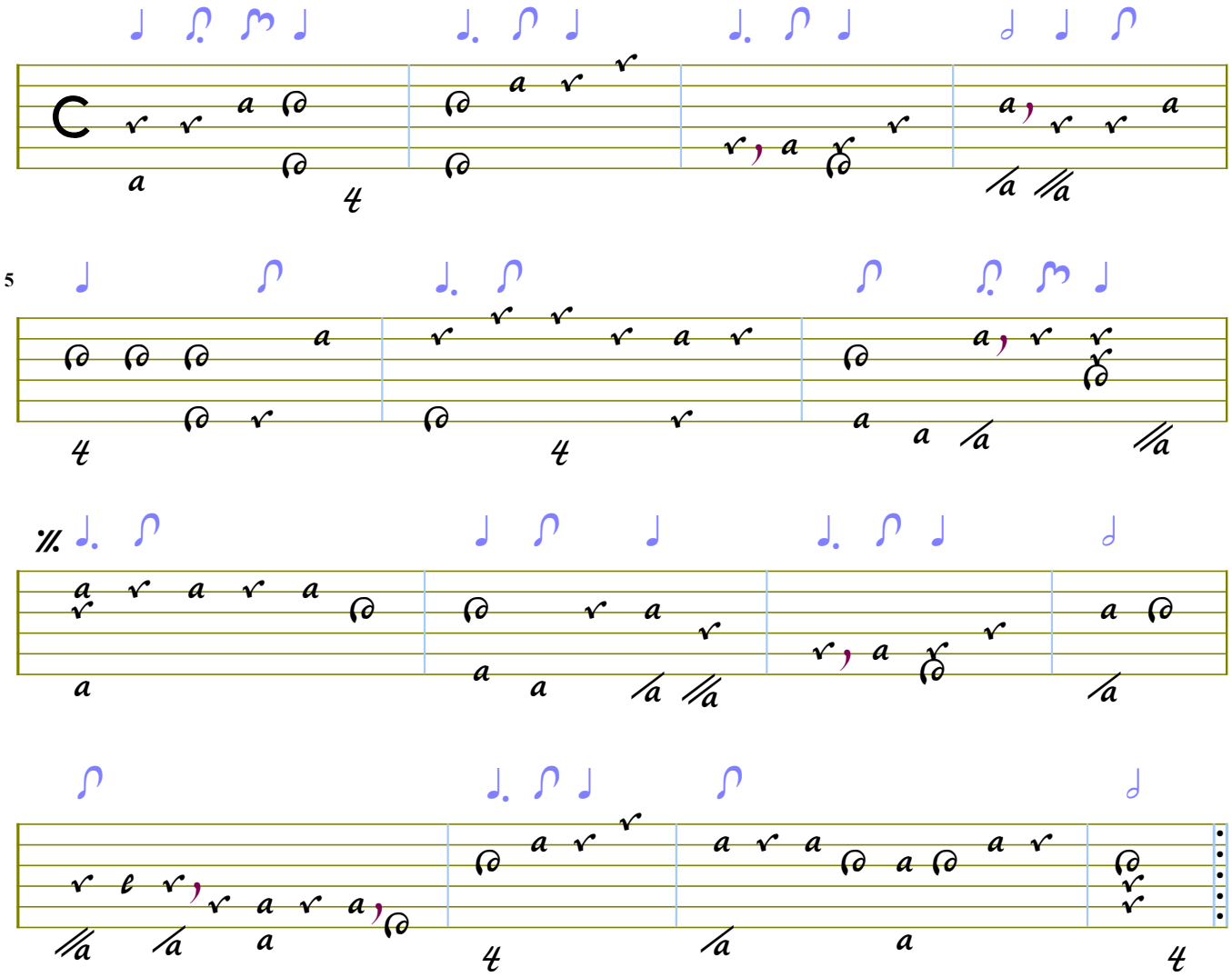
This one Night, mr. Beck's way



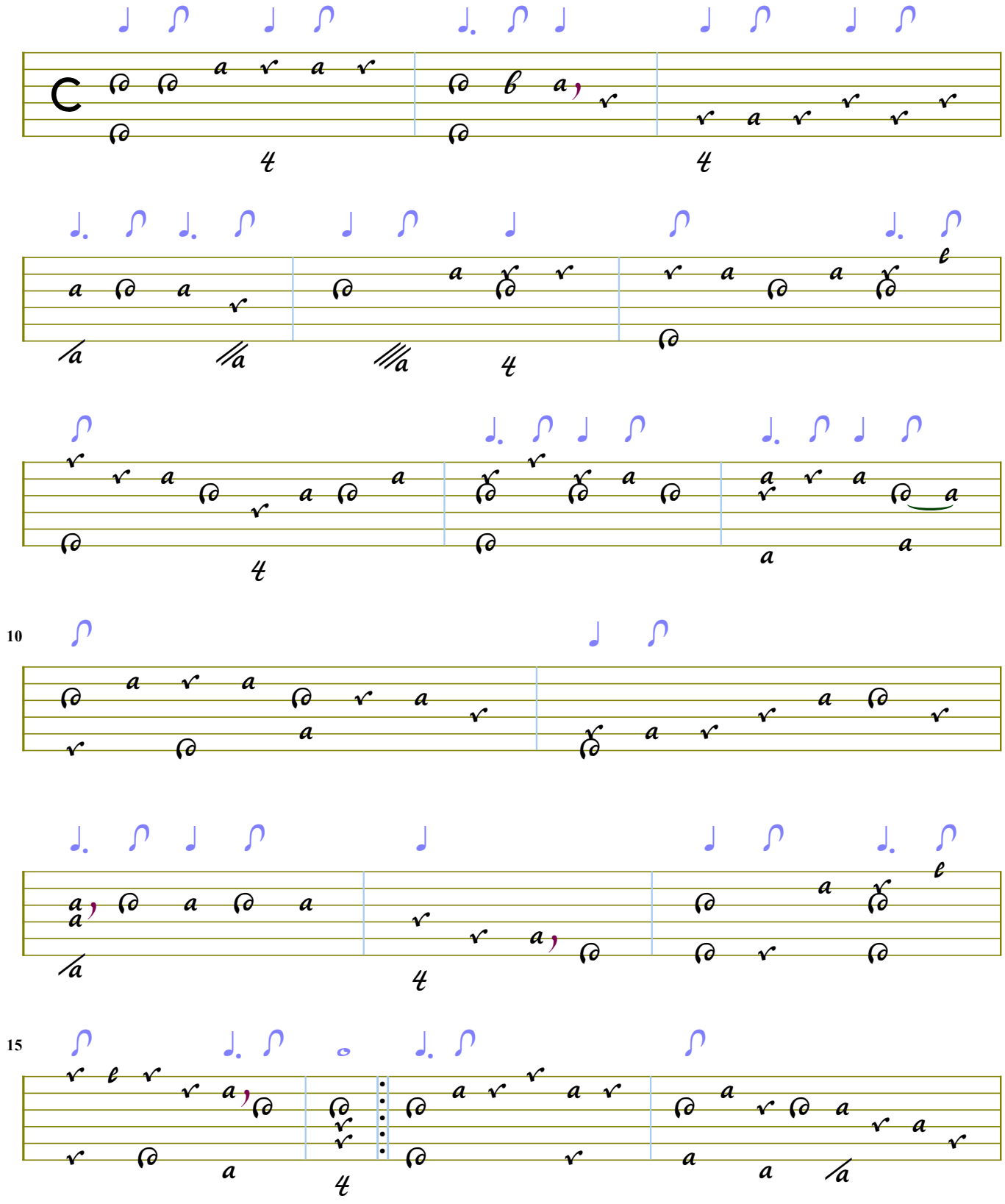
The broom, of caudinknows, Jean Mores's way, by mr. Beck

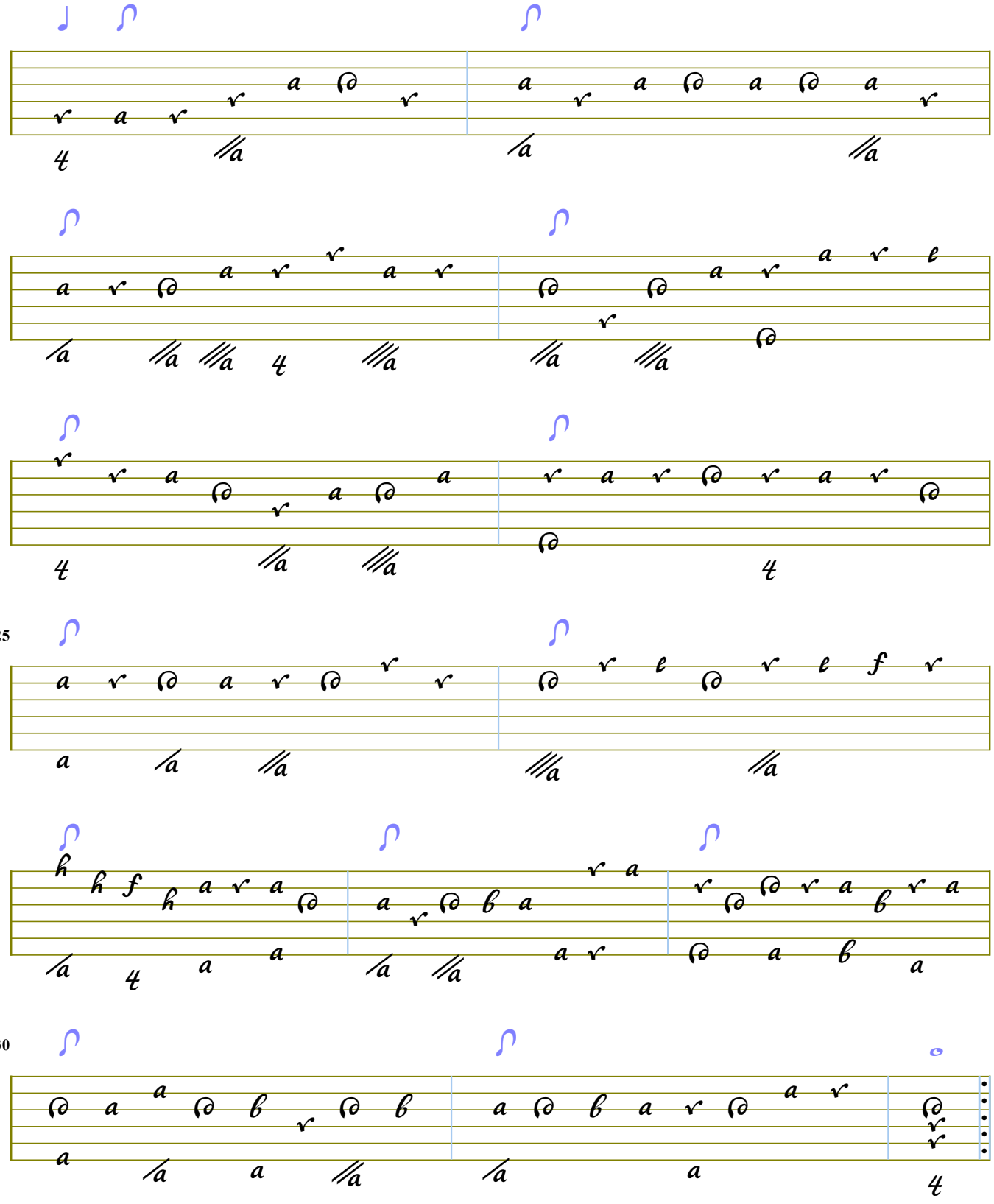


Fancie free, Jean Mores's way, by mr. Beck

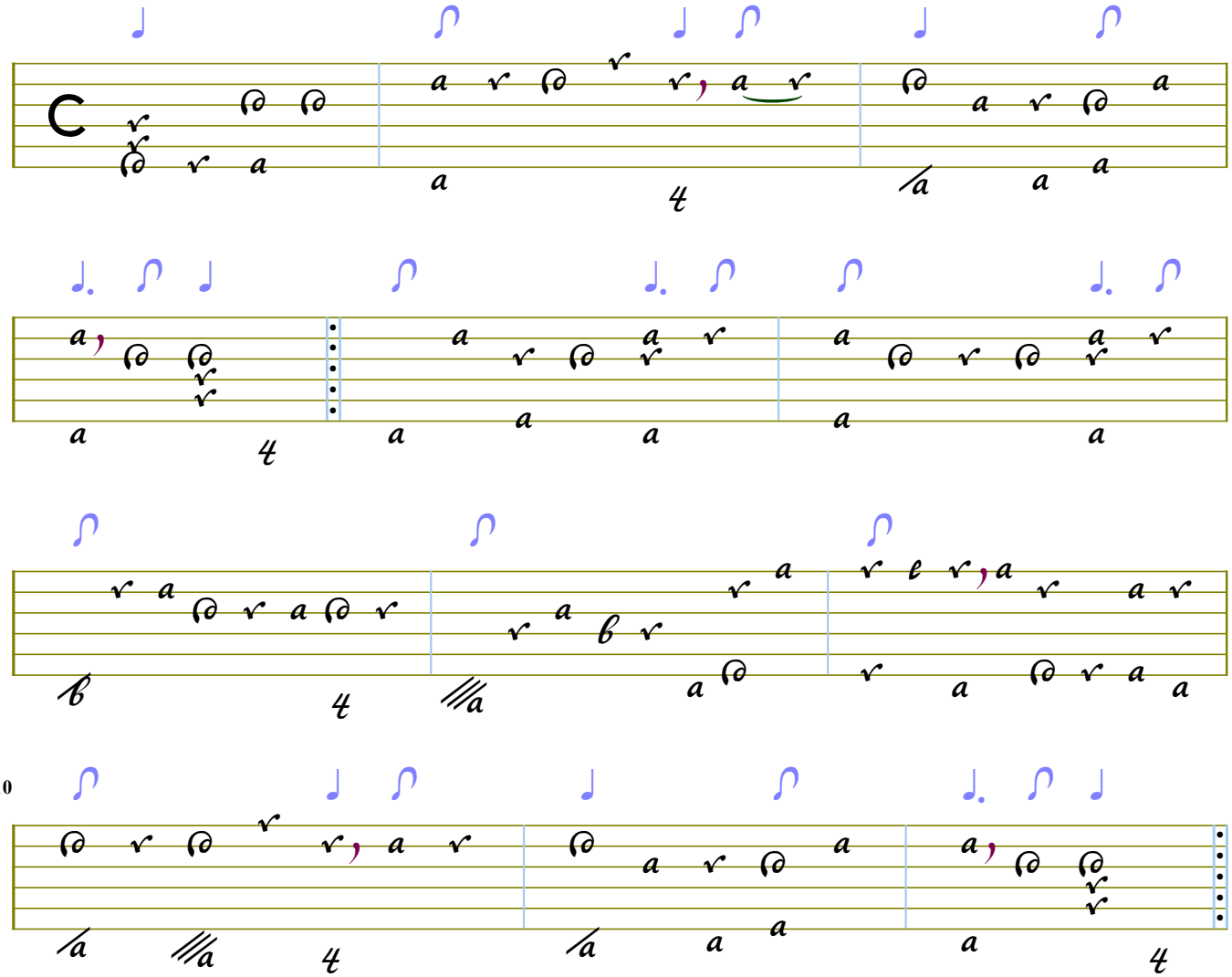


Fancie free, John Morison's way, by mr. Beck

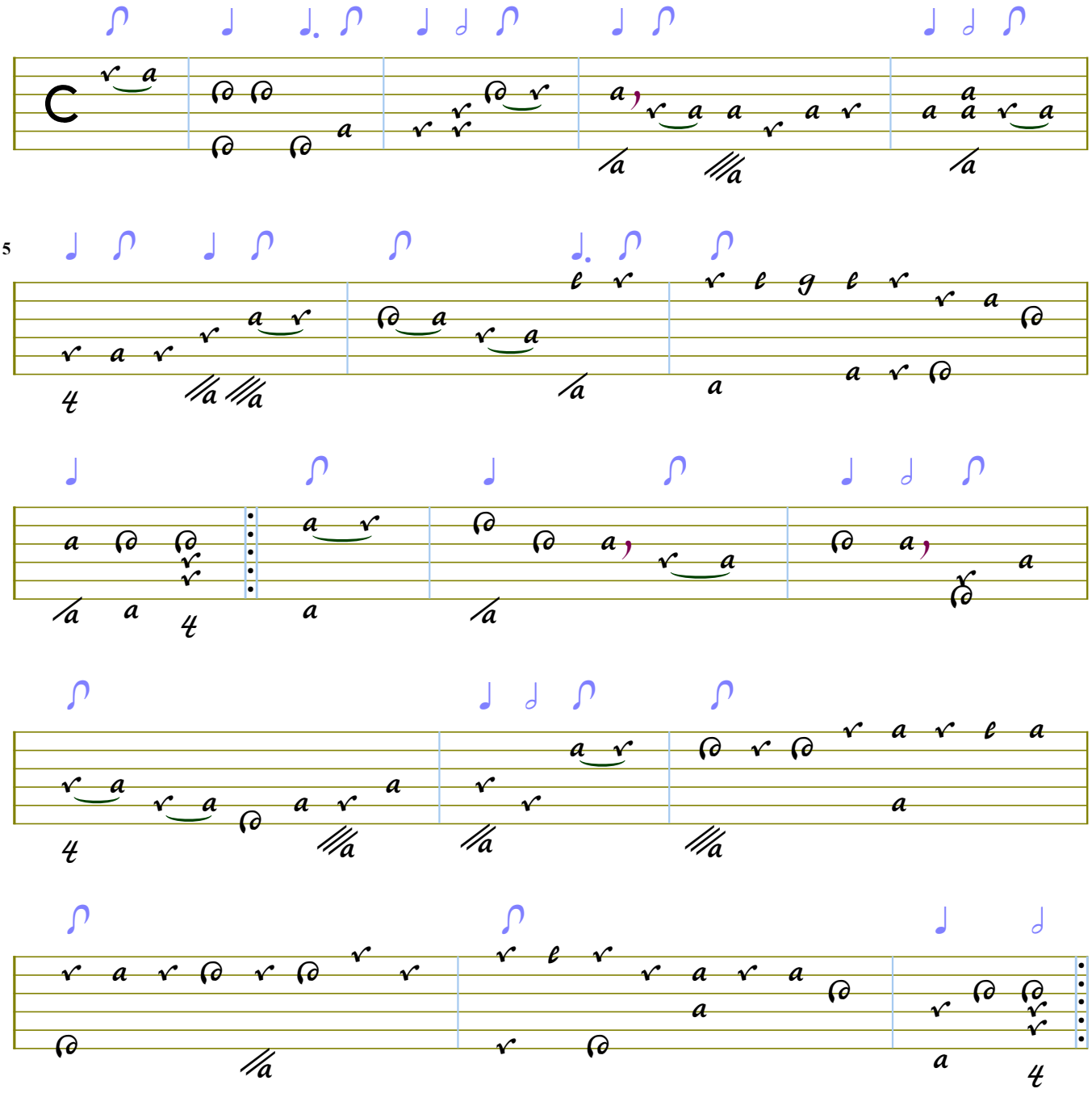




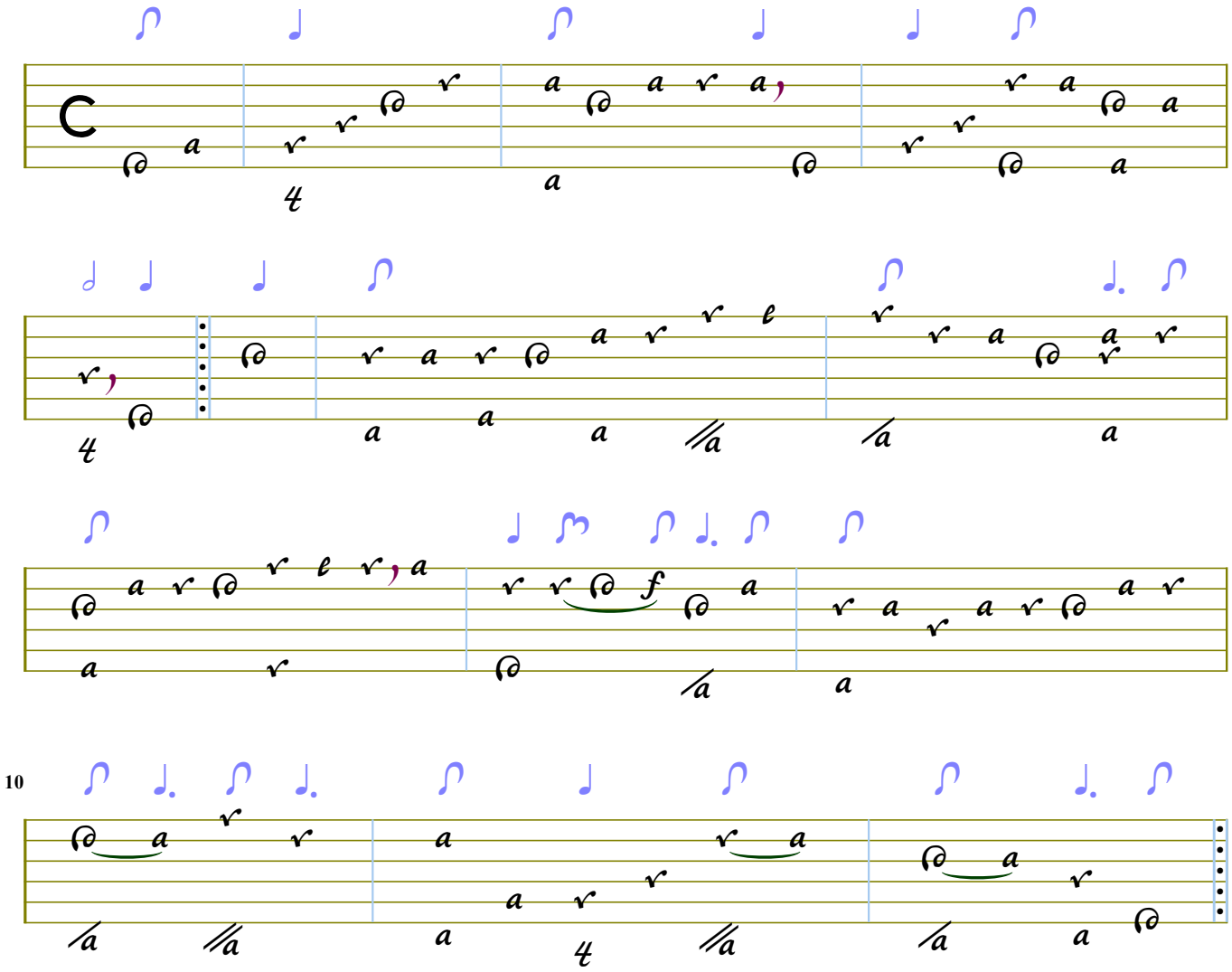
The king enjoy his own again, by mr. Beck



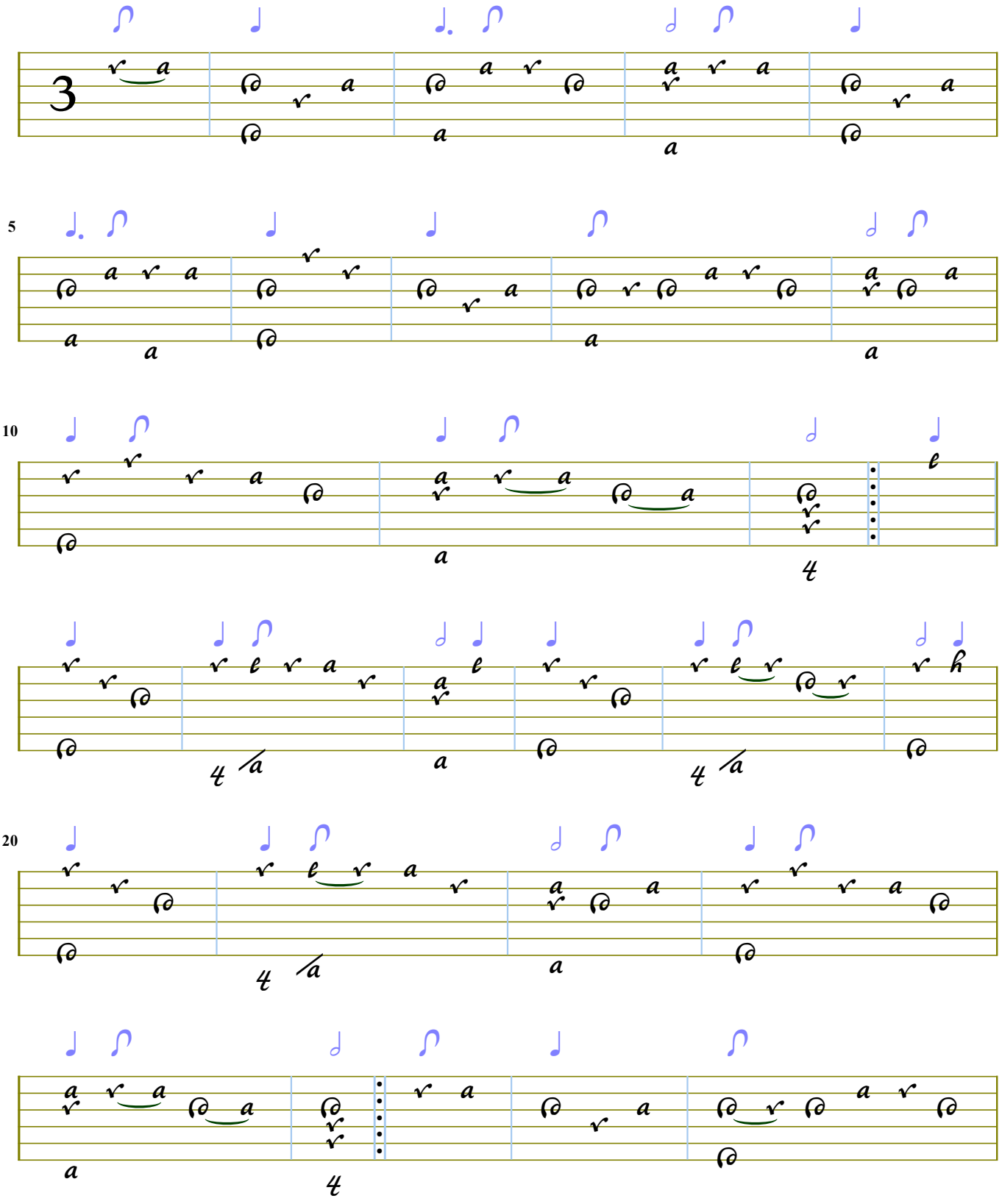
Jean is best of any, by mr. Beck

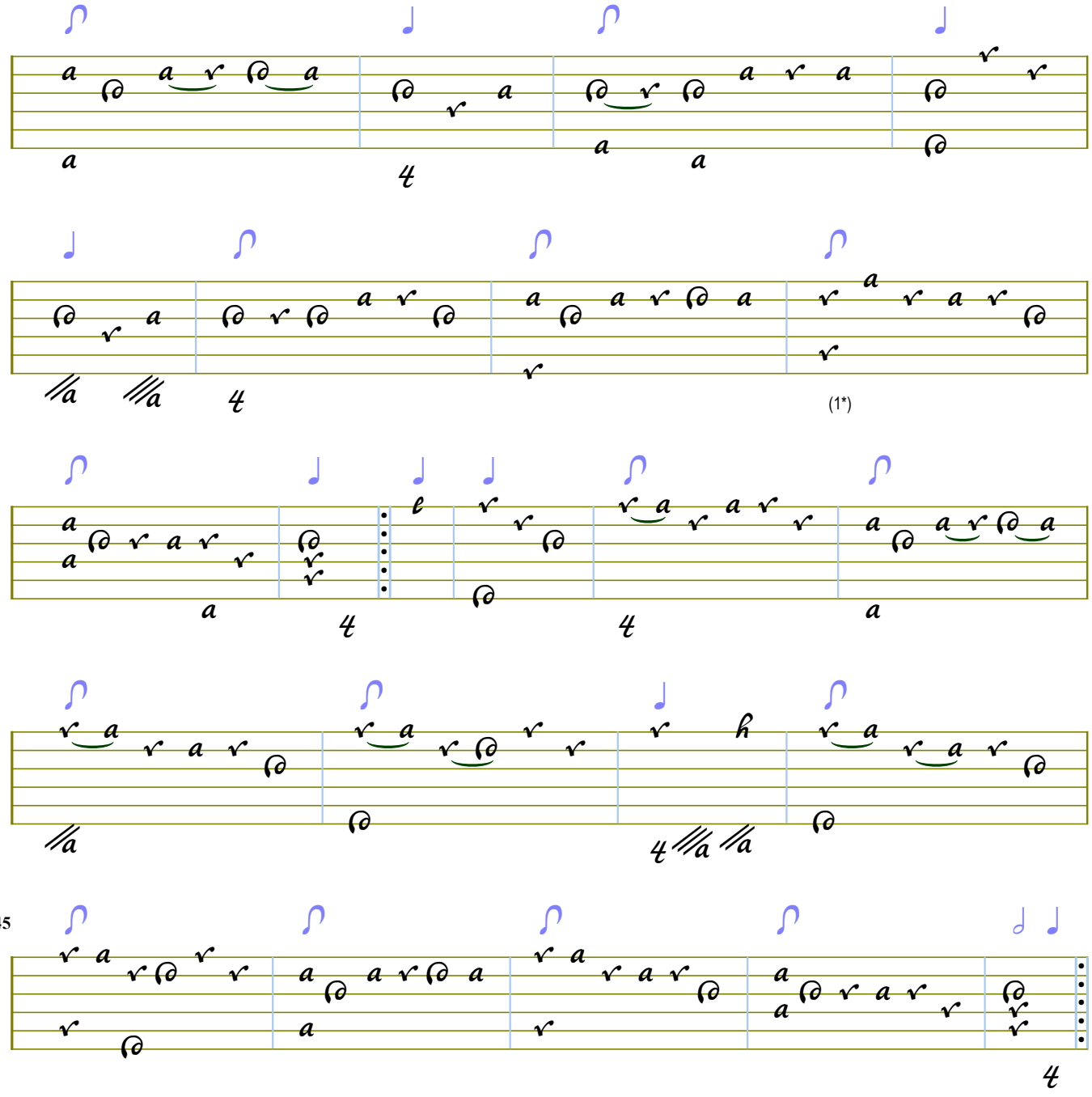


Love me, as I deserve, by mr. Beck



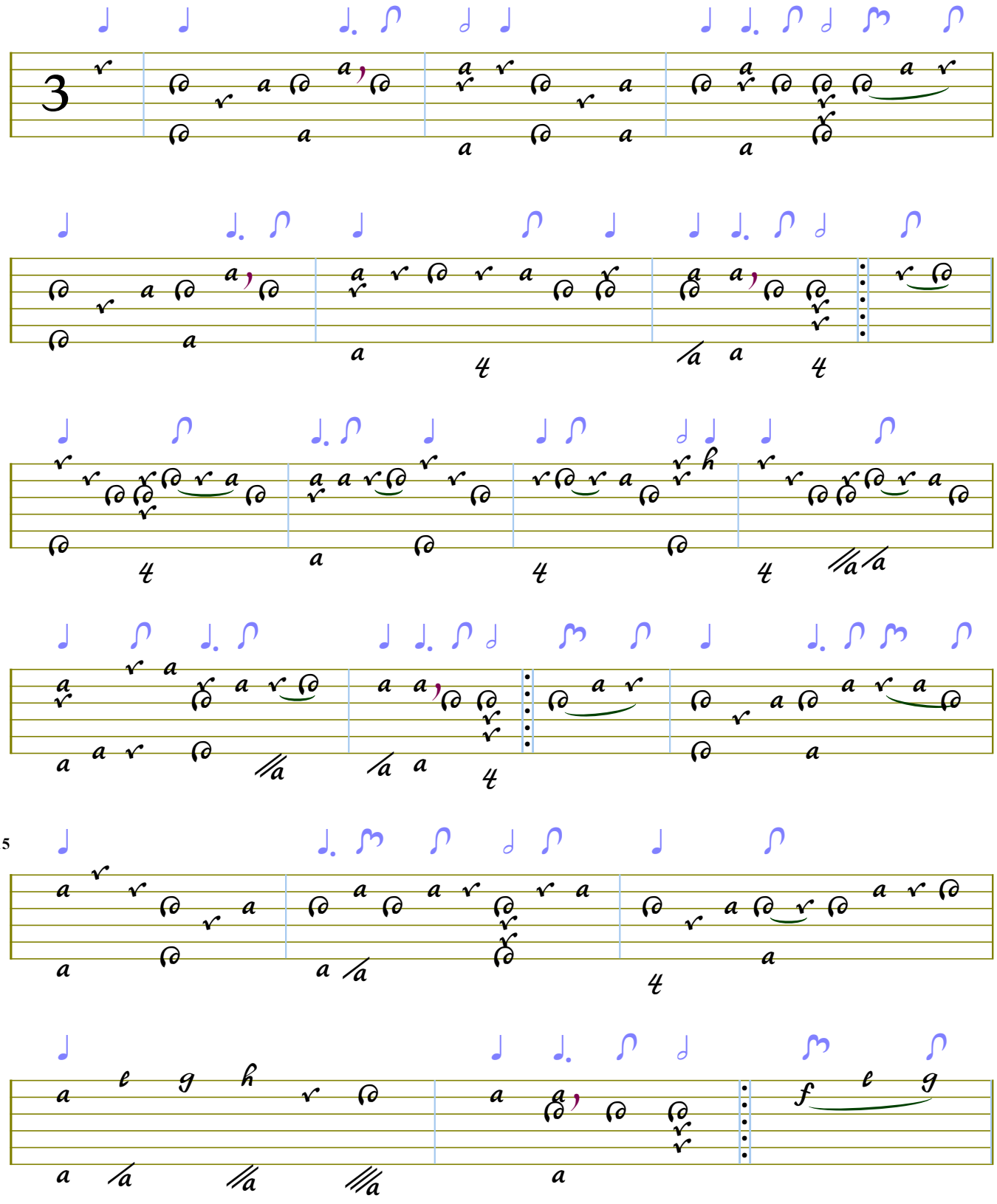
Tweedsyde, the old way, by mr. Beck

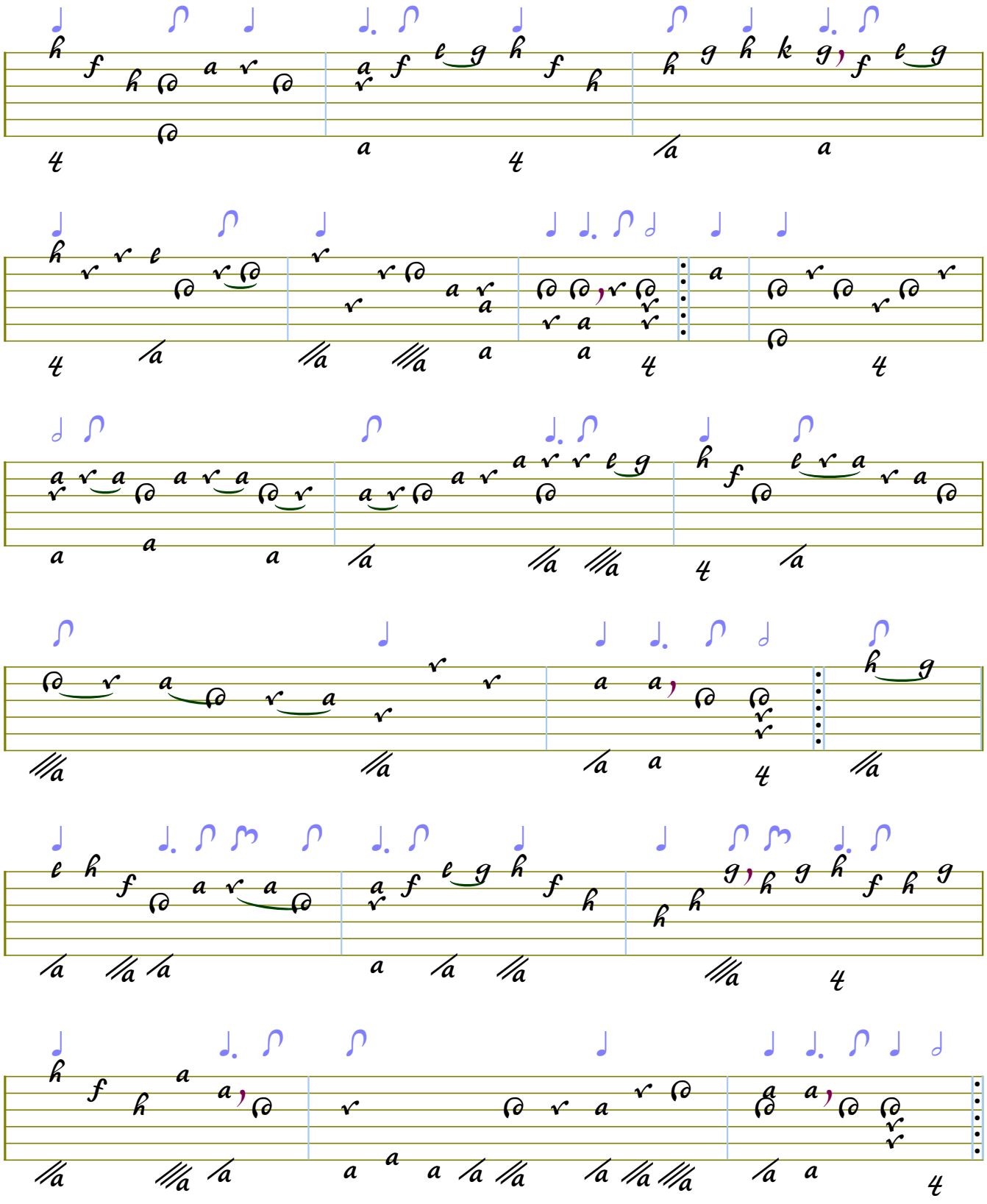




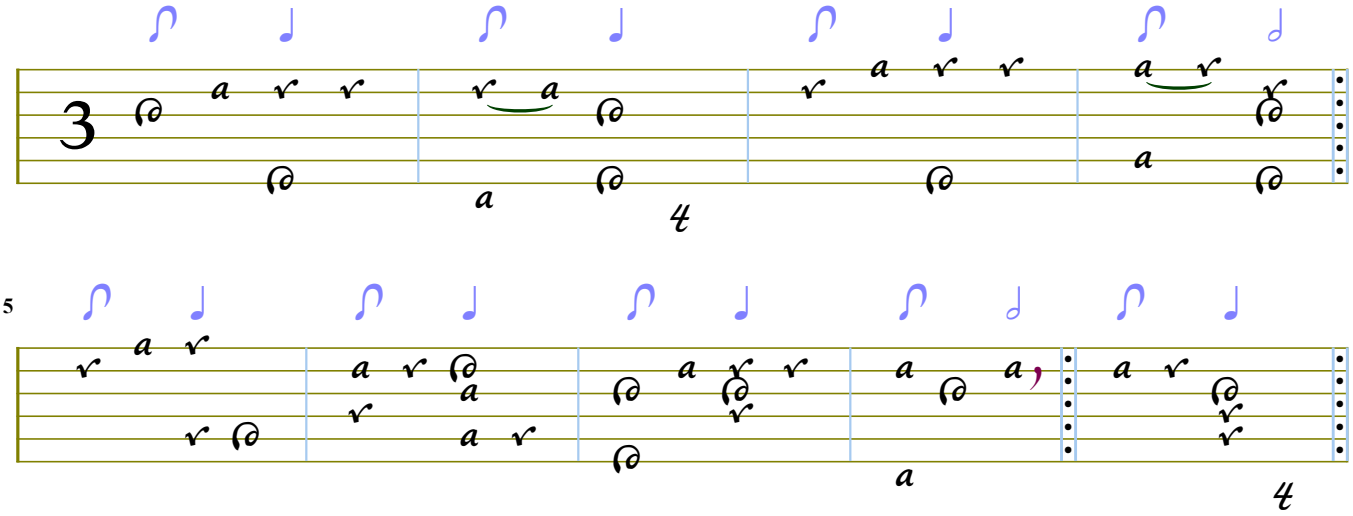
1. Note on 2nd course added.

Tweedsyde, the new way, by mr. Beck

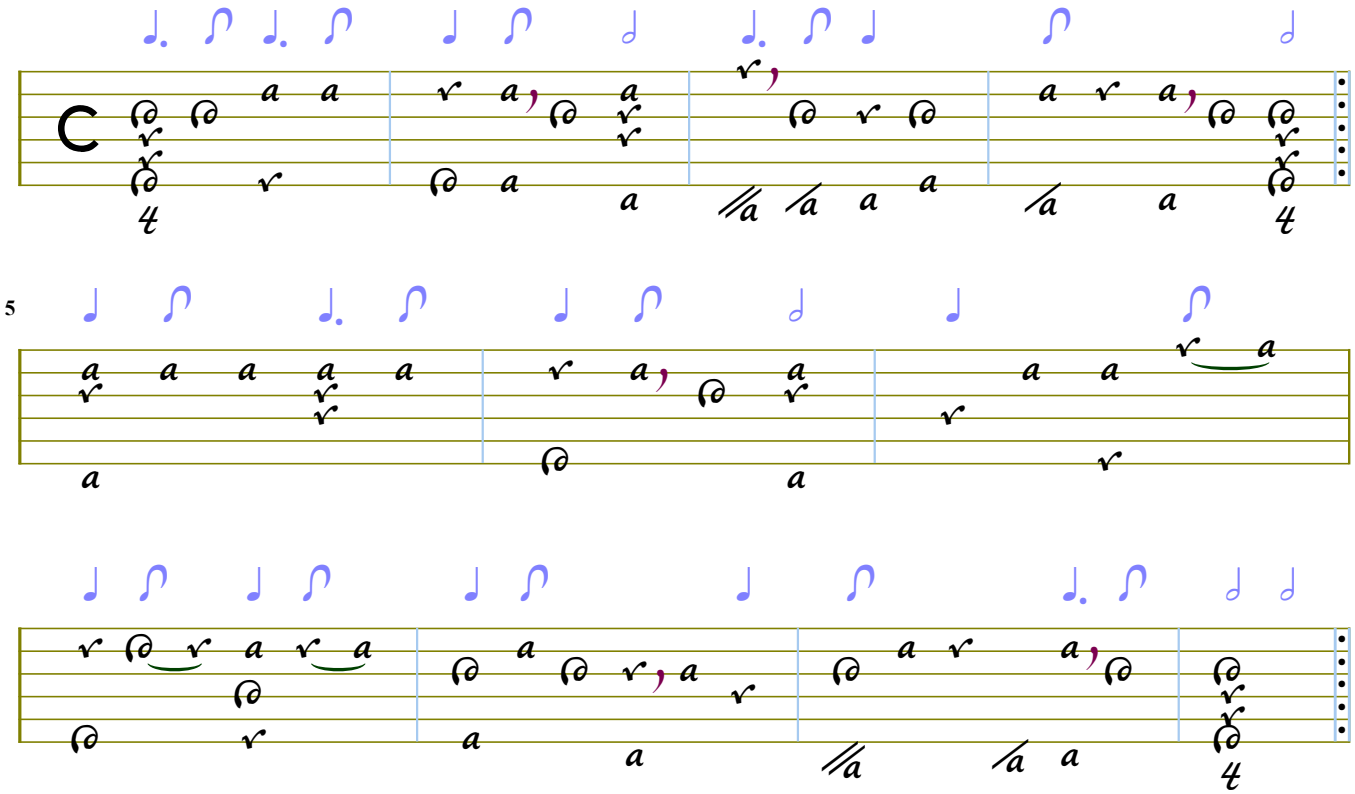




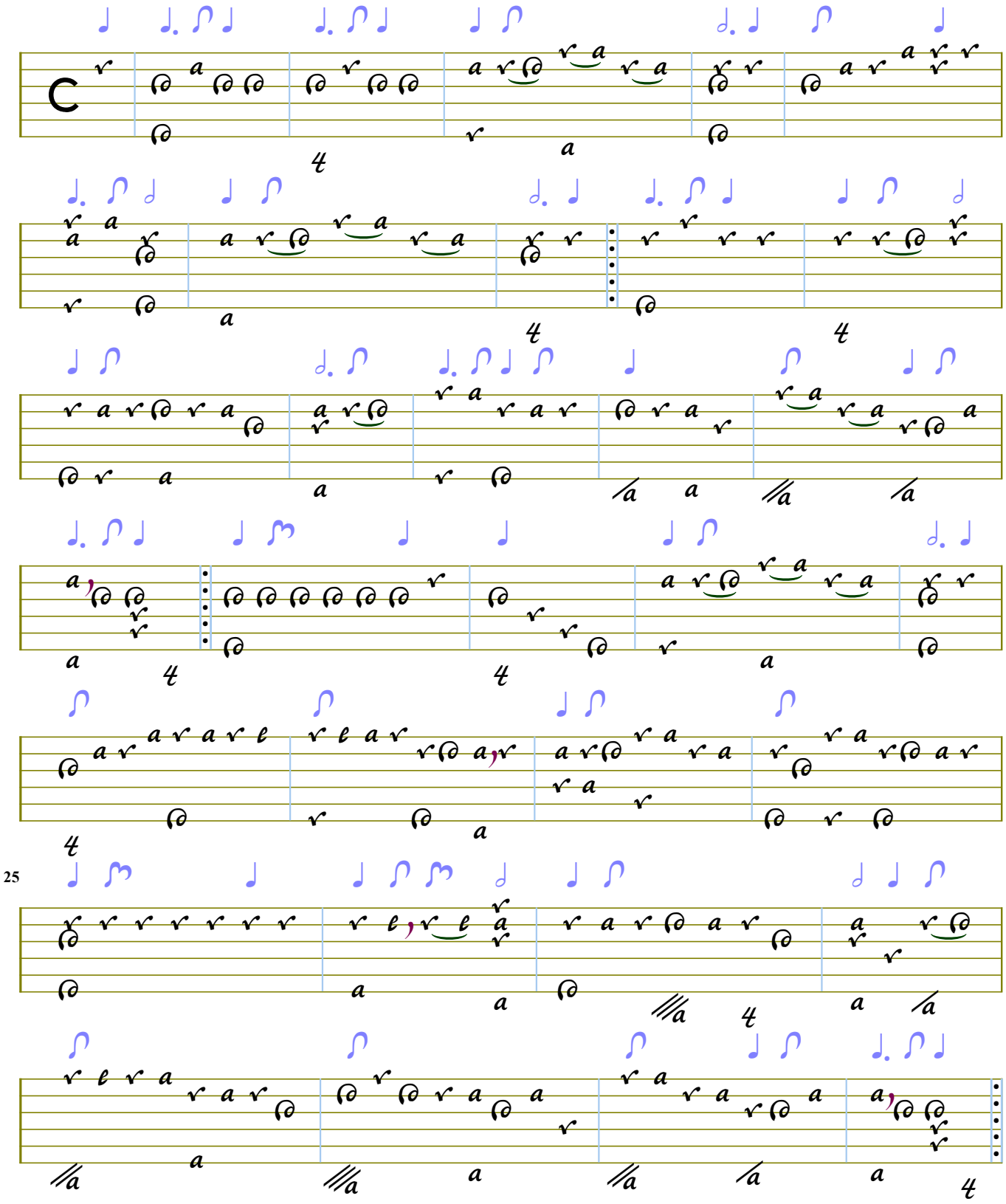
The new duke of Lorain's march, by mr. Beck



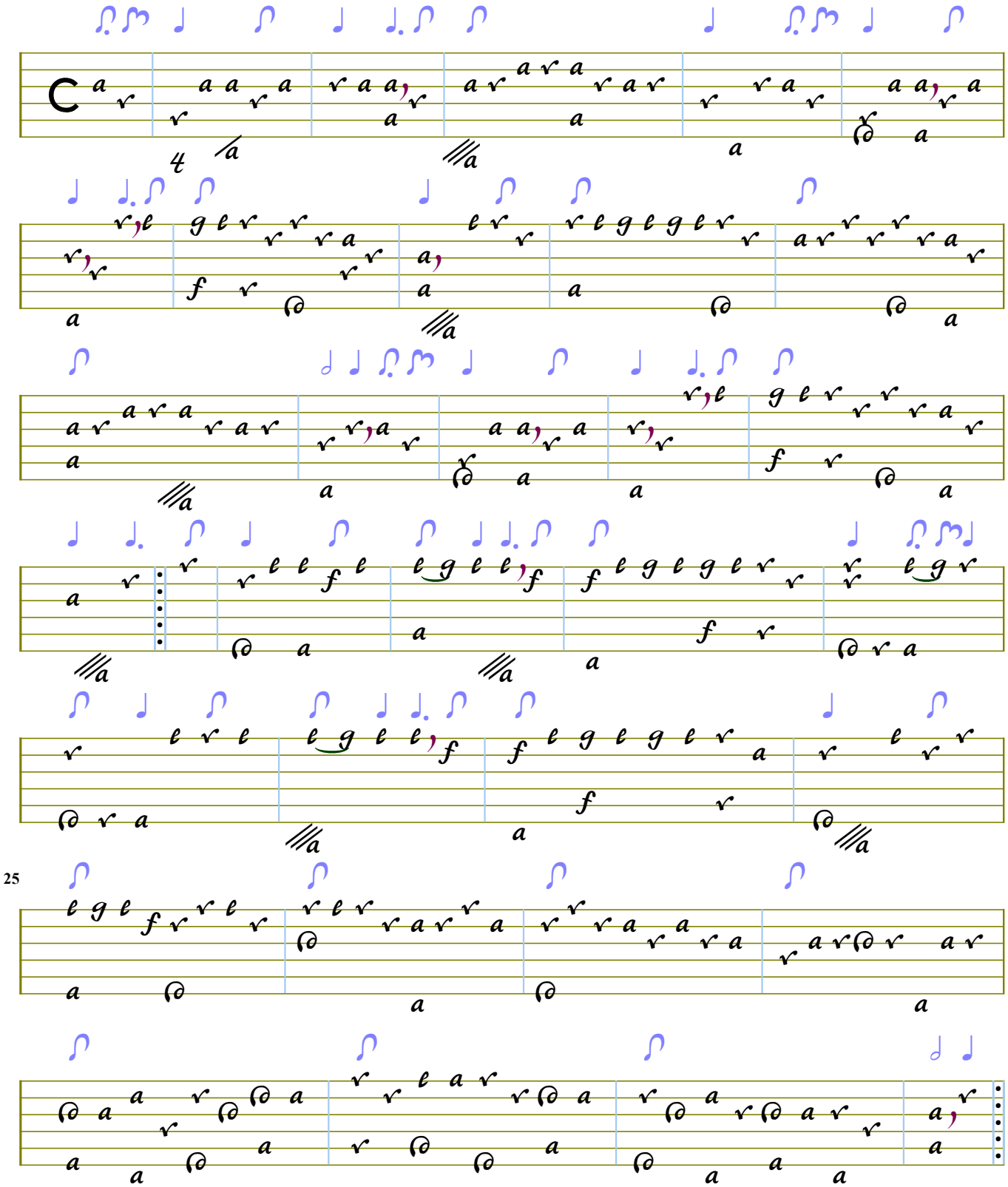
From the fair Lavinien shoar, David Grieve's way



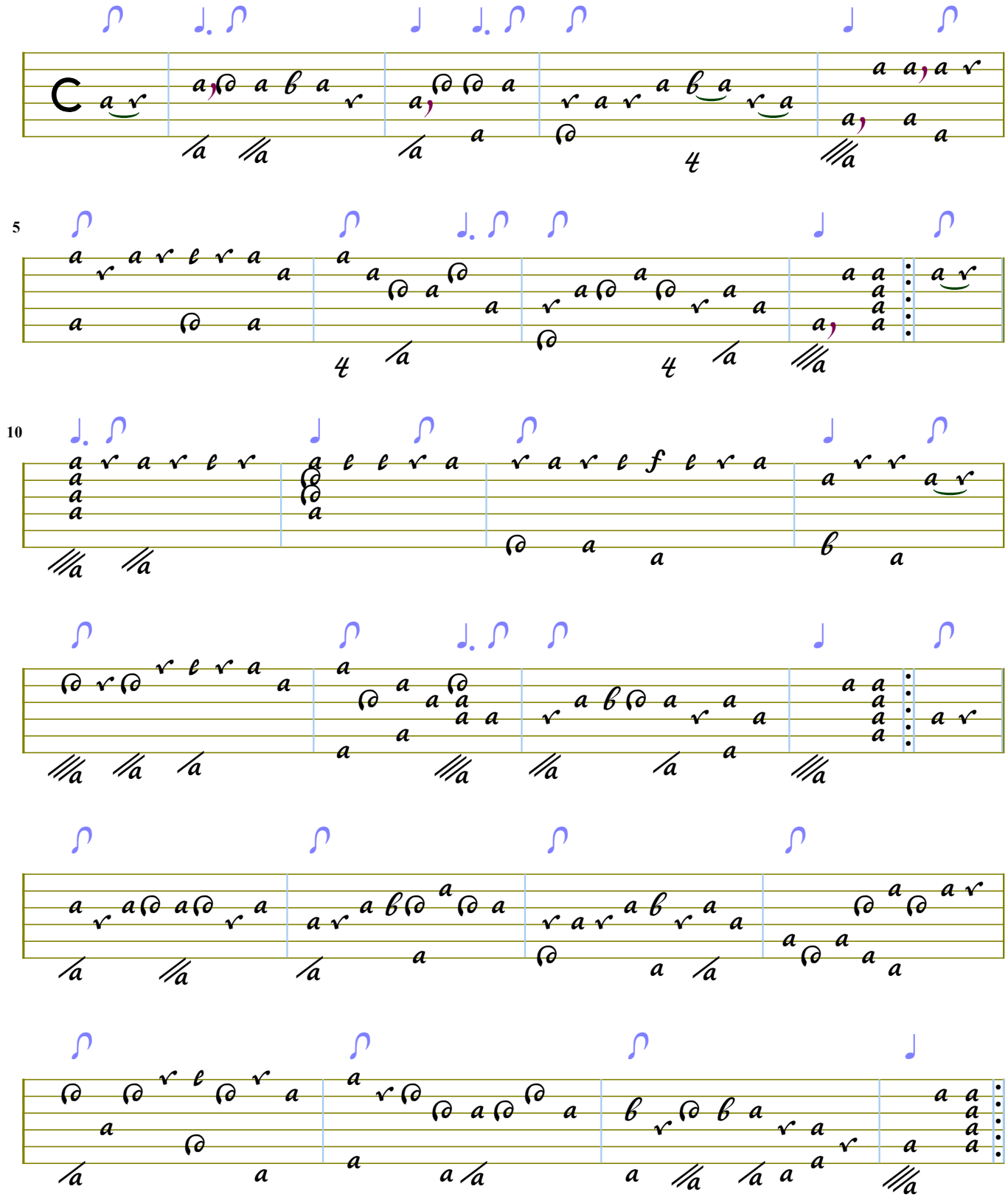
The old duke of Lorain's march, by mr. Beck



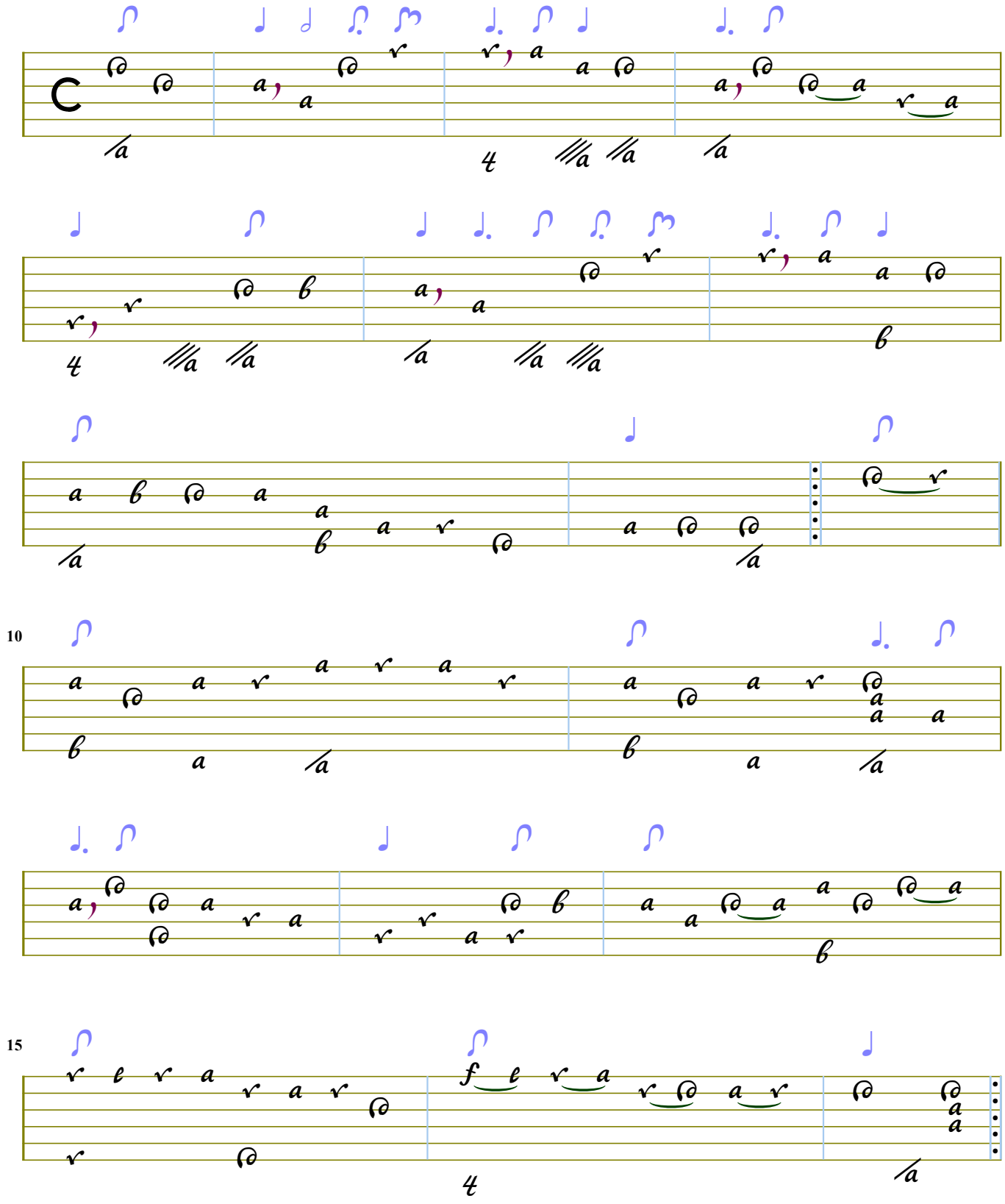
Katherine Ogie, mr. Beck's way



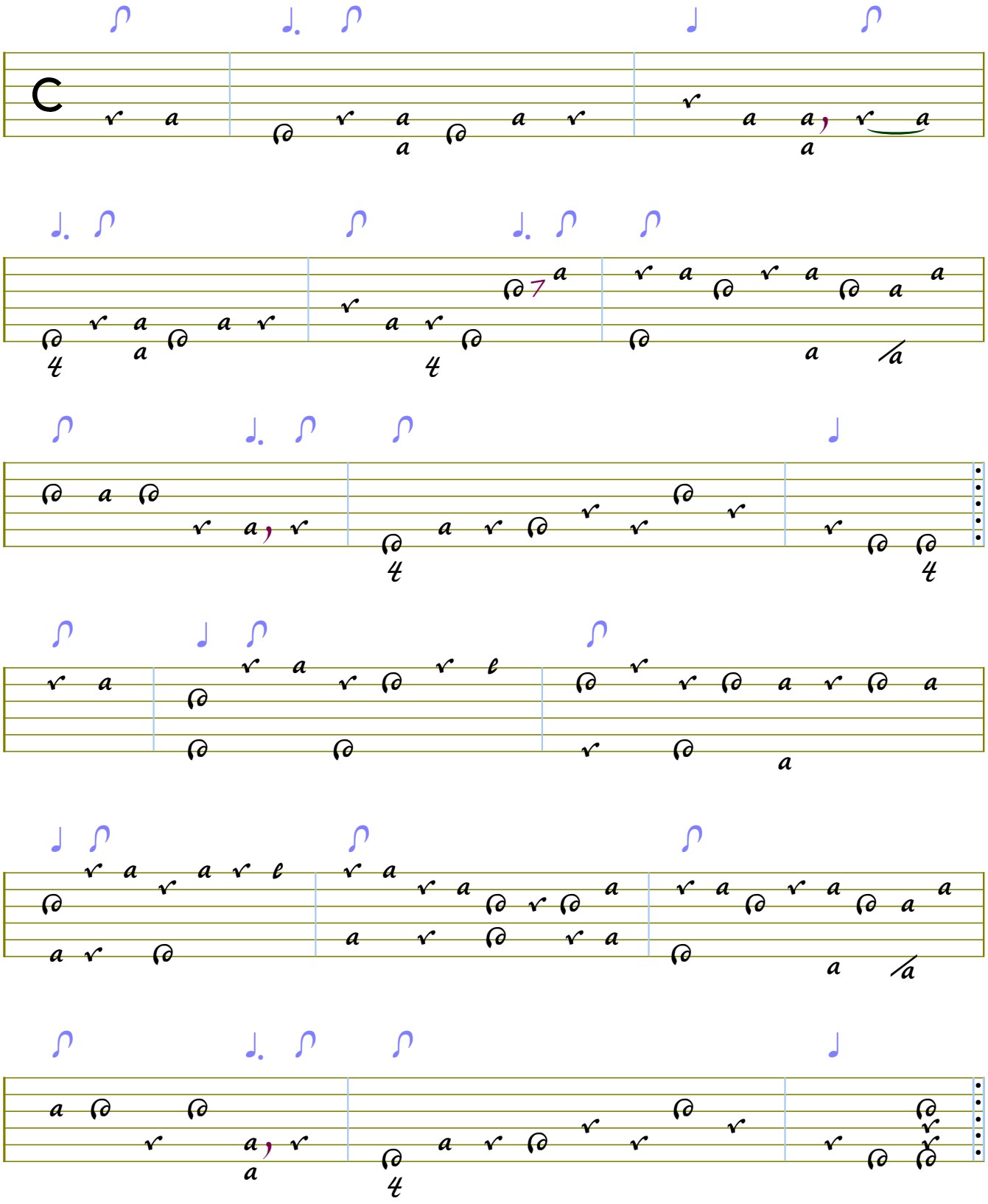
I serve a worthie lady, master Beck's way



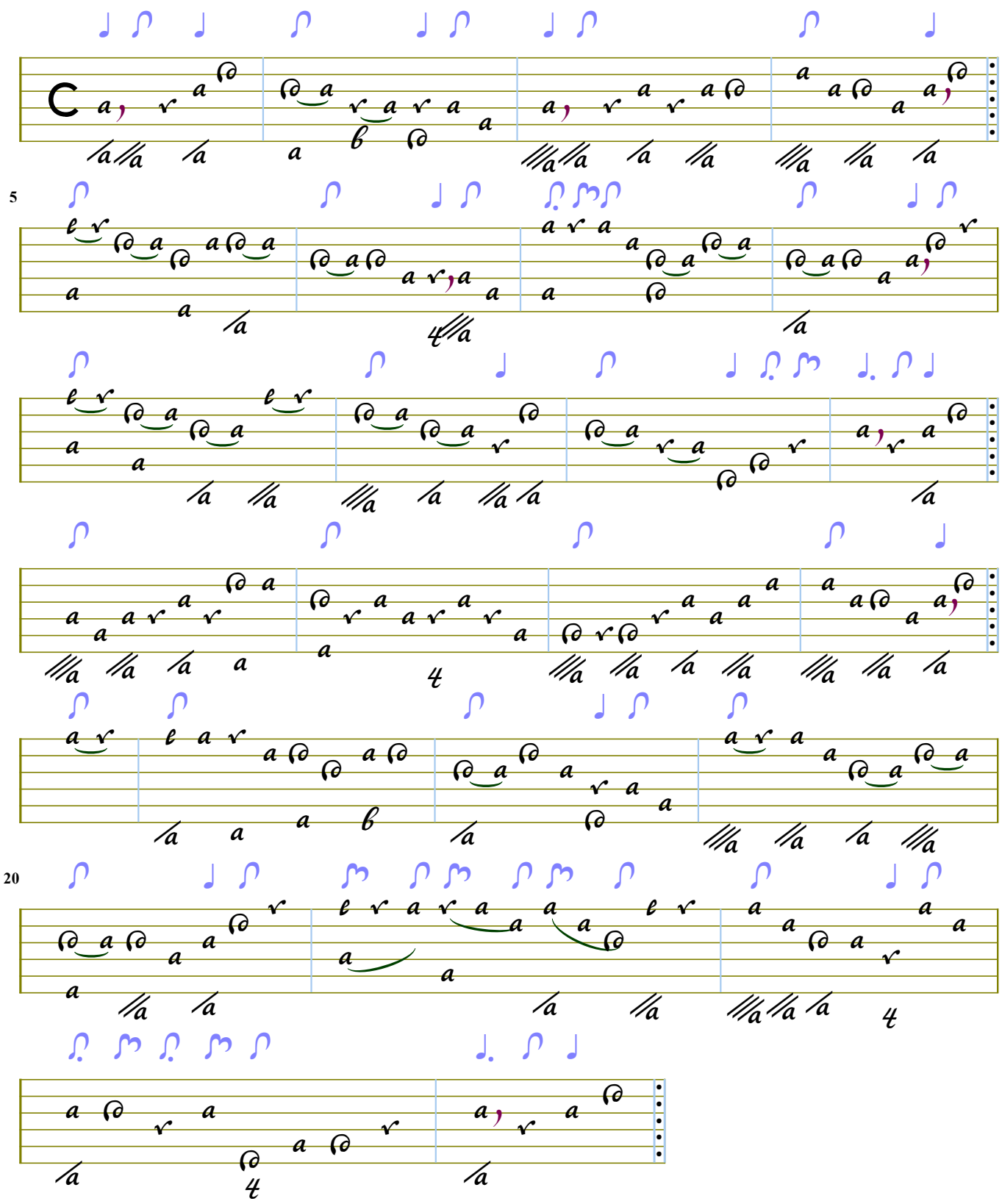
Hallow even, mr Beck's way



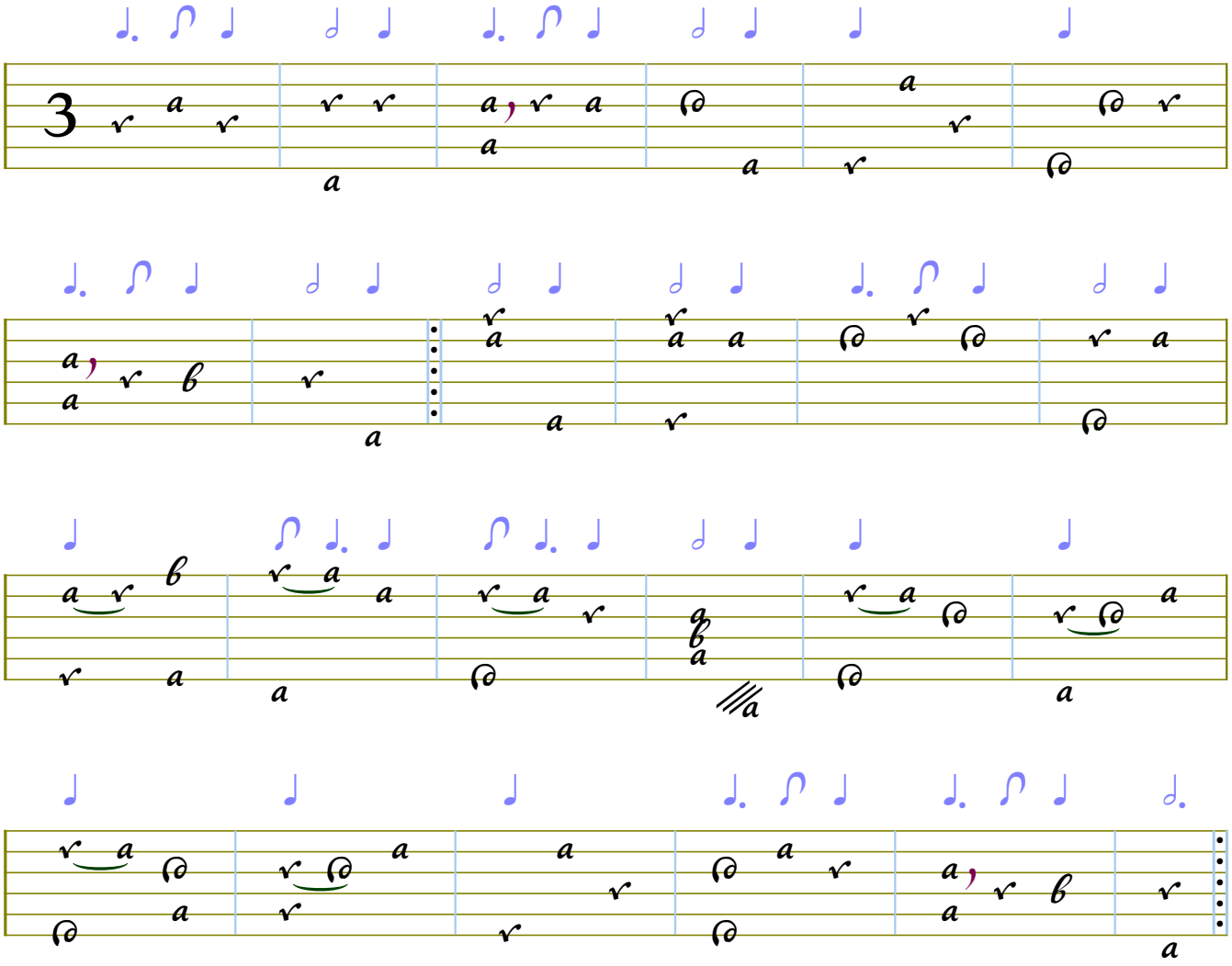
Macklain's Scots measure, mr. Beck's way



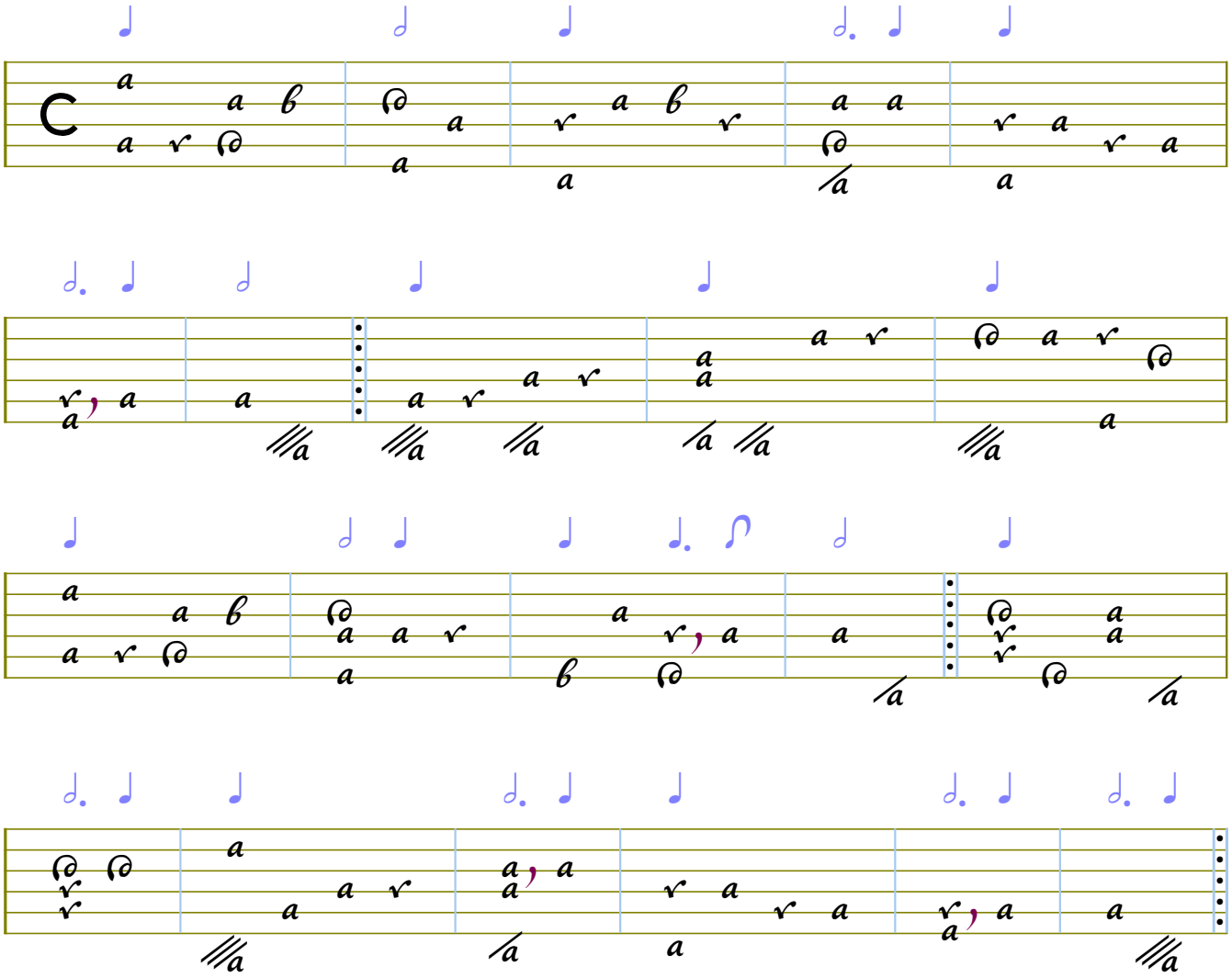
Alen water, mr. Beck's way



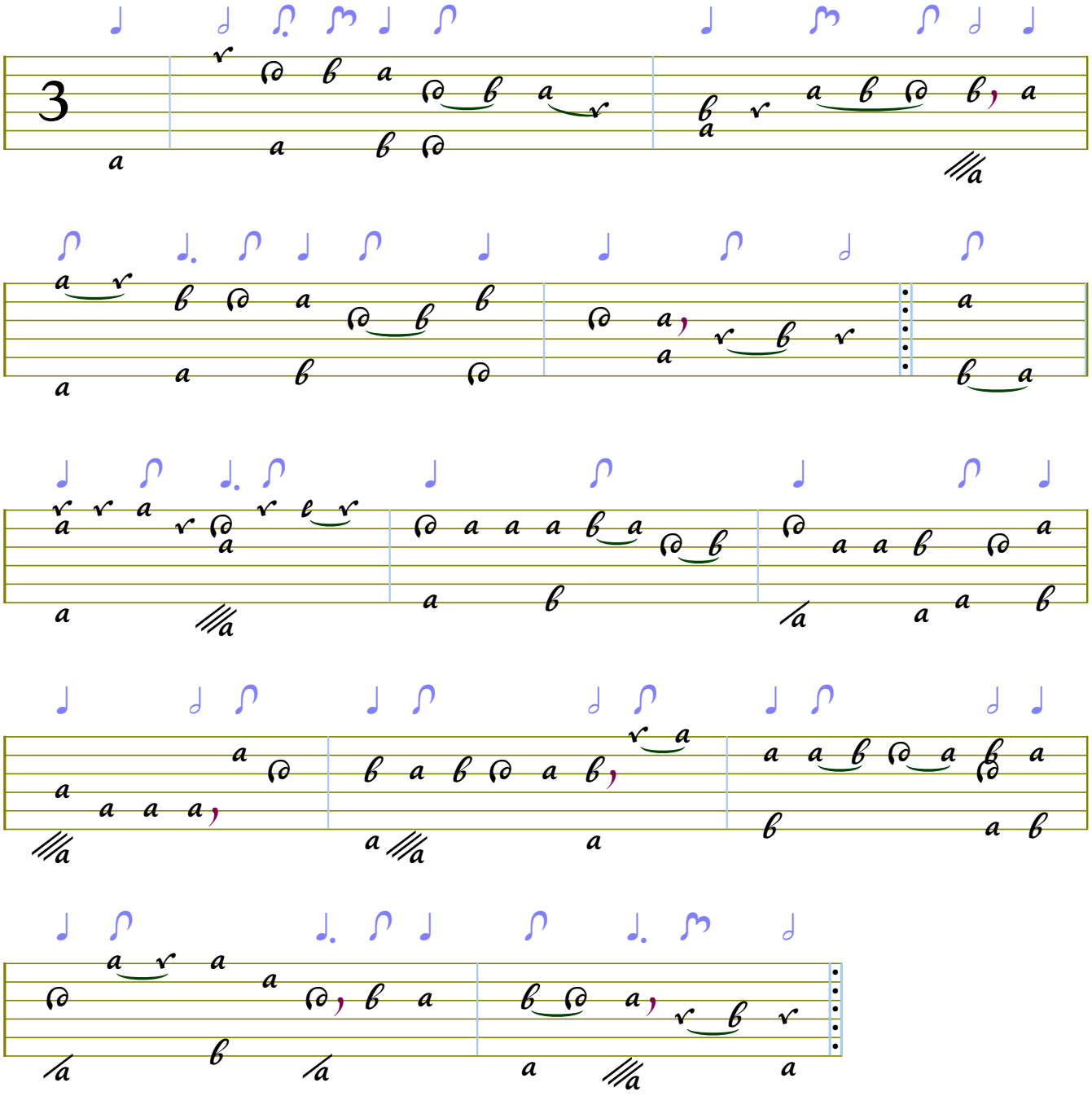
Lillybollaro, mr. Beck's way



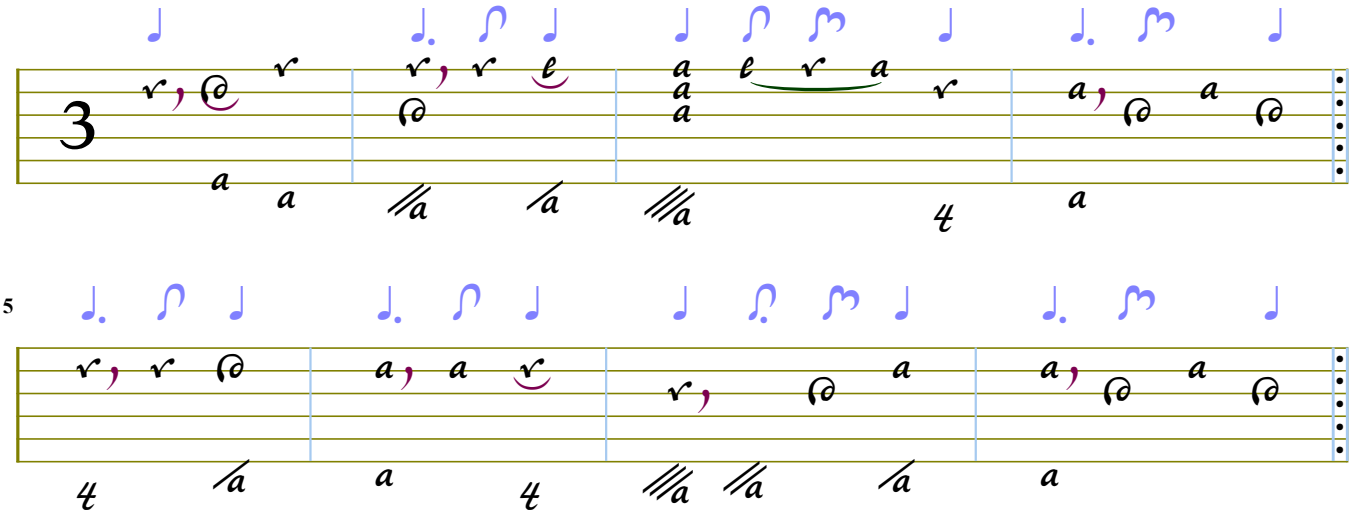
Joy to the Person of my love, mr. Beck's way



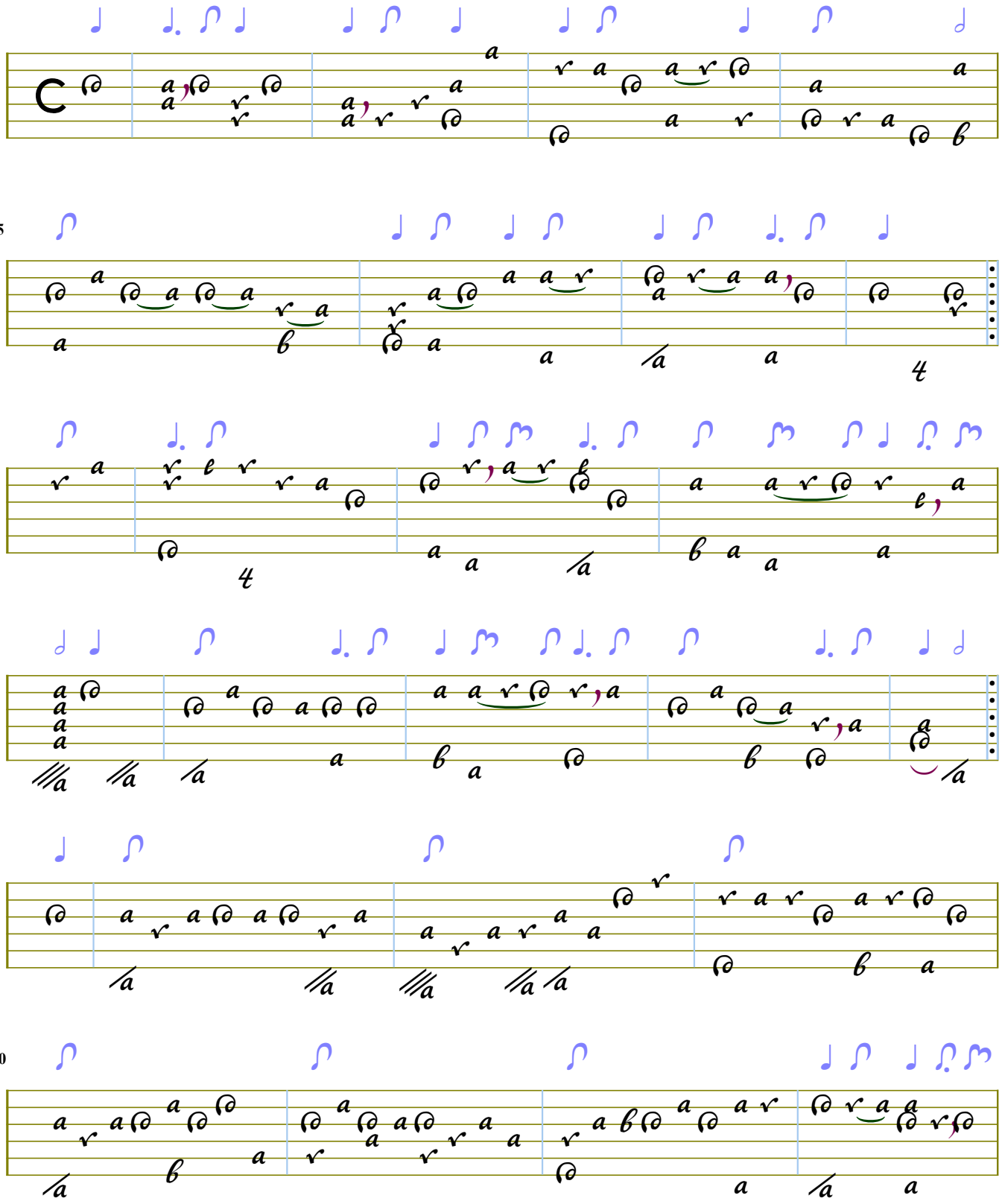
Armeda, by mr. Beck

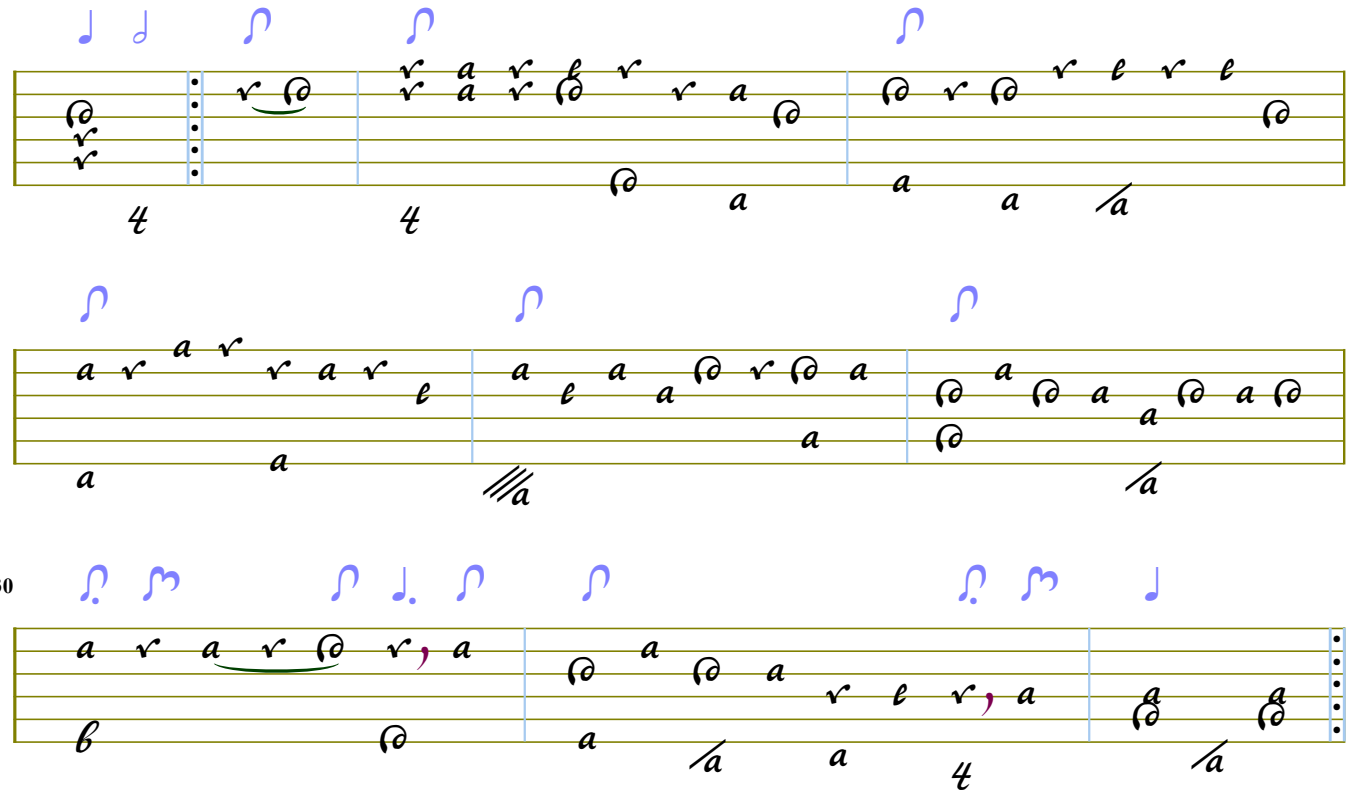


Saraband, mr. Gallot's way



Drumlangrigge's Air, mr. Beck's way





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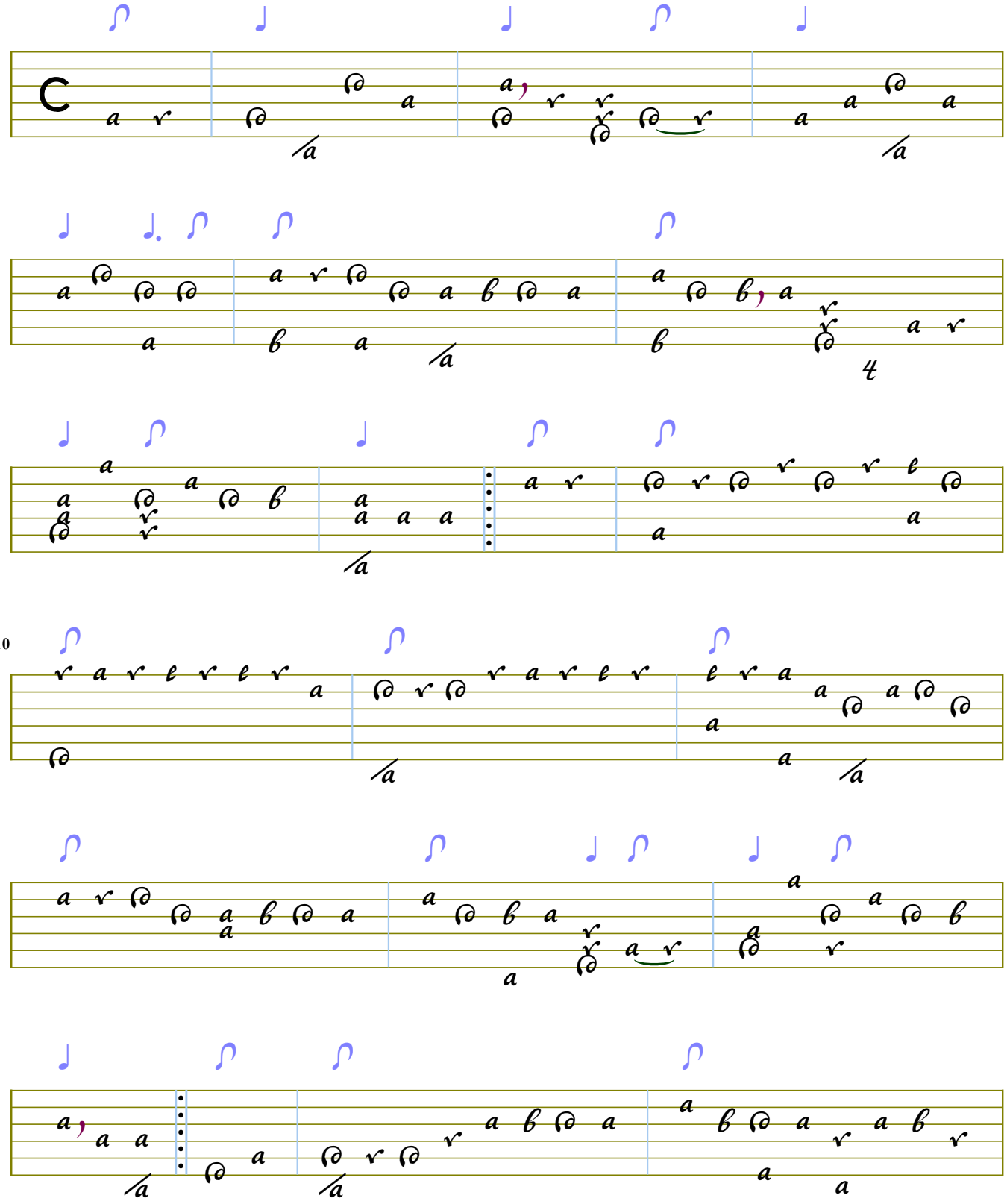
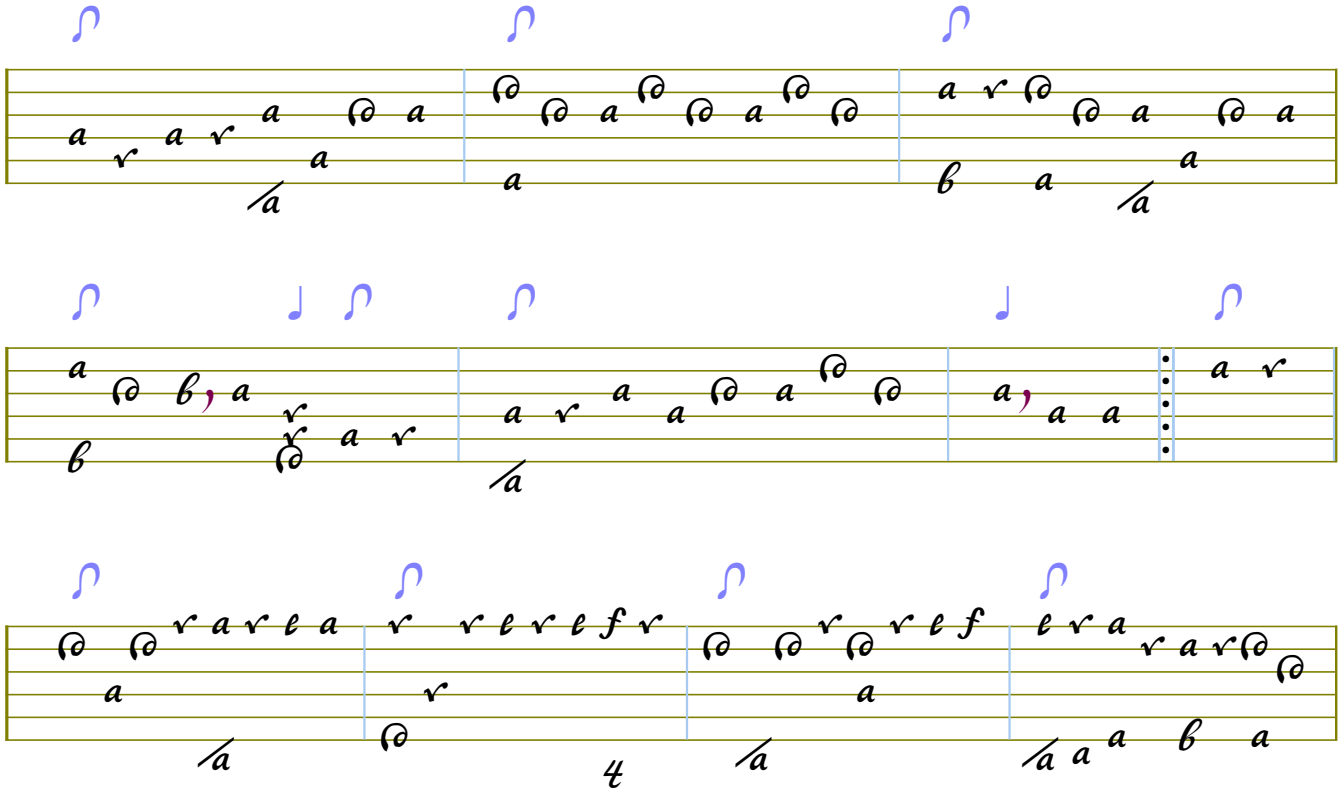
Watson's Scotts measure, mr. Beck's way





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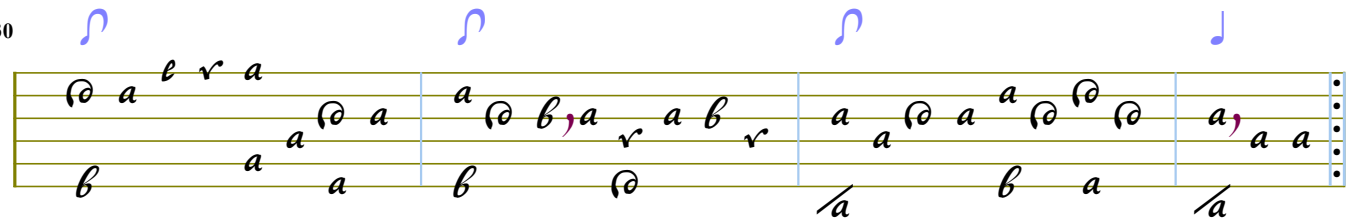
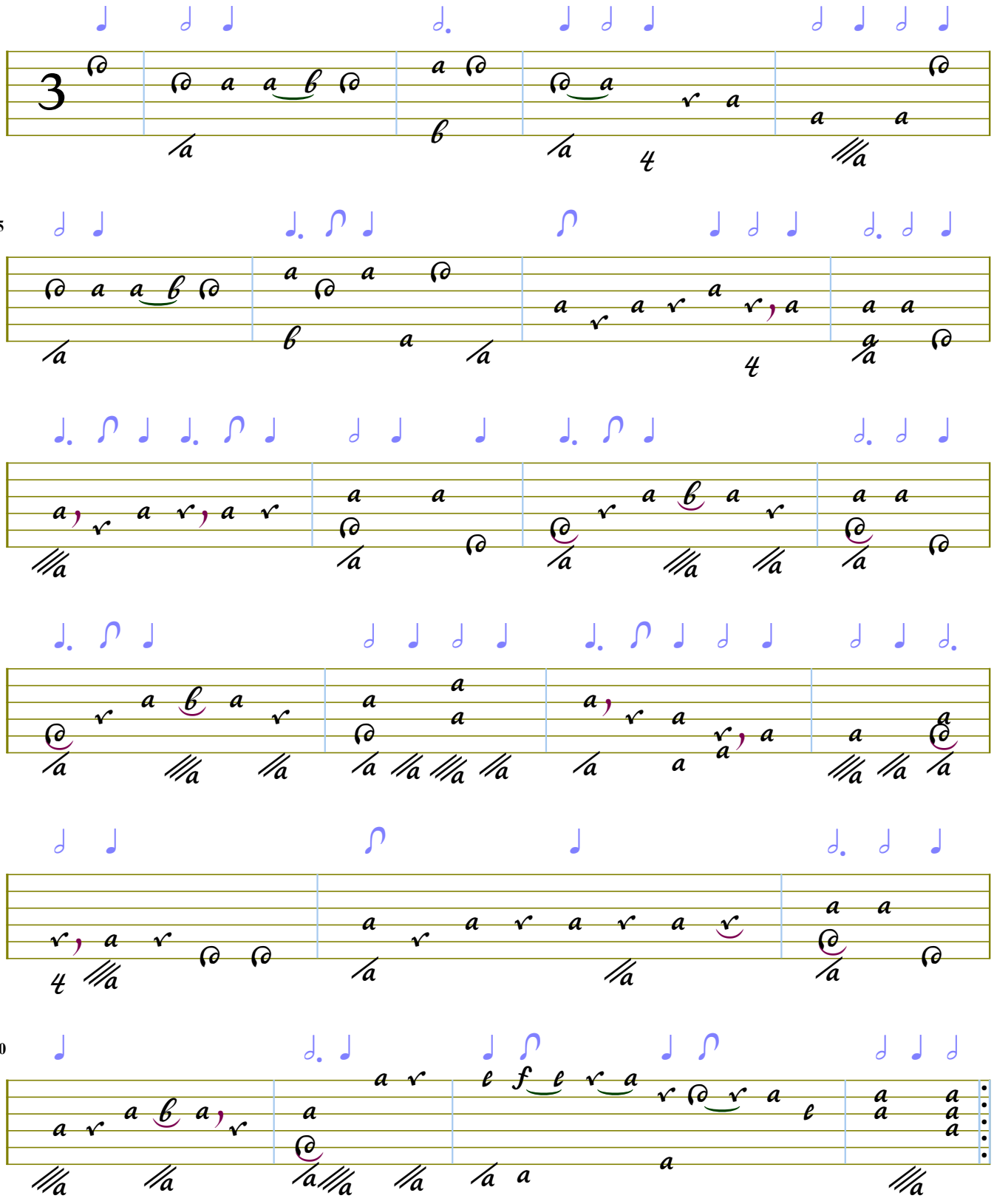
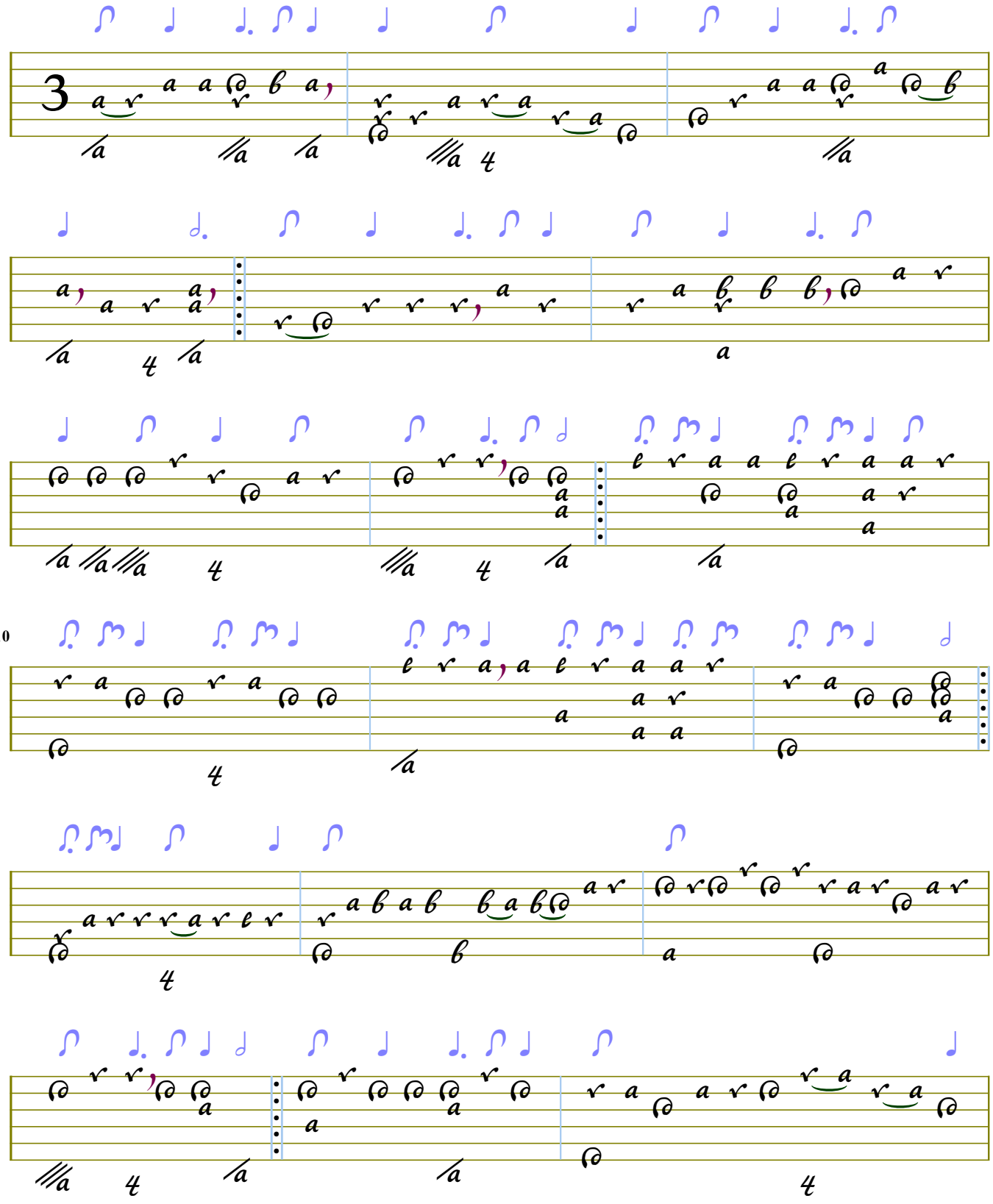
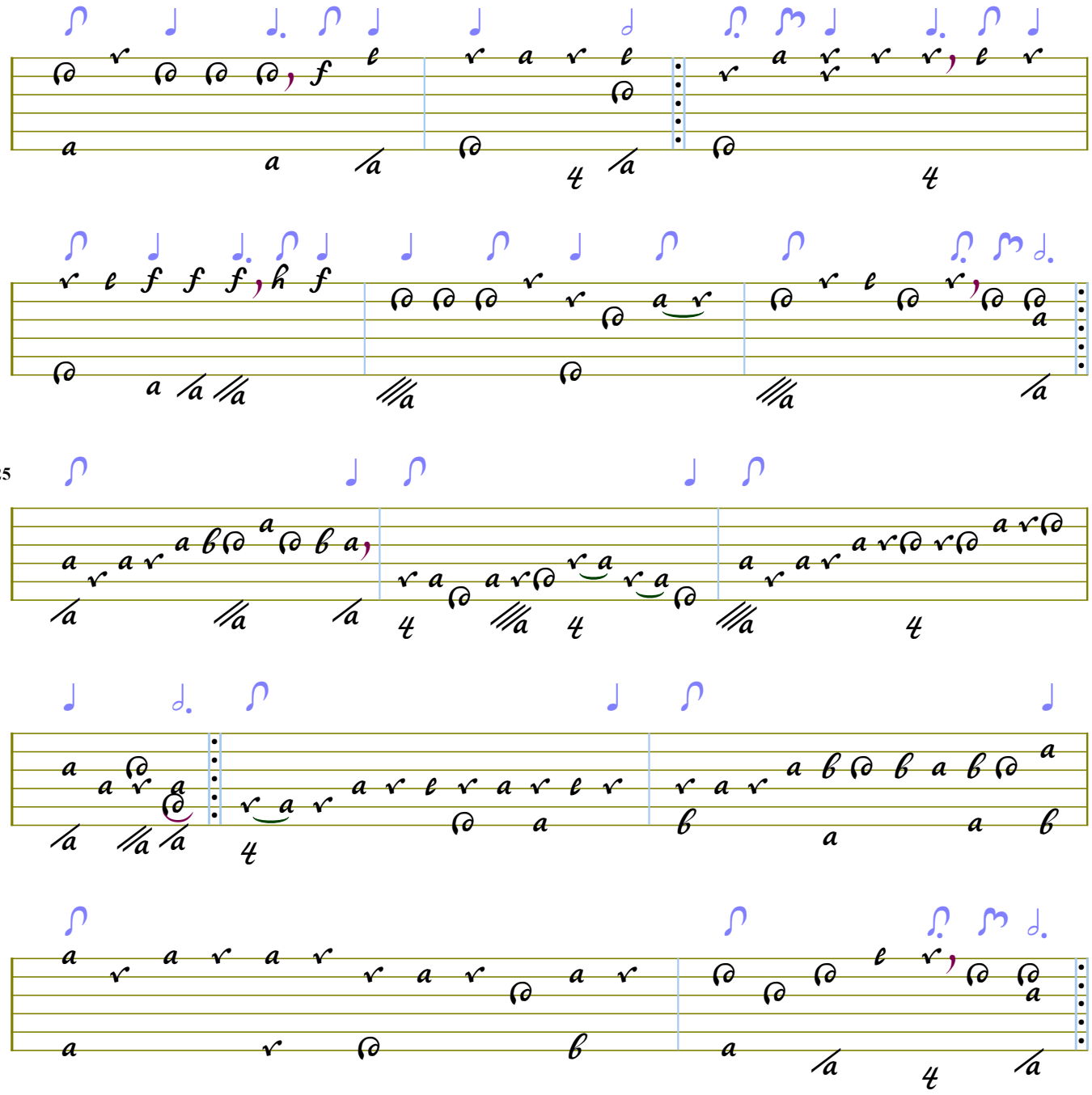


Come hither, my hony bird chuck, mr. Beck's way



Rothes Rant, John Morisons way,by mr. Beck

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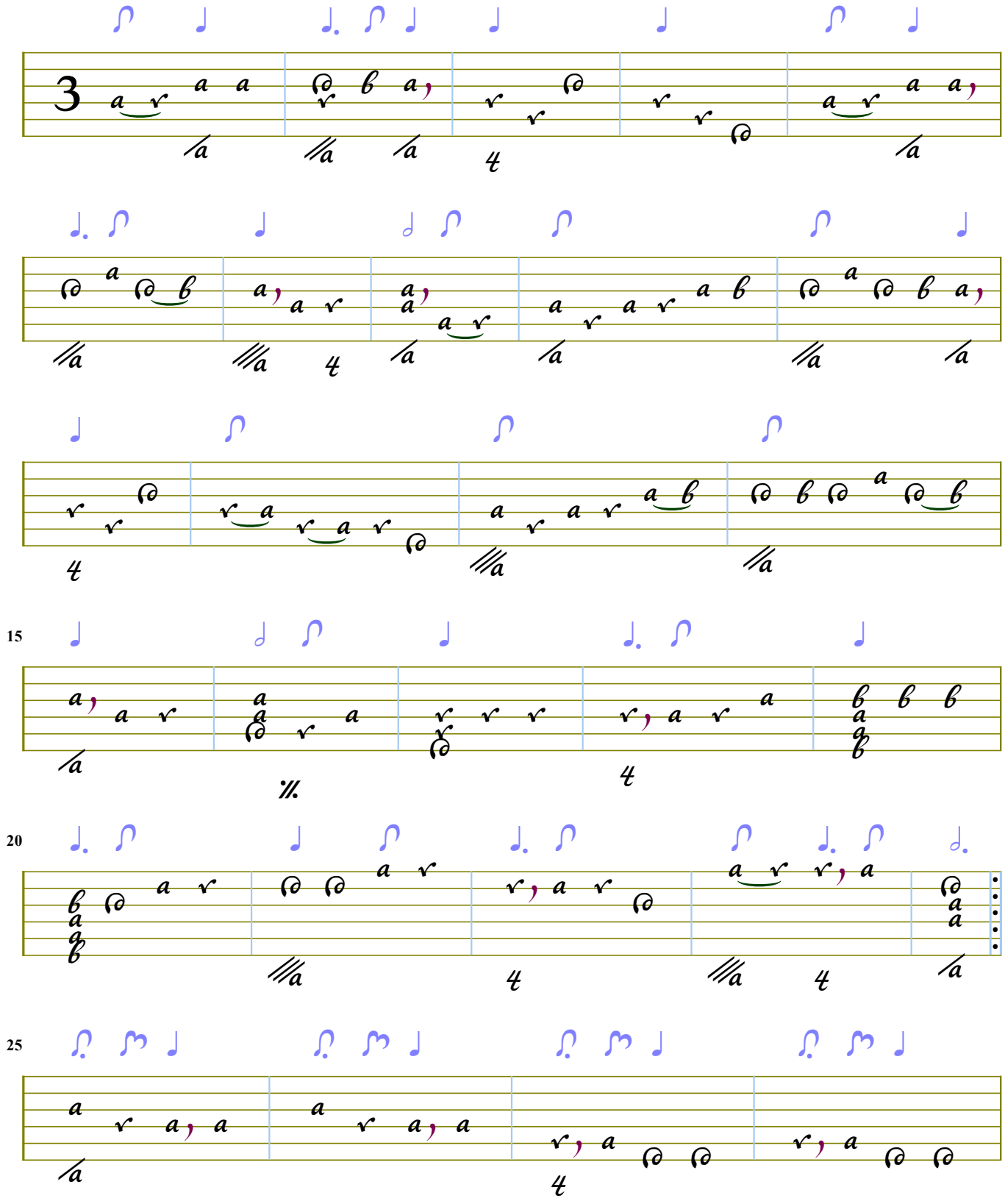
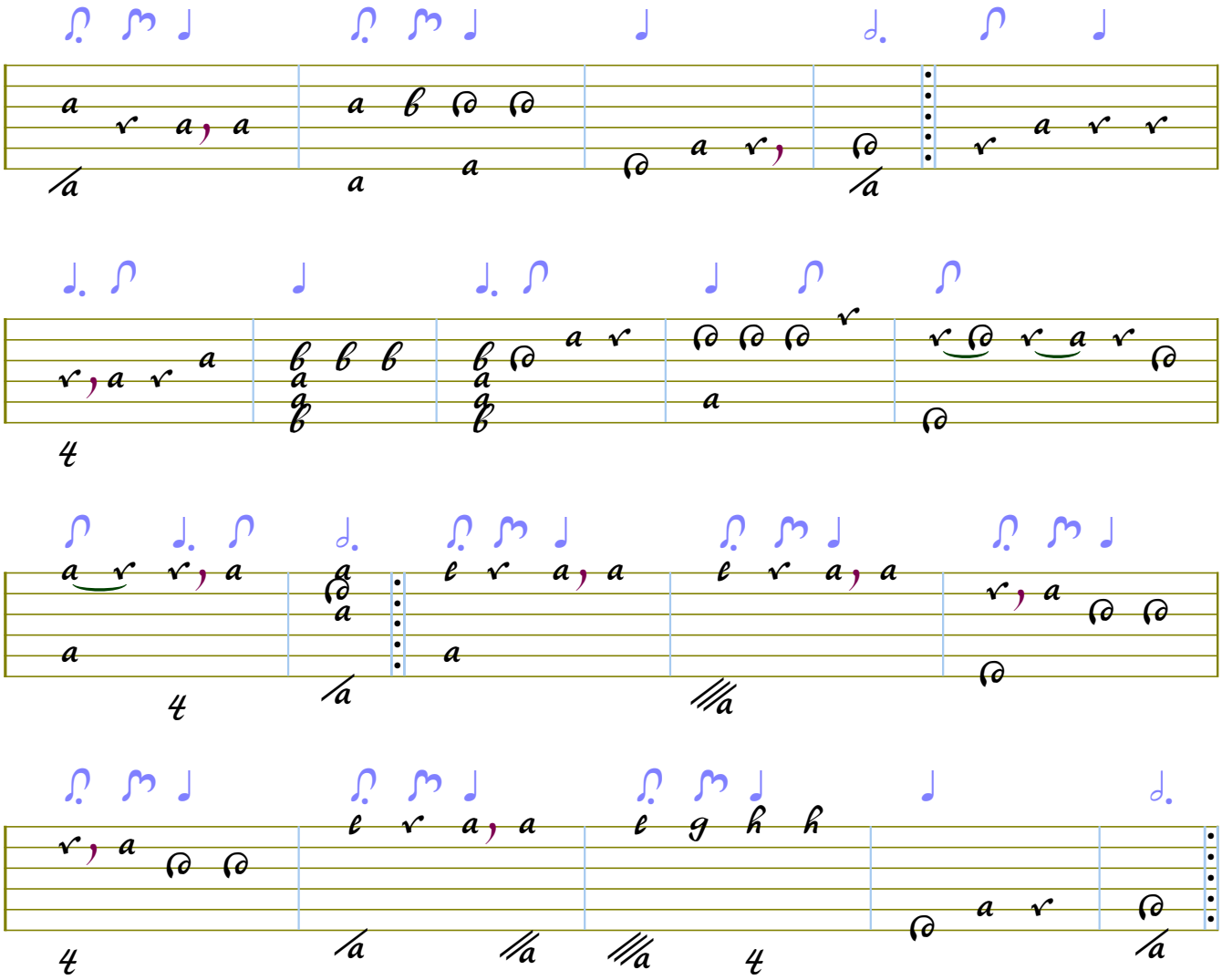
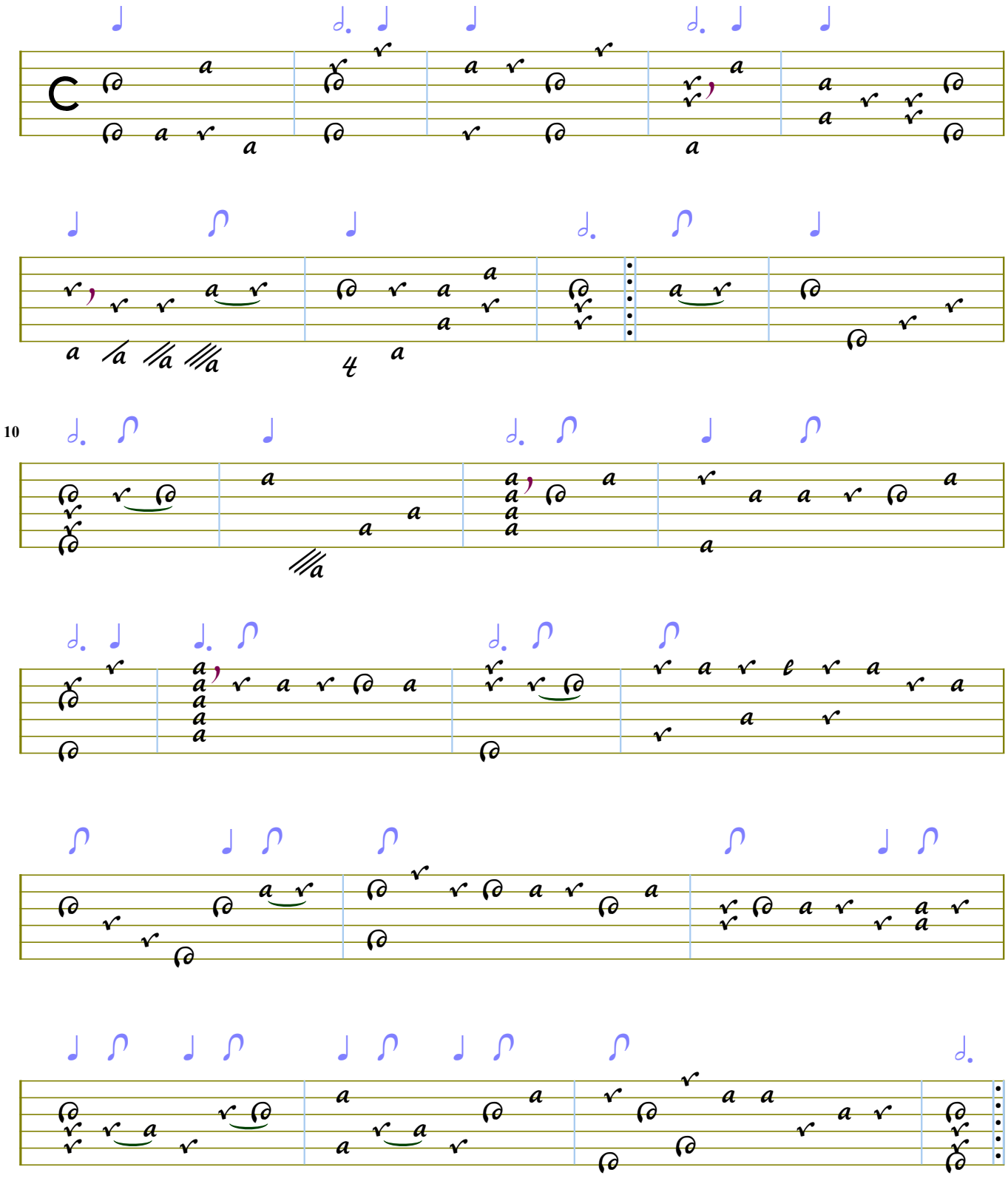
Roth's Rant, my daughters' way, by mr. Beck

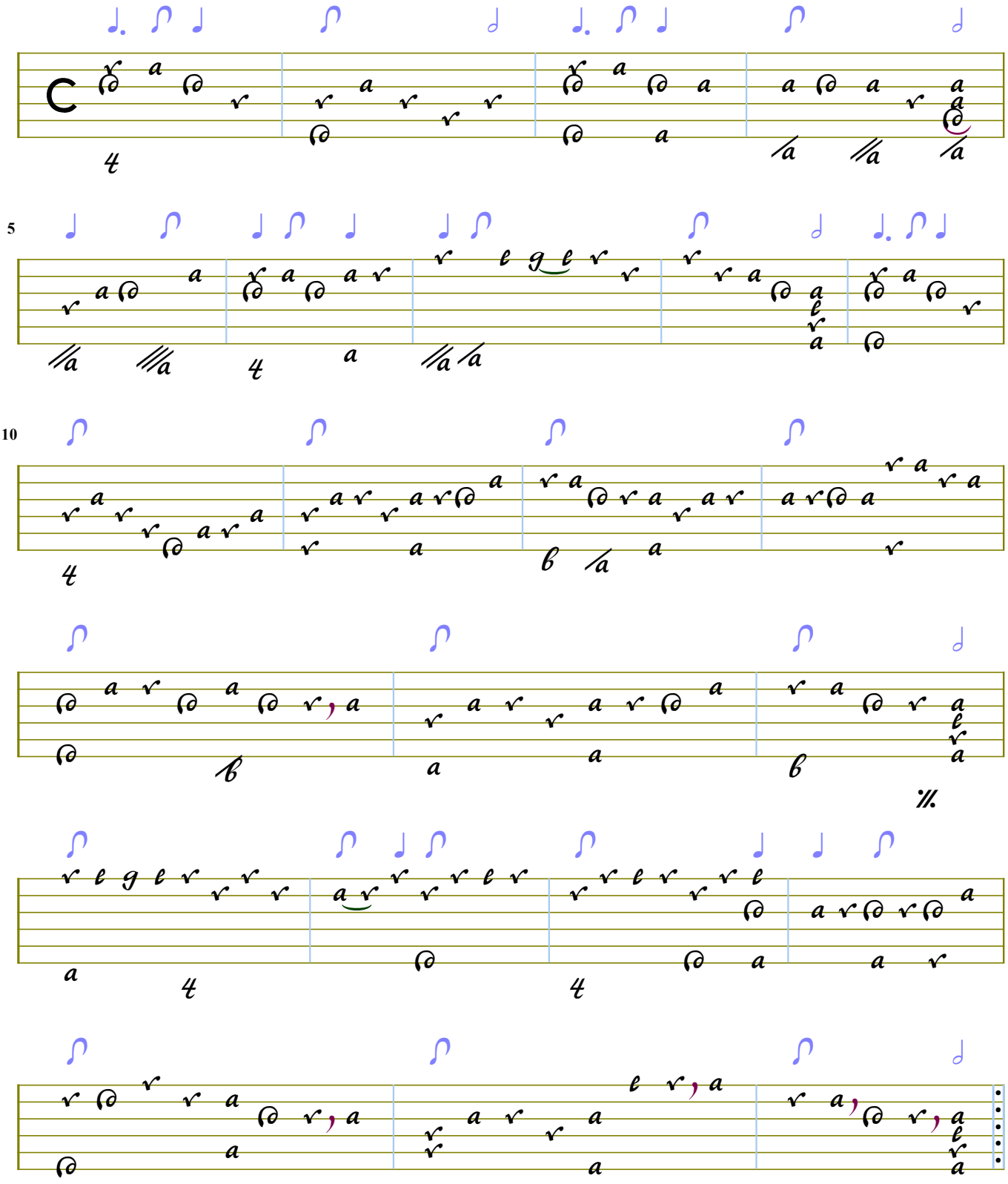




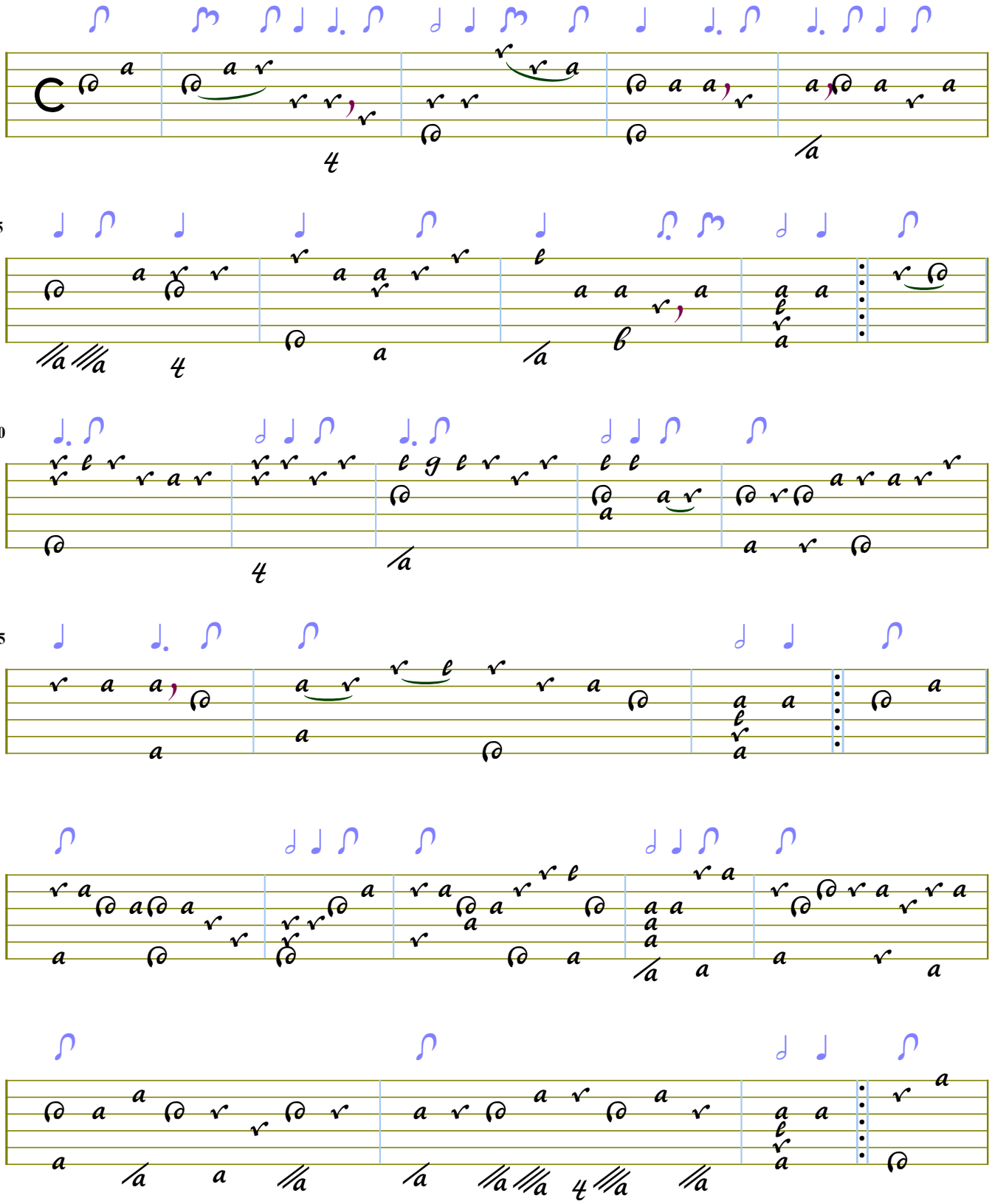
The Duke's Port, mr. Beck's way

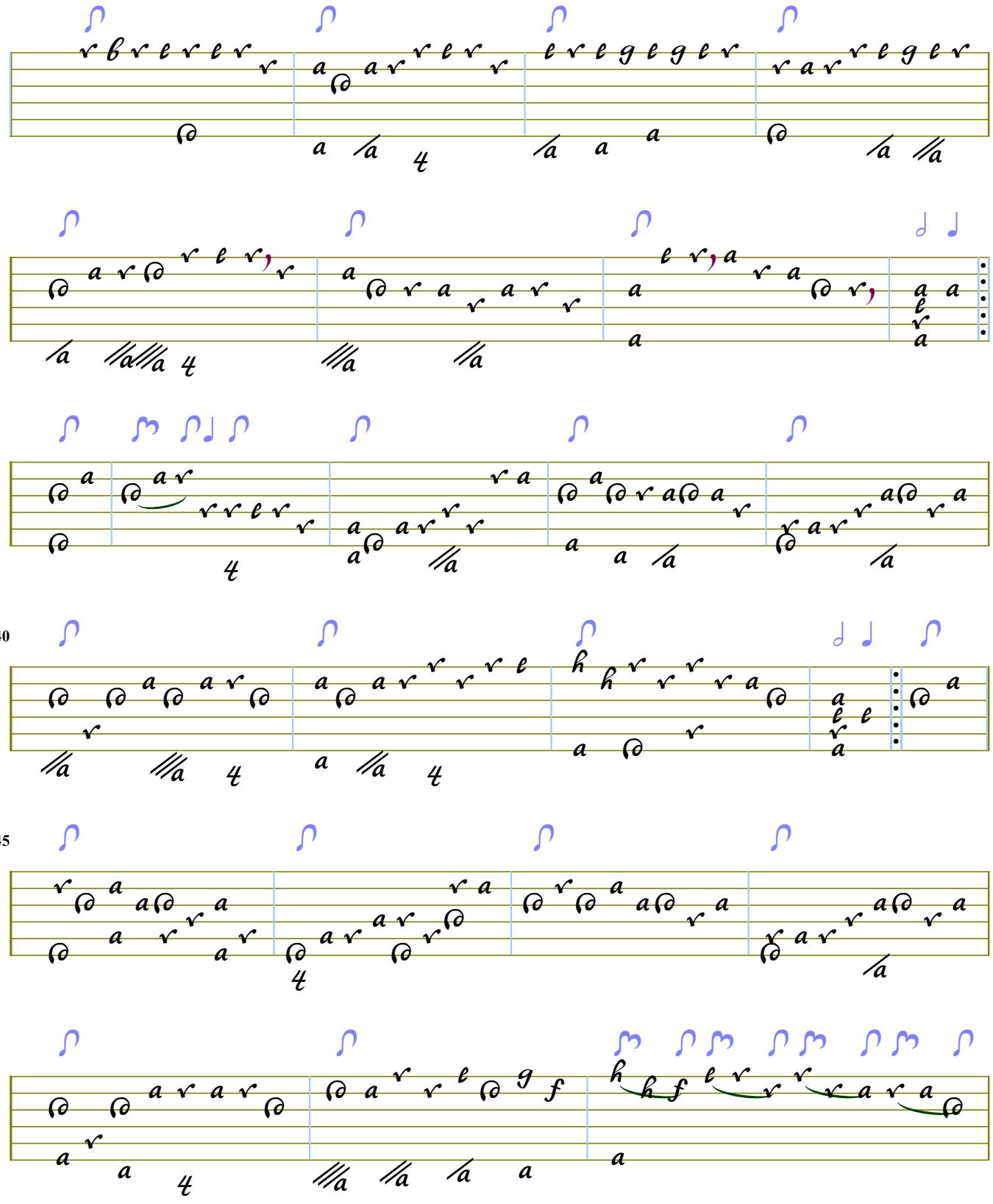


My Dearie, an thou dye, Jean More's way, by mr. Beck



My Dearie, an thou dye, John Morison's way, by mr. Beck

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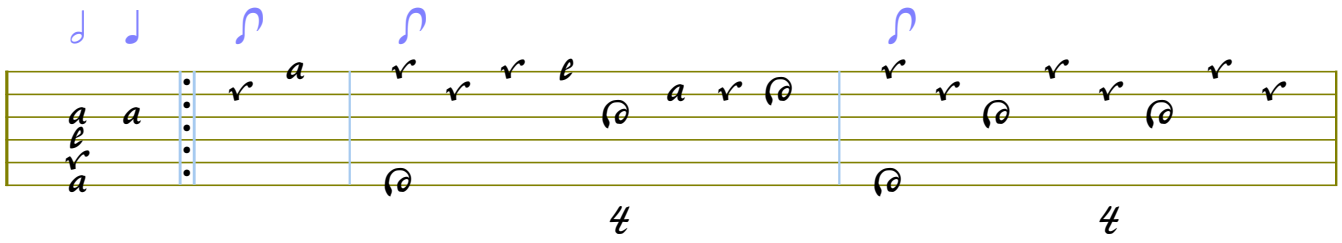

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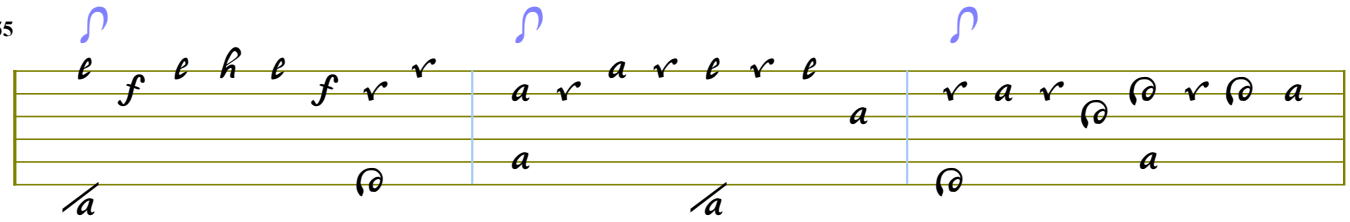

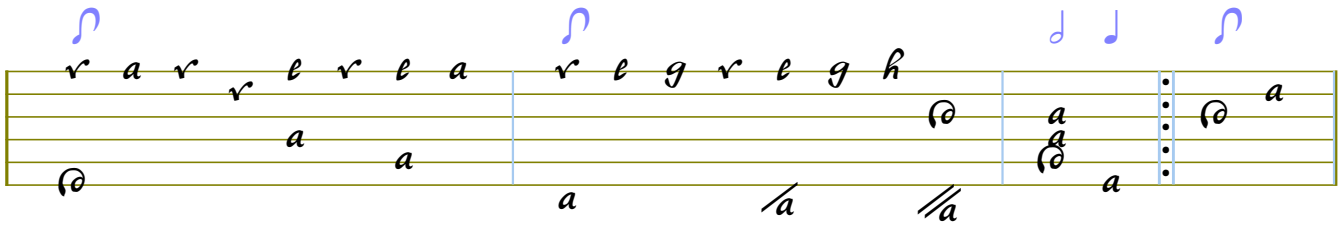

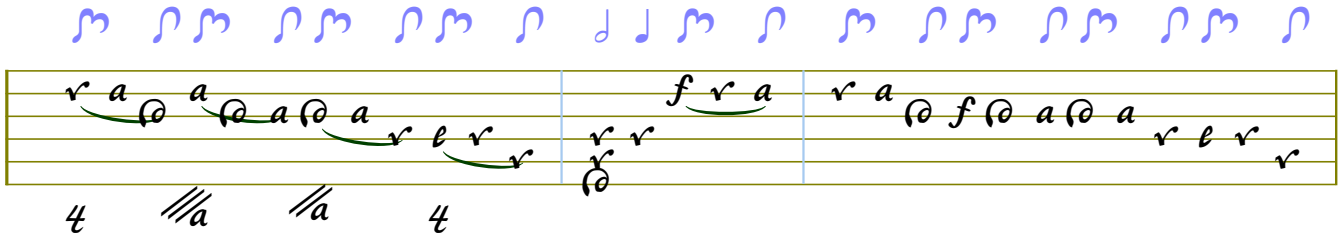

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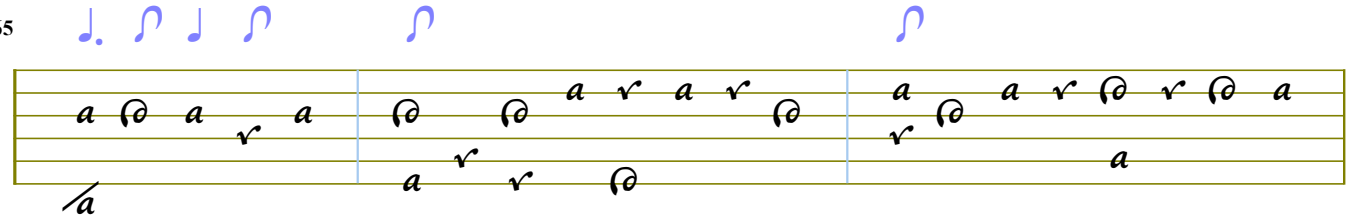

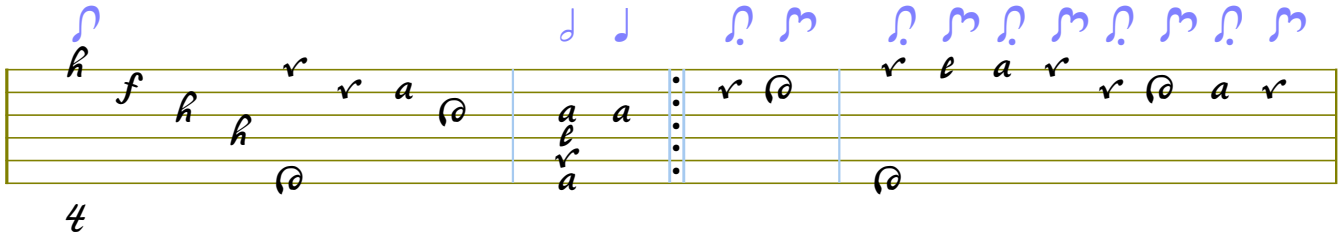

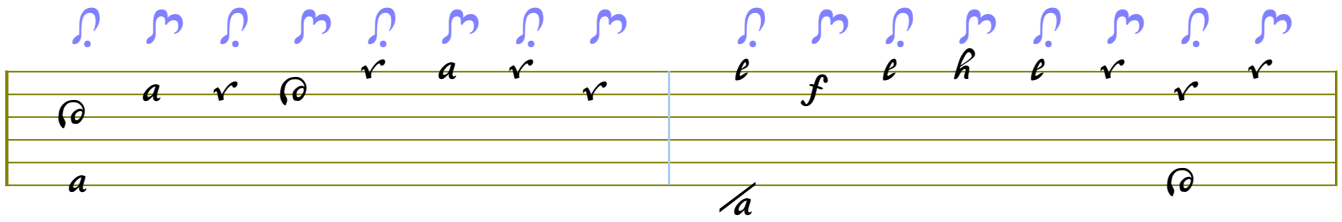

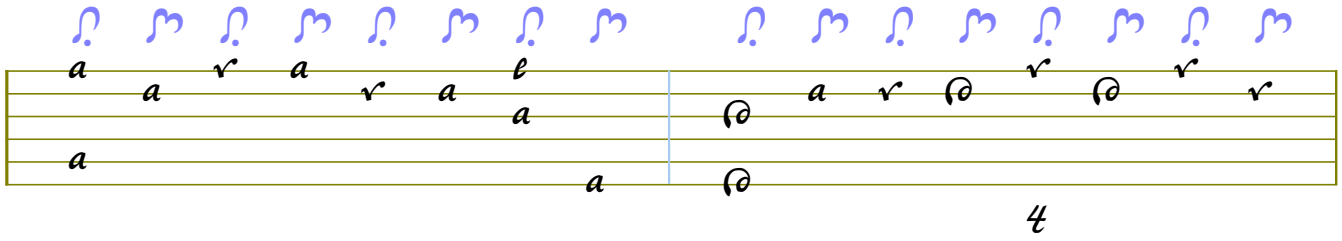

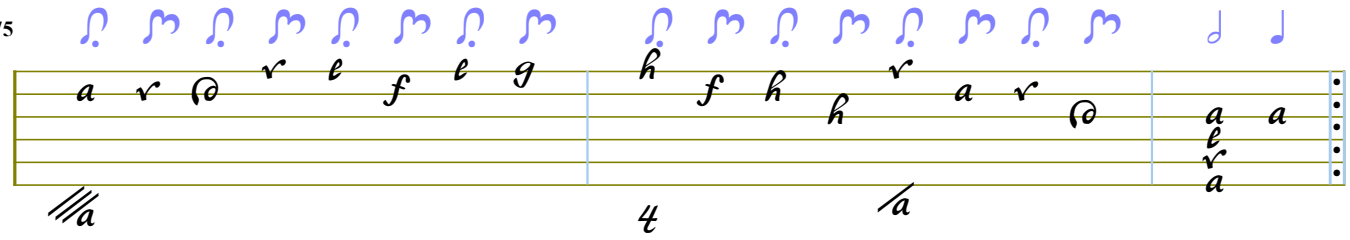
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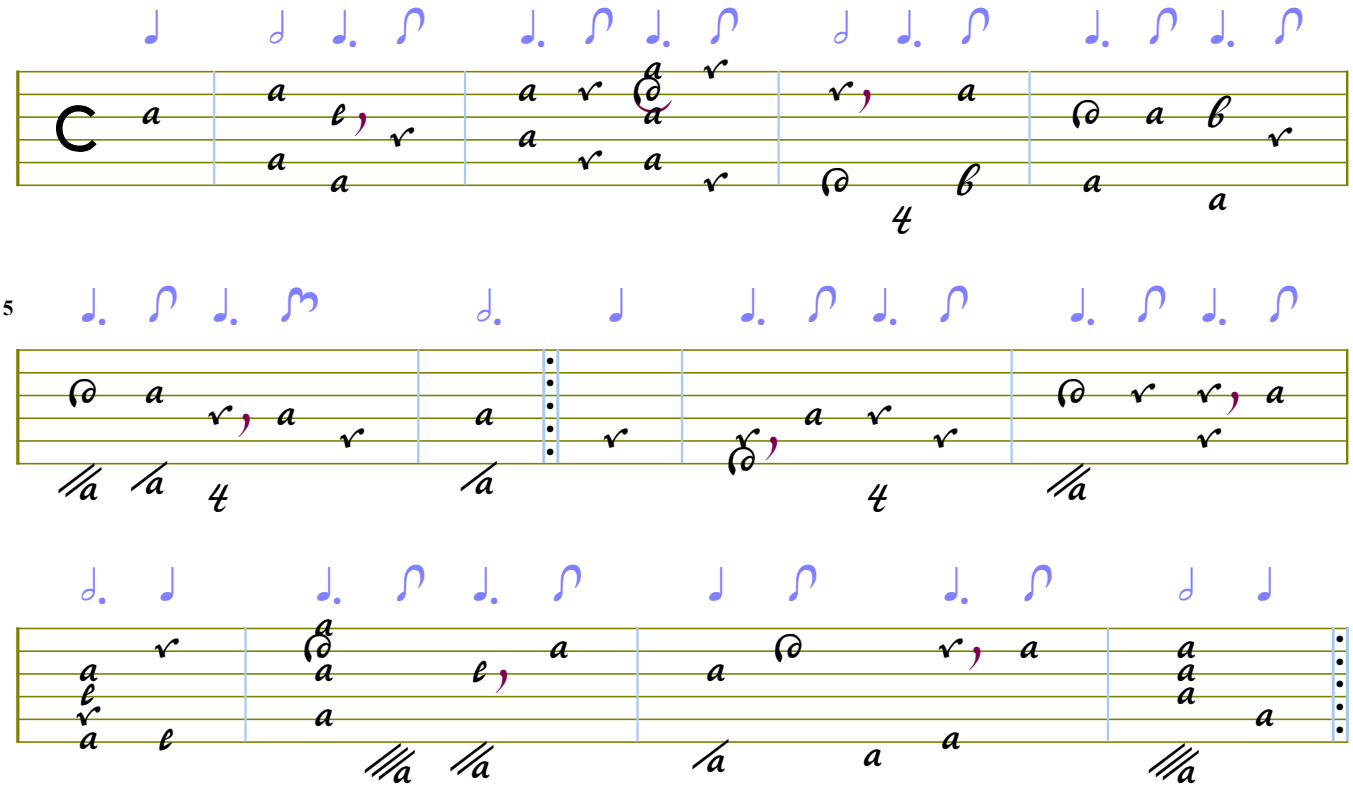
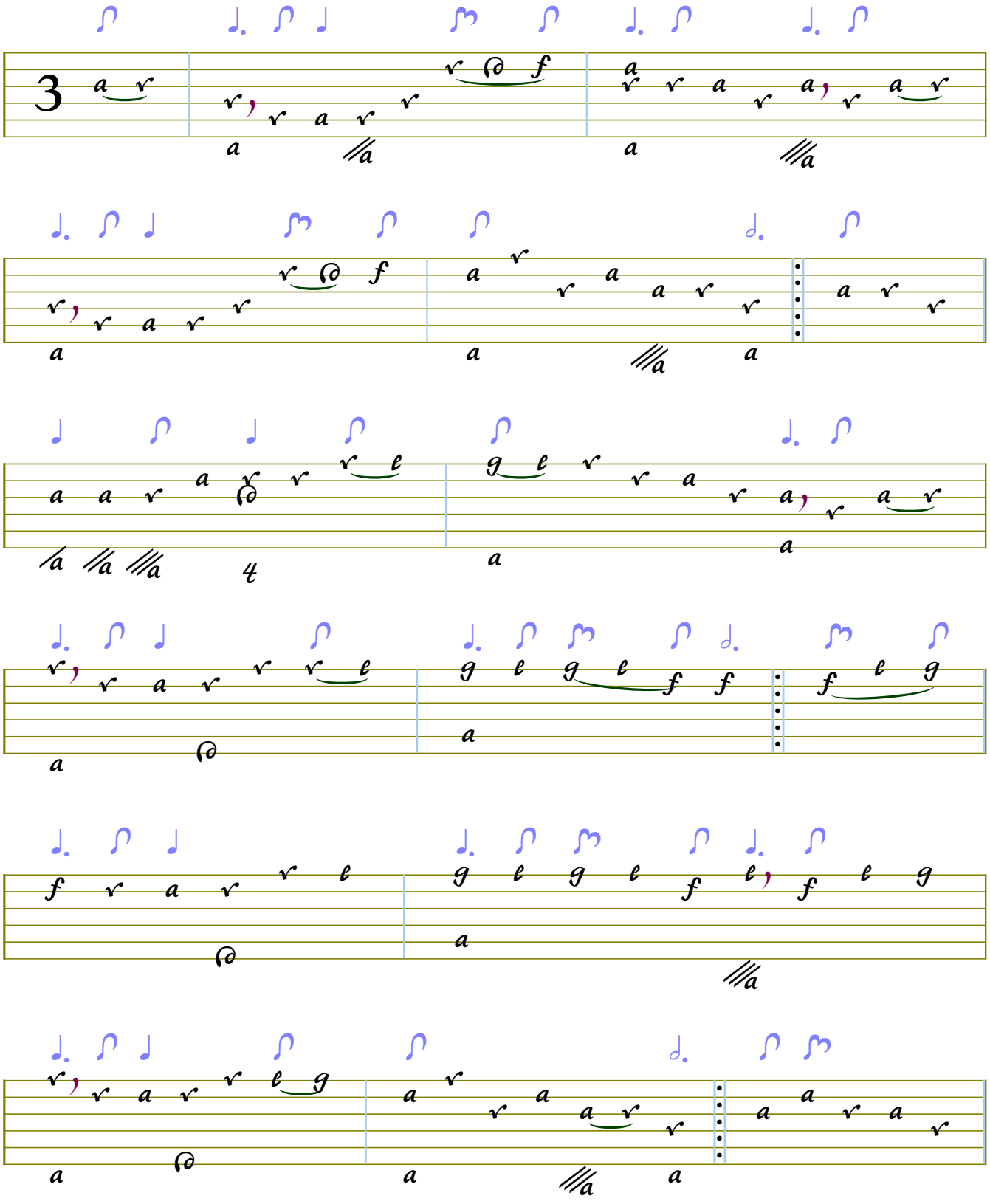
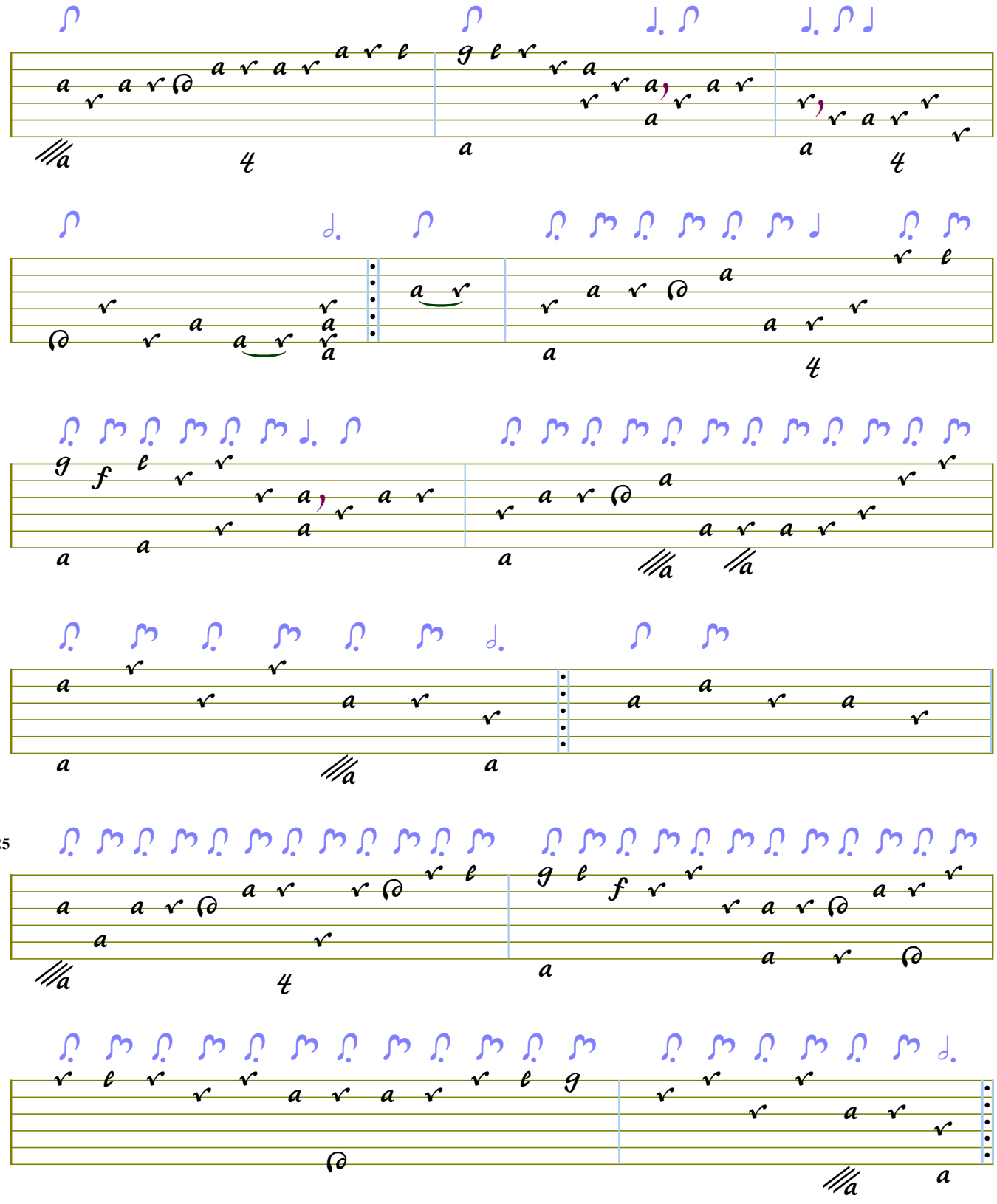
La Galliard, mr. Gallot's way

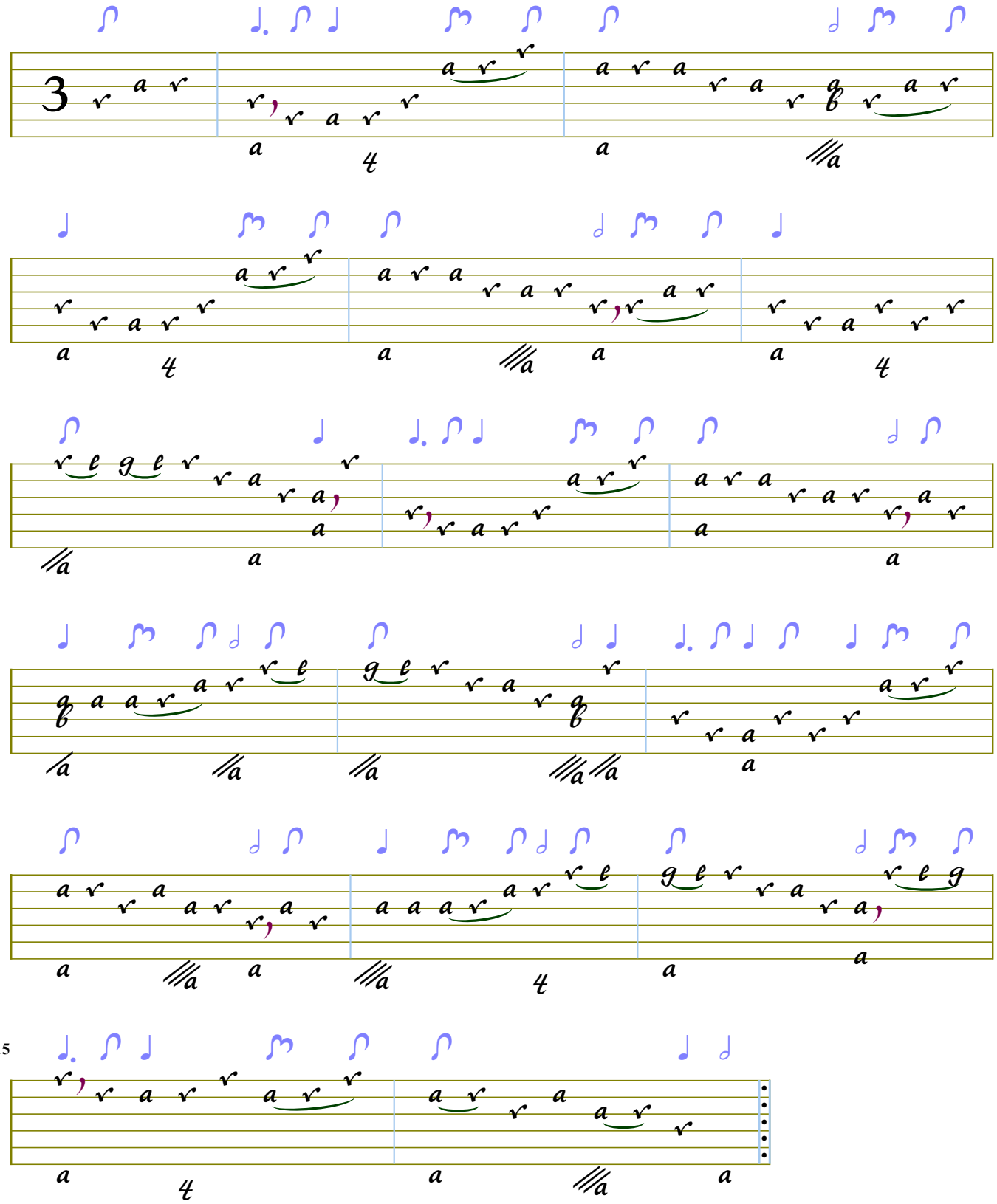


Jock the lairds brother, John Morison's way, by mr. Beck

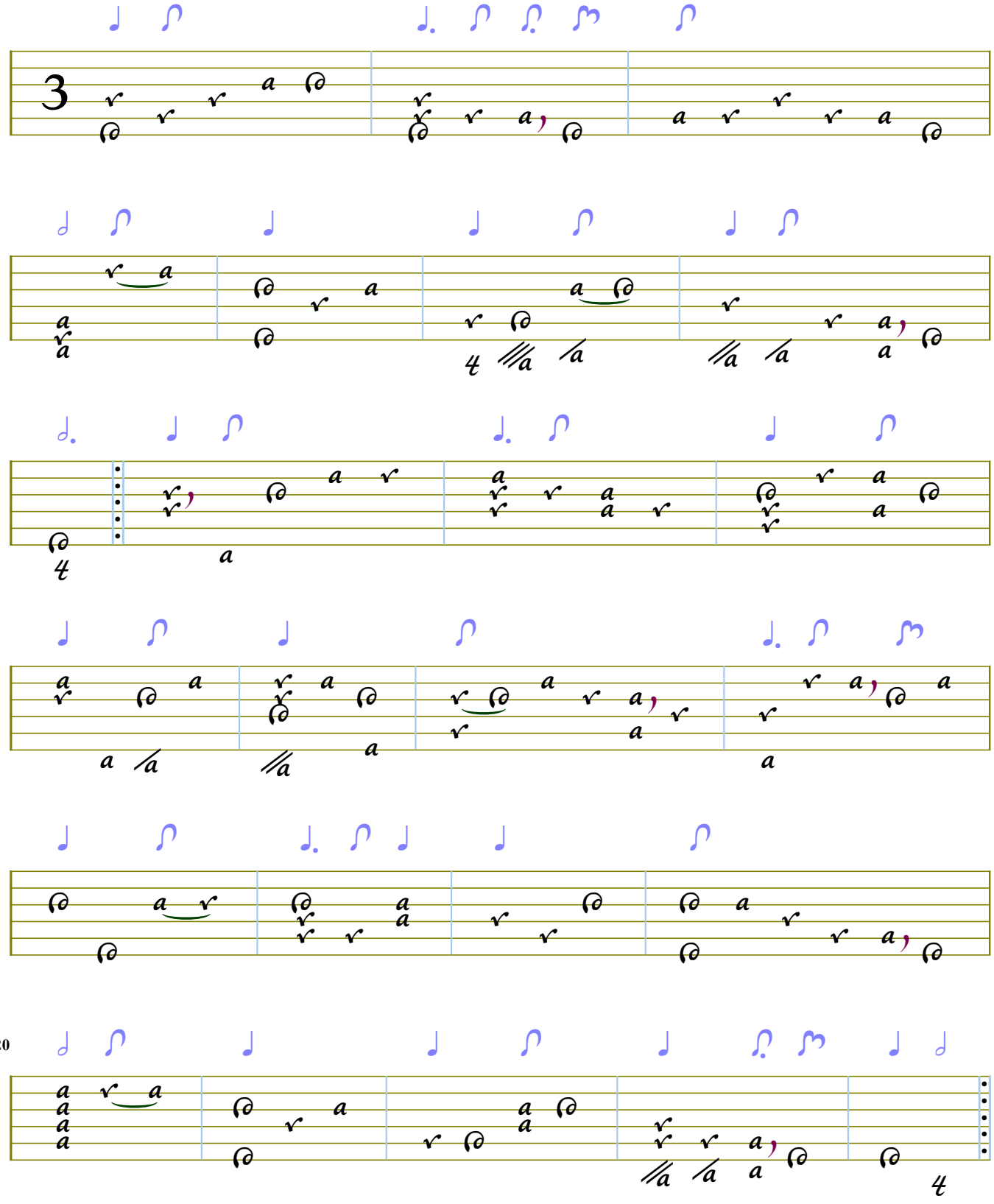




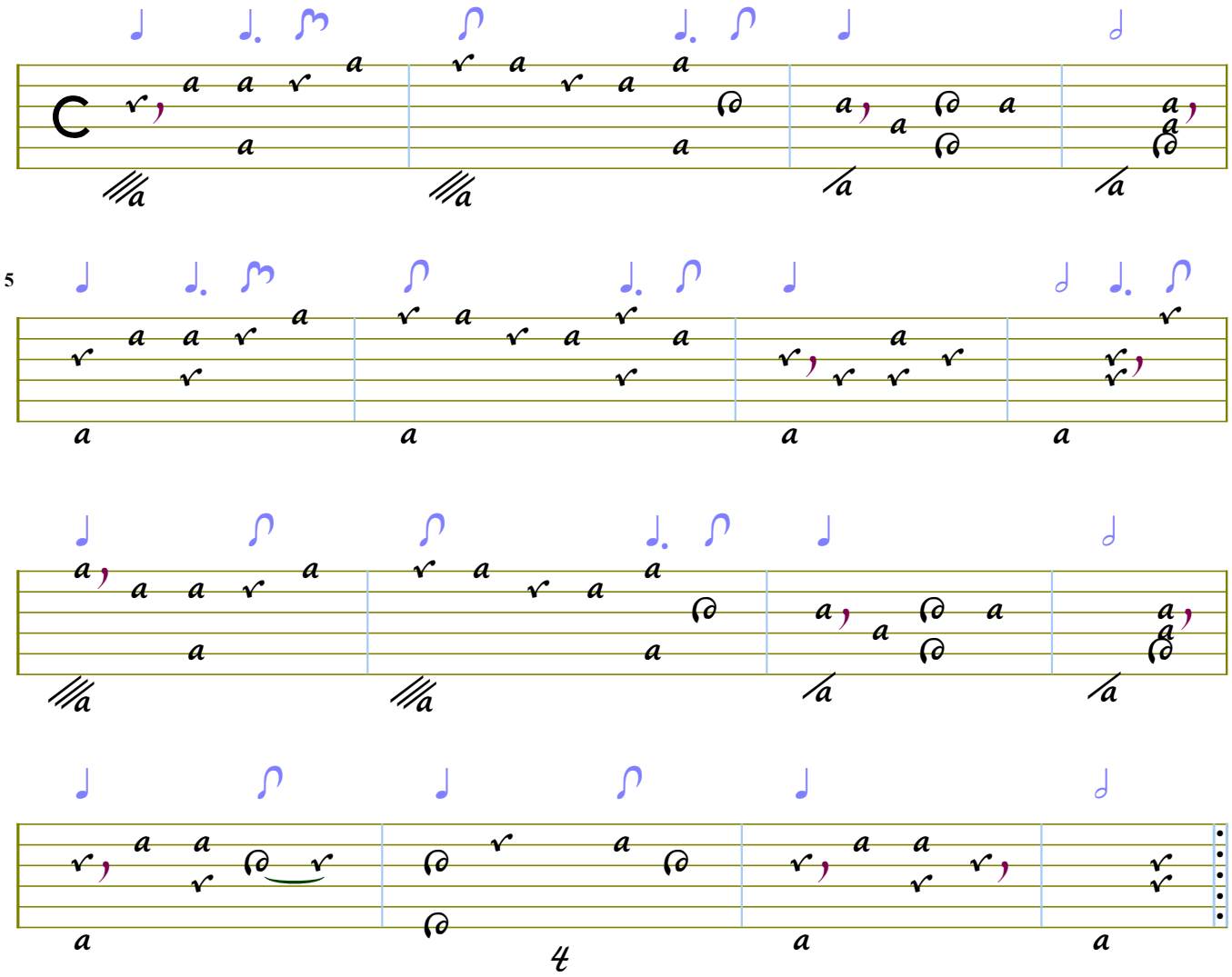
Jock the lairds brother, Jean More's way, by mr. Beck



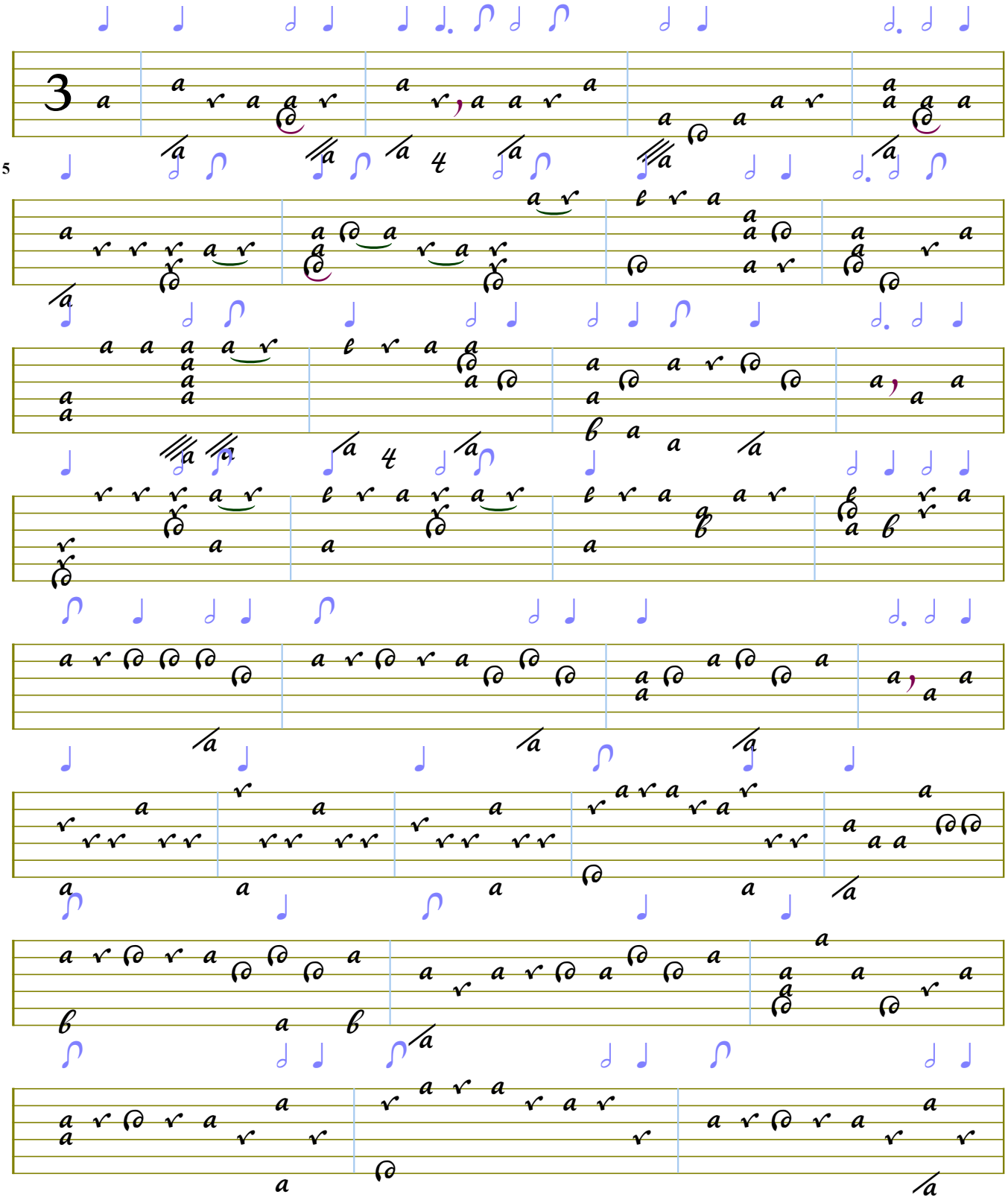
Rothymay's lilt, mr. Beck's way

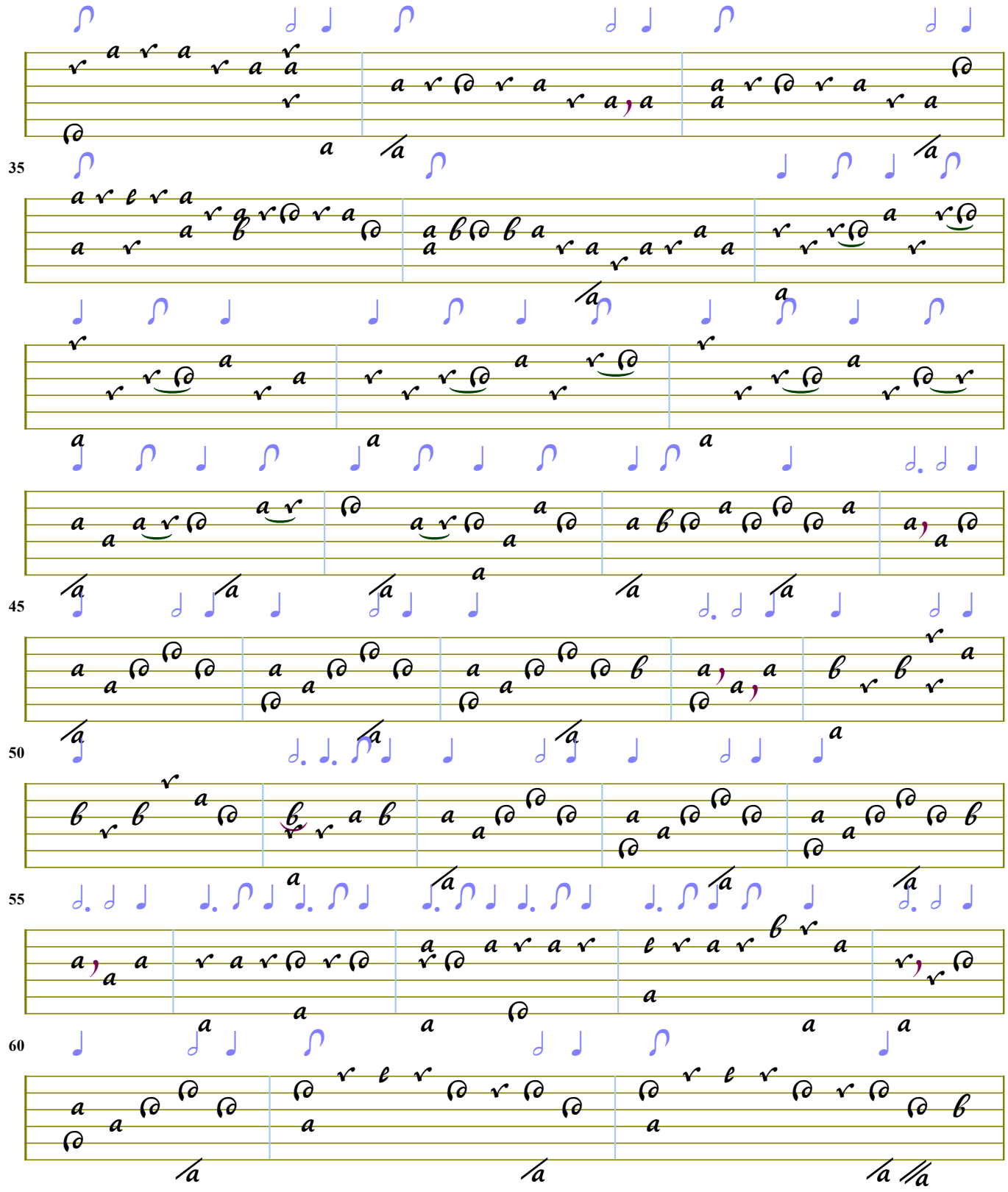


Sugar candie, by John Red



The horseman's Port, or the Black and the brown, John Morison's way, by mr. Beck

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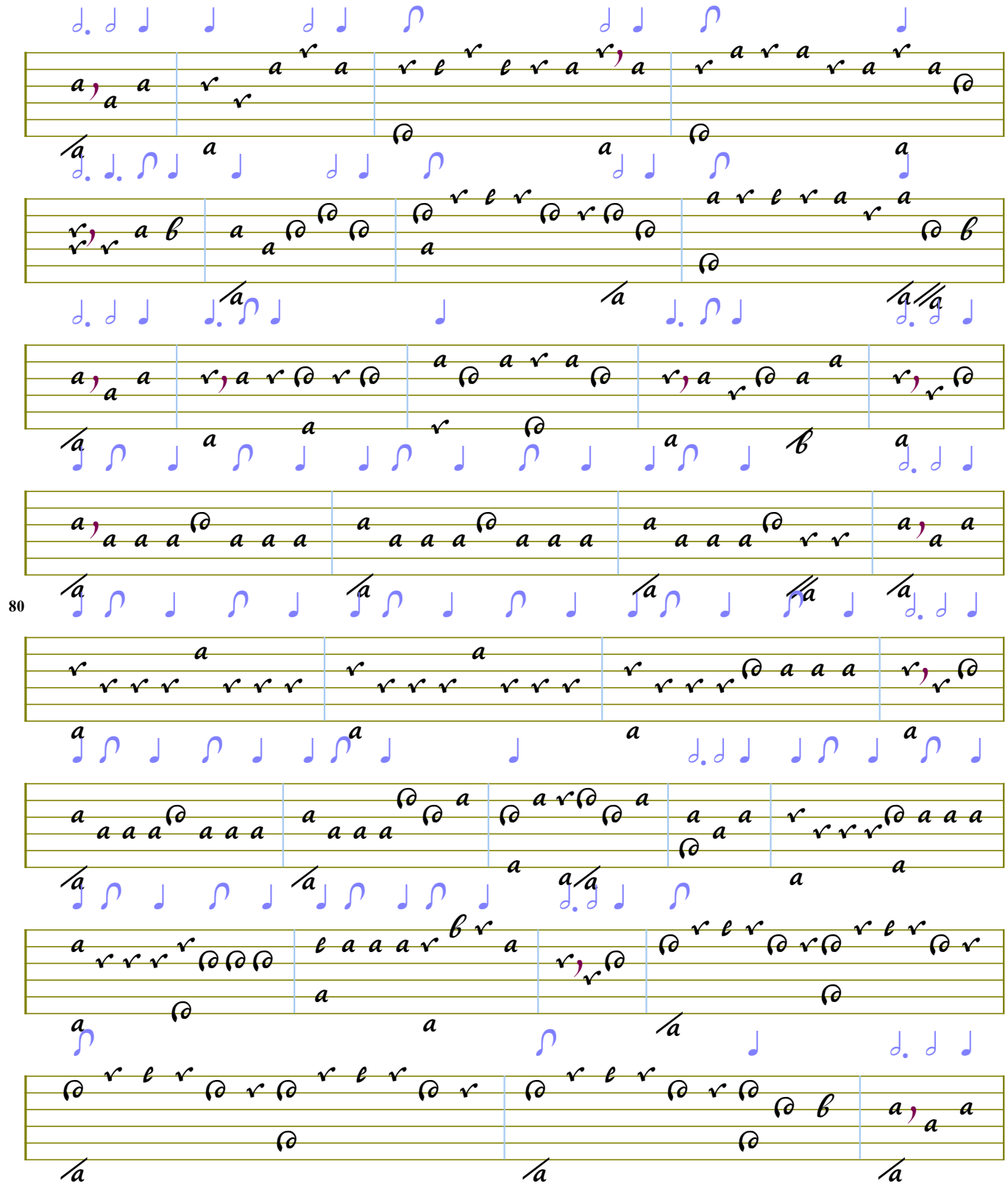
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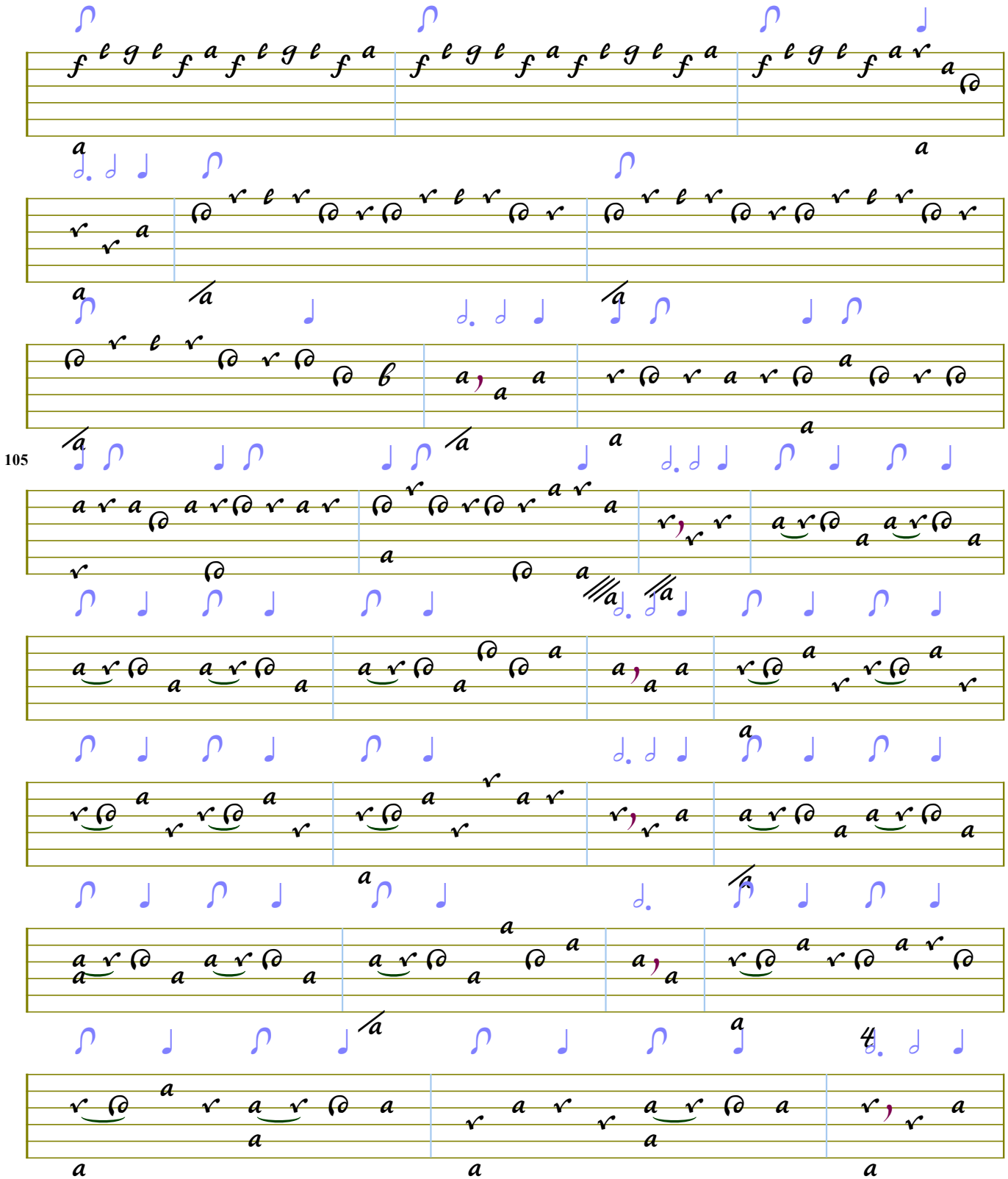
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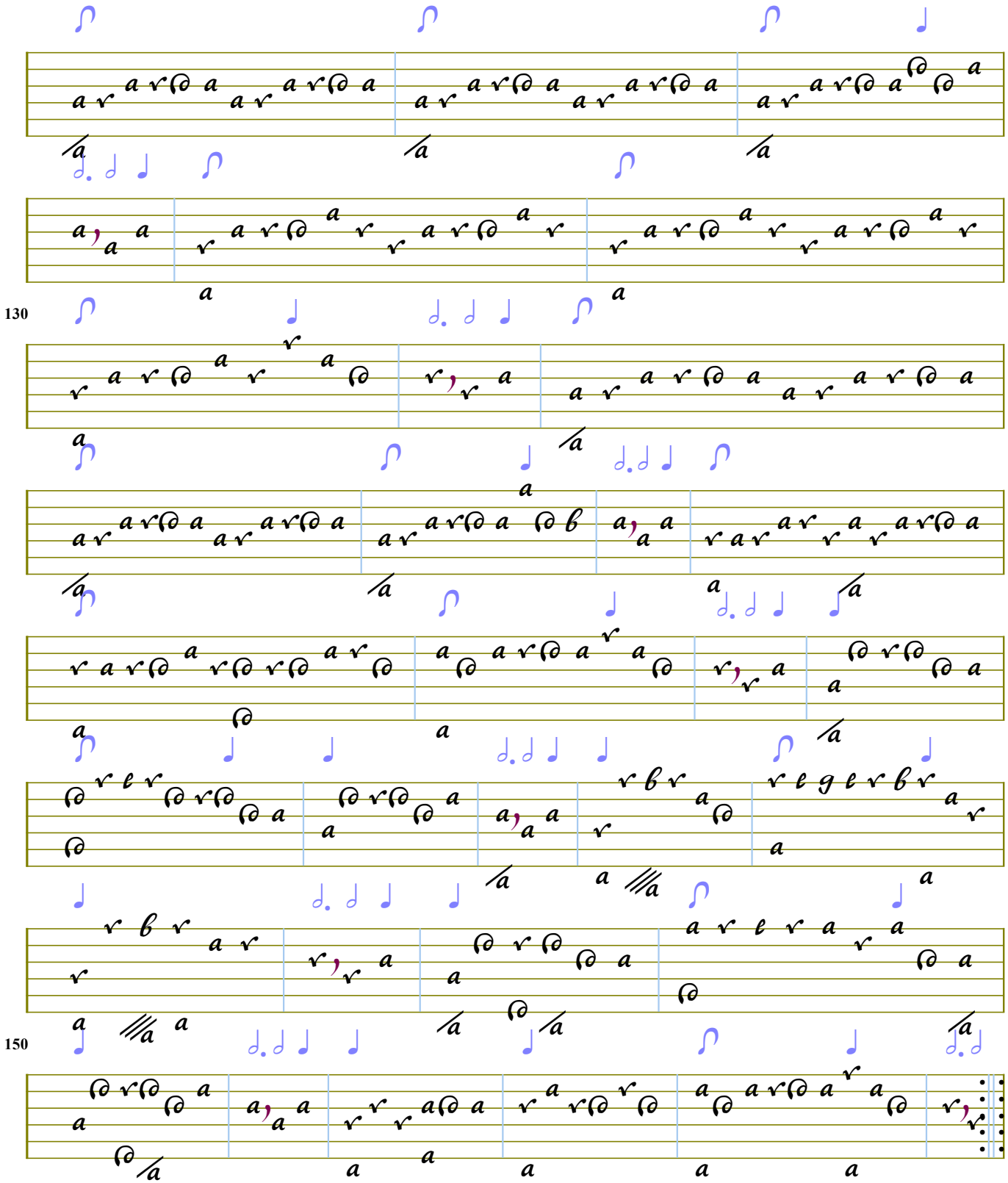
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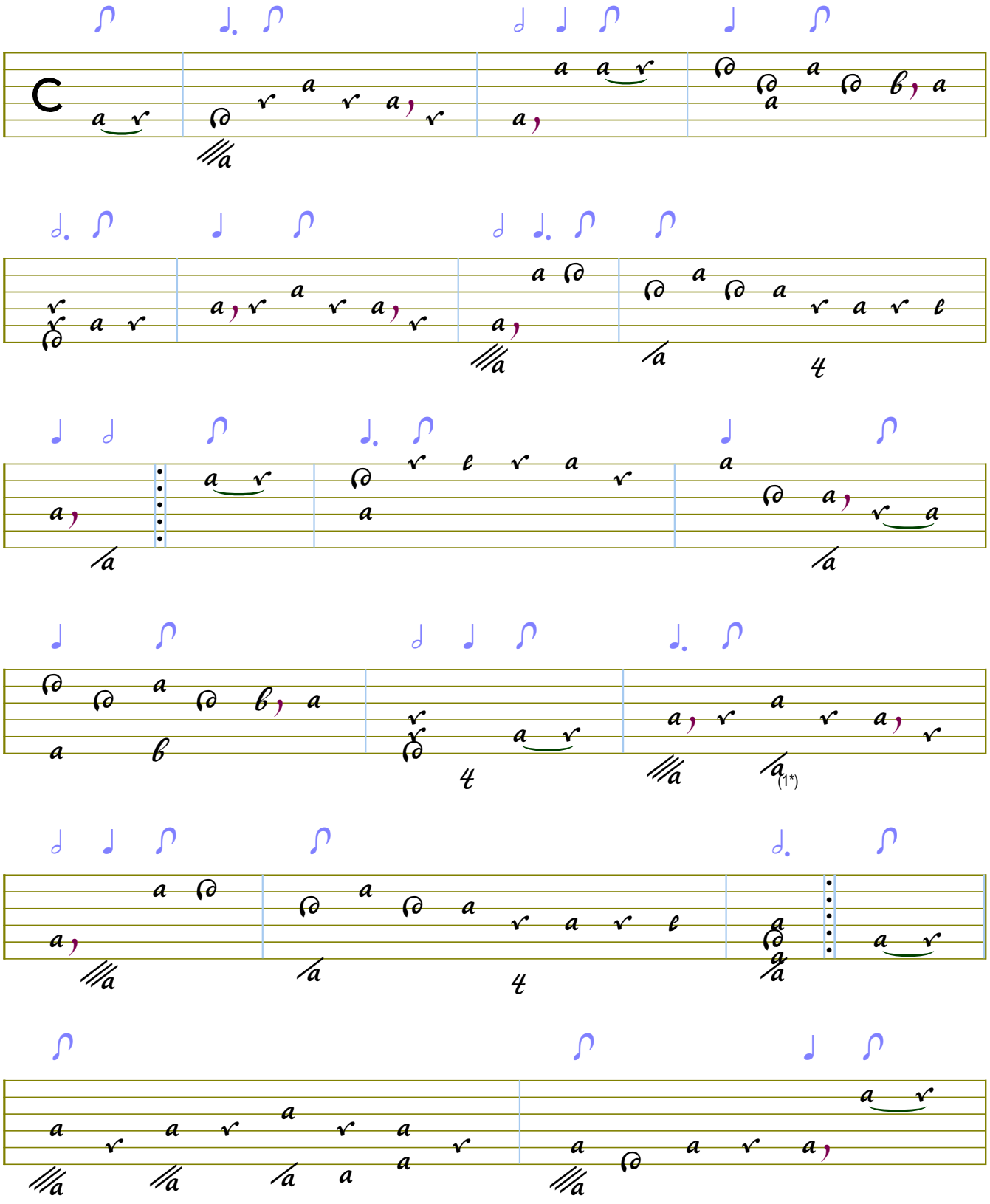
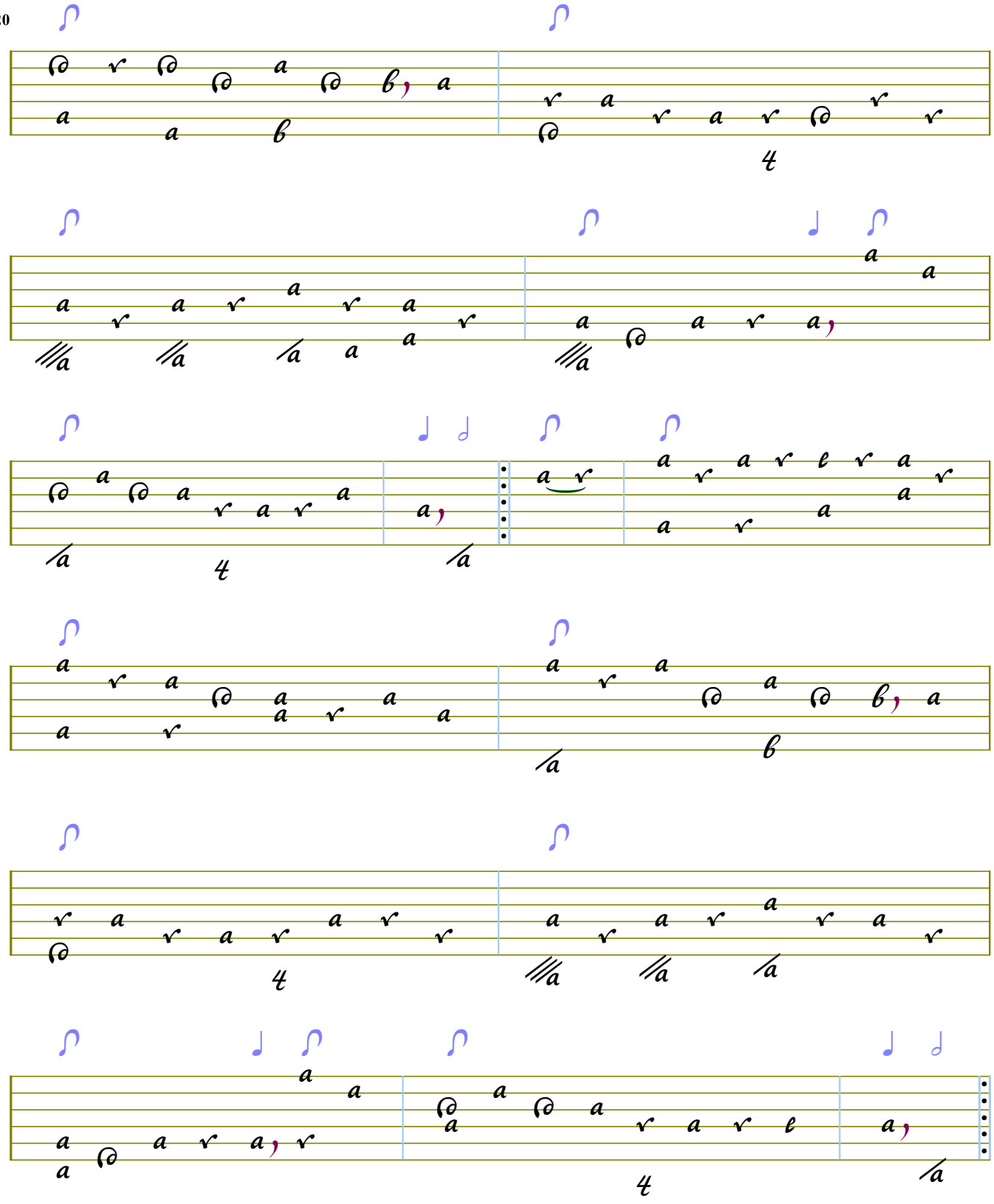
The black ewe, by mr. Beck

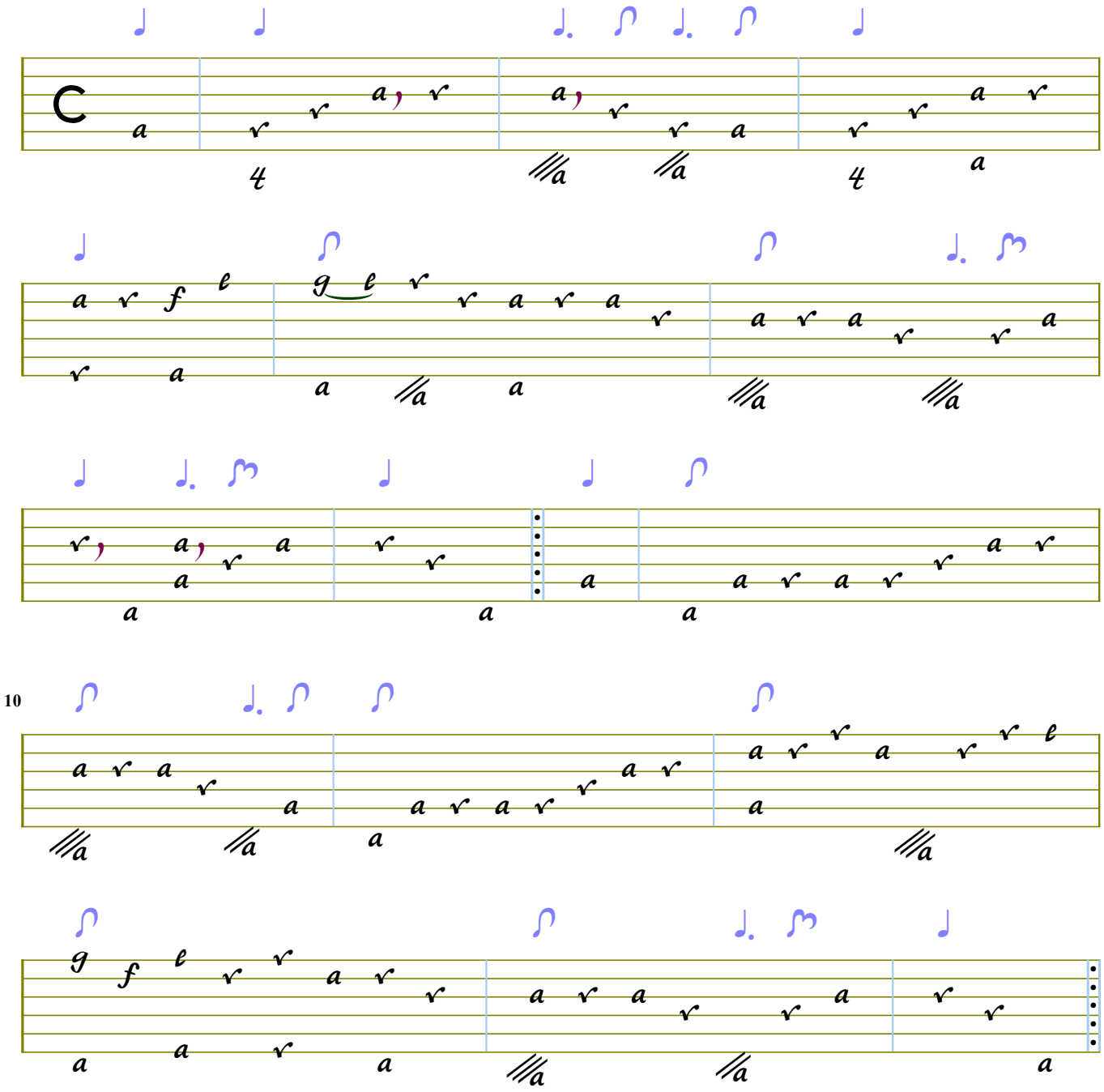


1. Bass seems 'a' in original

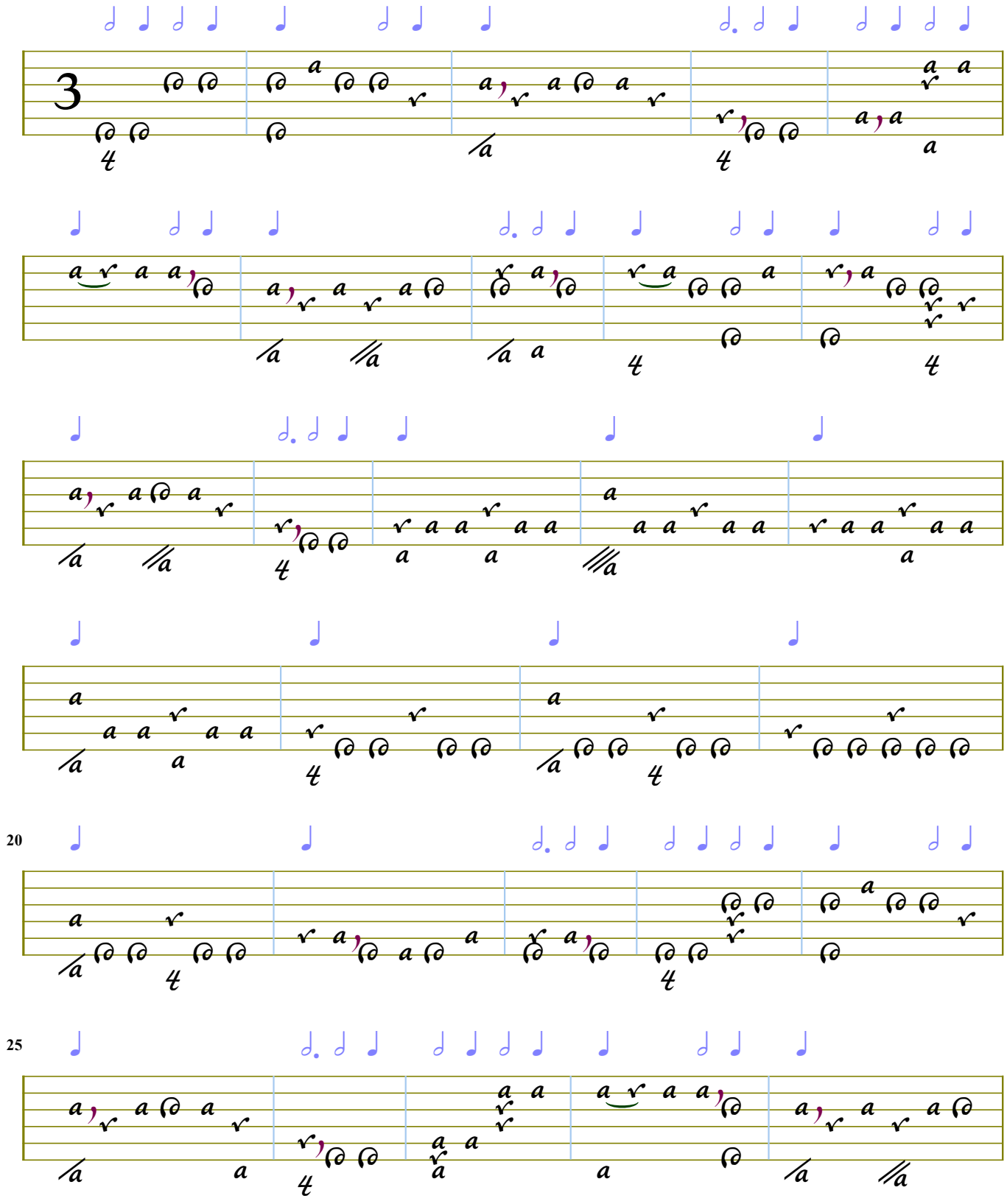
20



The lass, which made the bed to me, by John Red



The horseman's Port, or the Black and the brown, Jean Burnett's way, by mr. Beck



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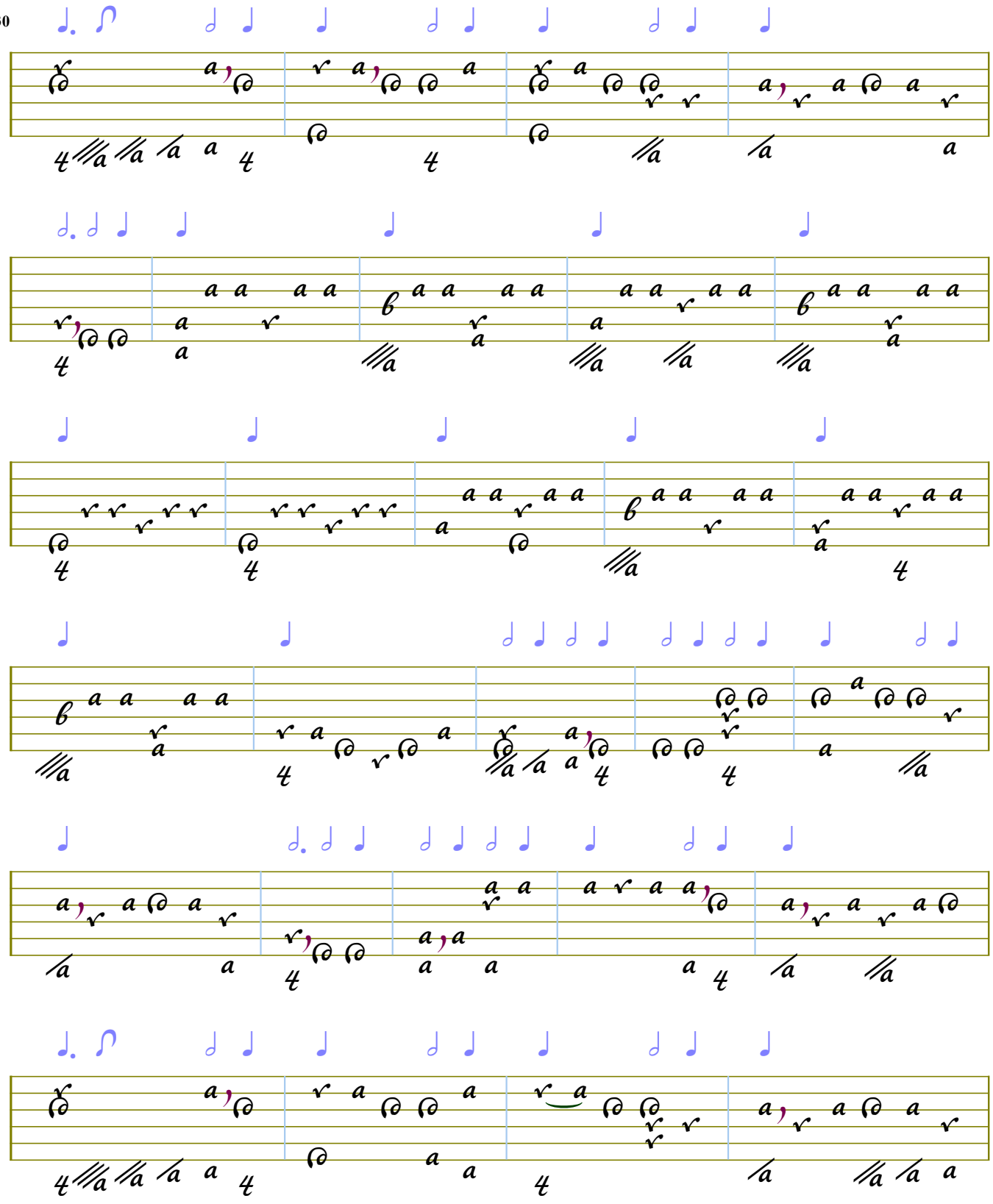

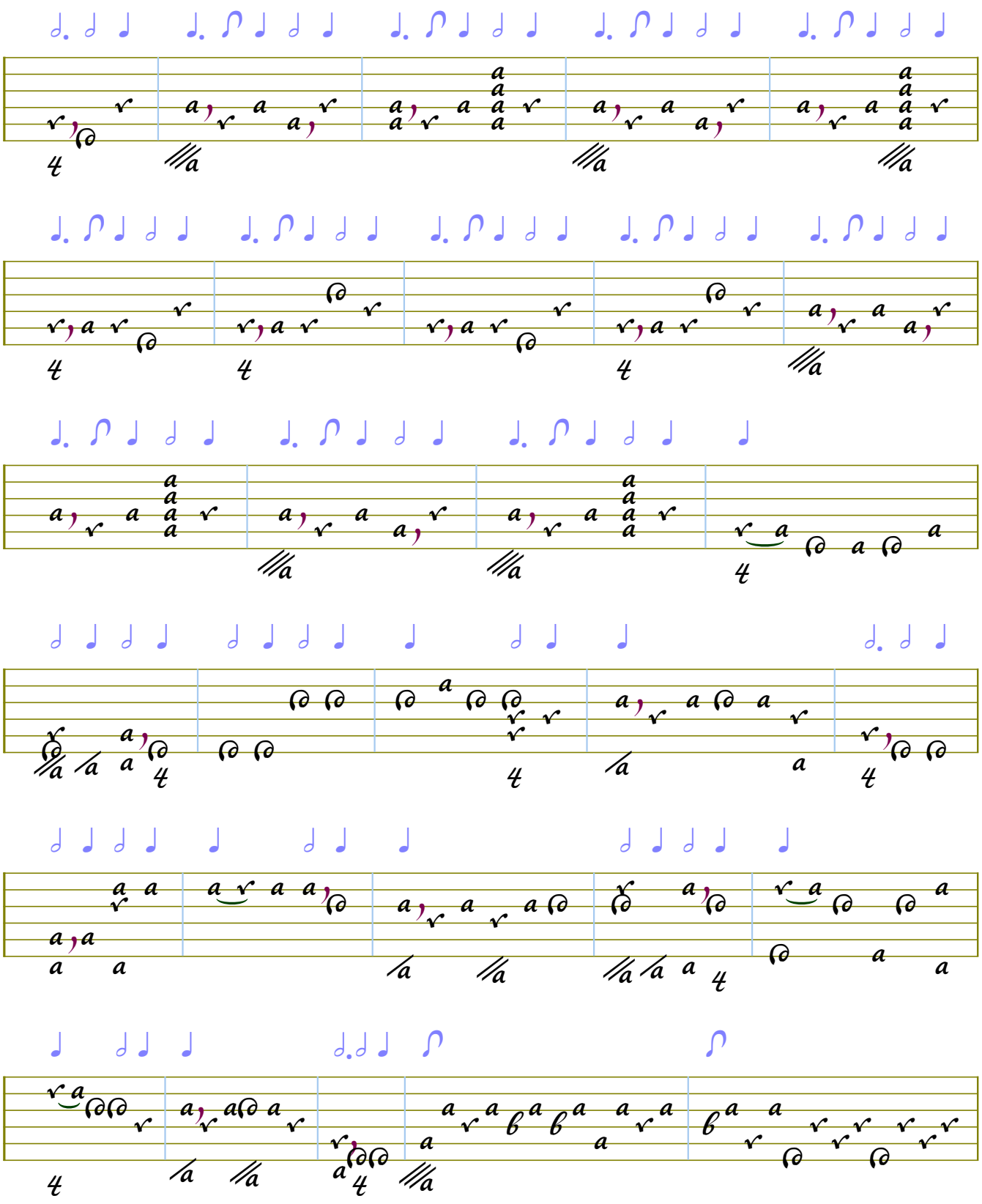

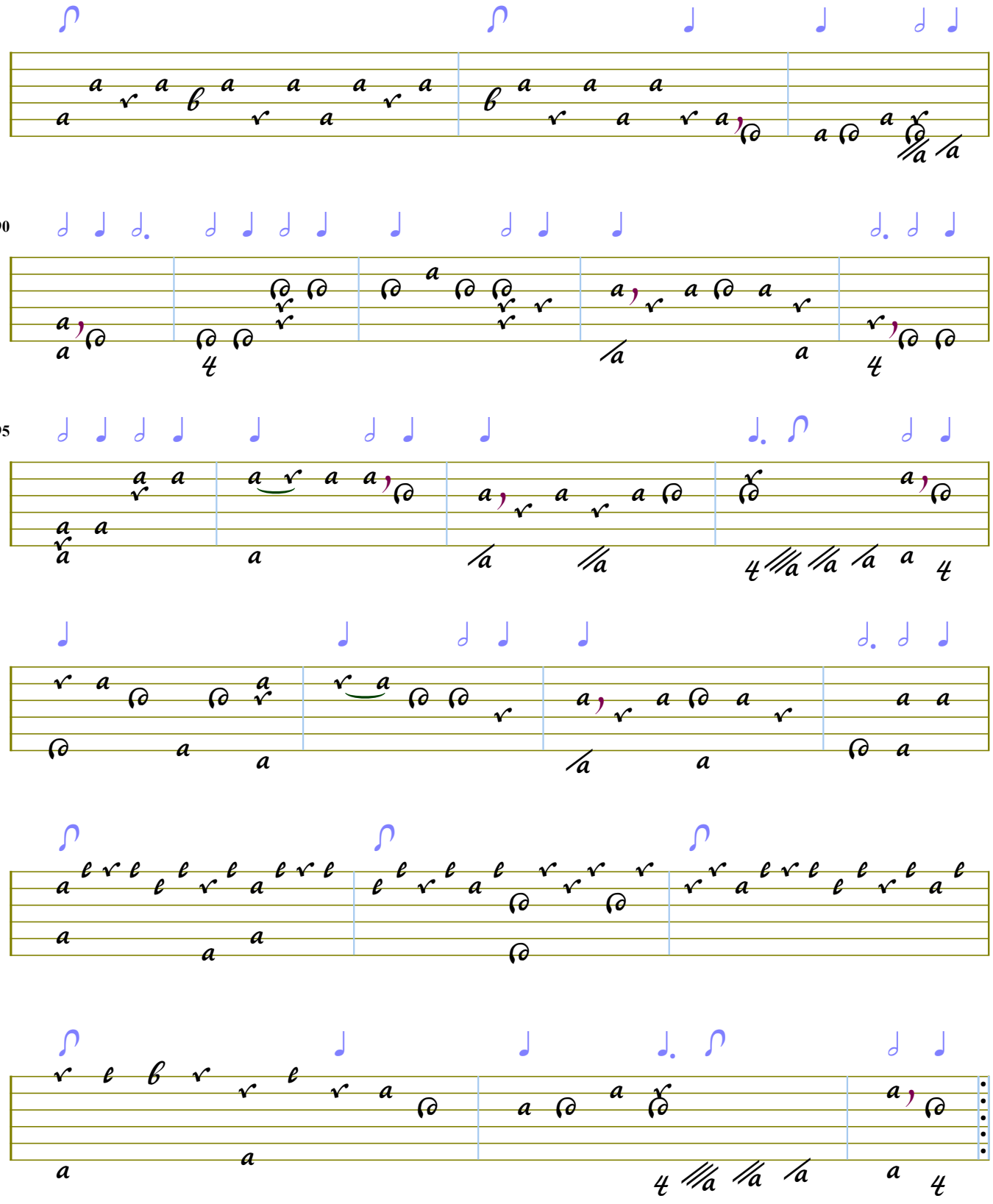
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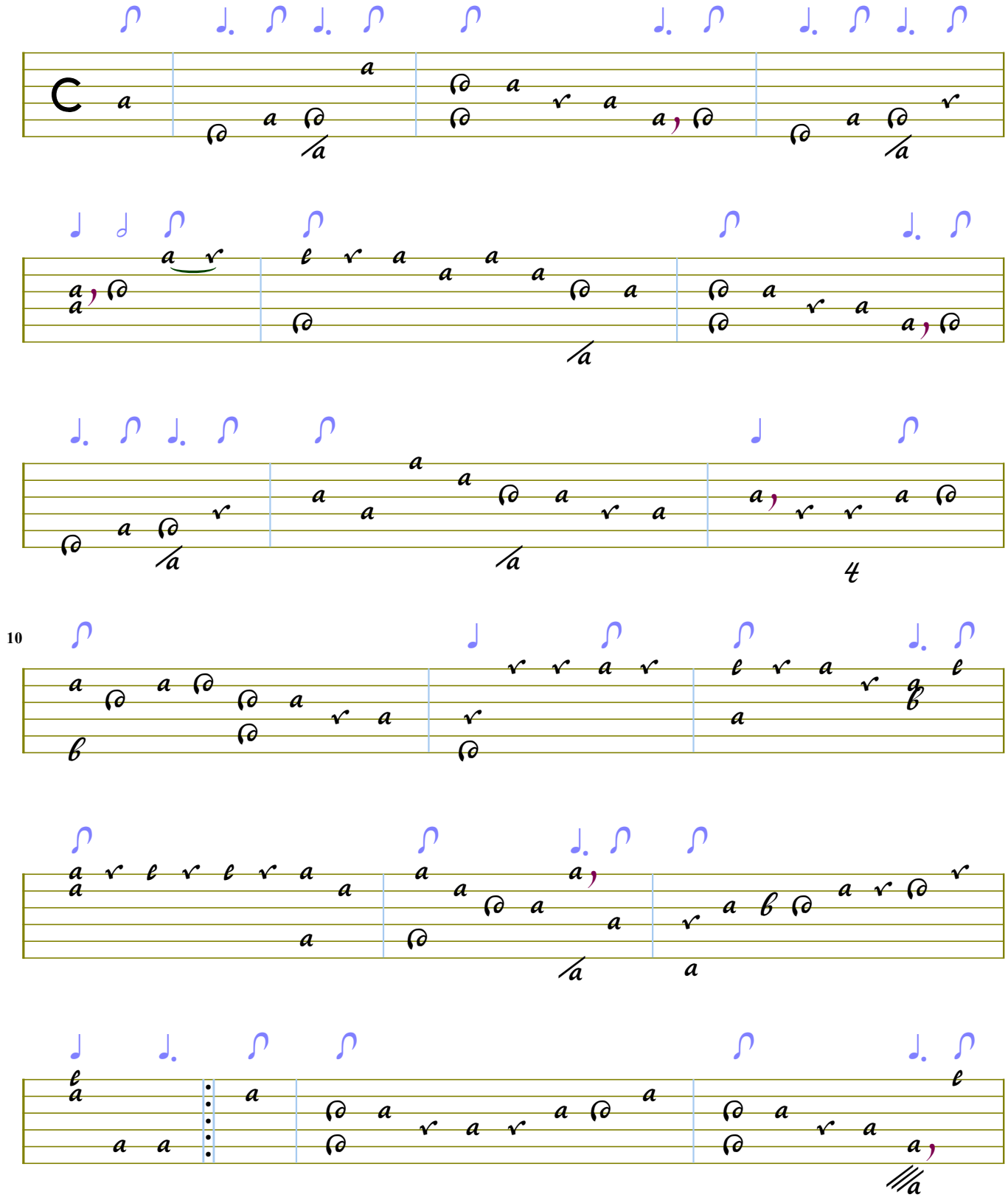
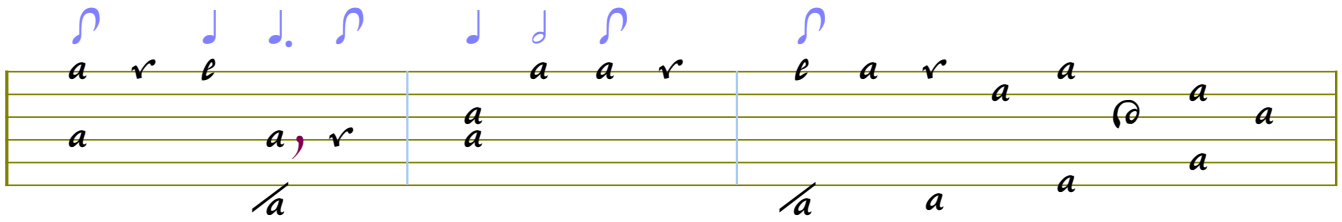
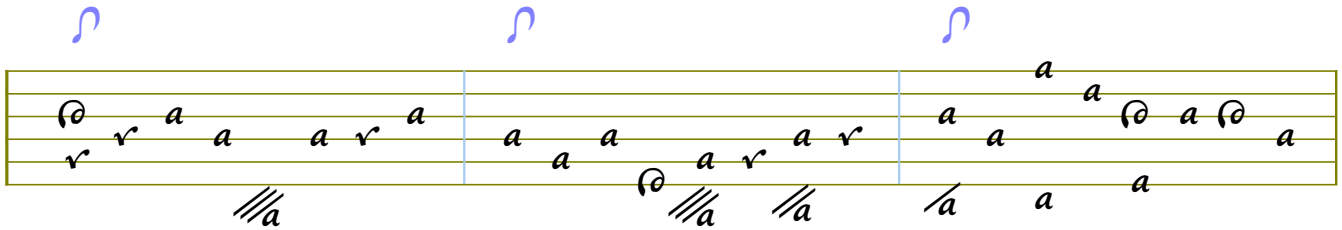
I never knew, I loved thee, by mr. Beck







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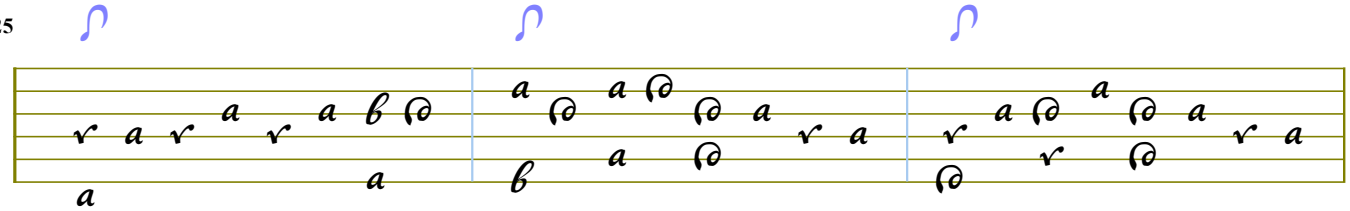
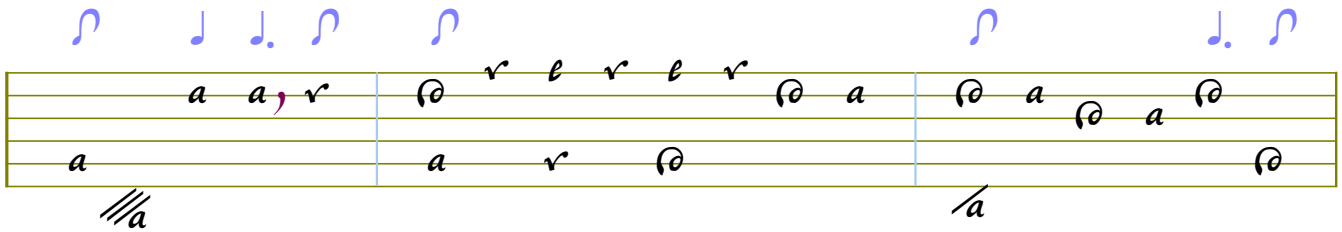
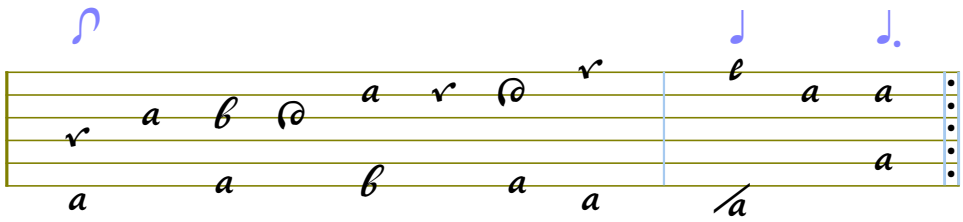
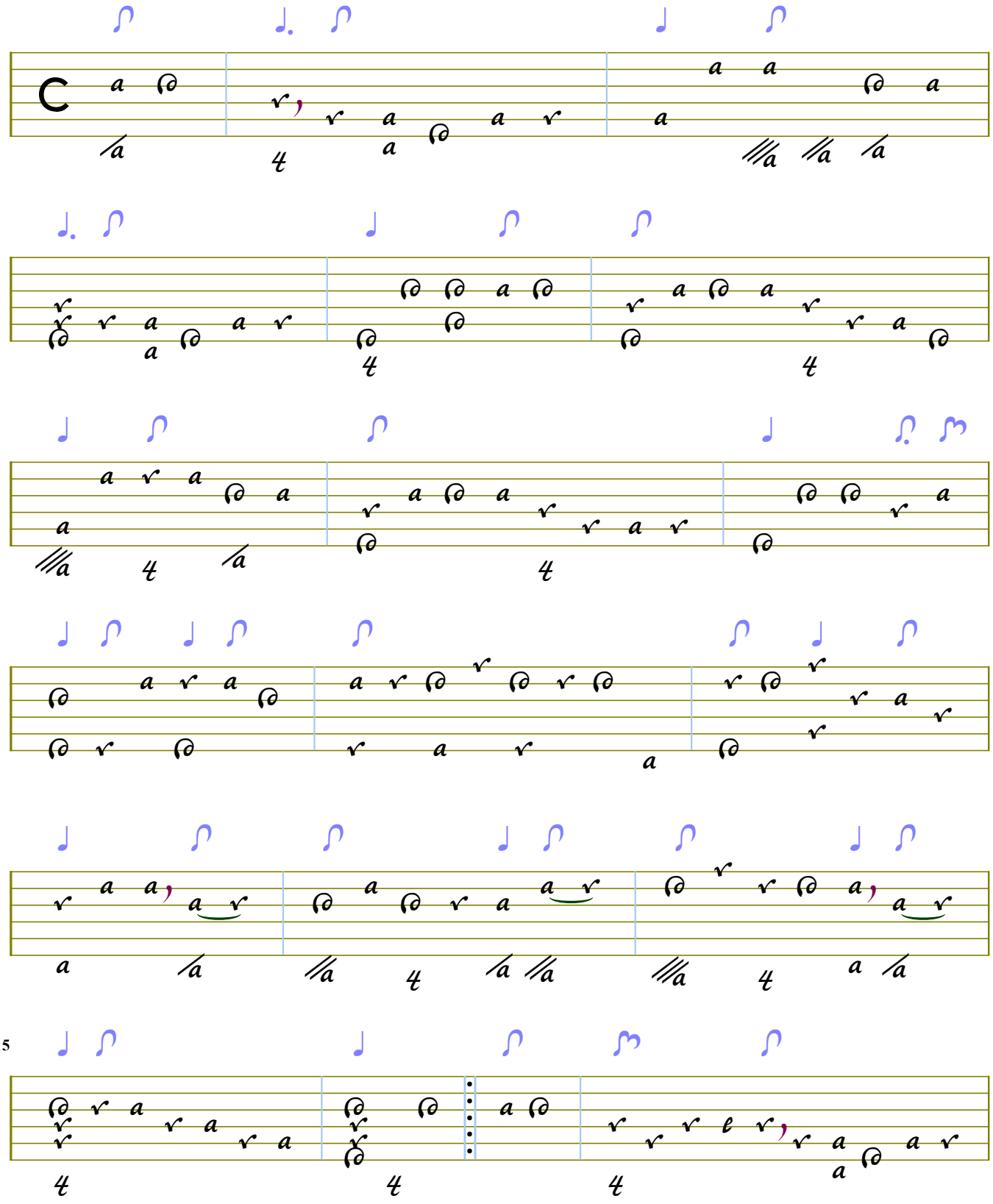






Over the moore, to Maggie, the new way, by mr. Beck



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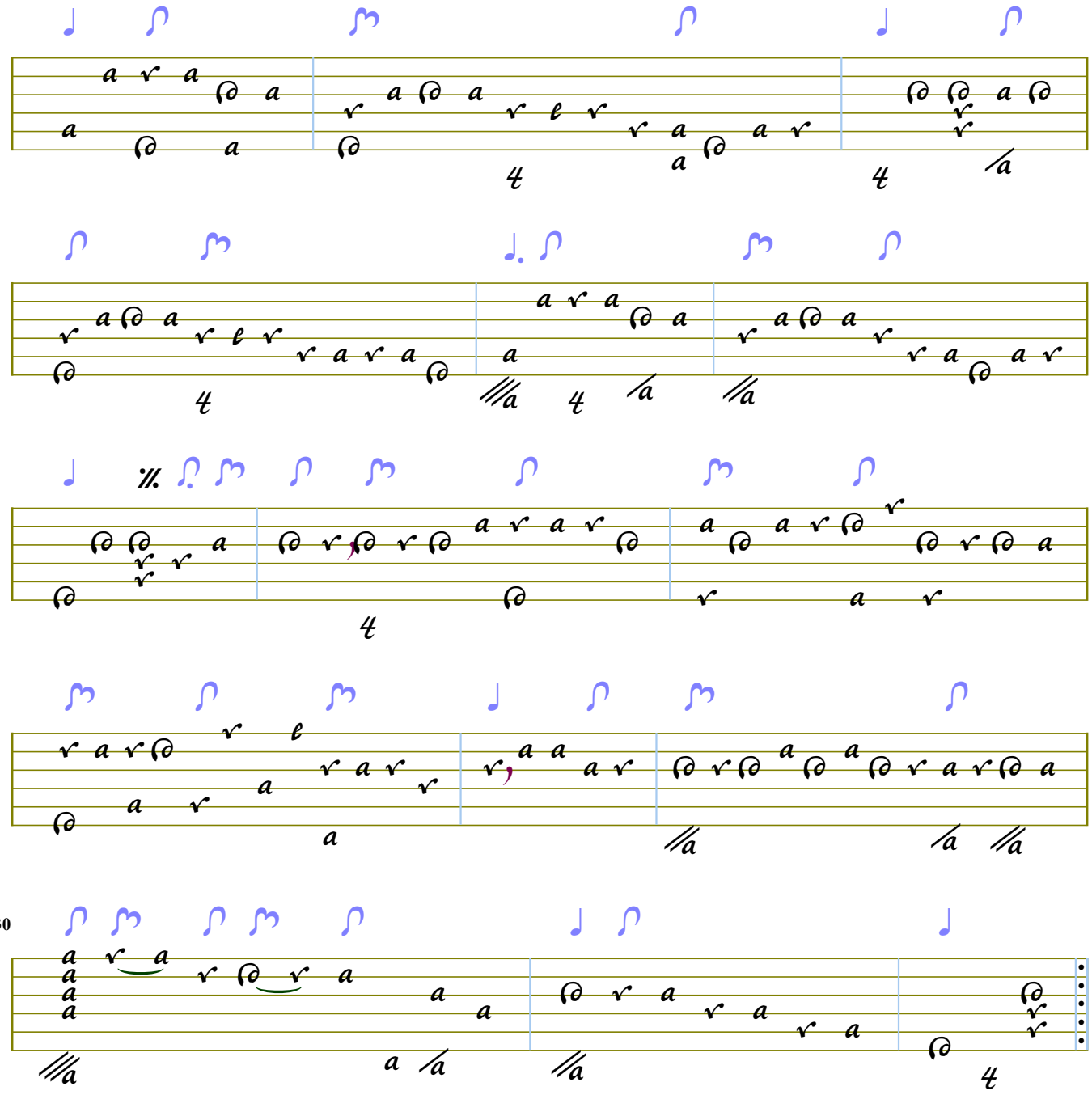
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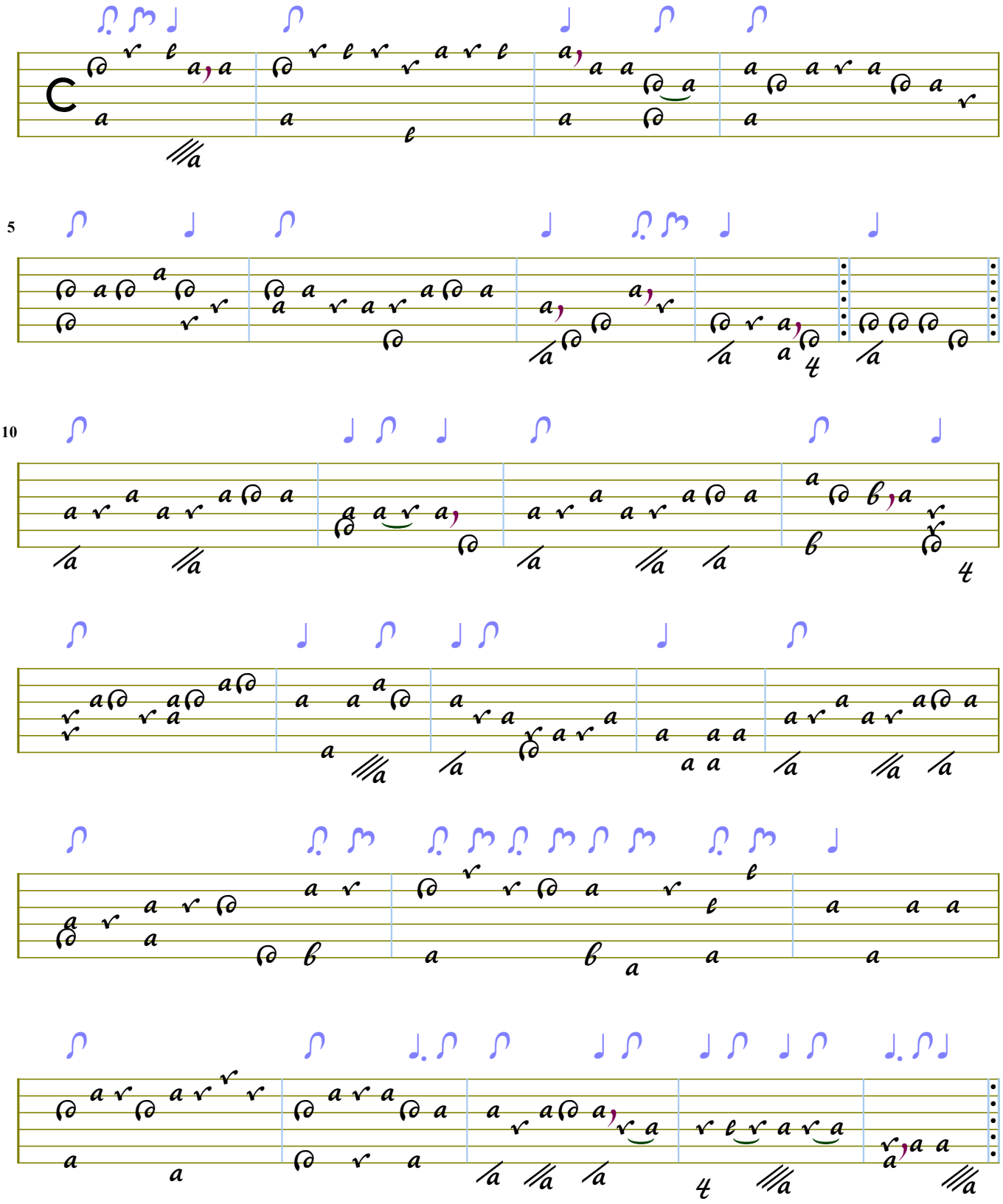
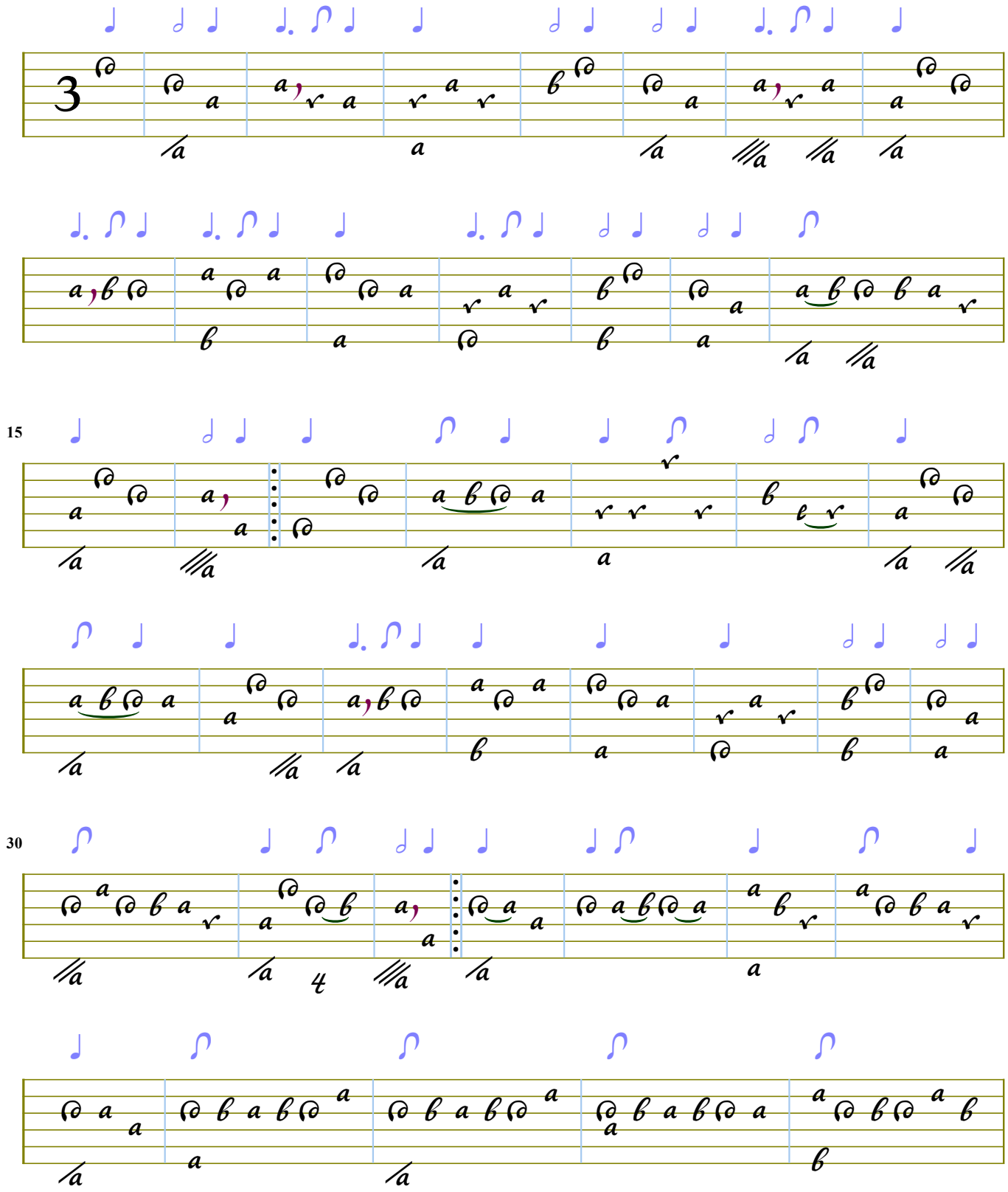
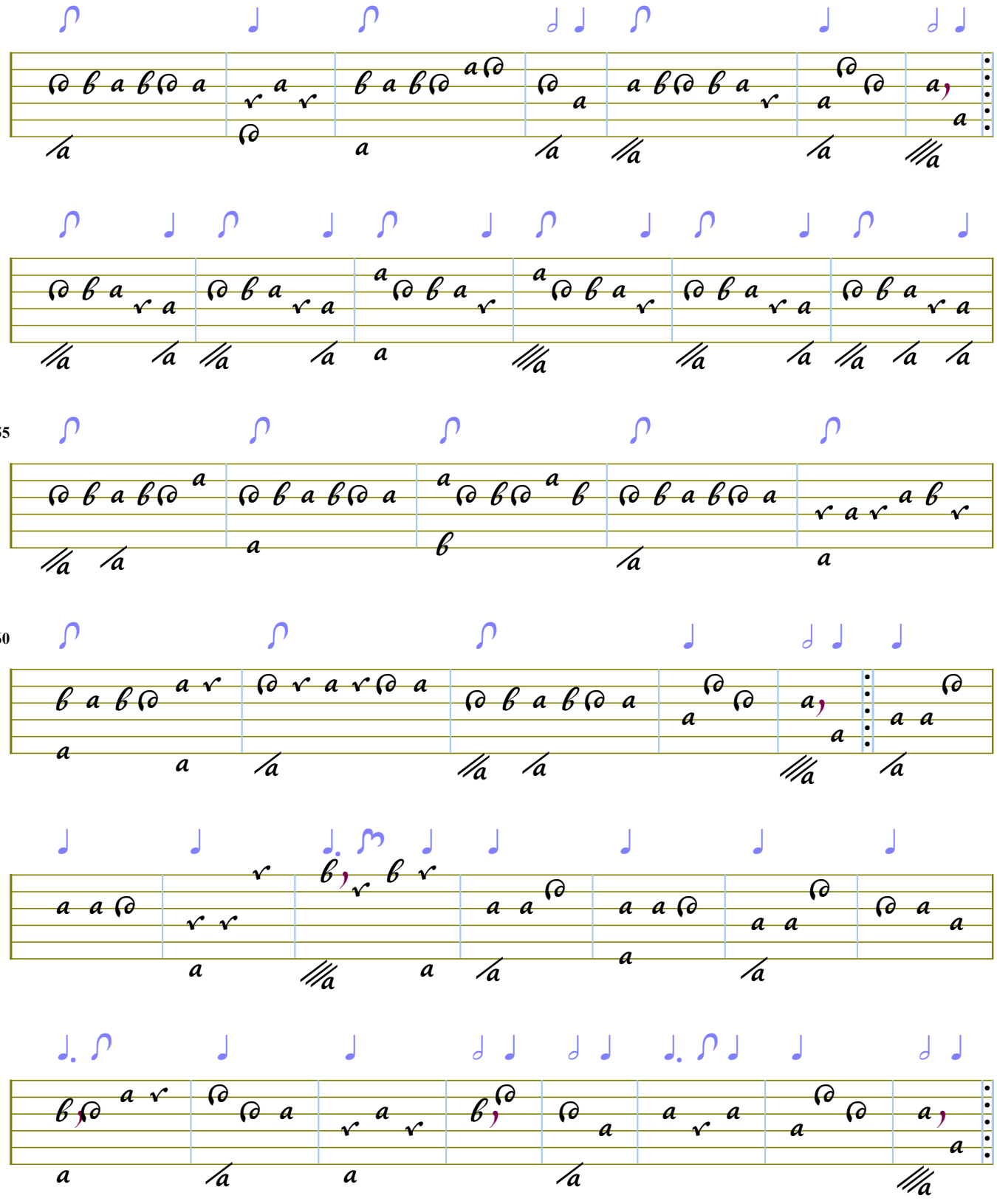
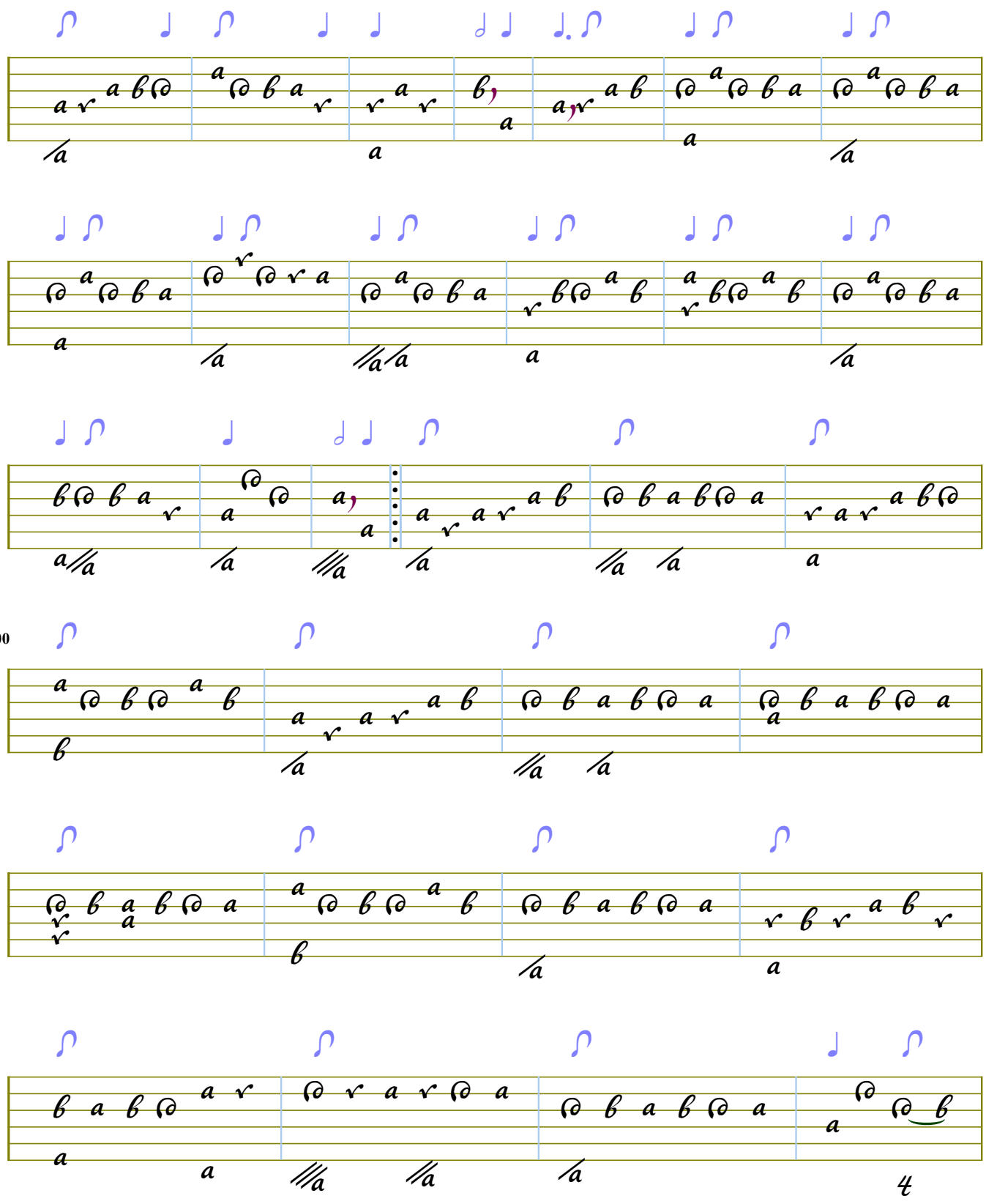
Port Gordon, by mr. Beck



John Cock, thy beaver, John Morison's way, by mr. Beck



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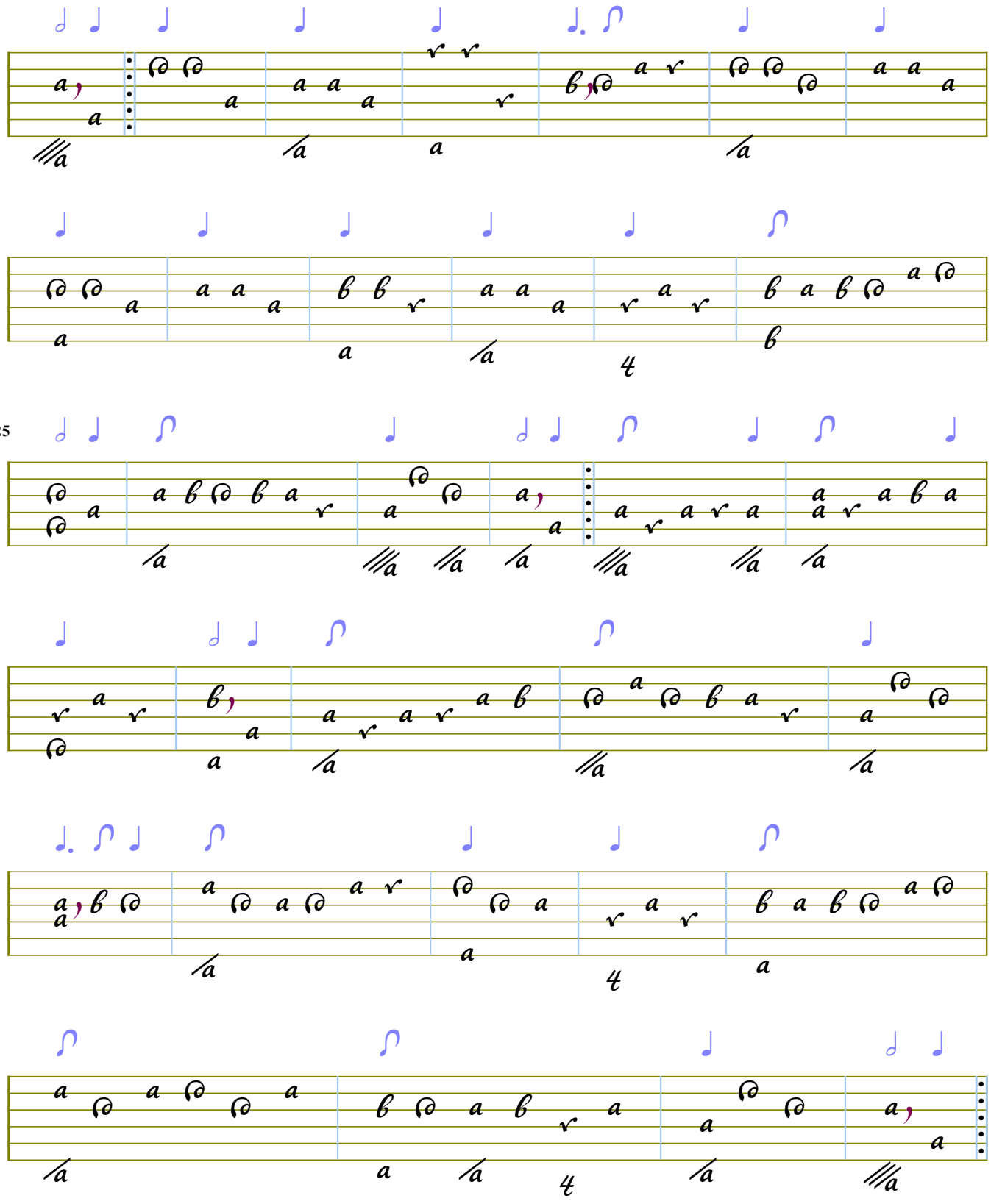
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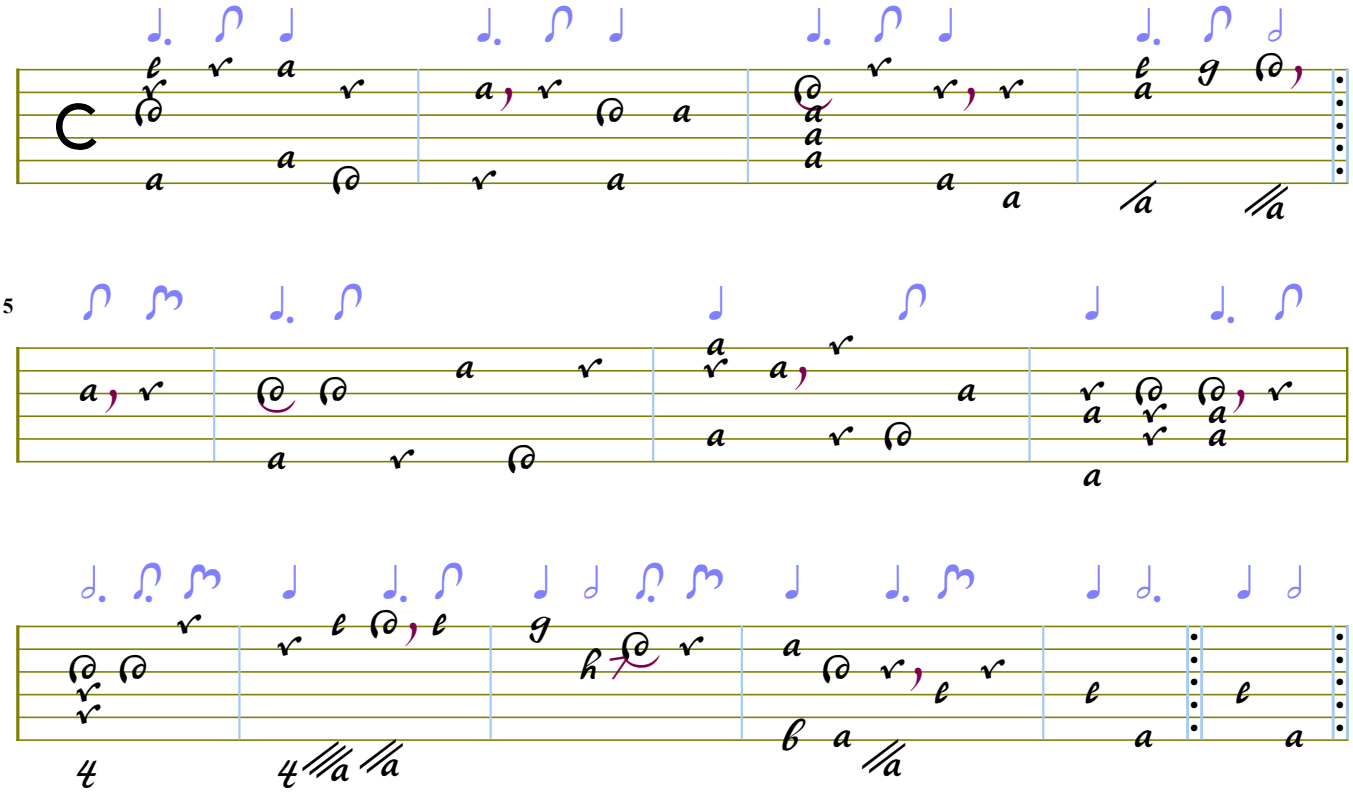
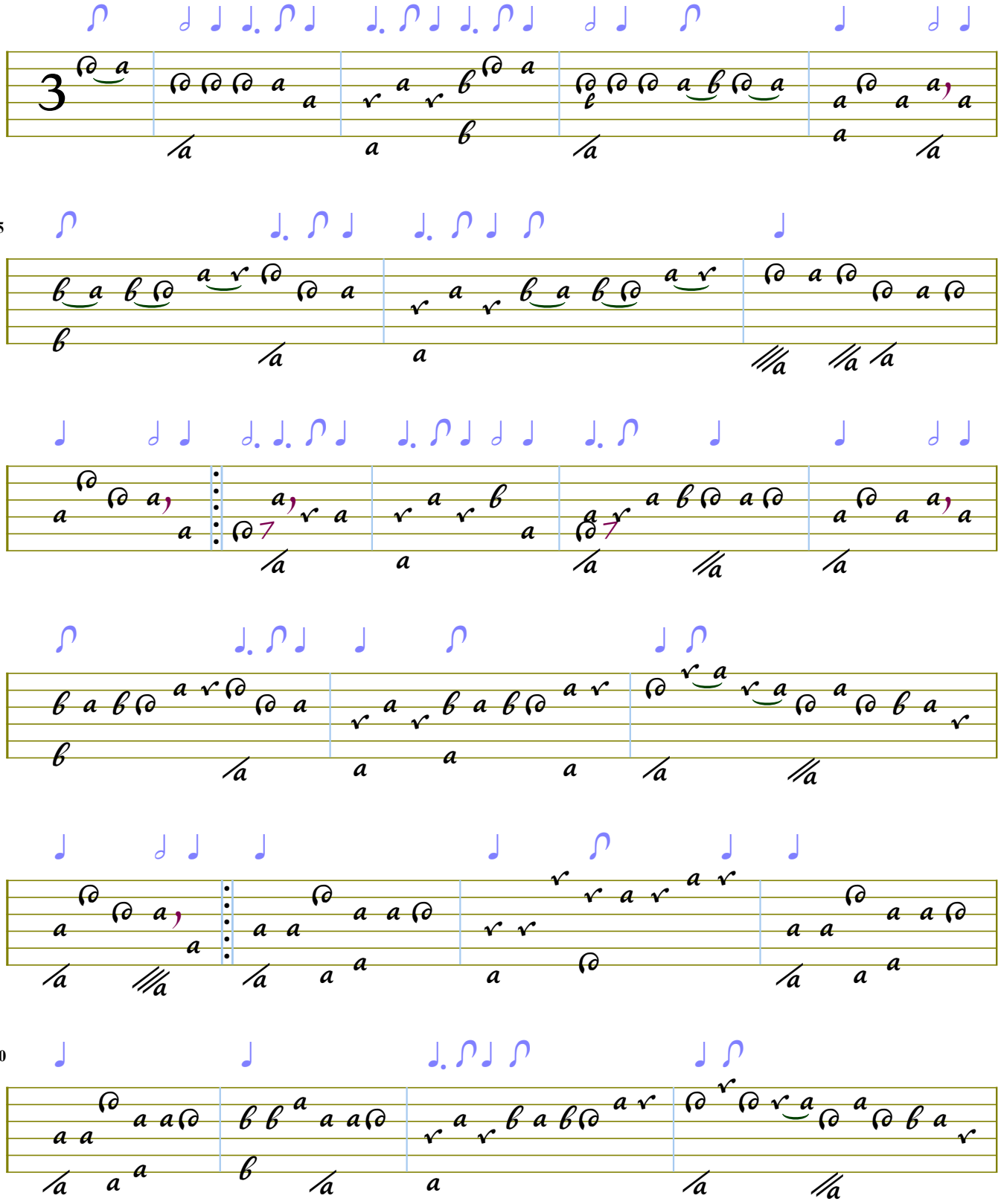
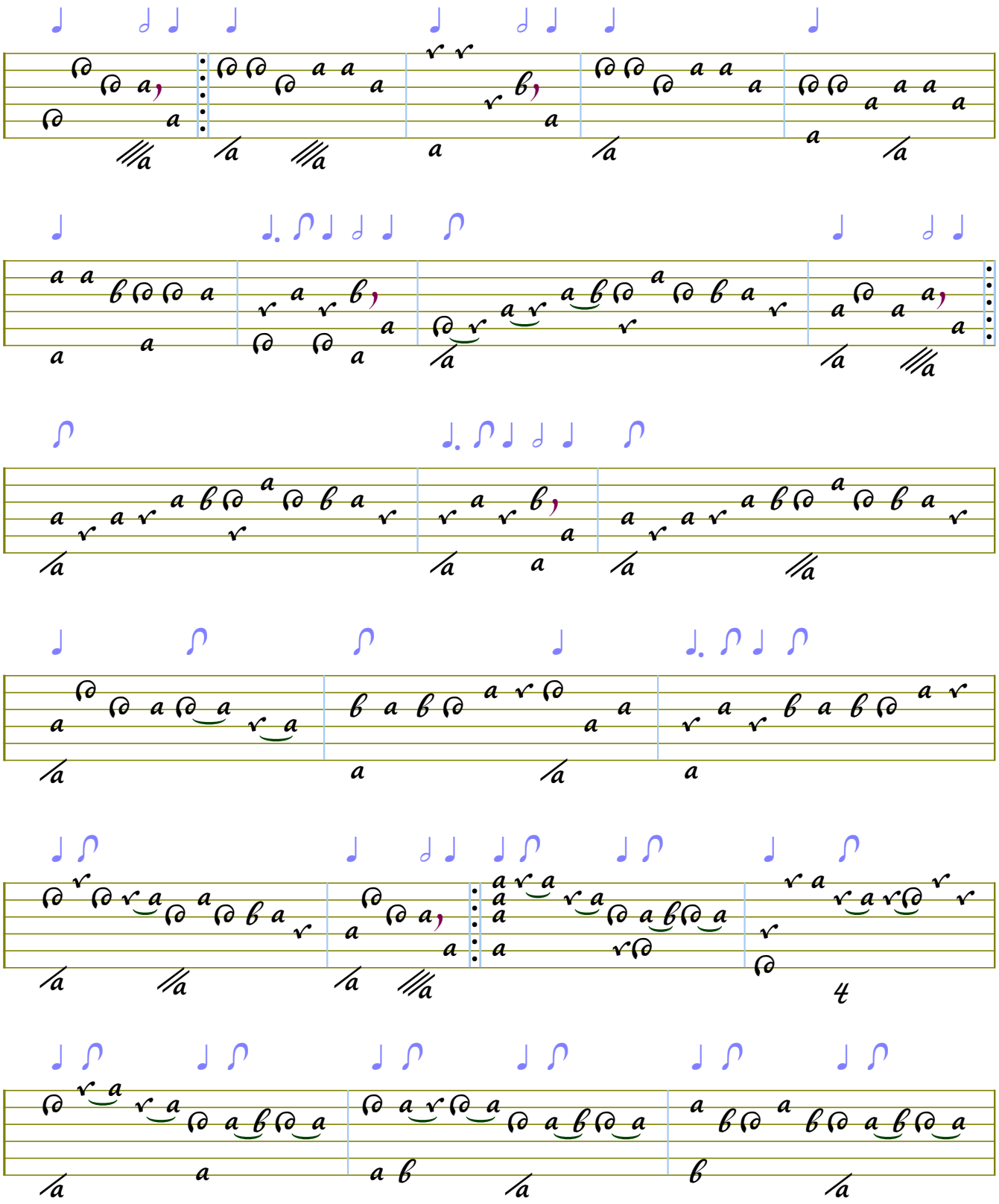
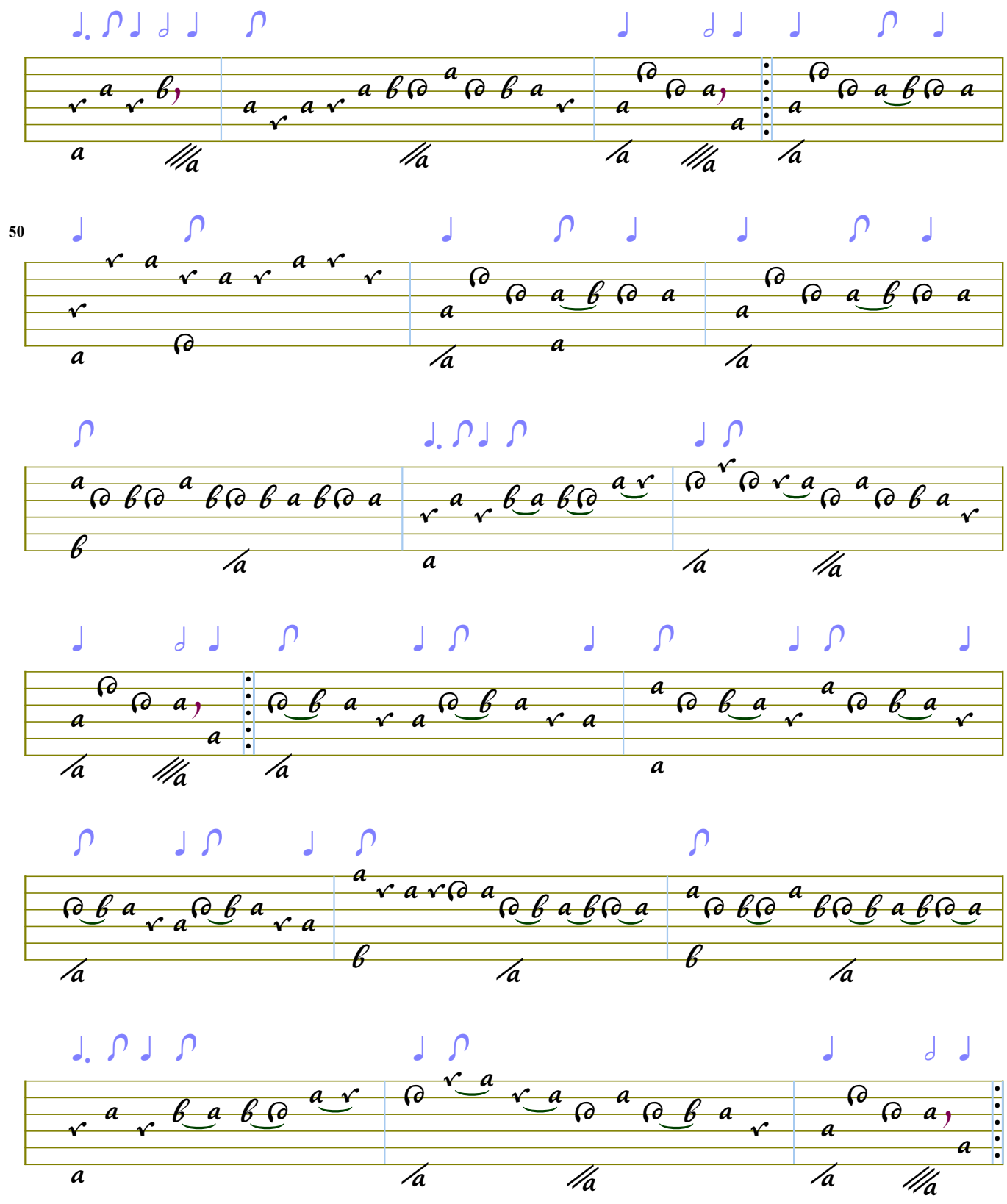
Gavotte, by mr. Gallot



John cock, thy beaver, Jean More's way, by mr. Beck



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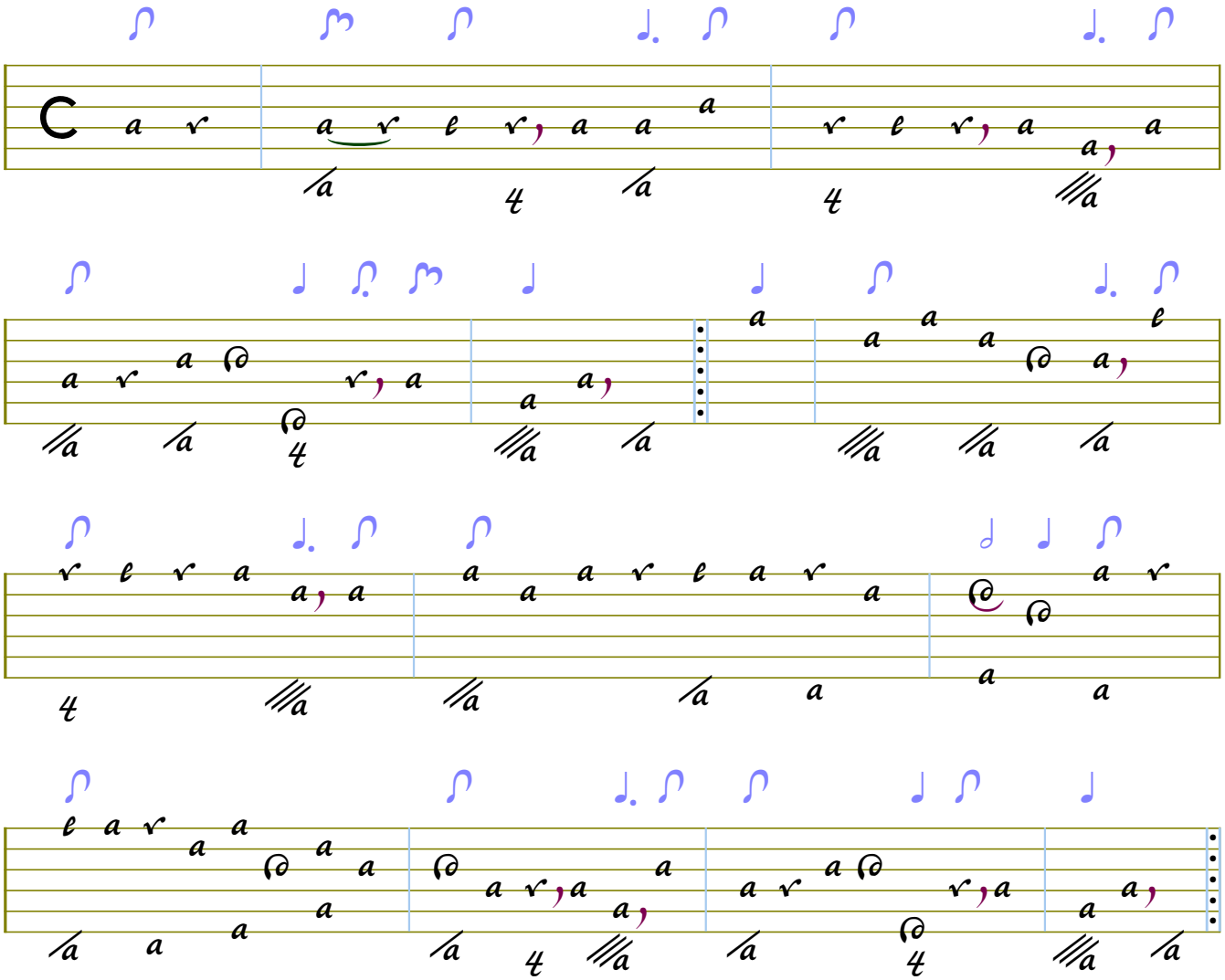
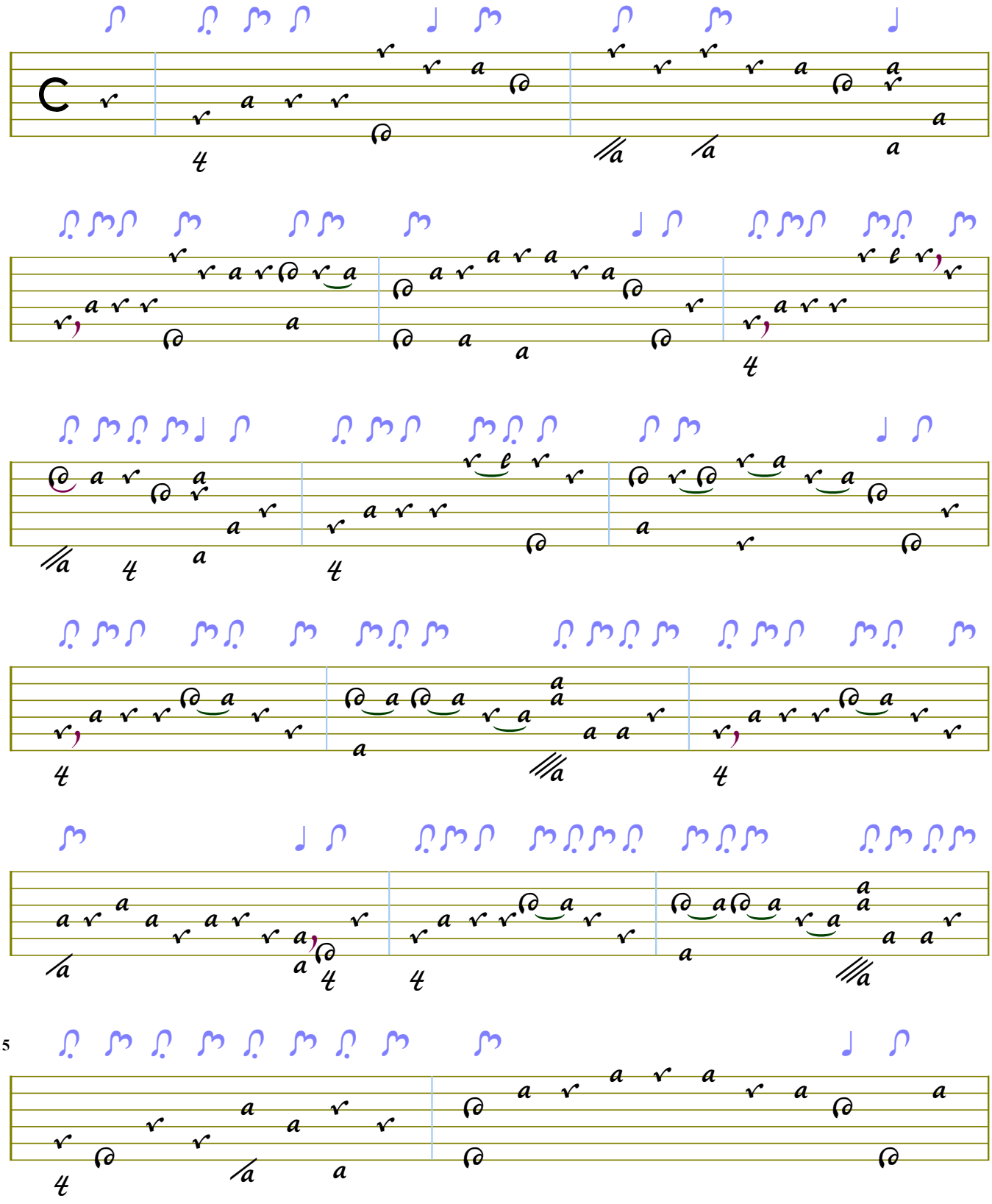
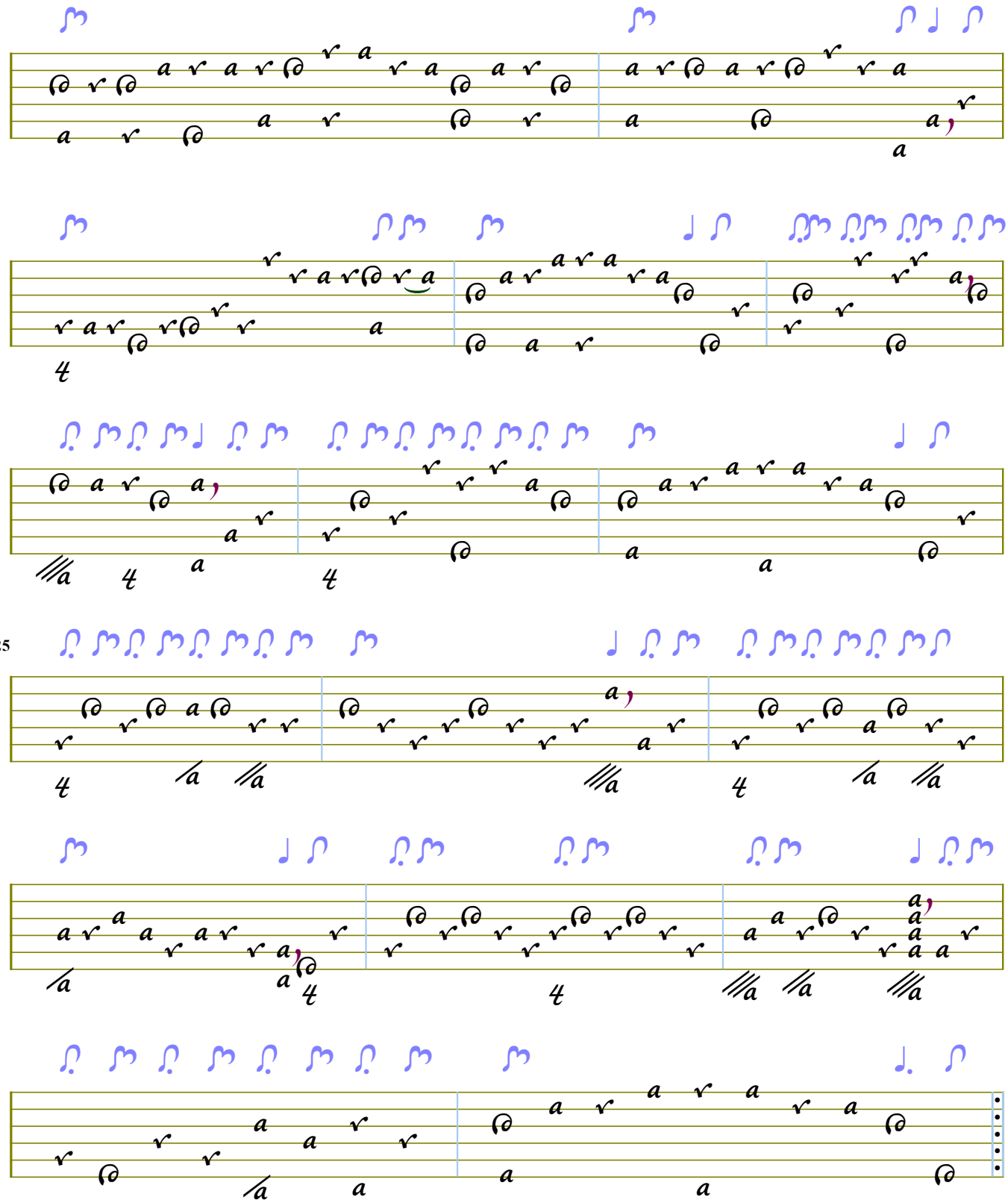
The Lady Errol's Delight, the 2nd way, by David Grieve

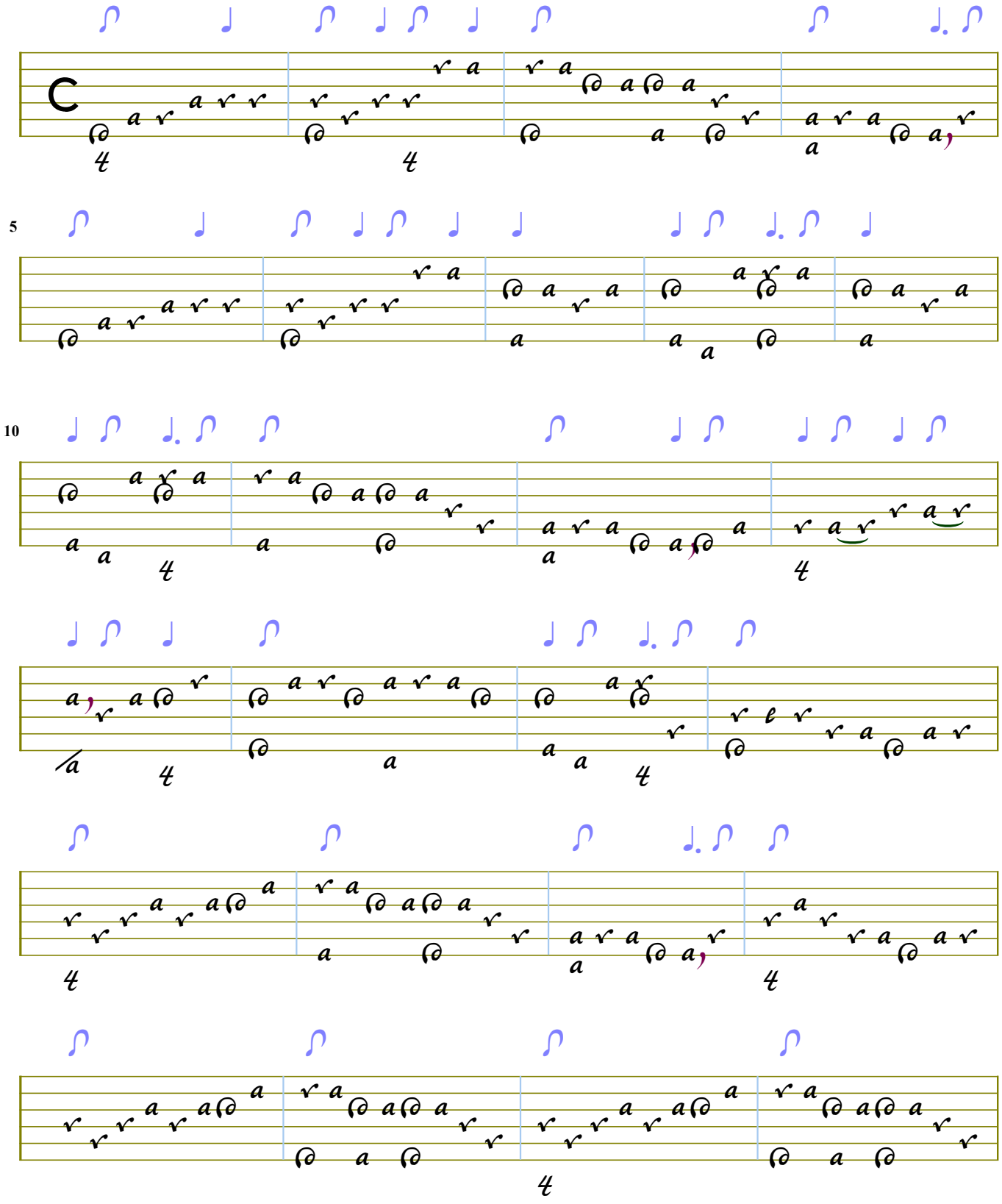


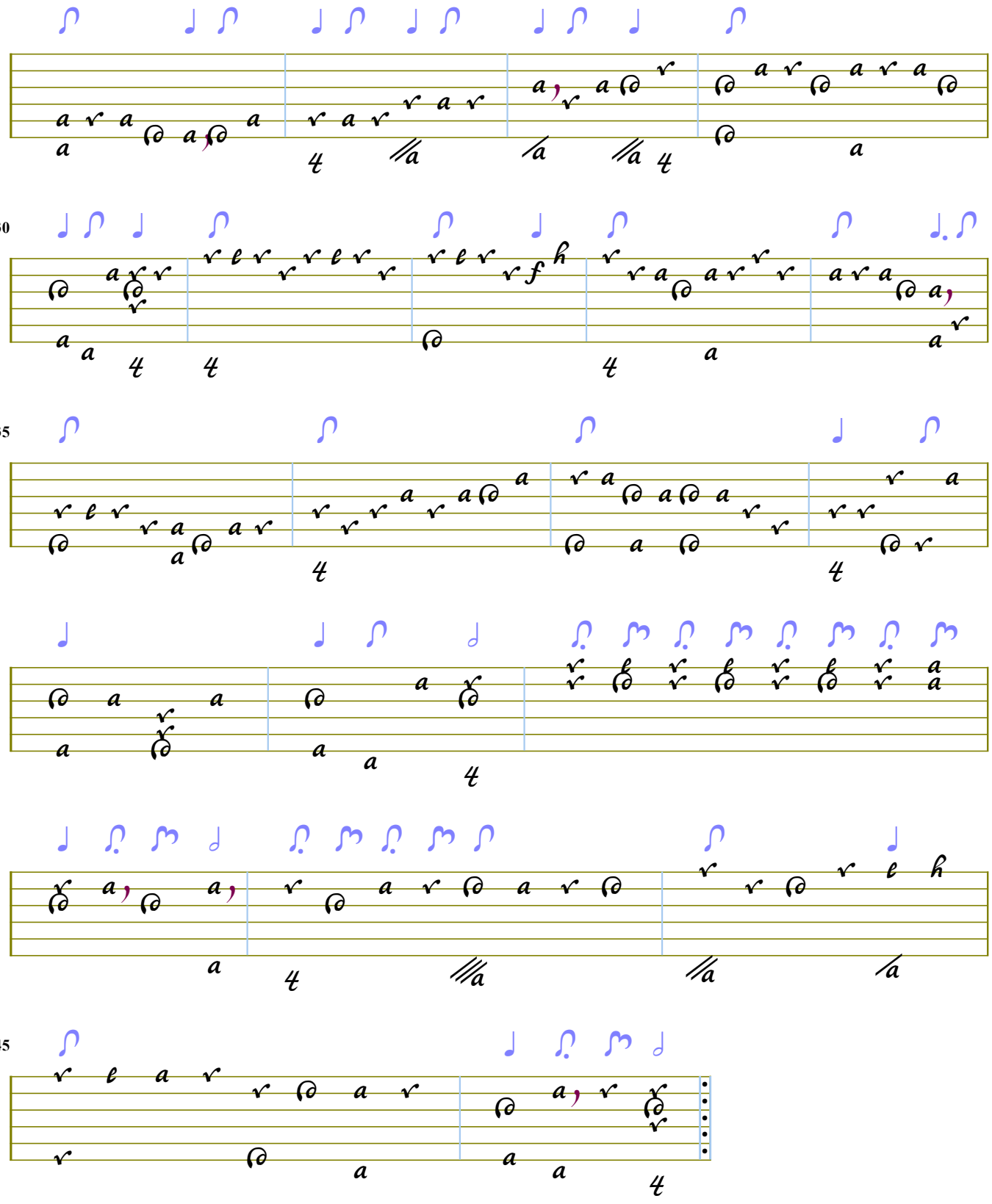
Cockstan, Jean More's way, by mr. Beck



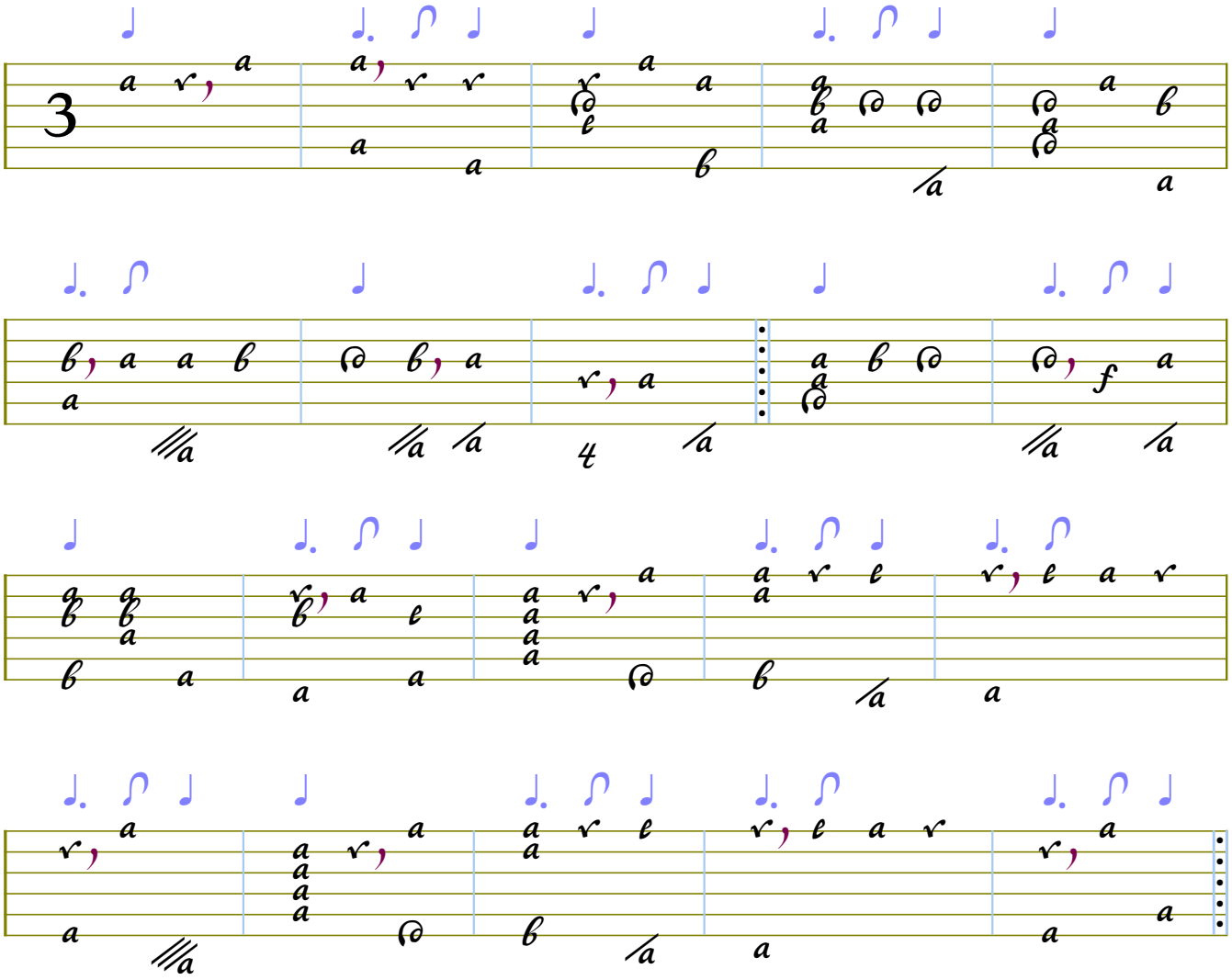


God be with by bonnie love, Jean More's way, by mr. Beck

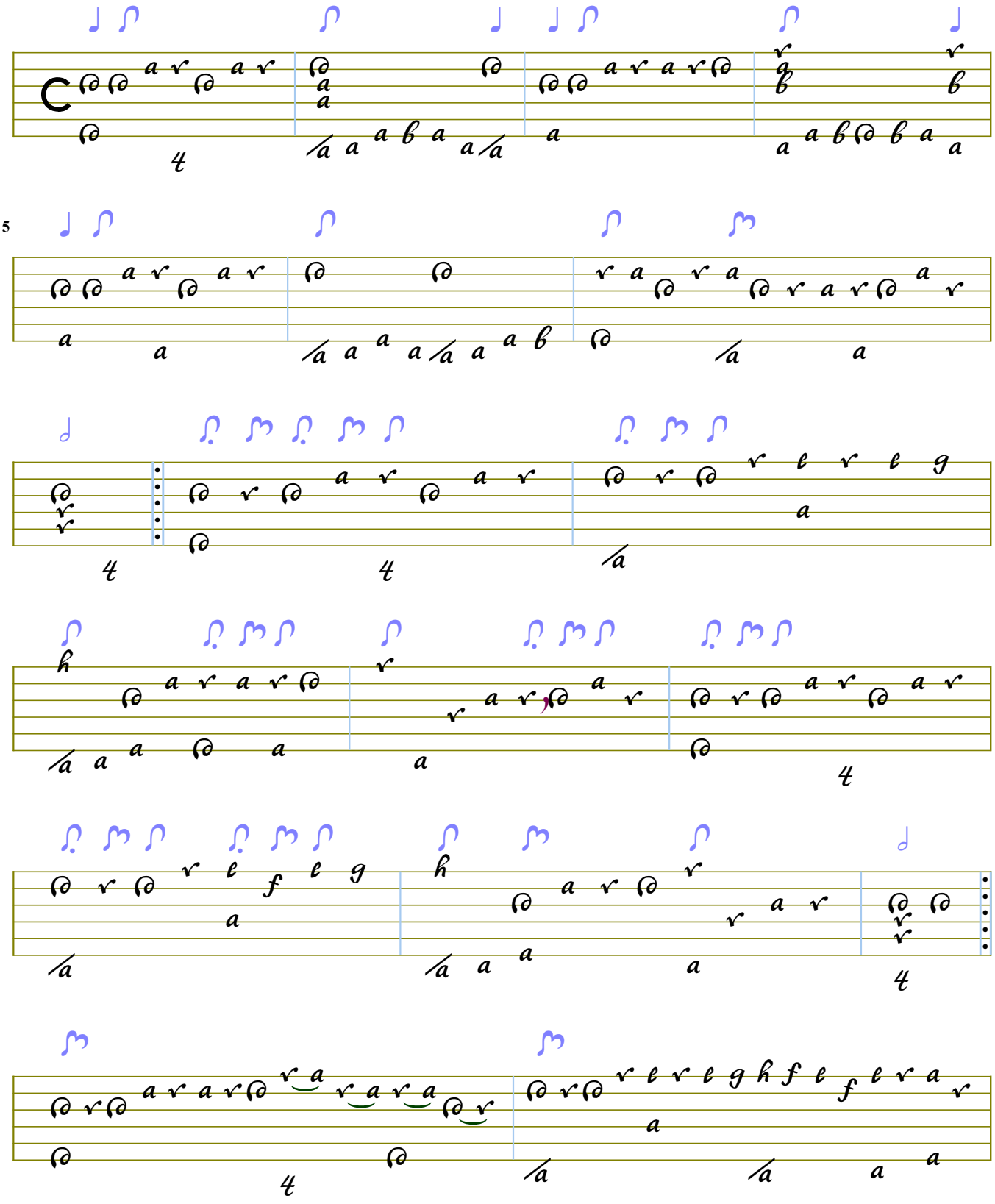


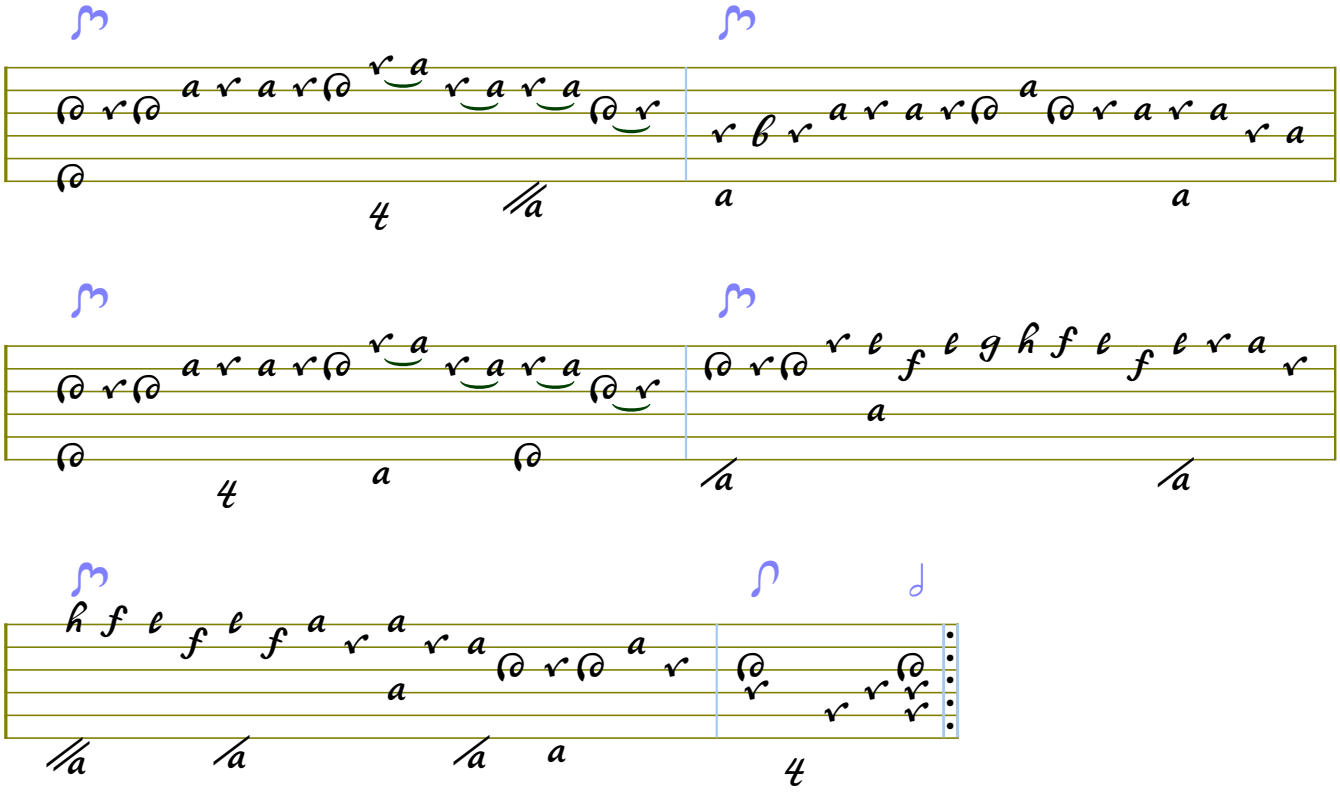


Saraband, by David Grieve

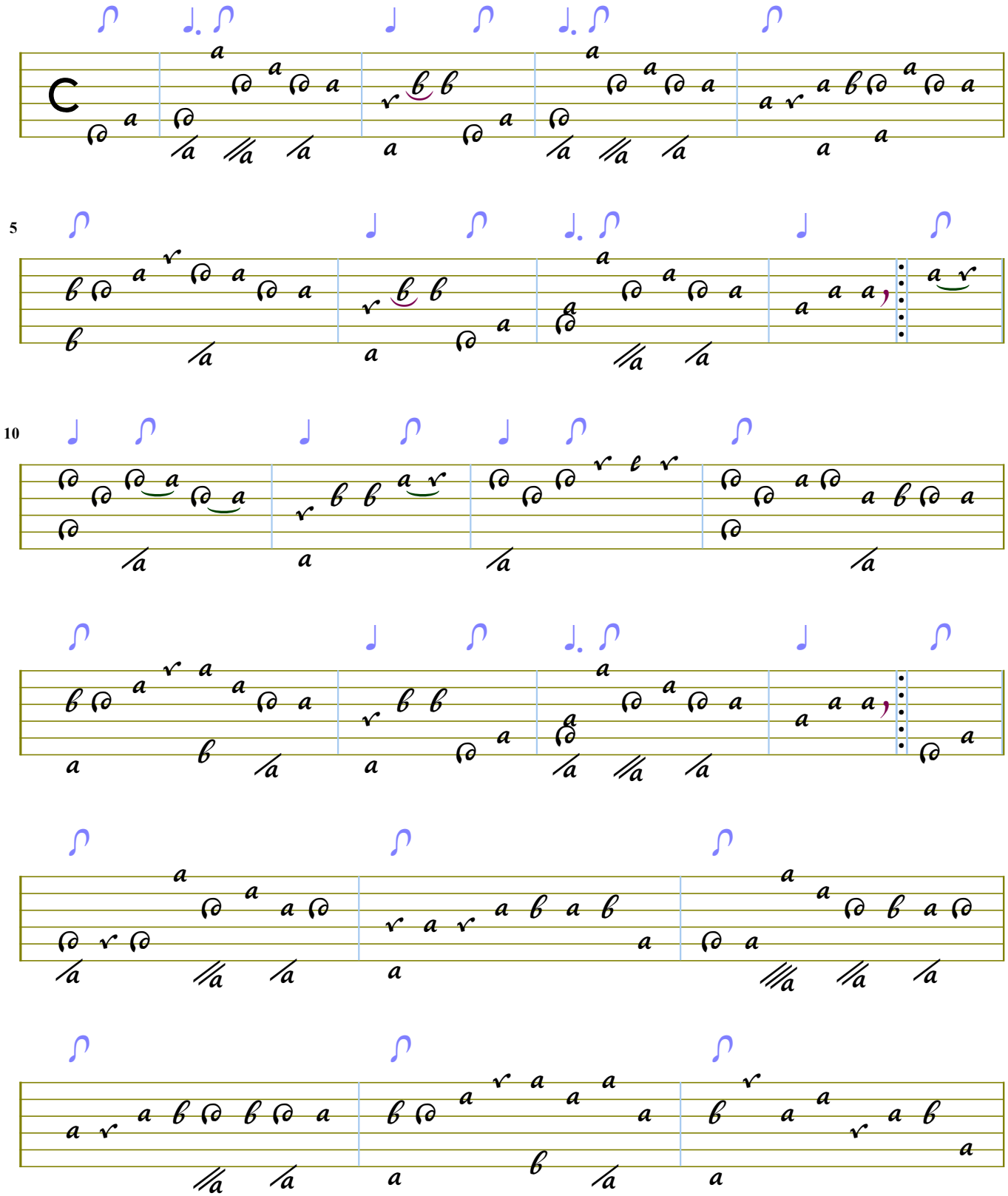


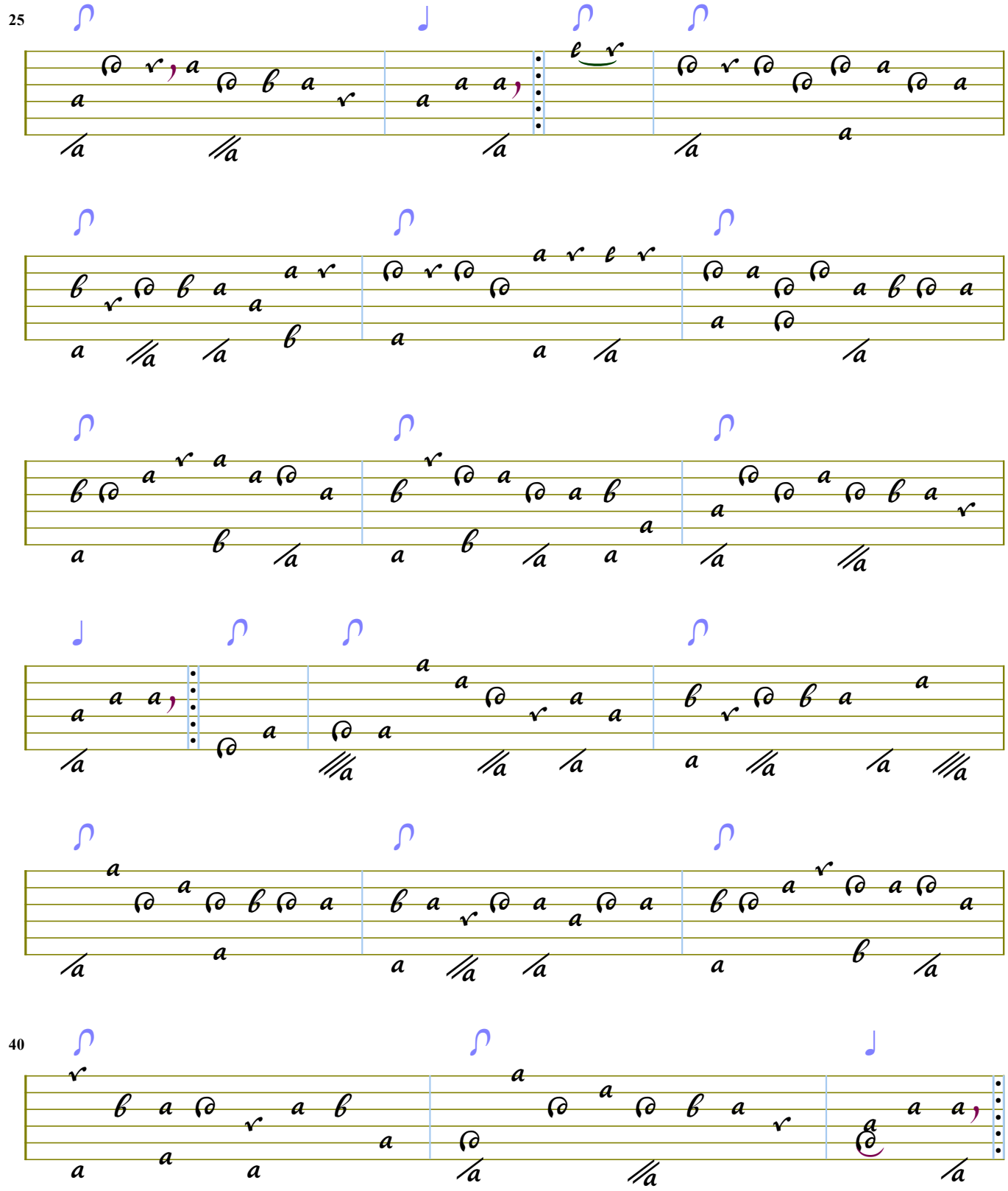
John come kiss me now, or the buffiness, John Morison's way, by mr. Beck





The Galloway horne pipe,. by mr. Beck

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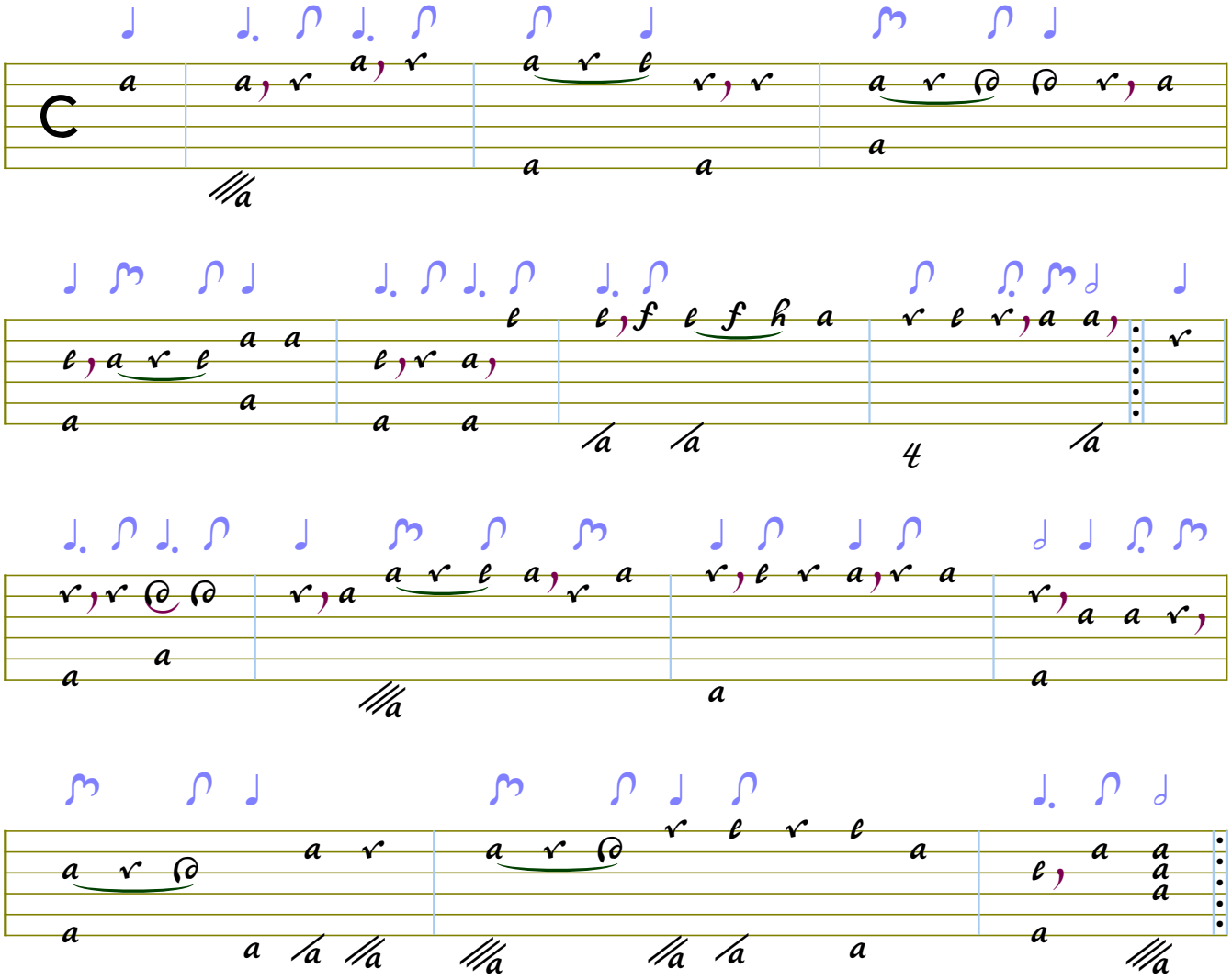
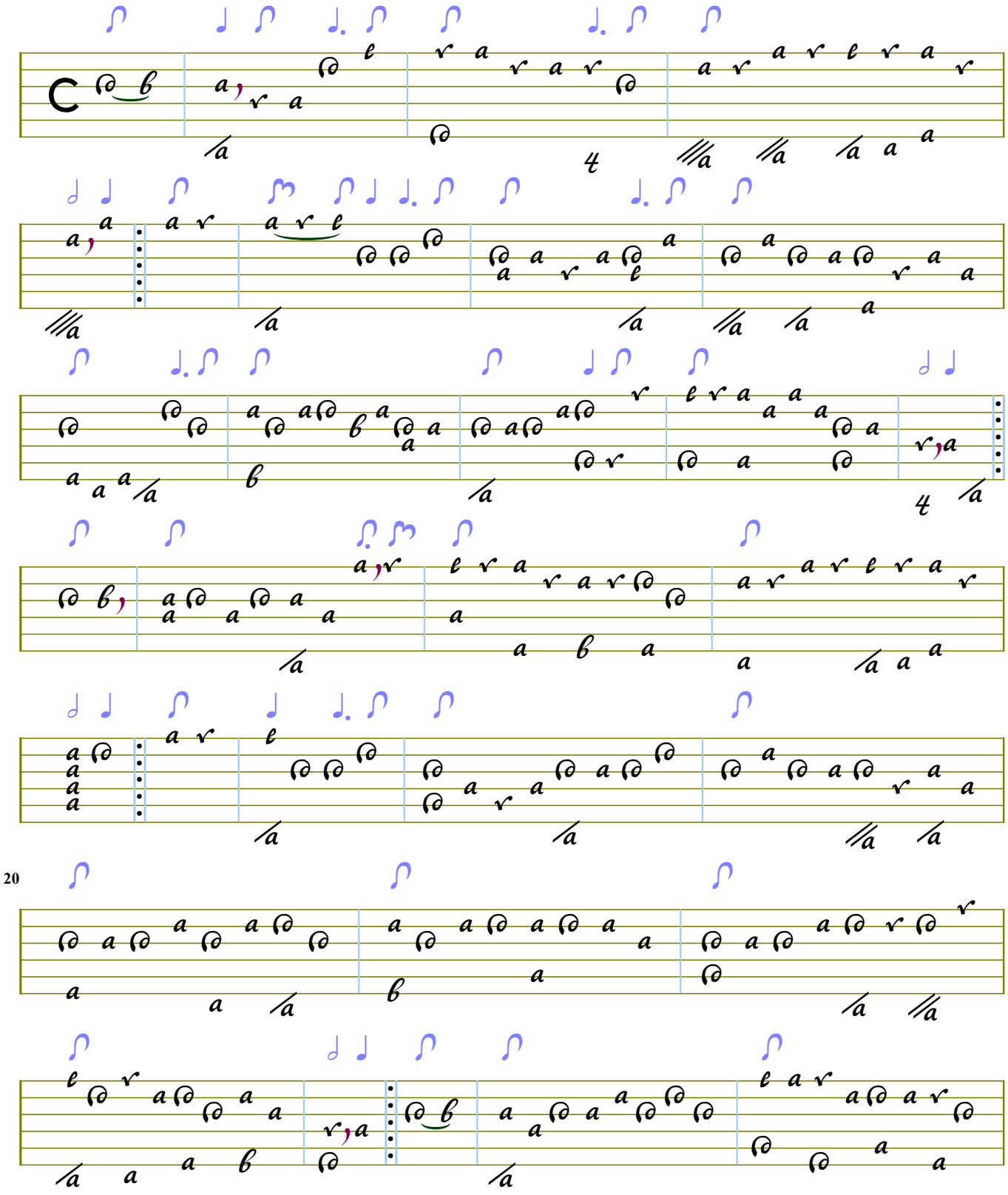
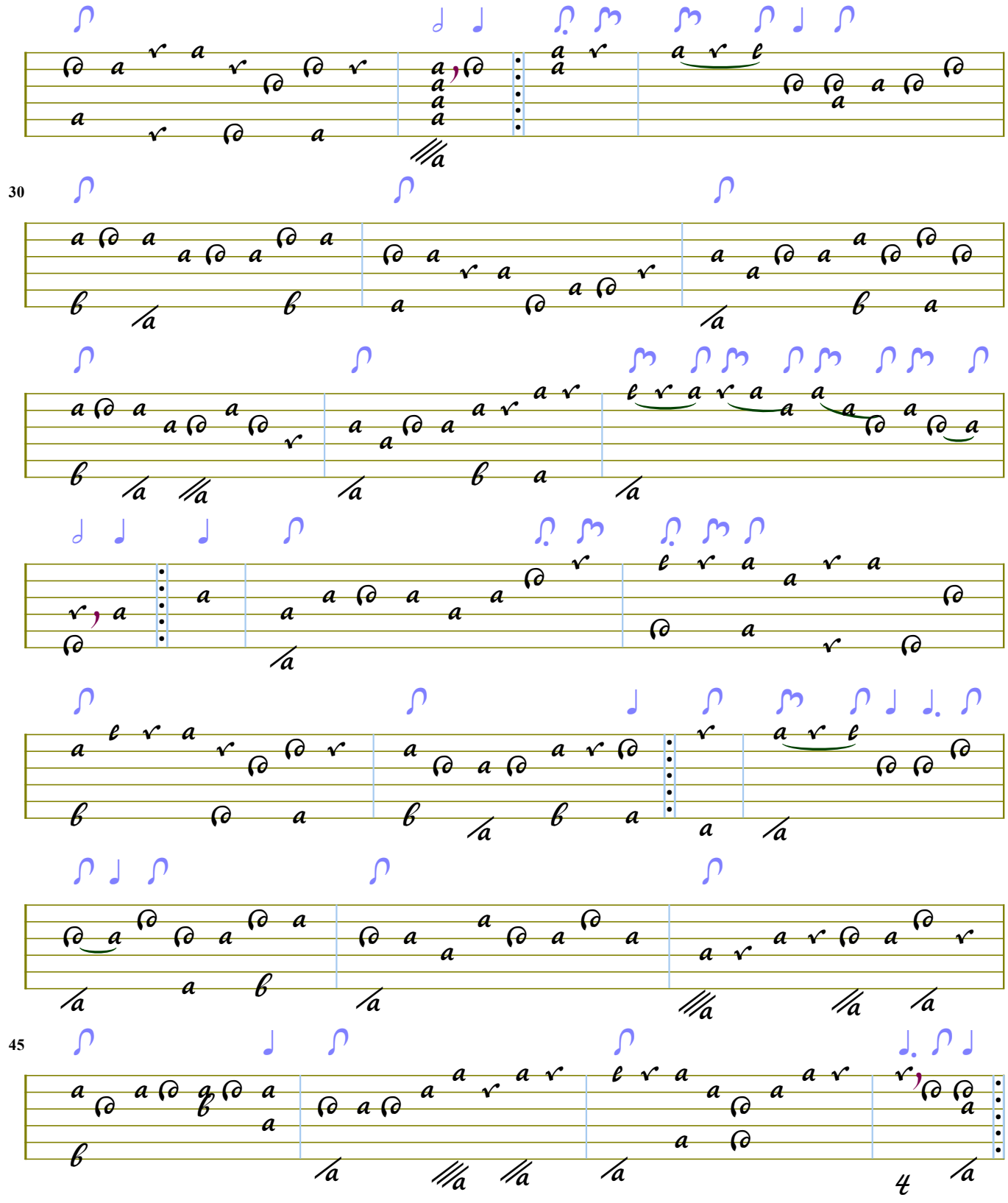
Gerard's mistress, David Griev's way



The last tyme I came over the moore, by mr. Beck

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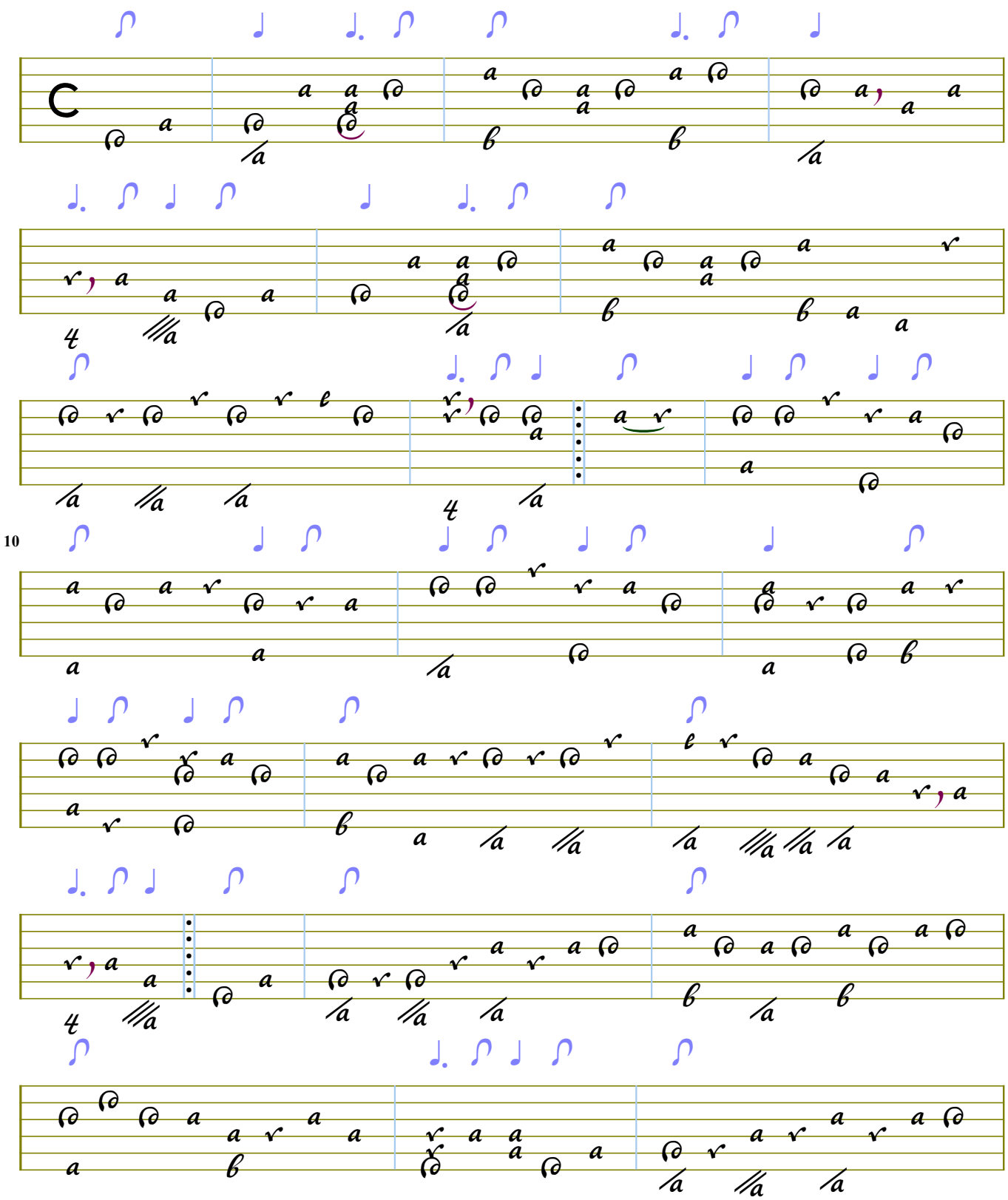
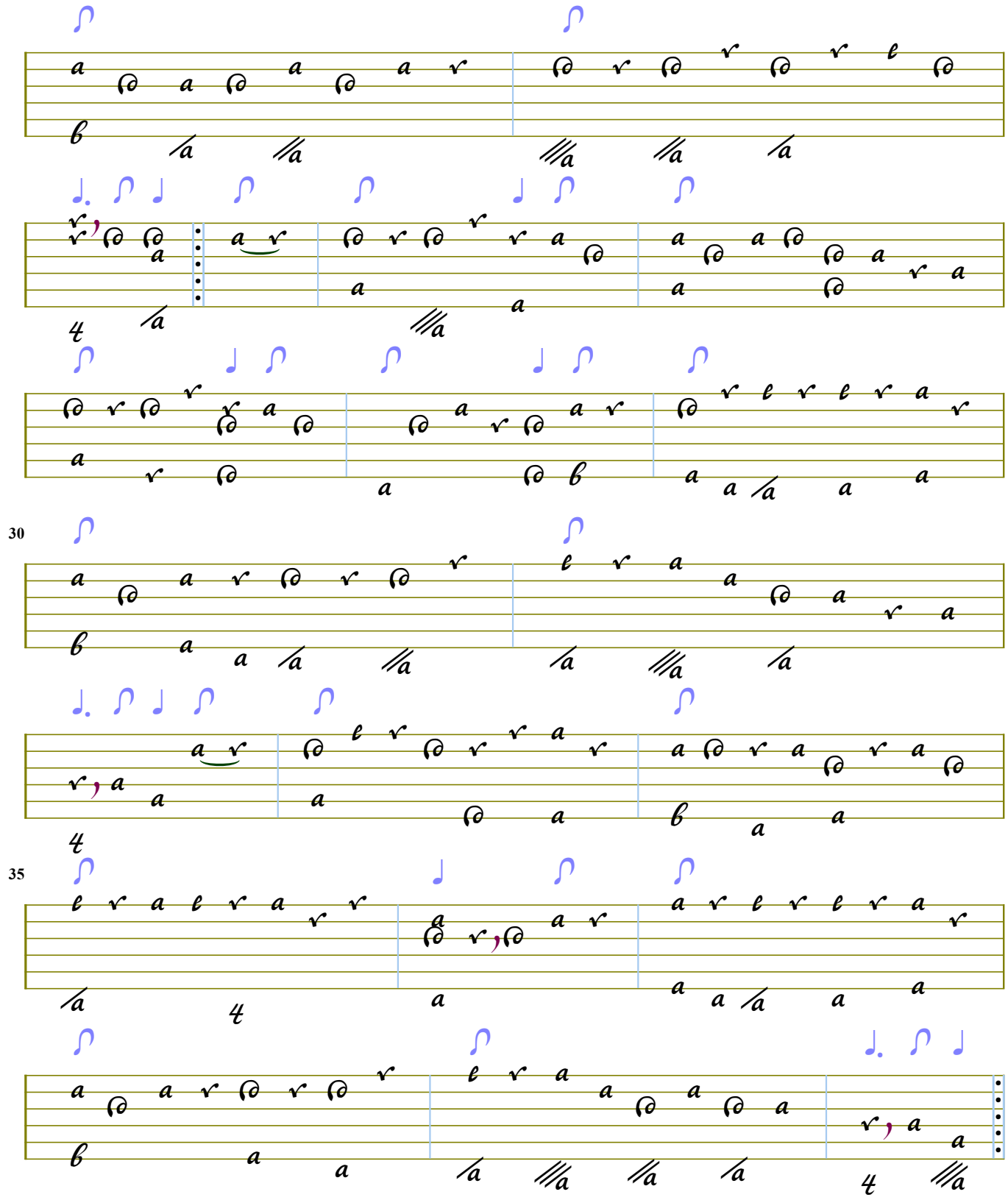
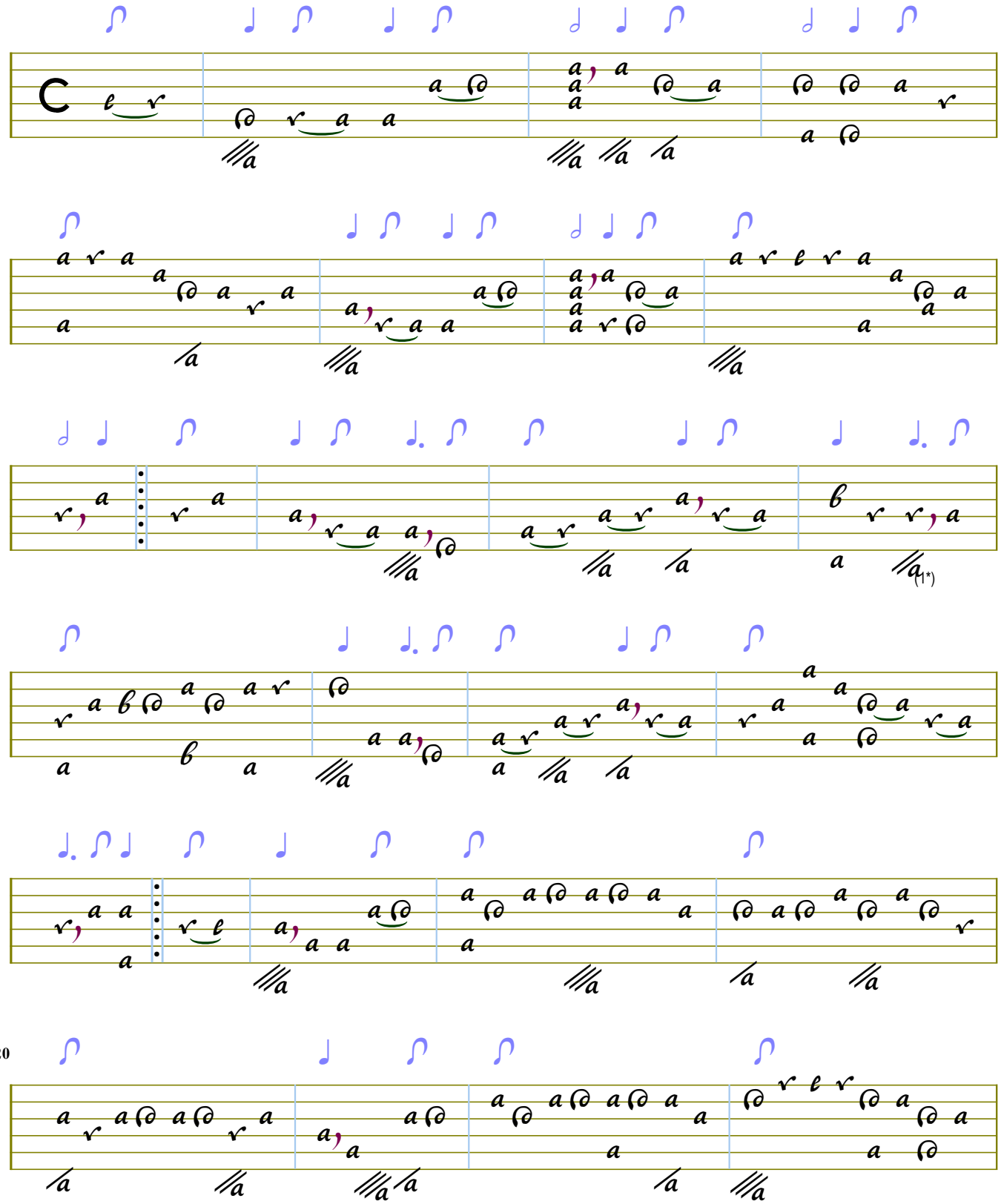
Jamaica, Jean More's way, by mr, Beck

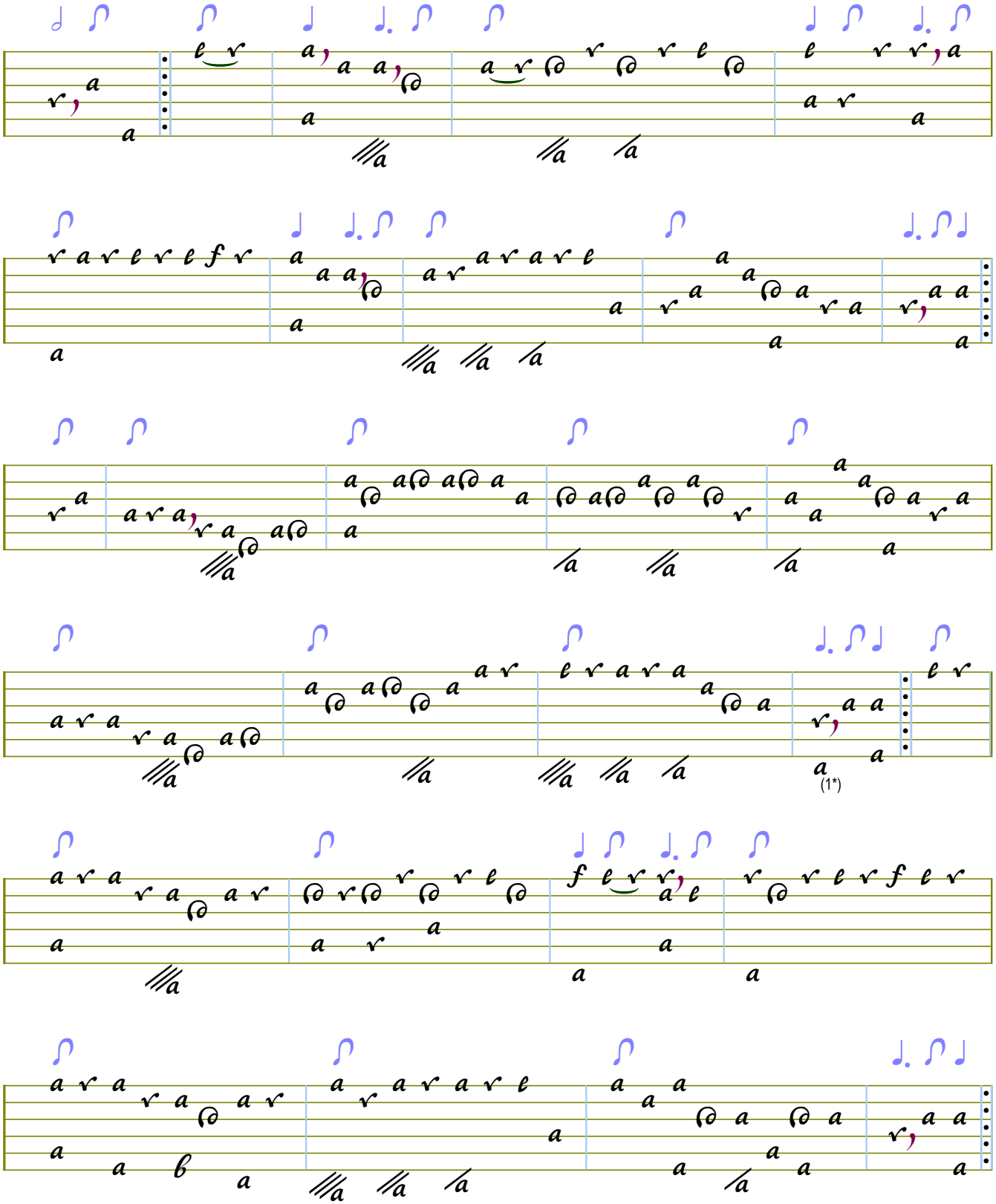




I will have my gown made, by mr. Beck

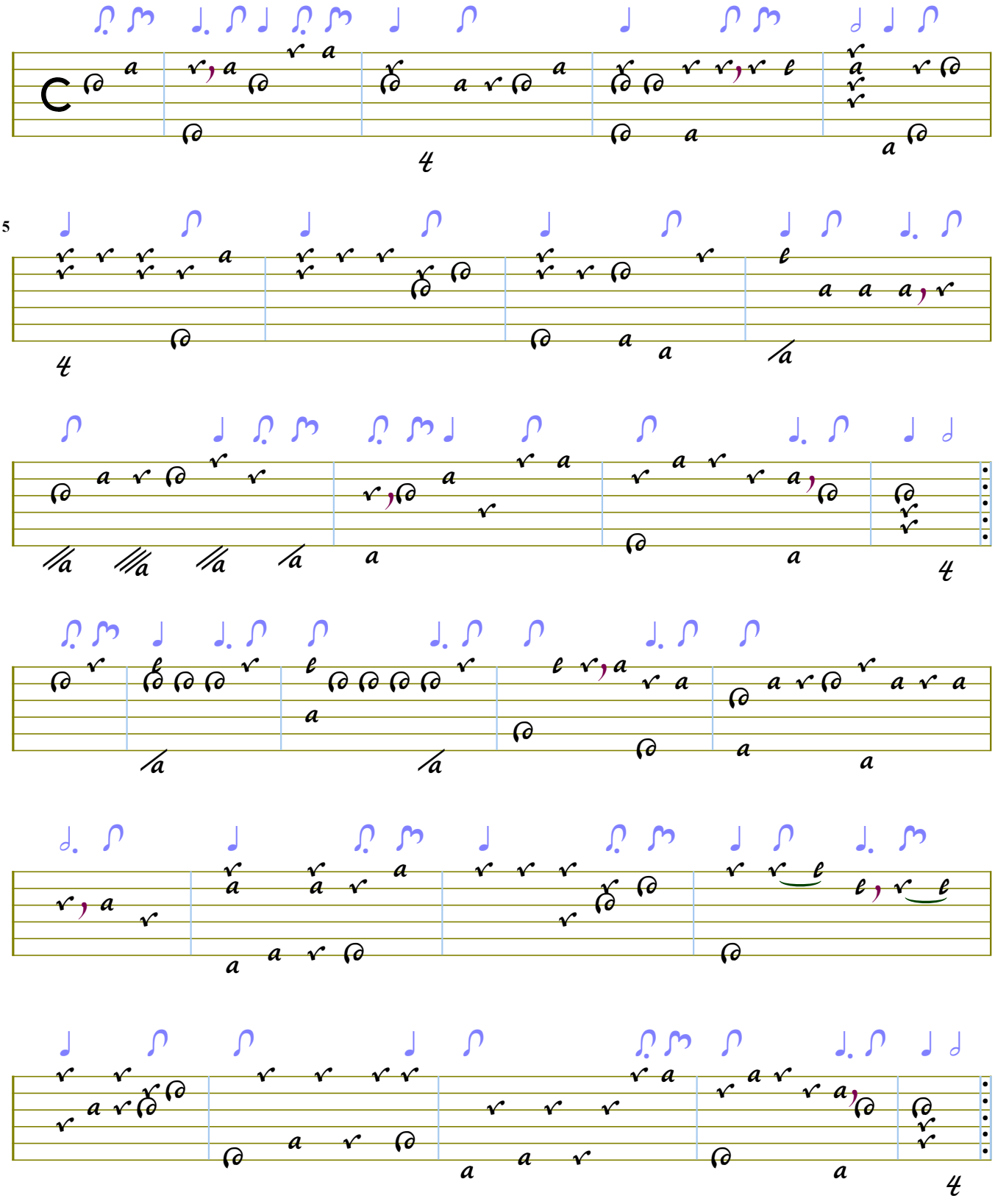


1. Orig: bass ///a

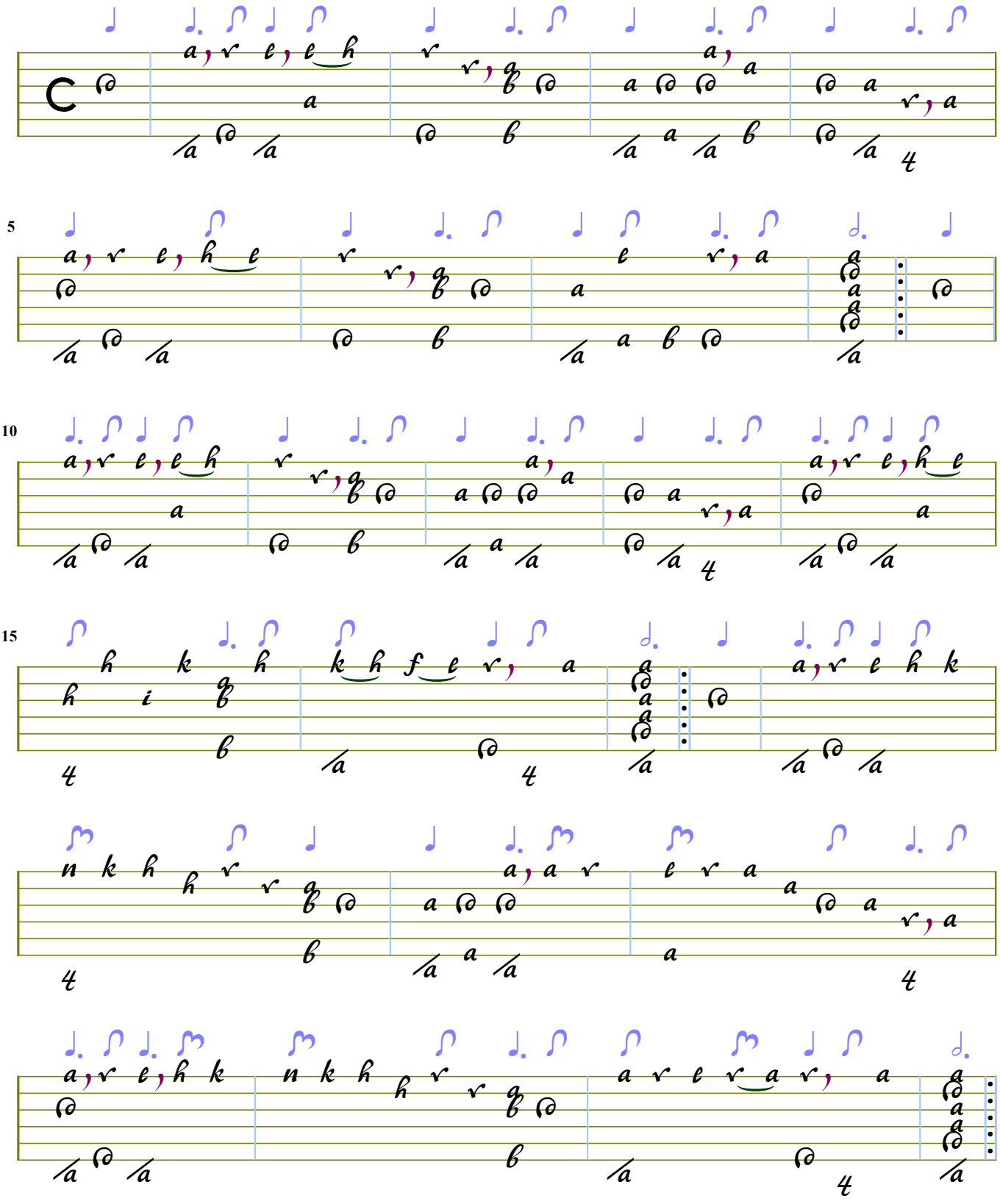


1. Orig: a on 6th course

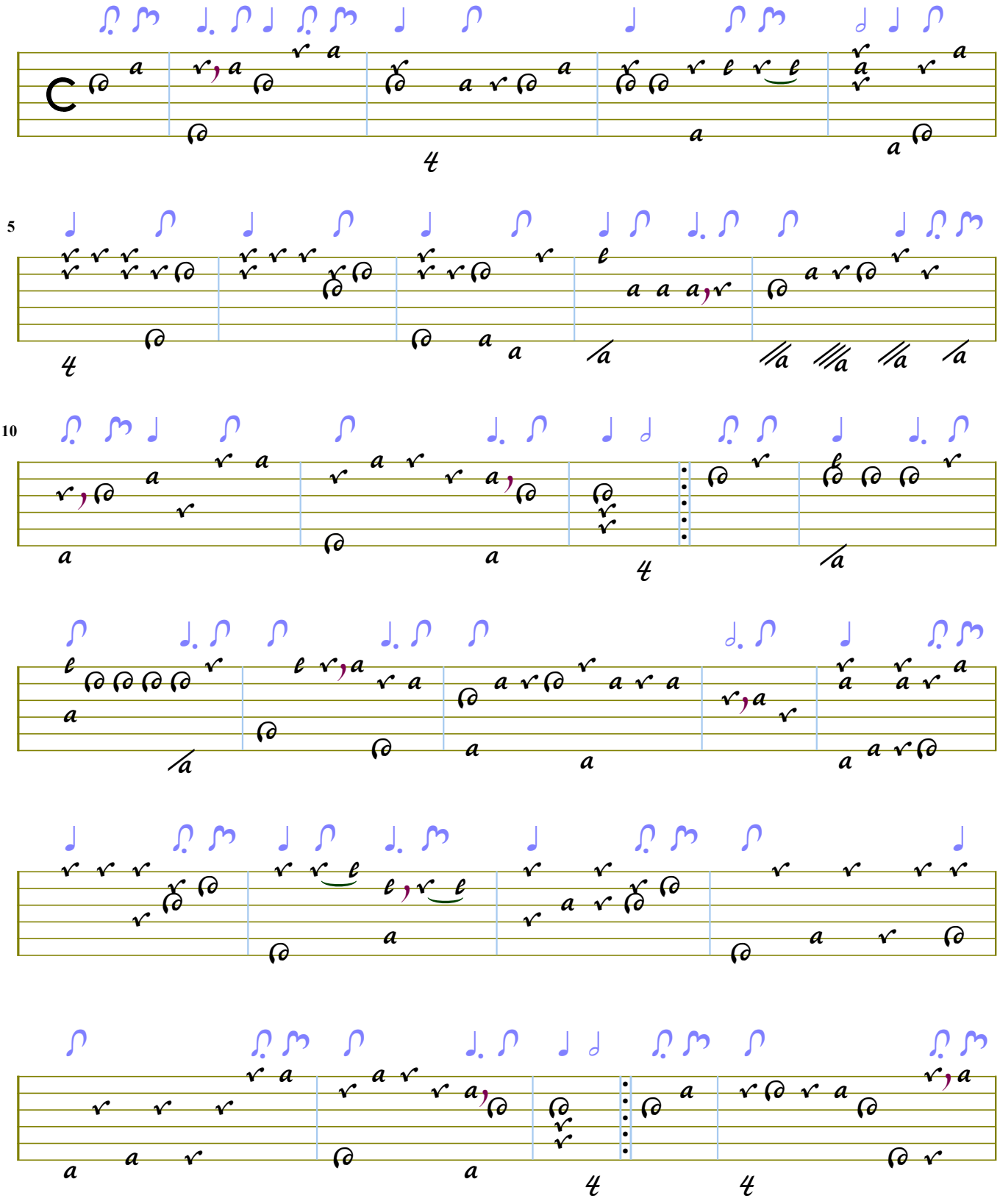
The Nightingale, John Morrison's way, without any division, by mr. Beck

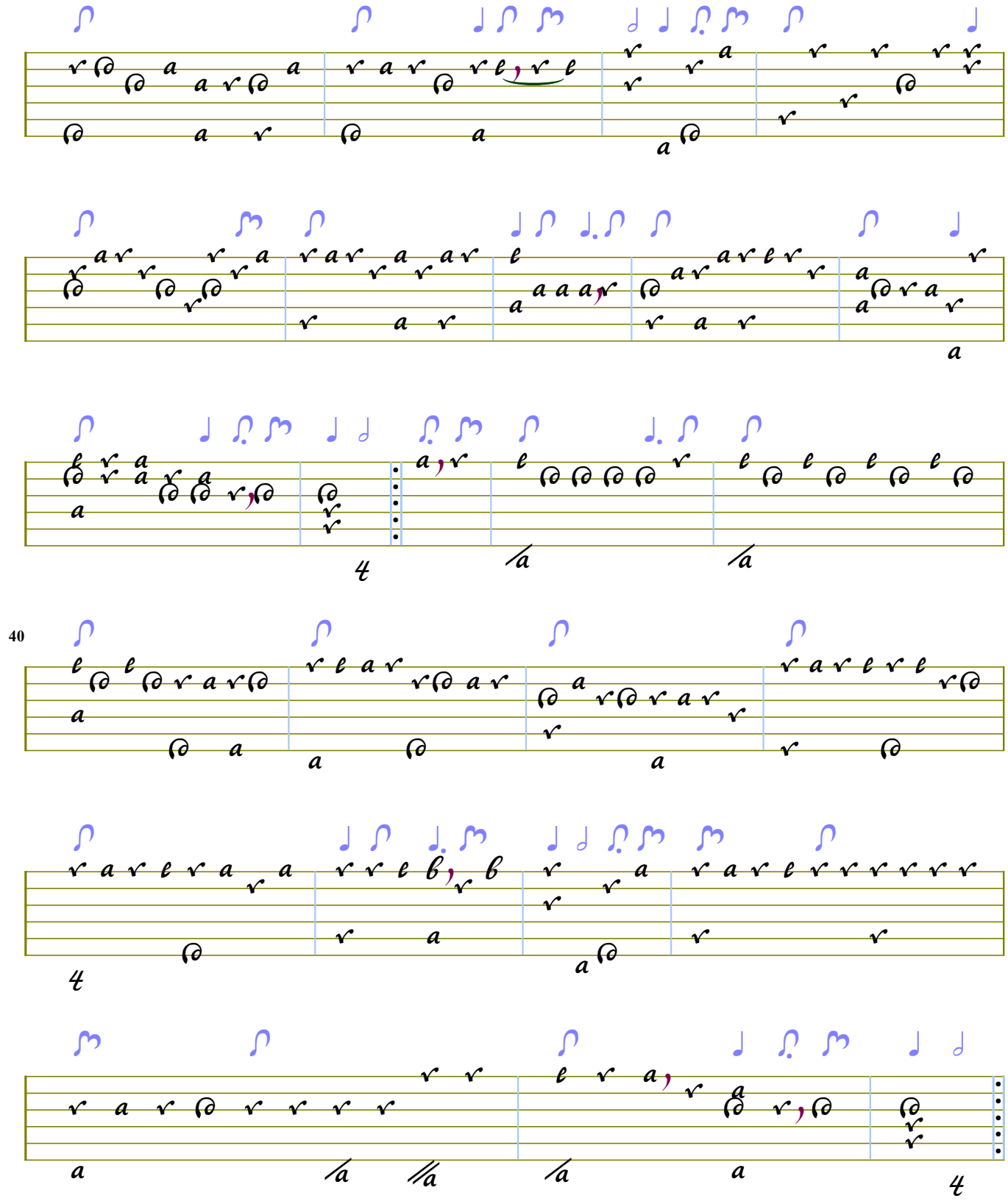


I wish I were where Helen lyes, by David Grieve



The Nightingale, with a division, by mr. Beck

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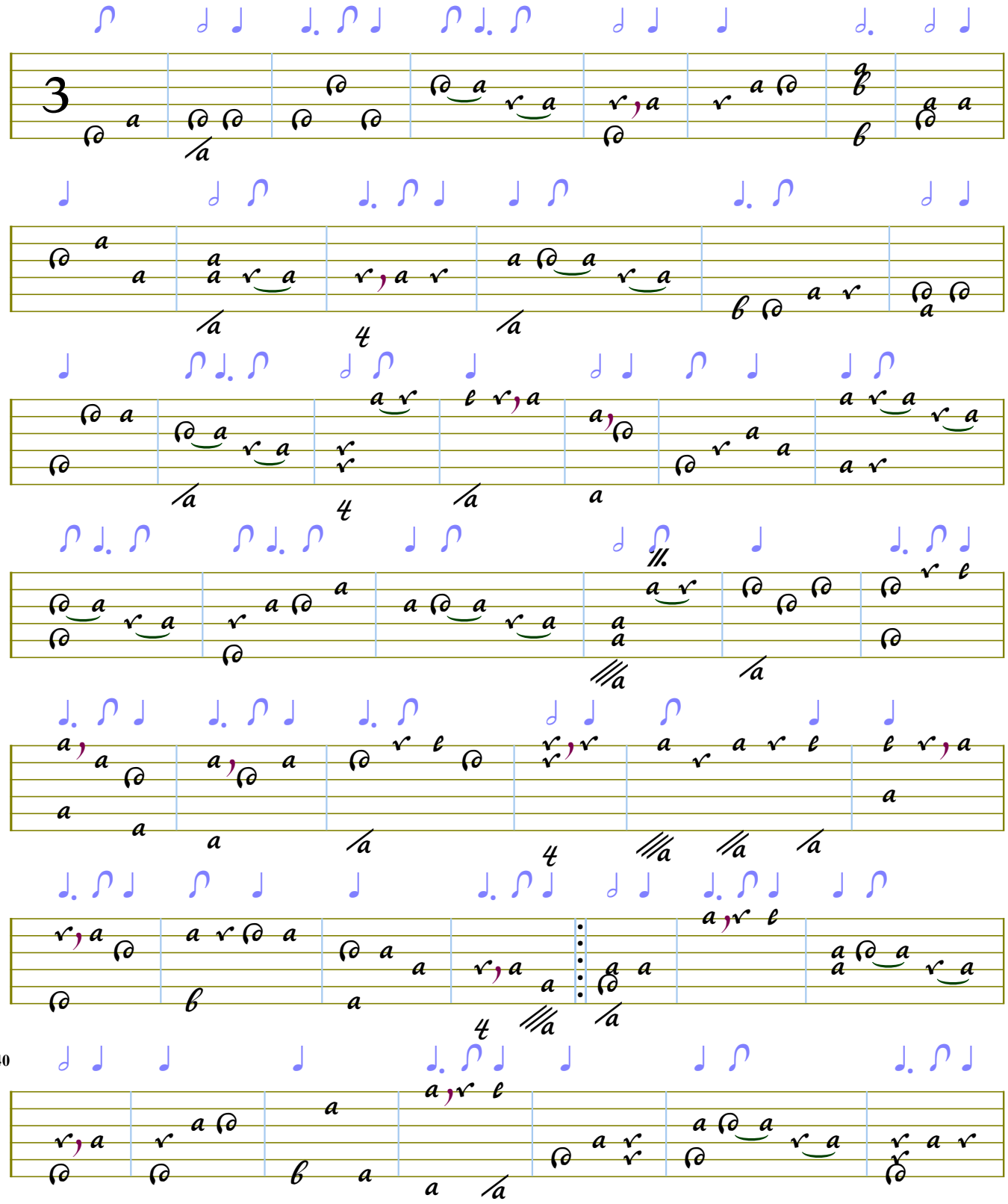
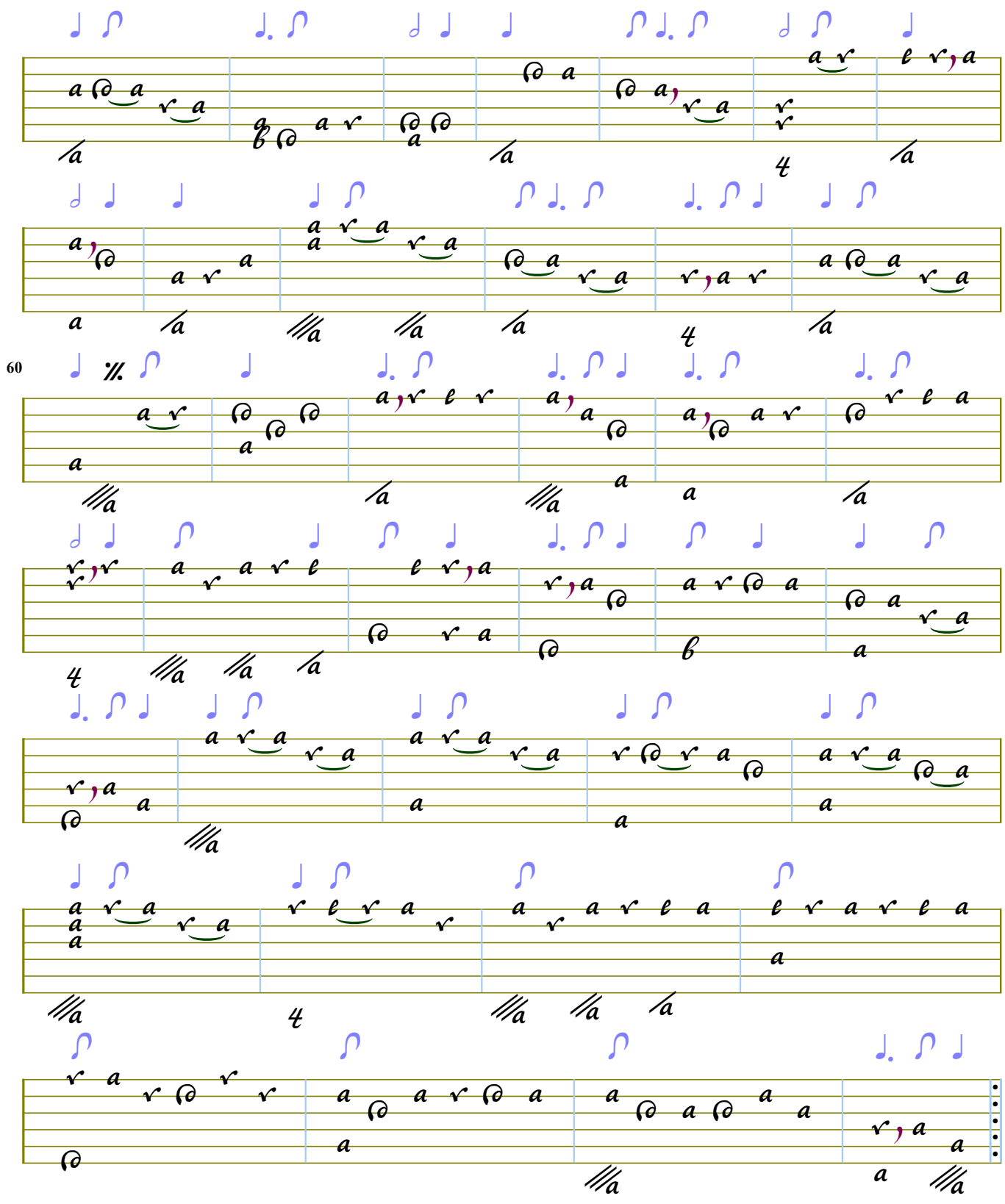
If the kirk would let me be, by mr. Beck

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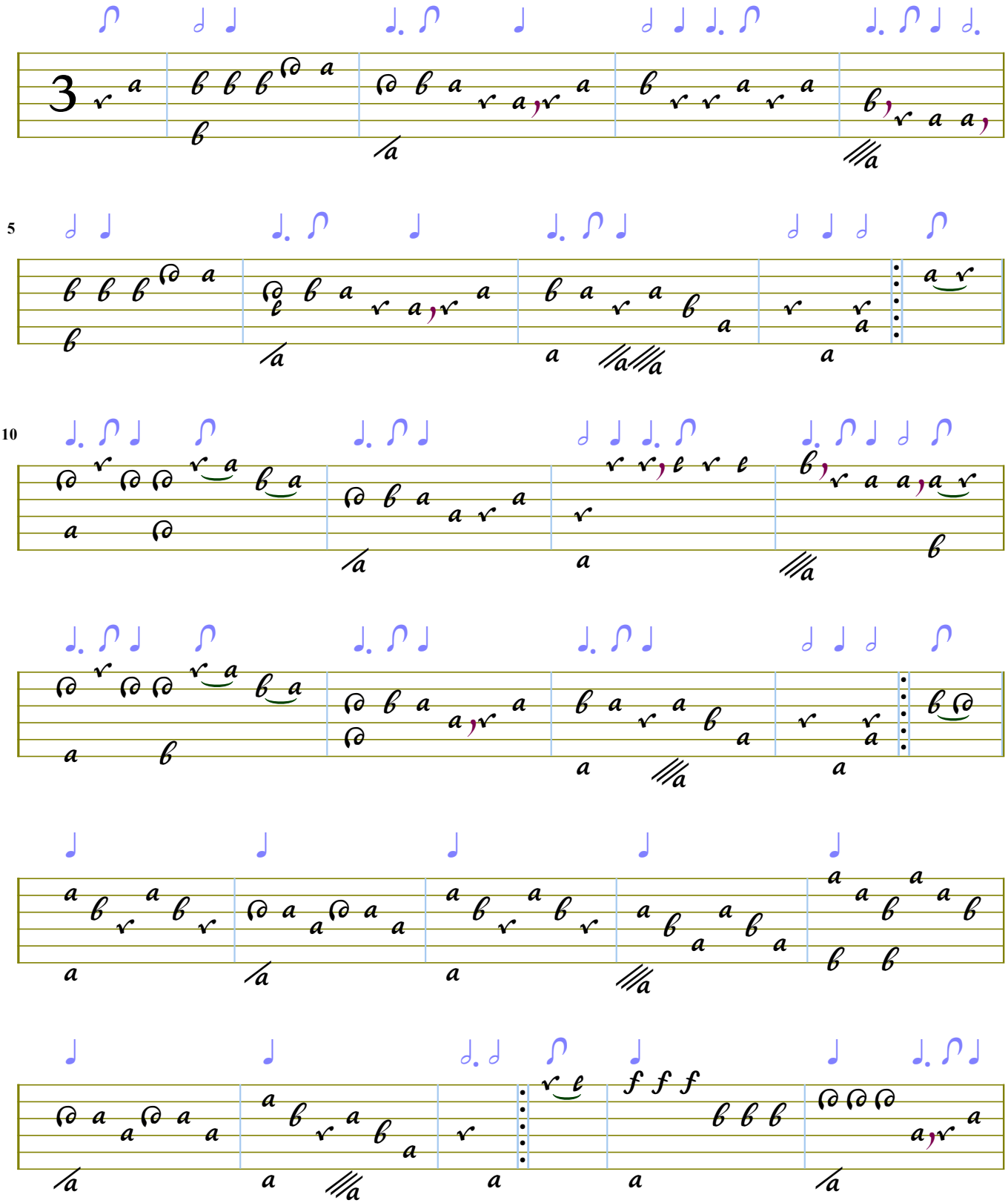
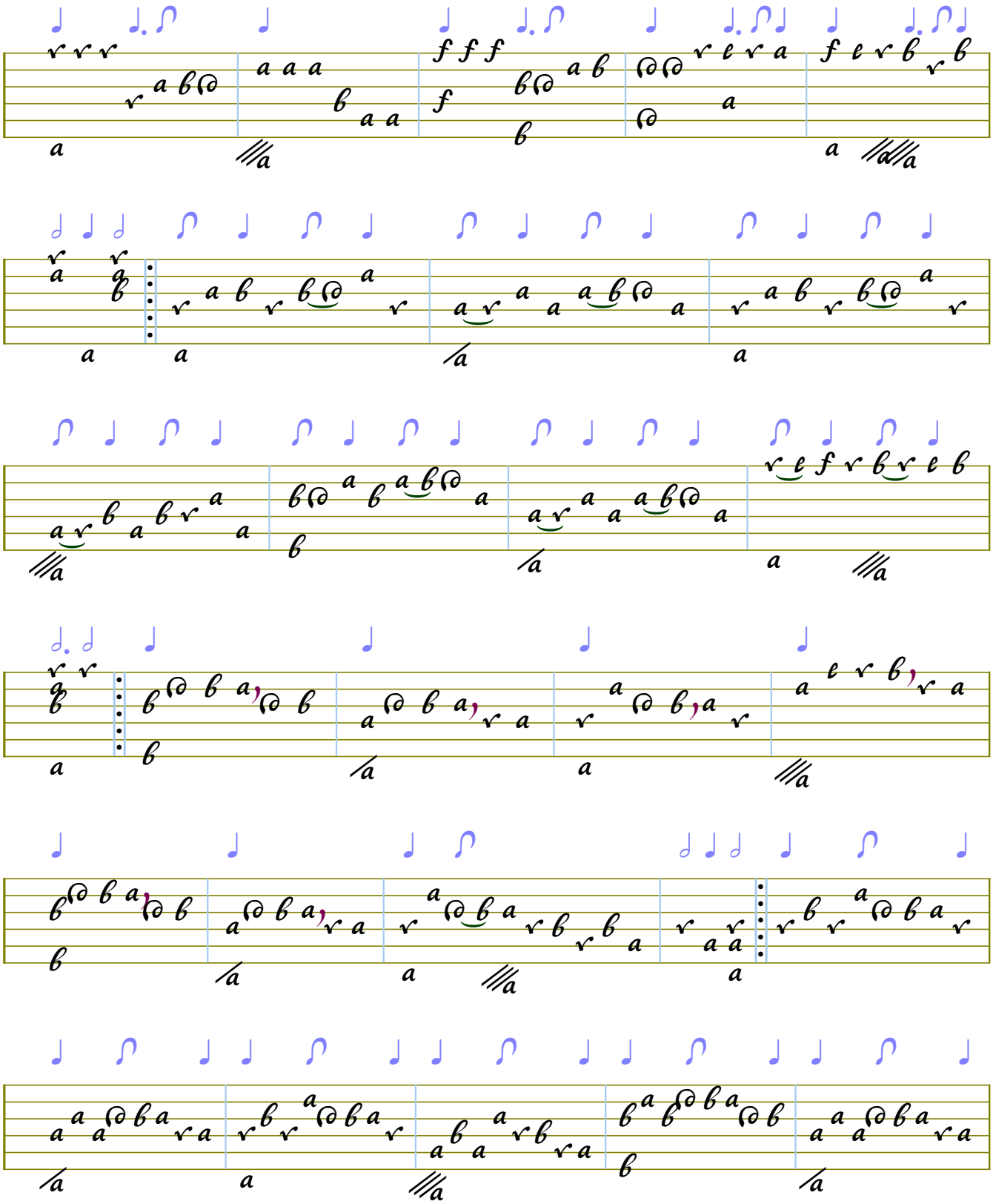
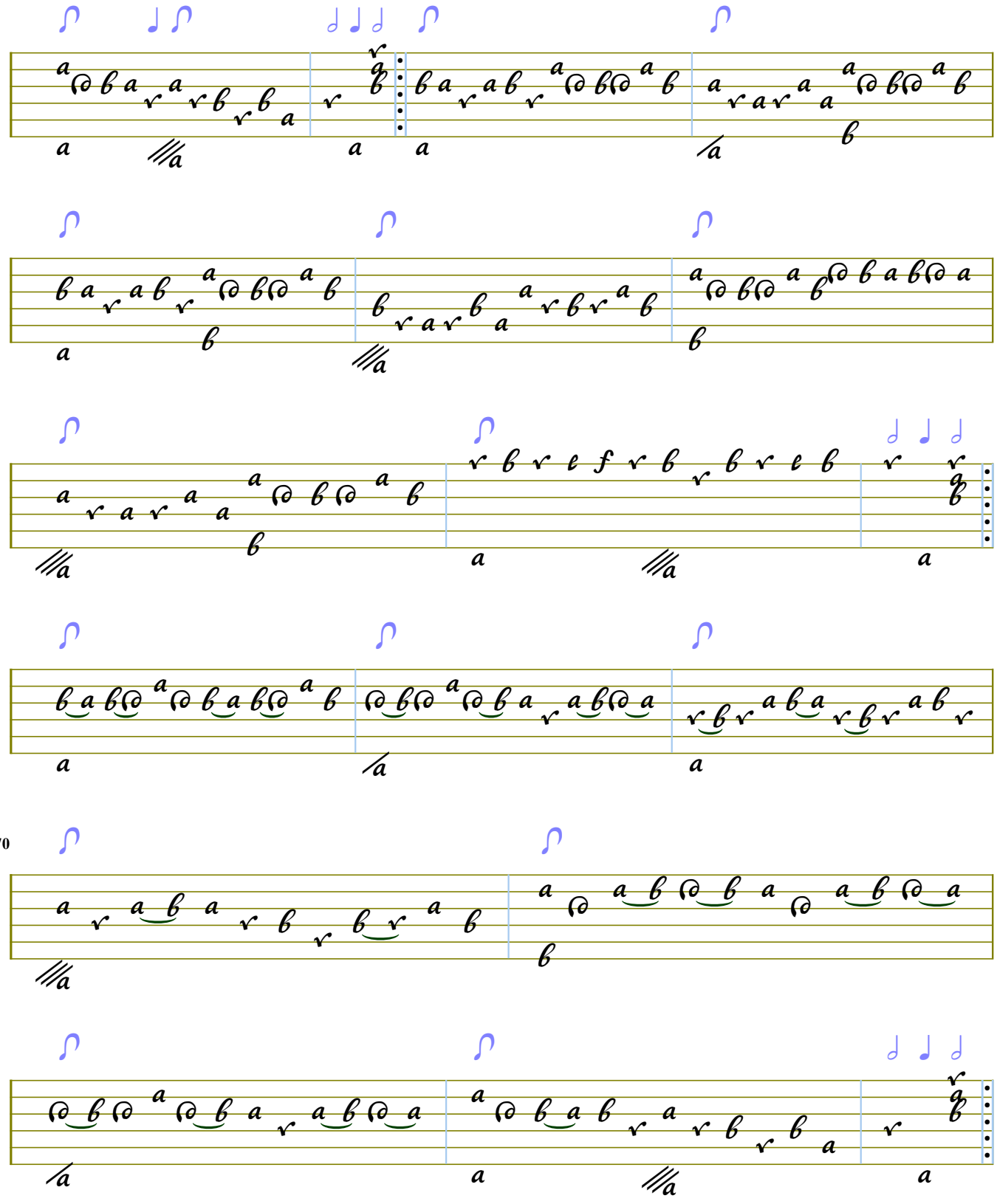
Greensleeves, the 9th string lowed by halve a note, by mr. Beck

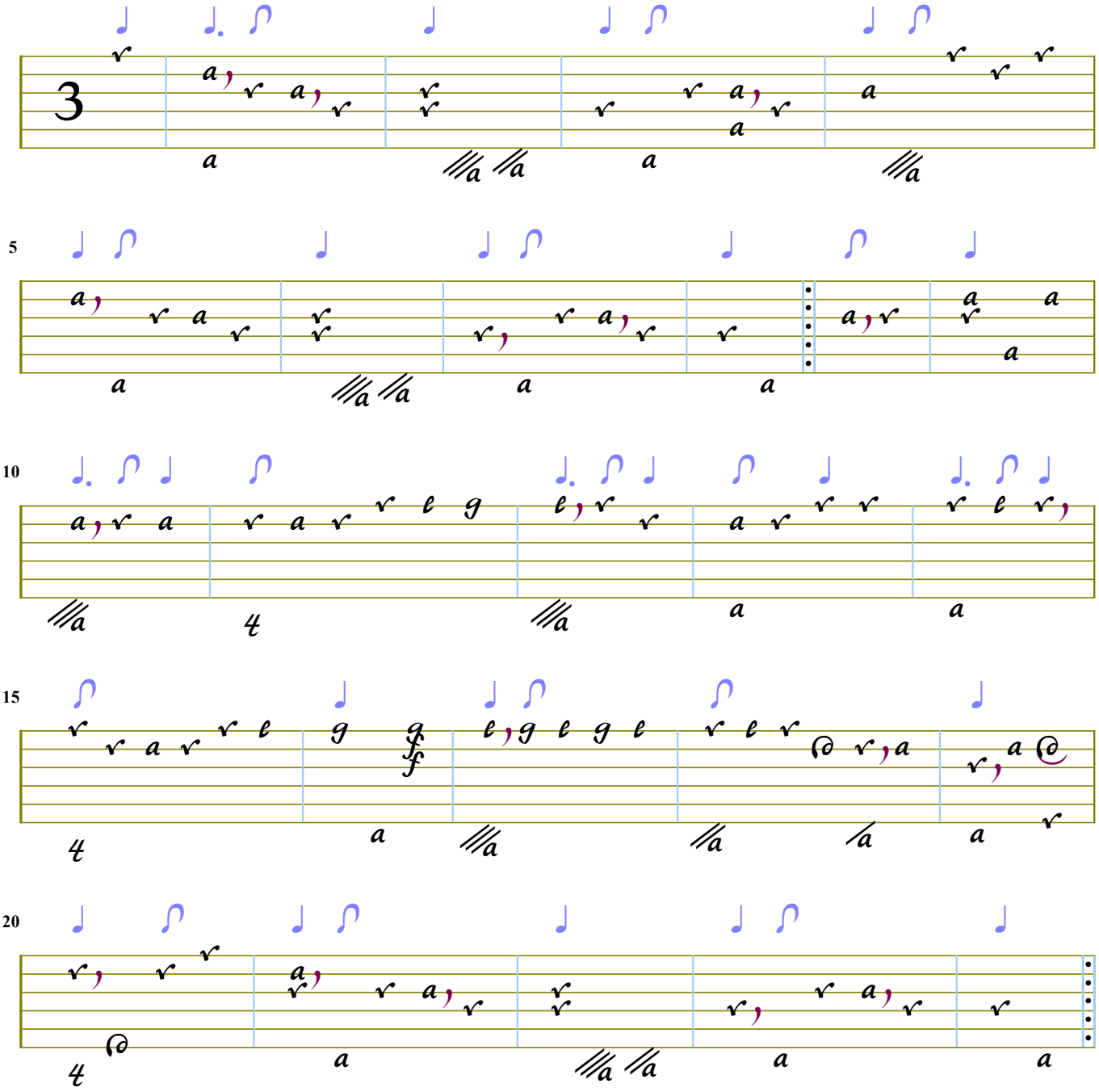




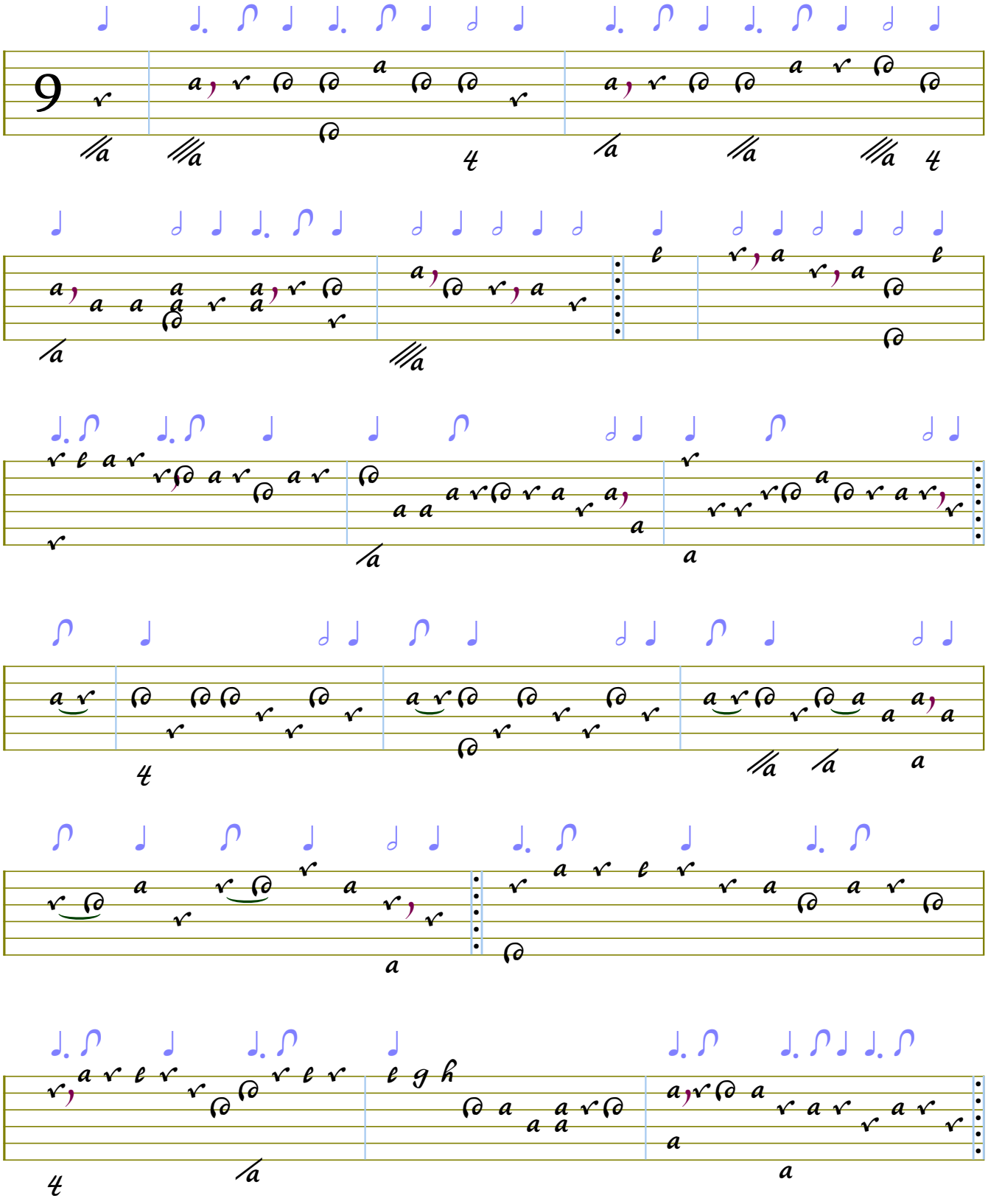


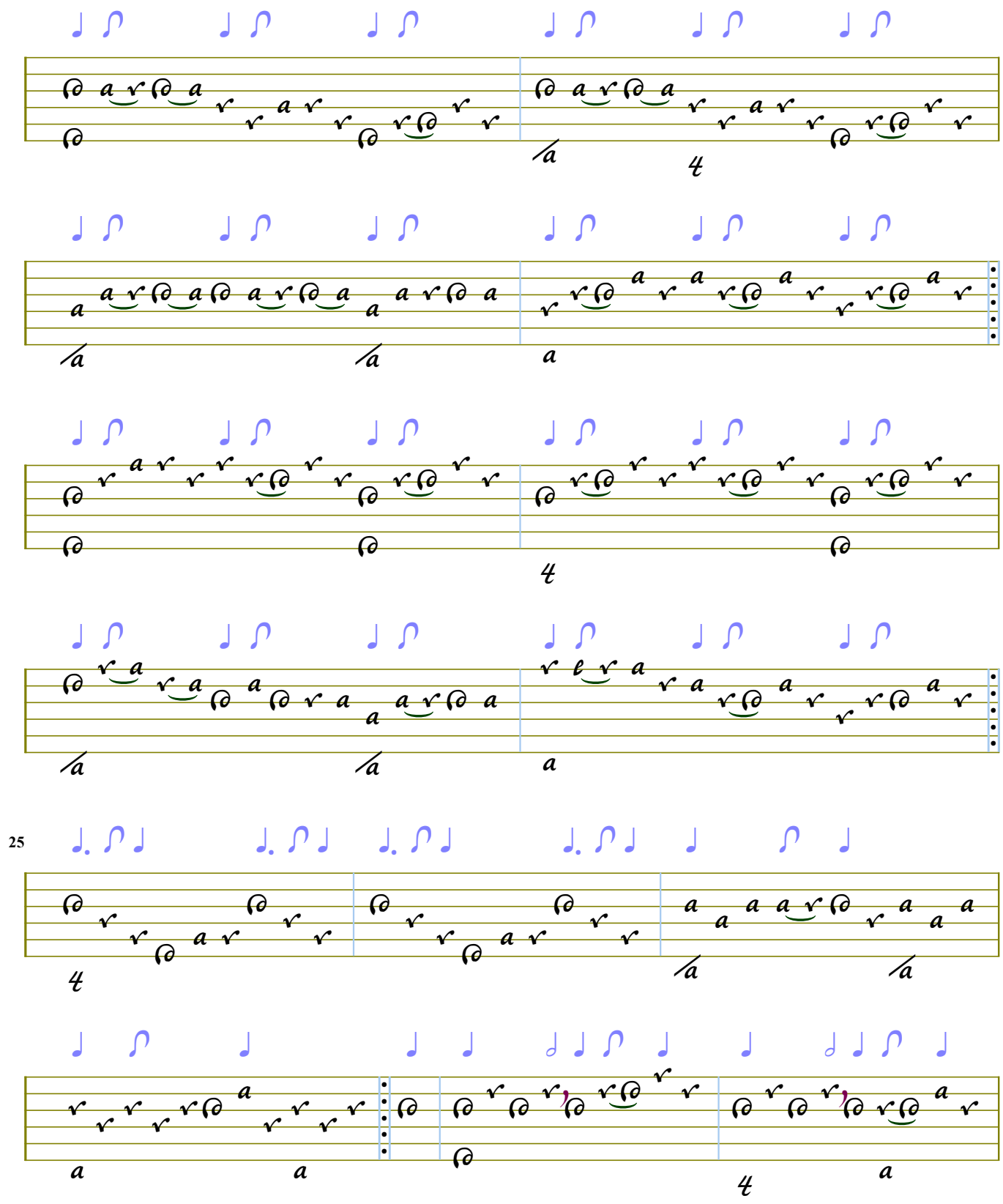
70

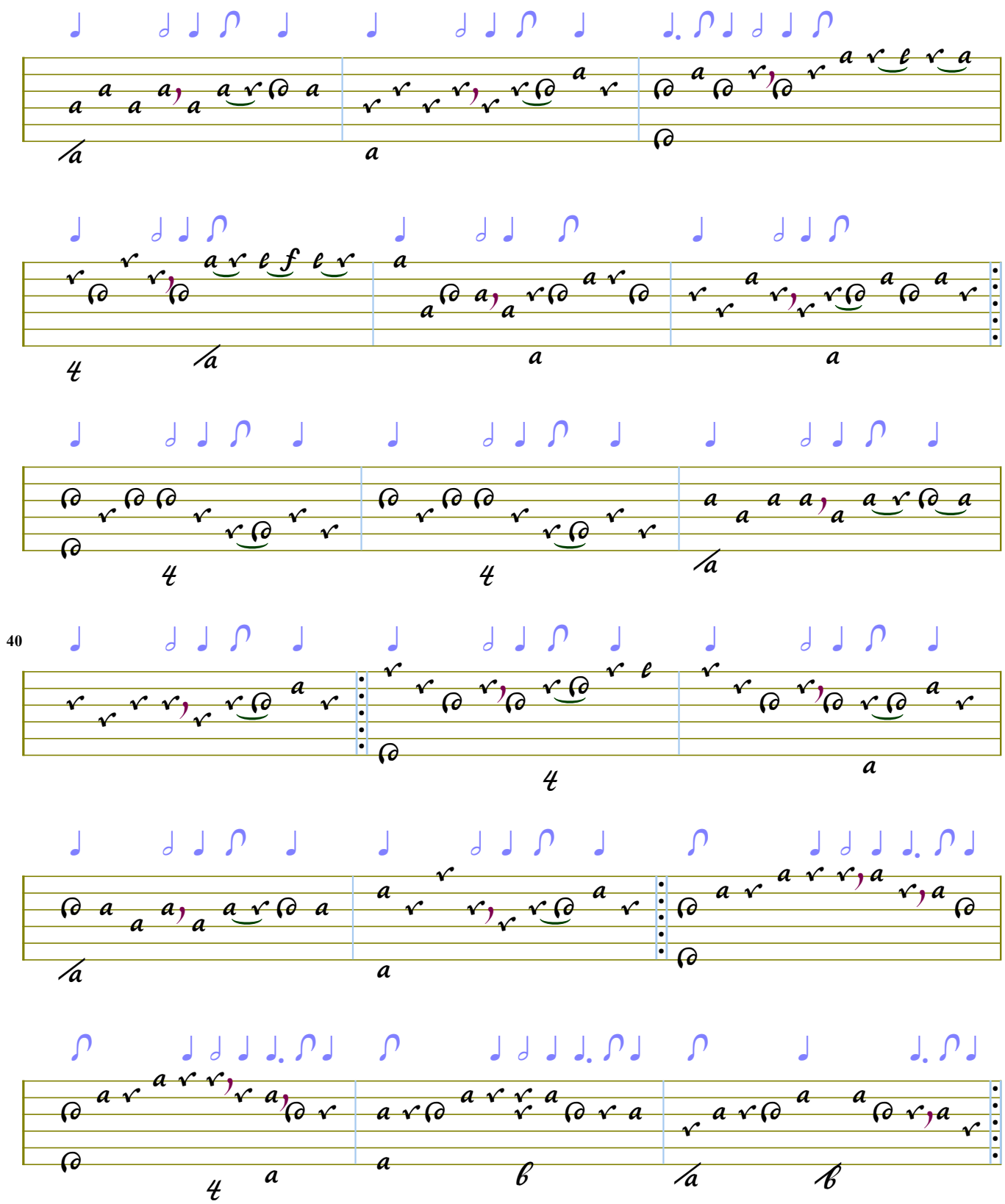
The Lady Binnies Lilt, by David Grieve

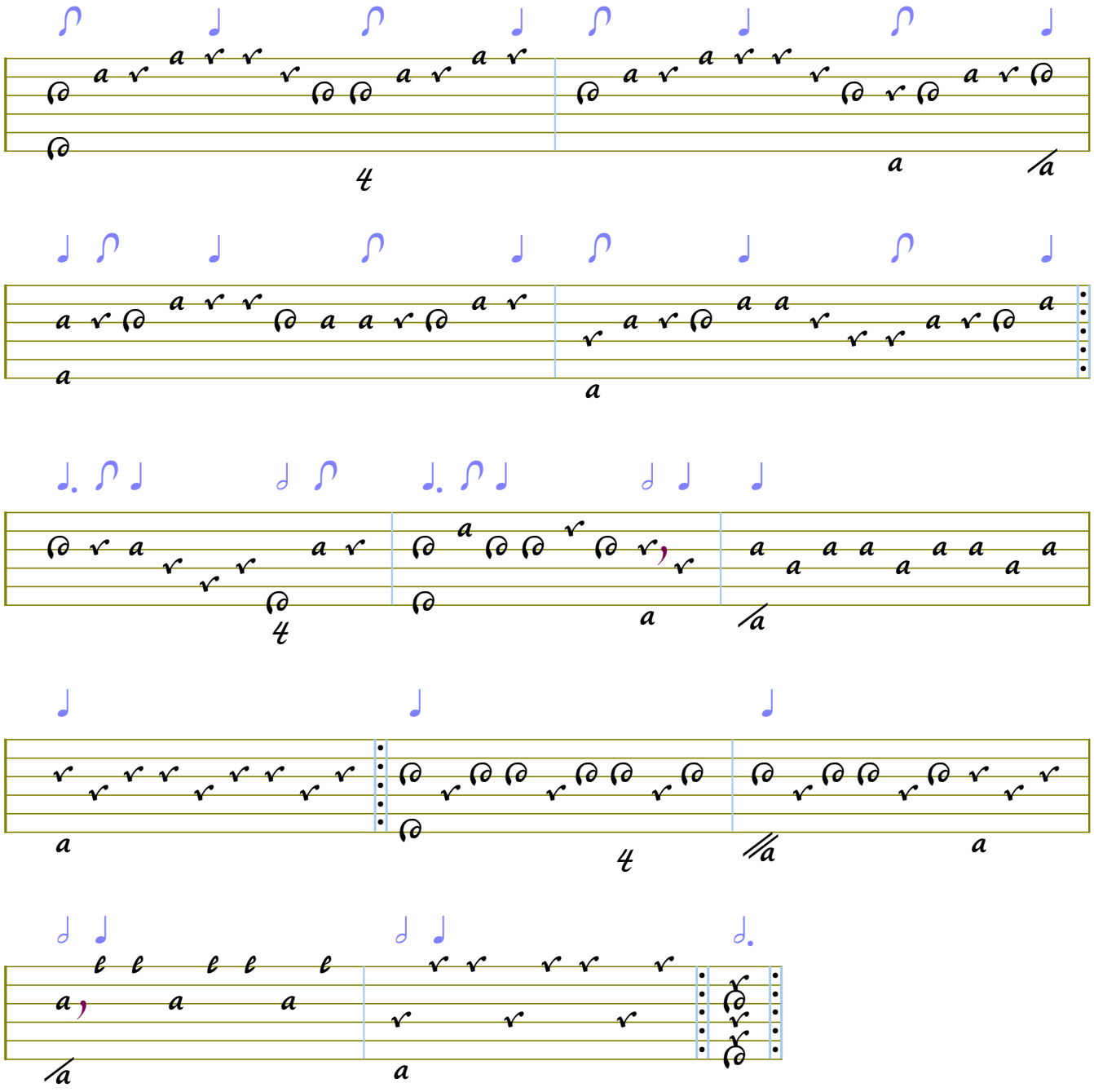


Old sir simon the king, John Morison's way, by mr. Beck

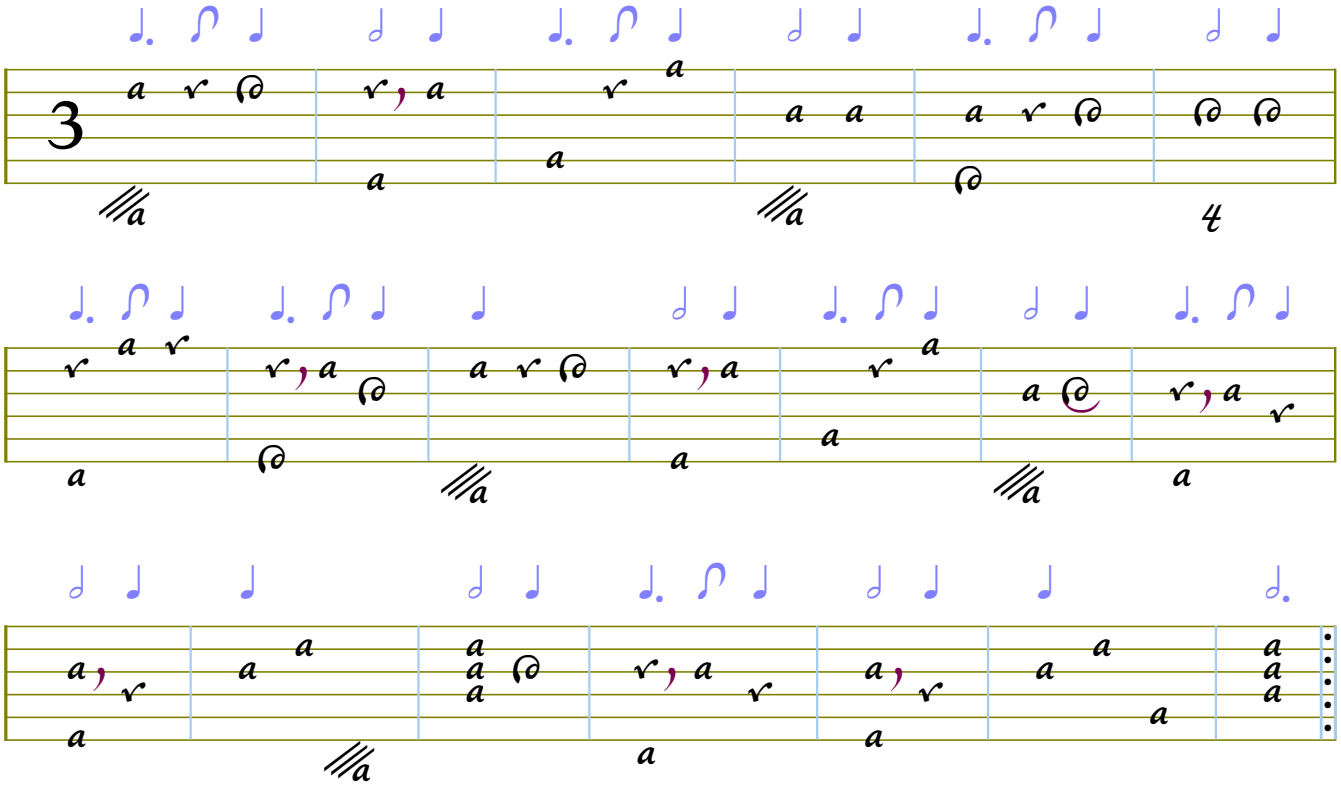




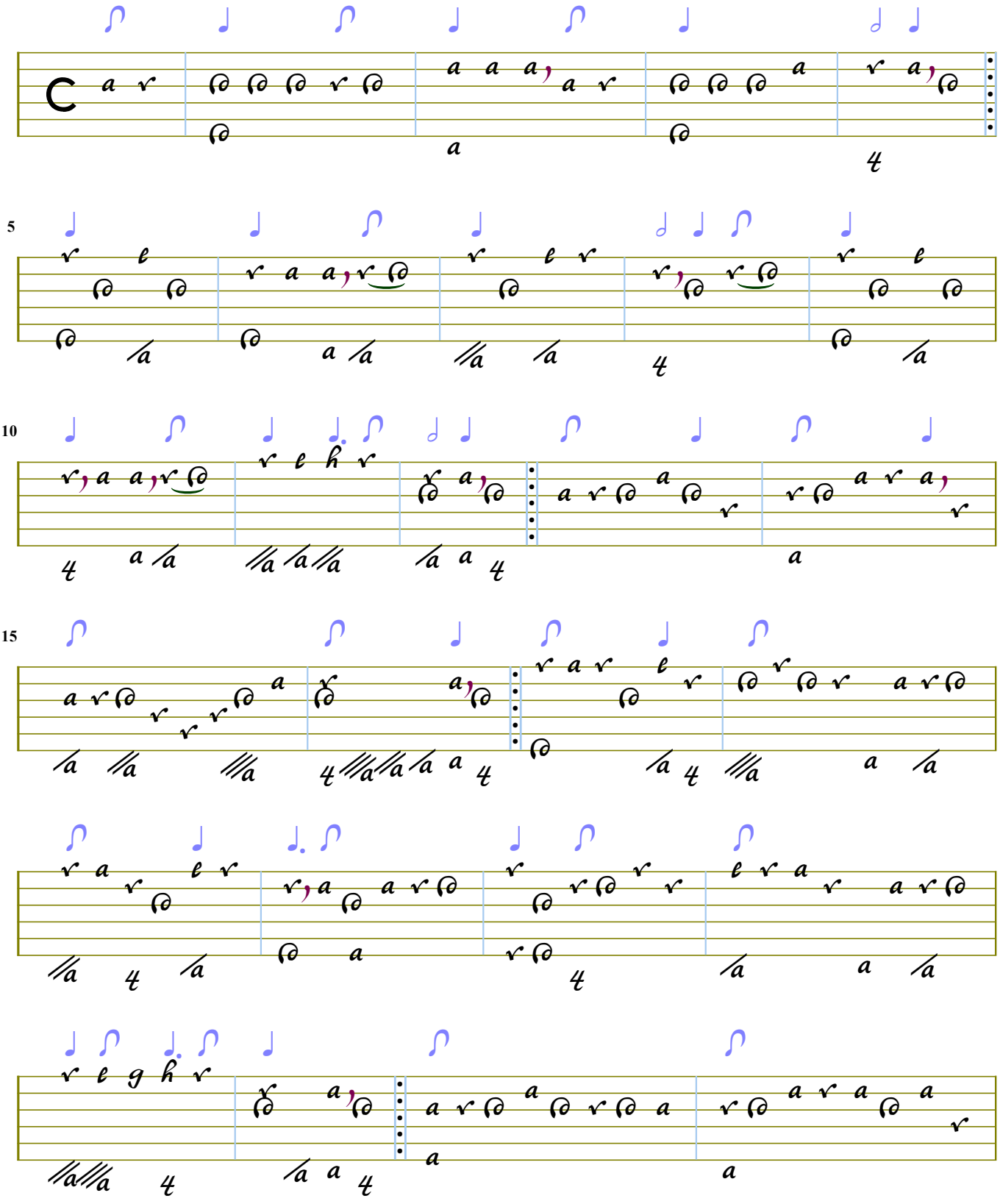


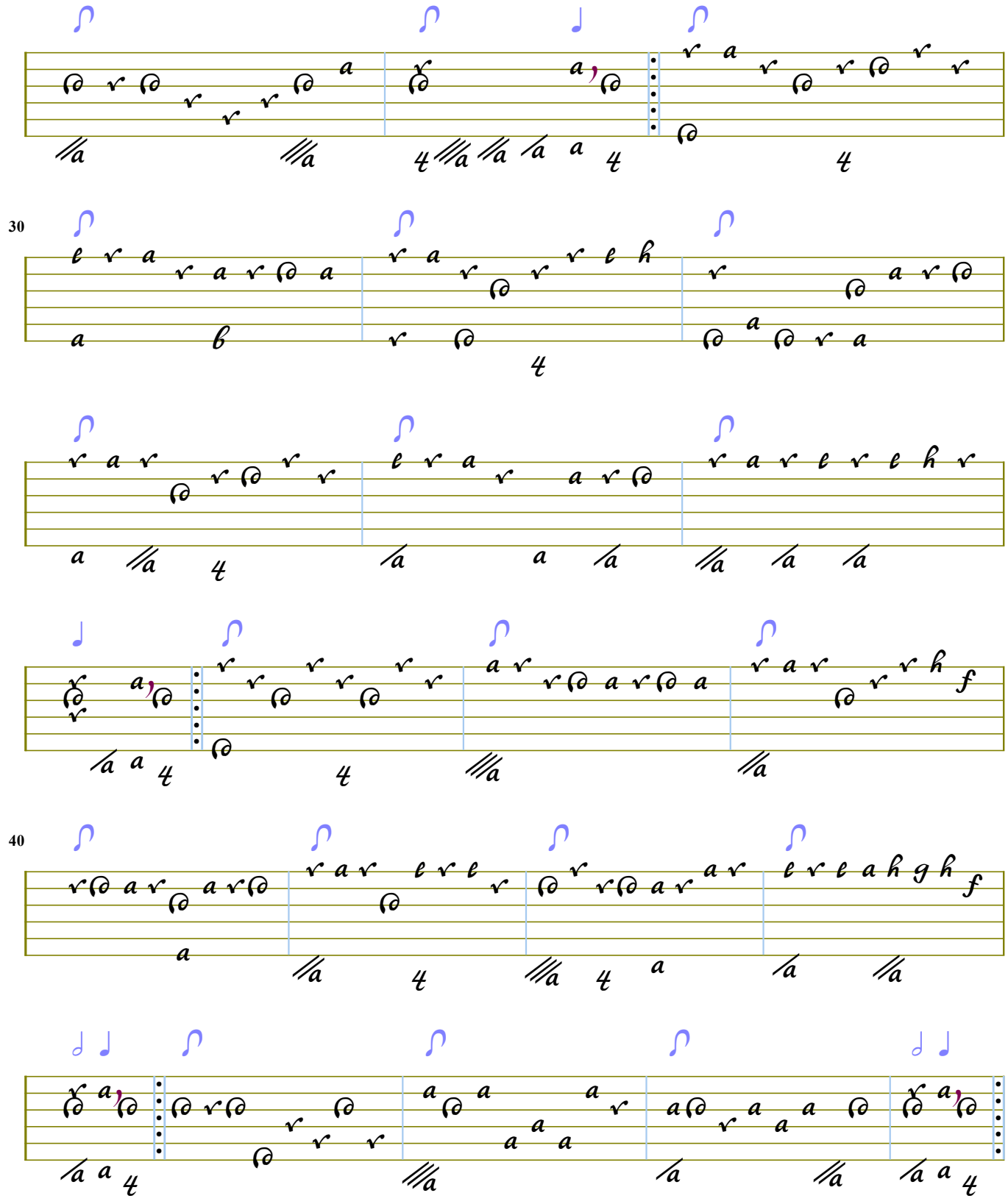


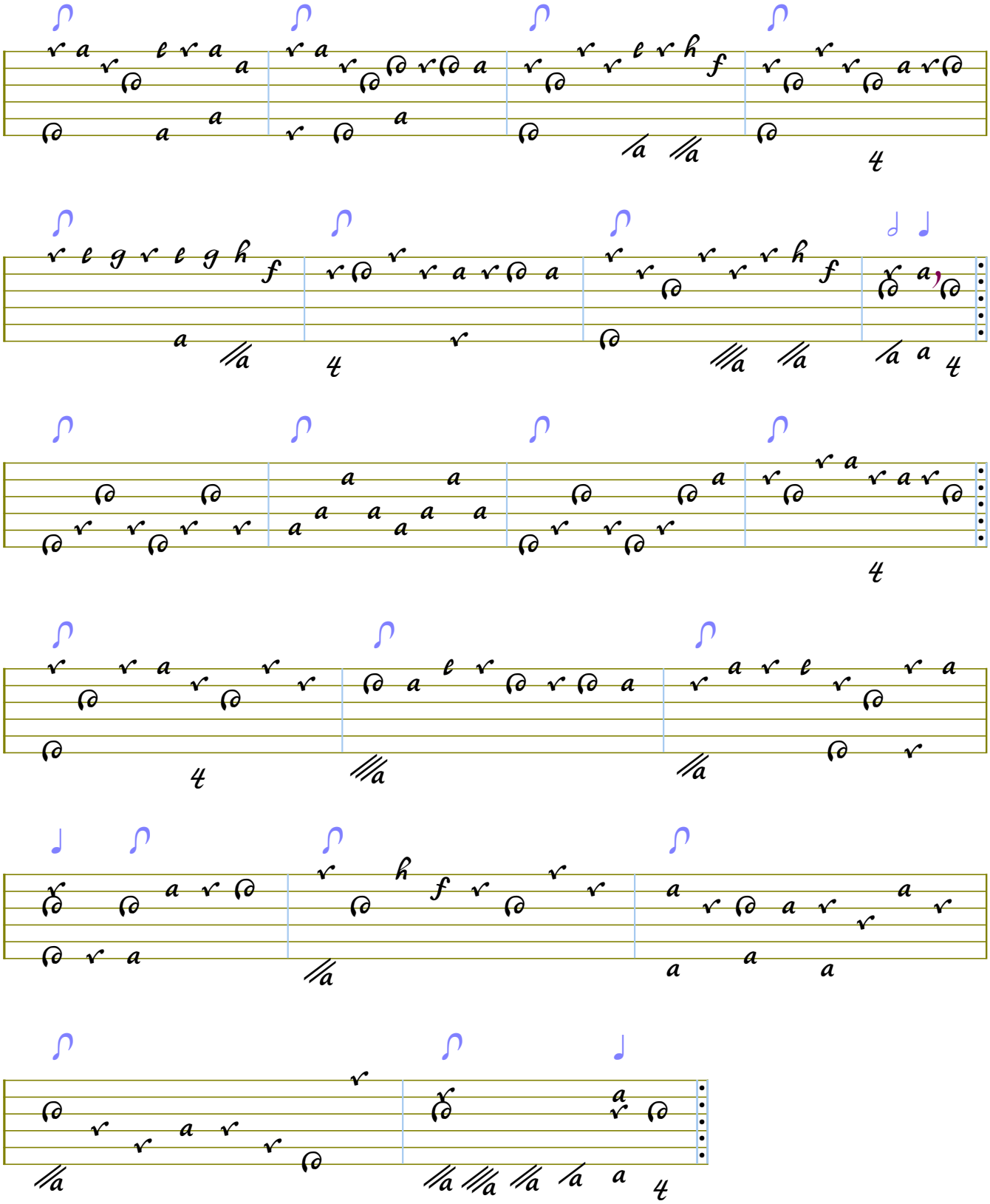
A scotts tune, by mr., Leslie



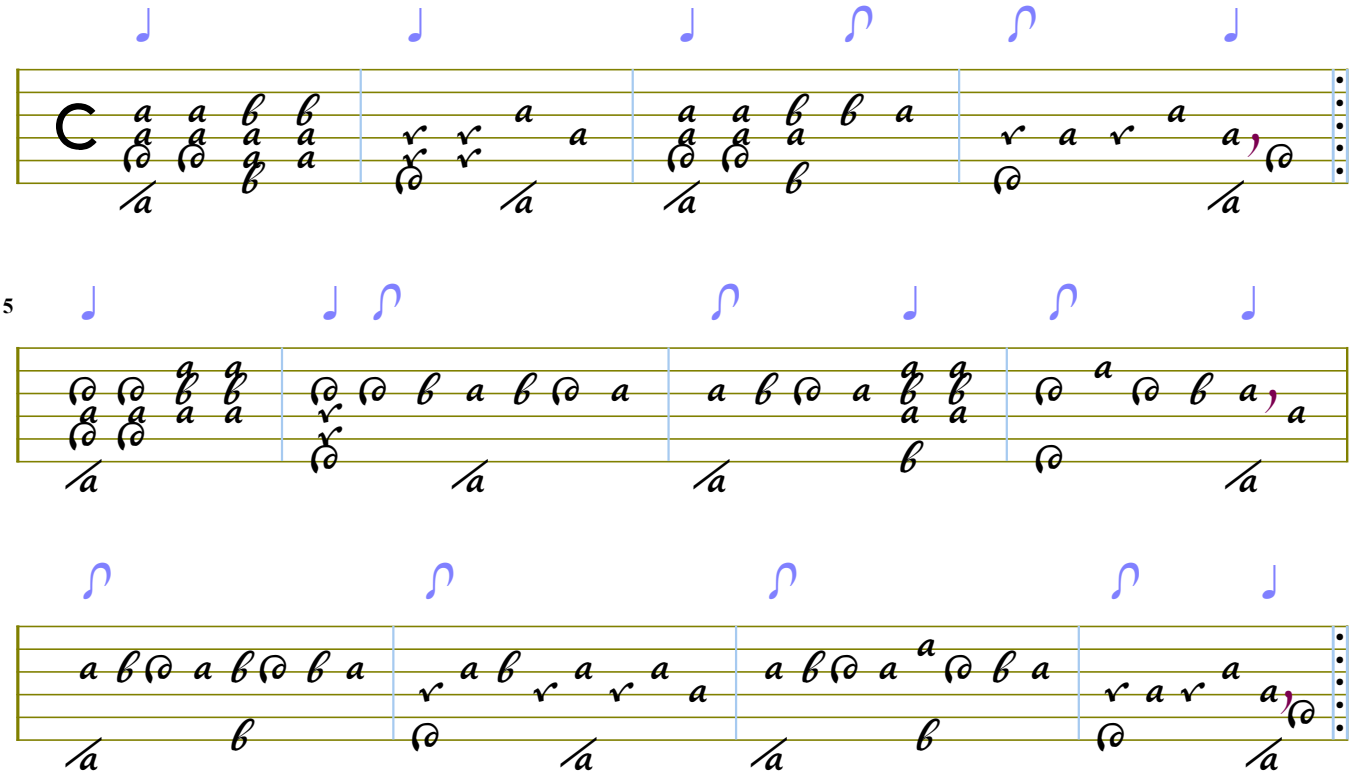
Donald Couper, by mr. Beck



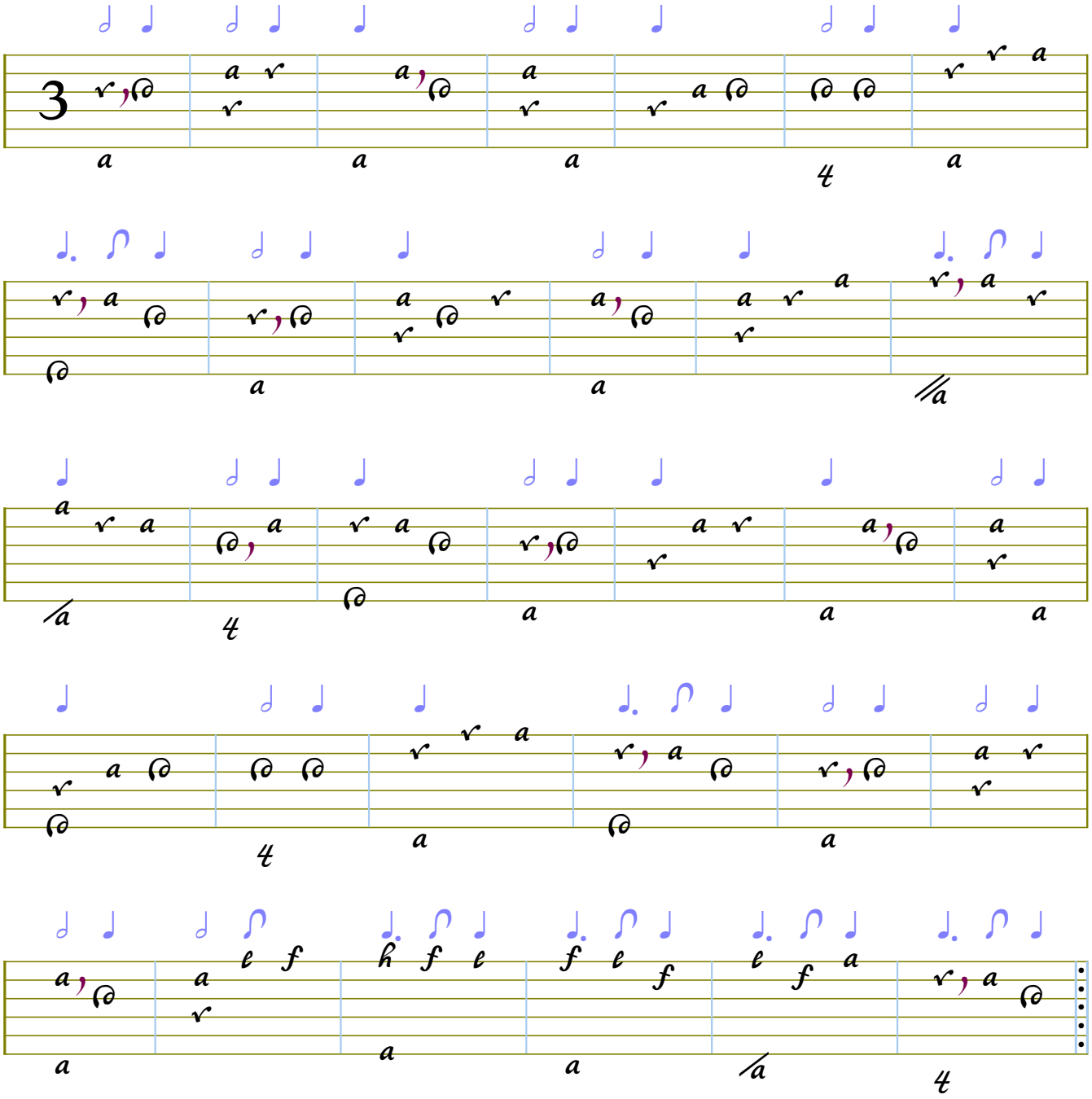




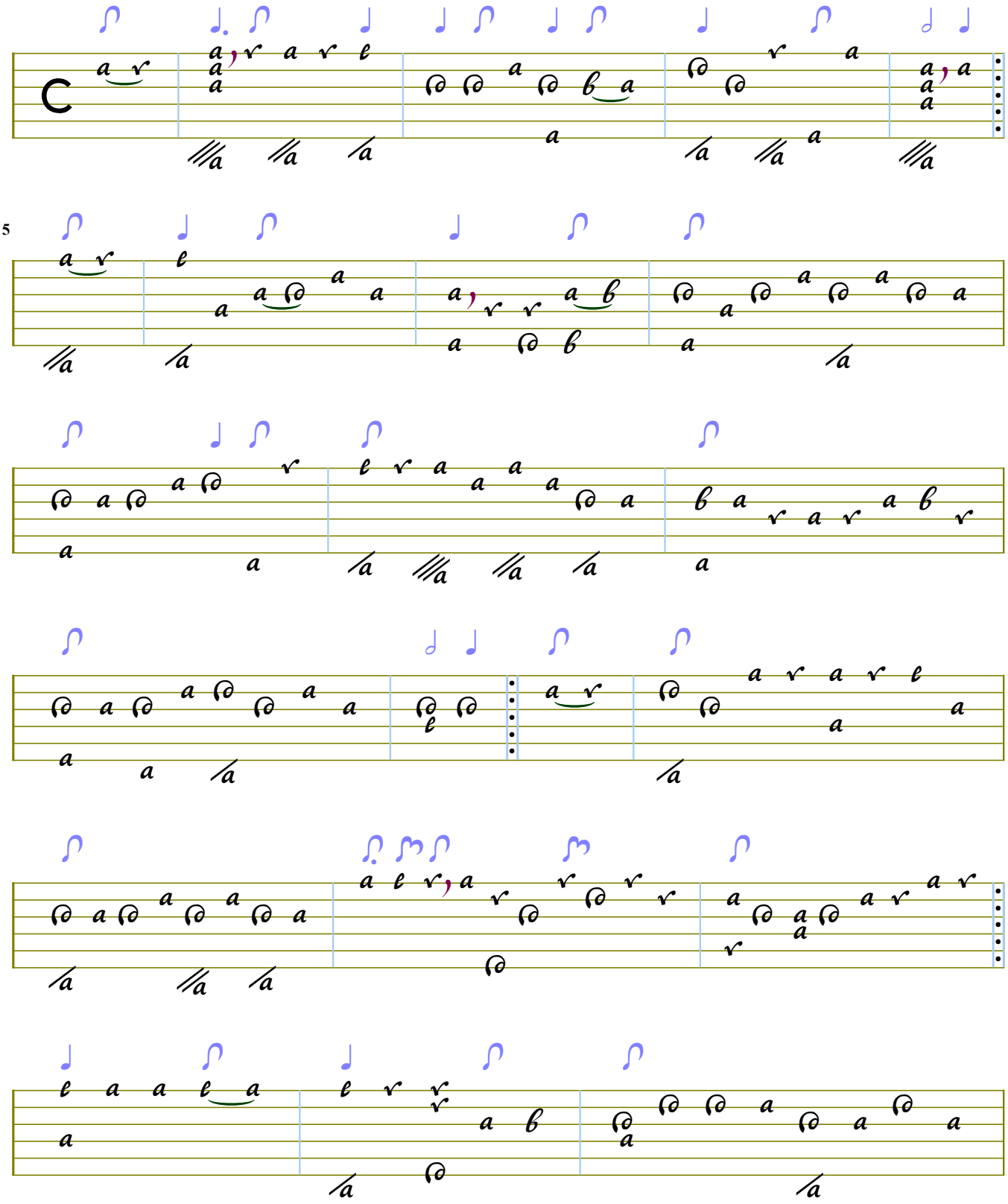
Pantaloon, by David Grieve

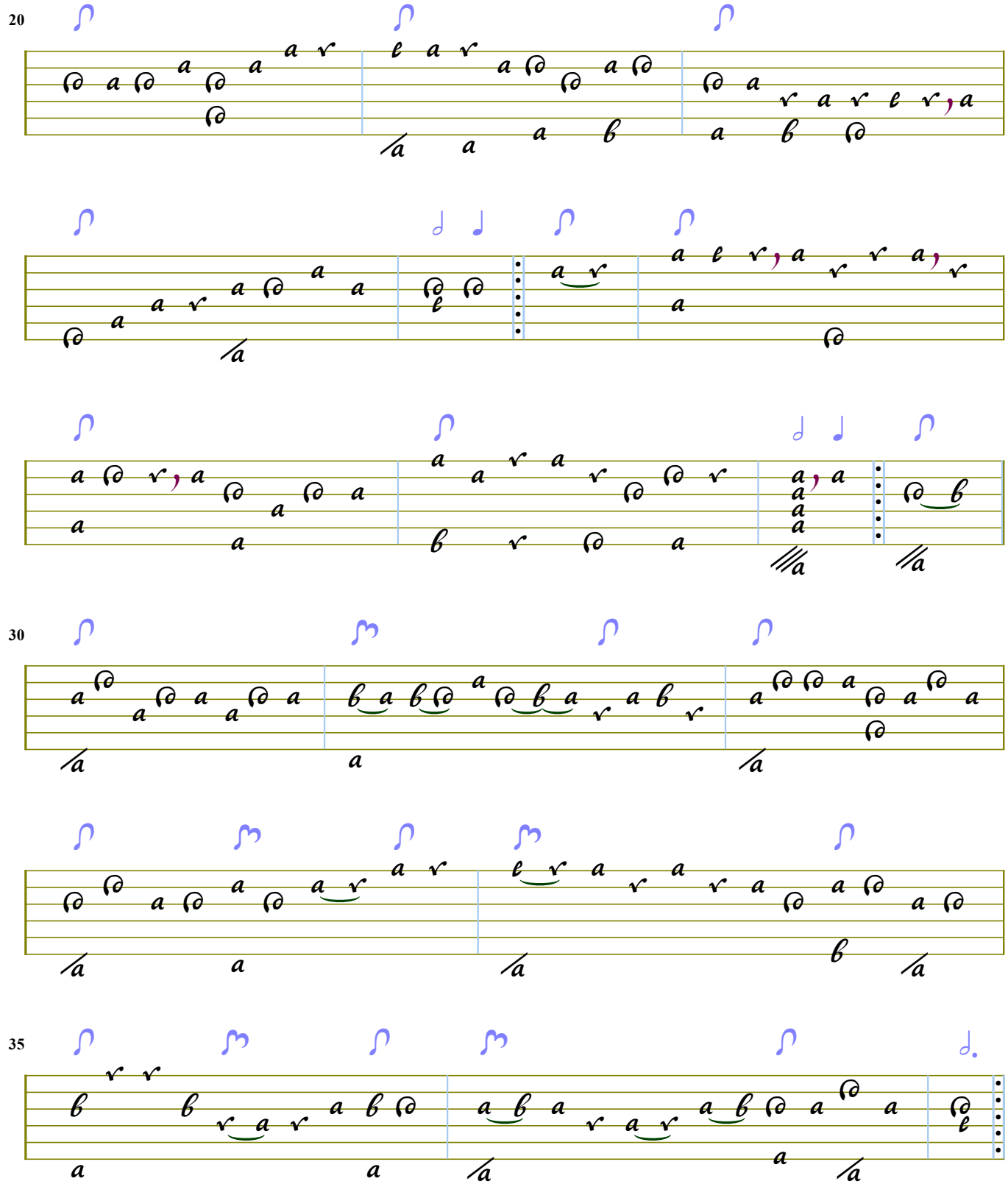


Trenchmore, by David Grieve



For old lang syne, by mr. Beck

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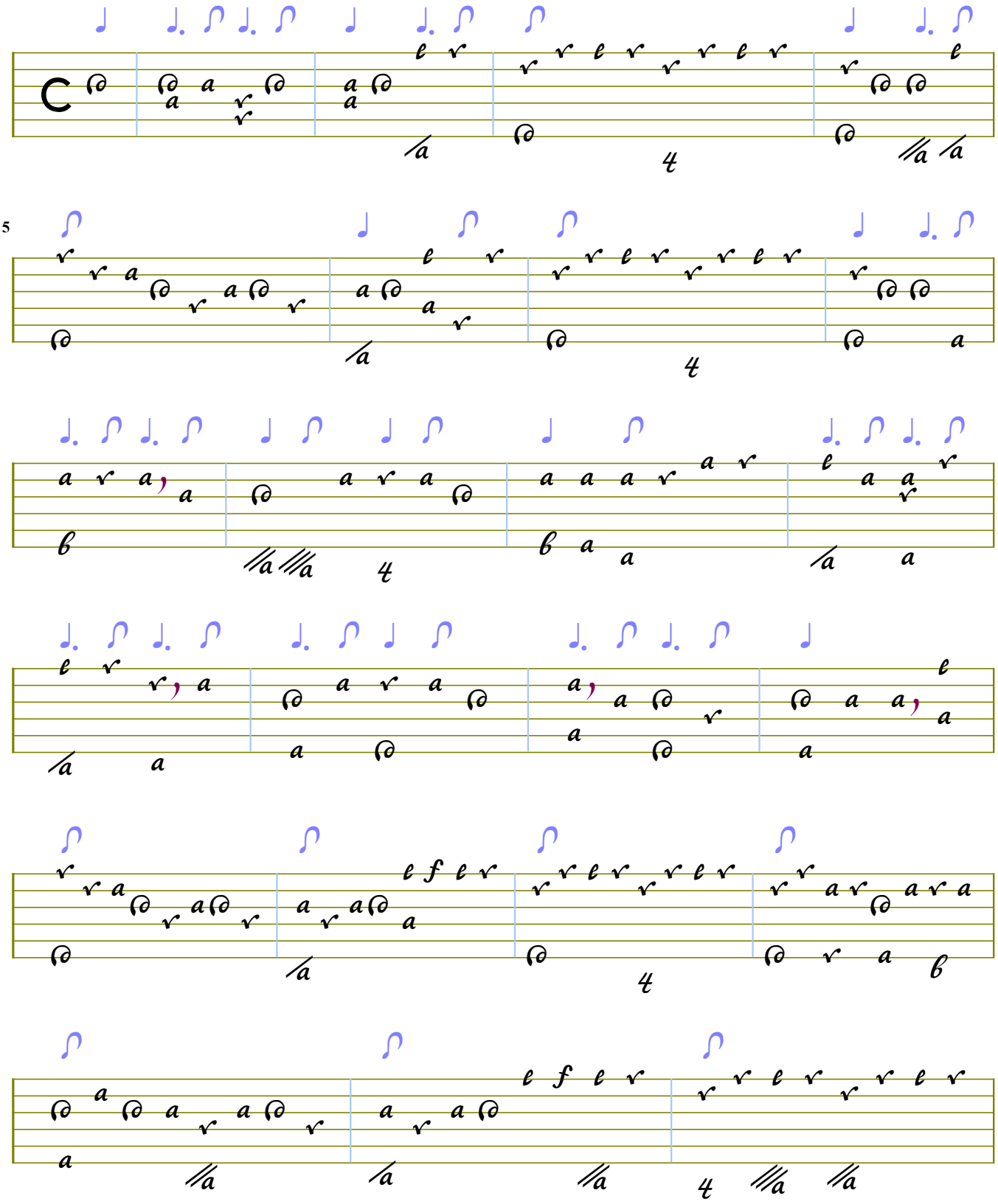
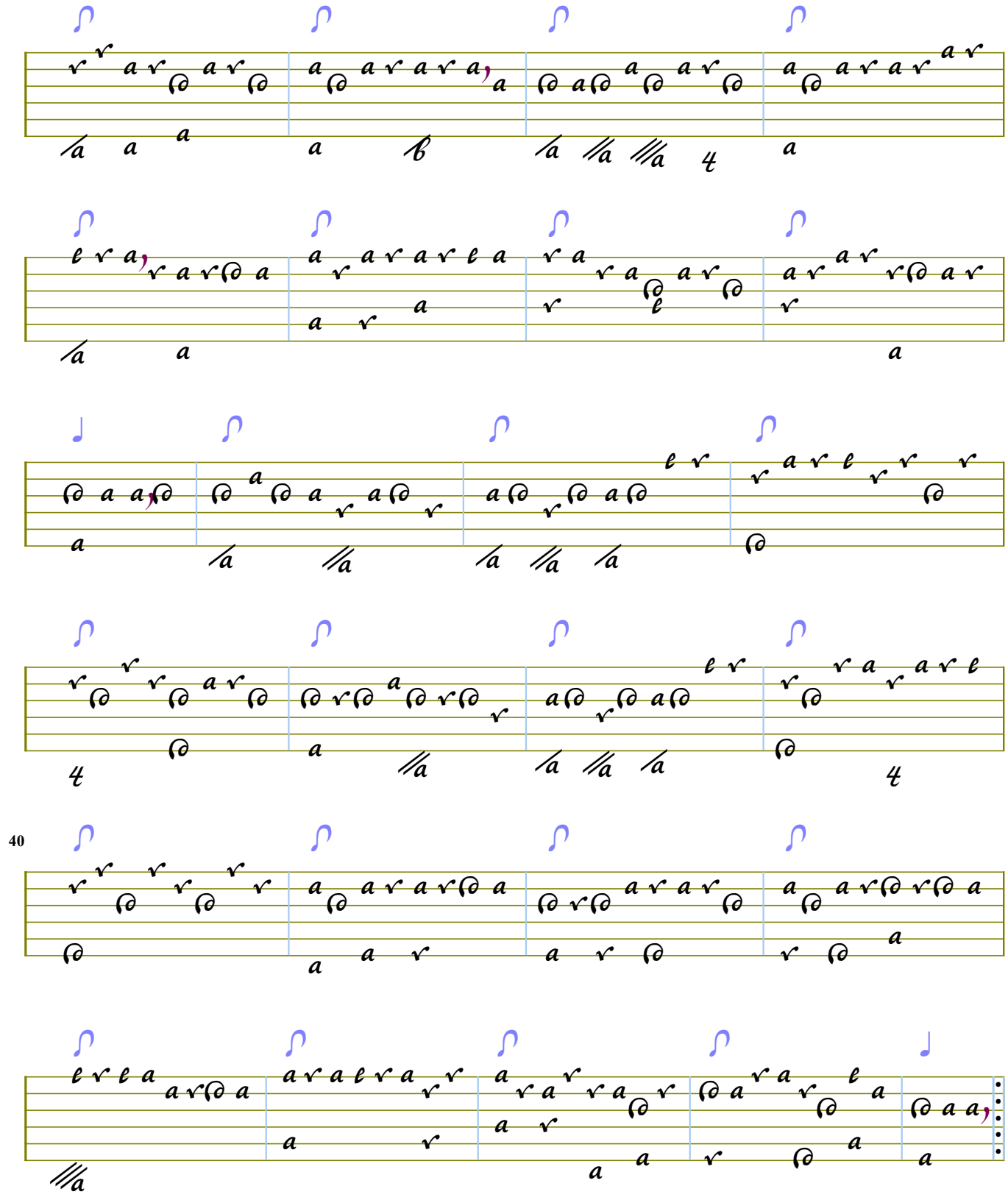
Good night and God be with you, by mr. Beck





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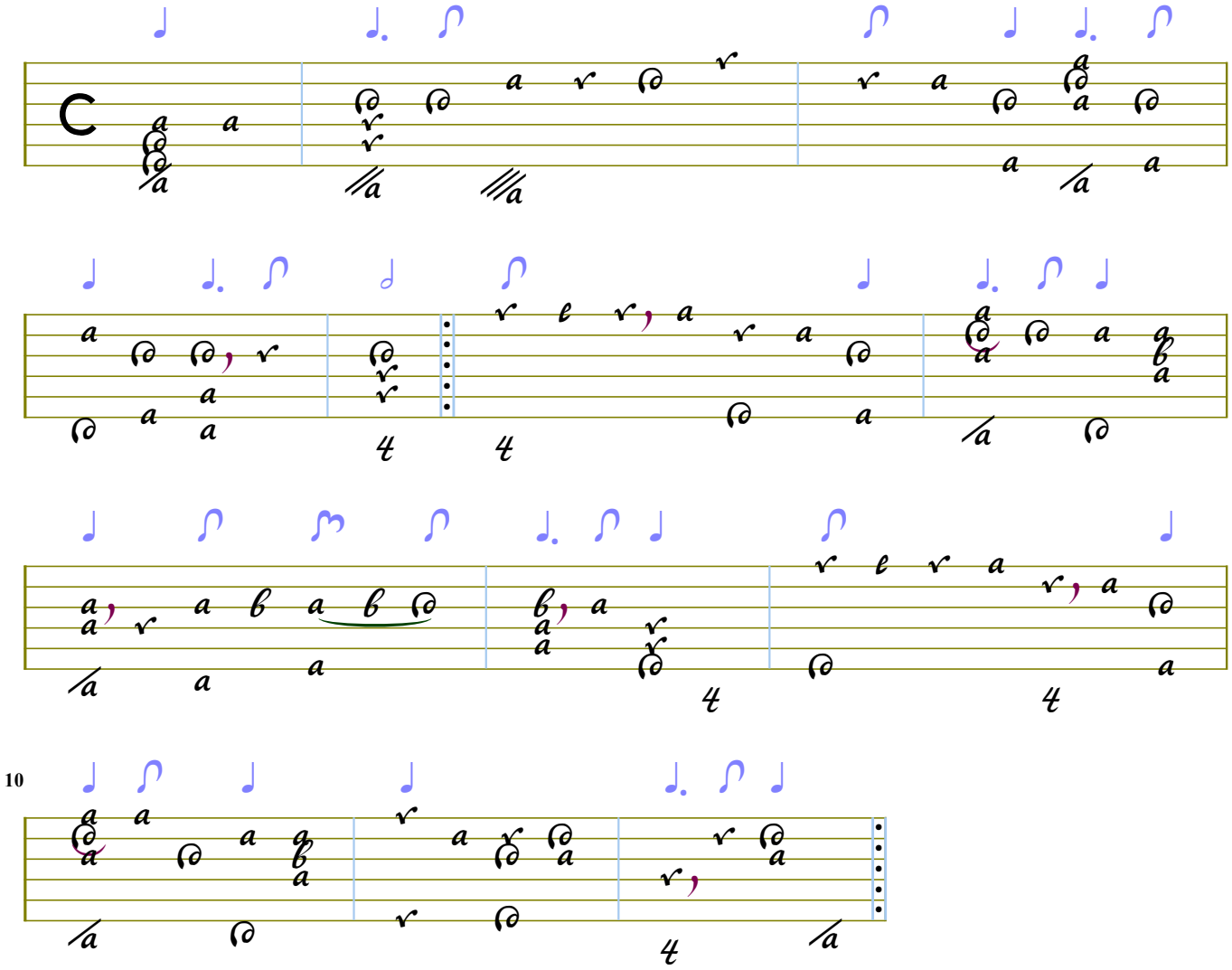
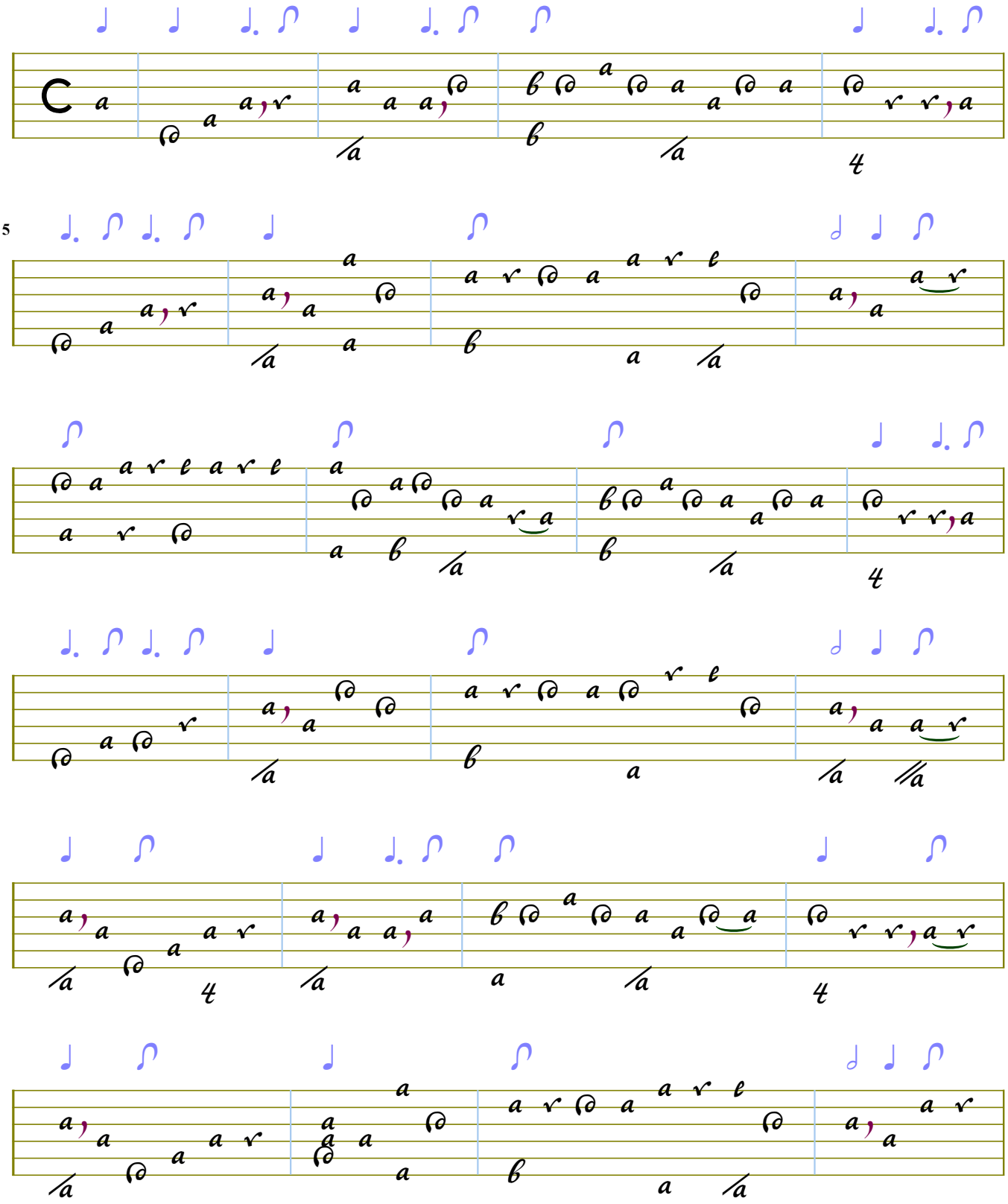
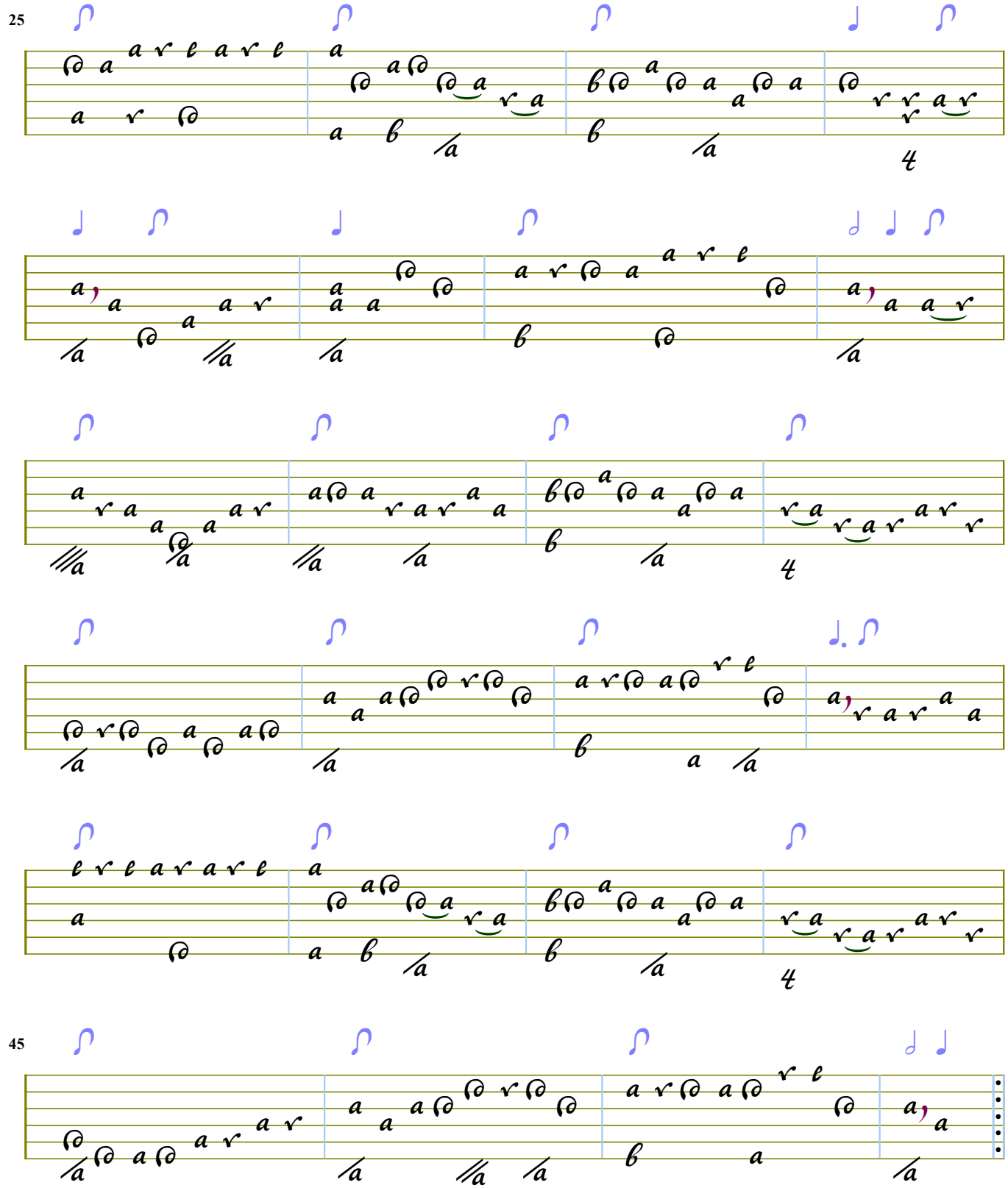
La Coquille, by mr. Gallot



Down the burne davie, my daughter's way, by mr. Beck

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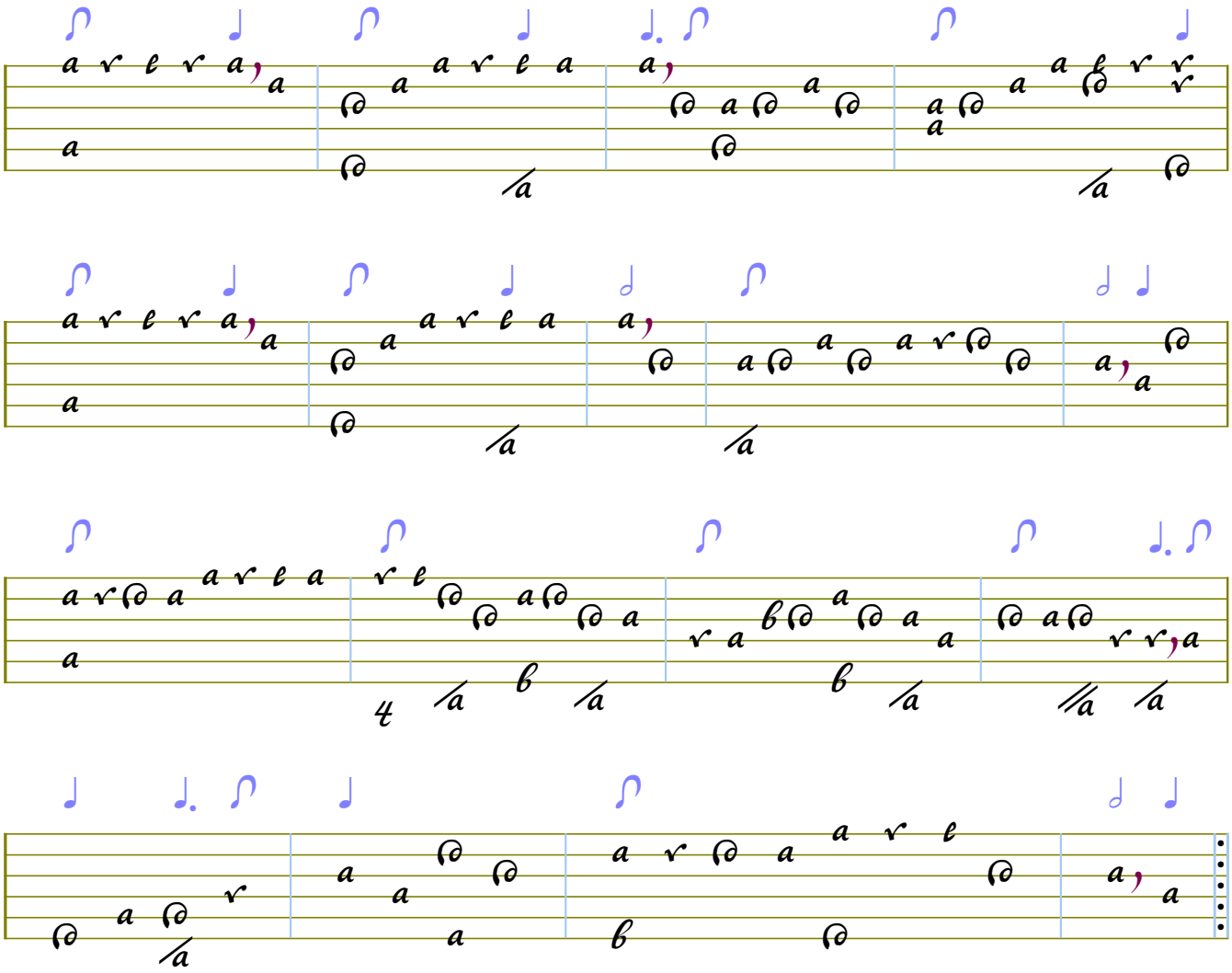
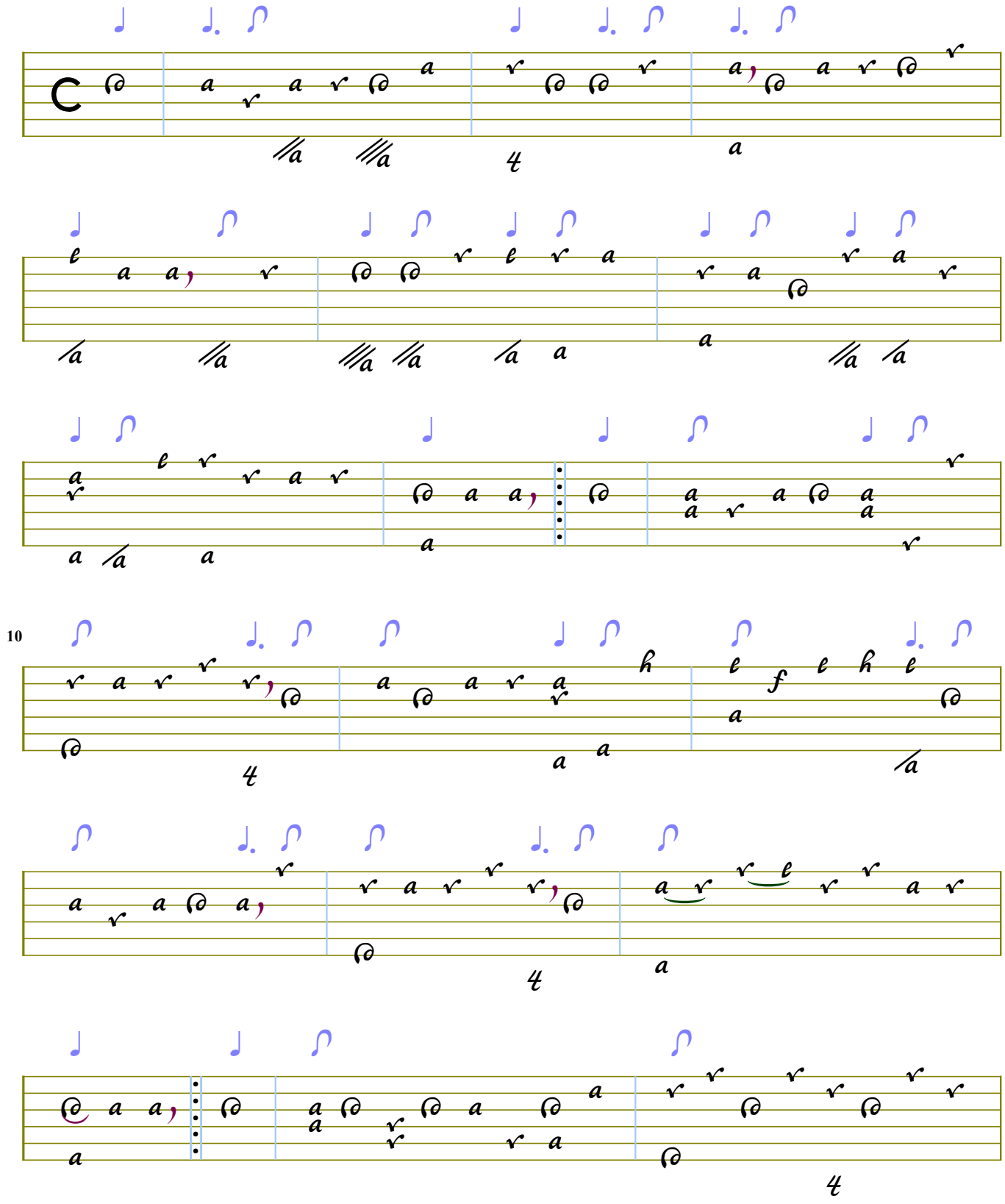
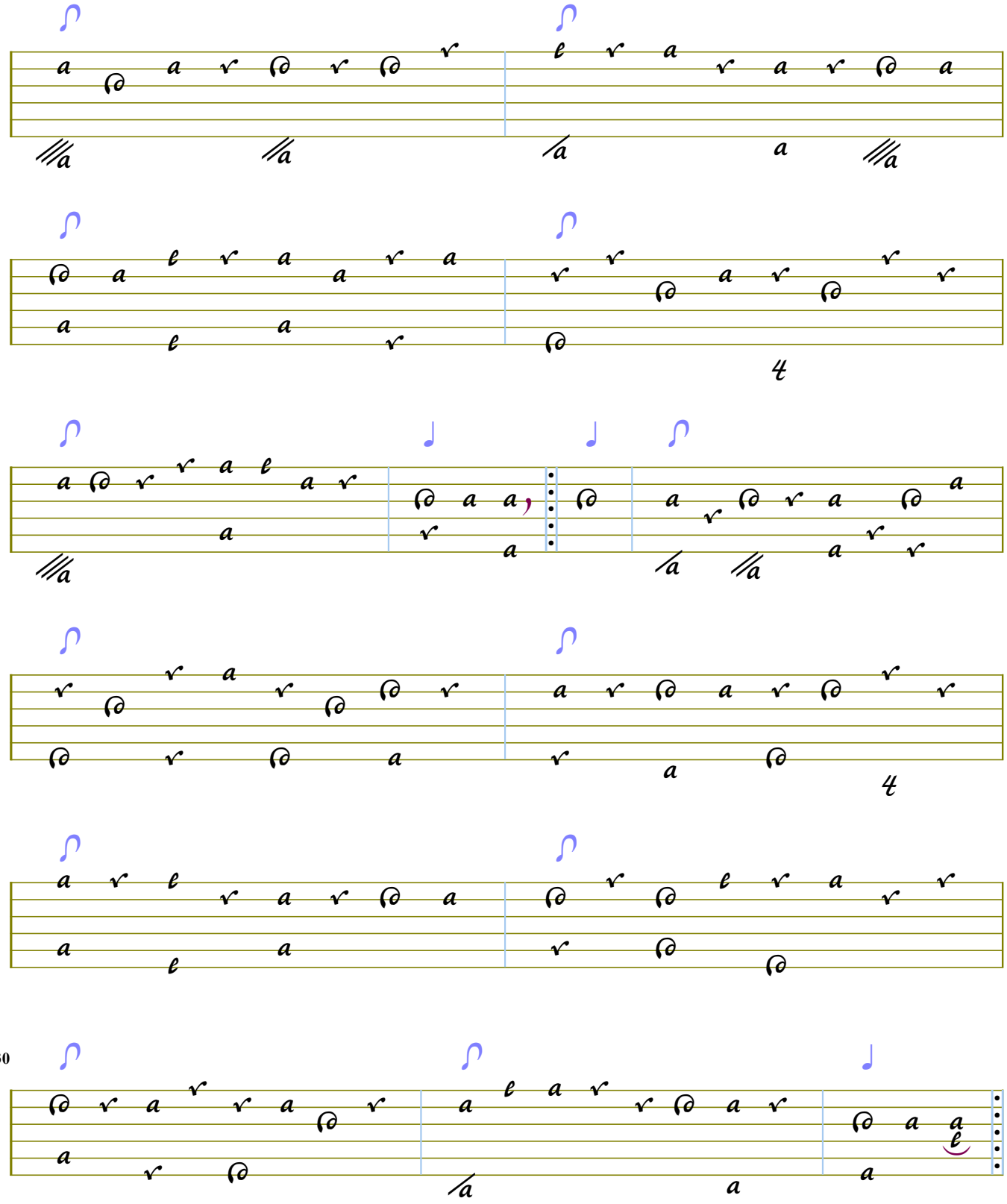


Green grows, the Rushes, by mr. Beck

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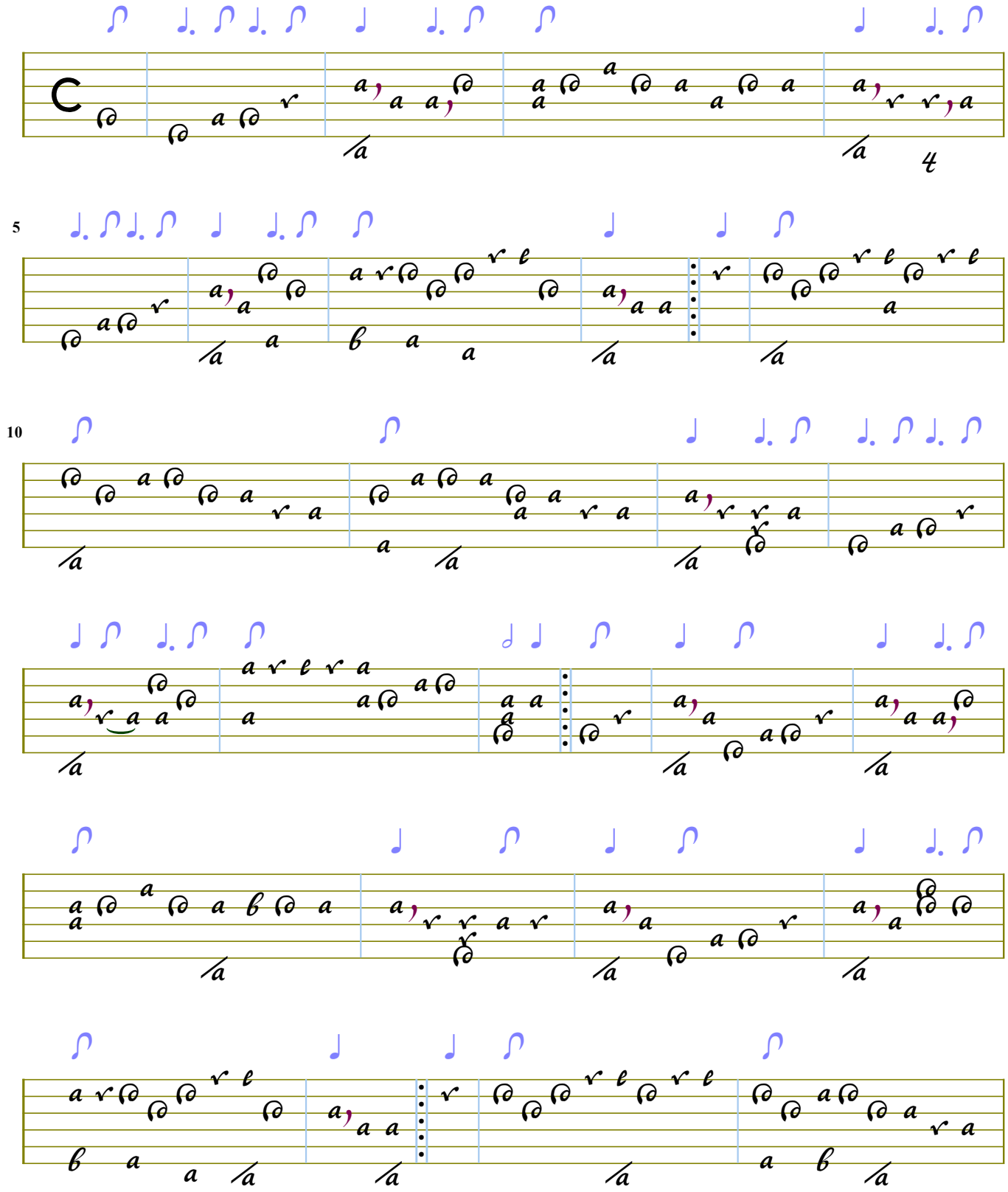
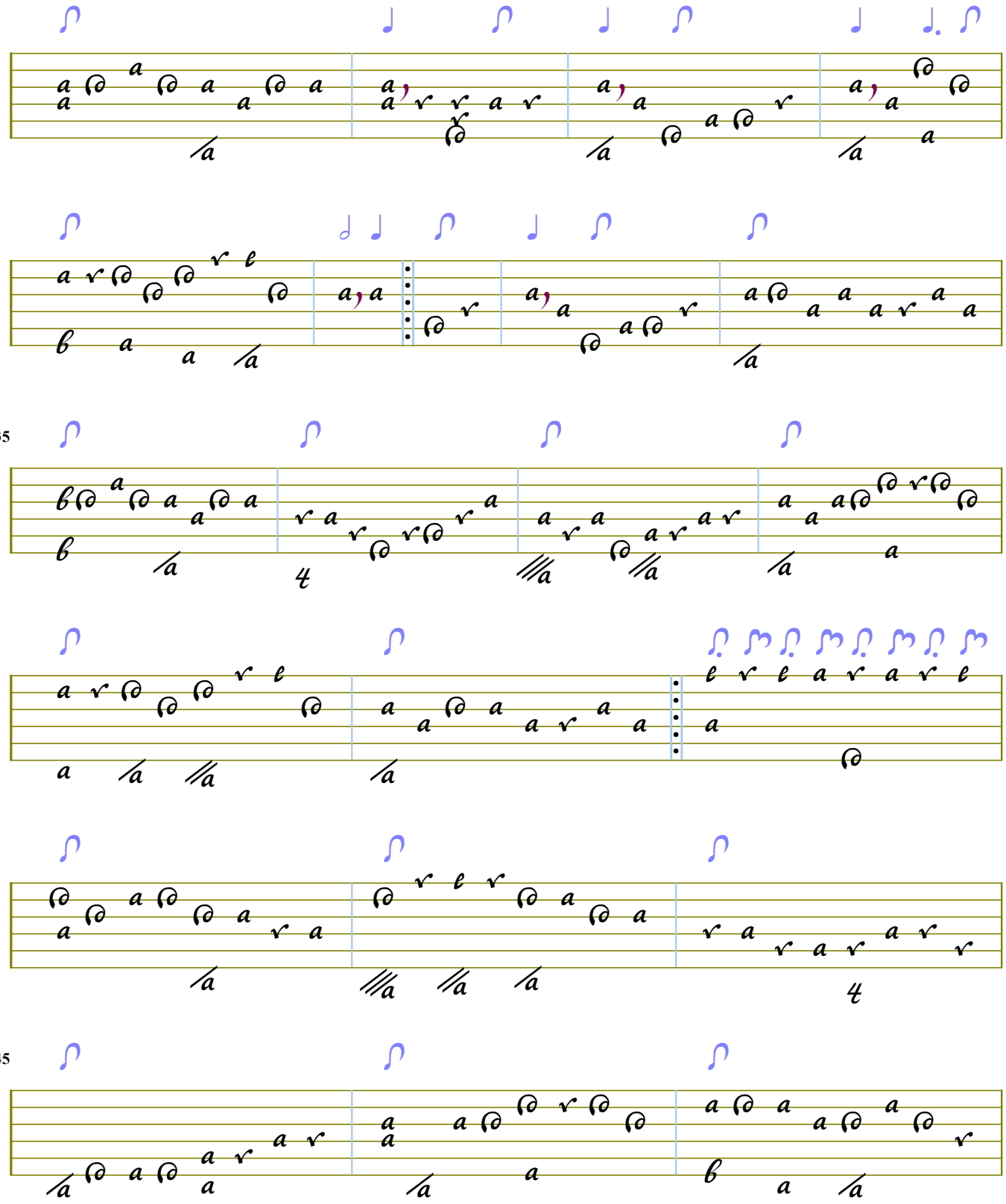
Down the burne davie, John Morison's way, by mr. Beck

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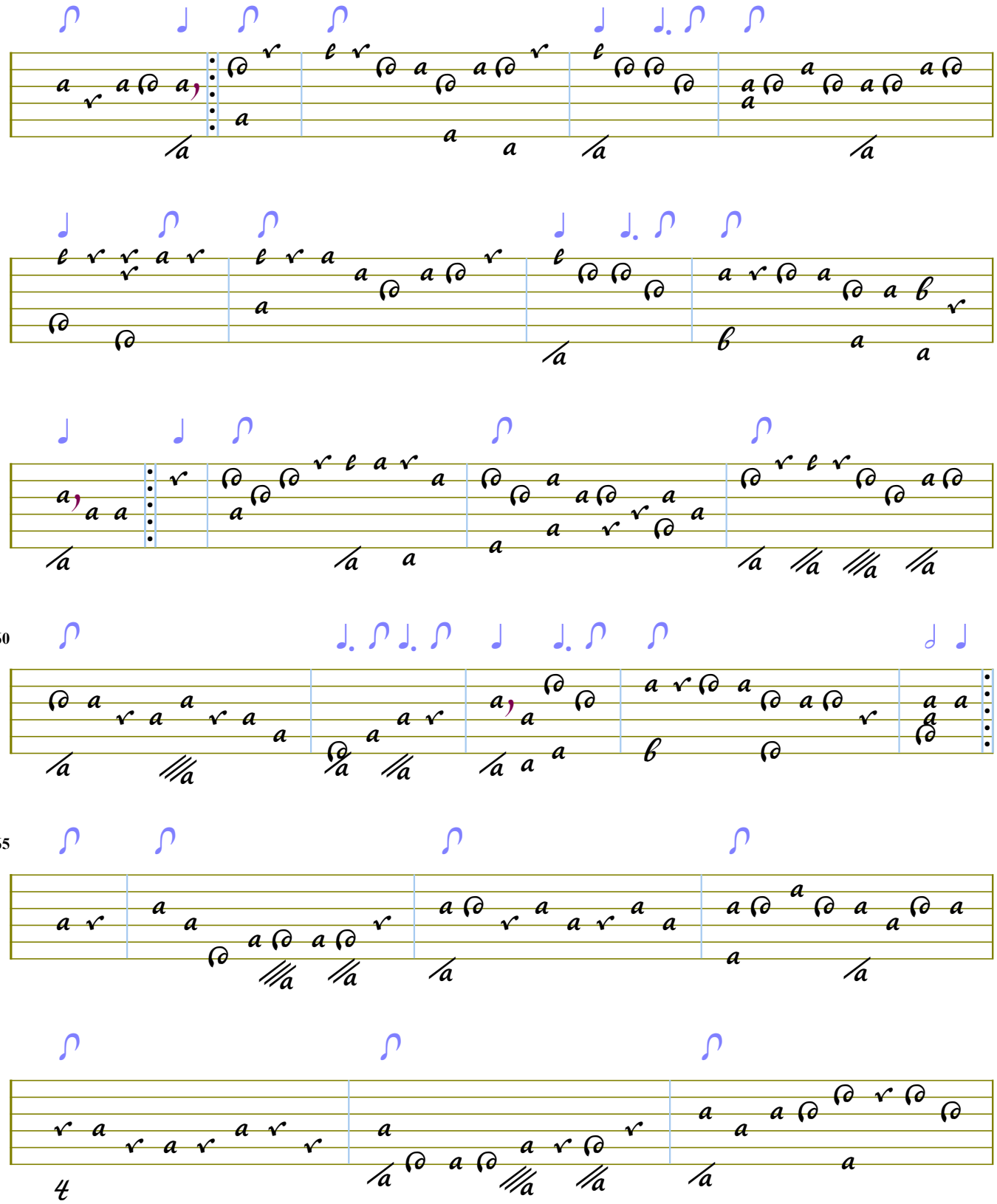
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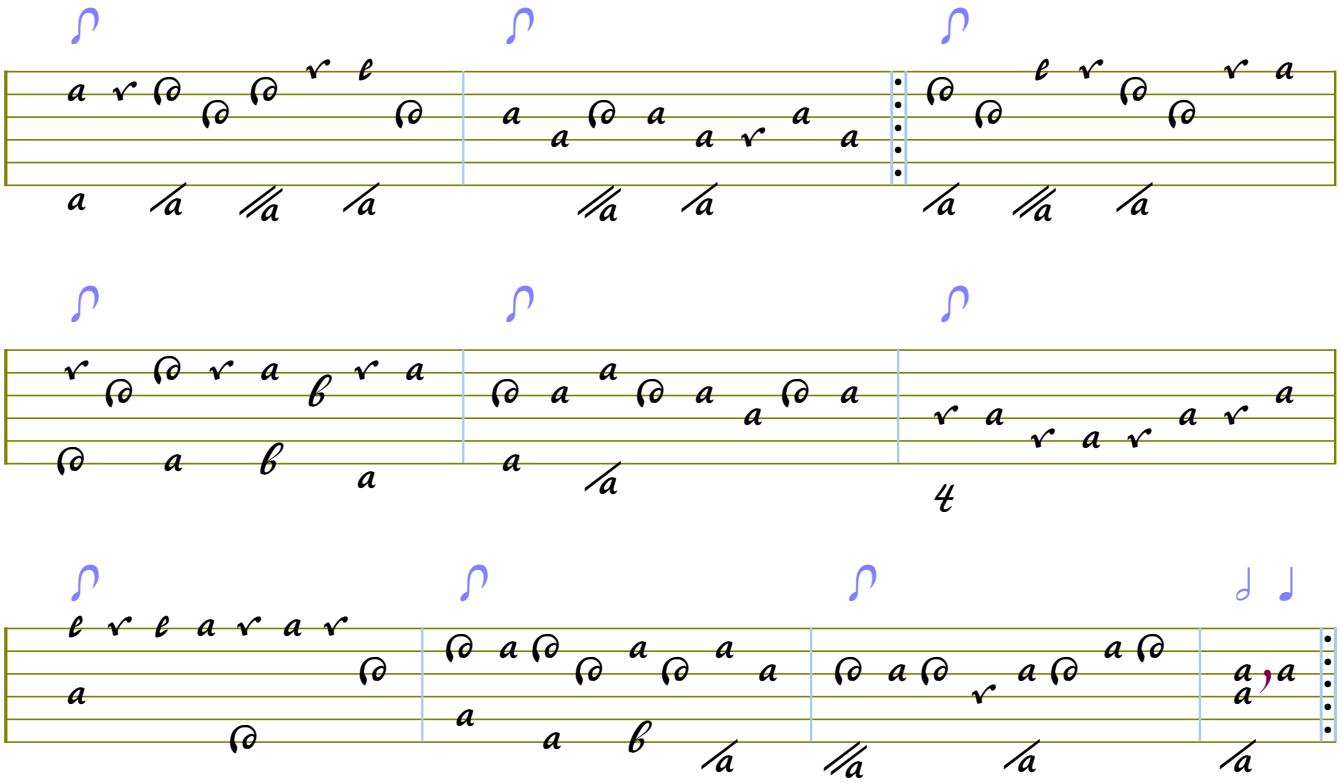
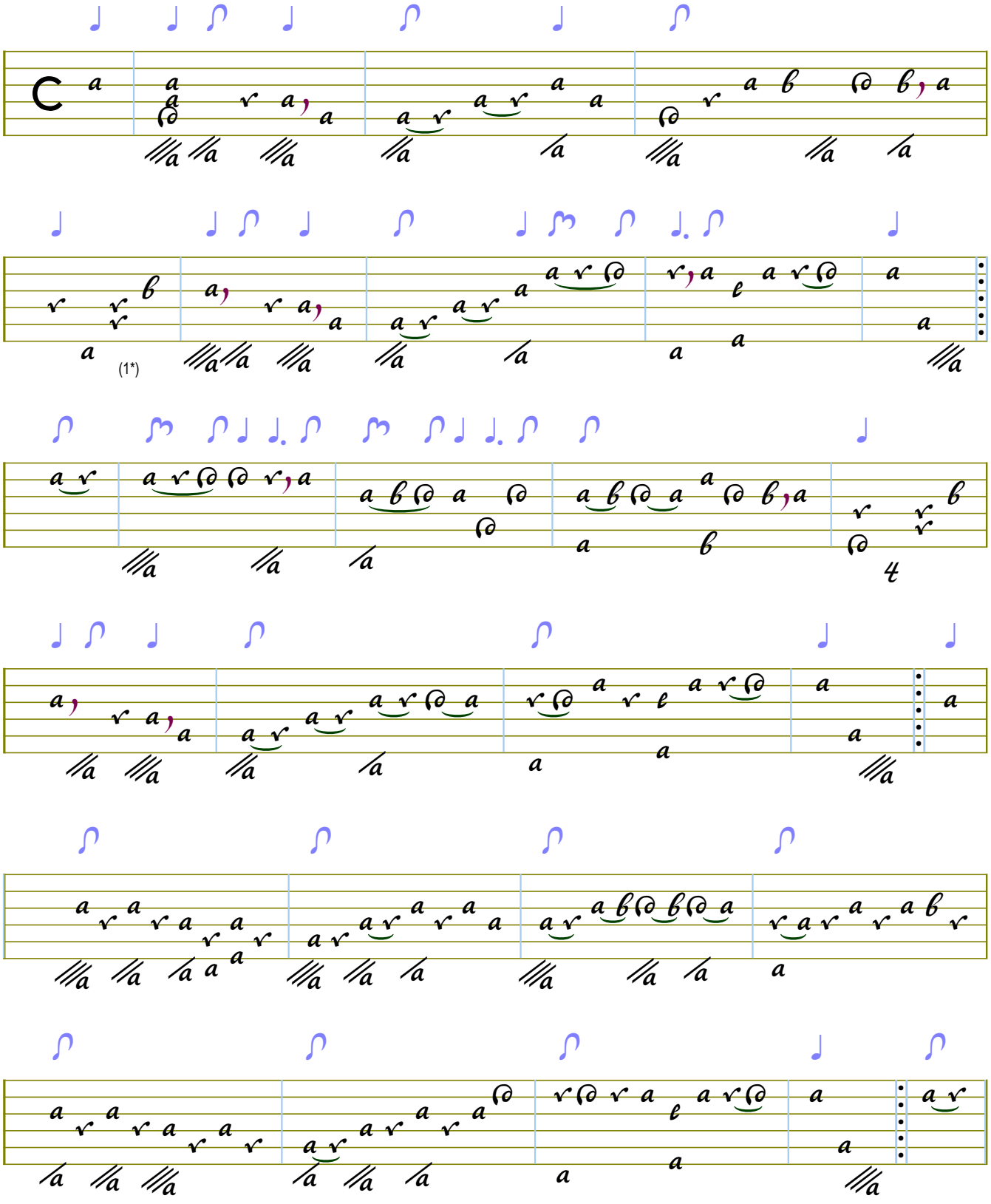
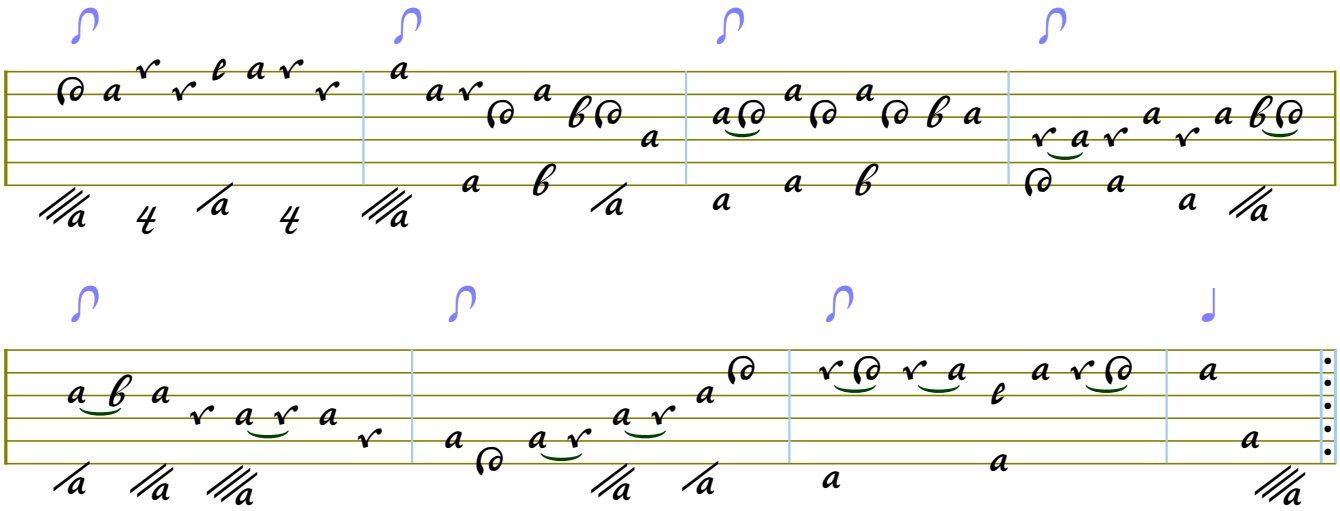


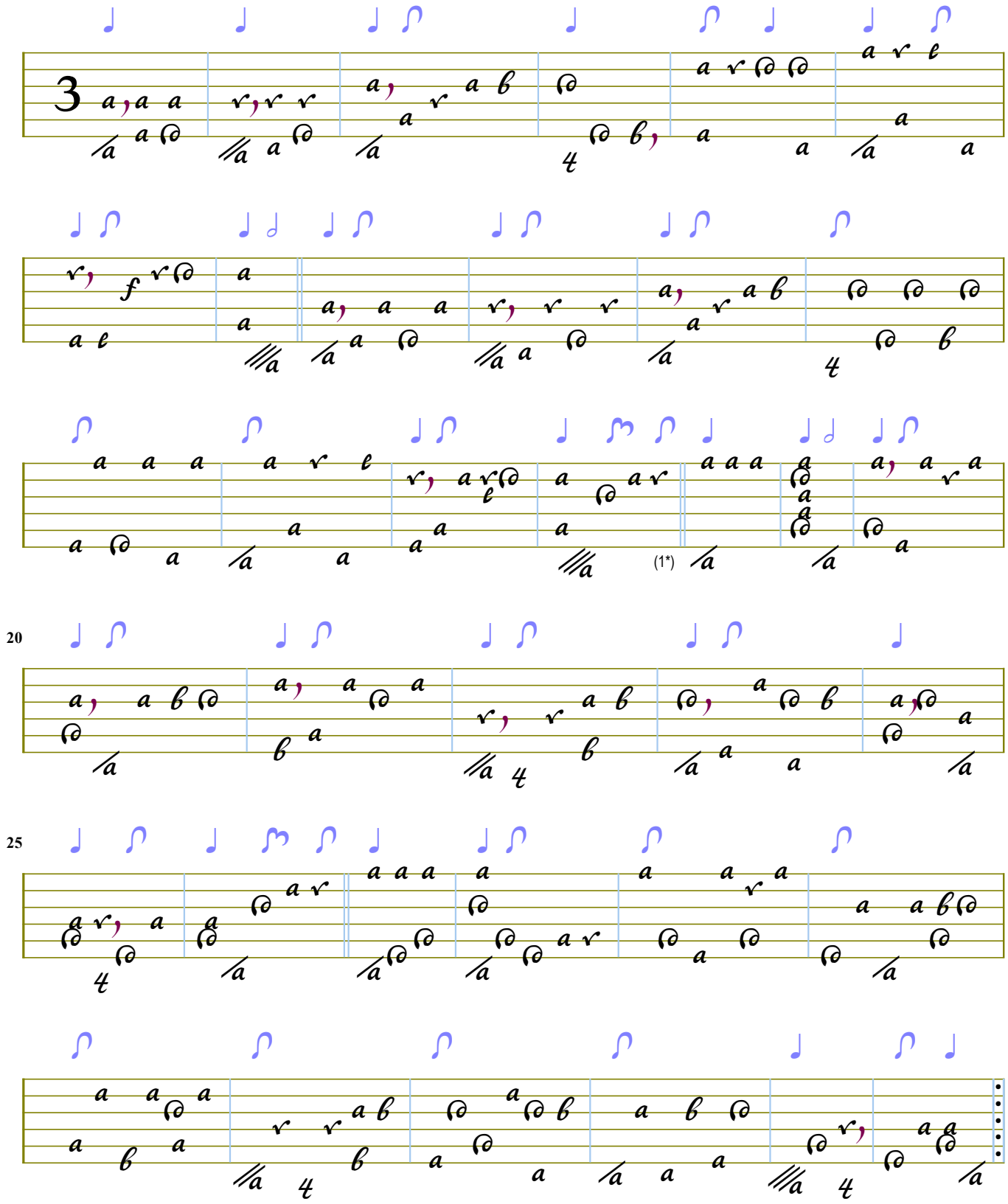
The touching of the strings, David Grieve's way



1. Orig: a on 5th course

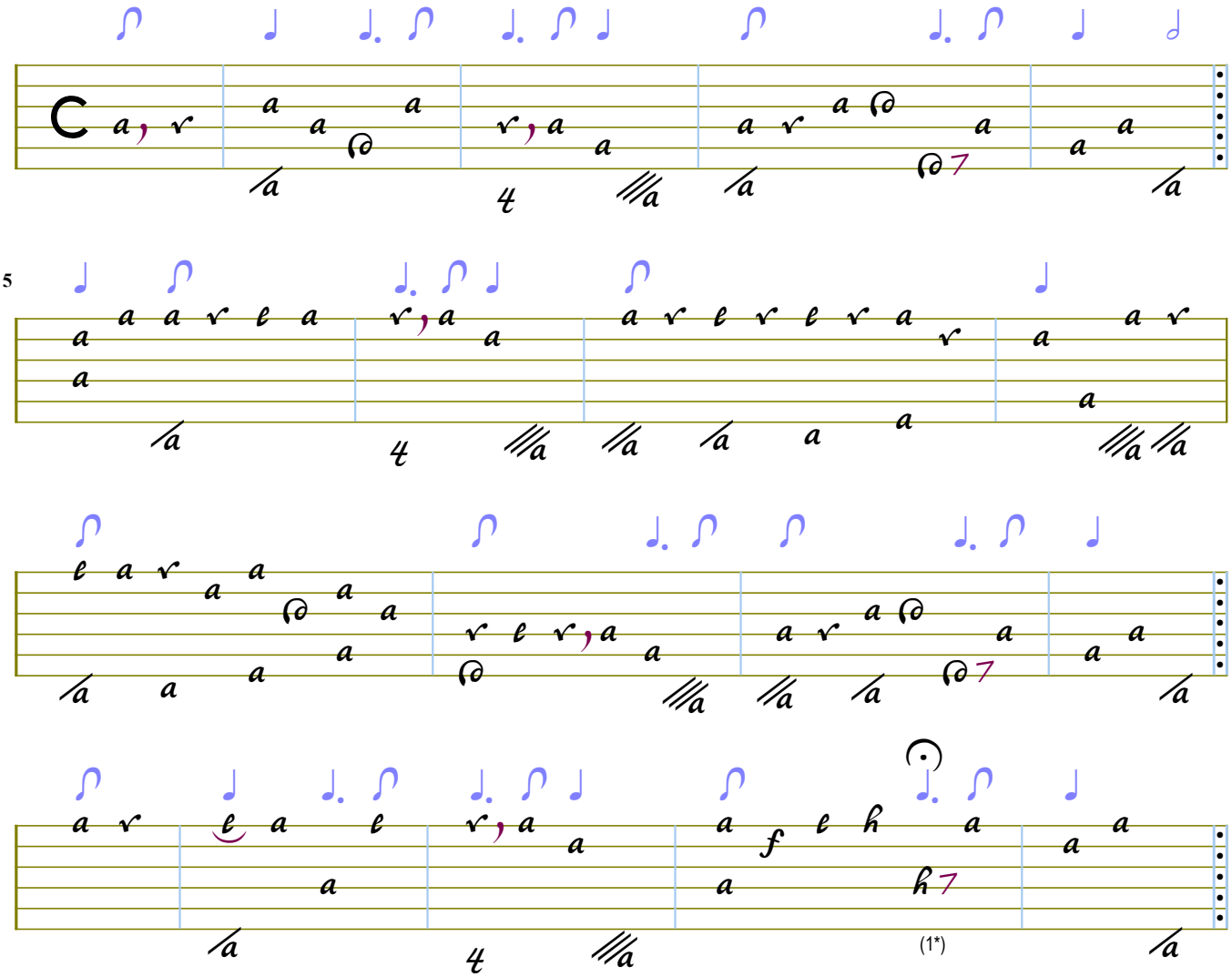


The blackbird, David Grieve's way



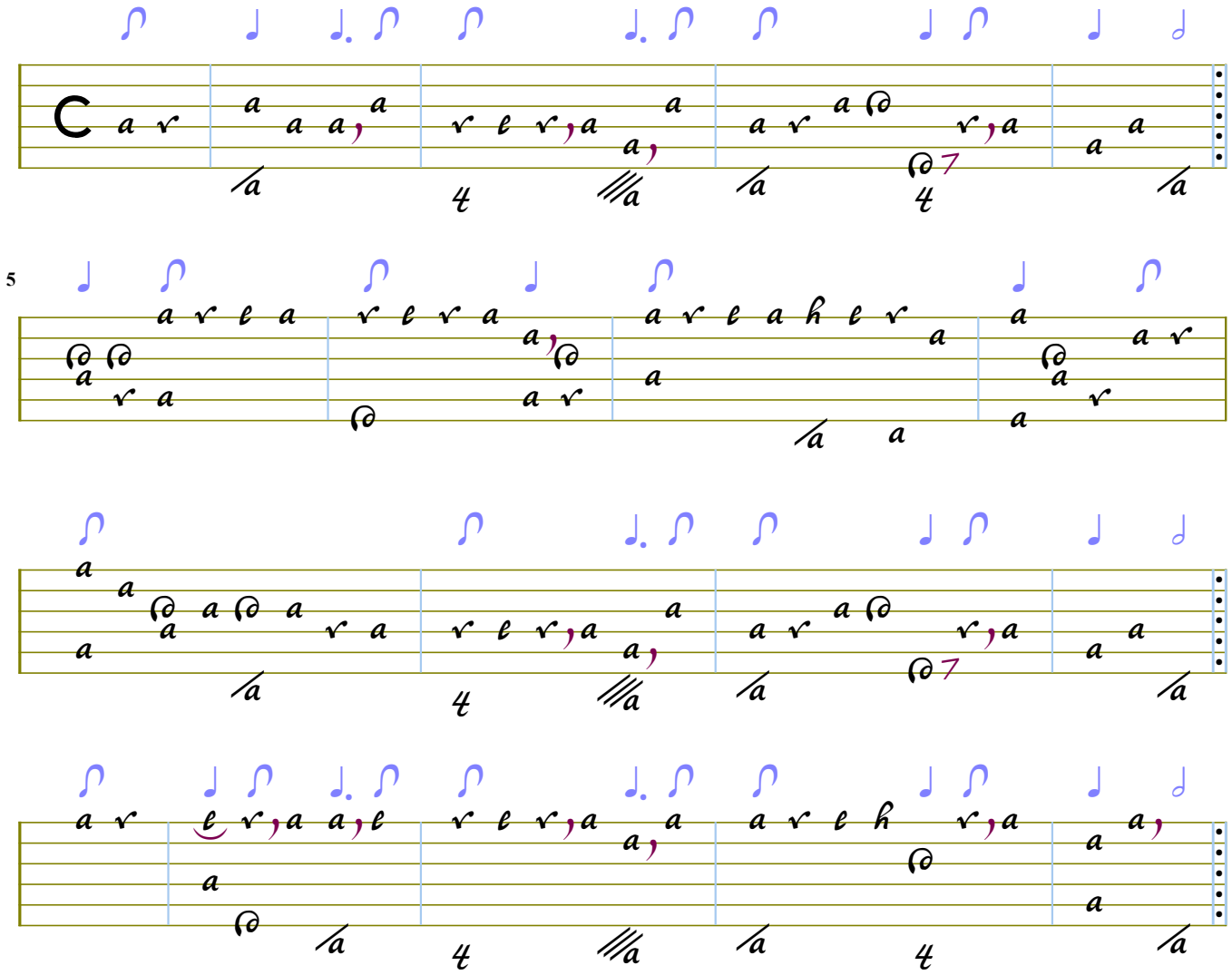
1. Double bar section delimiters editorial

The Lady Errol's delight, the 1st way, John Red's way



1. Indistinct ornament, perhaps a plus sign or '7'?

The Lady Errol's delight, the 2nd way, mr. Leslie's way



Bonnie Christian, David Grieve's way, with the 9th string lowed

[sic]

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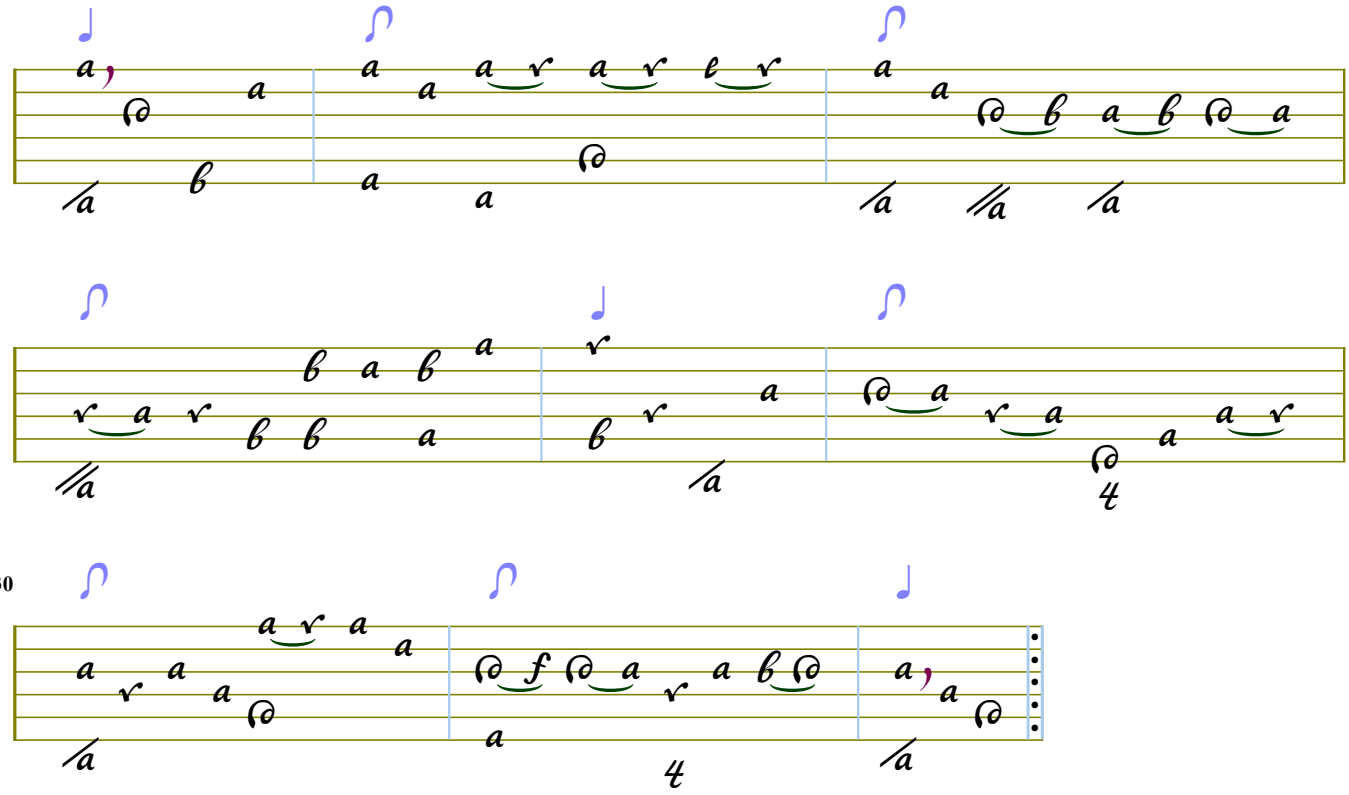

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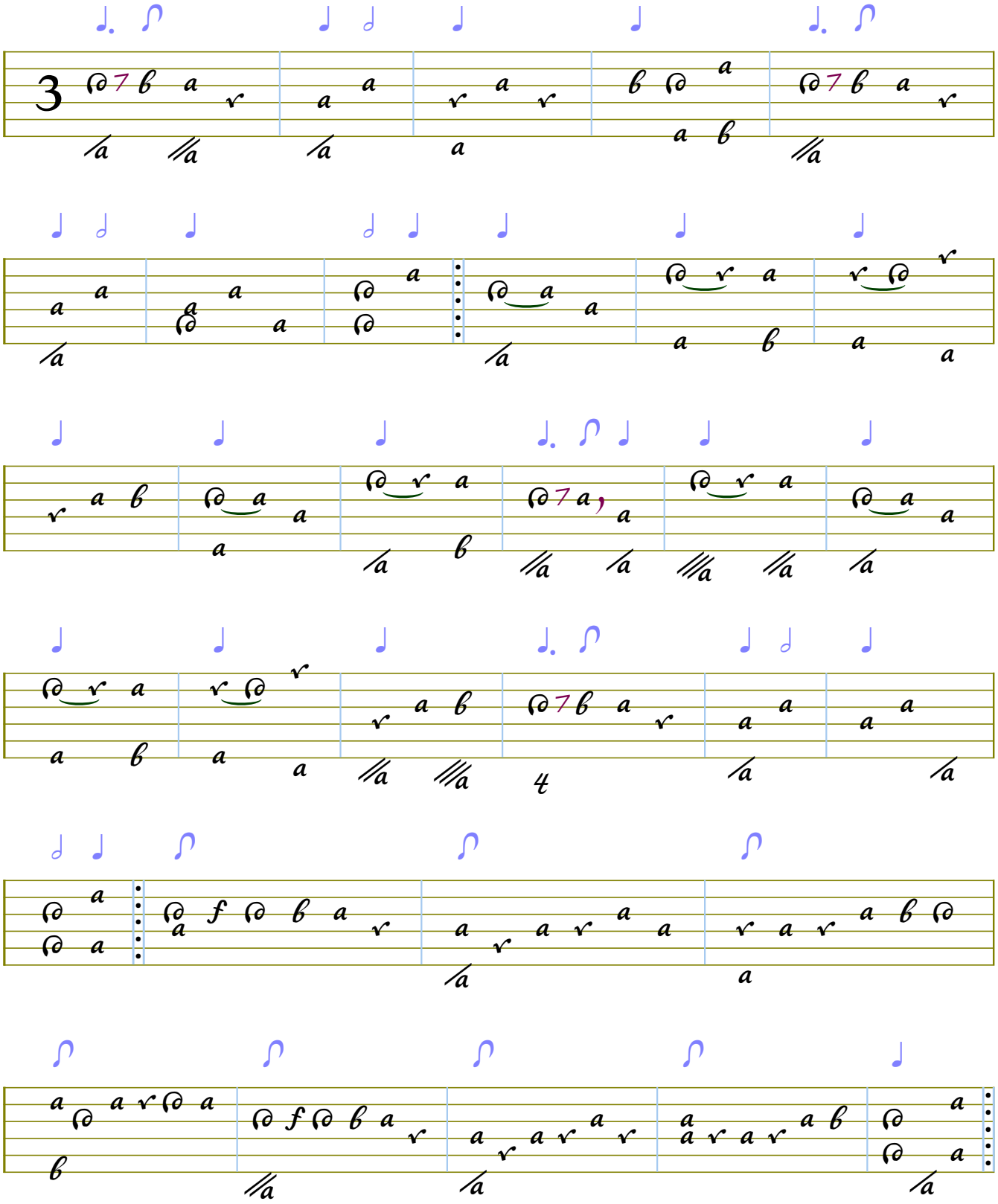
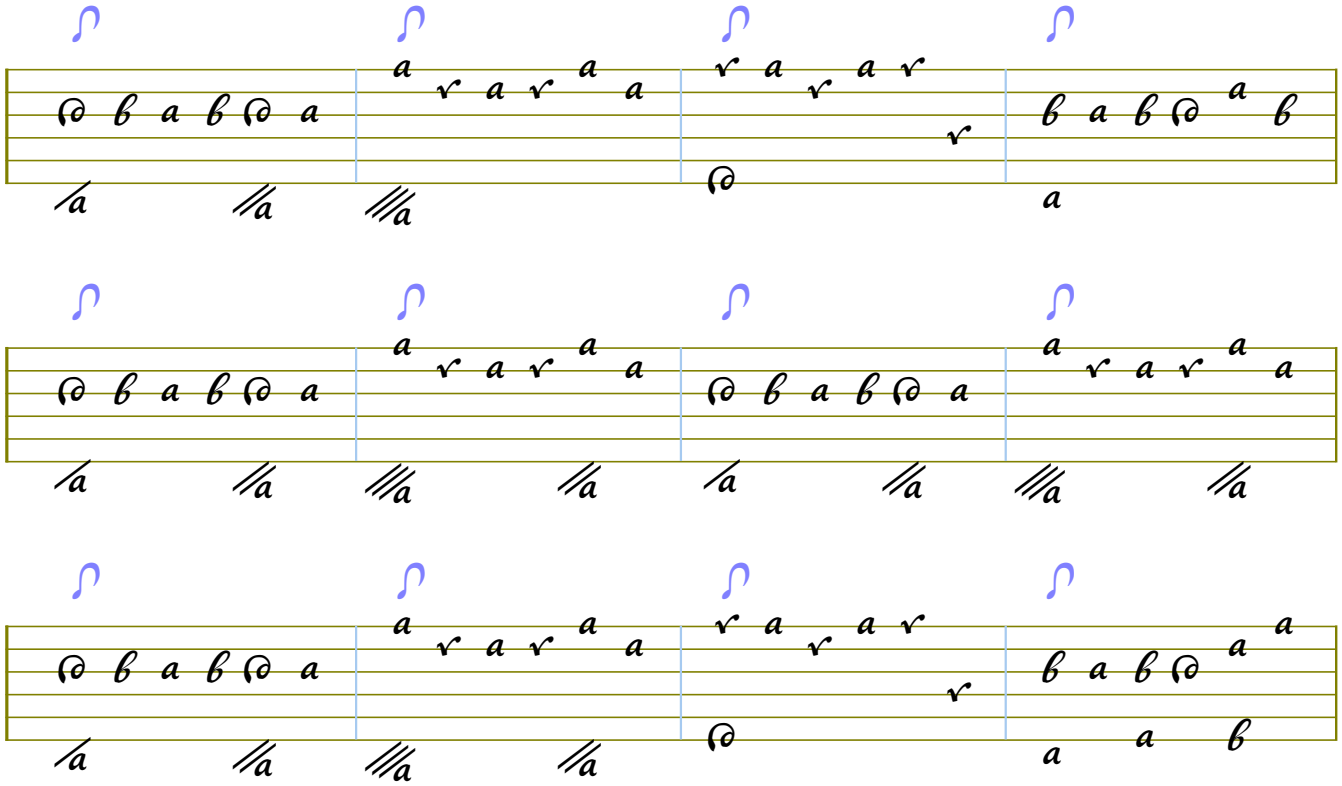
John Robinson's Park, David Grieve's way





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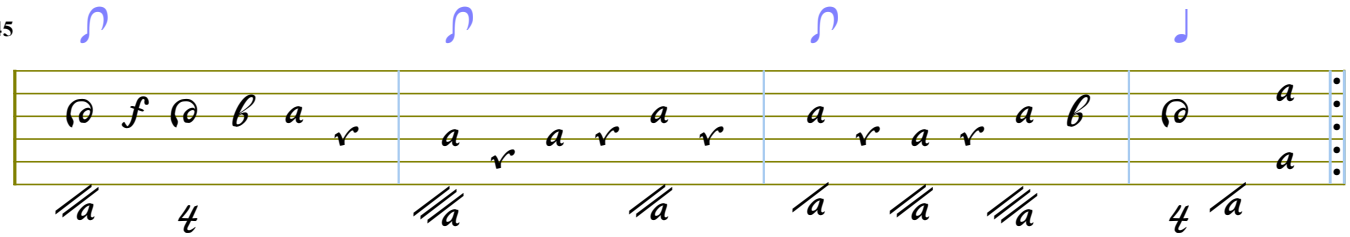
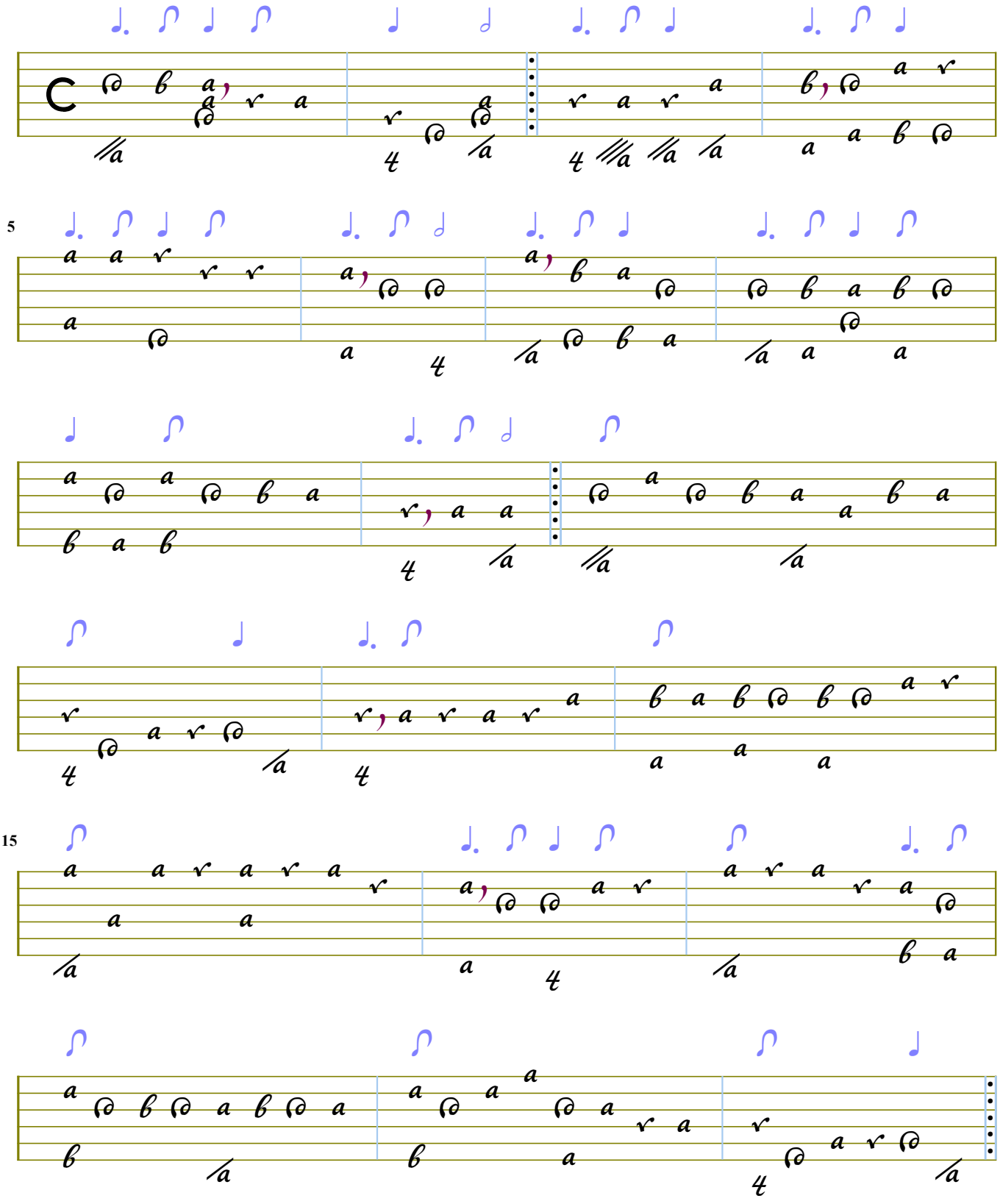
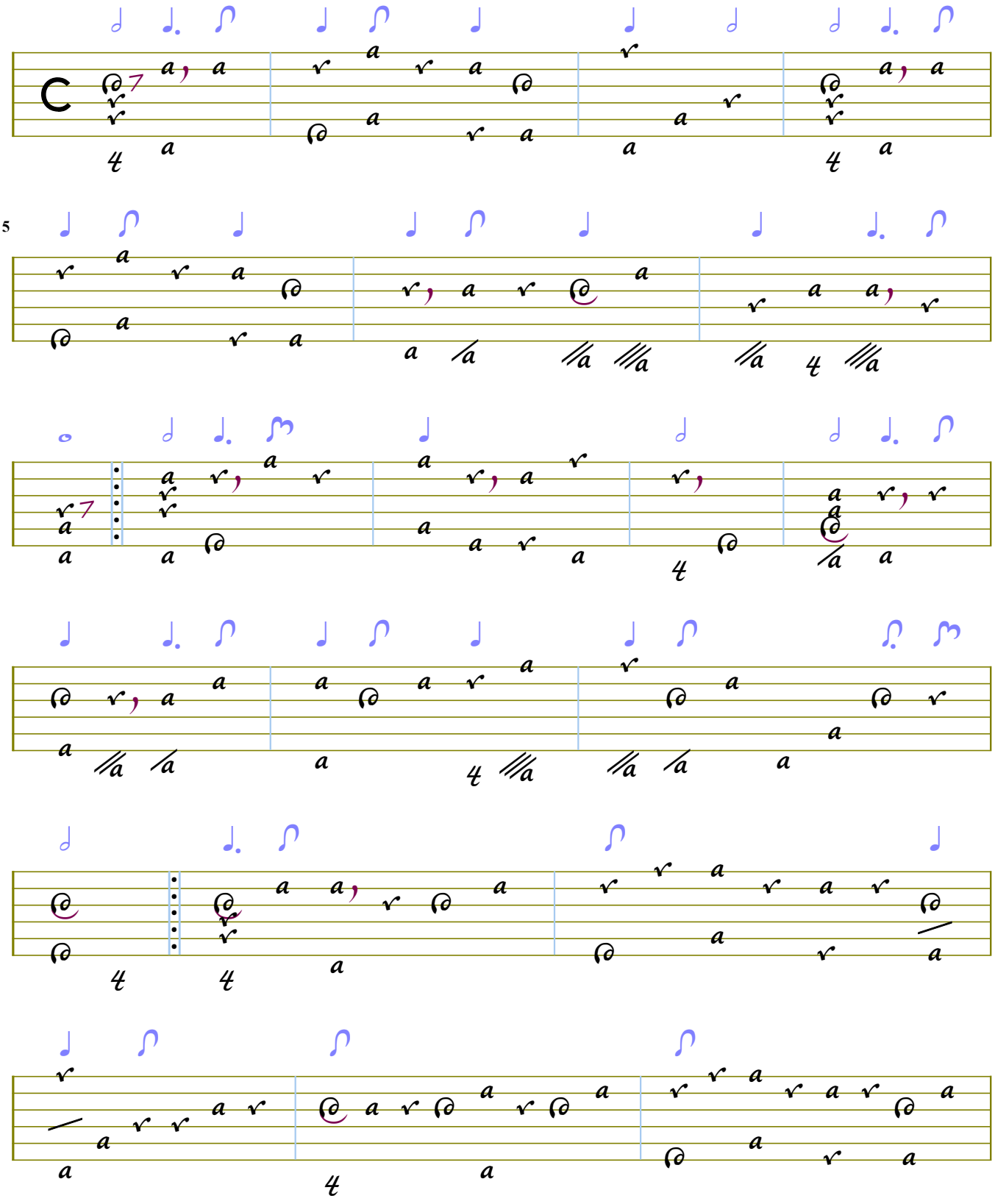
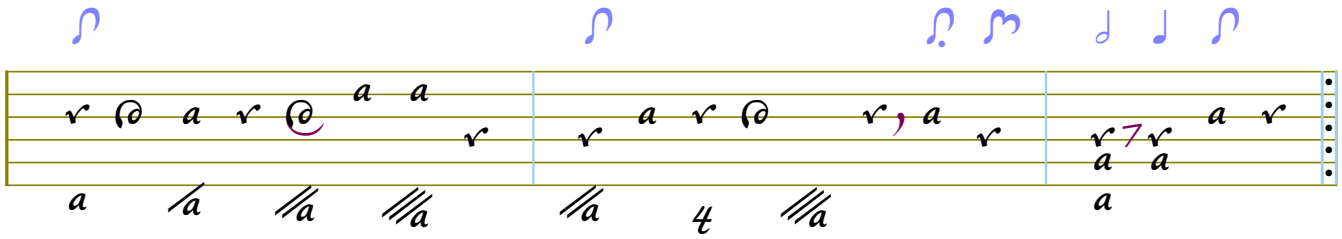


Amarillis told her swanne, David Grieve's way



Le Premier Mousquetair, by monsieur Gallot





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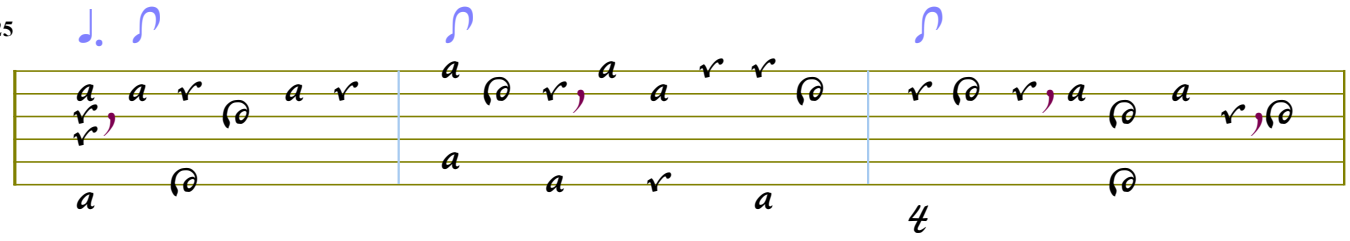
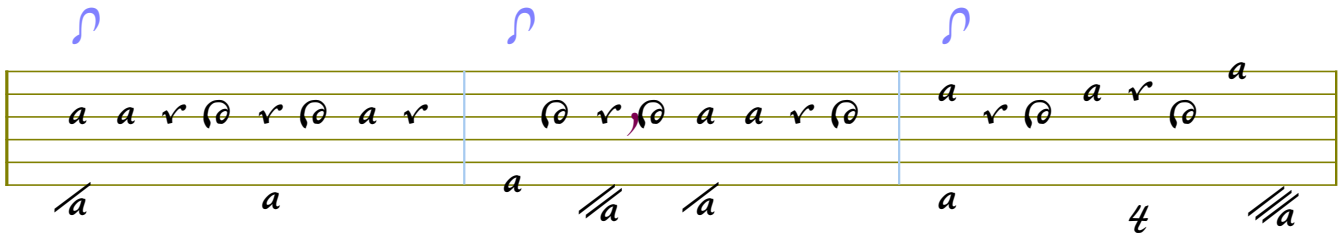
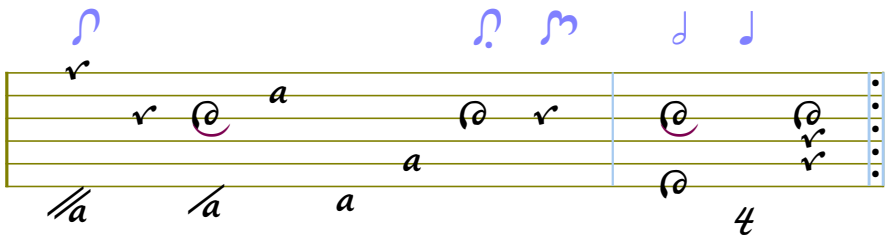
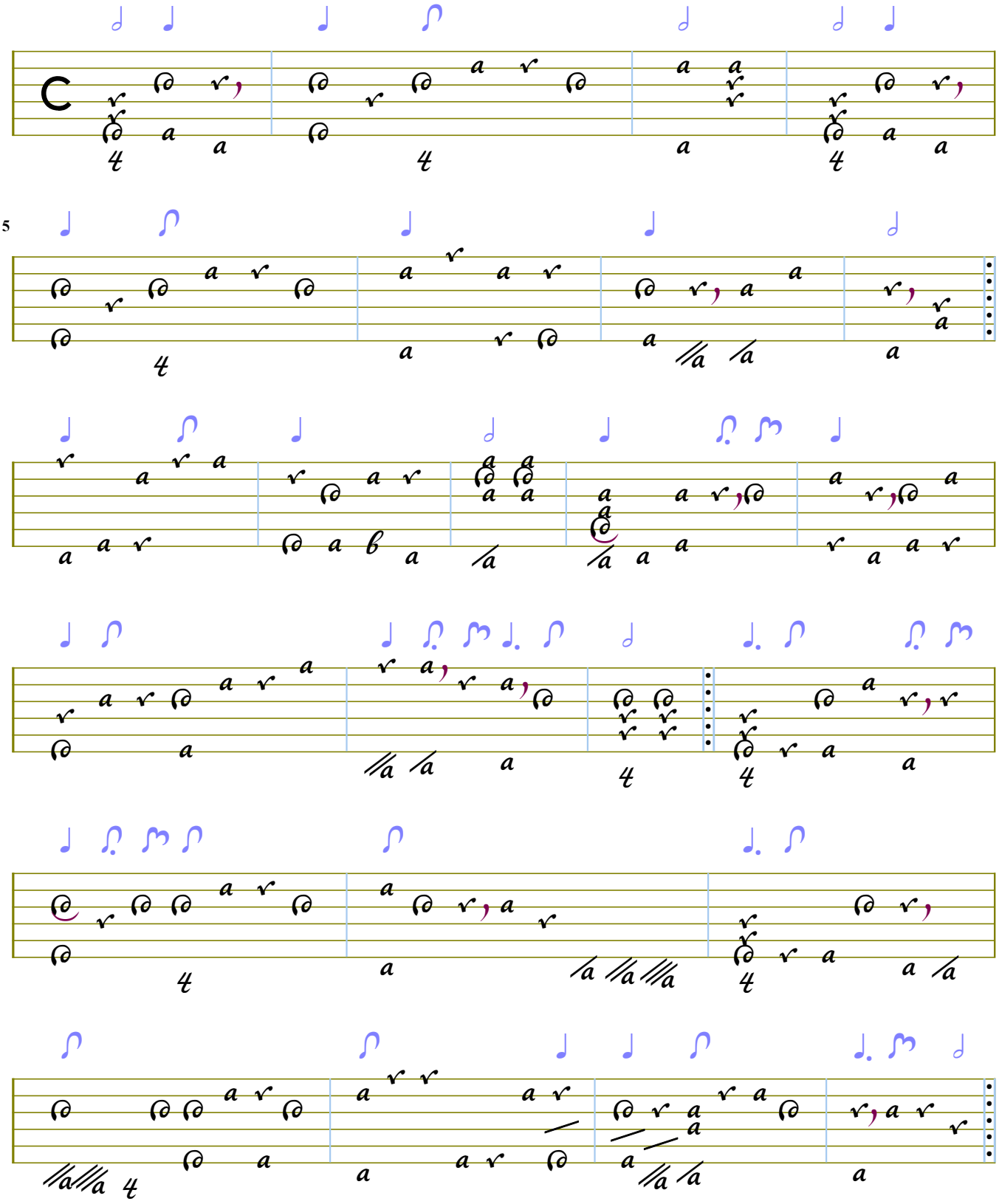
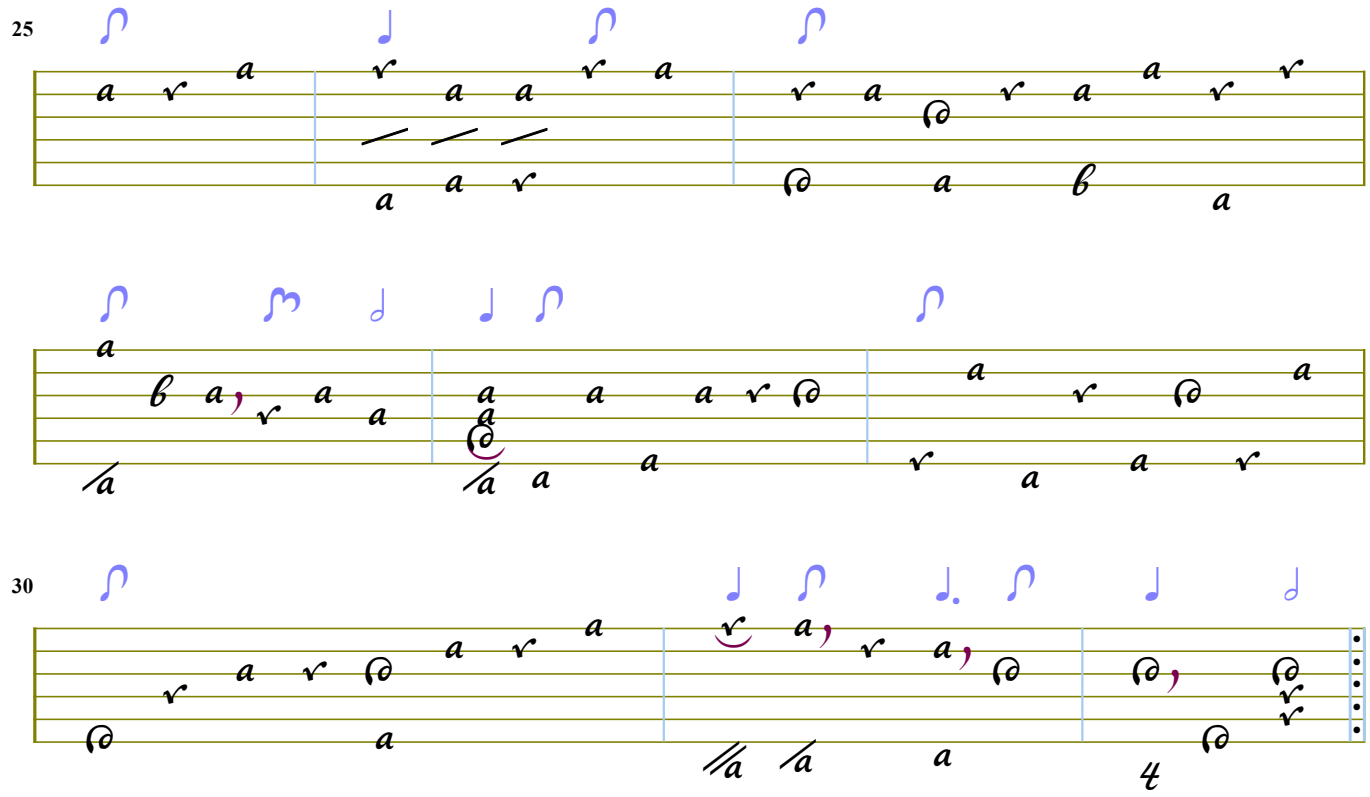






Le Second Mousquetair, my monsieur Gallot

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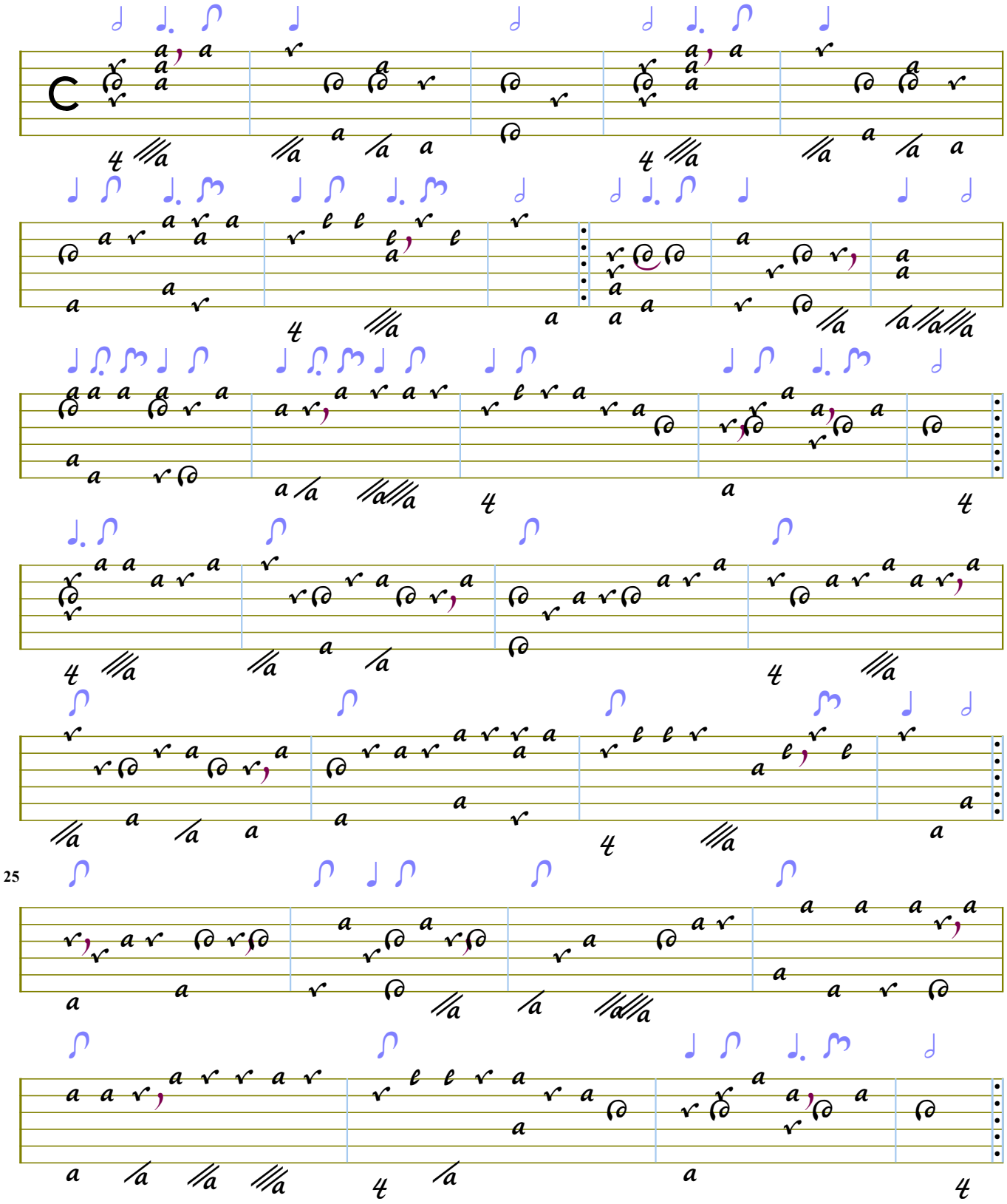
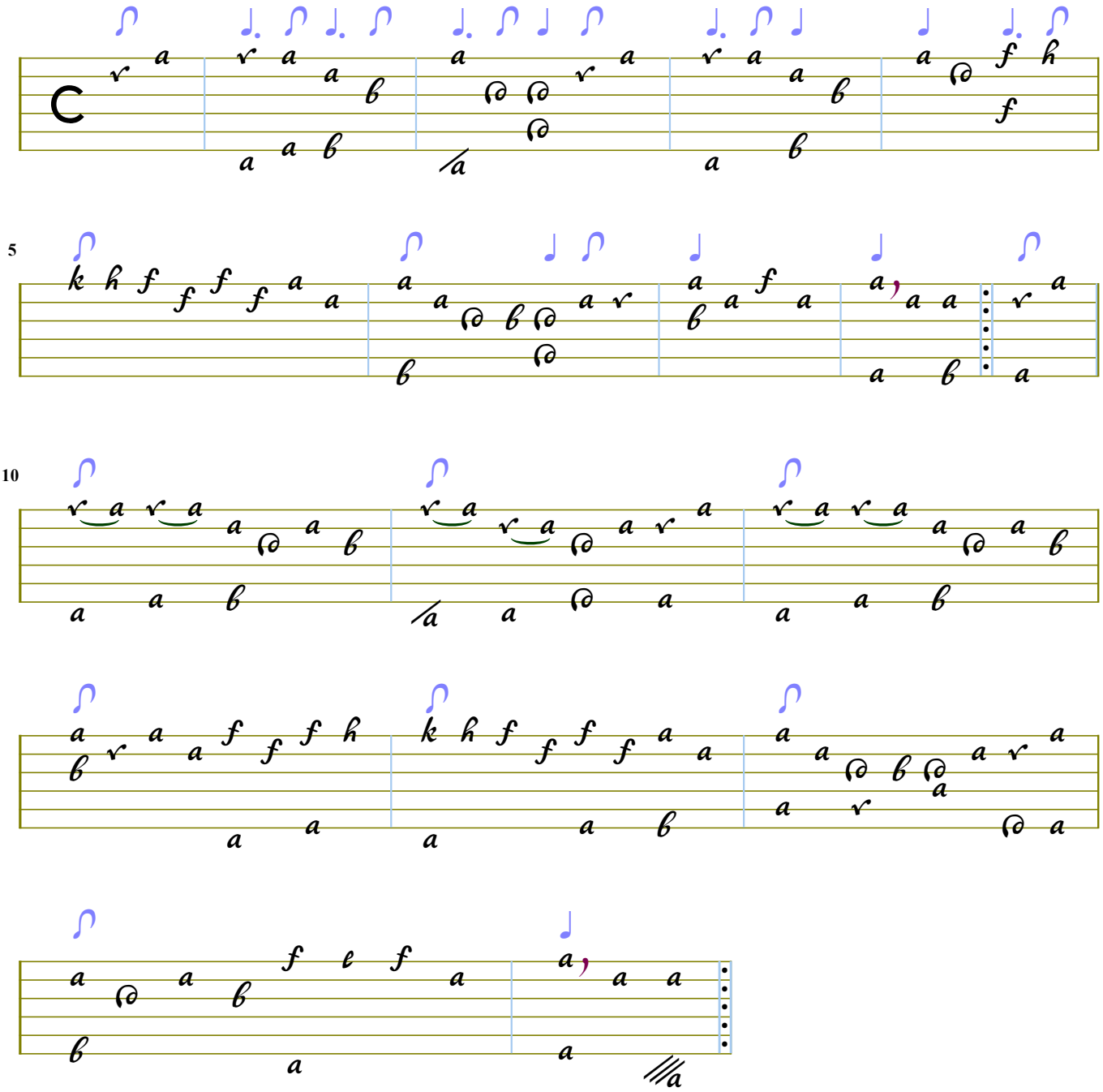
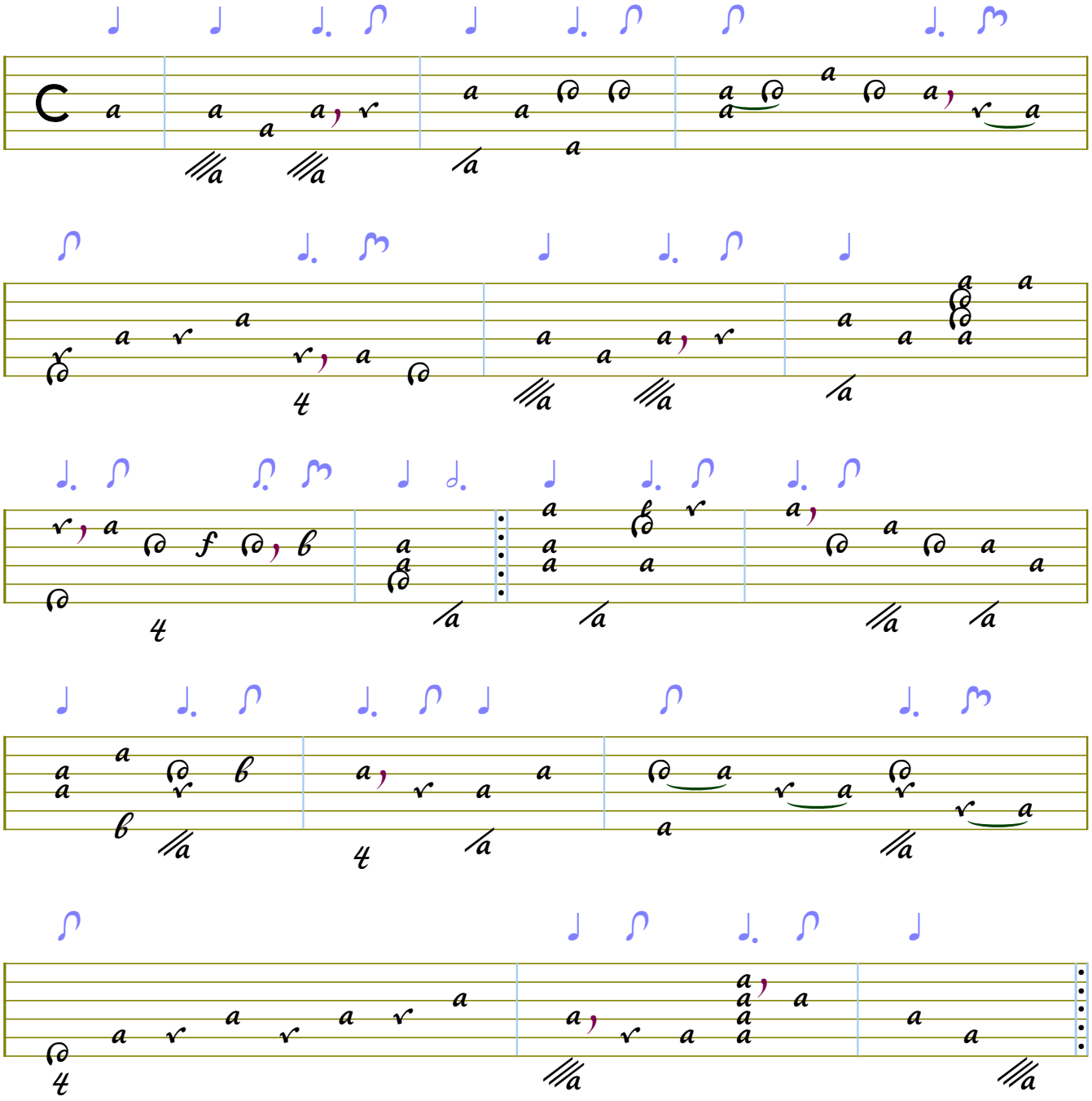
Le Troisieme Mousquetair, by monsieur Gallot



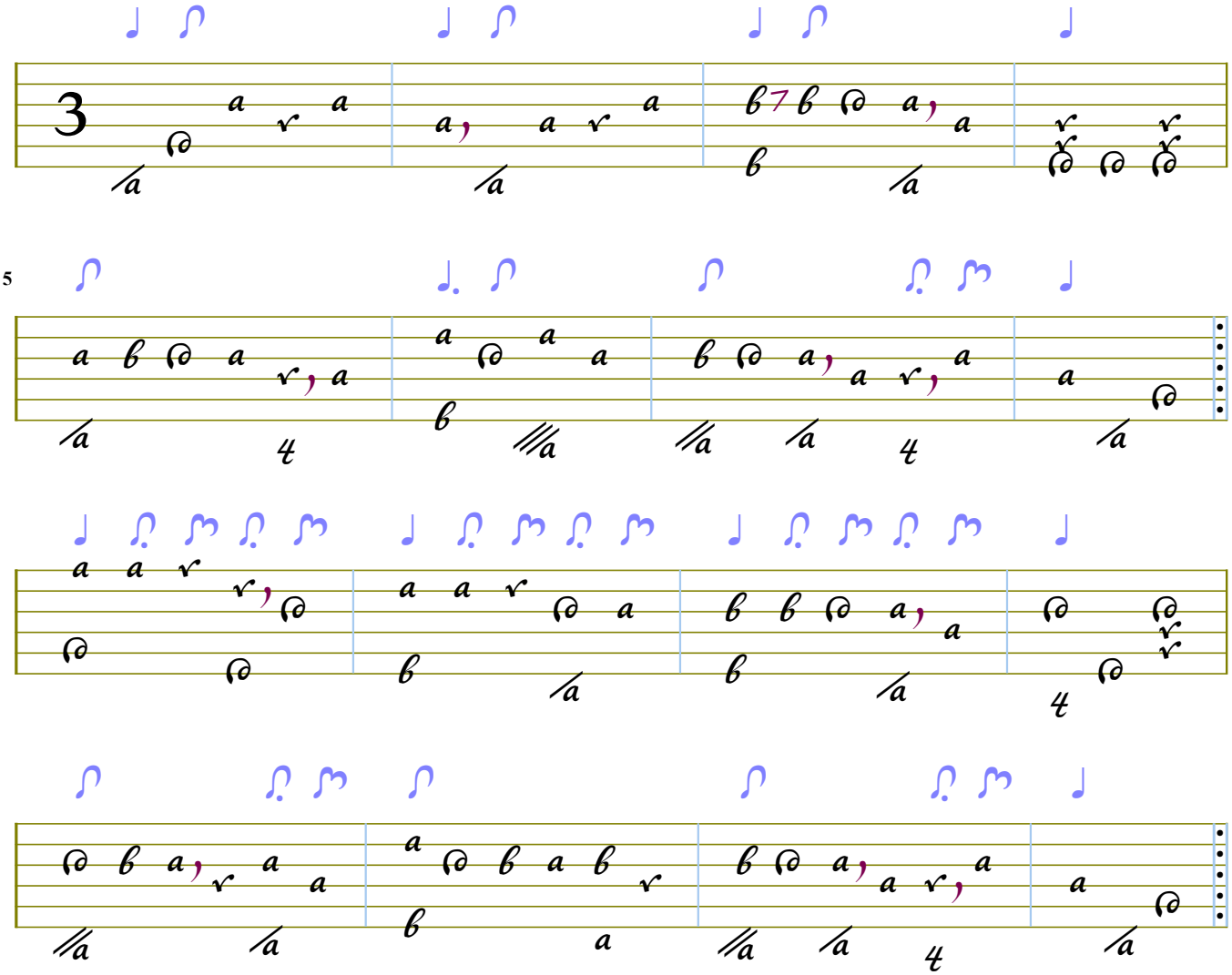
My Lady's night gown, by David Grieve



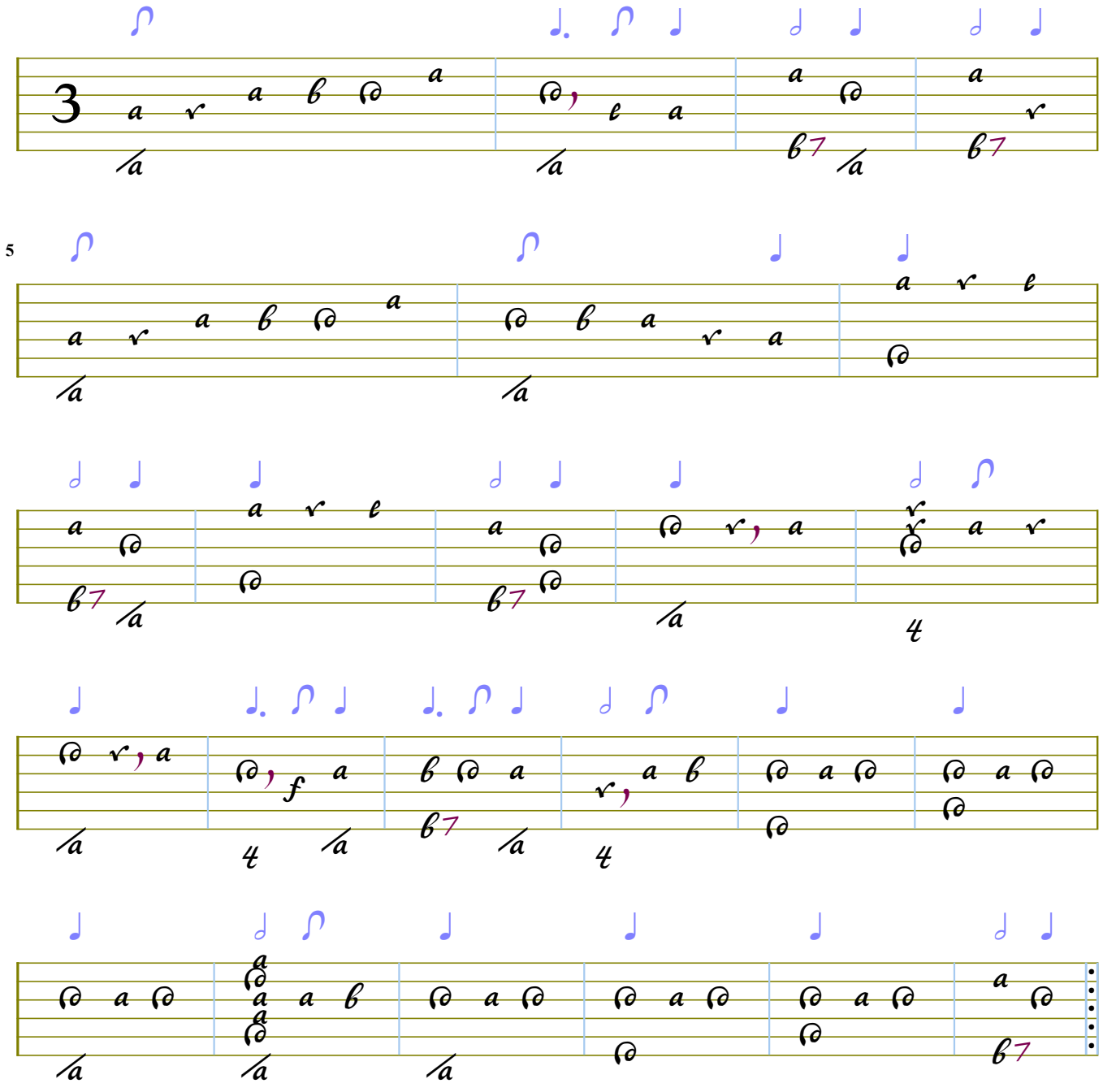
Moncks March, by David Grieve



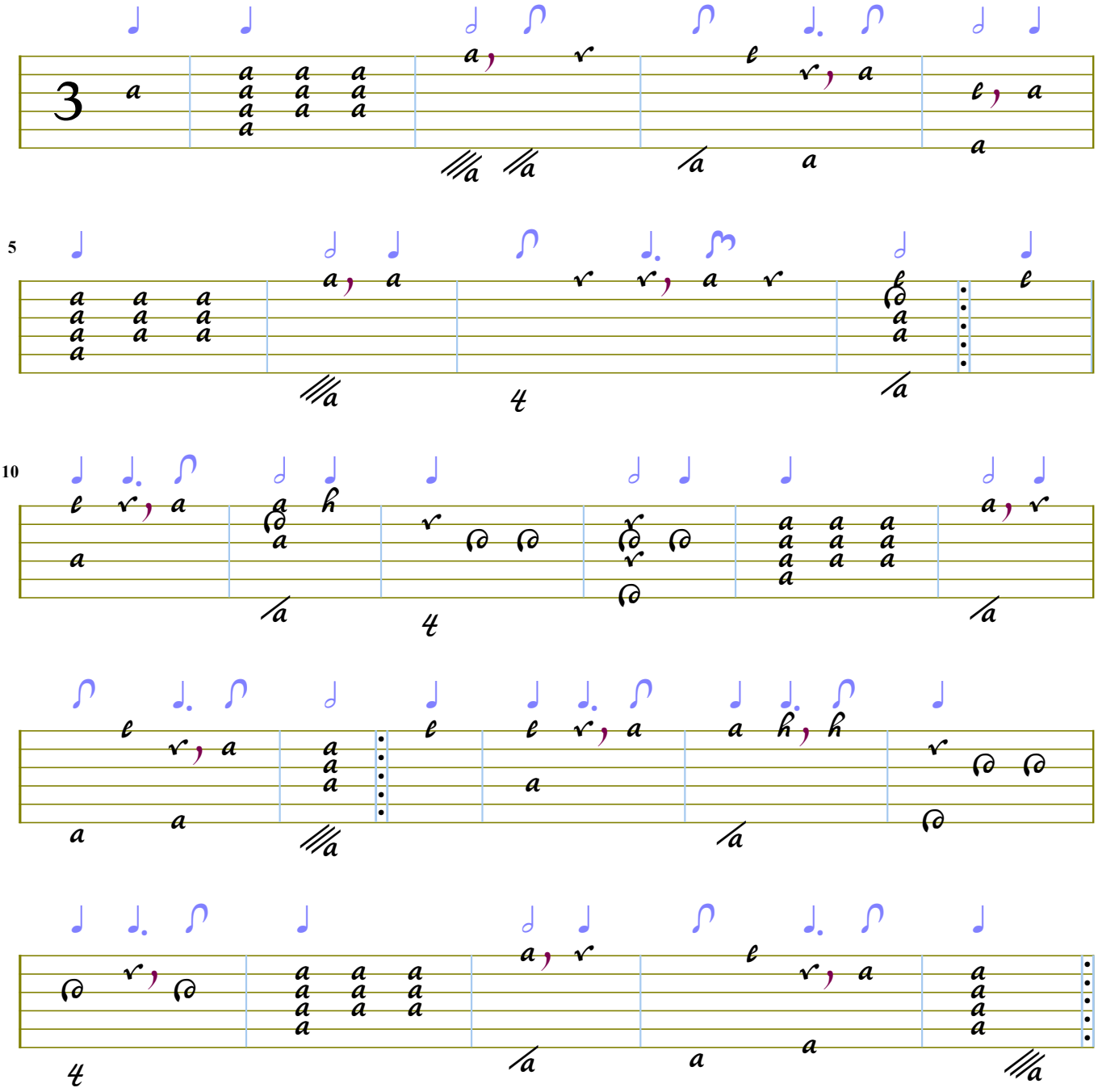
Phil Porter's rantt, by David Grieve



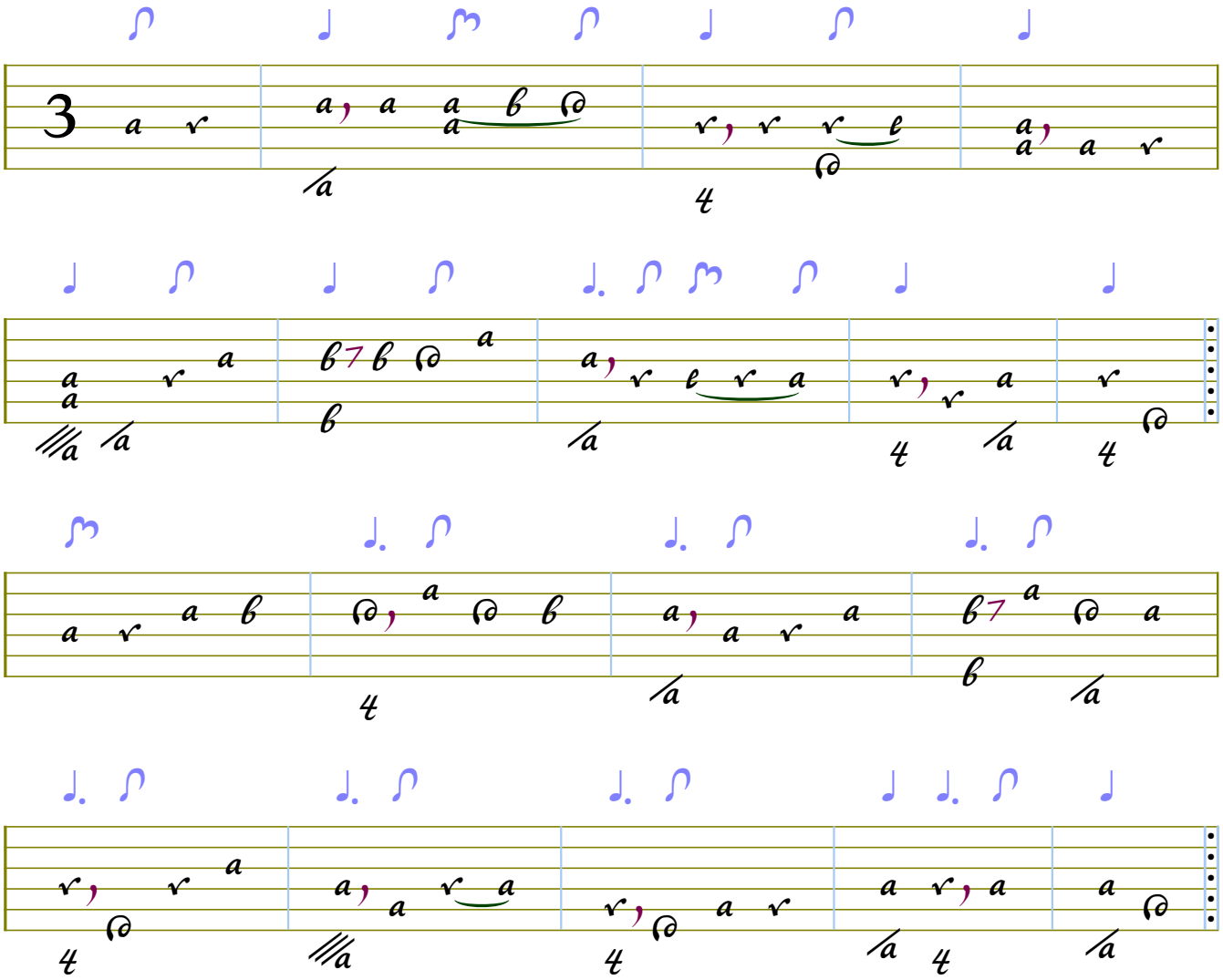
Saraband, to Phil Porter's rant, by David Grieve



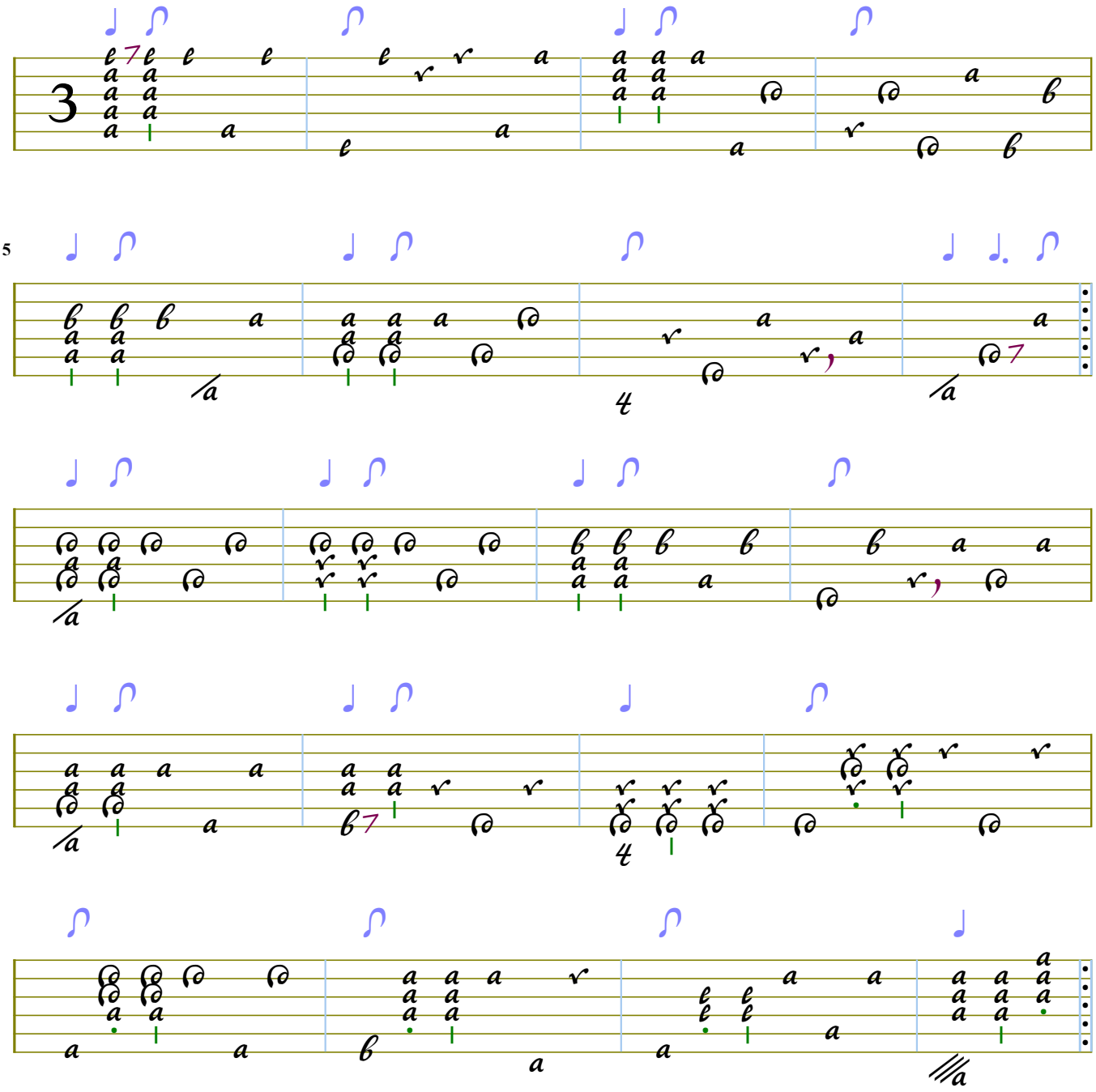
Amarillis



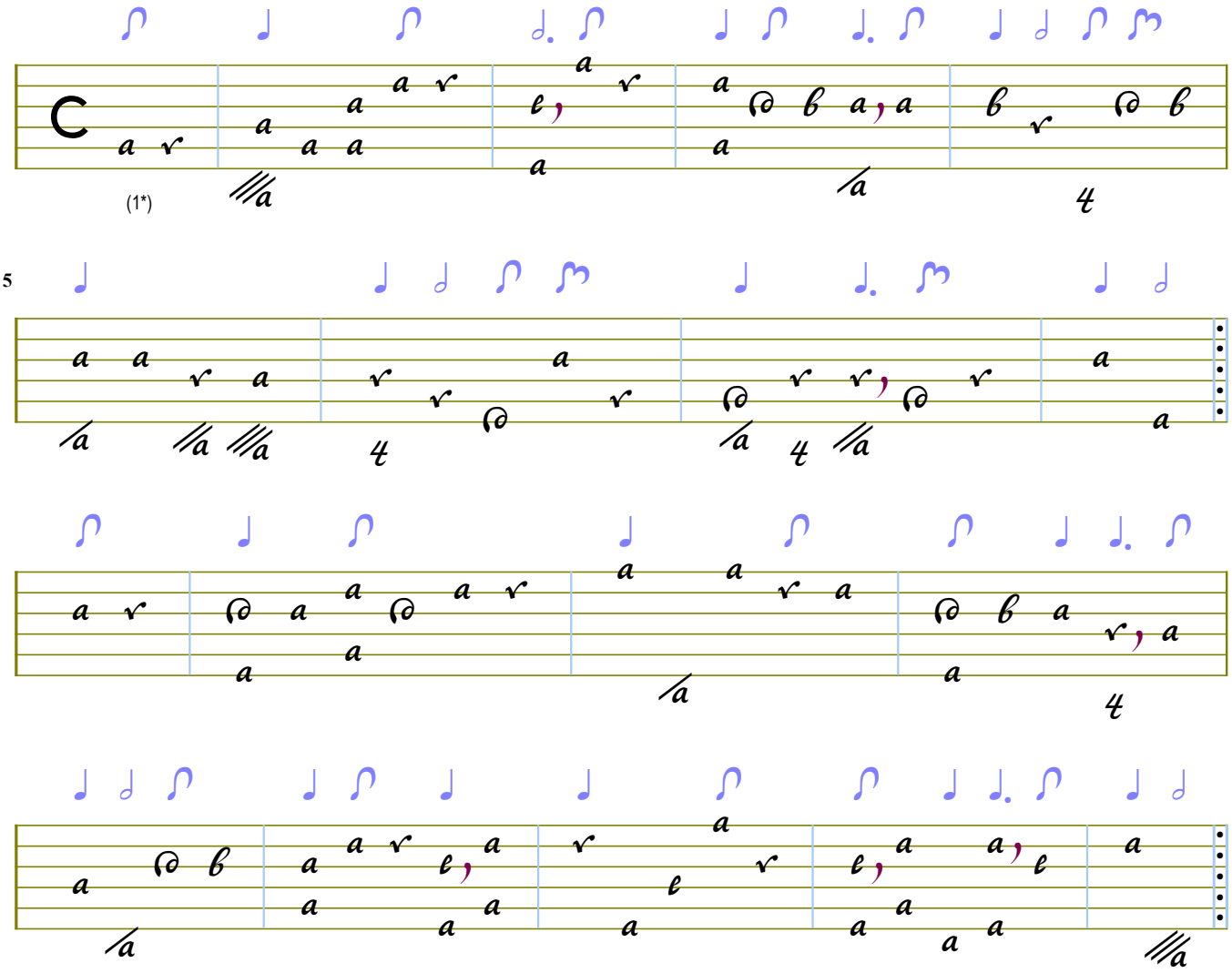
Imperial sweetnesse, by Master Leslie



Sarraband Mercure

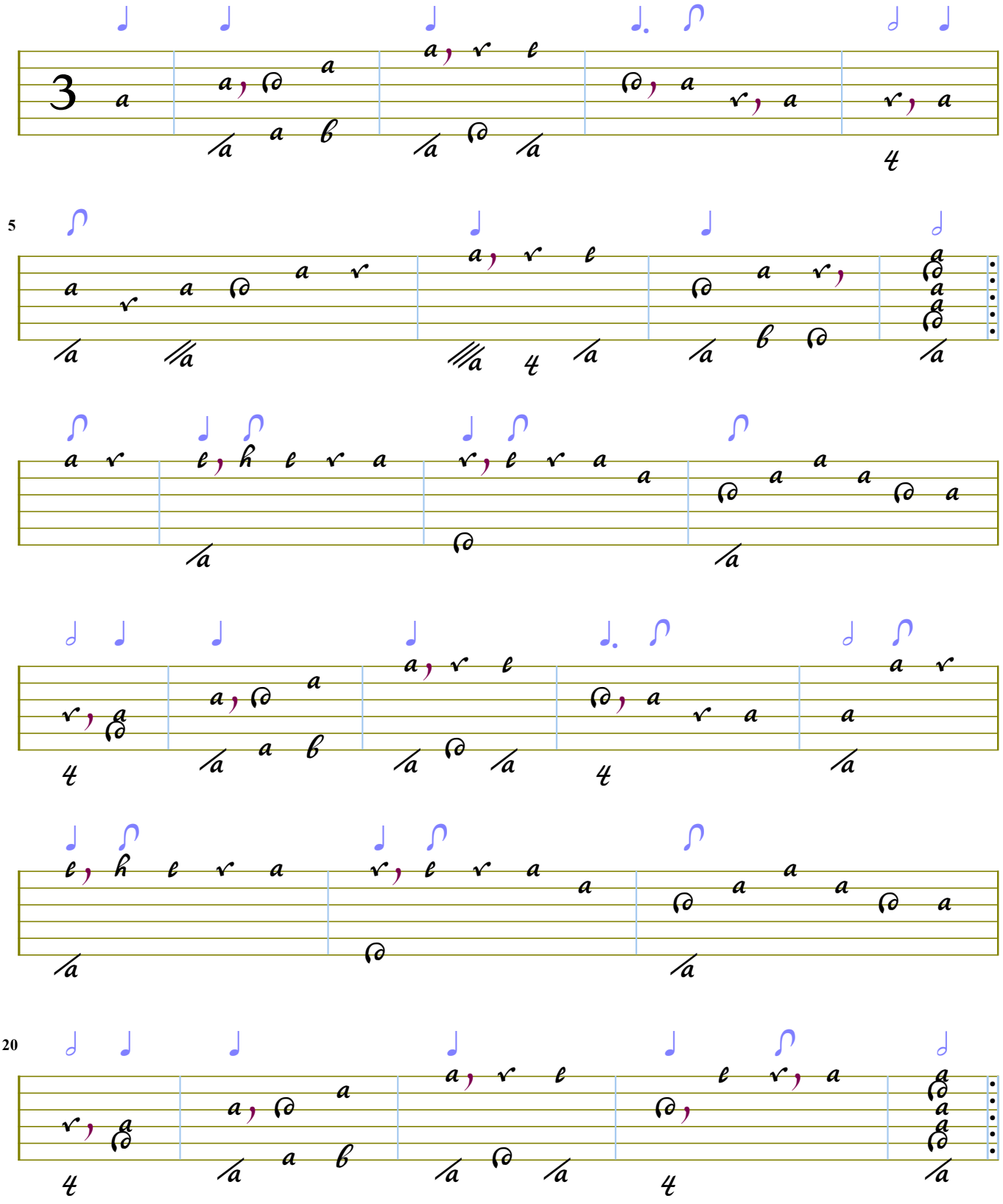


Belle heureuse, by Mr. Leslie

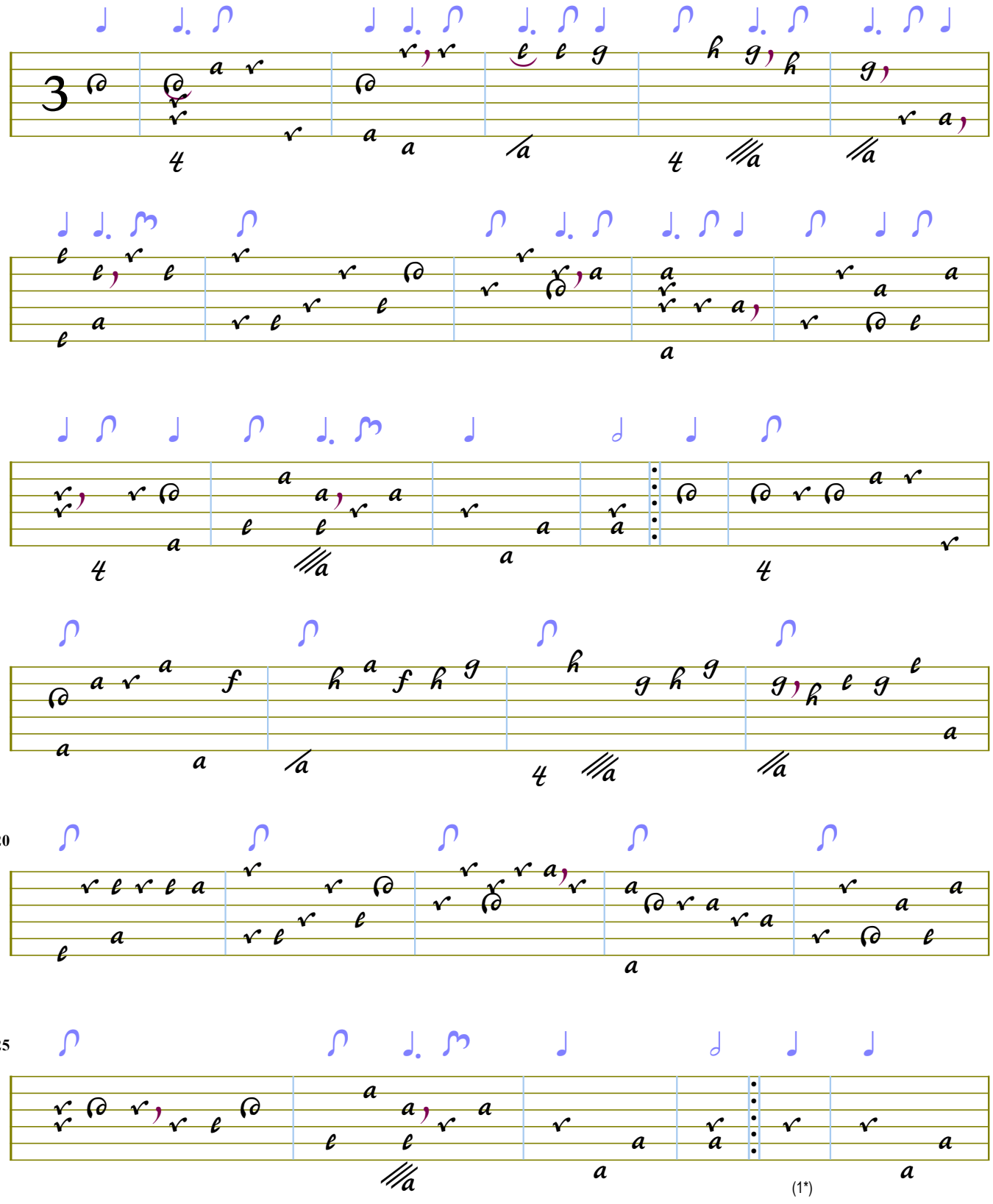


1. Mr. Leslie = Lully

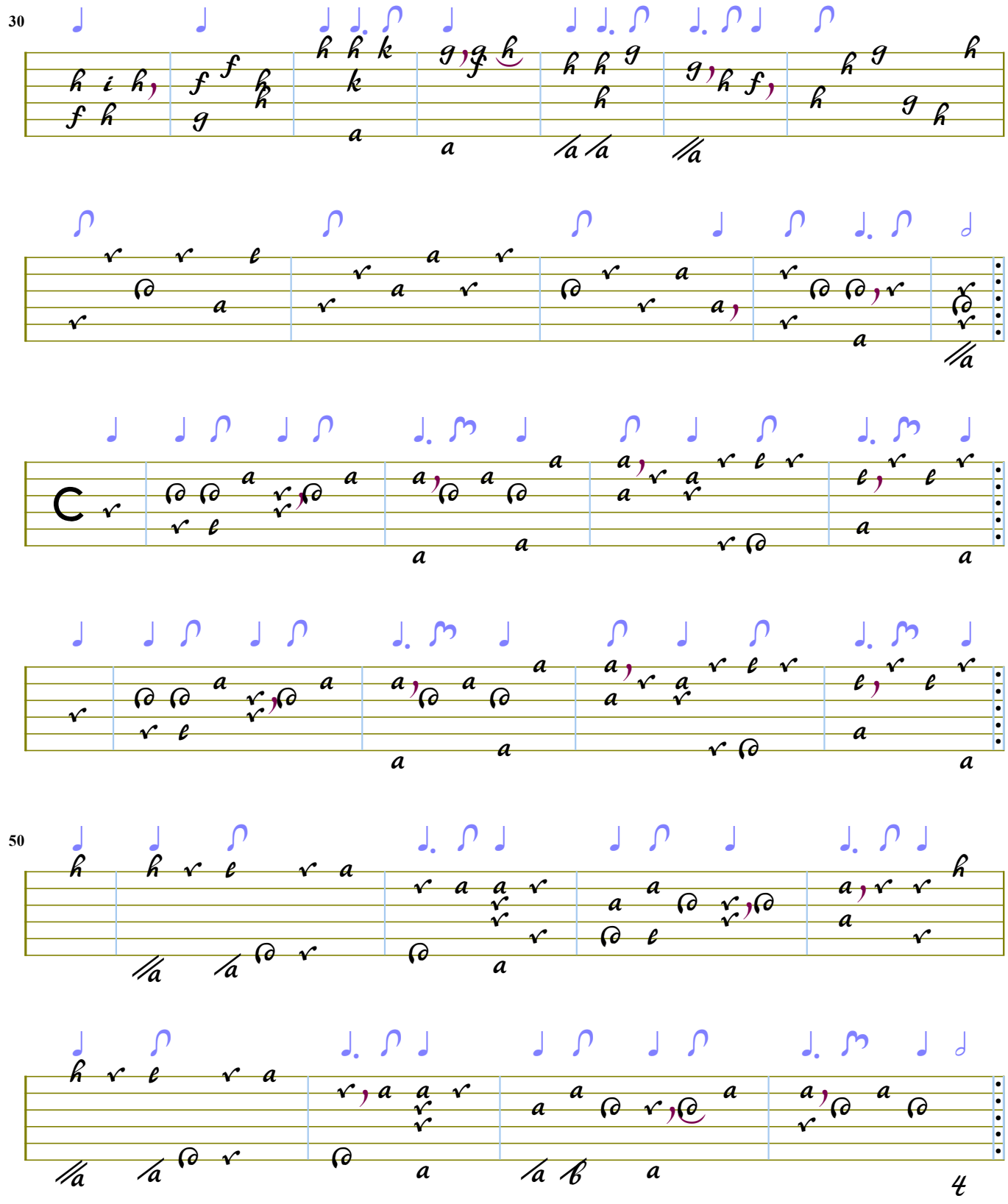
My own dear honey, be kind to me, or the yellow haired ladie, by mr. Leslie



Courante Madame, by monsieur Mouton



1. Note inserted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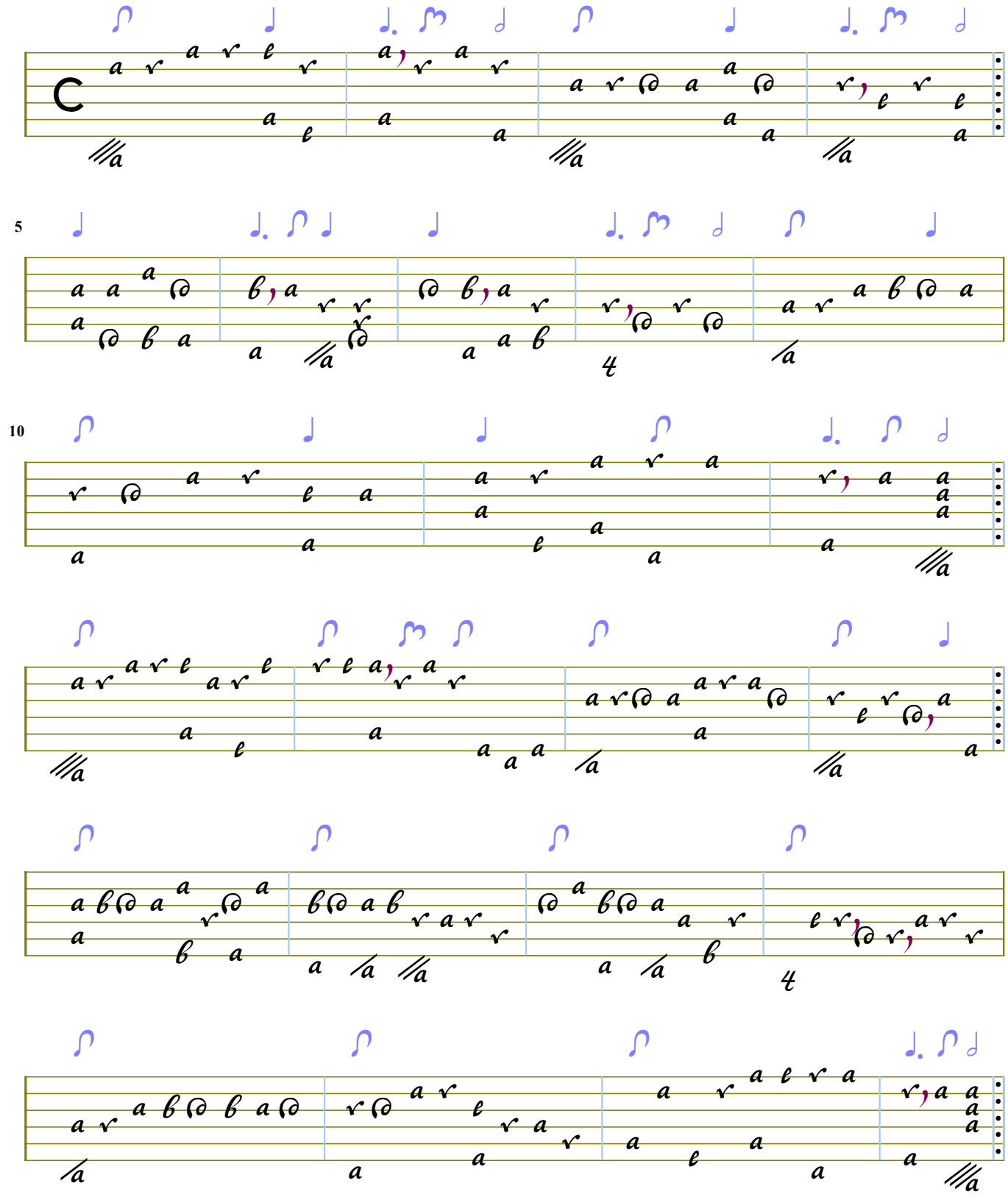
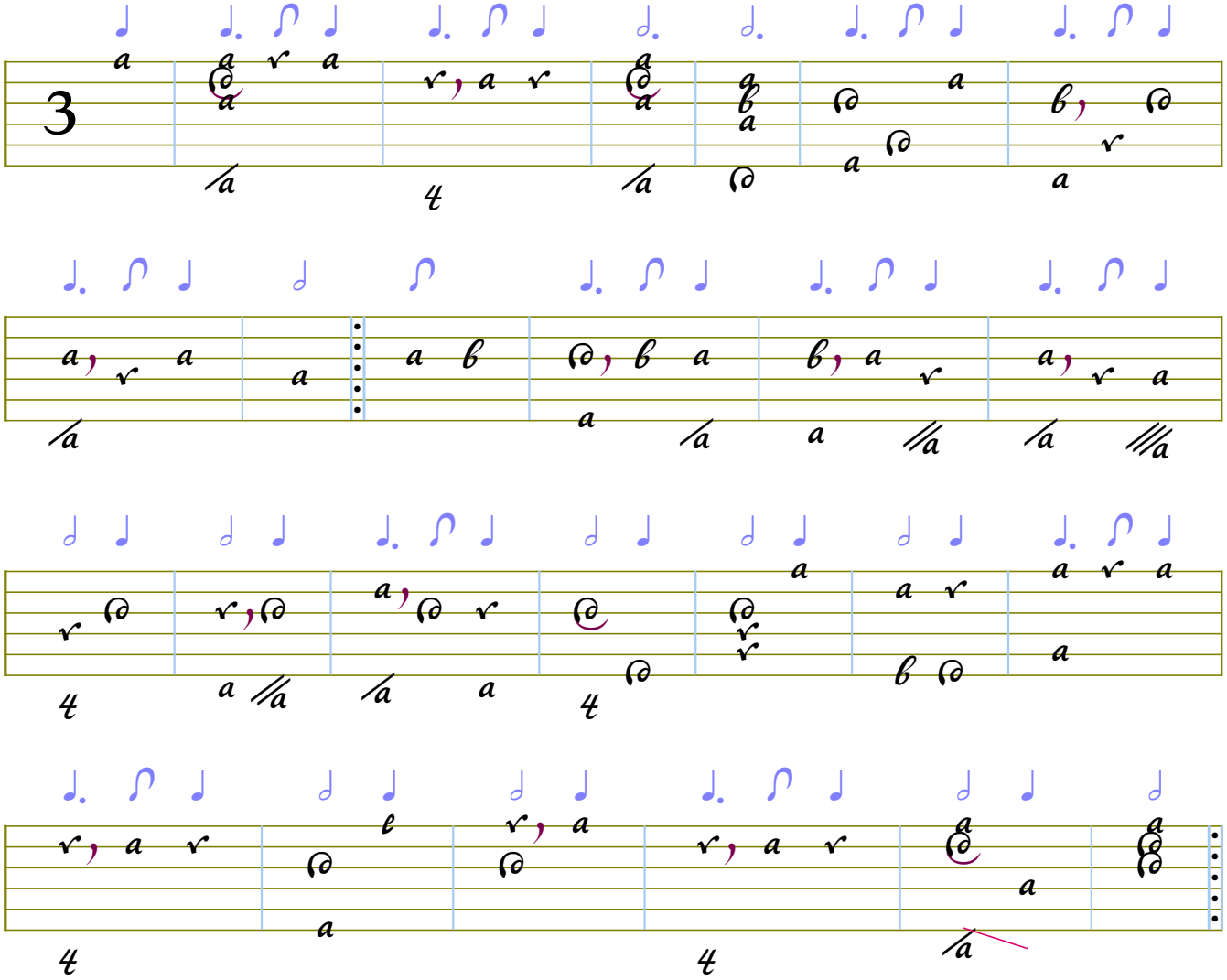
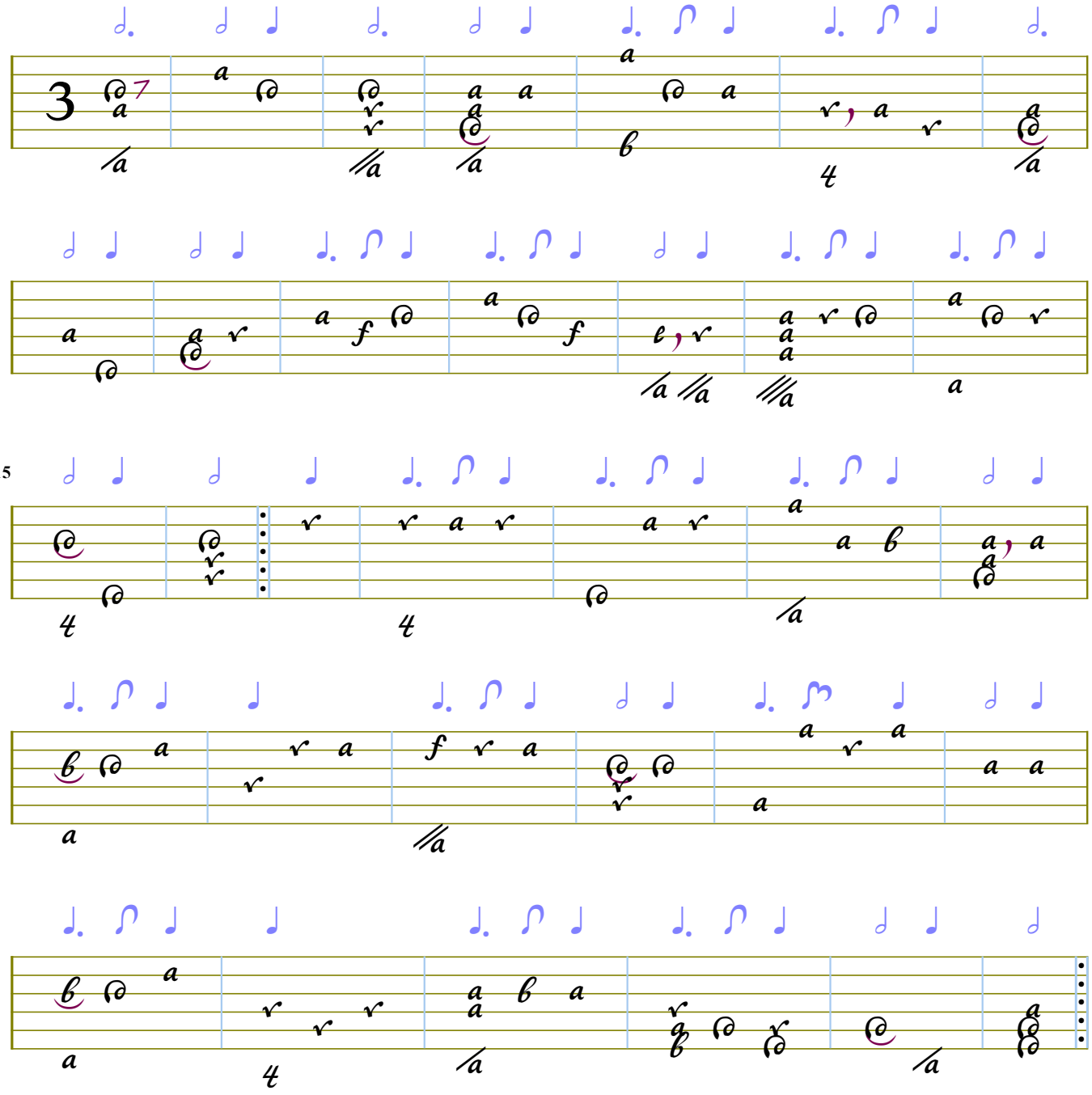
La Gavotte Frondeuse, by monsieur Mouton



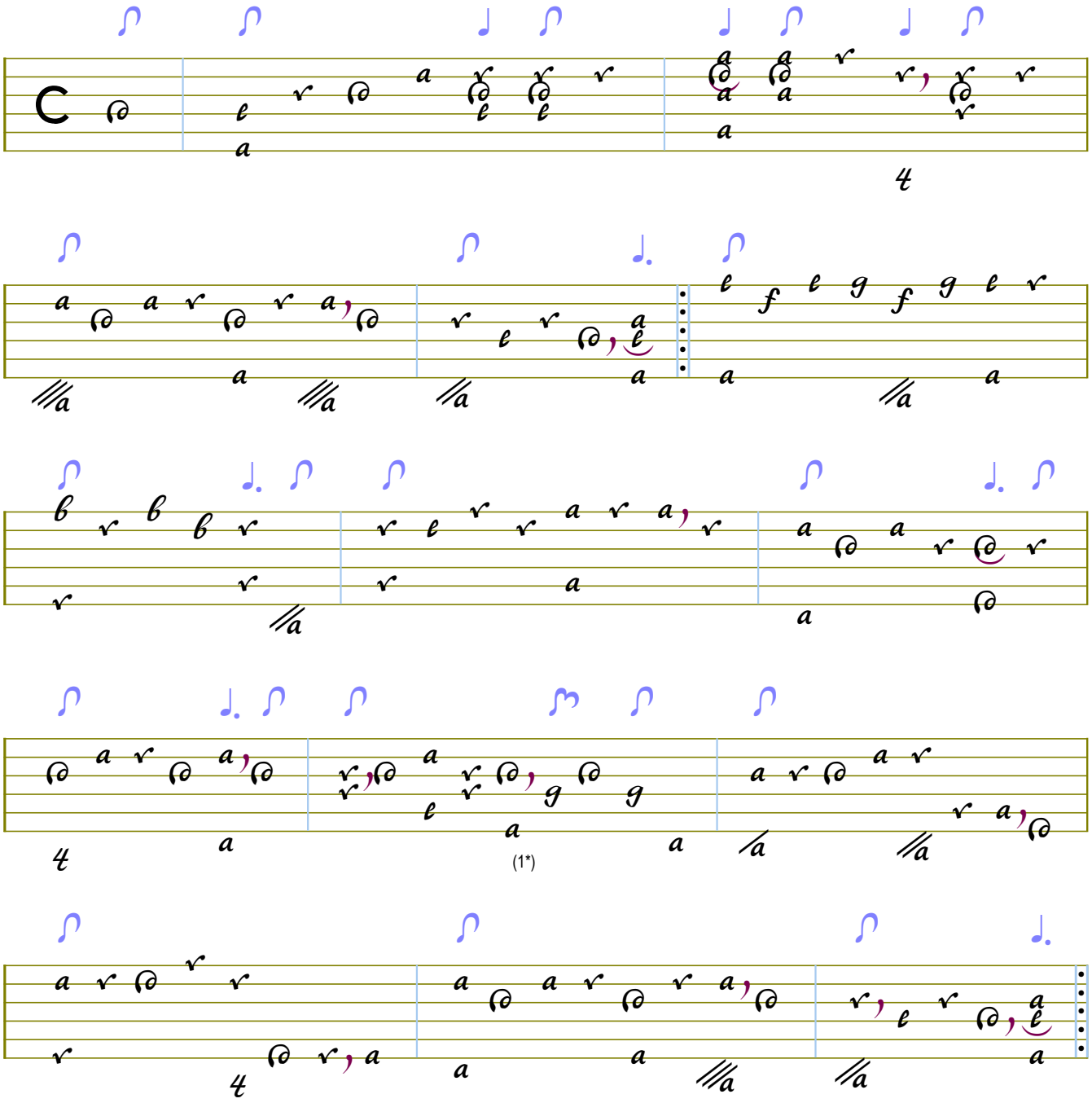
Gigue, by Monsieur Gallot



Gigue, by Monsieur Gallot

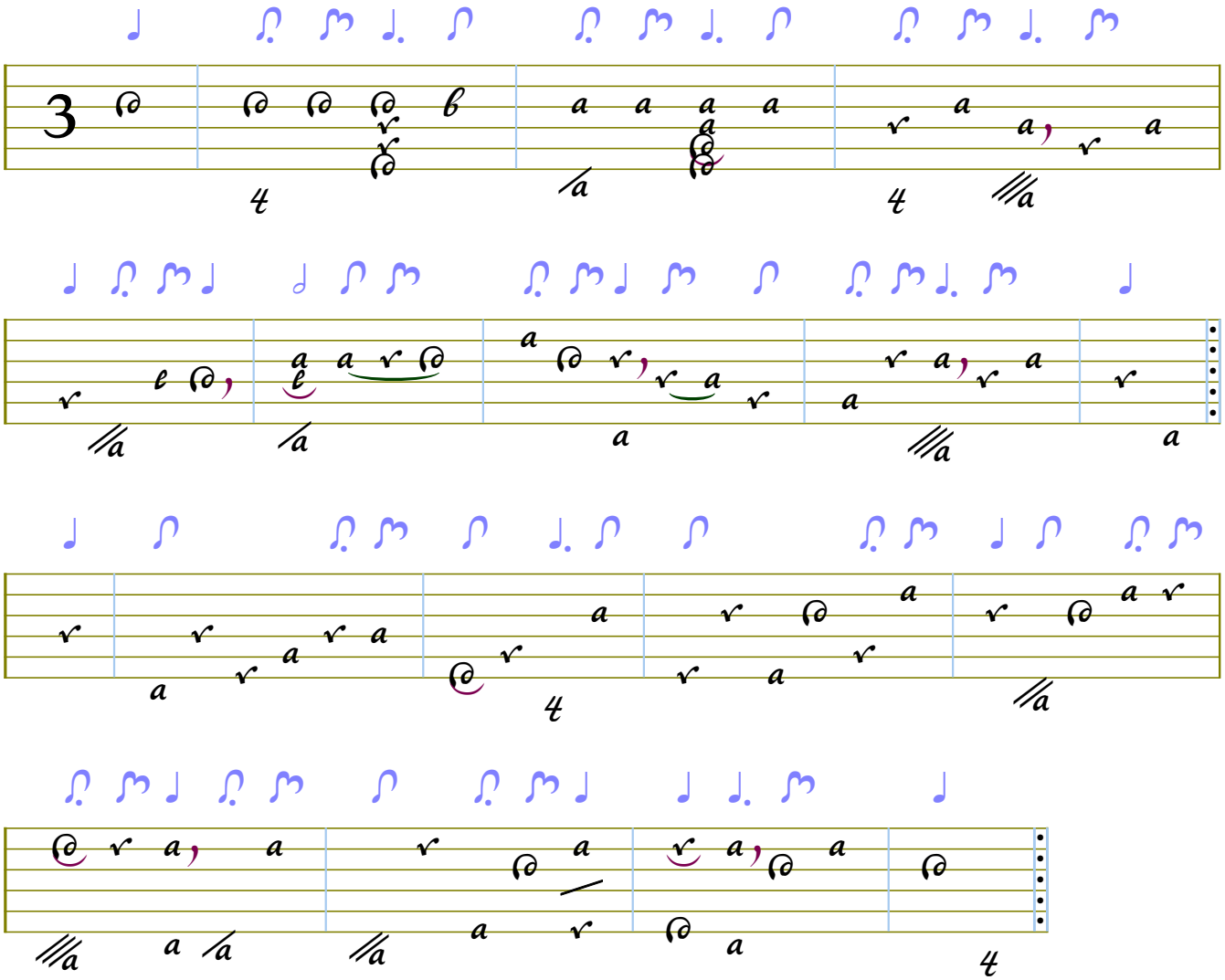


My Mistress is Prettie, by monsieur Mouton

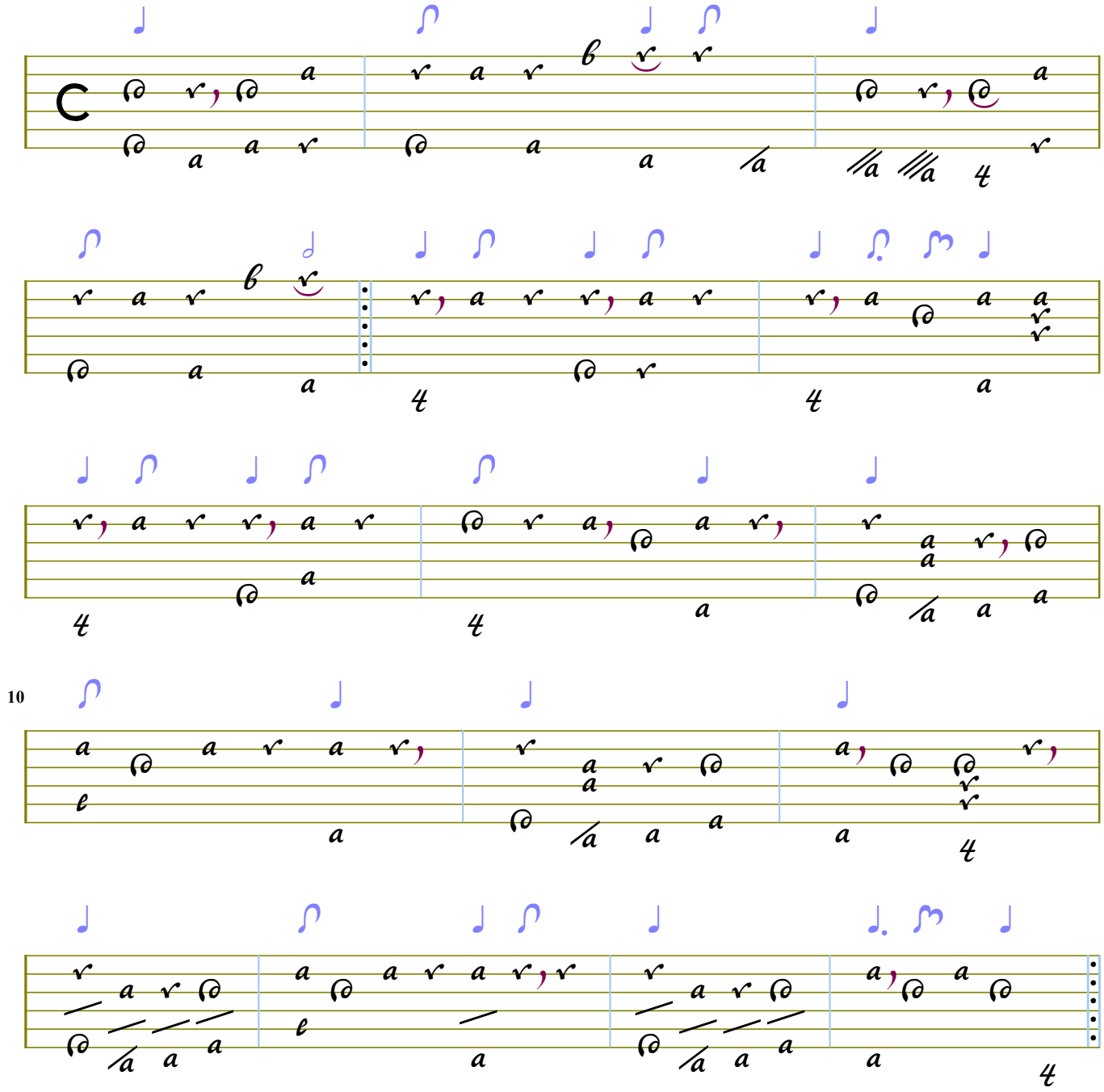


1. Dotted in original

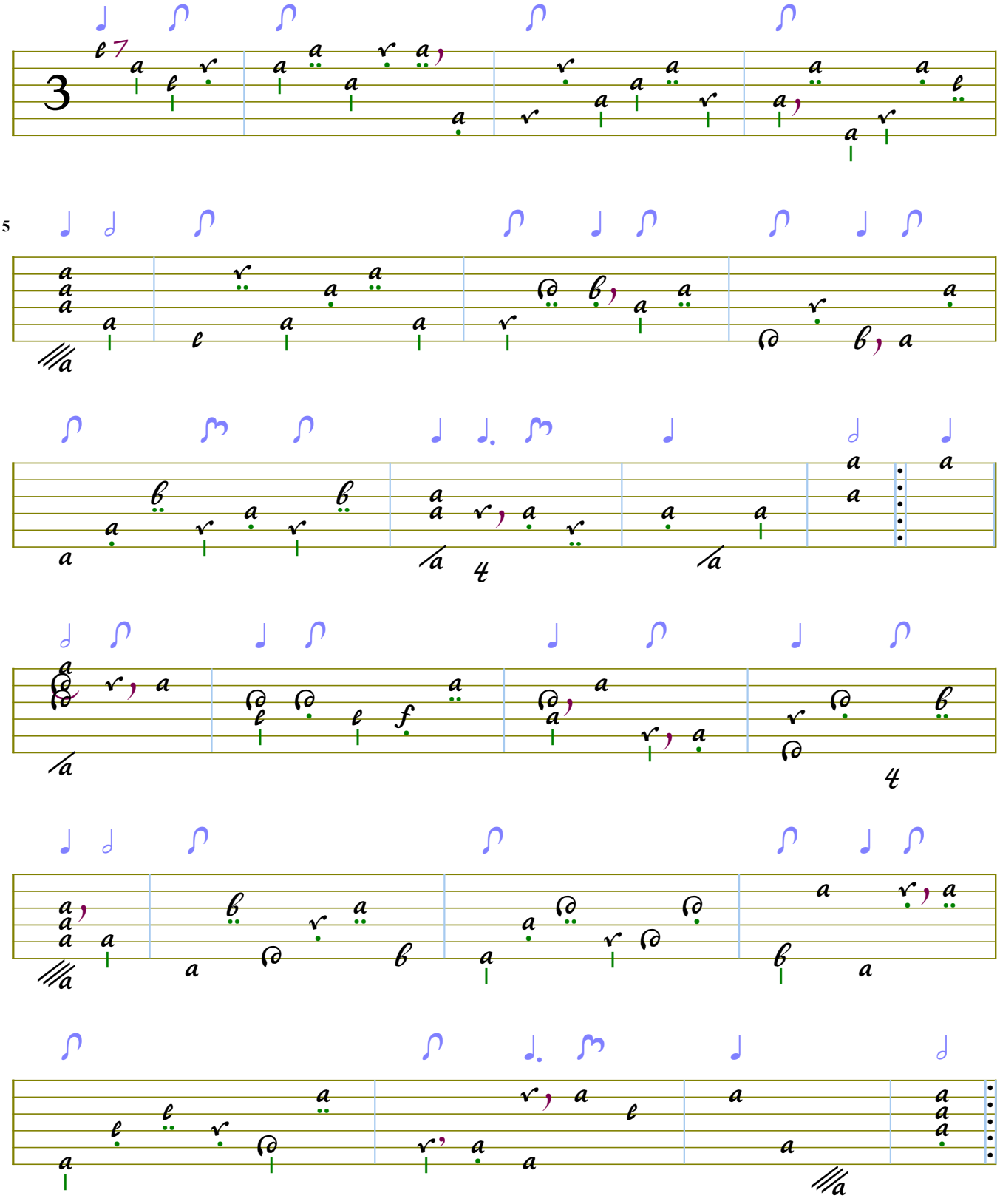
Sarraband, by Monsieur Gallot



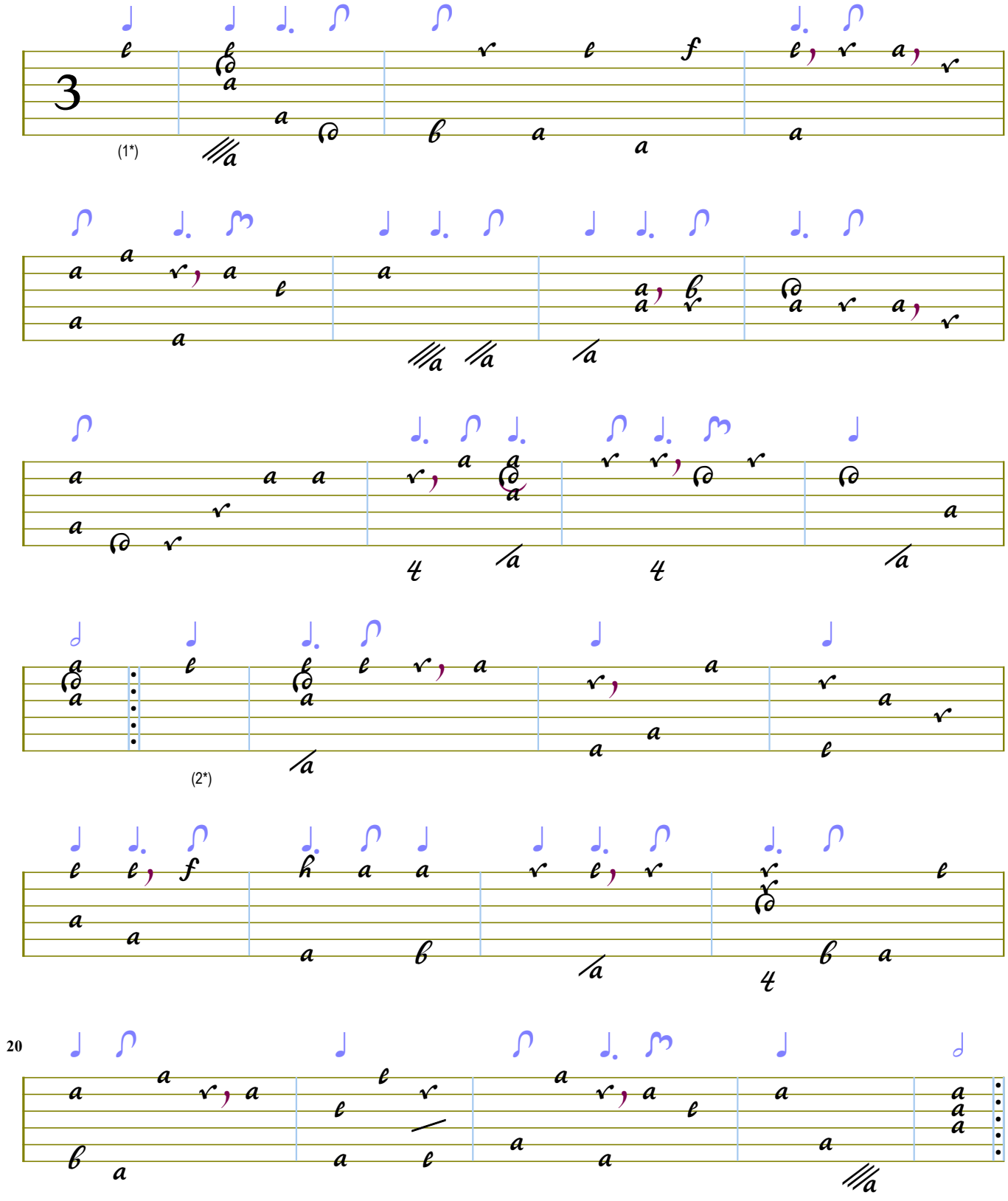
Dragons, by monsieur Gallot



Le Canon, Courante de gautier

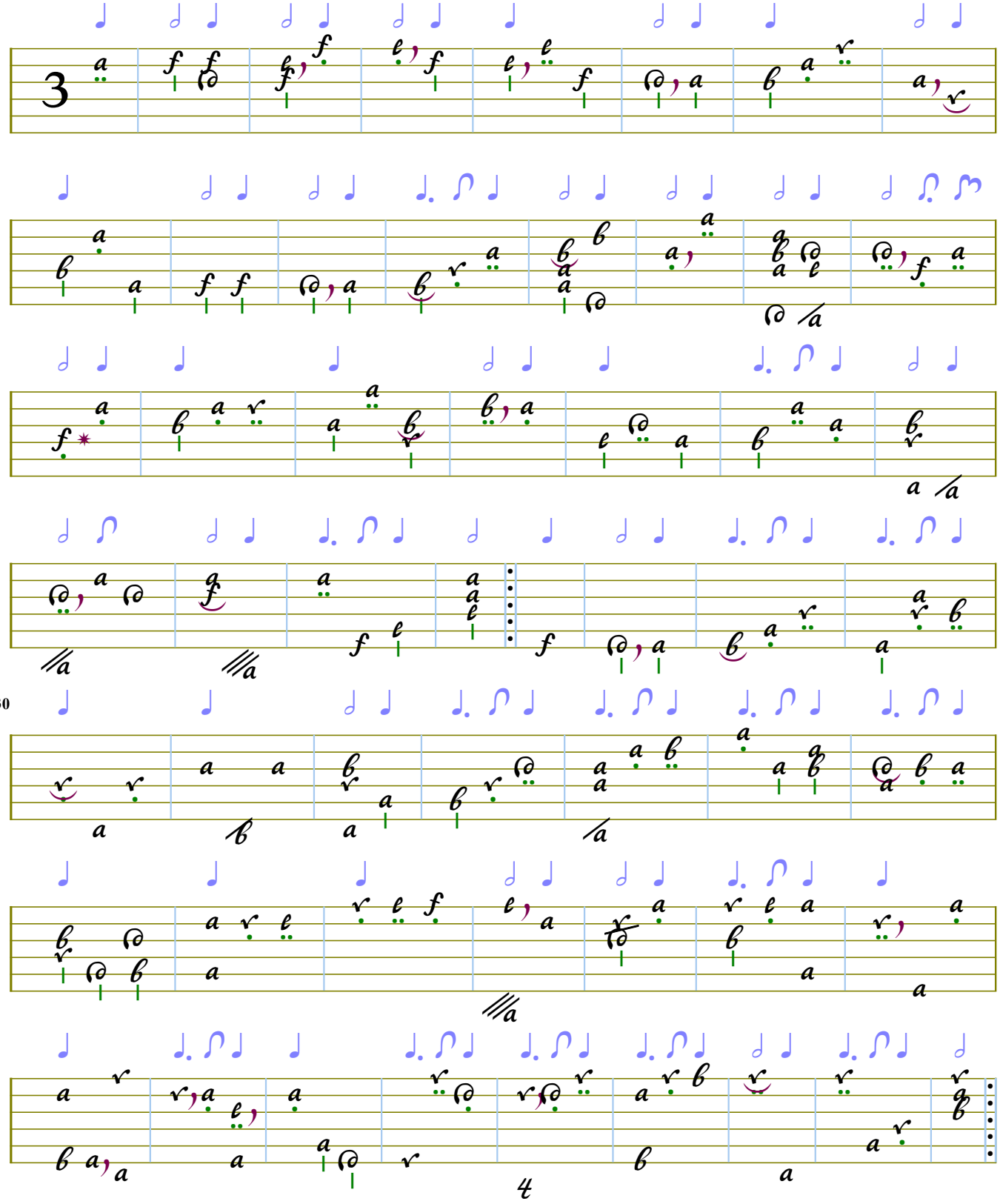


Courante de Gautier

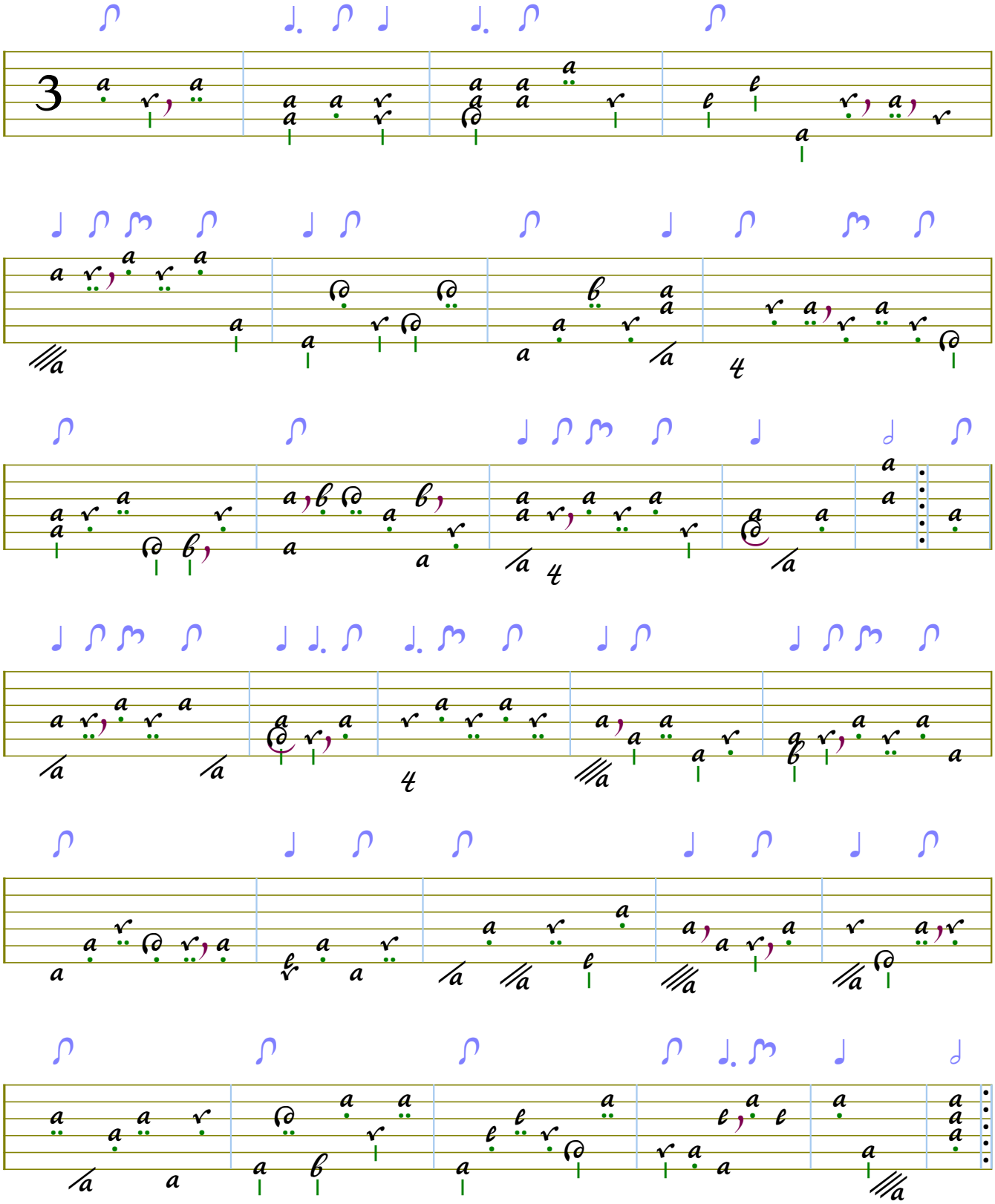


1. Half note in original
2. Half note in original

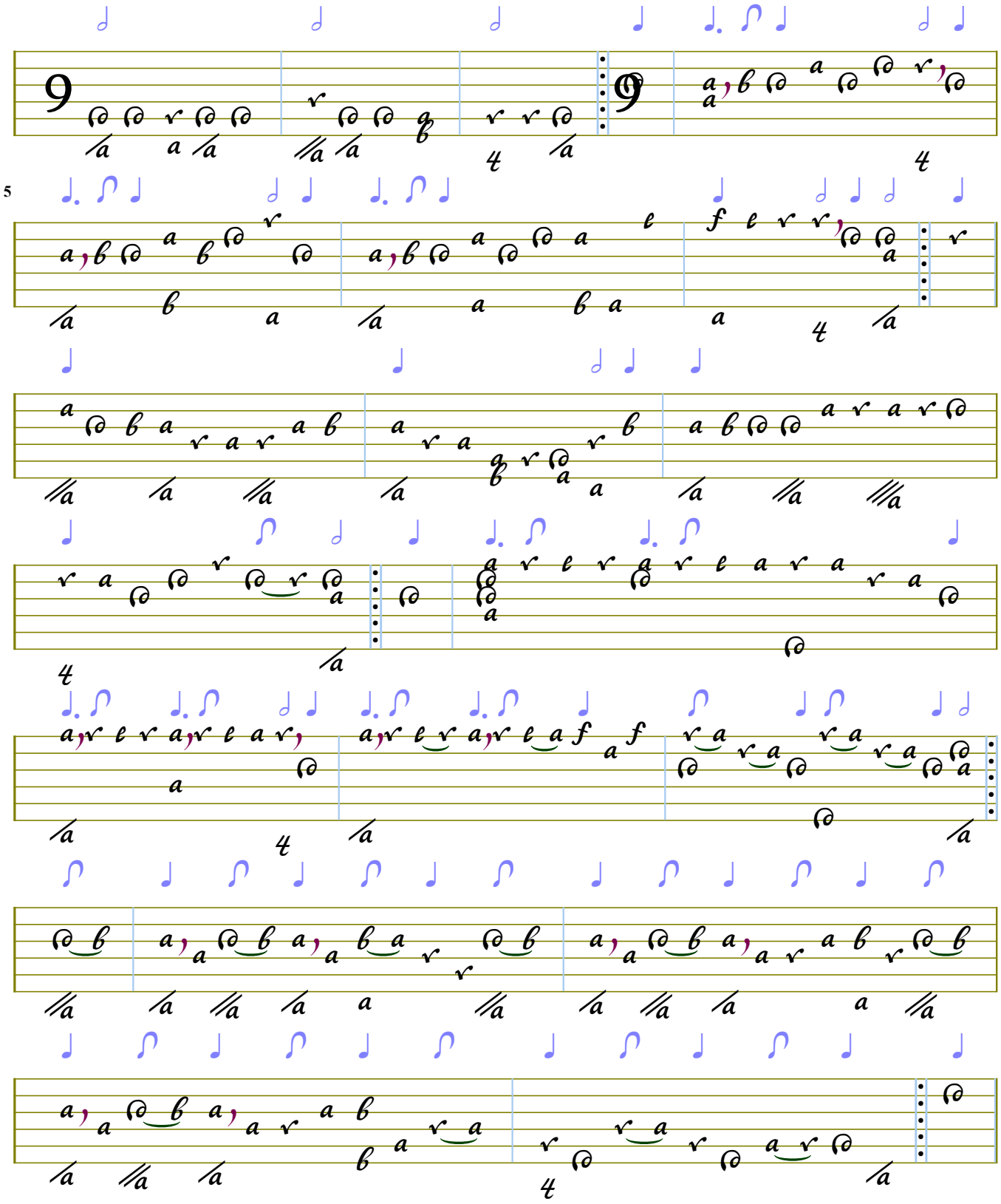
Gigue, with the 9th lowed halfe a note, by monsieur Gallot

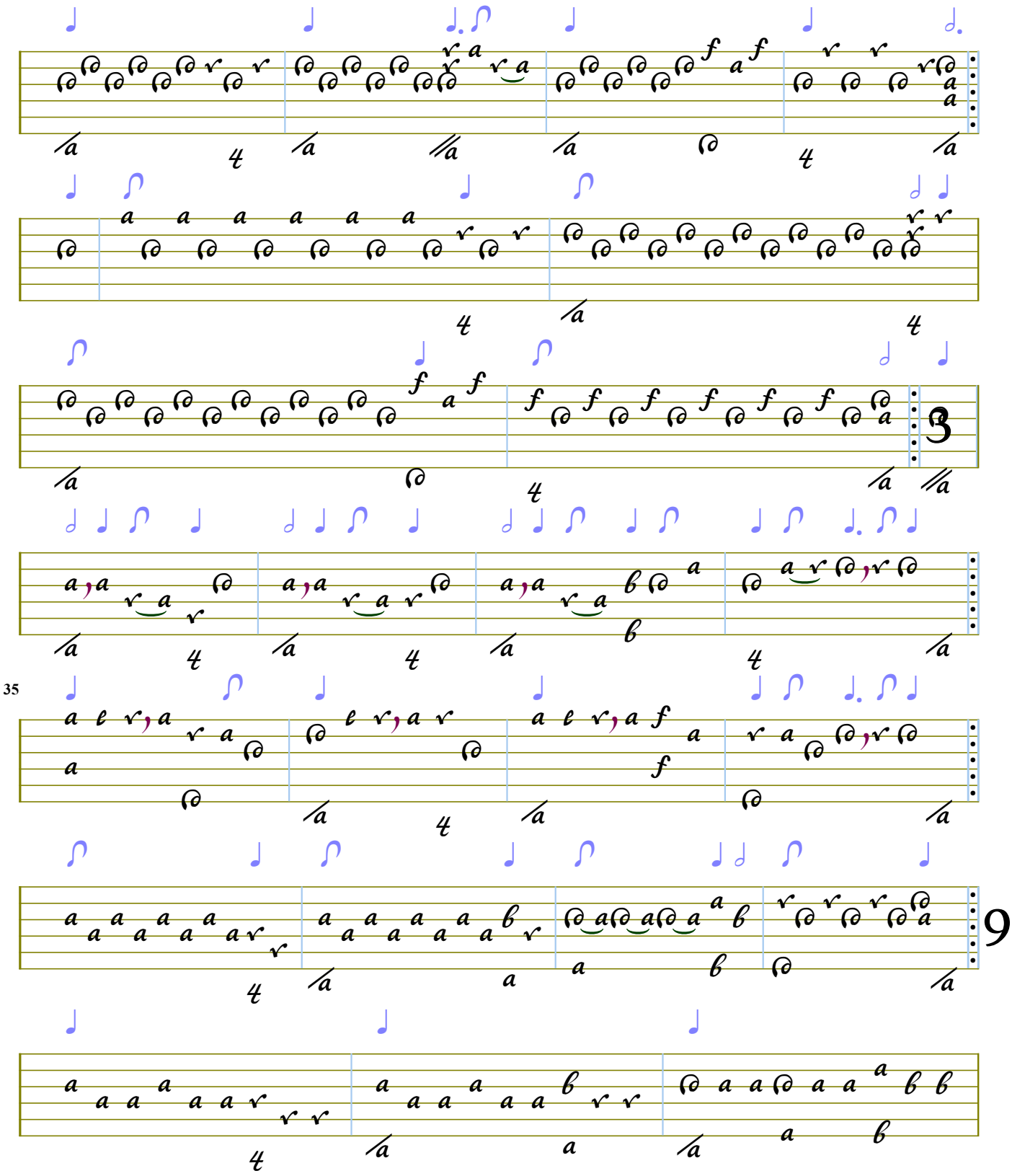


Courante, by monsieur Mouton



Thomas Tollit's ground, master Mackllaughland's way, by mr. Beck

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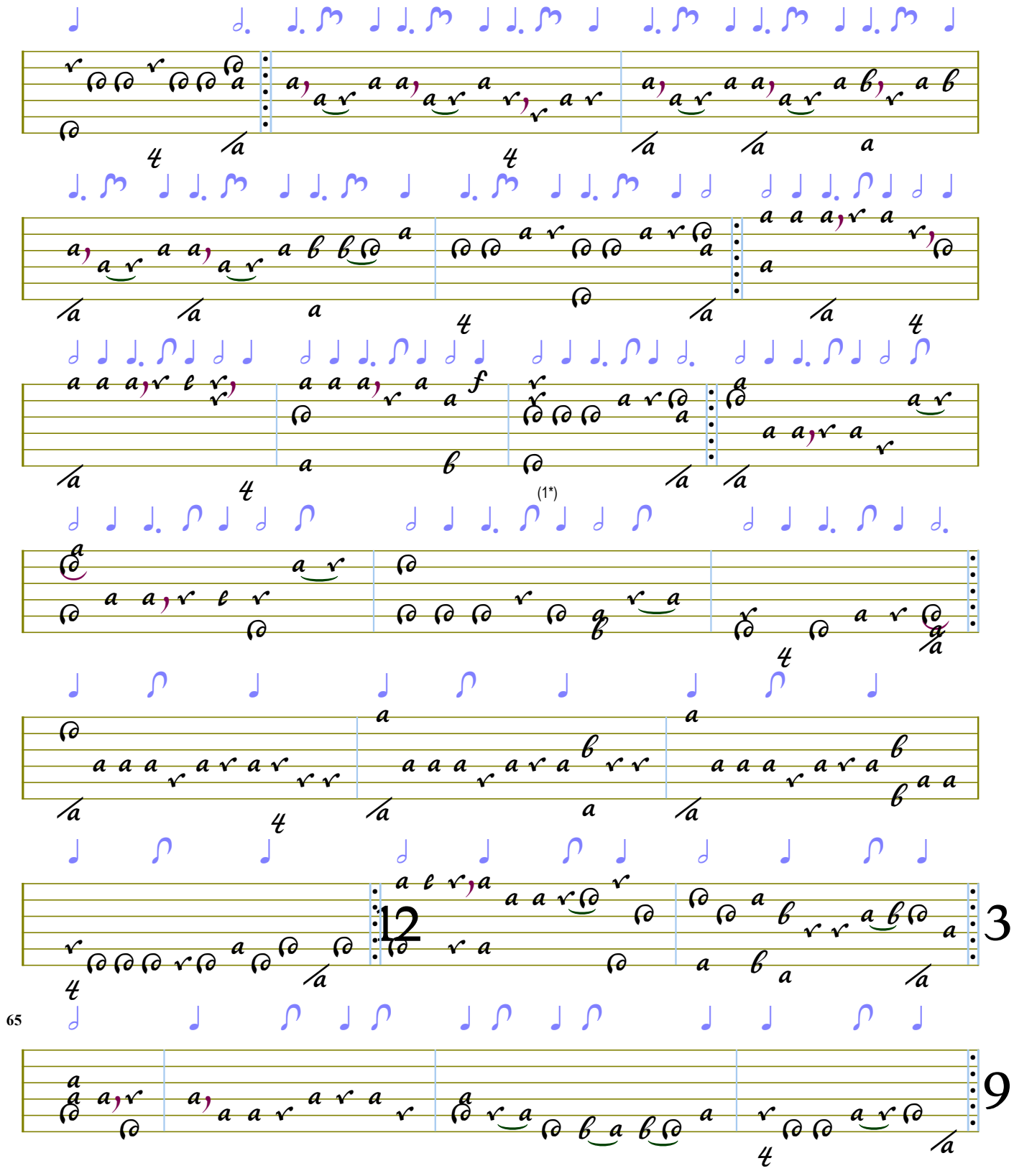

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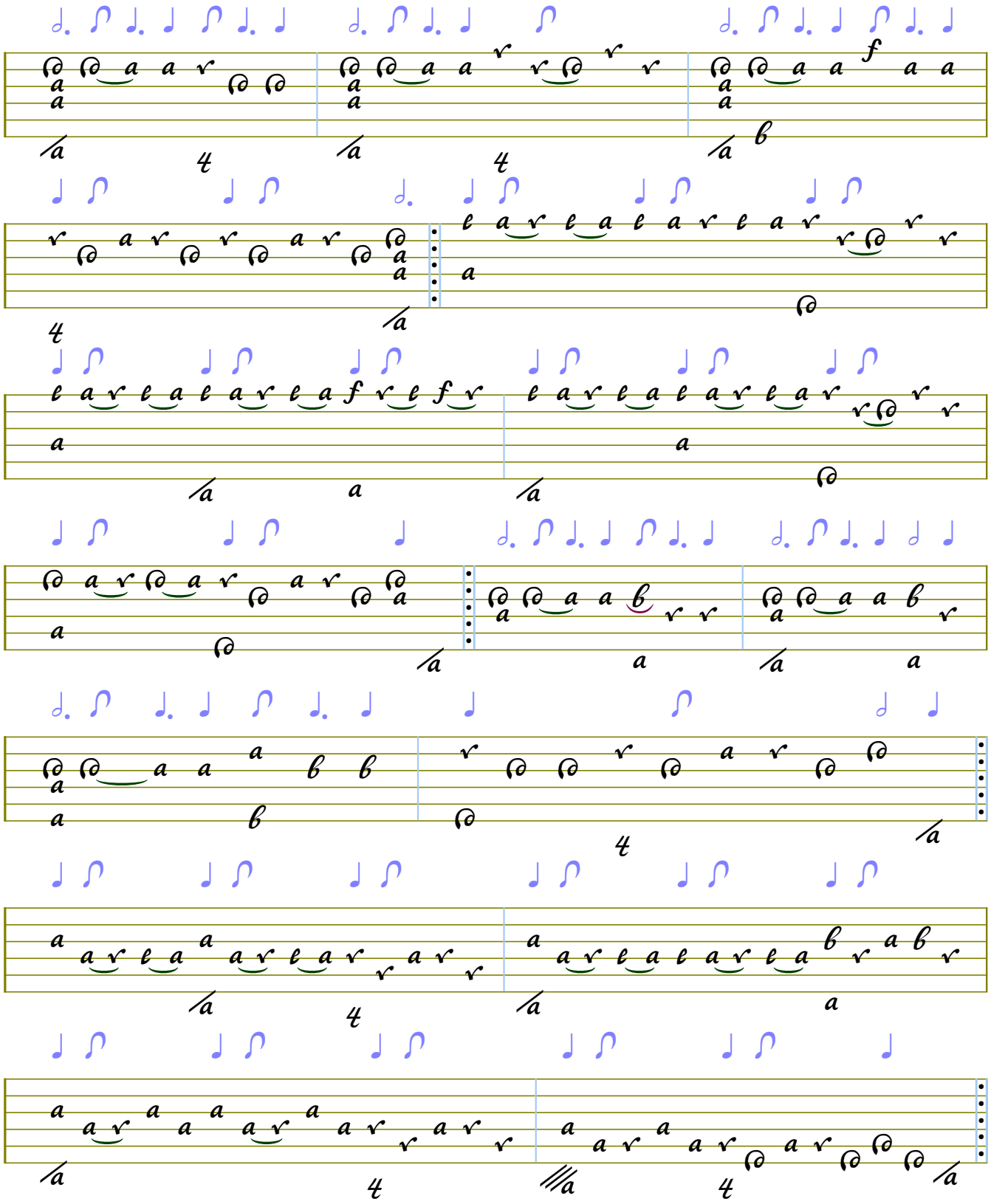
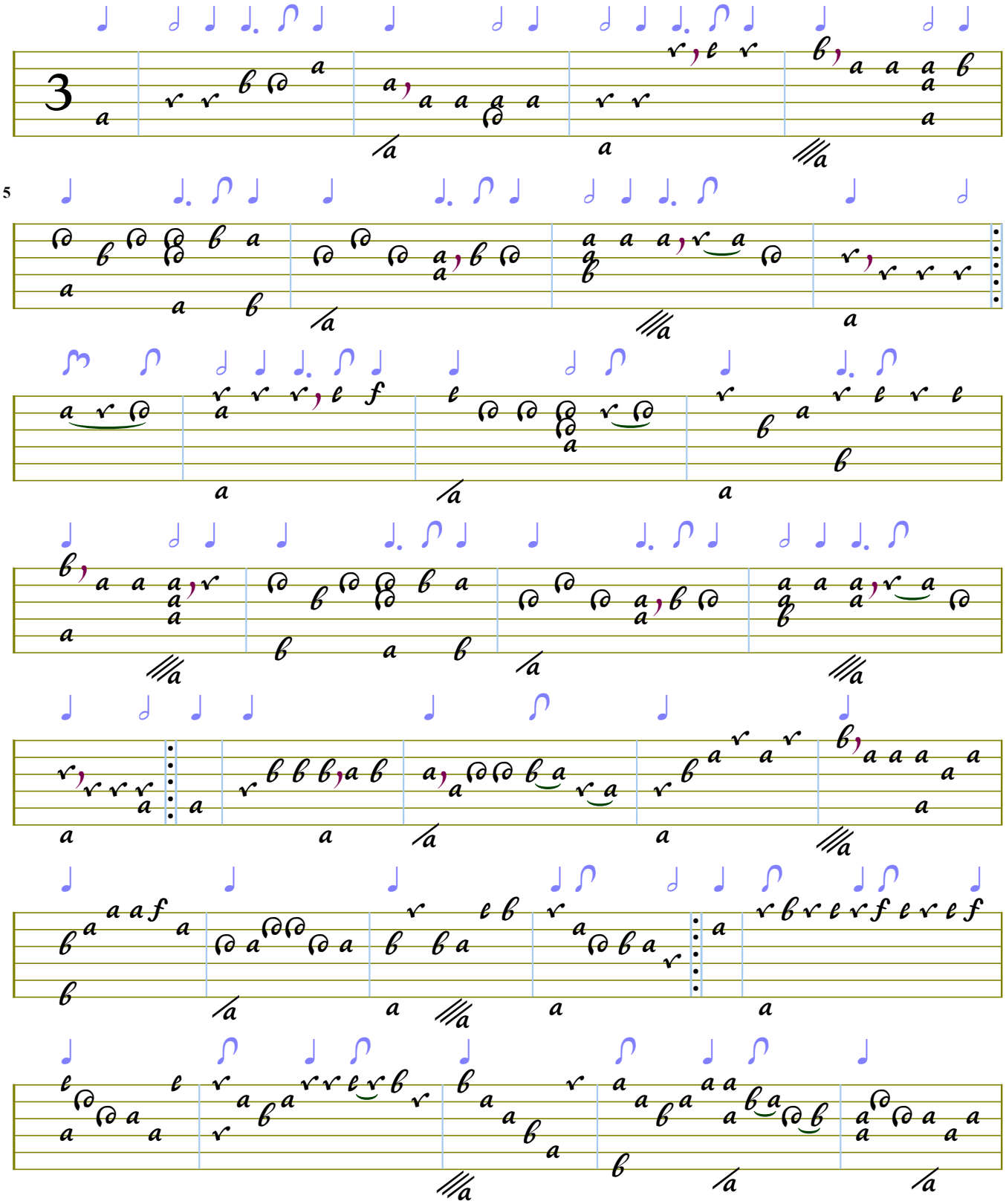
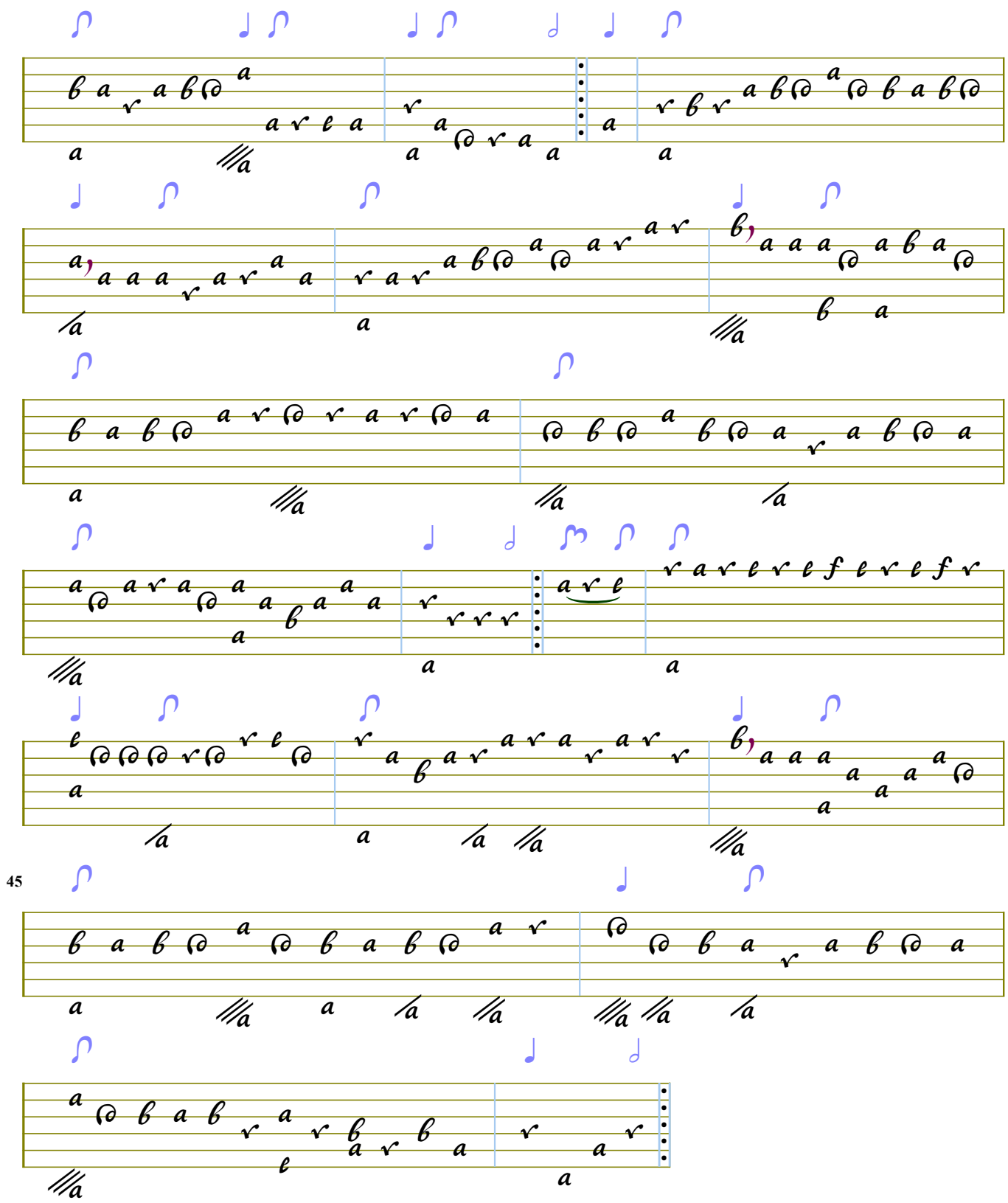
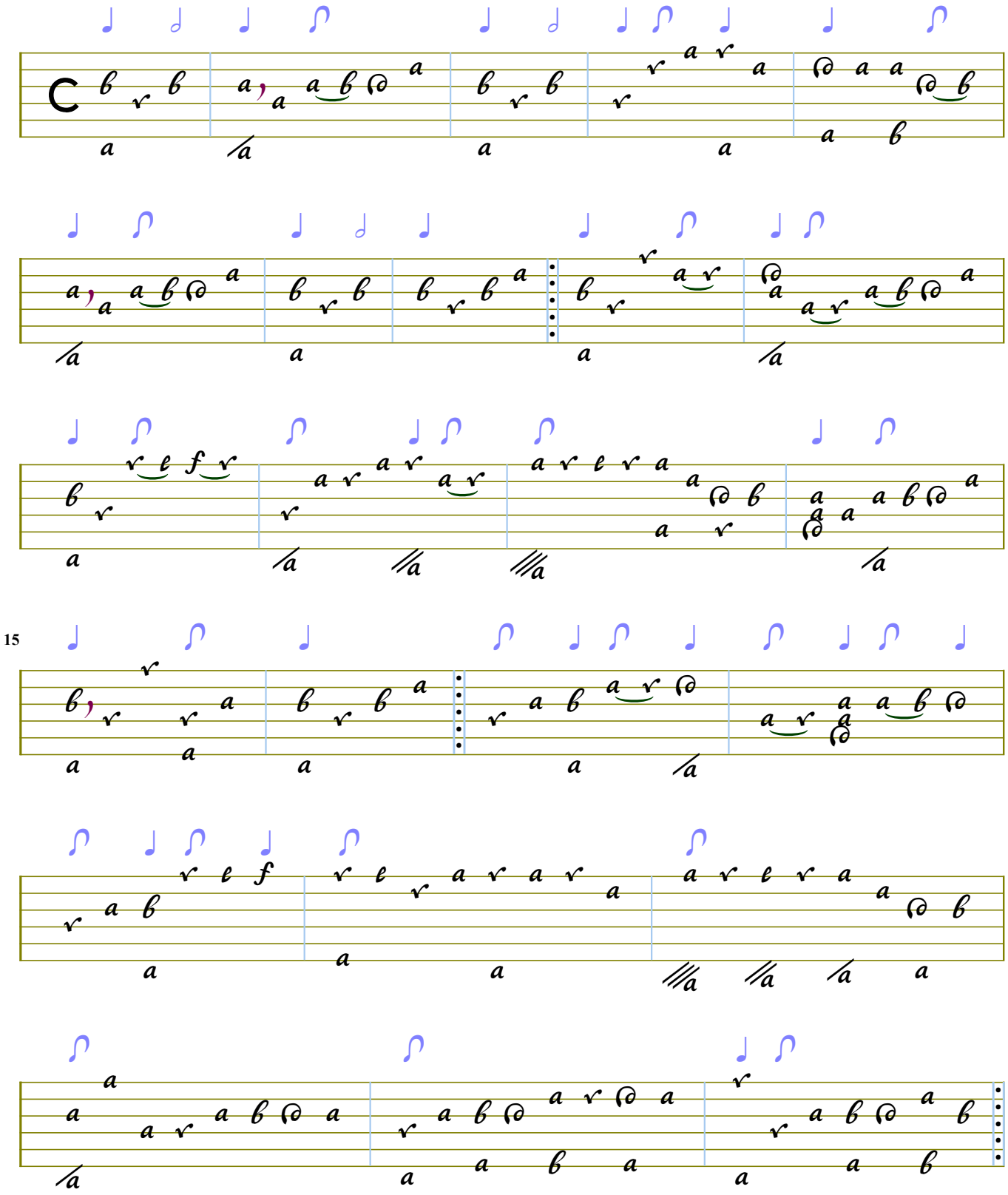


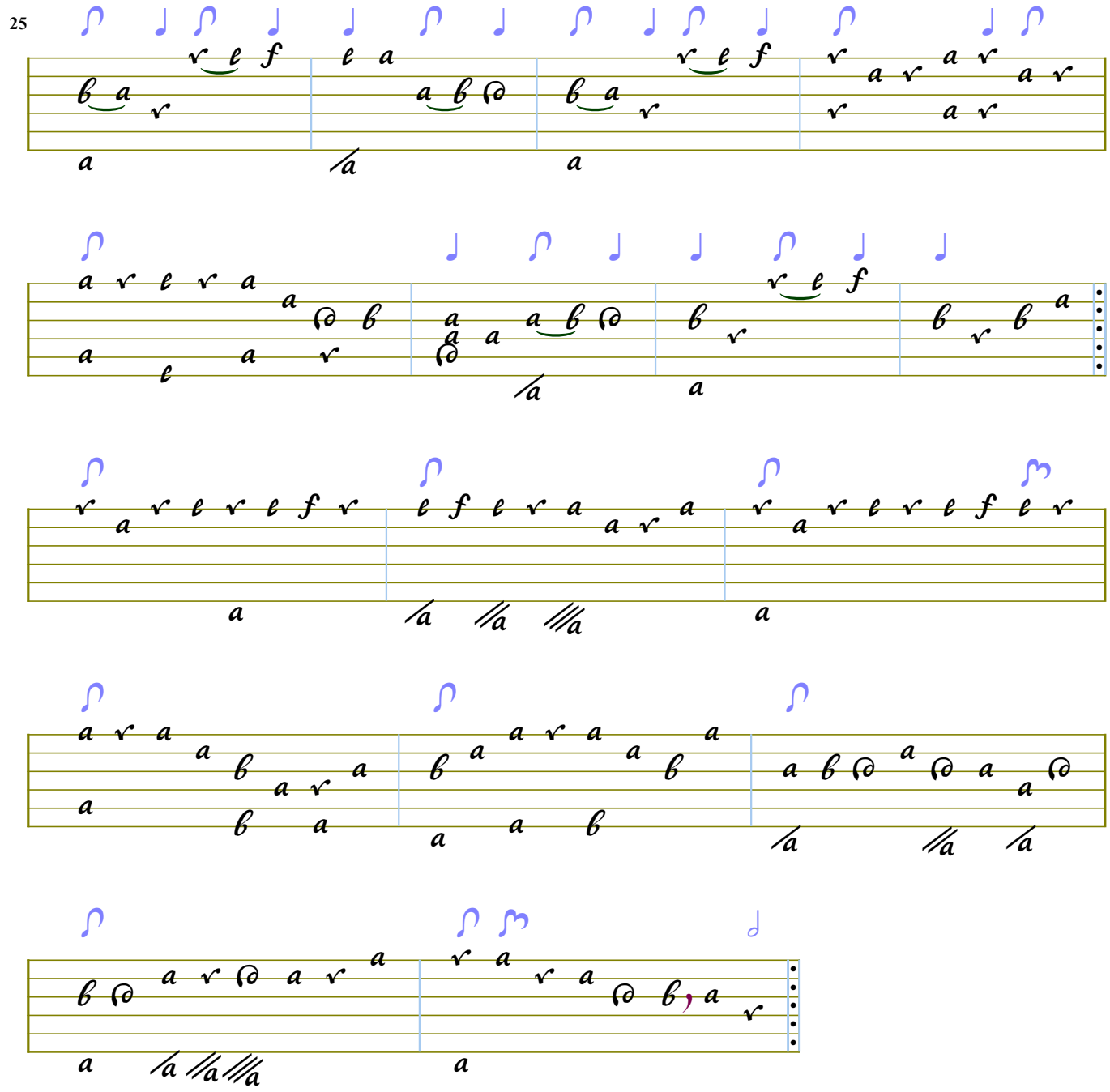
When she came in, she bobbed, mr. mclaughland's way, by mr. Beck





Simon brodie, mr Mclaughland's way, by mr. Beck

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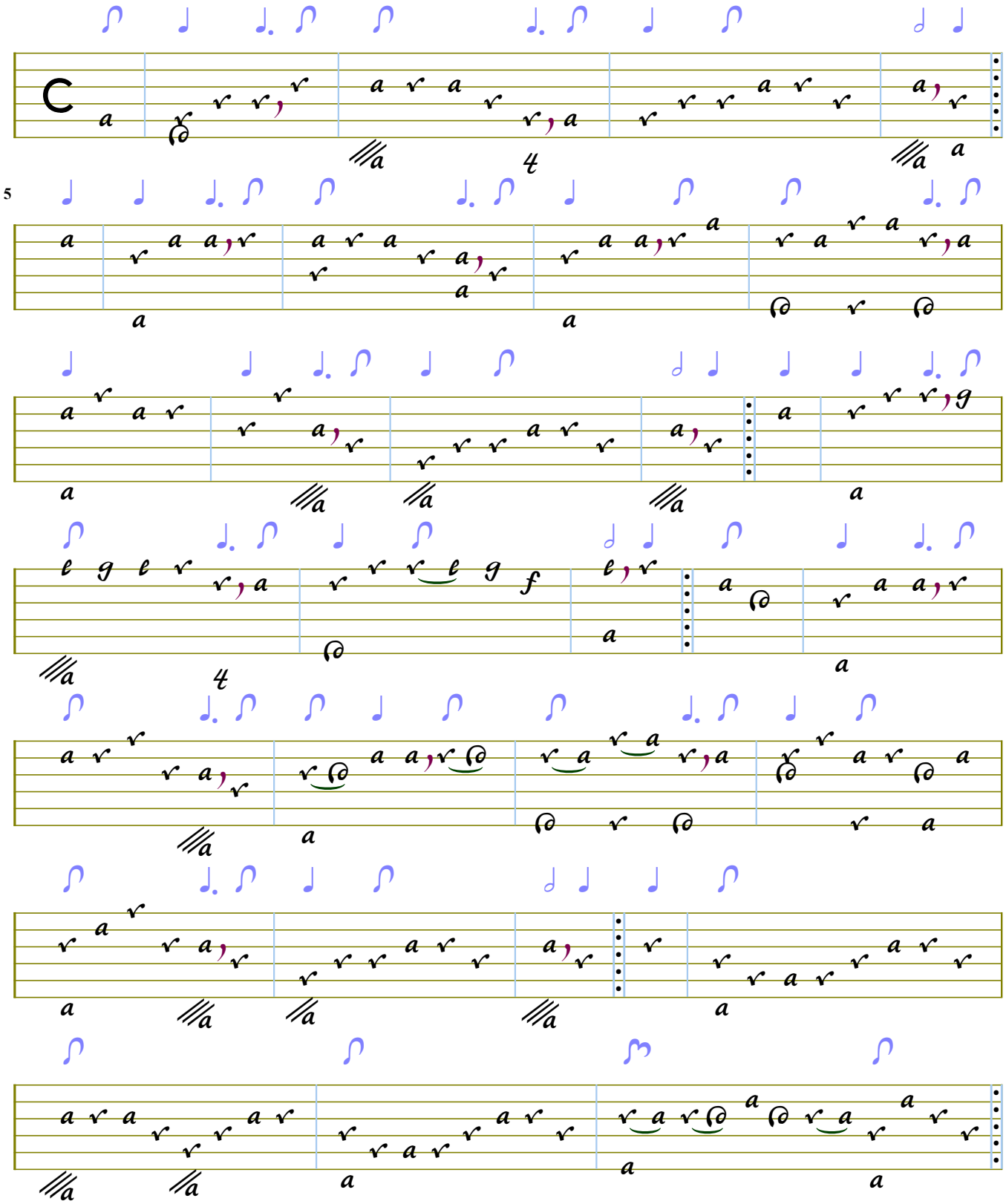
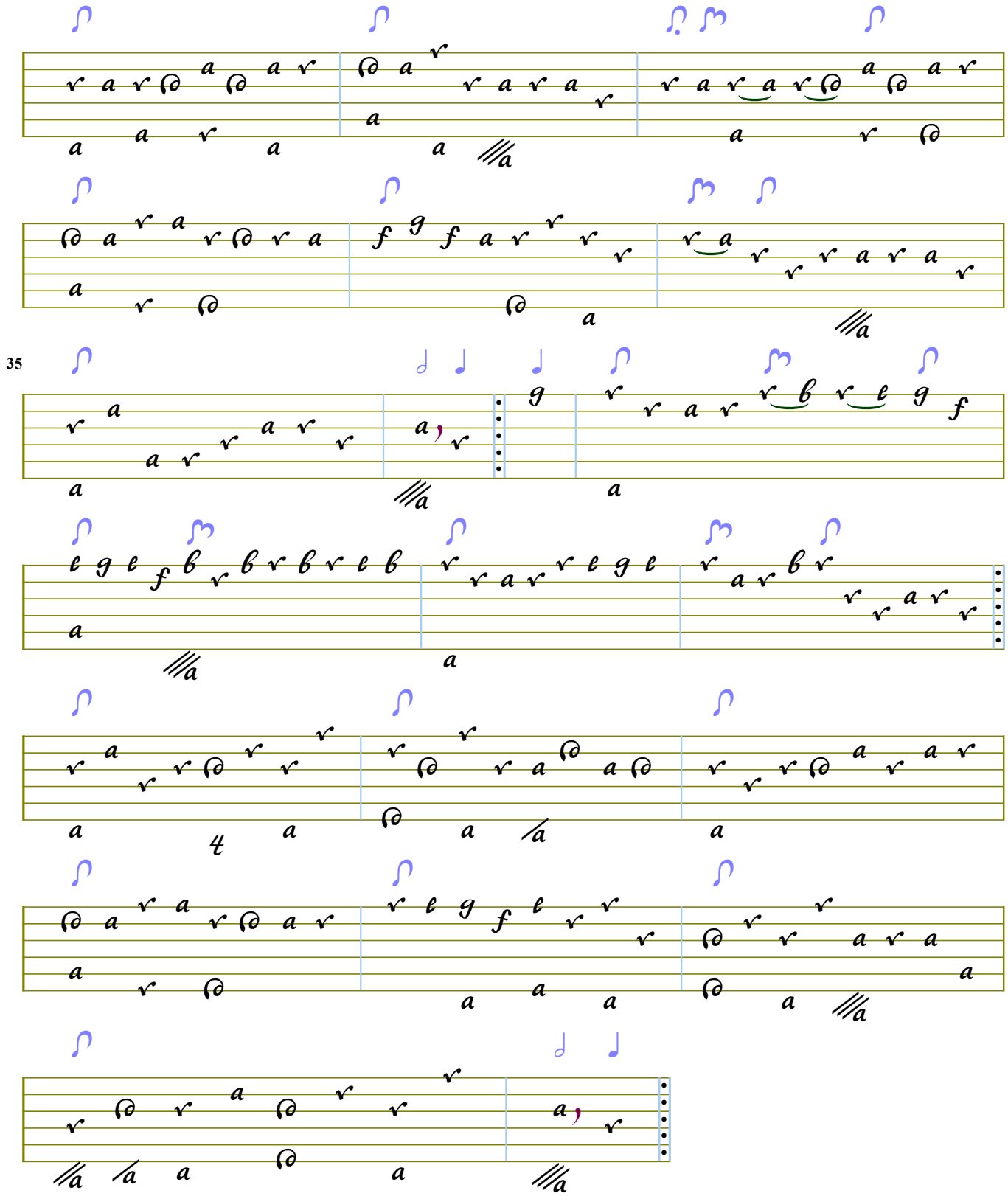
Peggie, I must love thee, Master mclaughland's way, by mr. Beck

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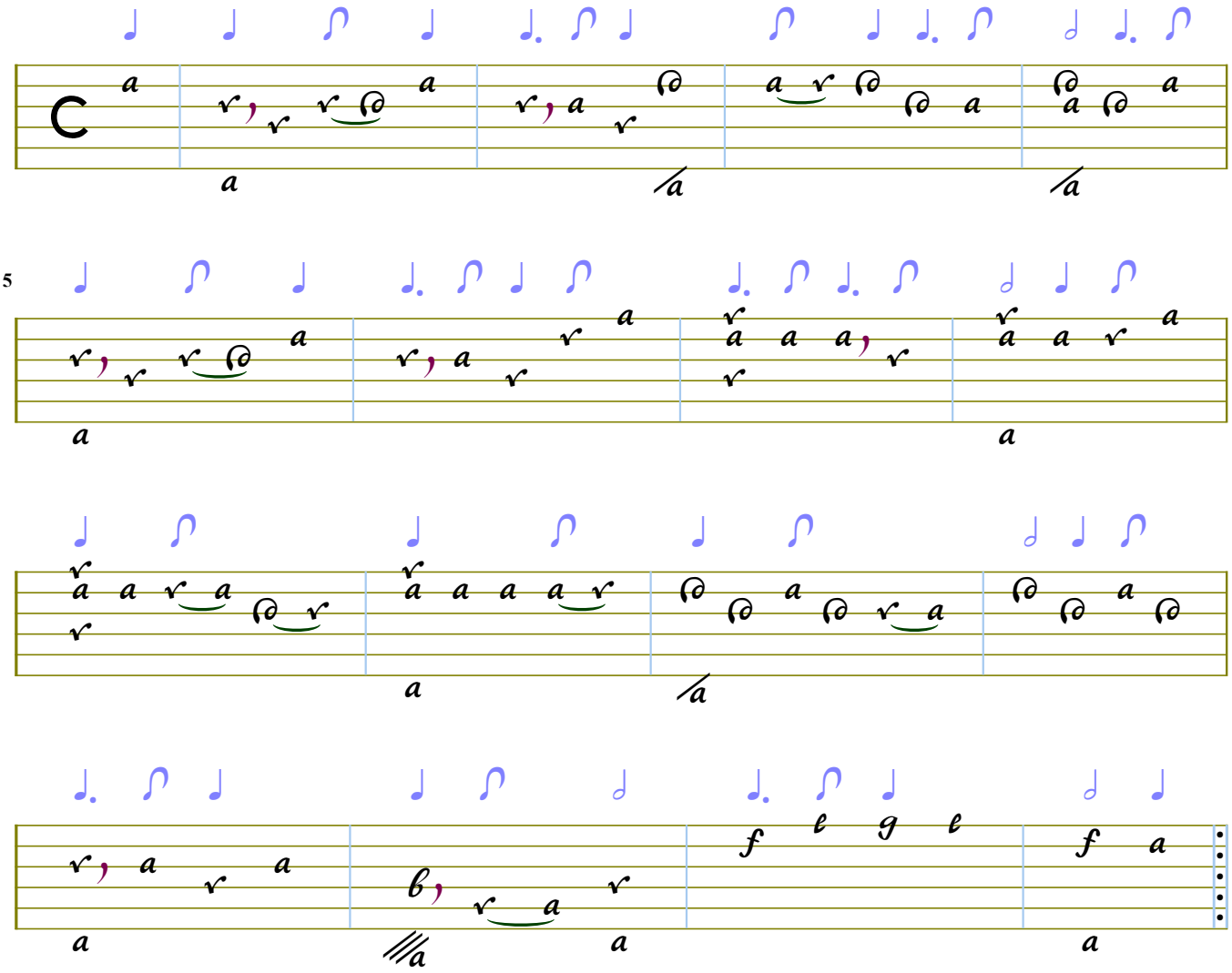
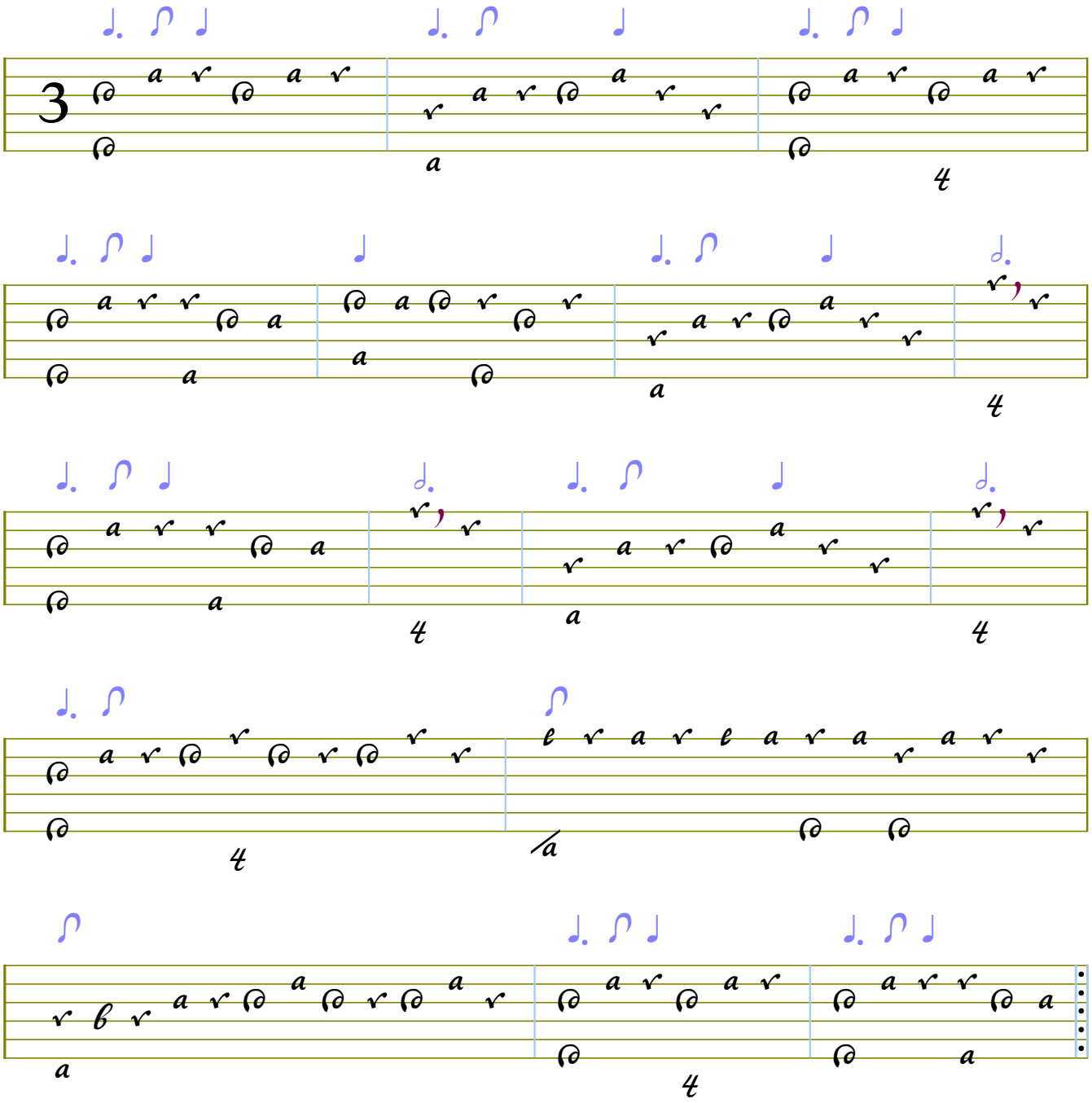
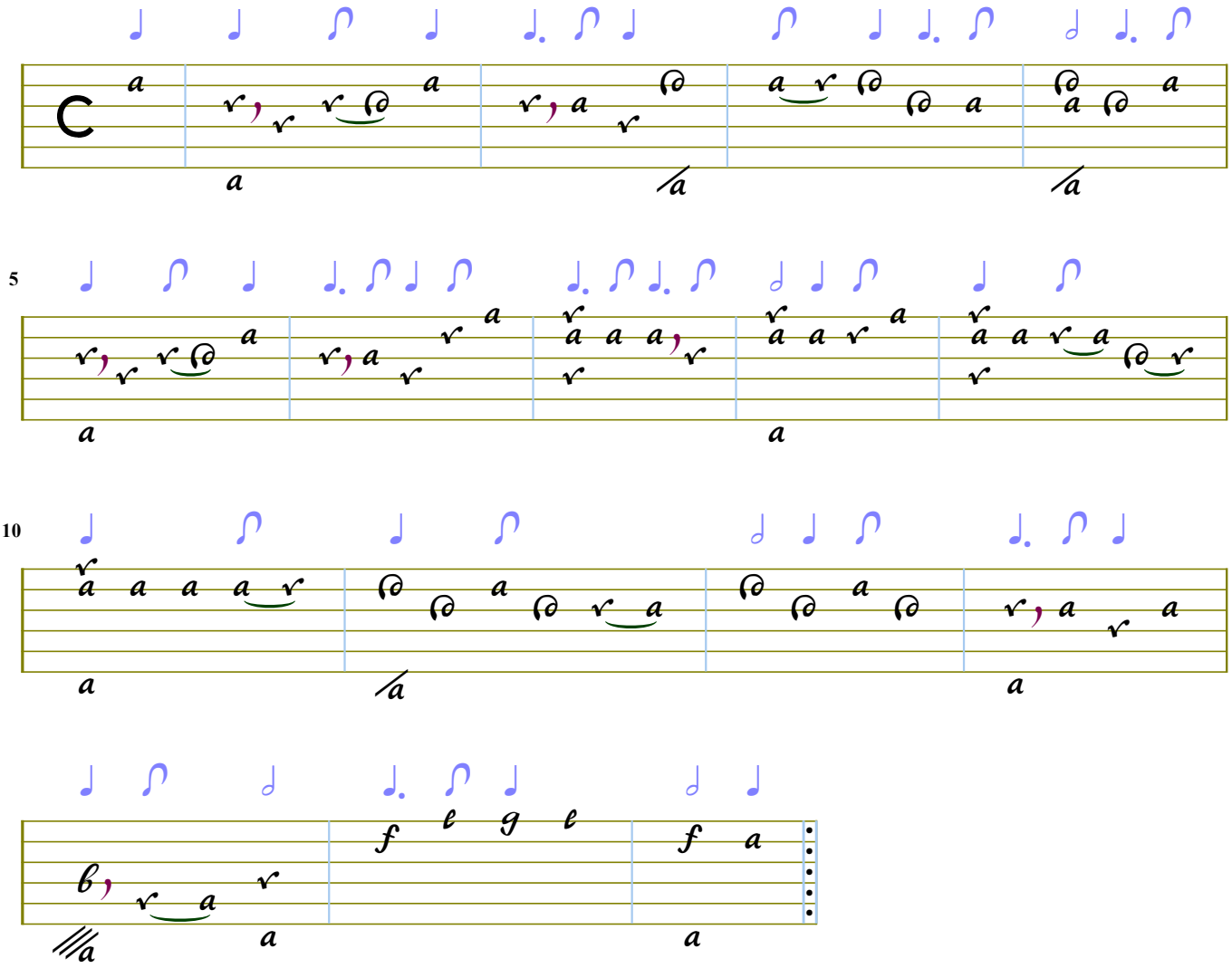
The highland King,mr mclaughland's way, by mr. Beck



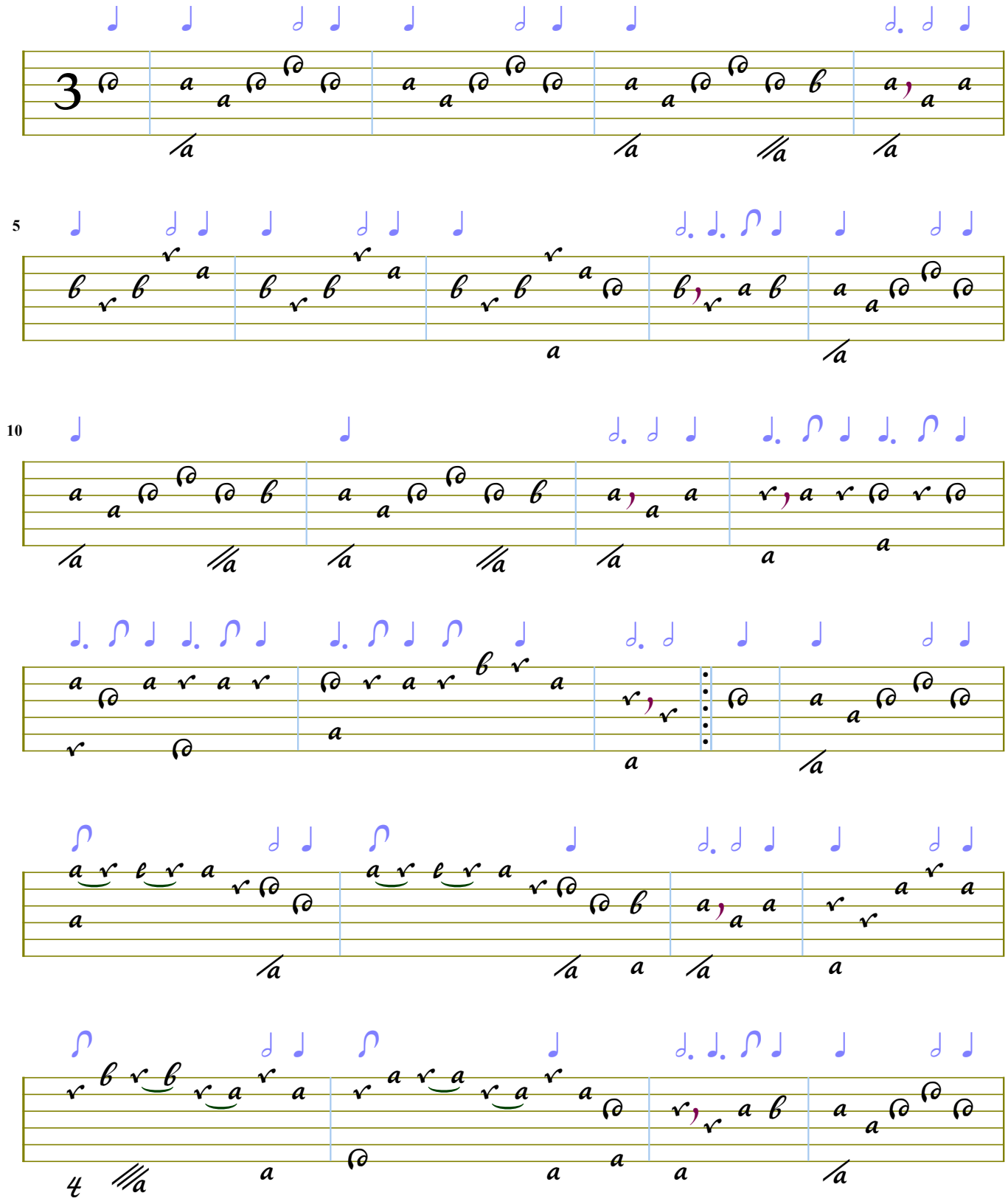
Fairly shott off her, mr. mclaughland's way, by mr. Beck

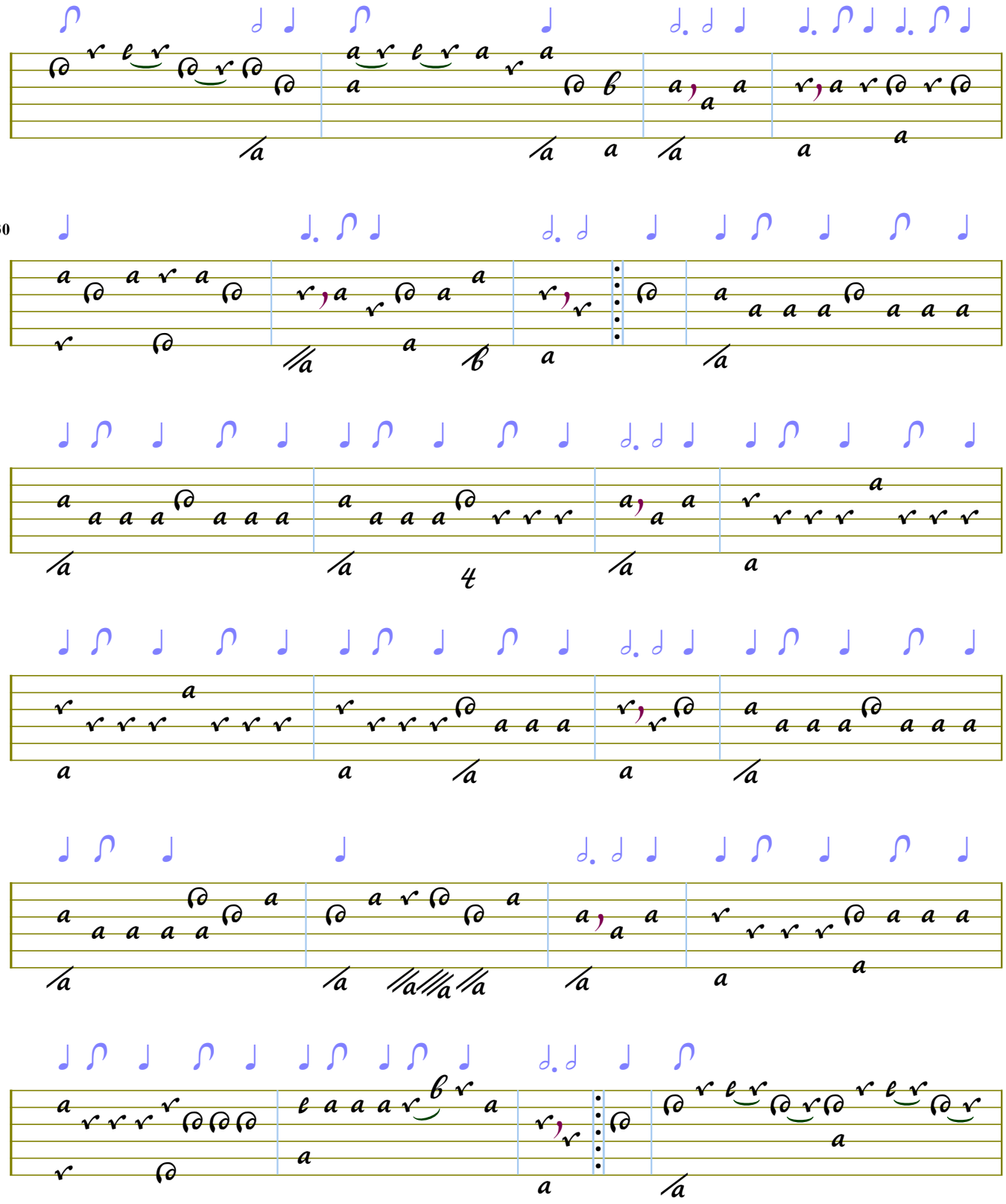


The highland King,mr mclaughland's way, by mr. Beck



The horseman's Port, mr. Macklachlands way, by mr. Beck

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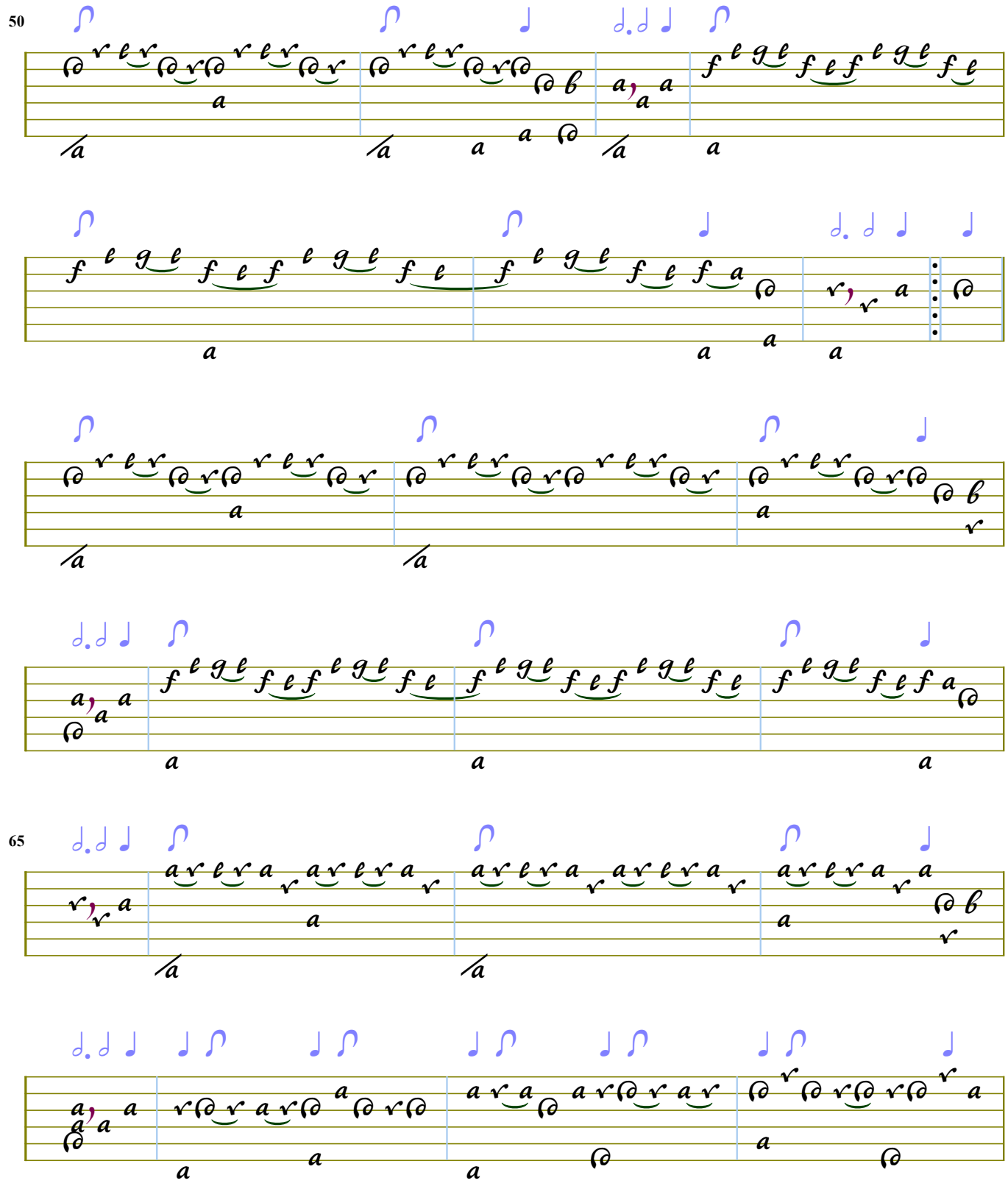
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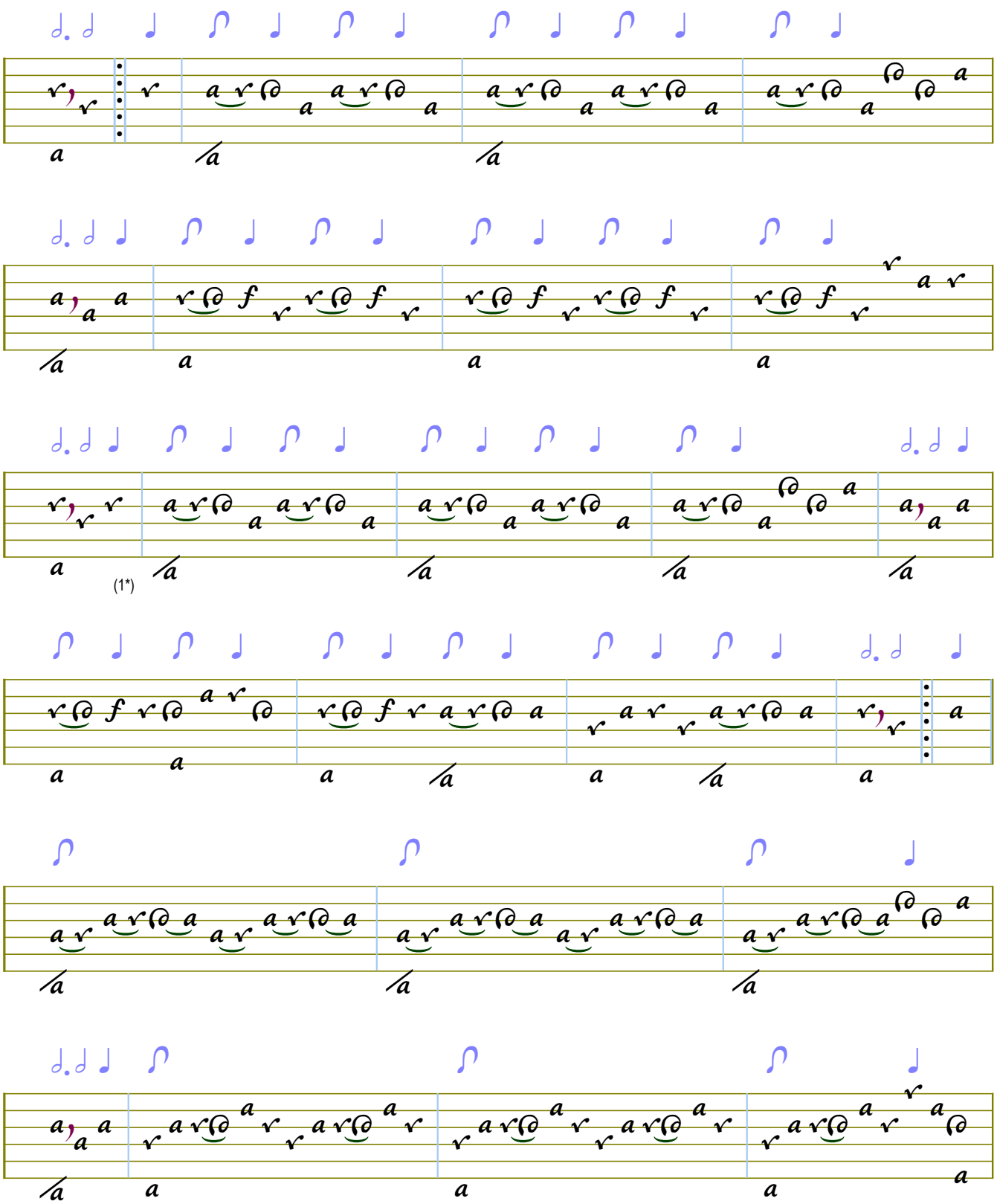

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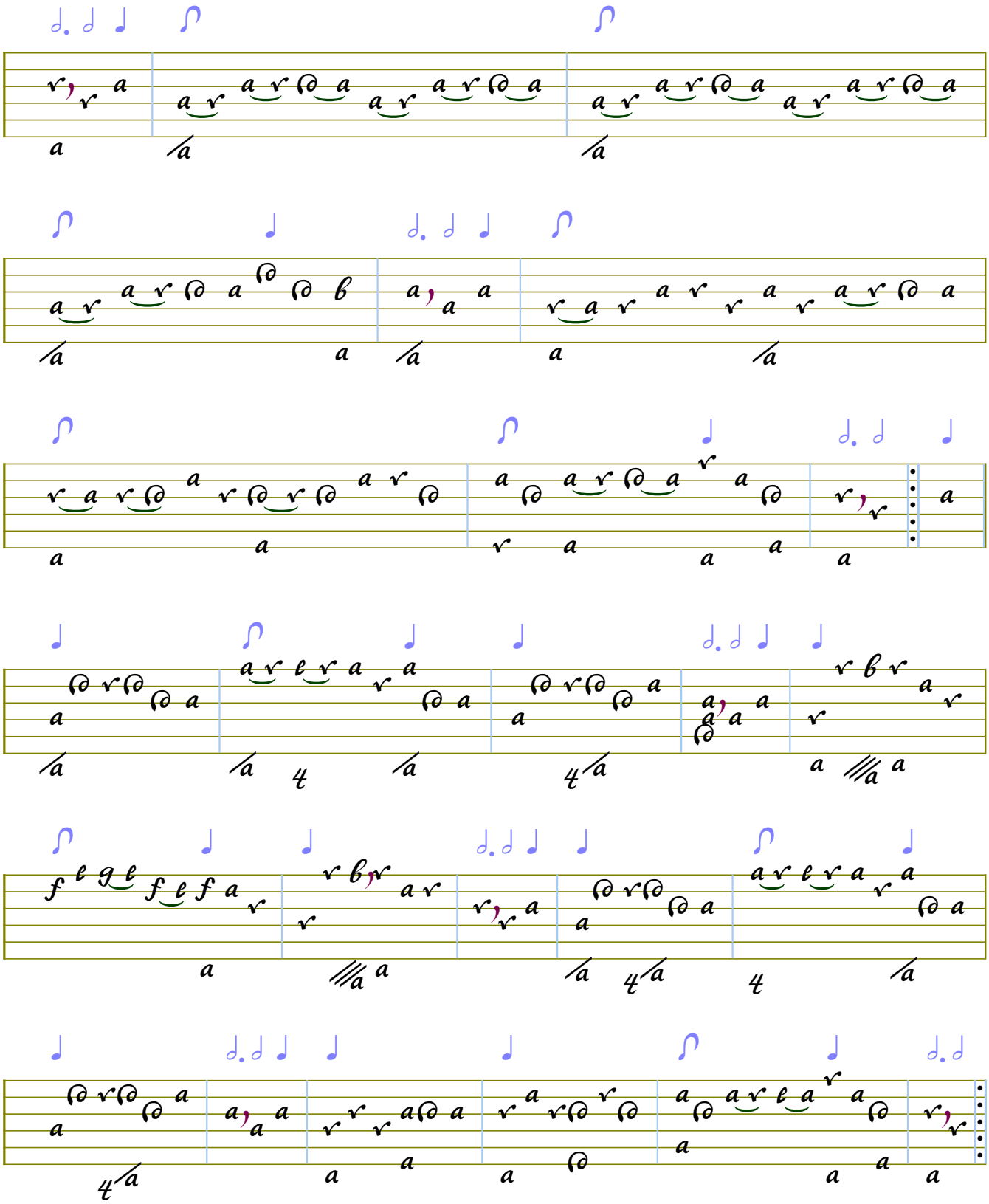
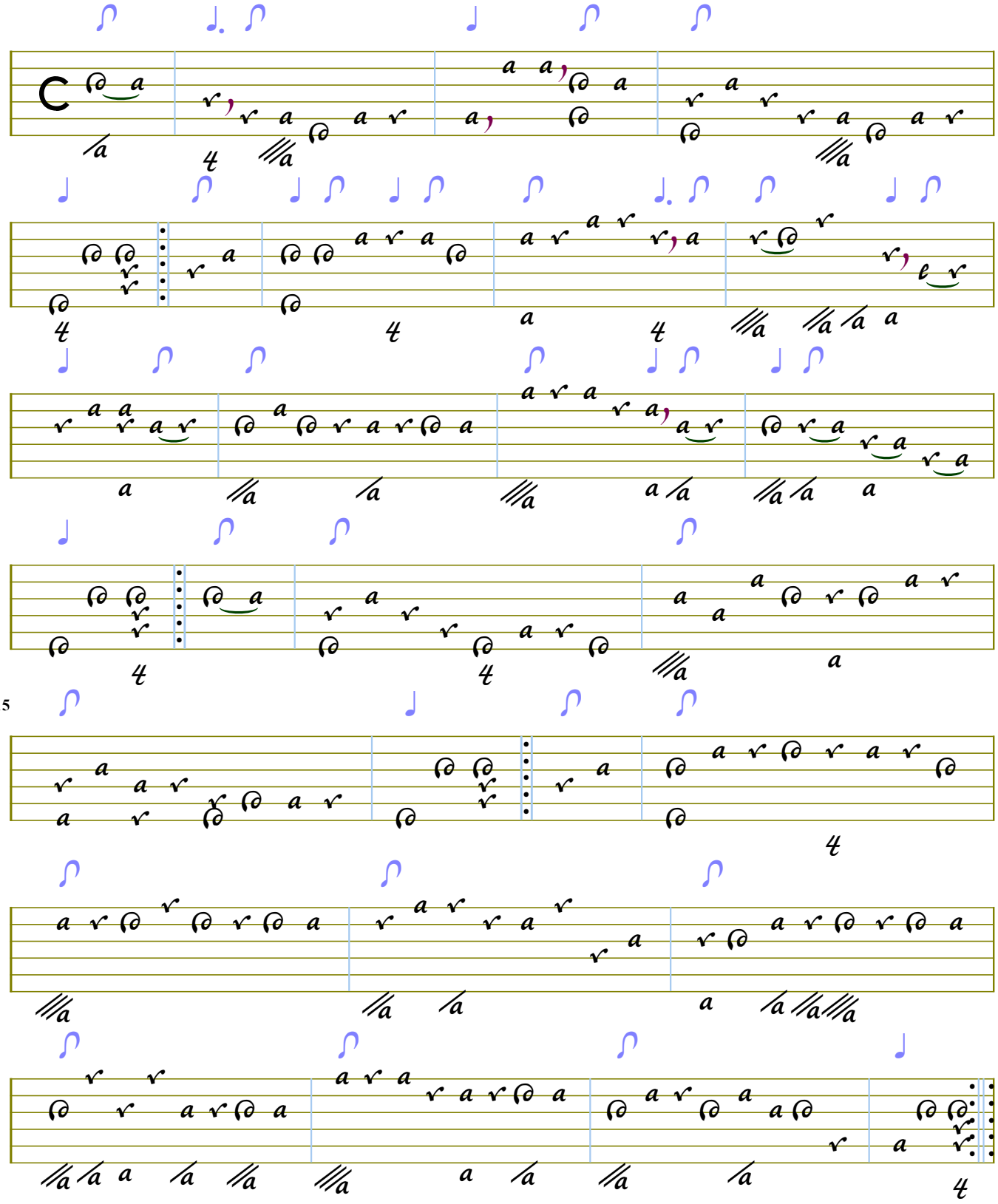
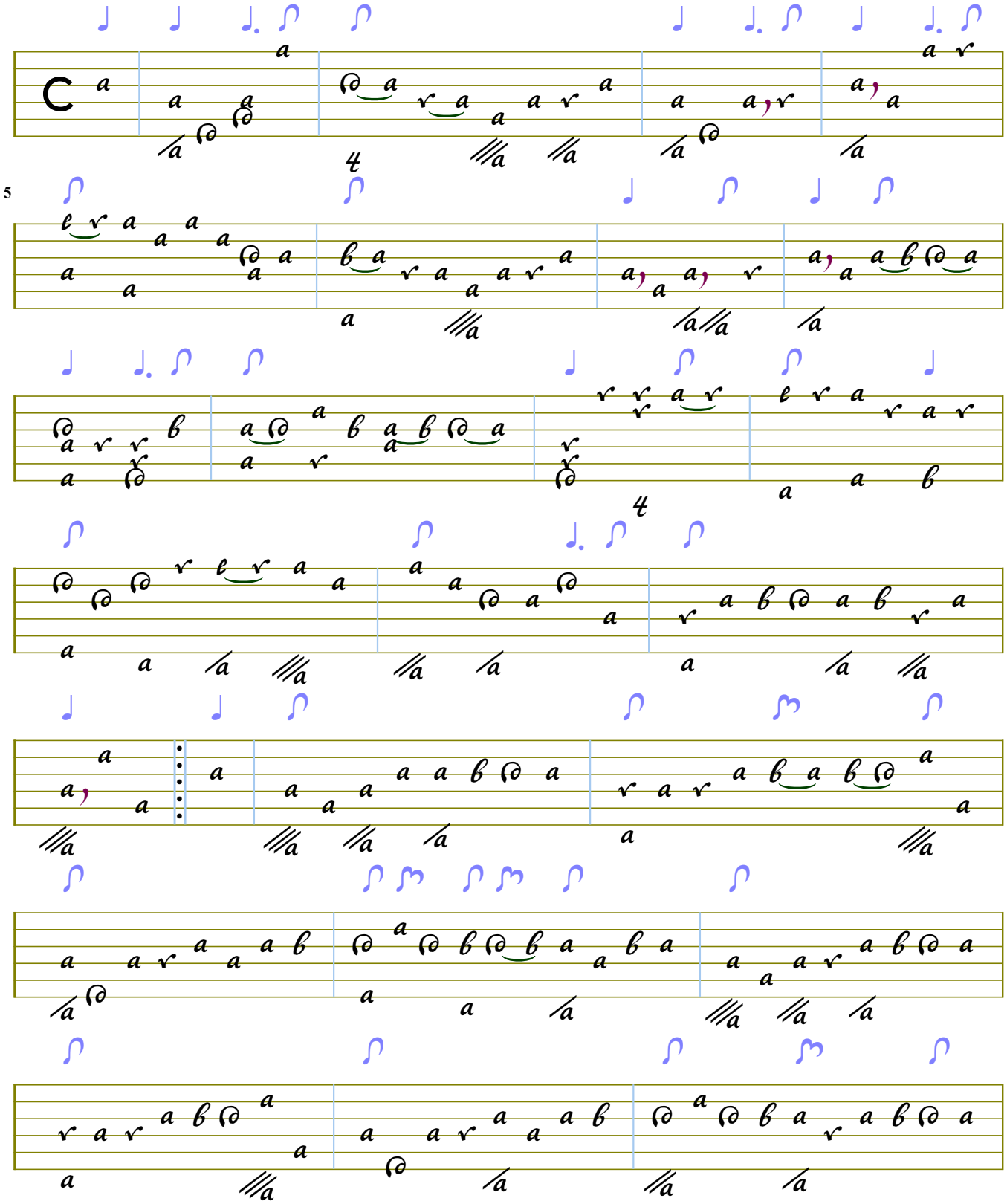
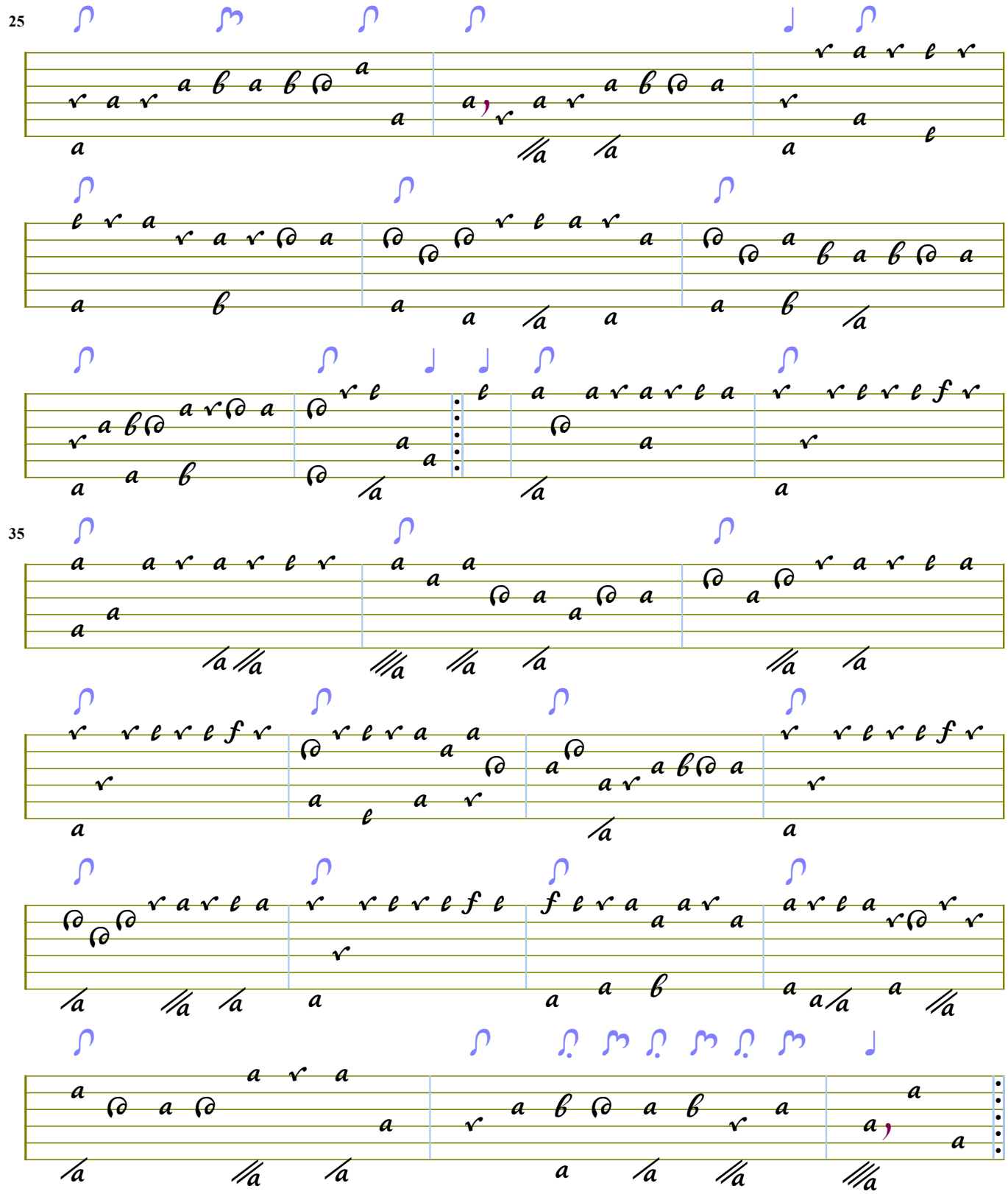


Over the moore, to Maggie, the new way,
in mr. mclaughland's fashion, by mr. Beck



I never knew, I loved thee, mr. mclaughland's way, by mr. Beck

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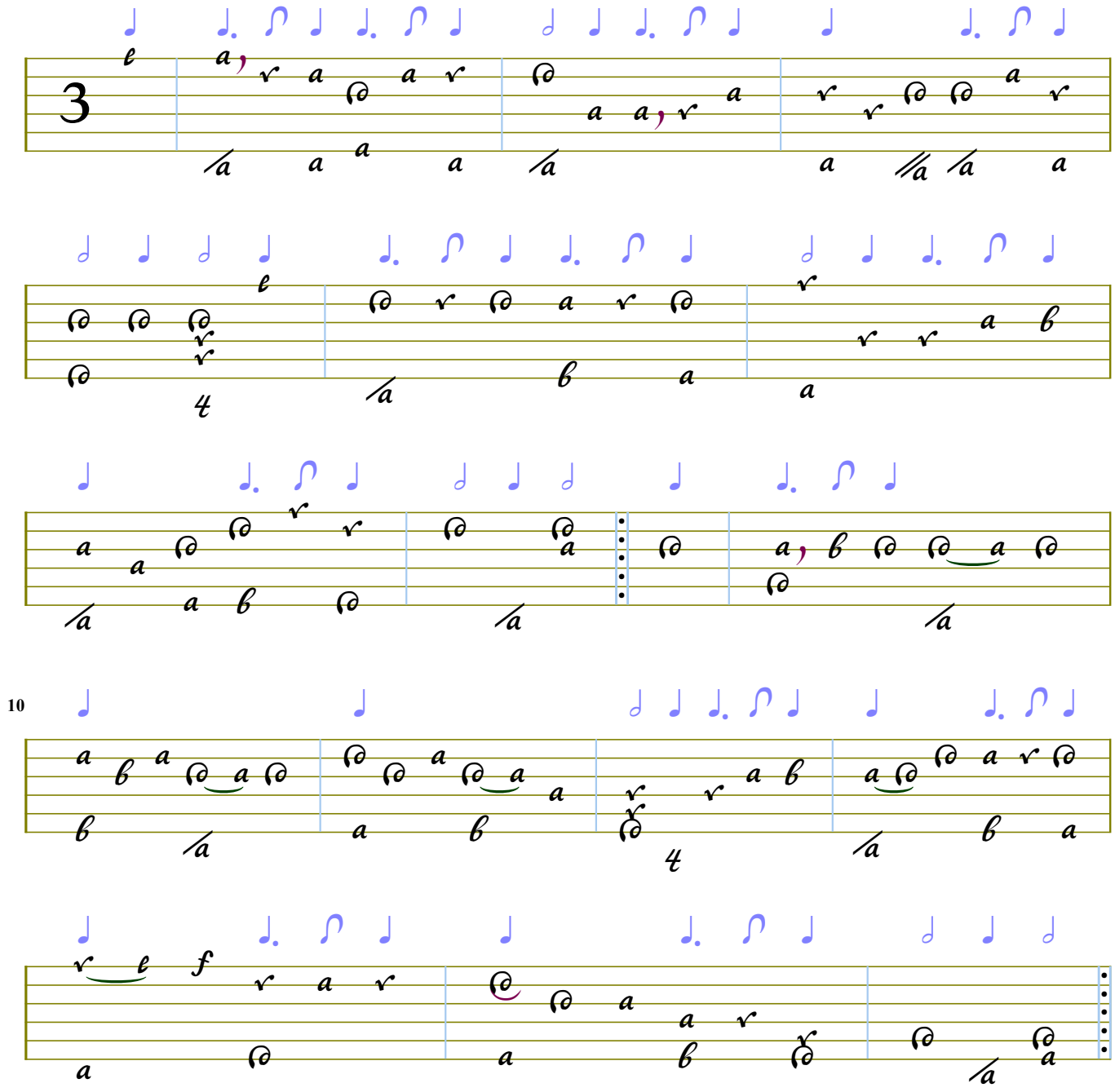
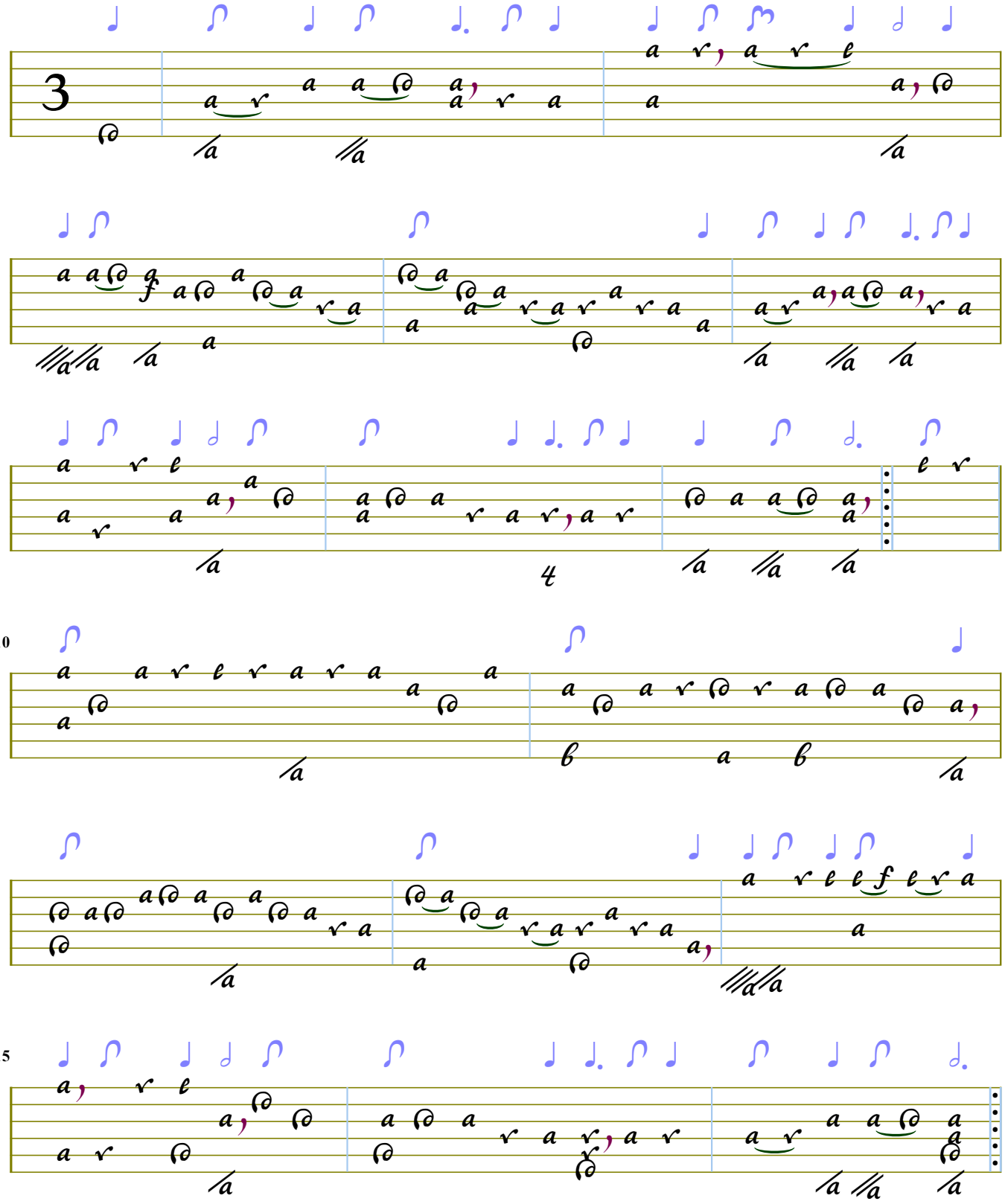
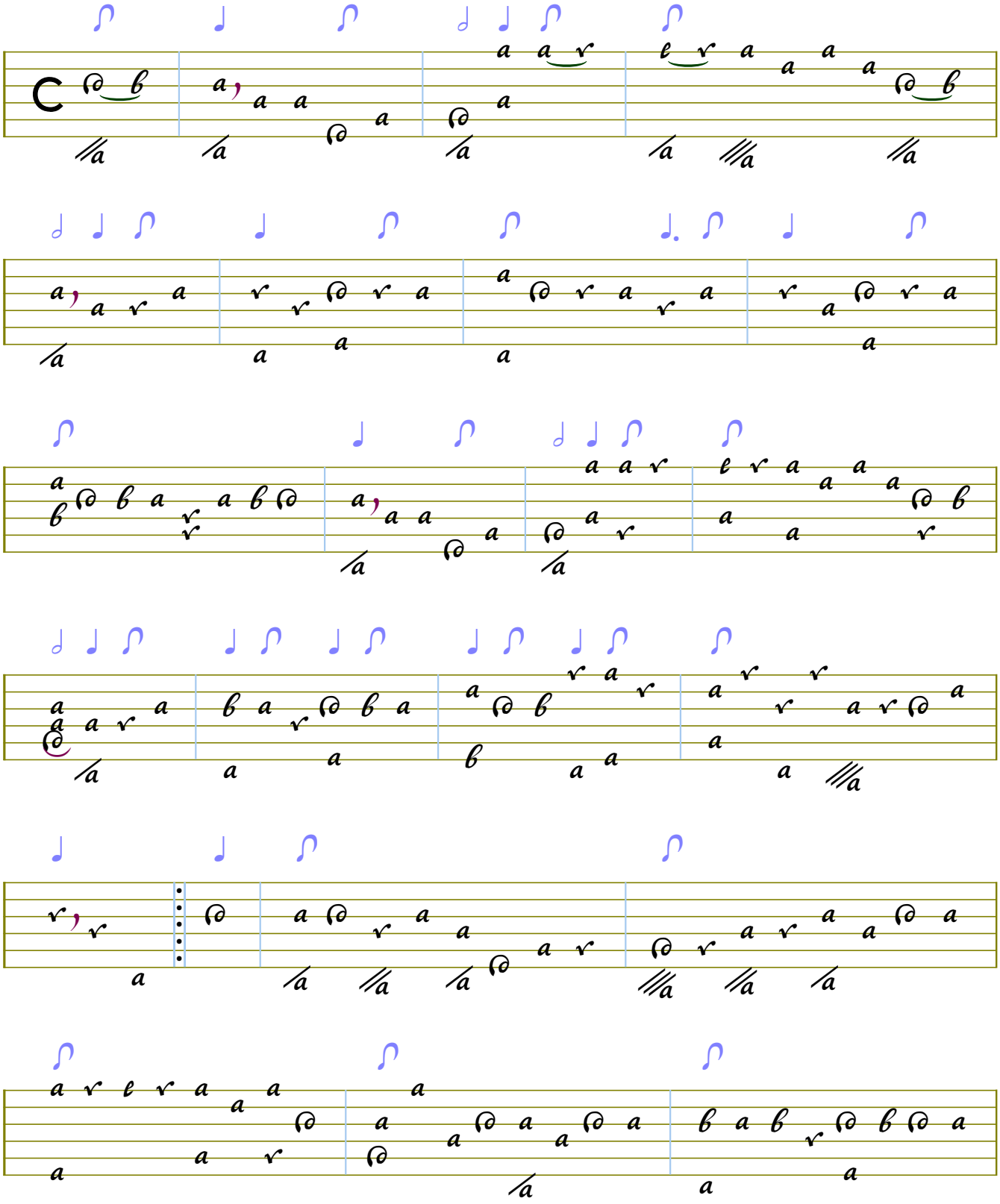
A gigge,mr. mclachland's way, by mr. Beck

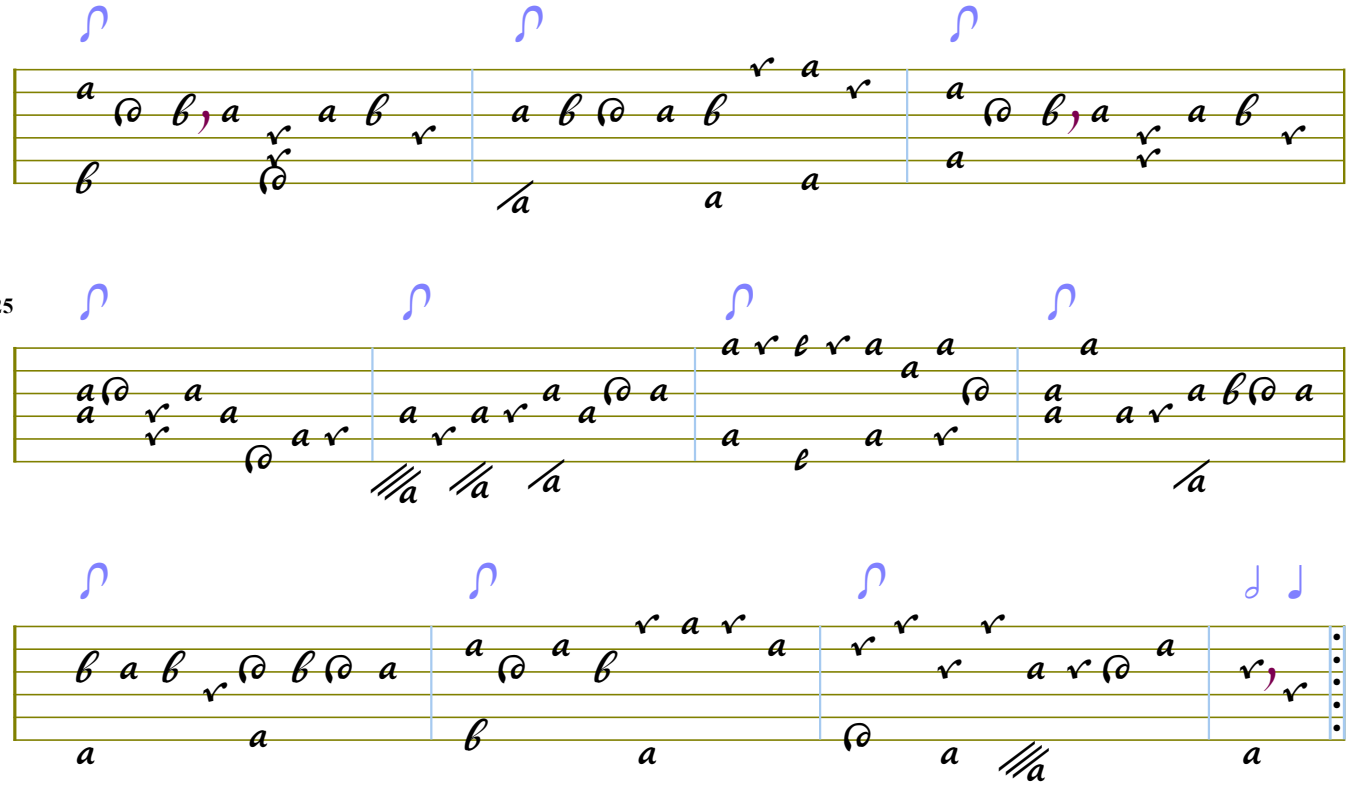


Love is the cause of my mourning, mr. mclaughland's way, by mr. Beck

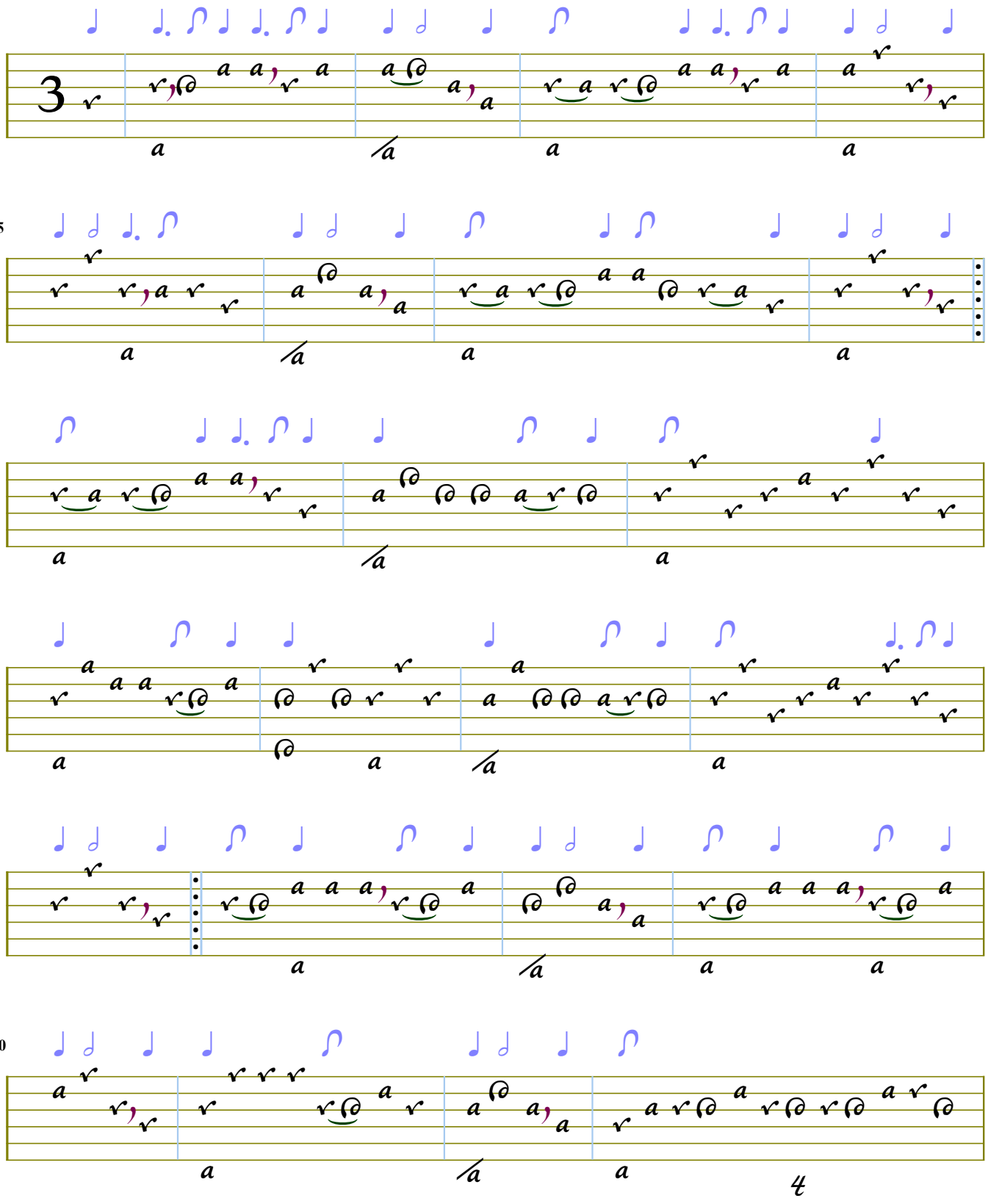


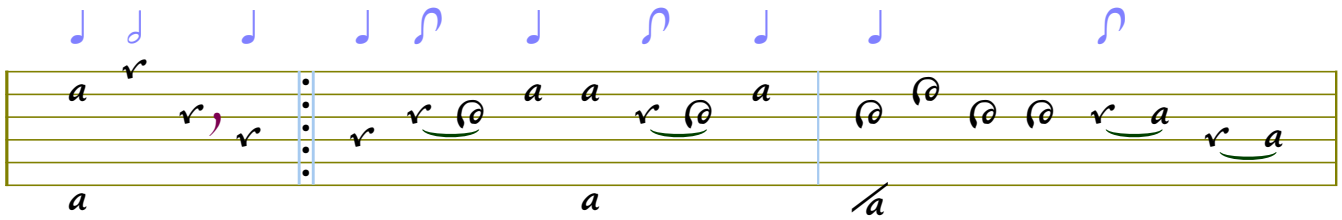
When the bride was married, mr. mclaghland's way, by mr. Beck

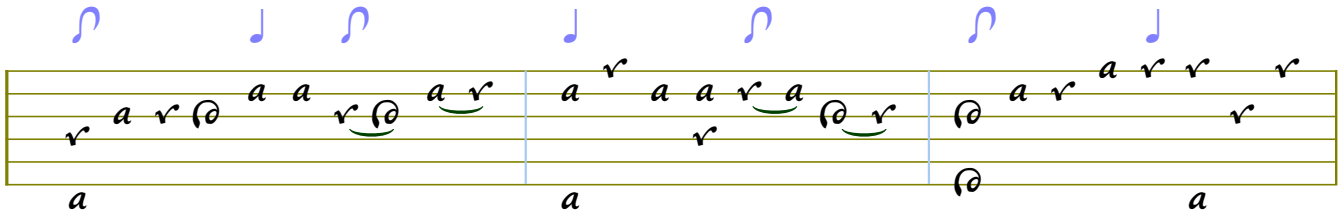




Jockie leaped over the dyke, mr. mclachland's way, by mr. Beck







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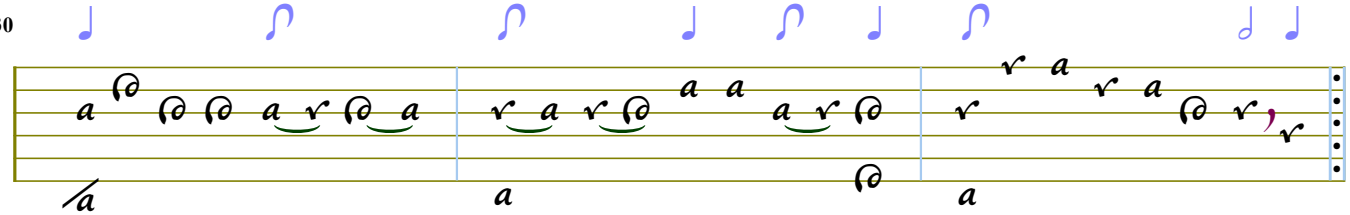
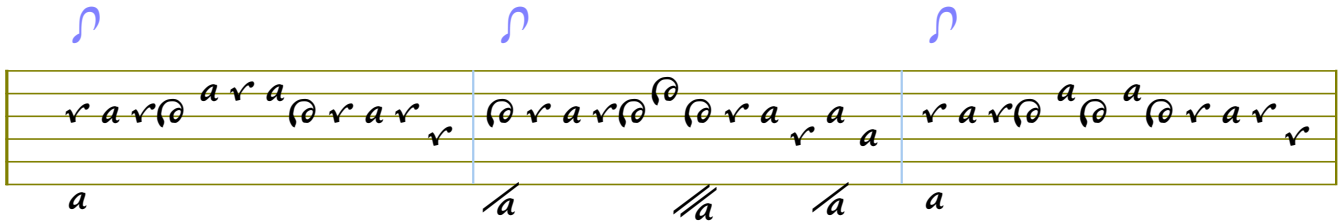
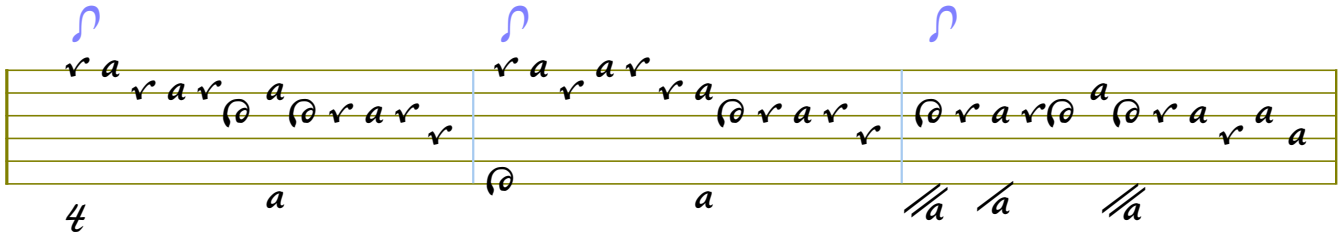
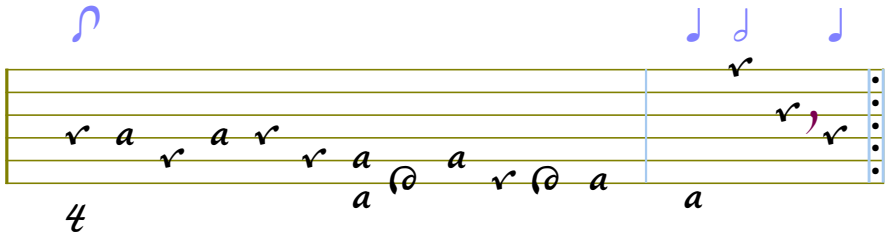
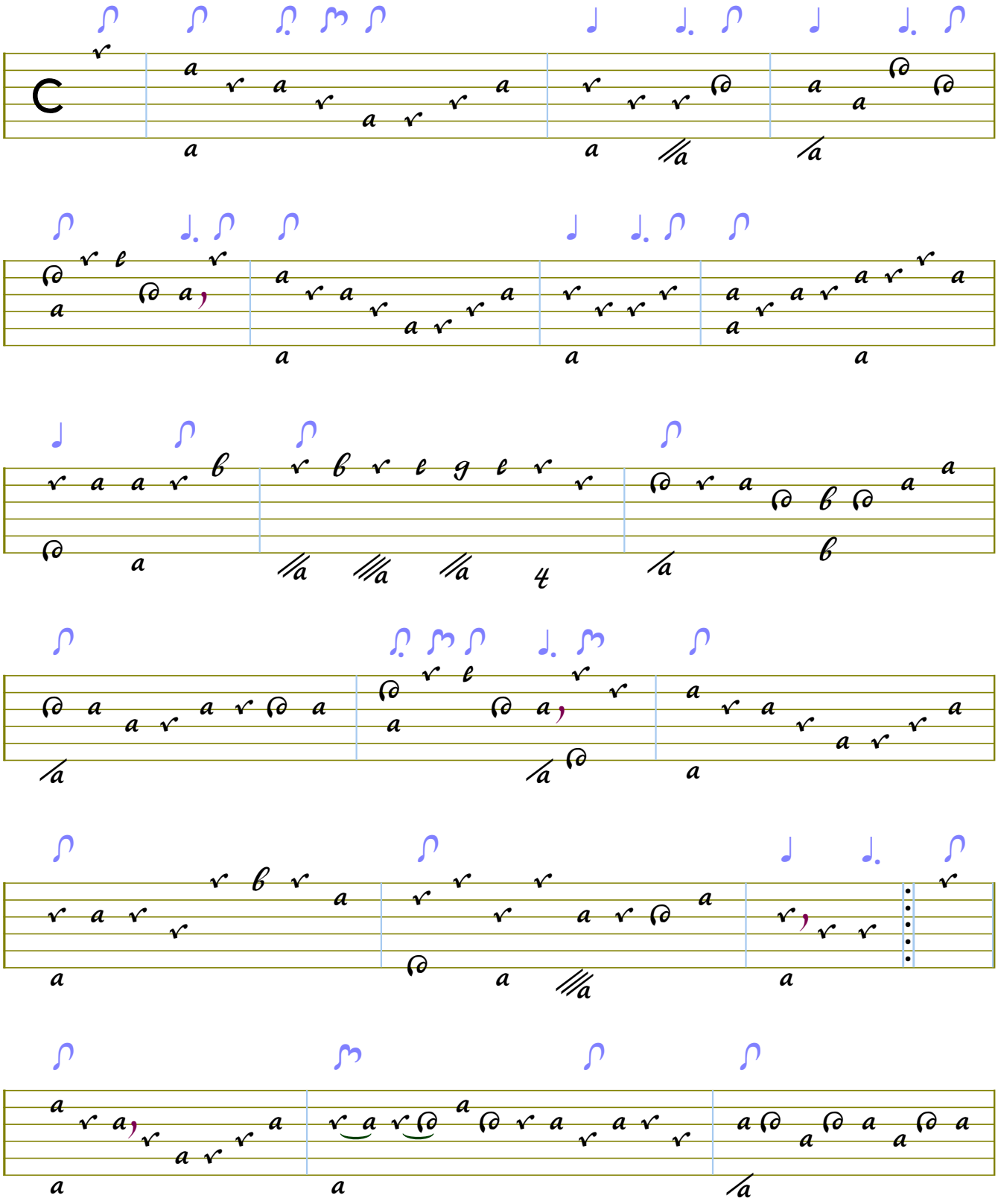


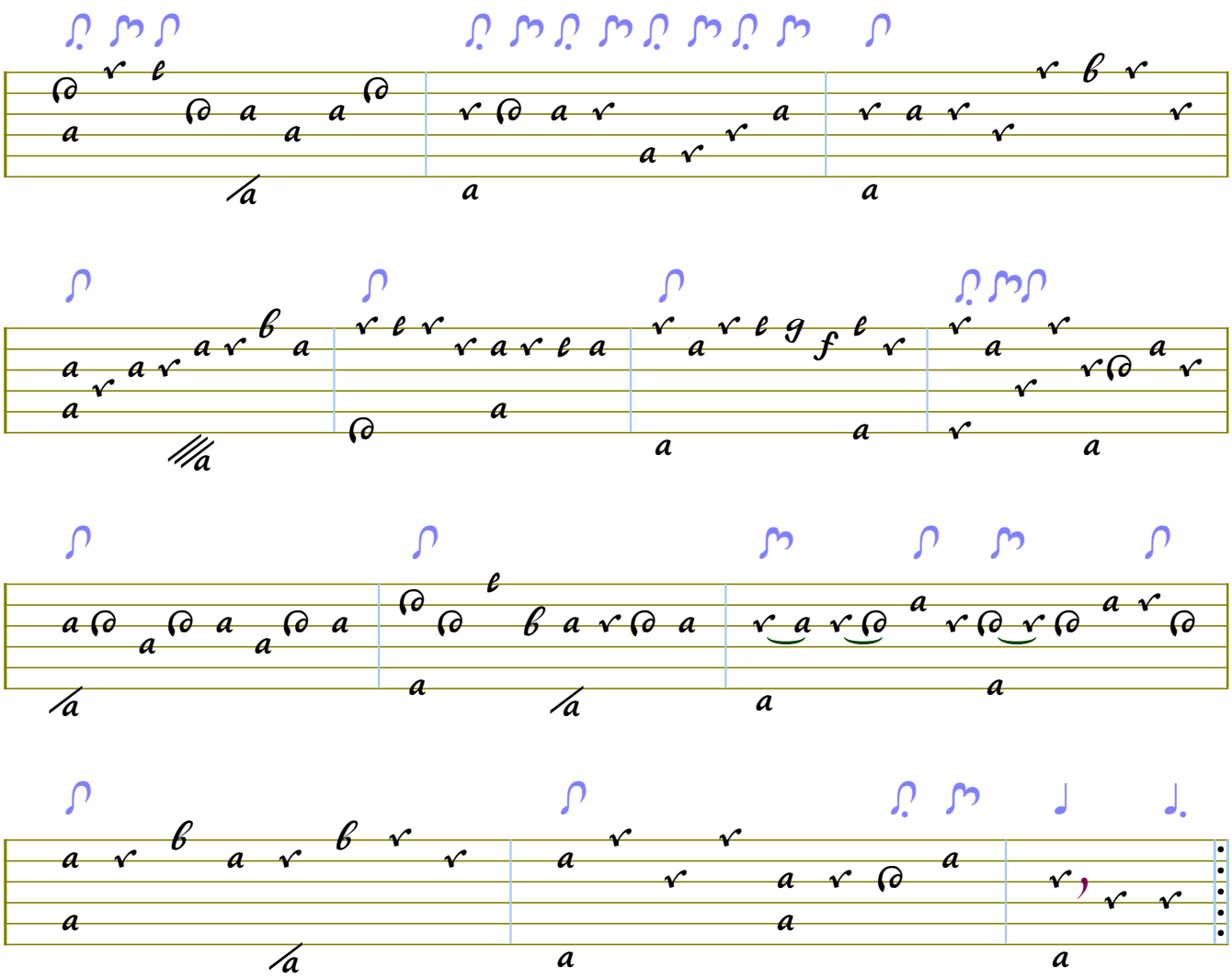




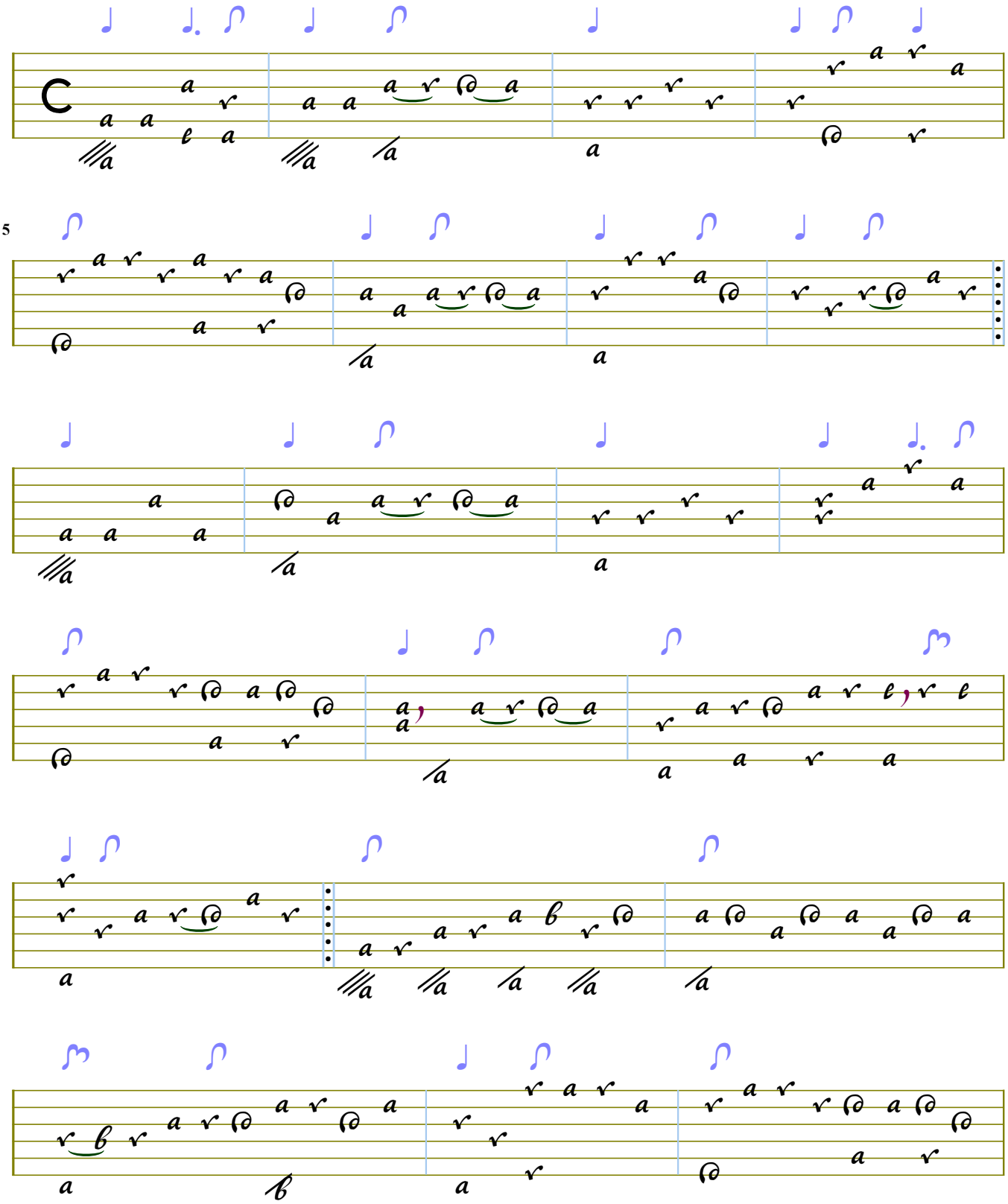


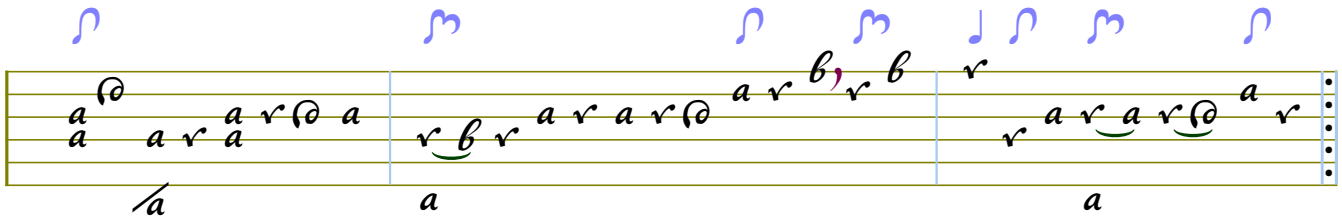
Bonnie Christien, mr mclaghland's way, by mr. Beck





Katie Bairdie, mr mclachland's way, by mr. Beck





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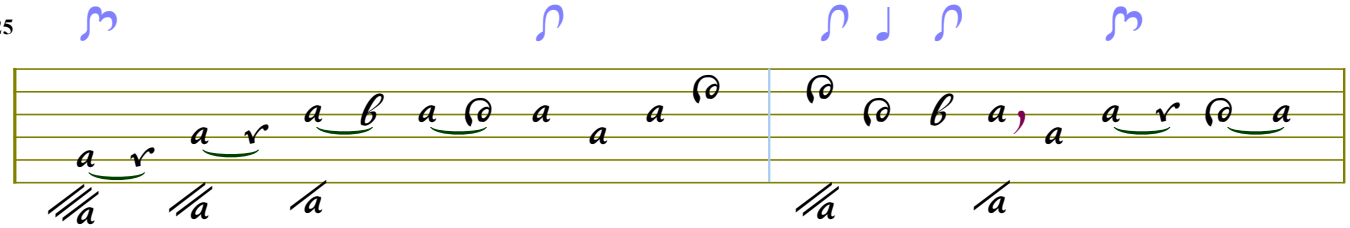
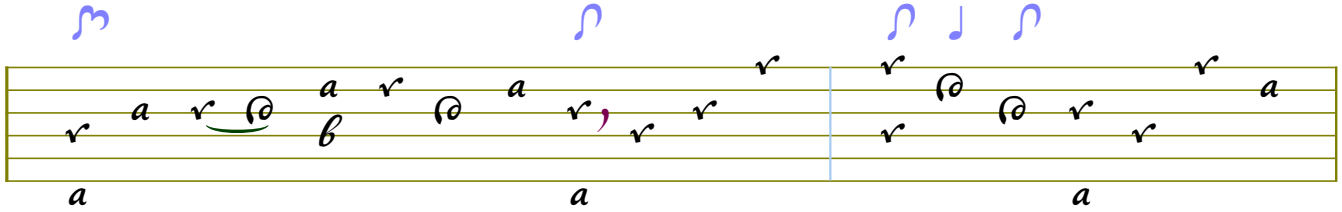
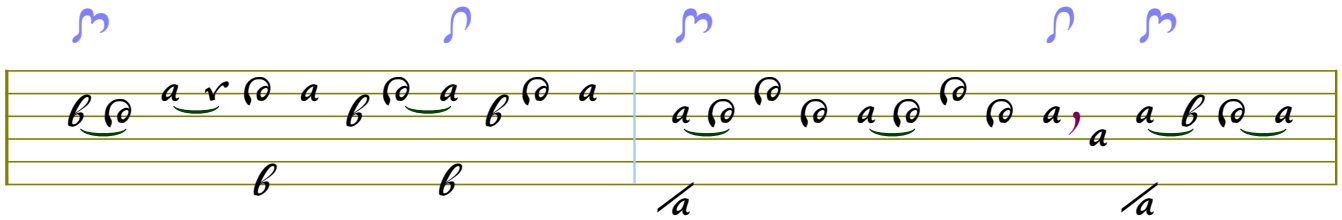
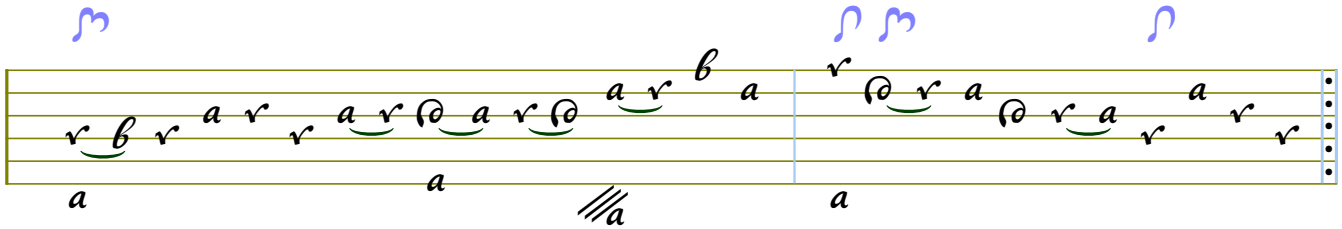
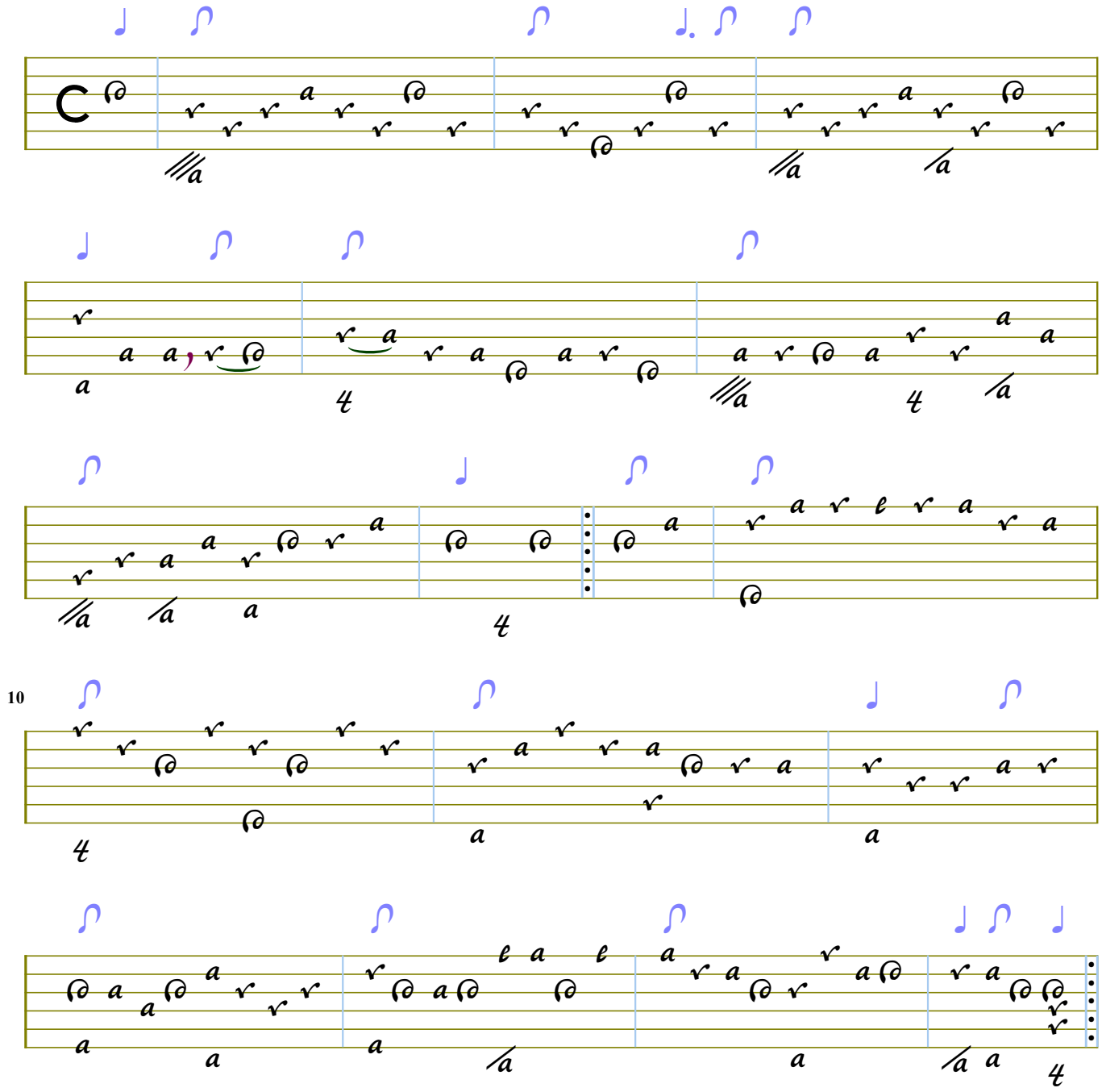




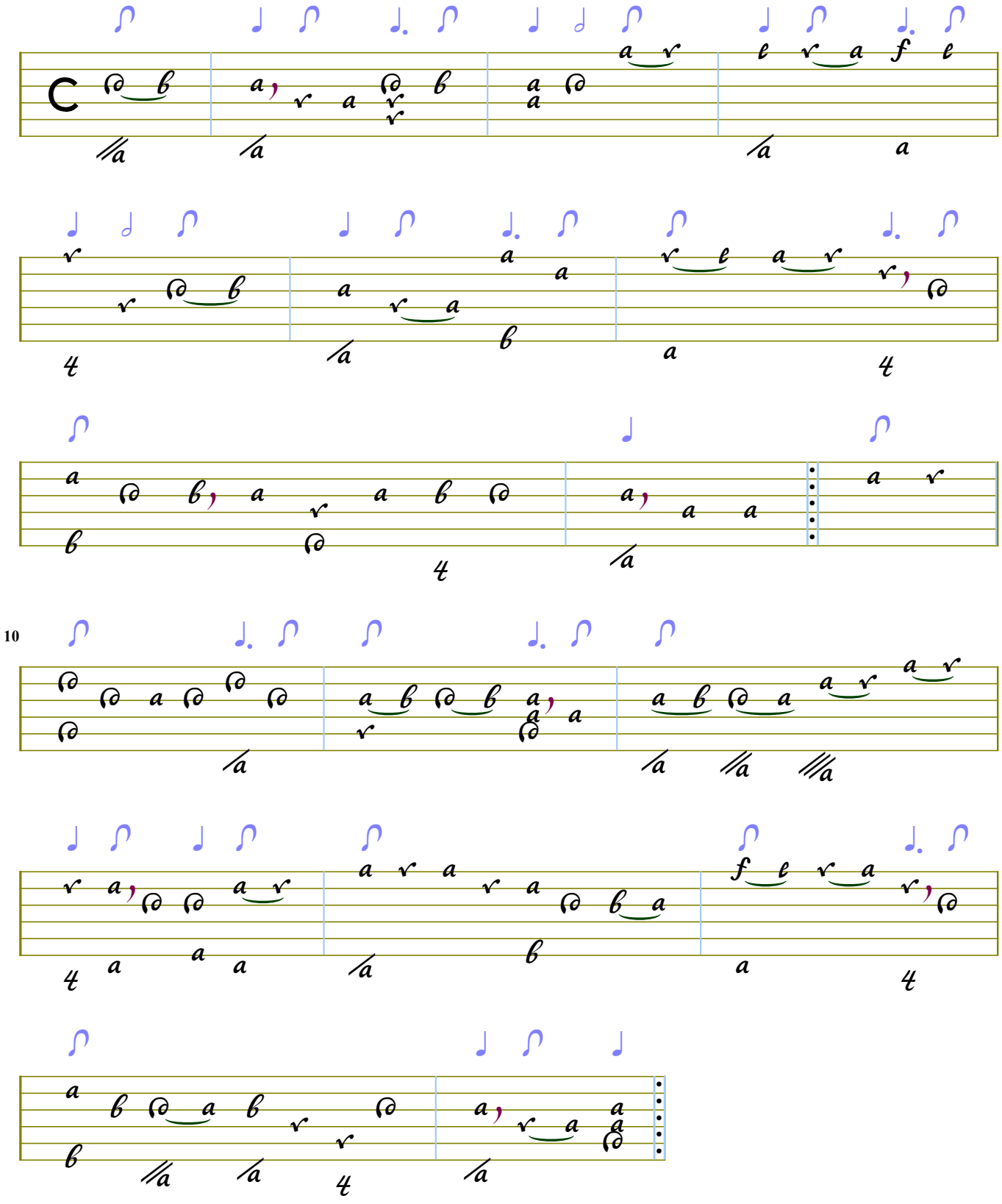




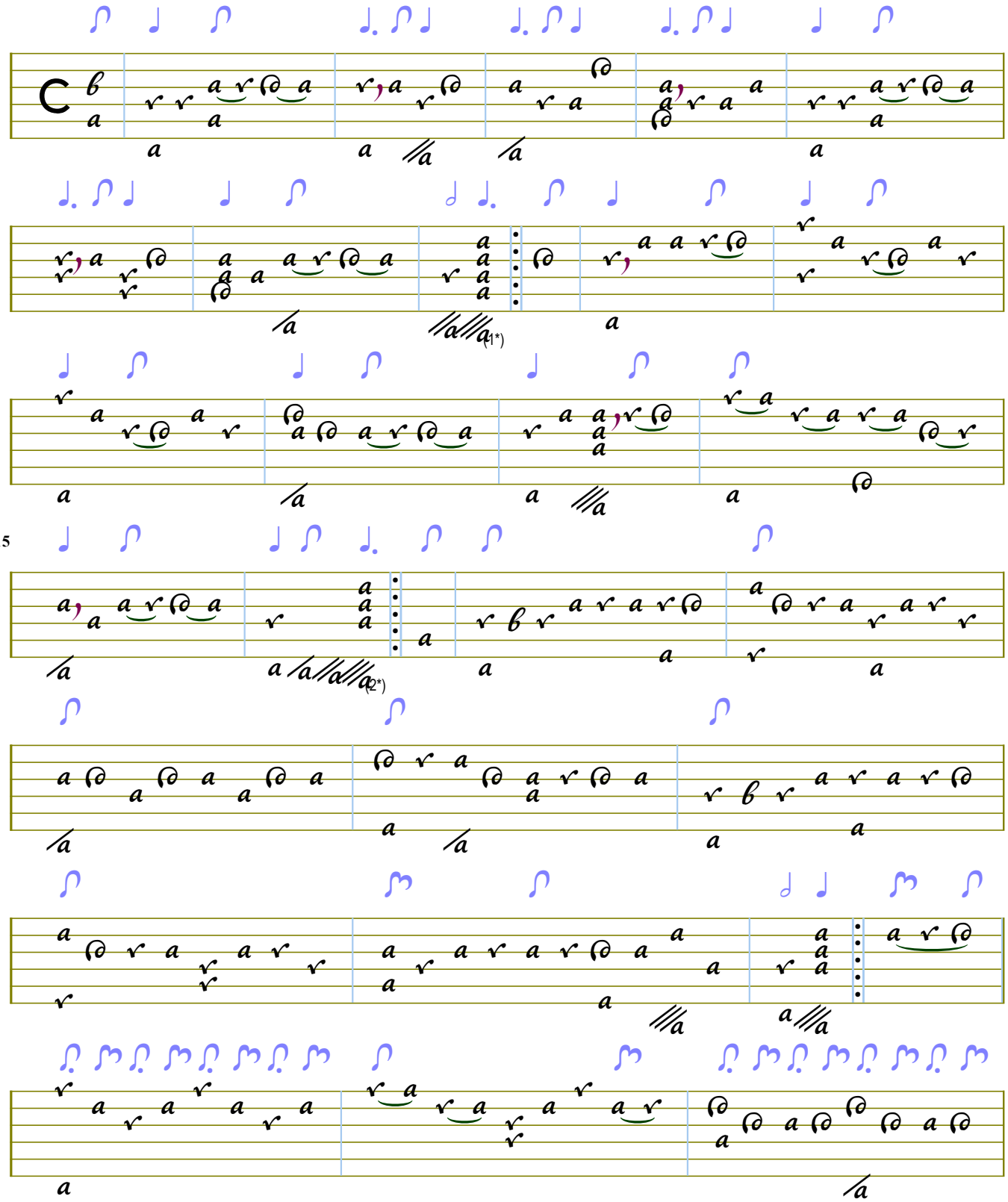
Mr Kenneth mcKenzies's scotts measure, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck



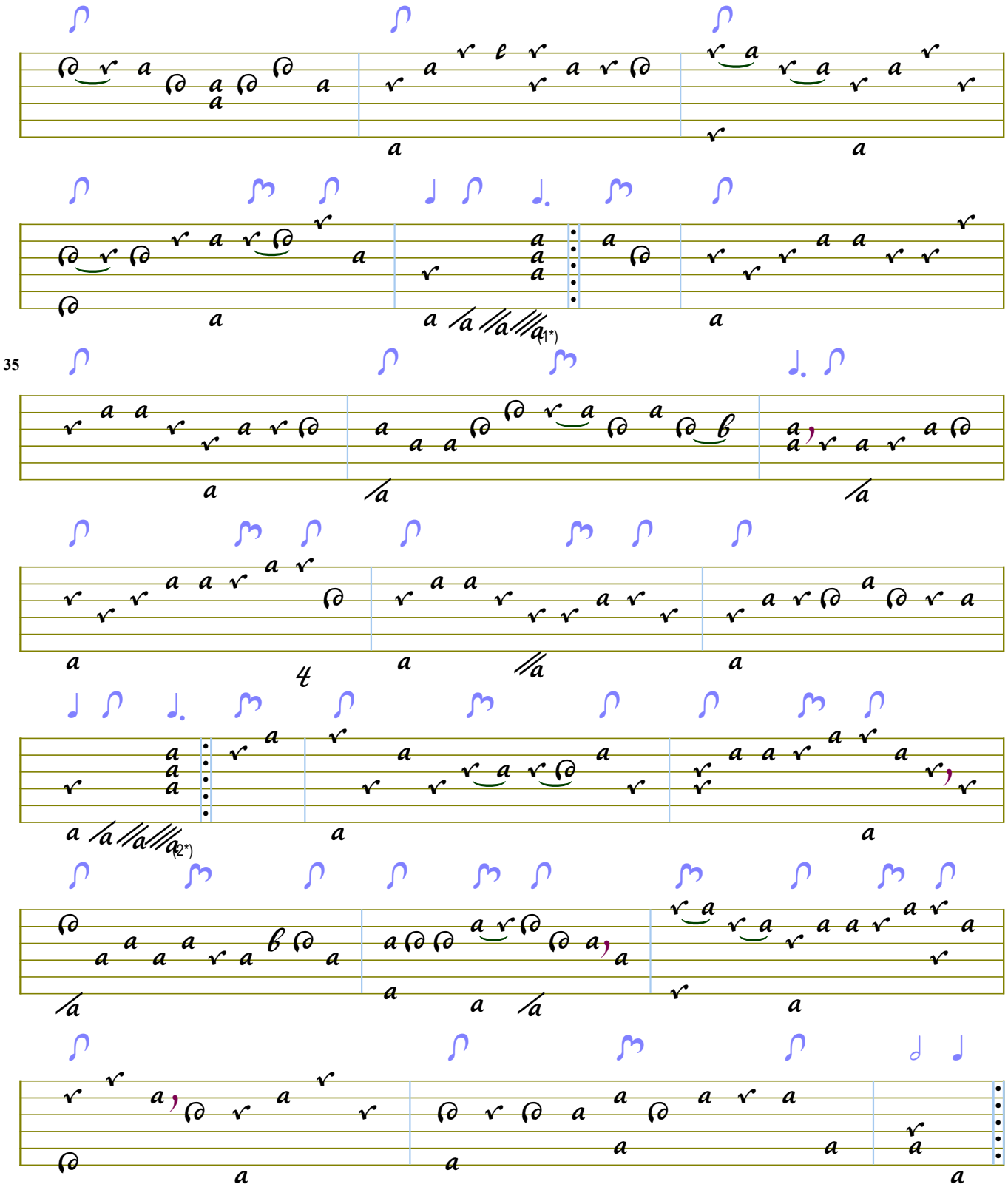
The newest scotts measure, mr mclaughland's way, by mr. Beck



Where will our good man lye, mr. mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

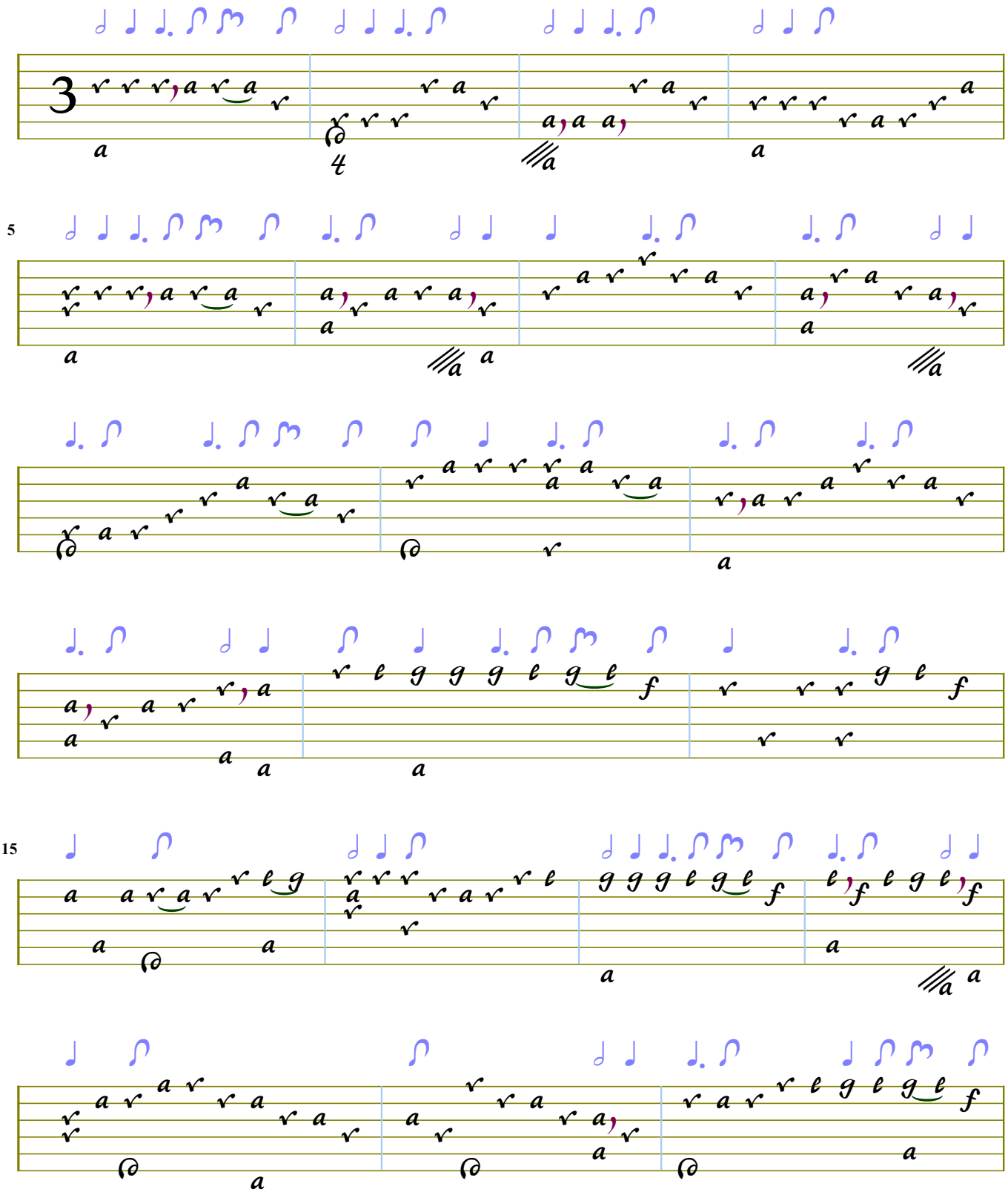


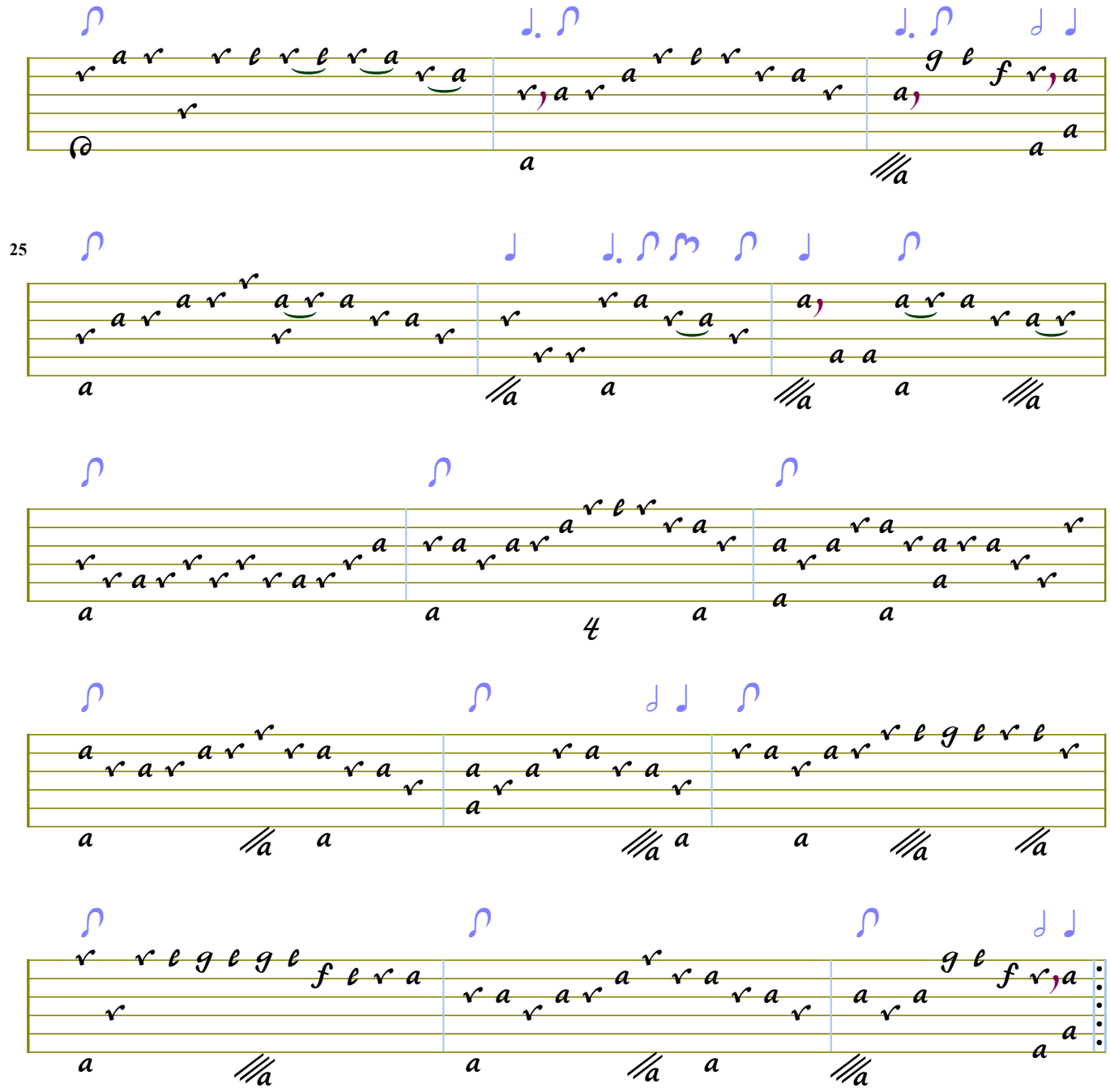
1. Note lenght adapted
2. Note length adapted



1. Note length adapted
2. Note length adapted

Port Atholl, mr. mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

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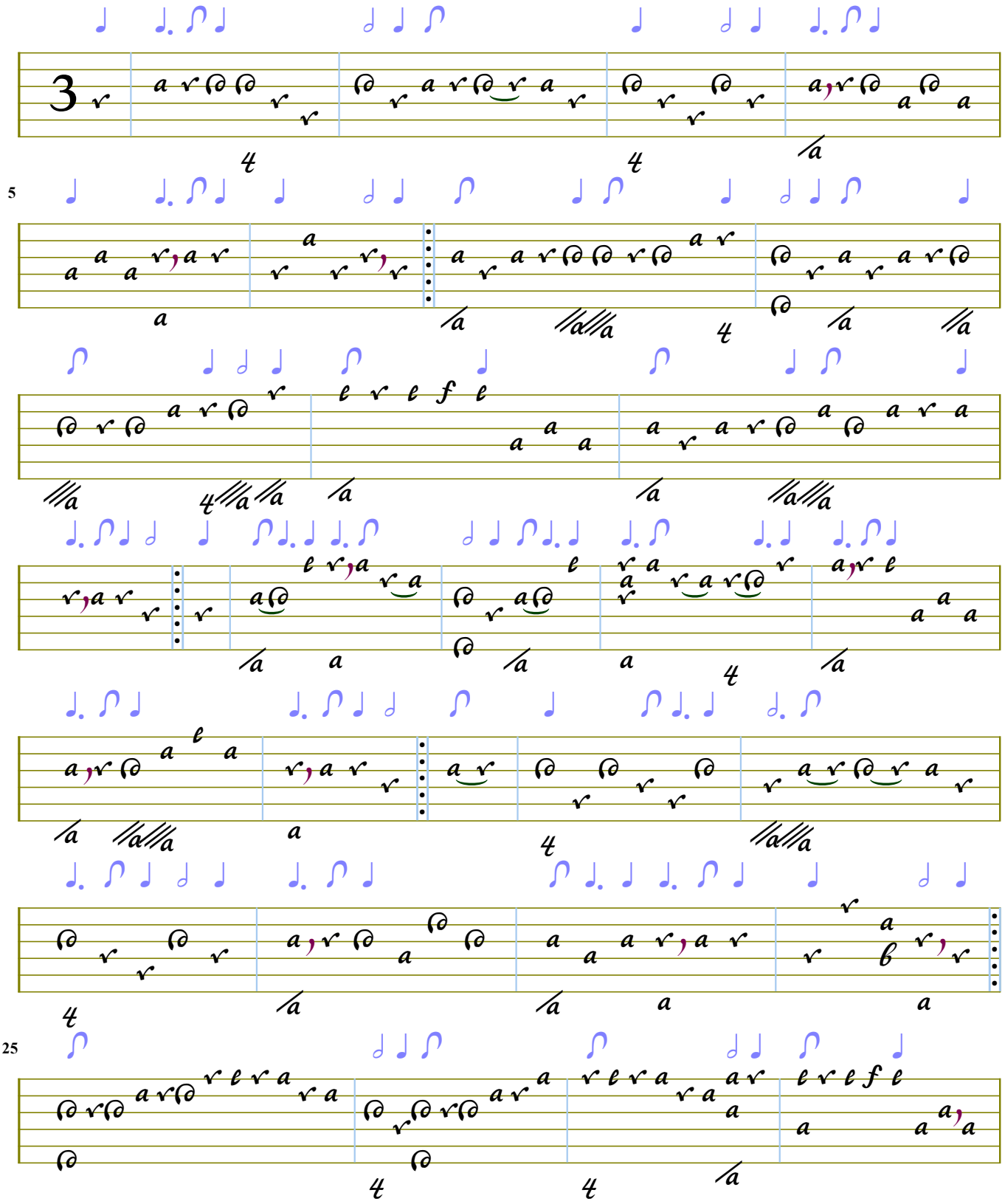
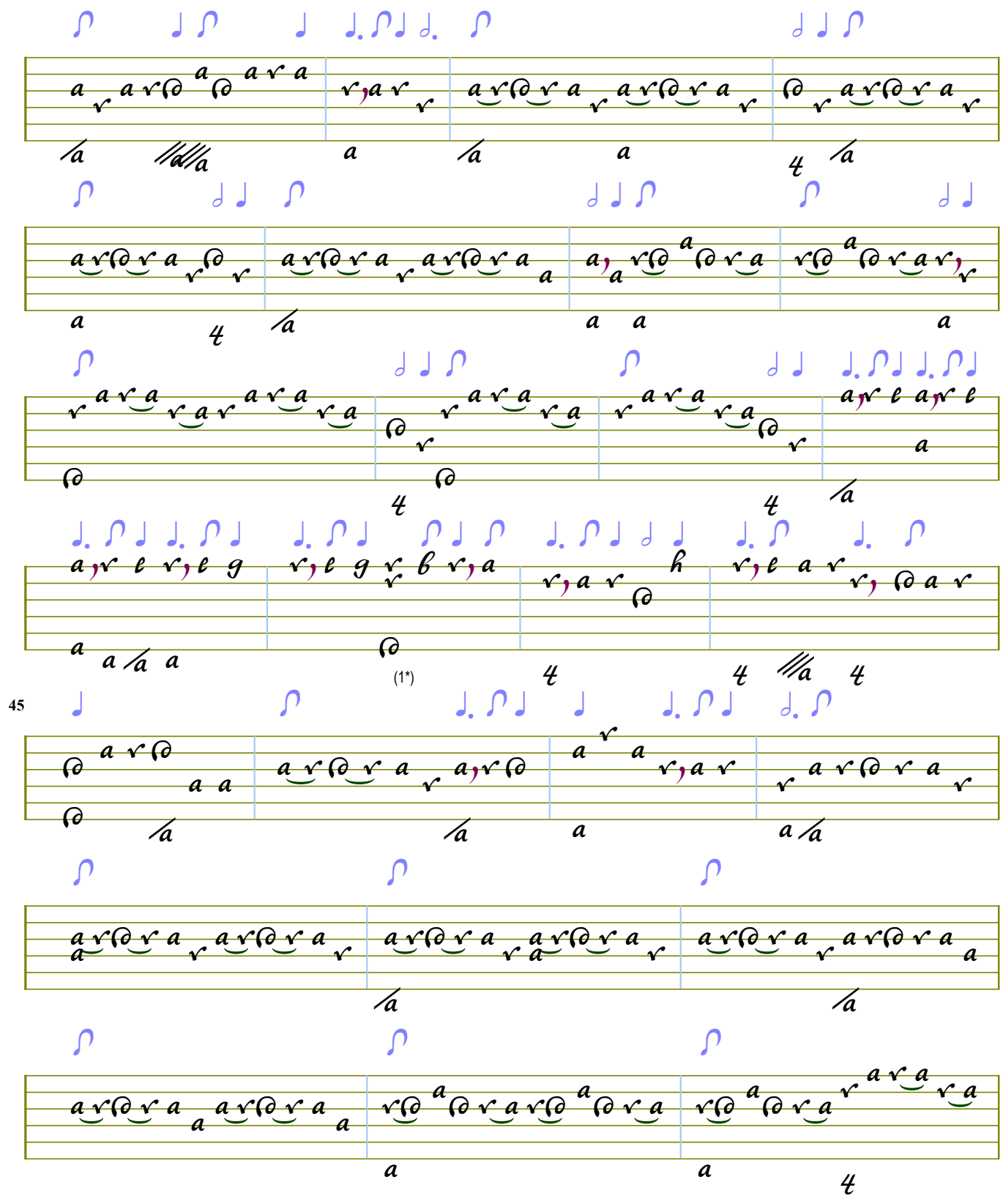
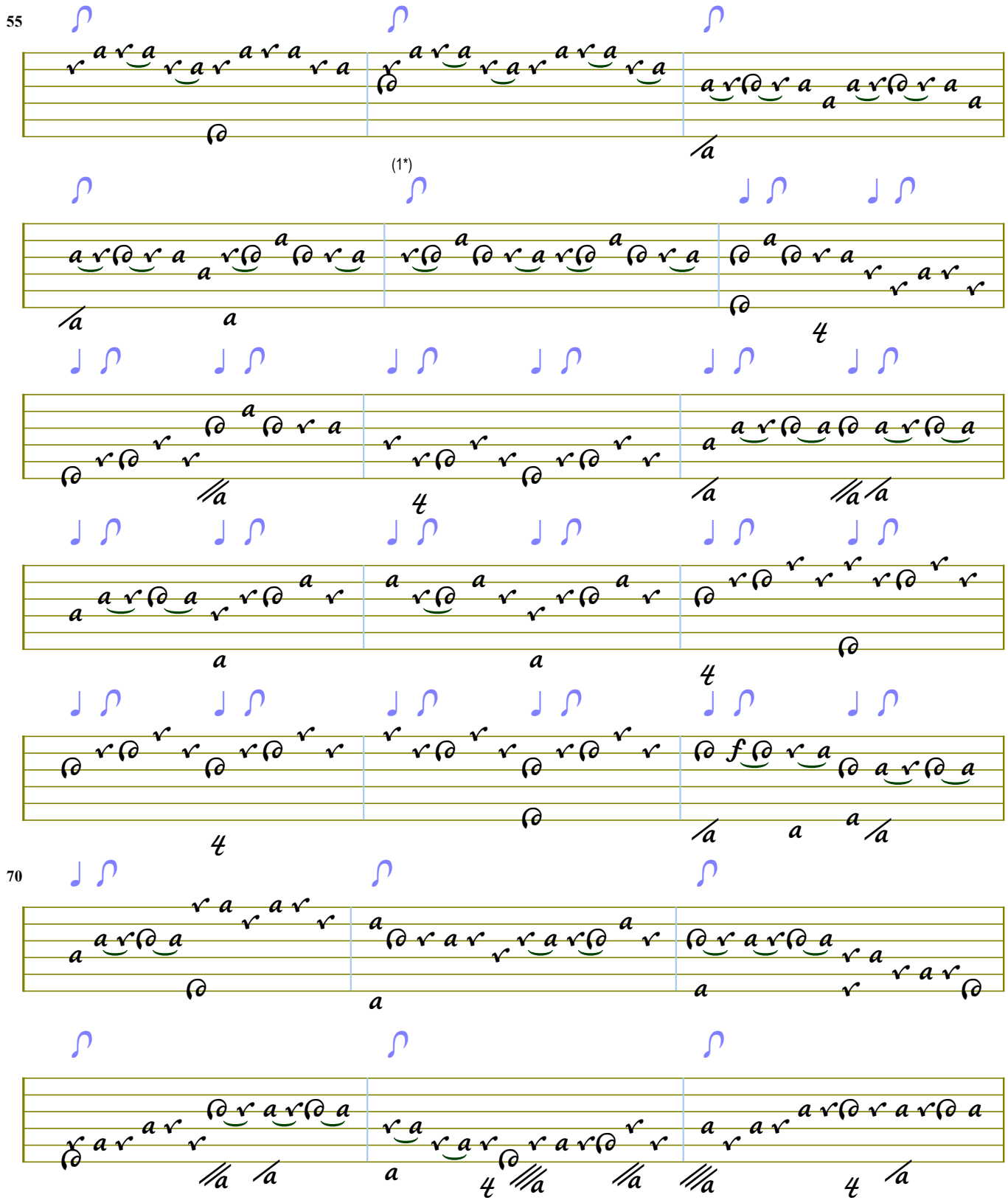
Old sir simon the king, Jean More's way, by mr. Beck

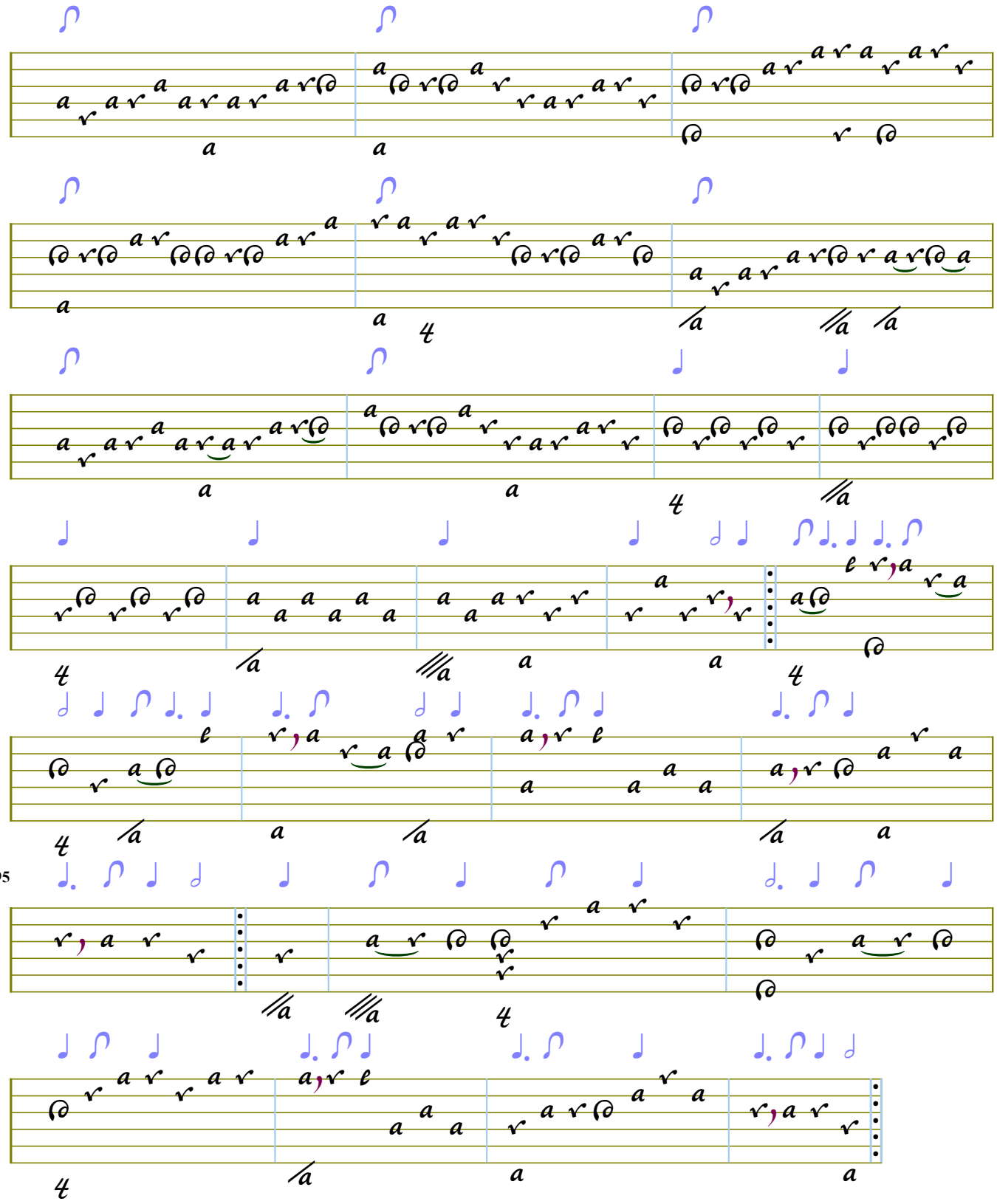




1. Orig: 2nd half of bar with double note length



1. Orig: 6 notes too many before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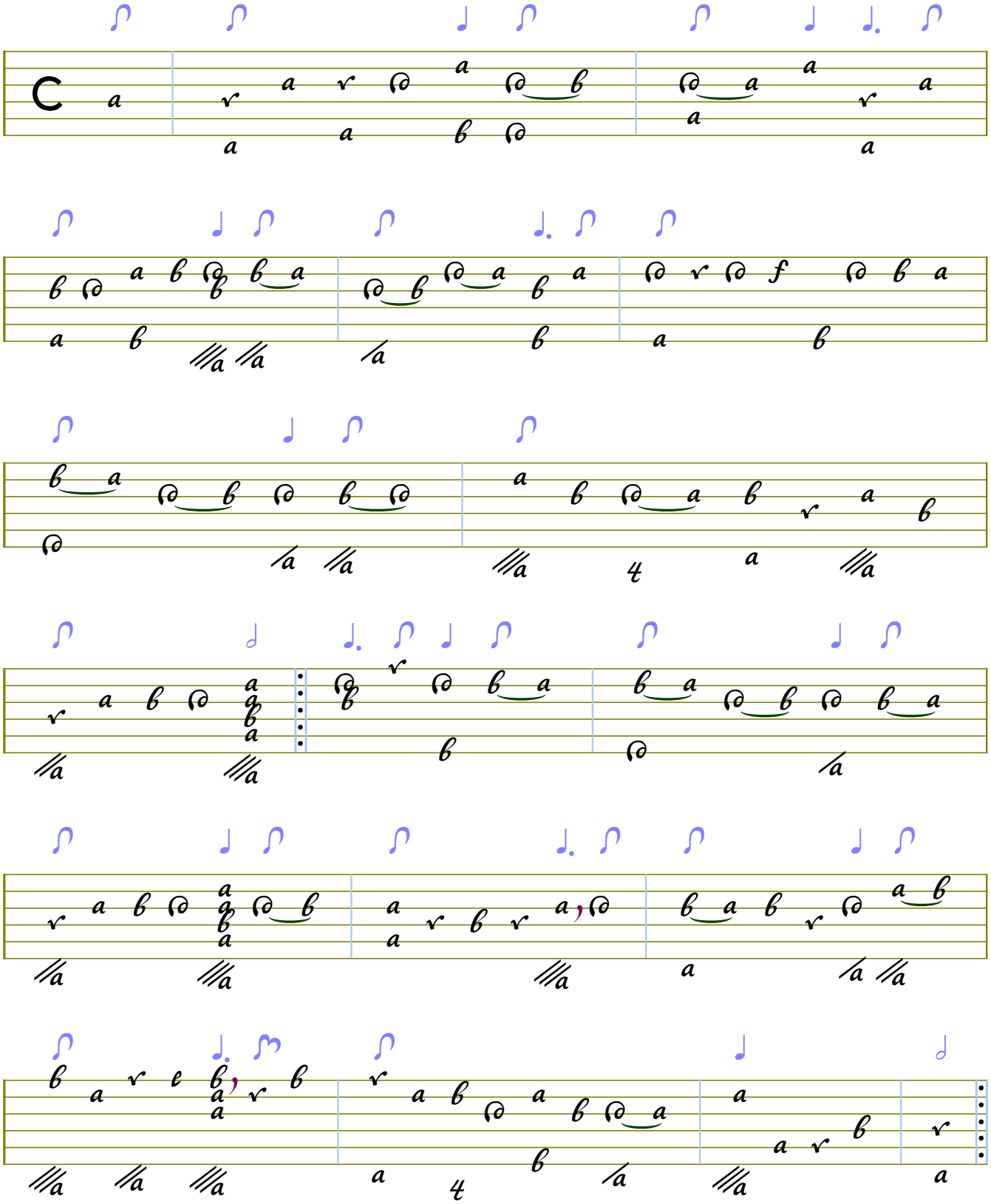
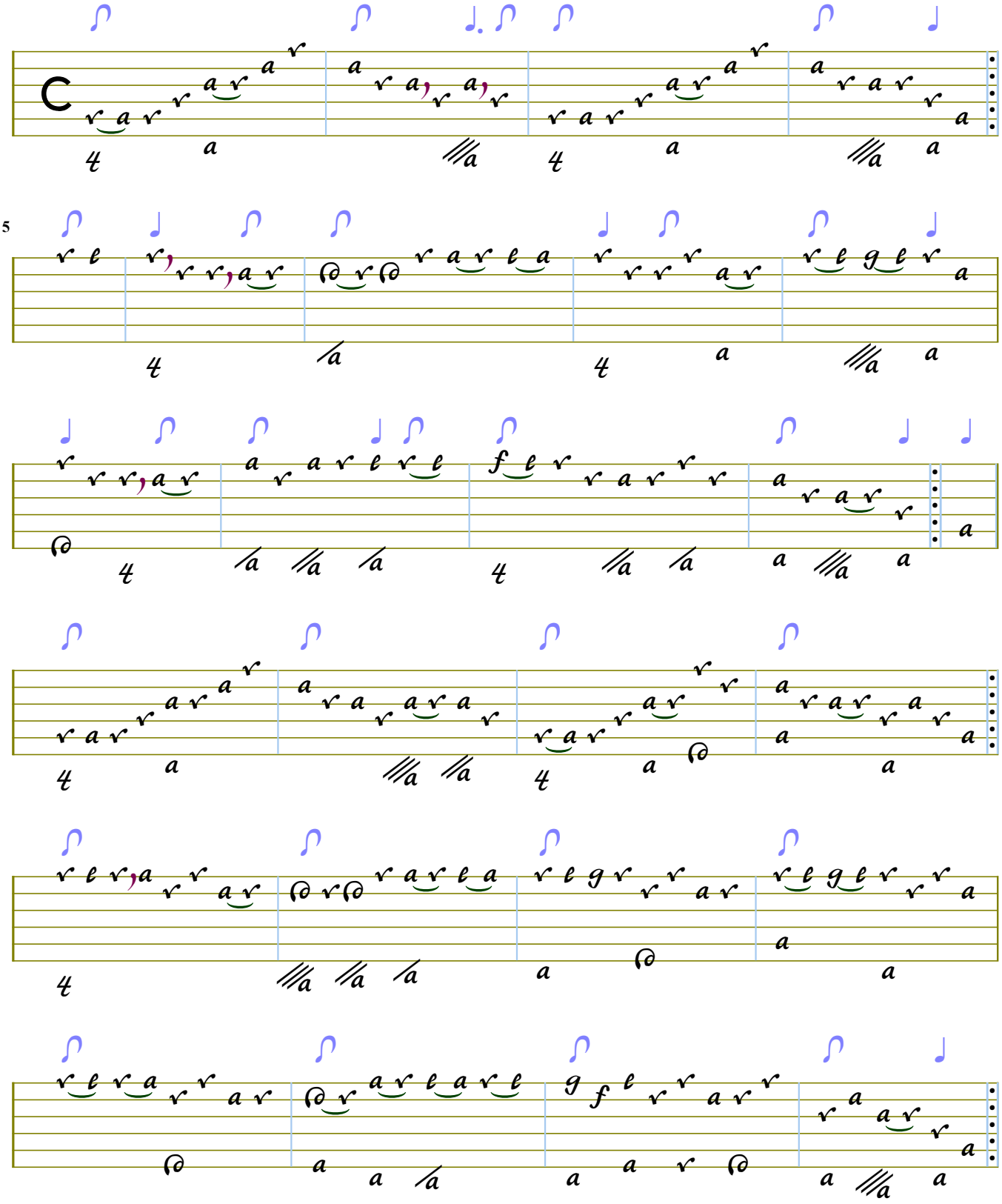
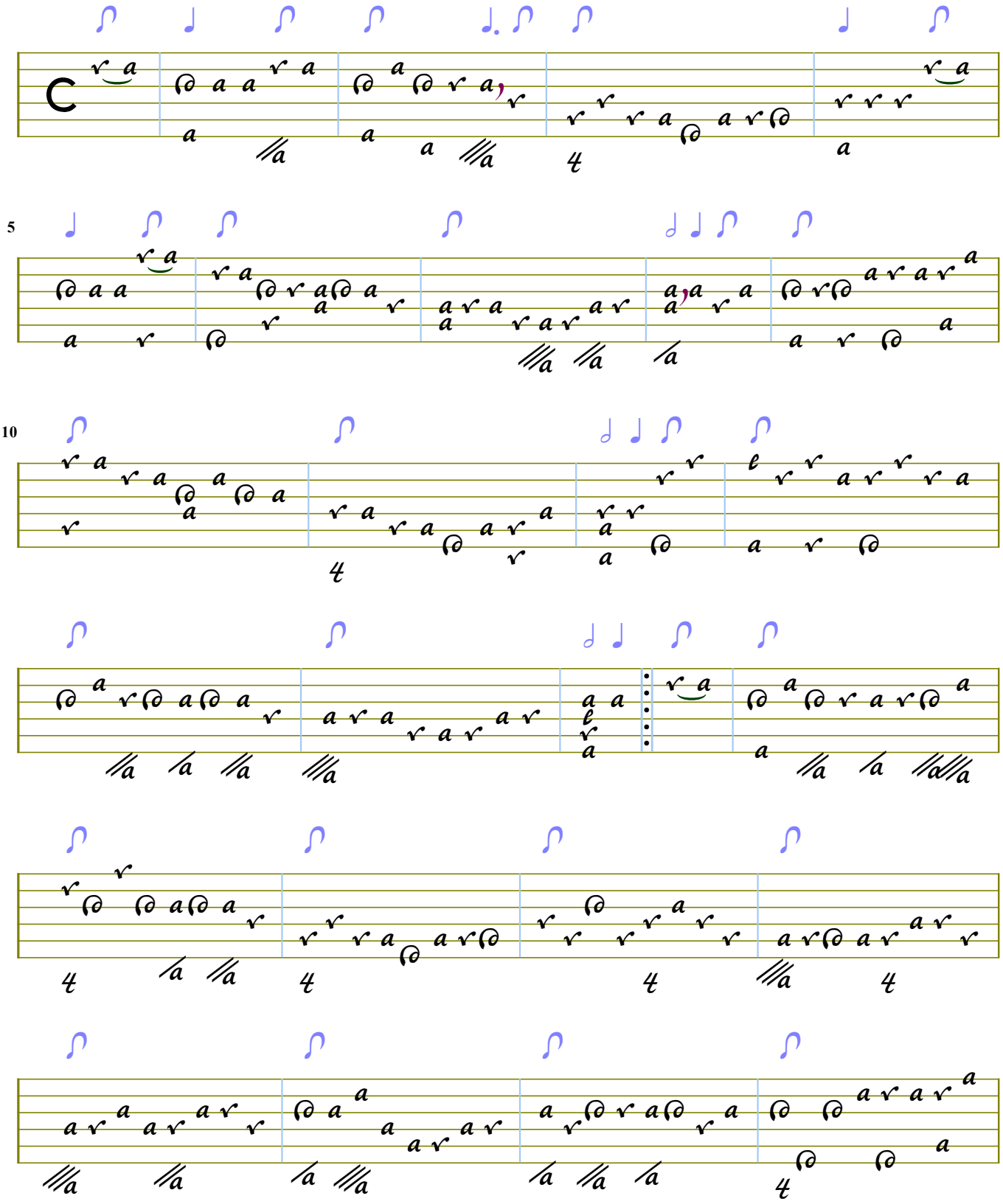
It was but a furlong from Edinburgh,
with the 9th string lowed half a note, mr mclaughland's way, by mr. Beck

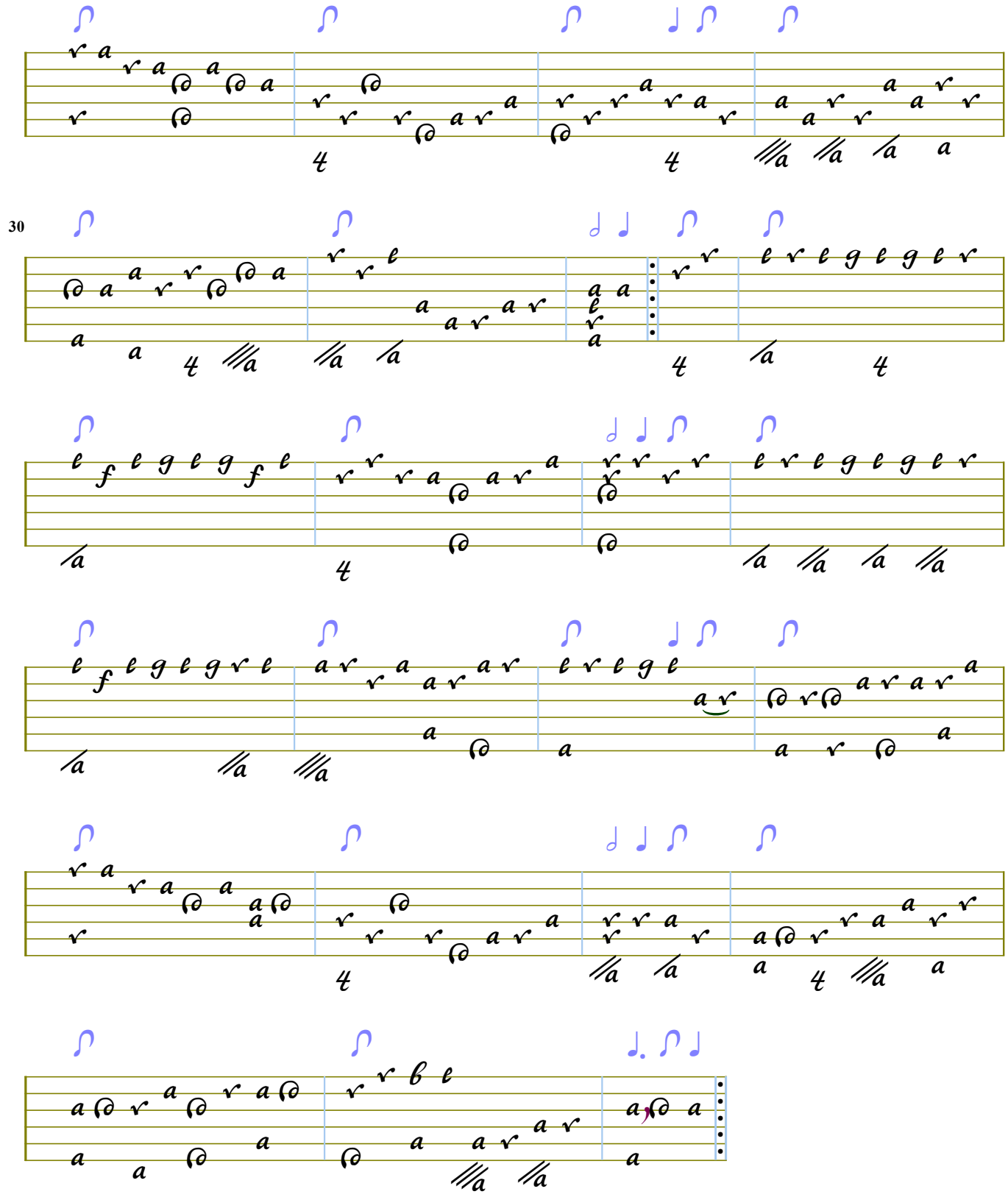


The shoemaker, mr mclaughlan'd way, by mr. Beck



The Geeman, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

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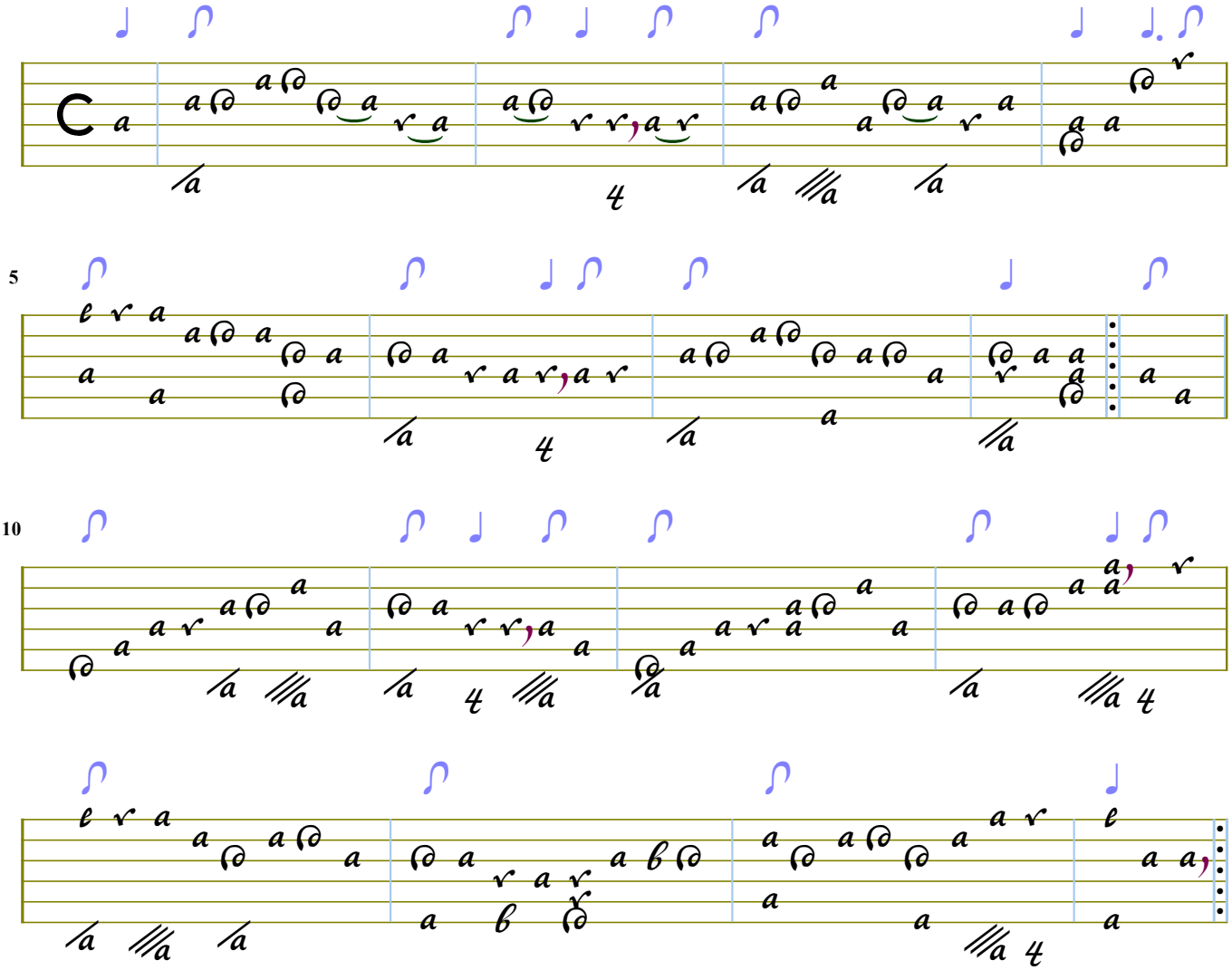
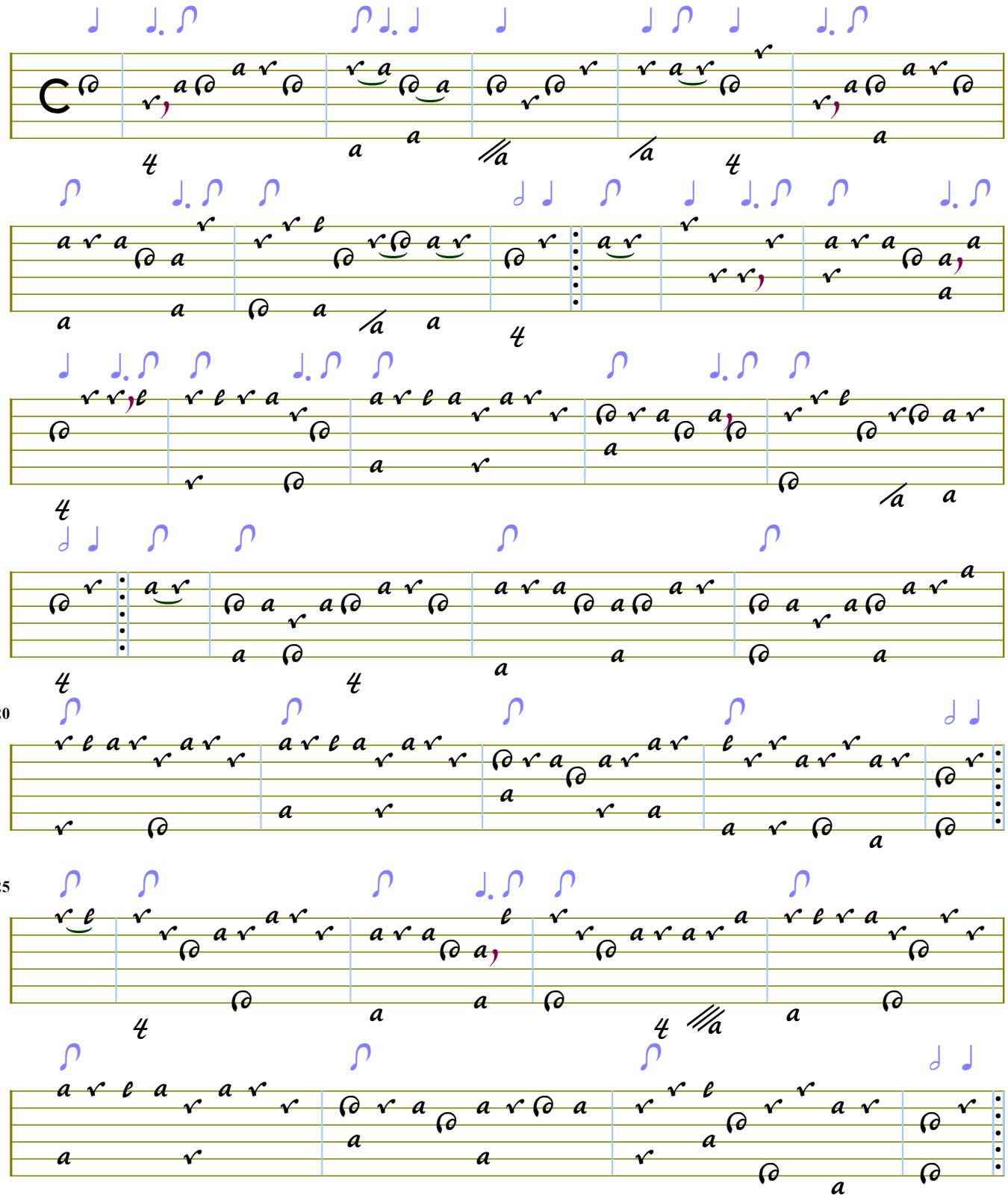
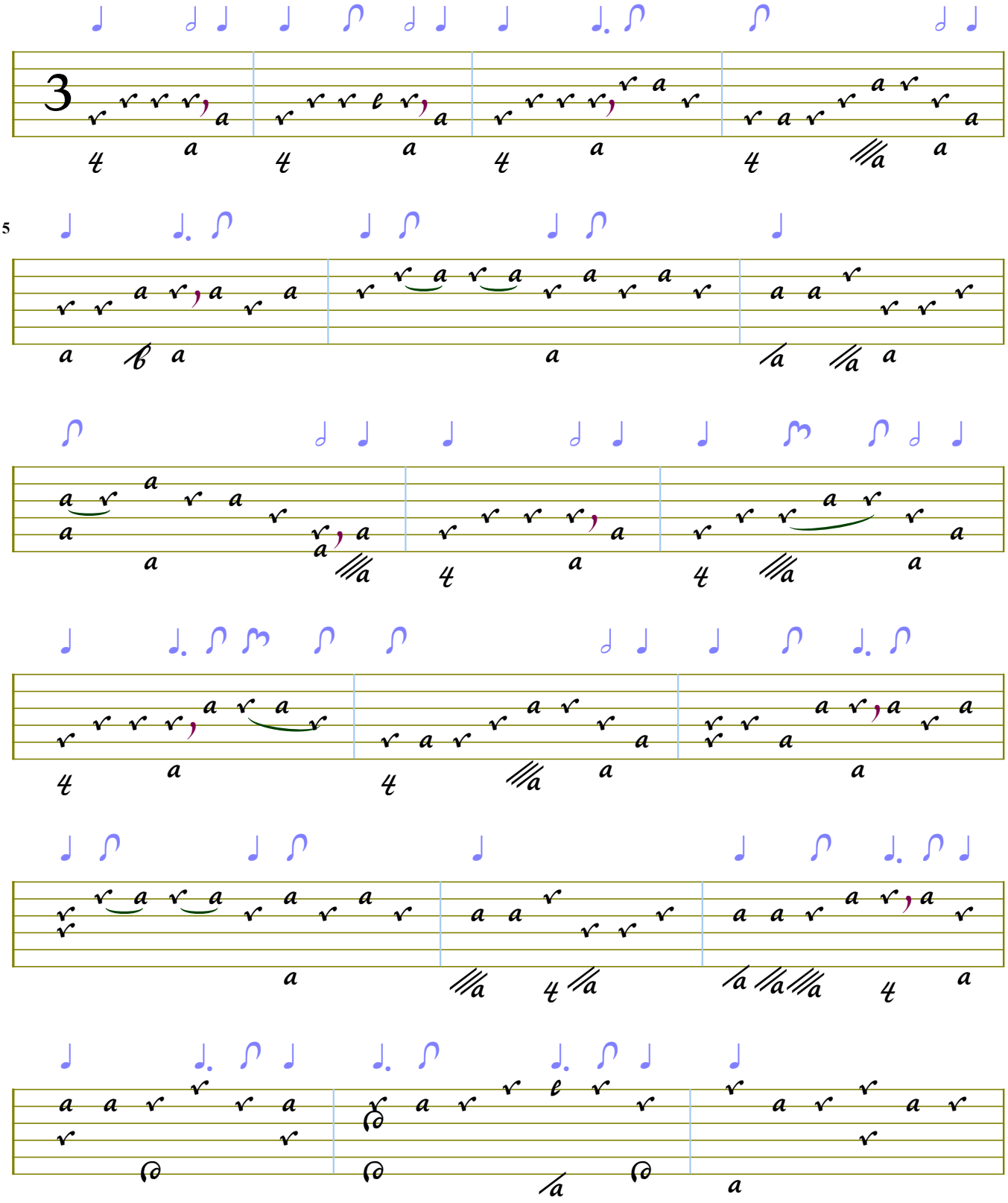
Cause give the bride her supper, the old way, in mr. mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

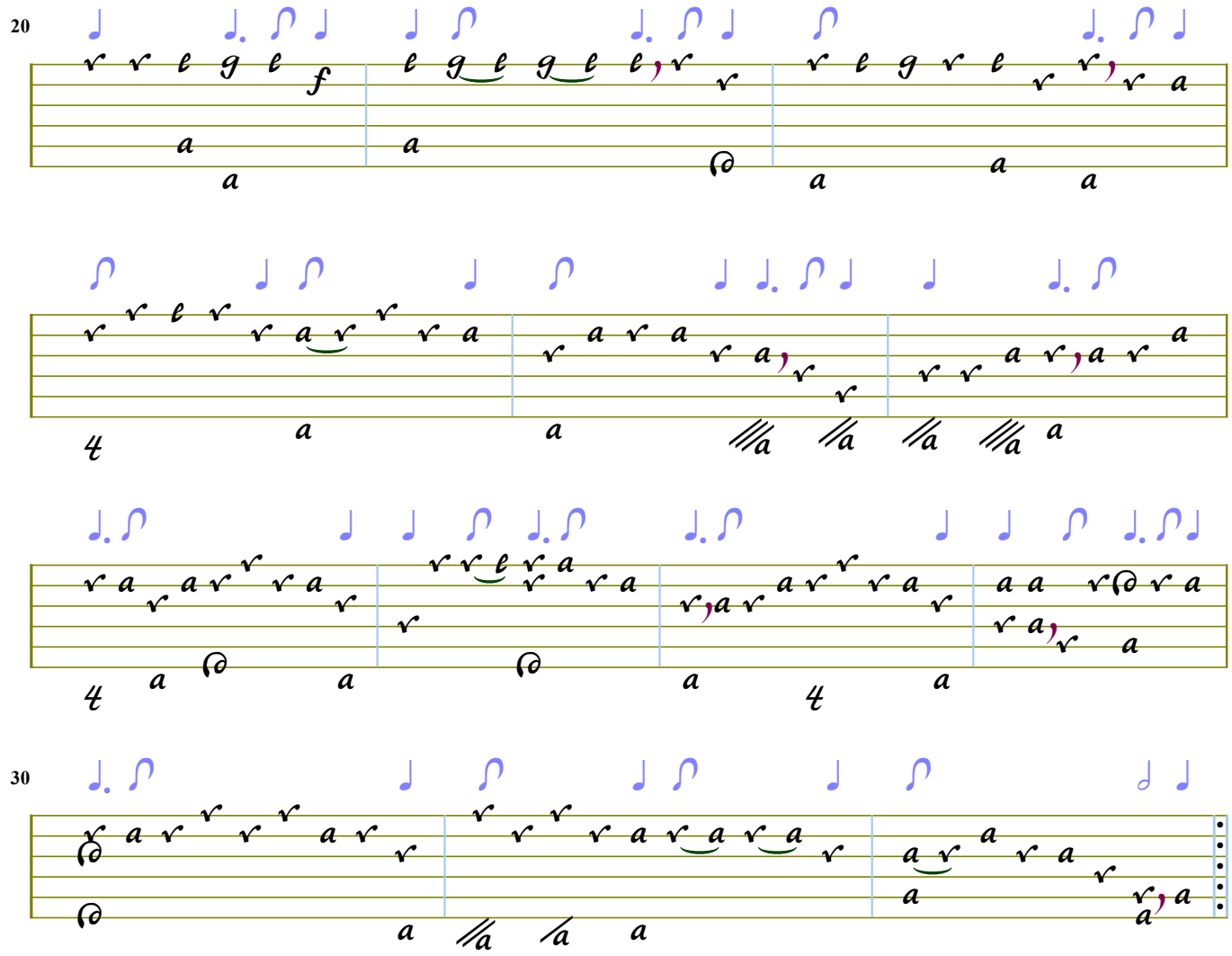


If thou wert my own thing, mr. mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck



Da mihi manum, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

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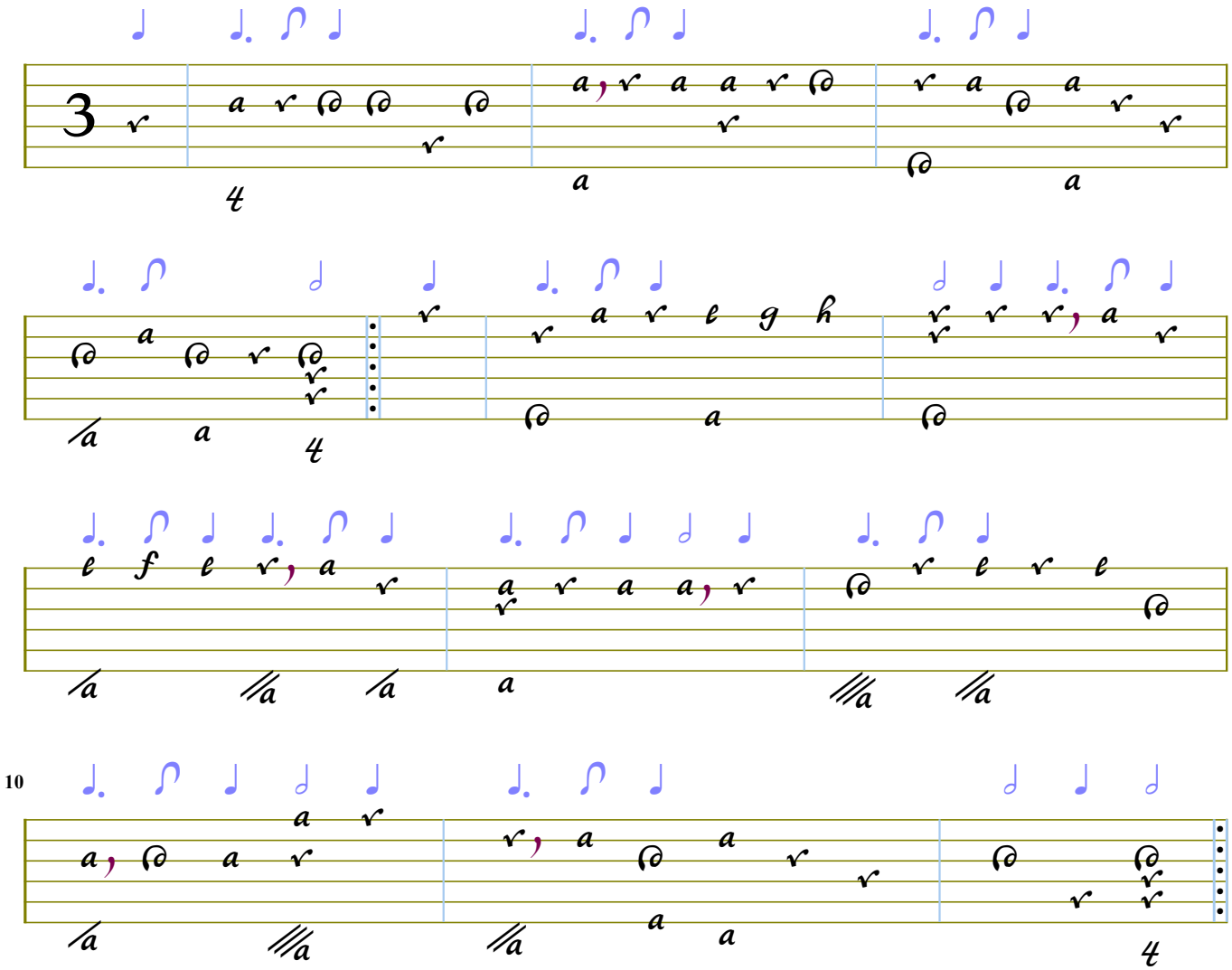
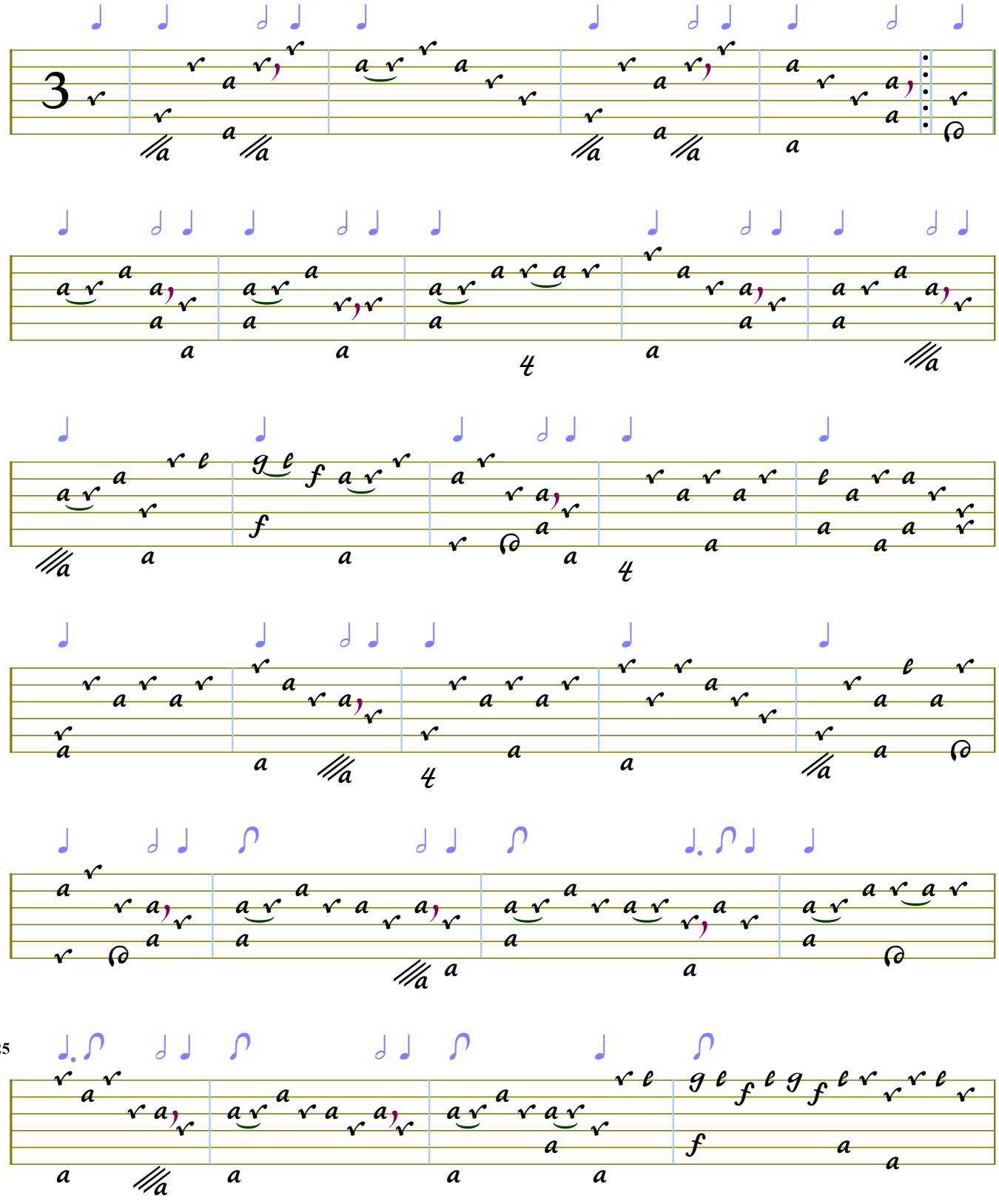
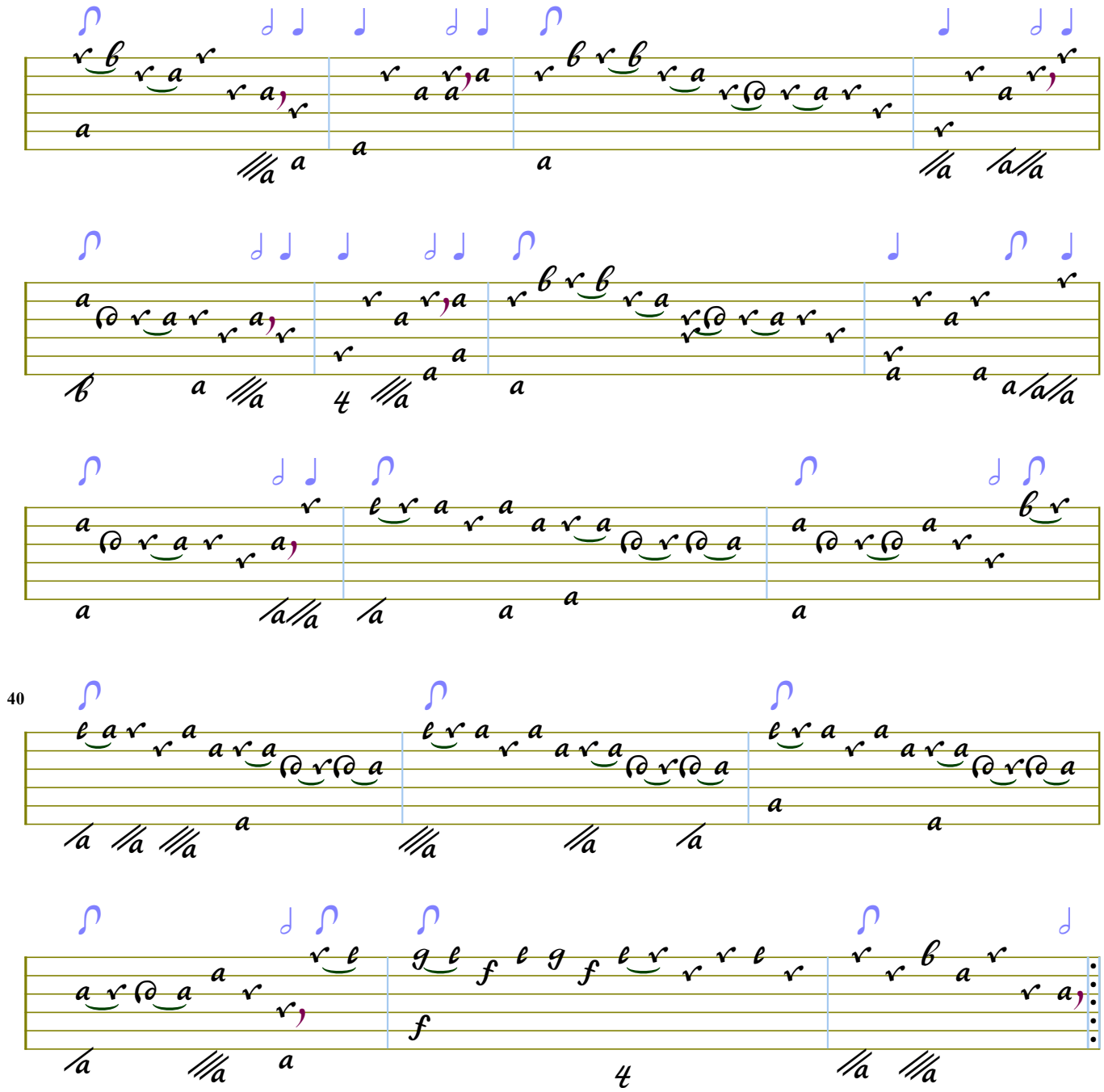
The king's gige, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck



Bobbing Jo, mr. mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

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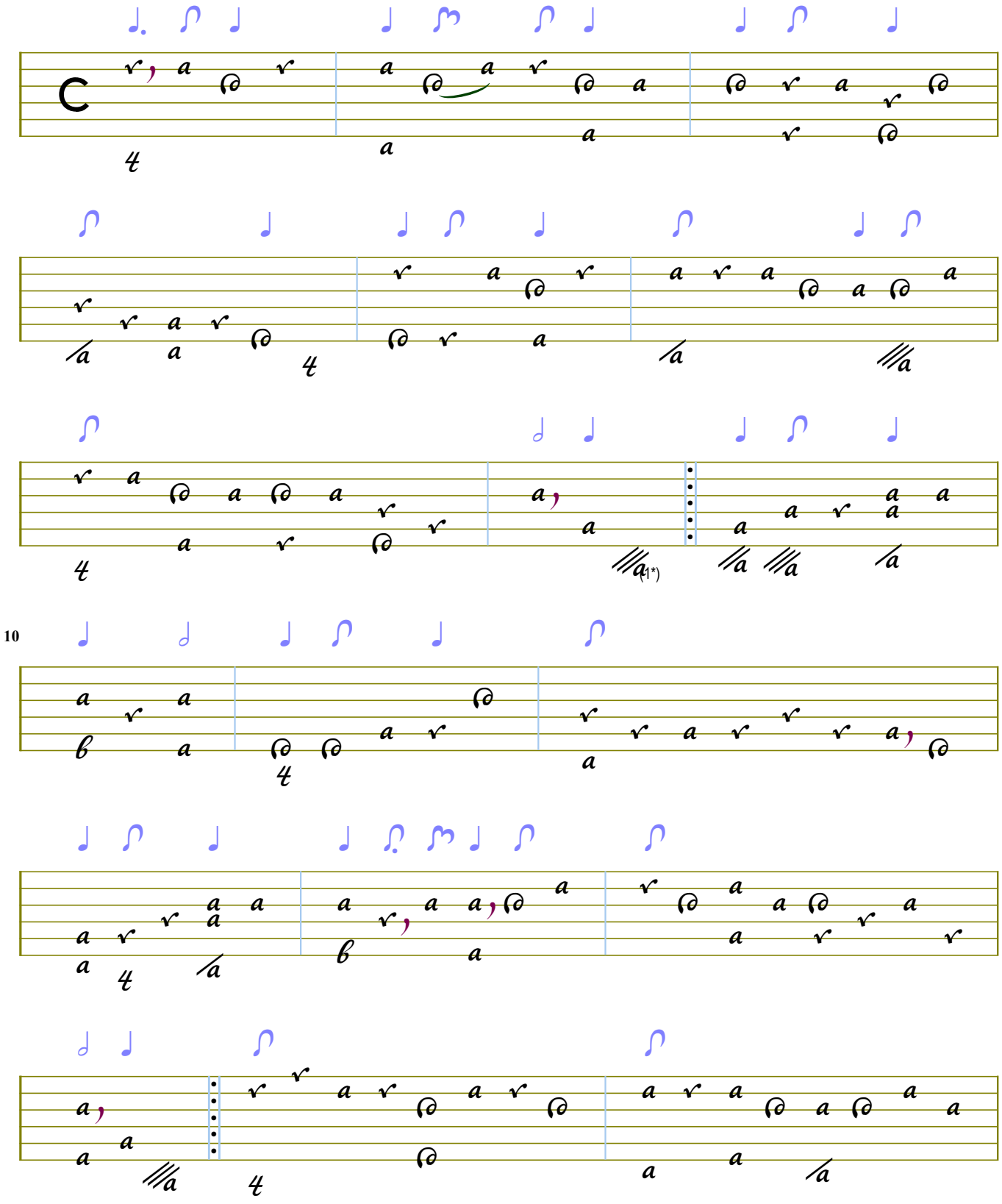
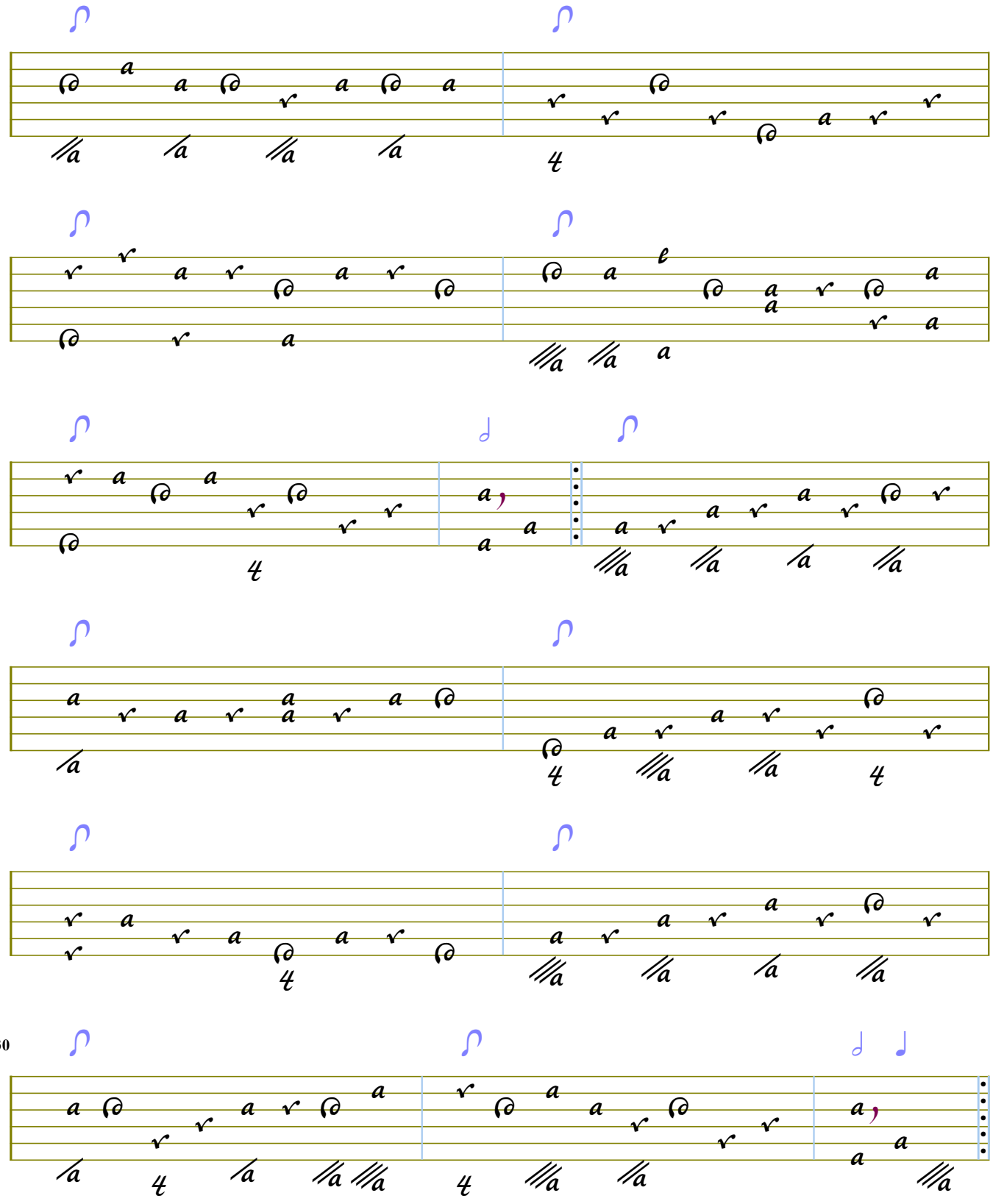
Wantons for ever more, mr. mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck



1. Note added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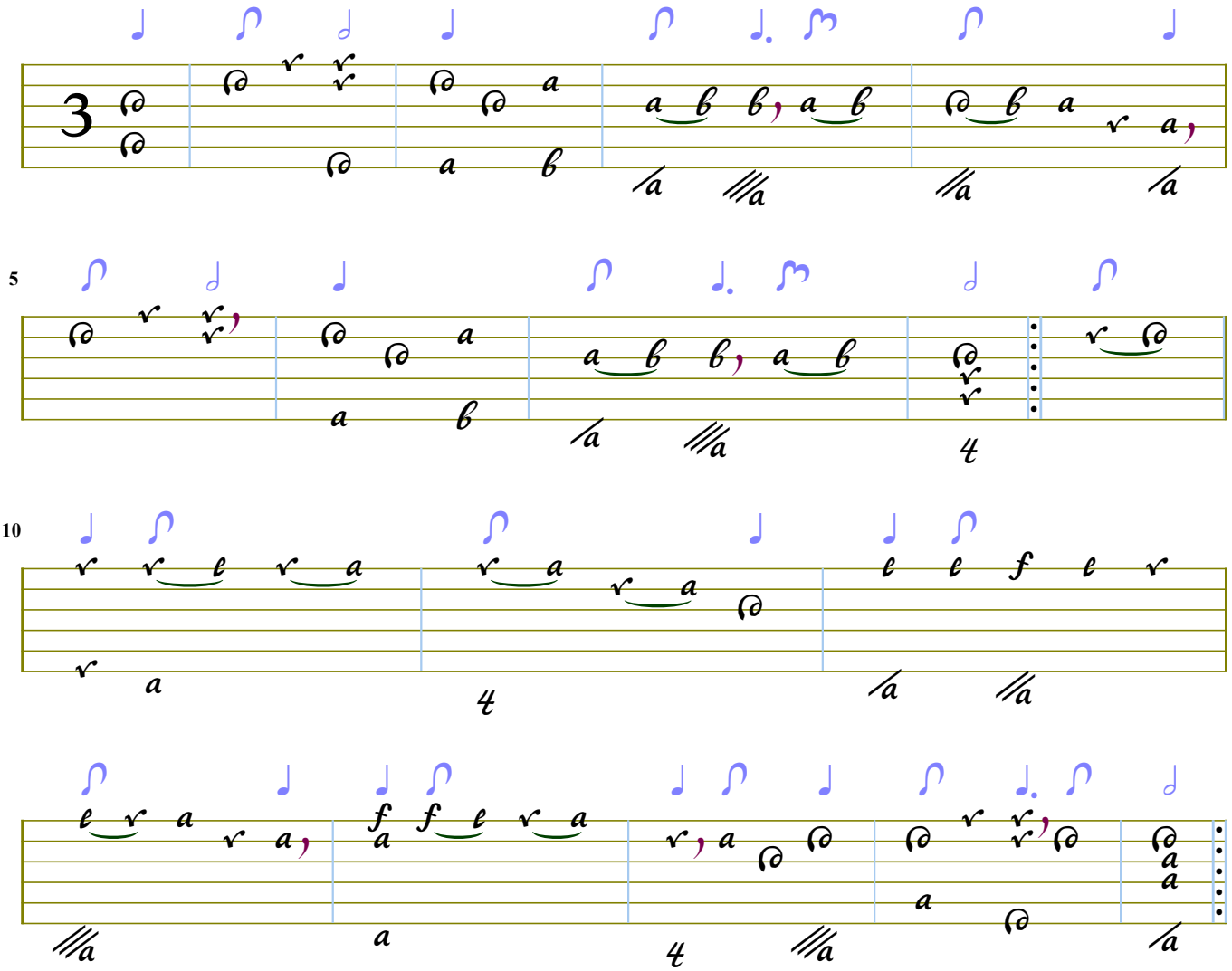
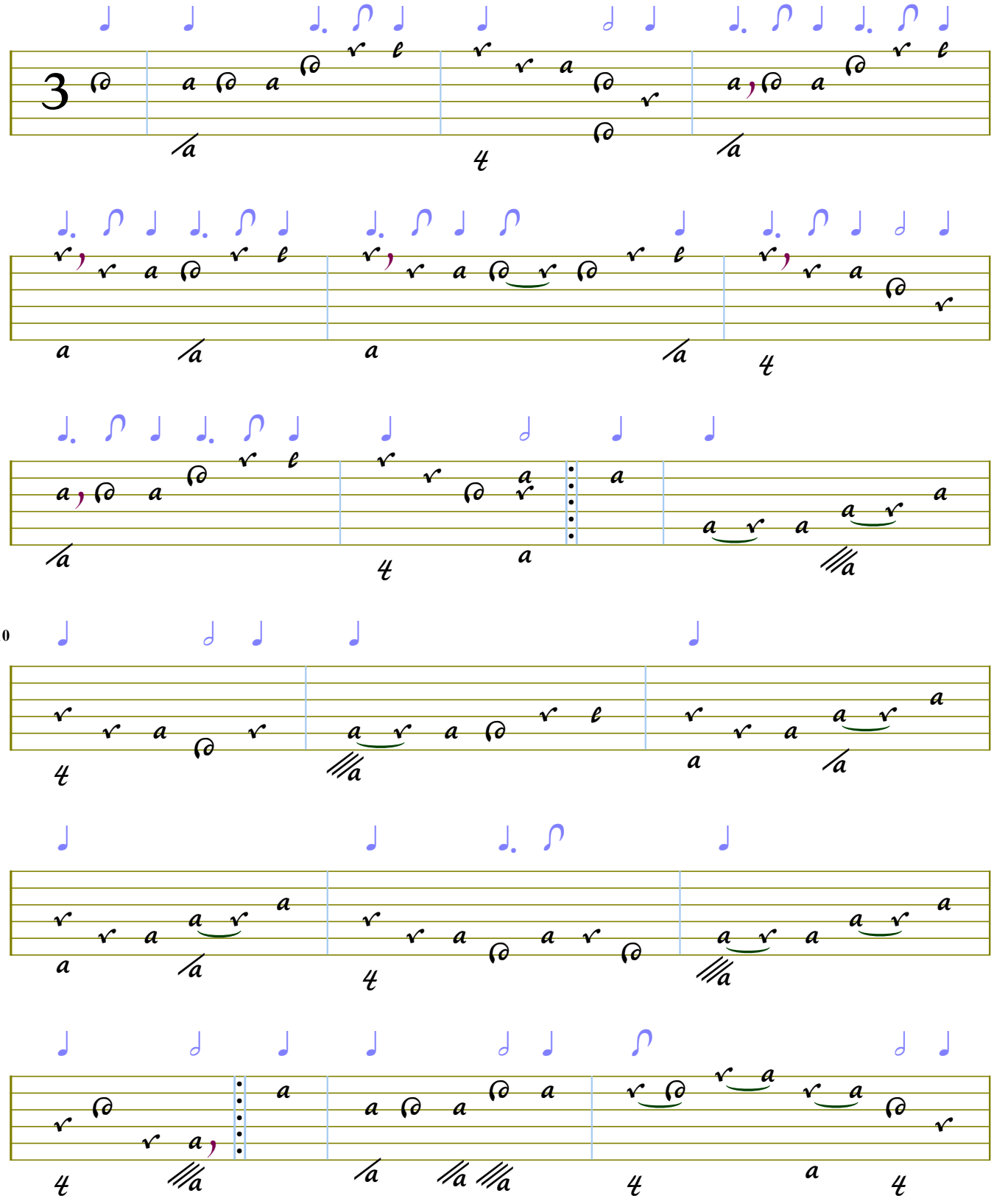
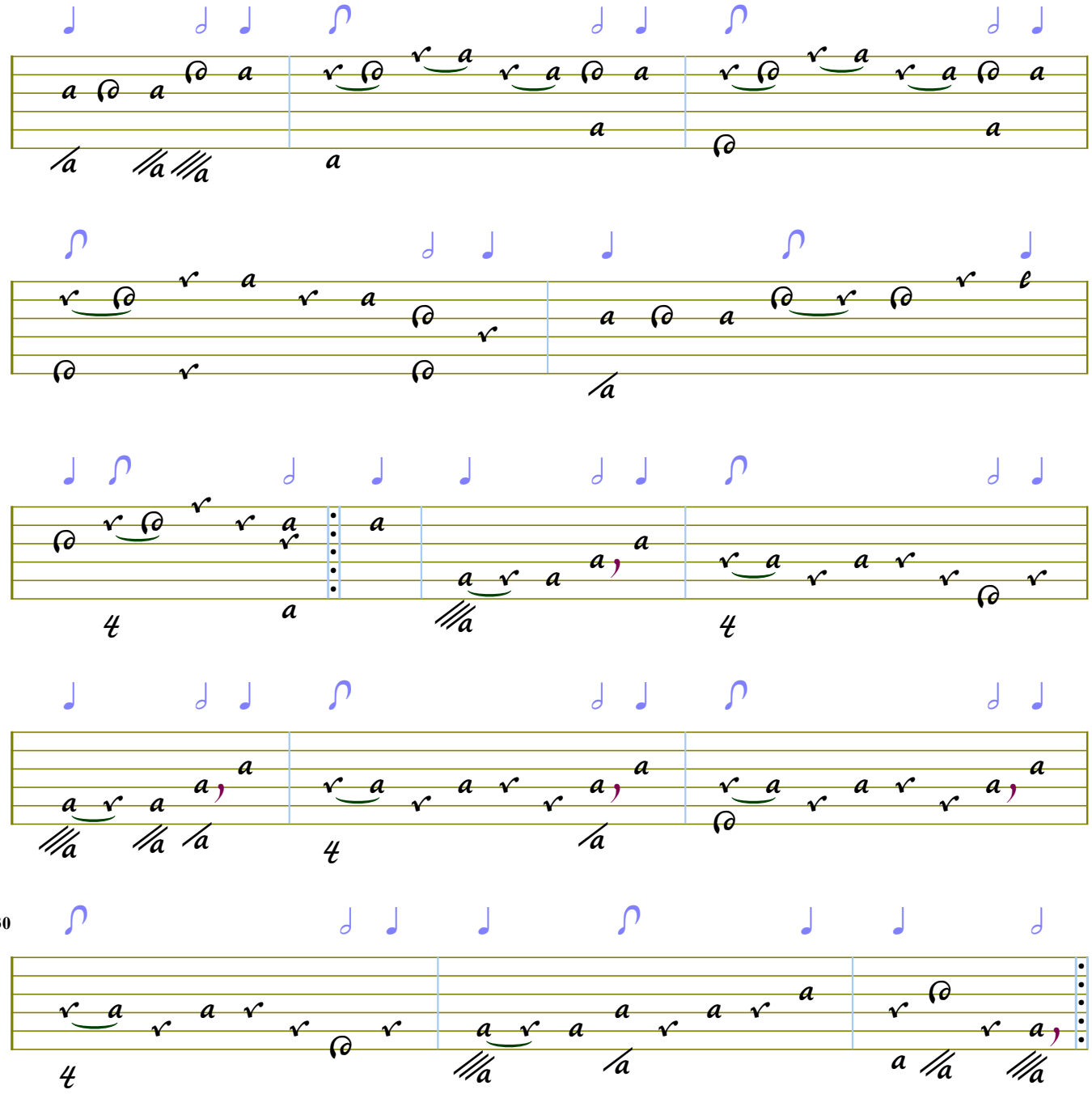
My Lord Elhoe's minuett, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck



Skip thom walker, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

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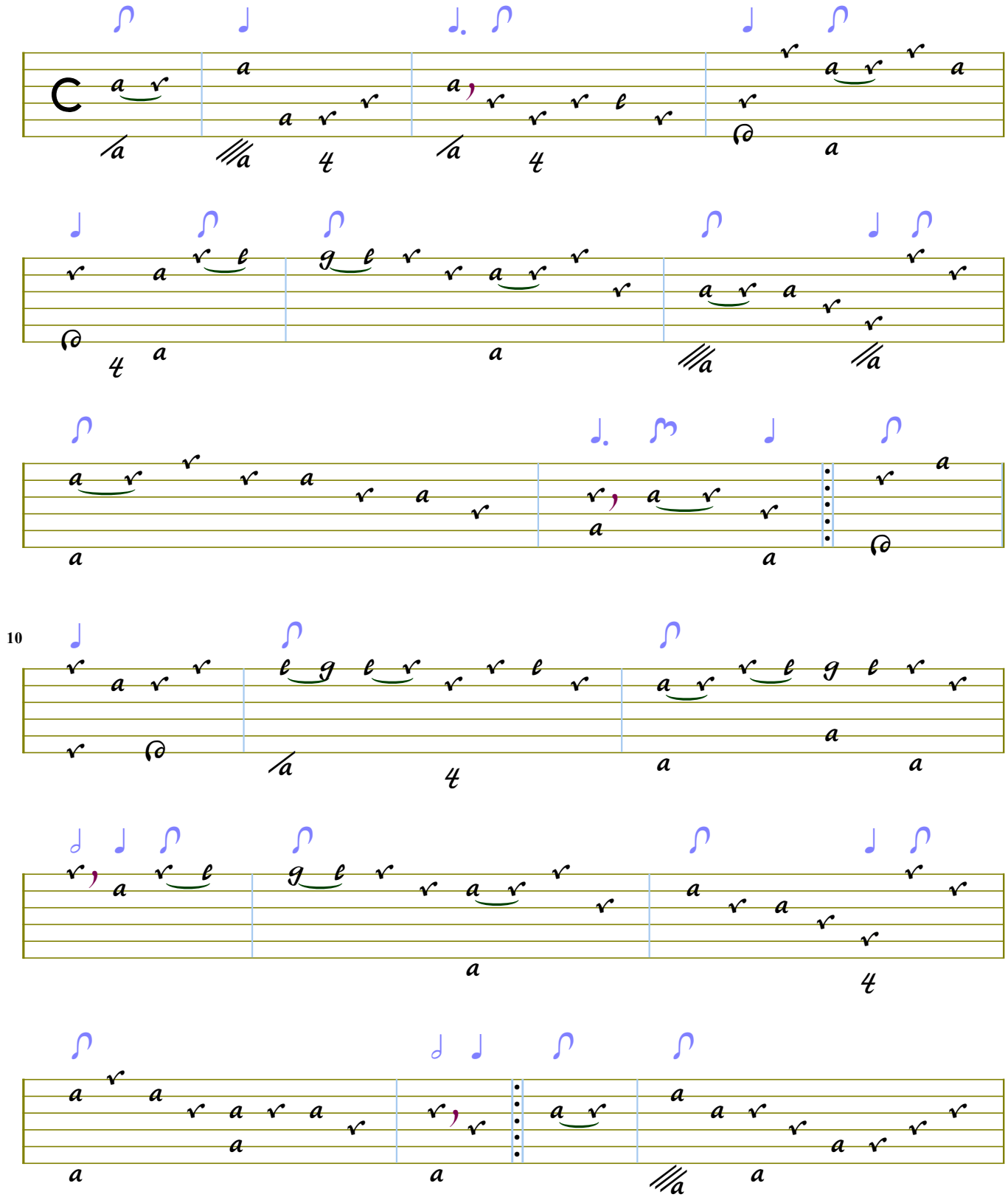
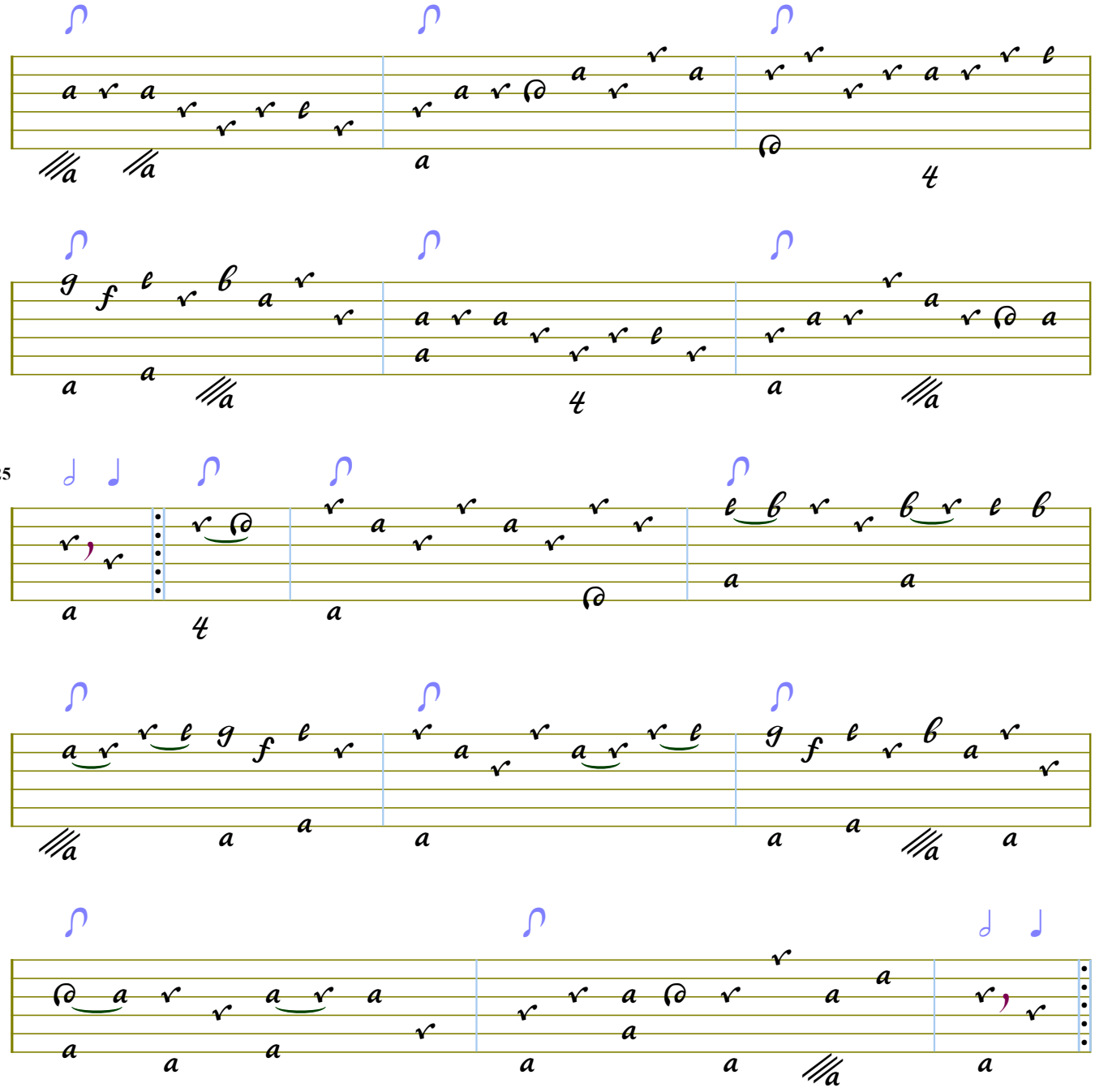
The bonniest lass in the world, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr Beck

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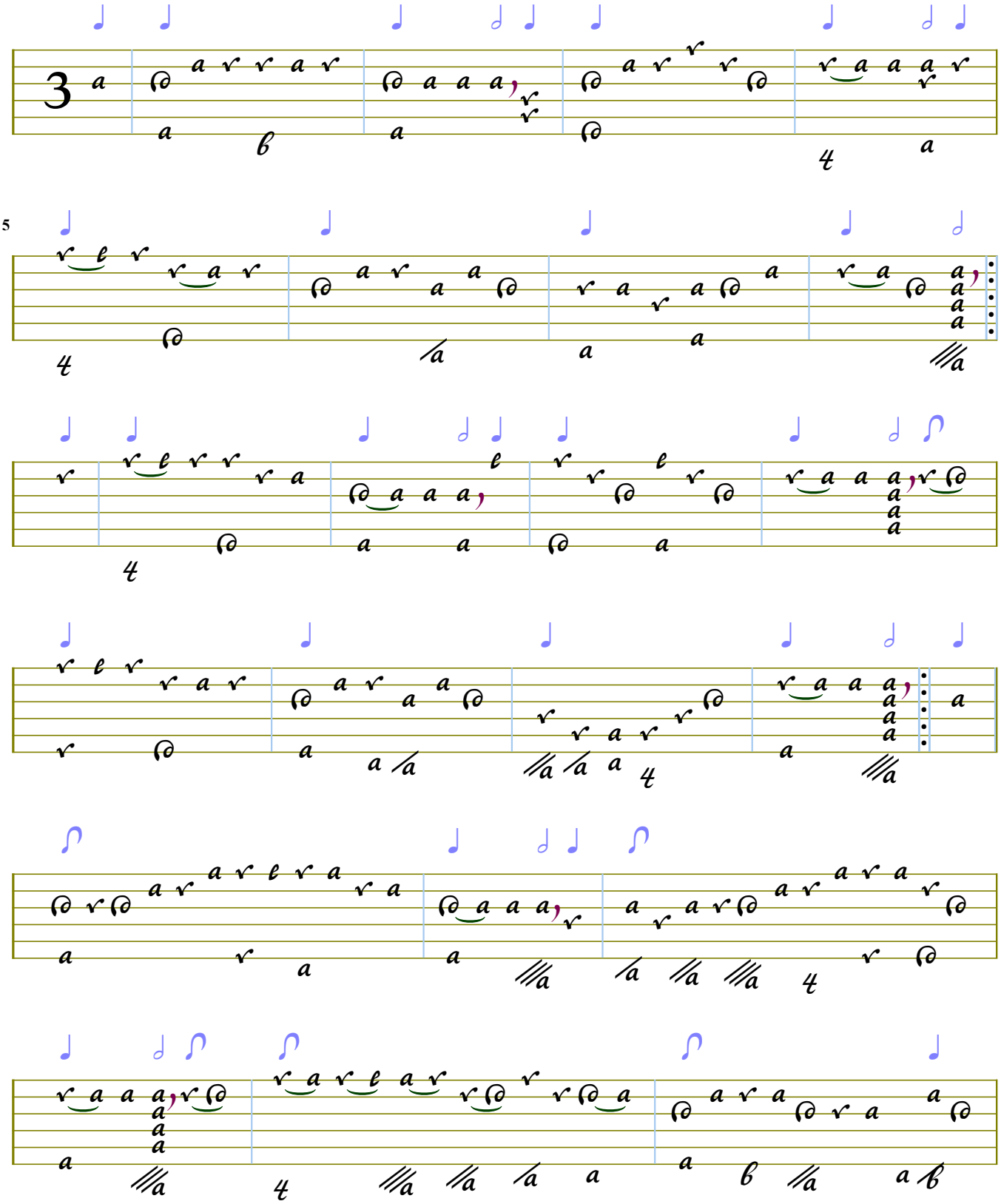
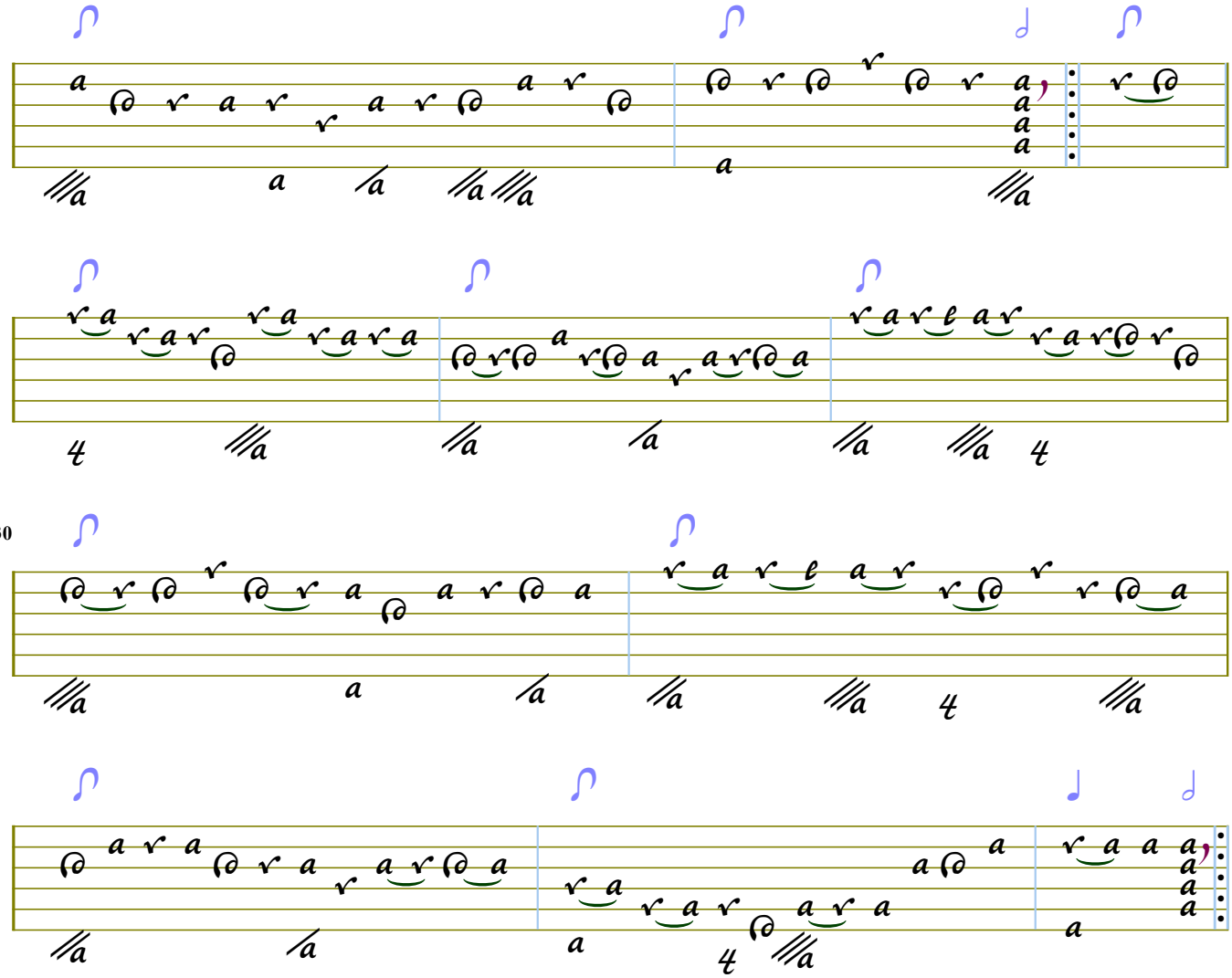
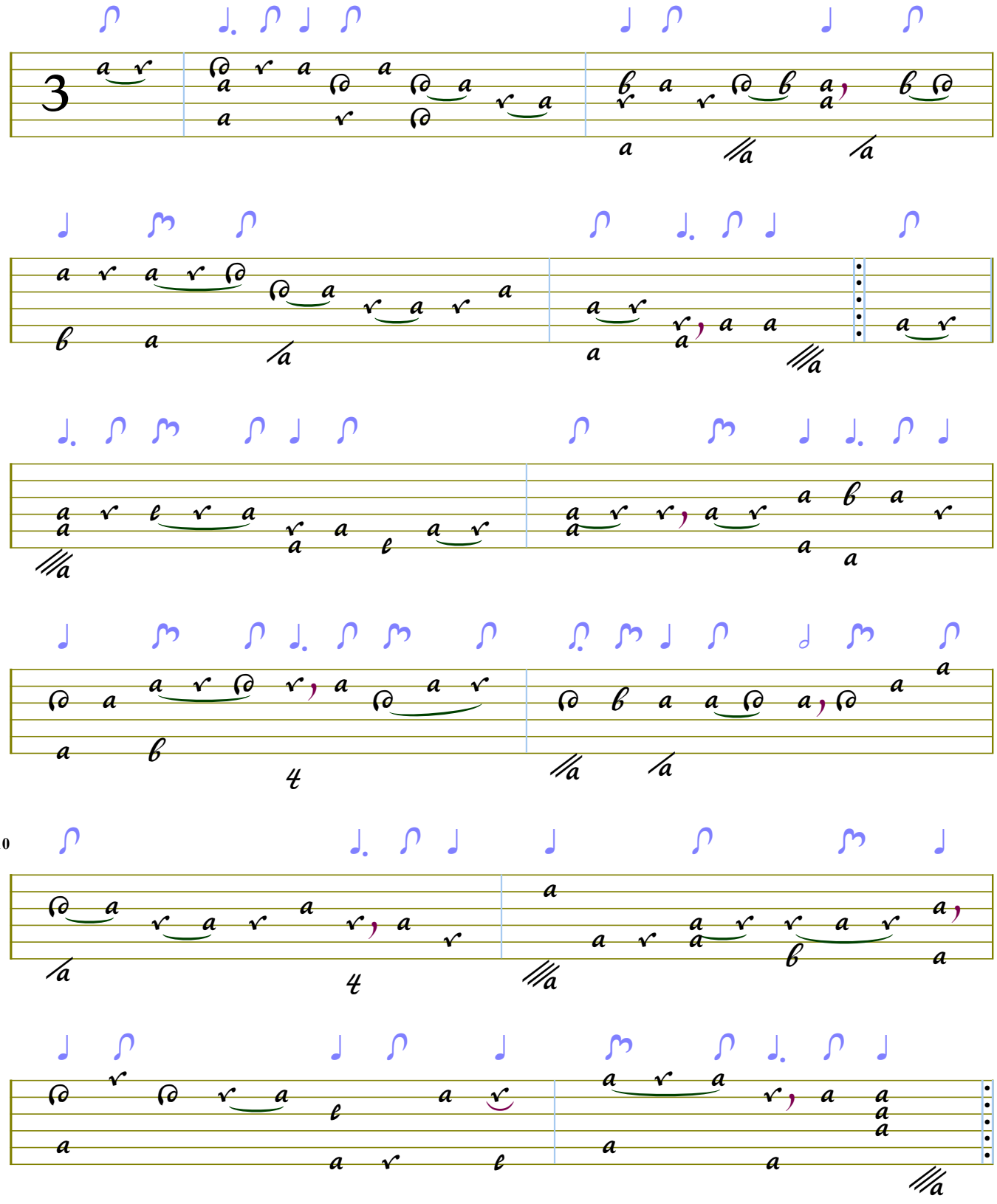
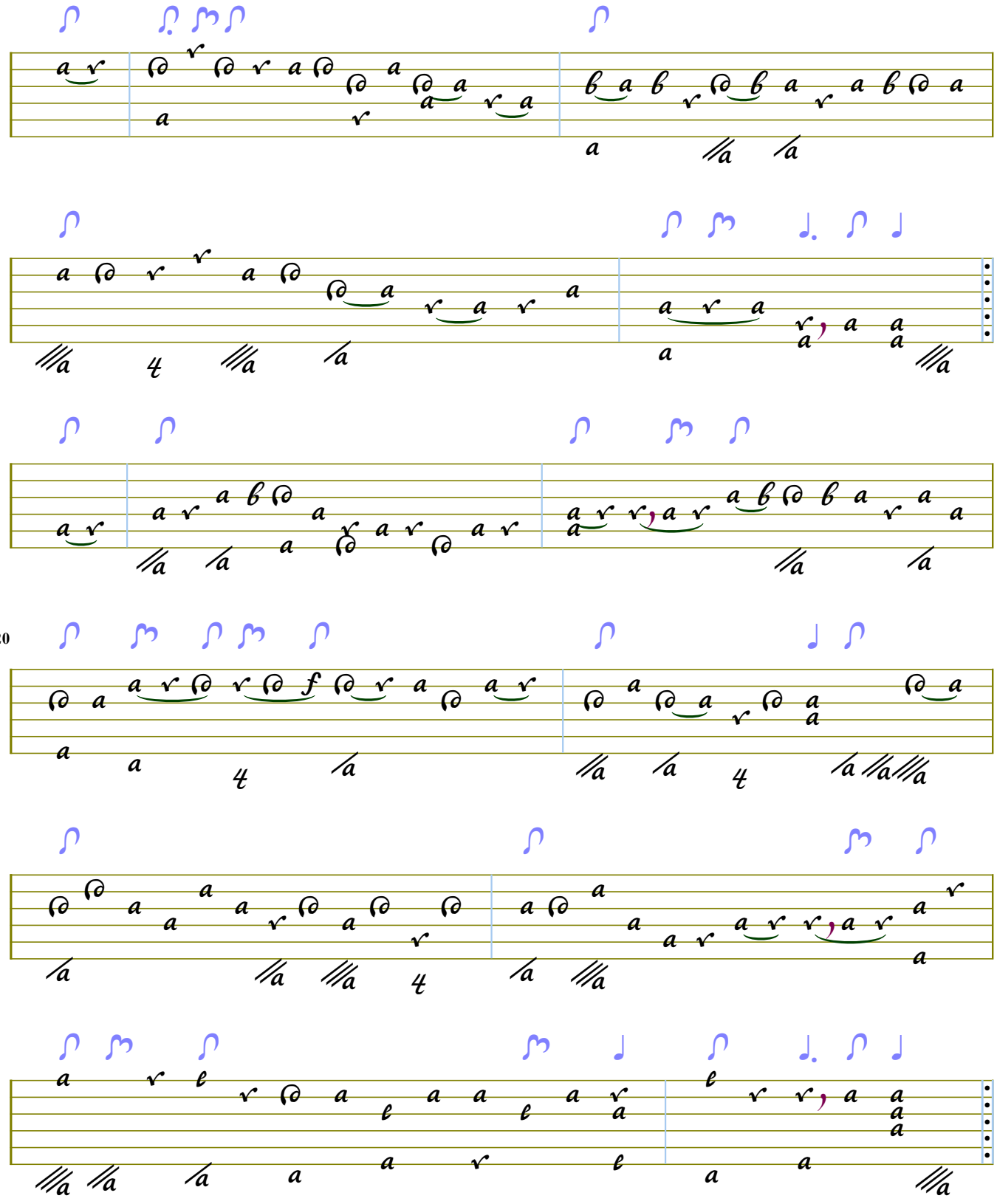
Galloway thom, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck





Adieu to the Pleasures, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

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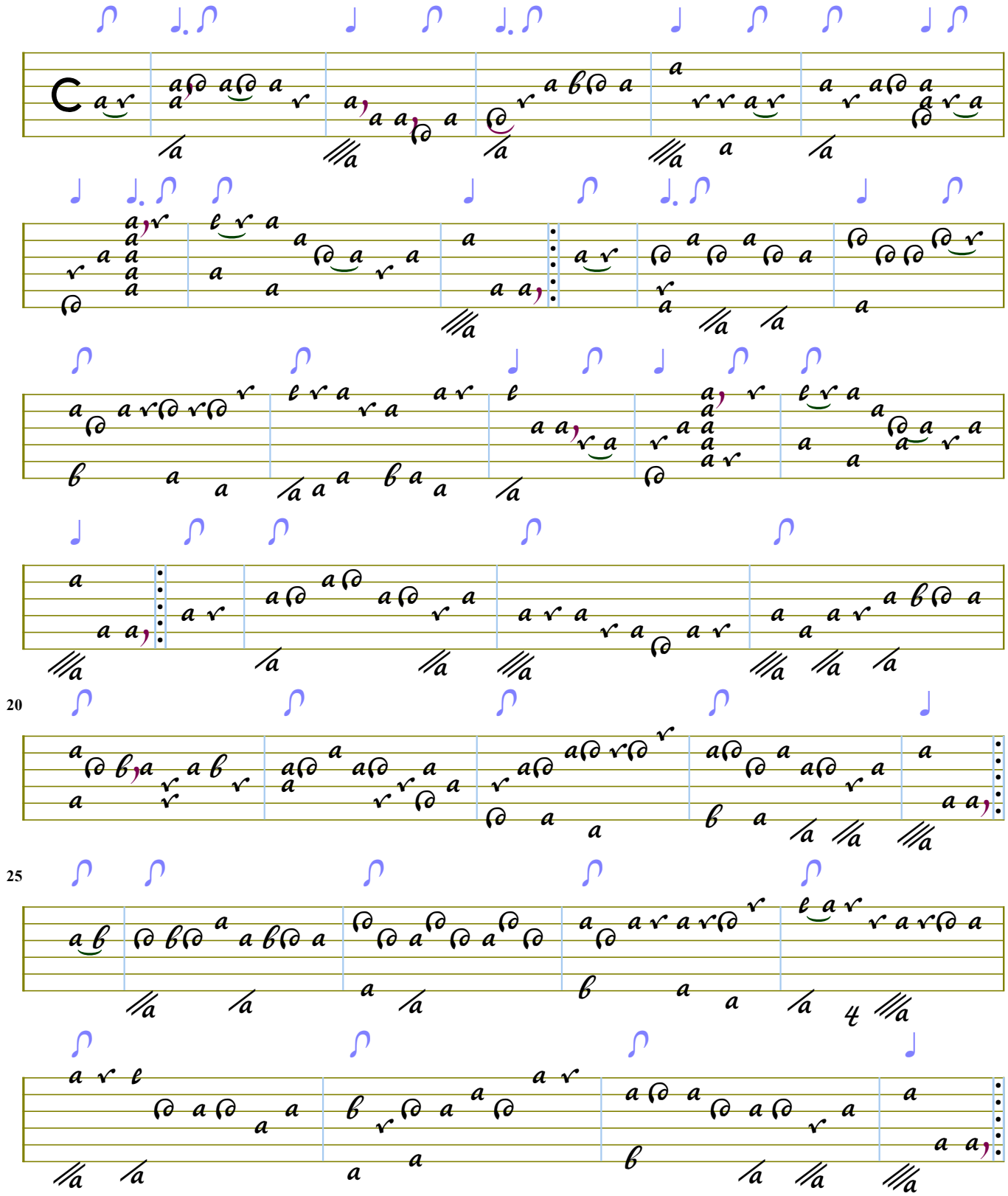
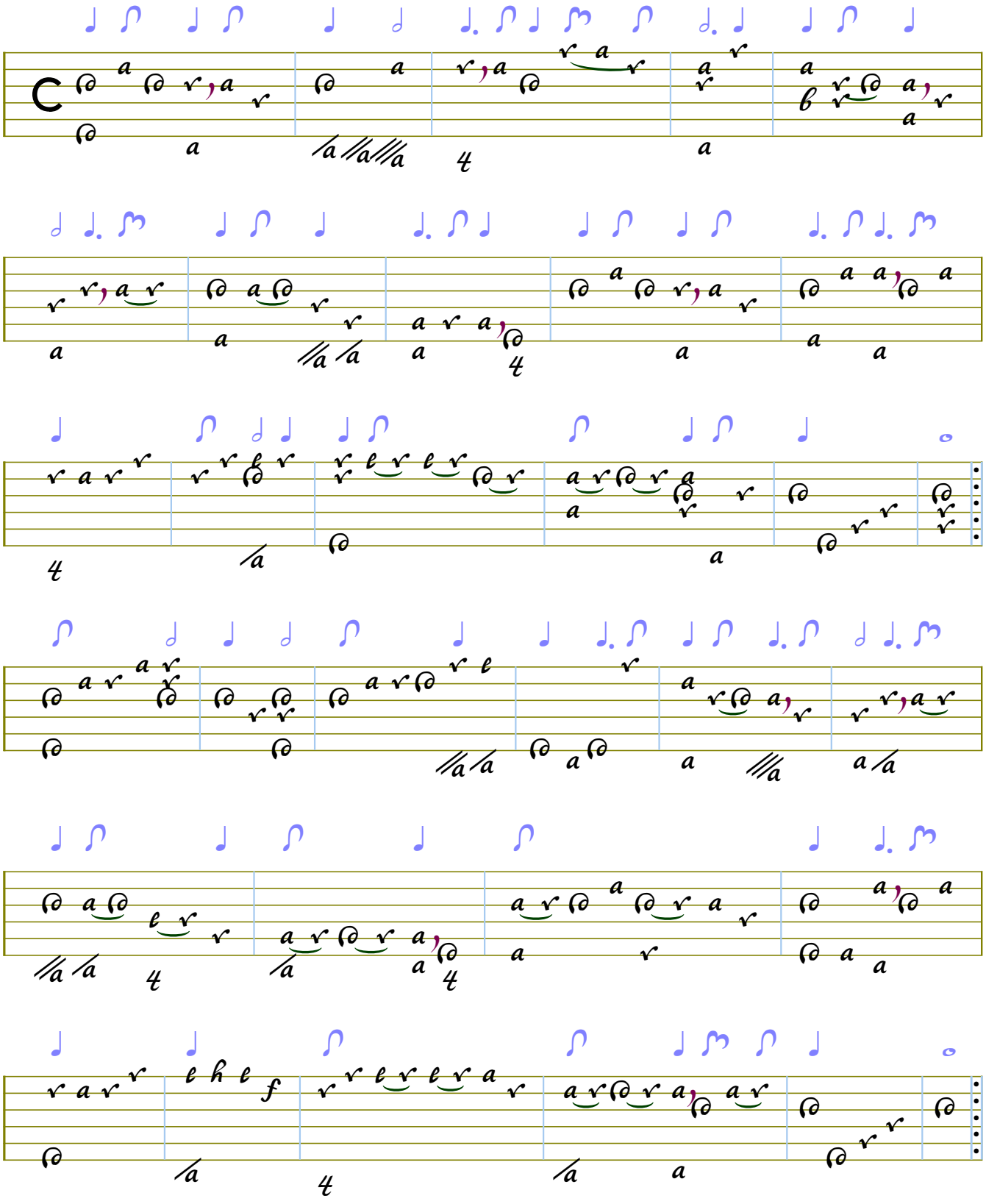
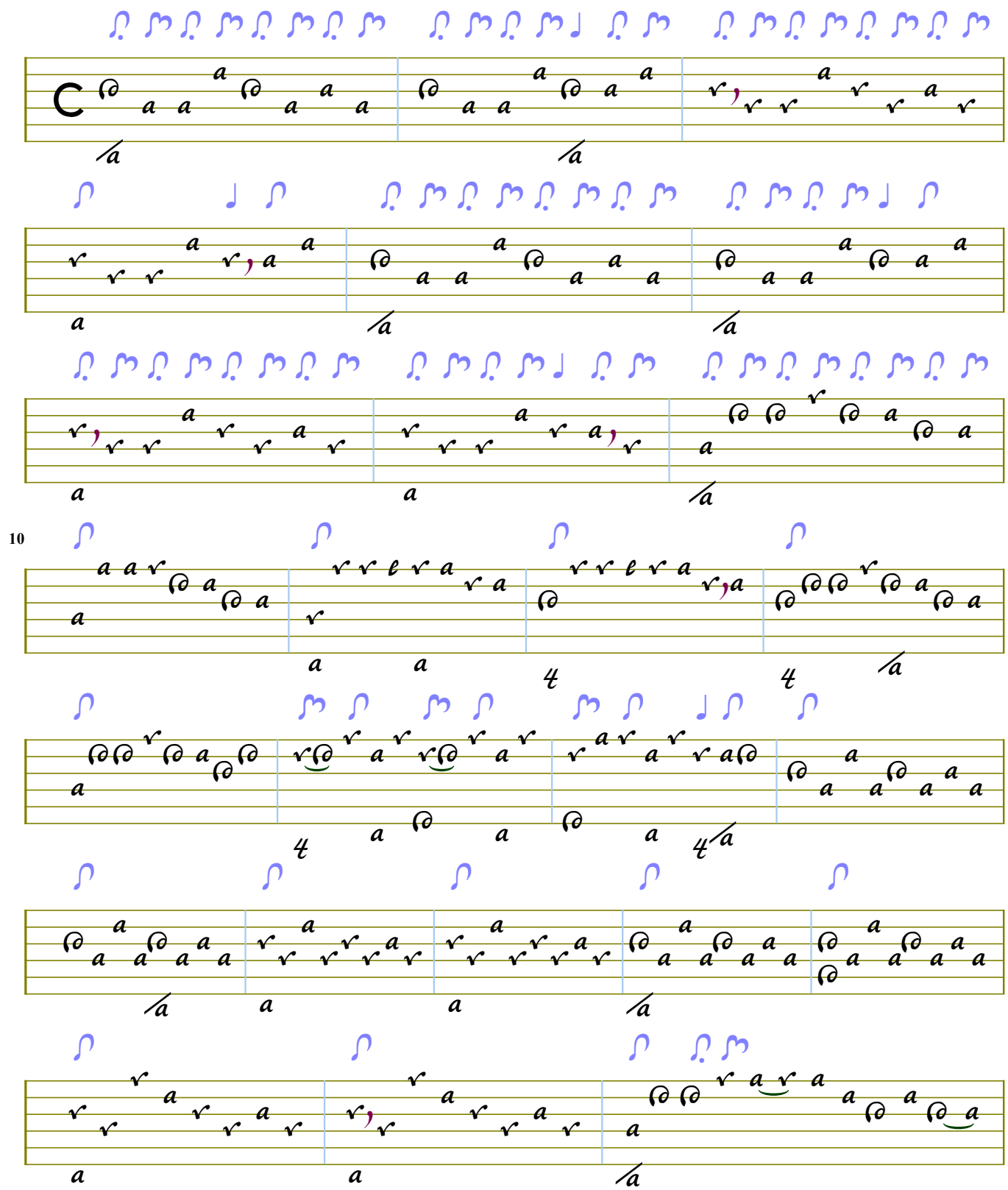
My Nannies, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

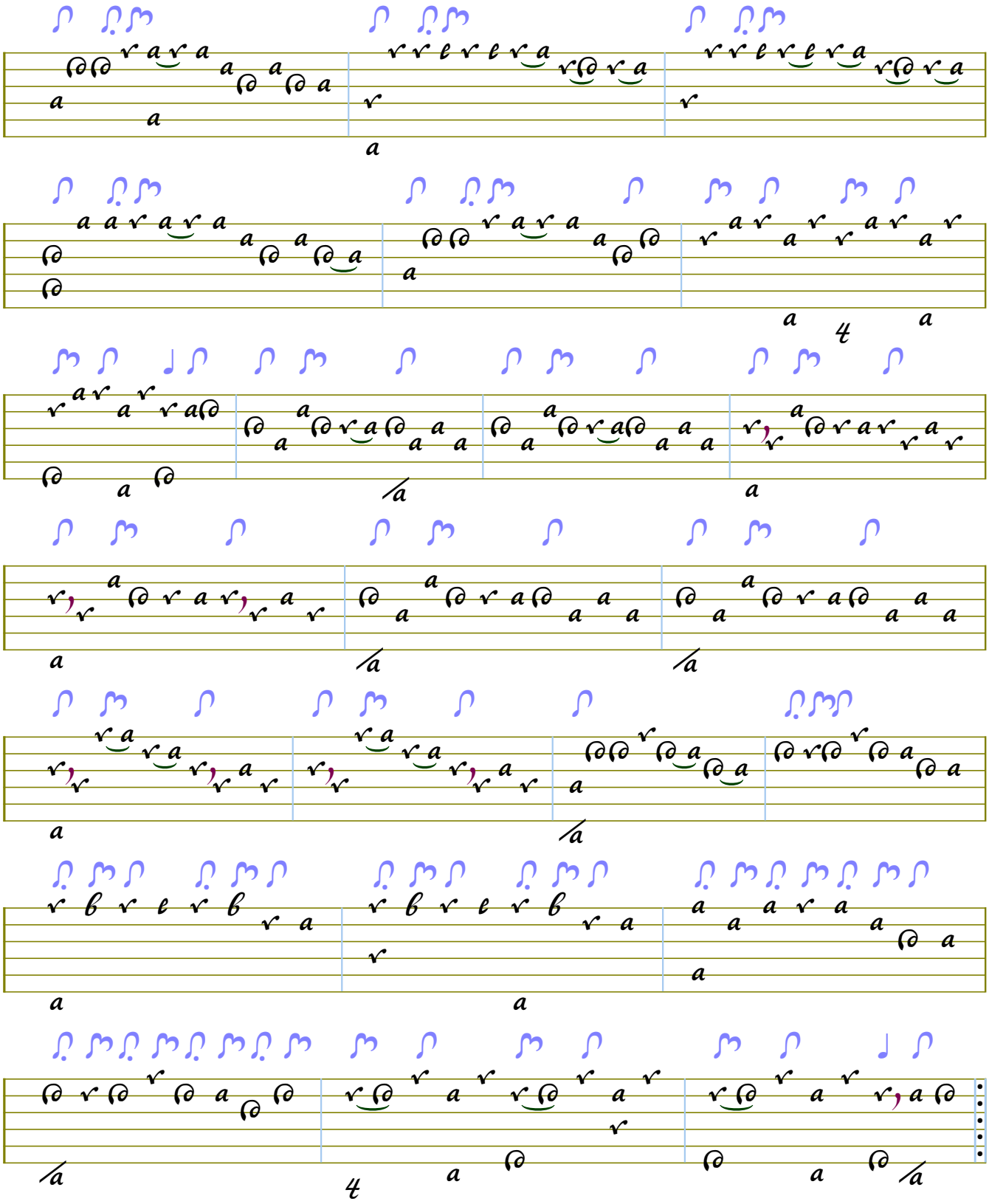


This one night, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr Beck, to be played to a slow tyme

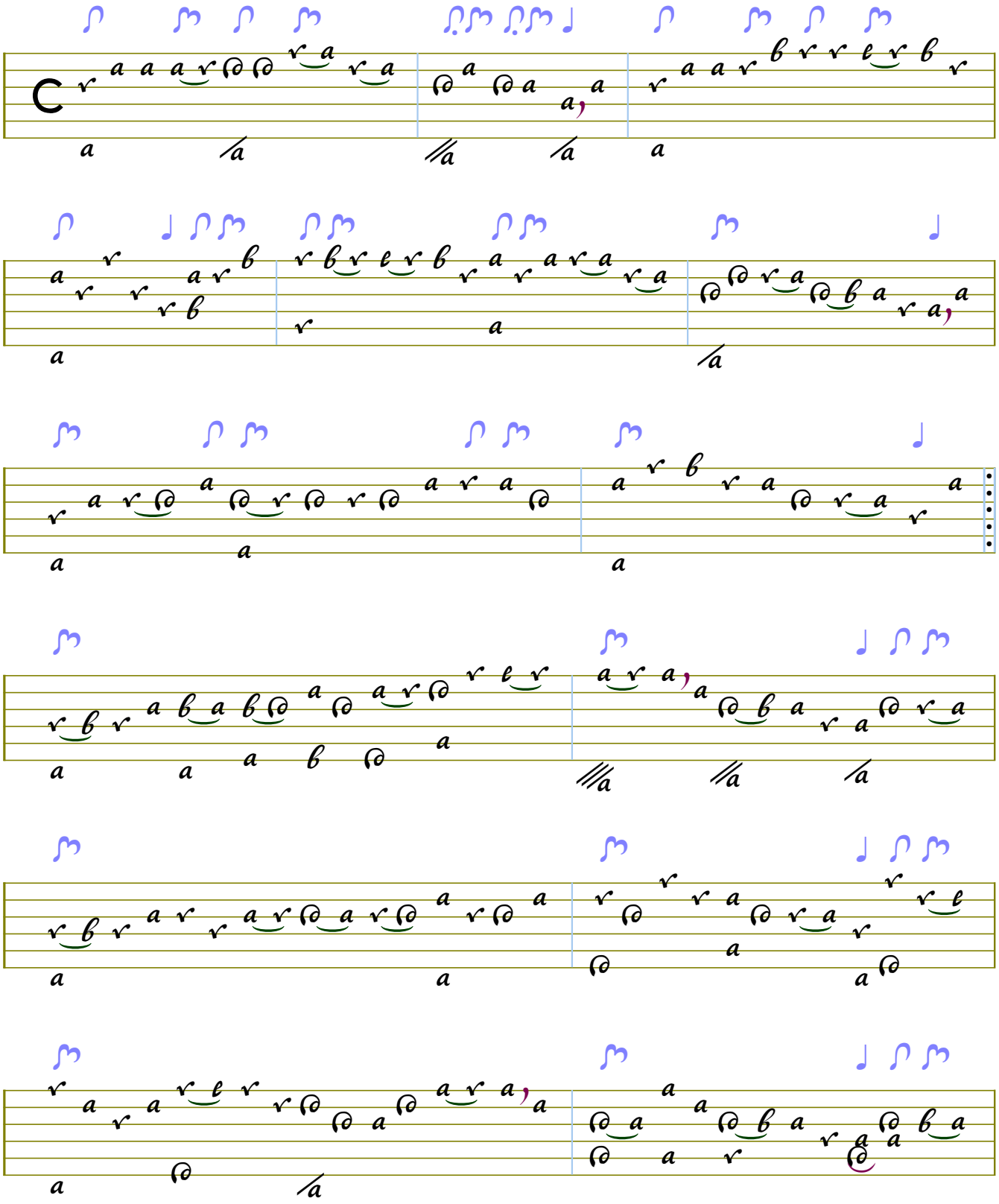


The Cameronian march, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck





Sugarcandie, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck



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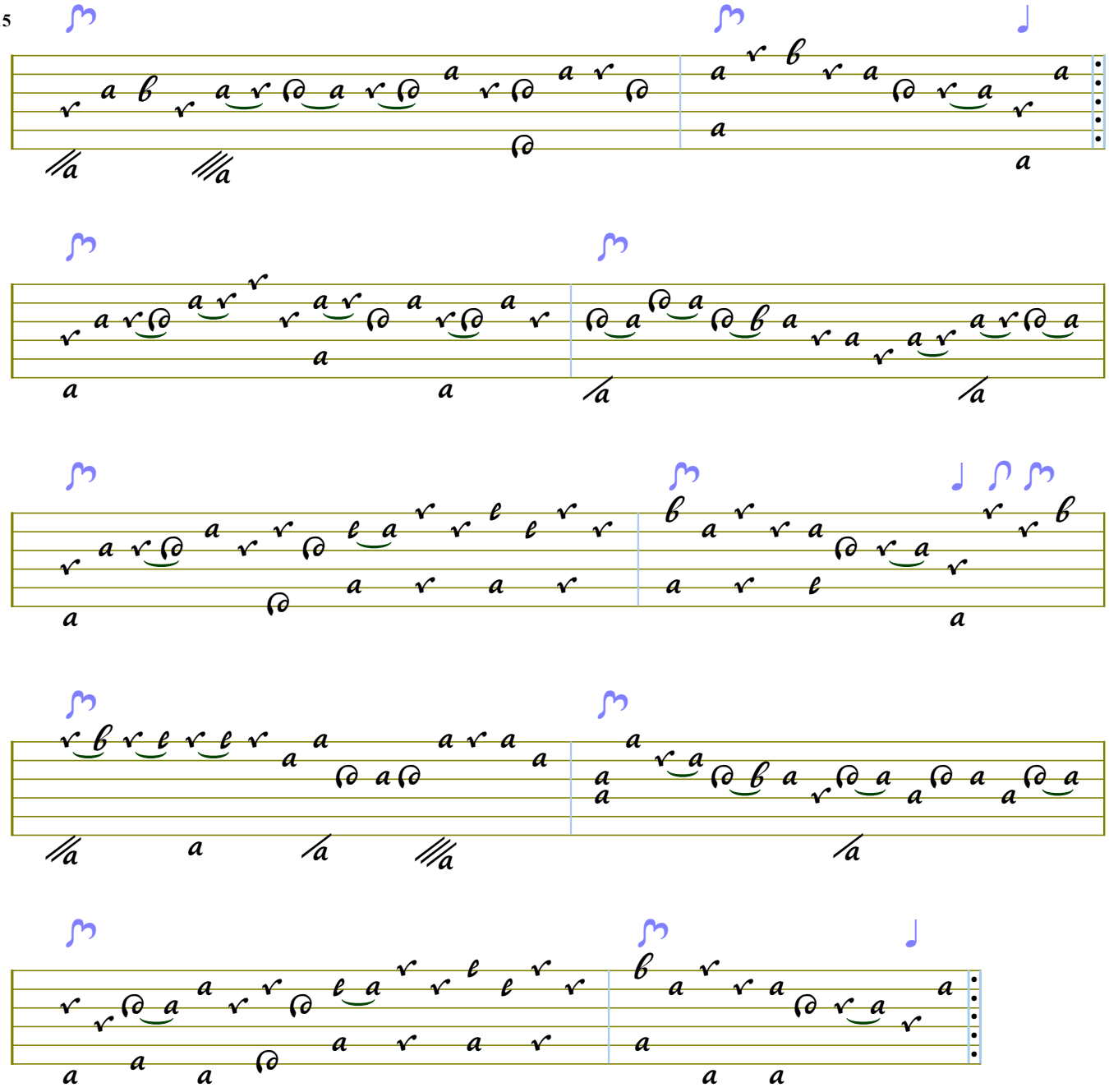
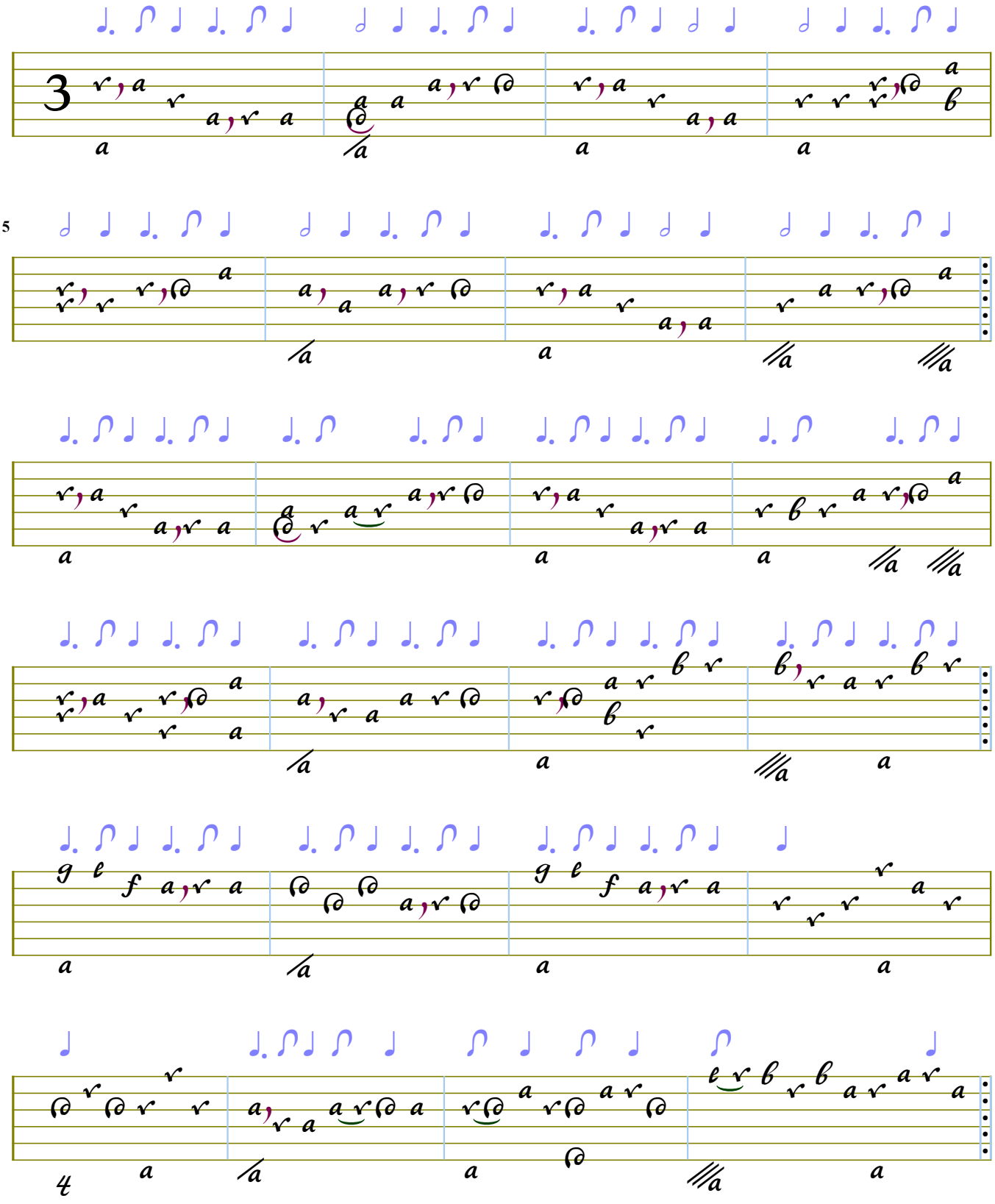
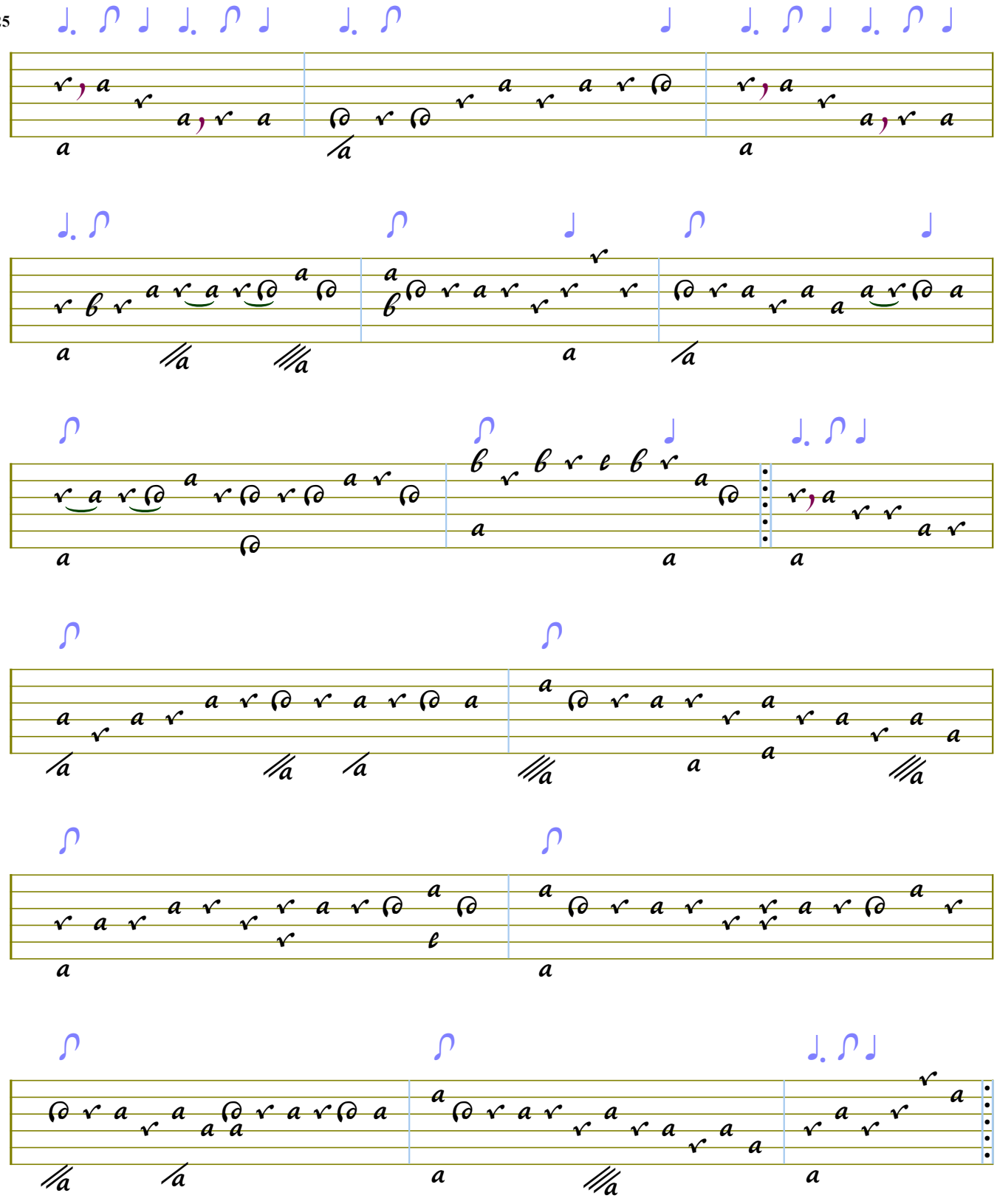


Fair and luckie, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

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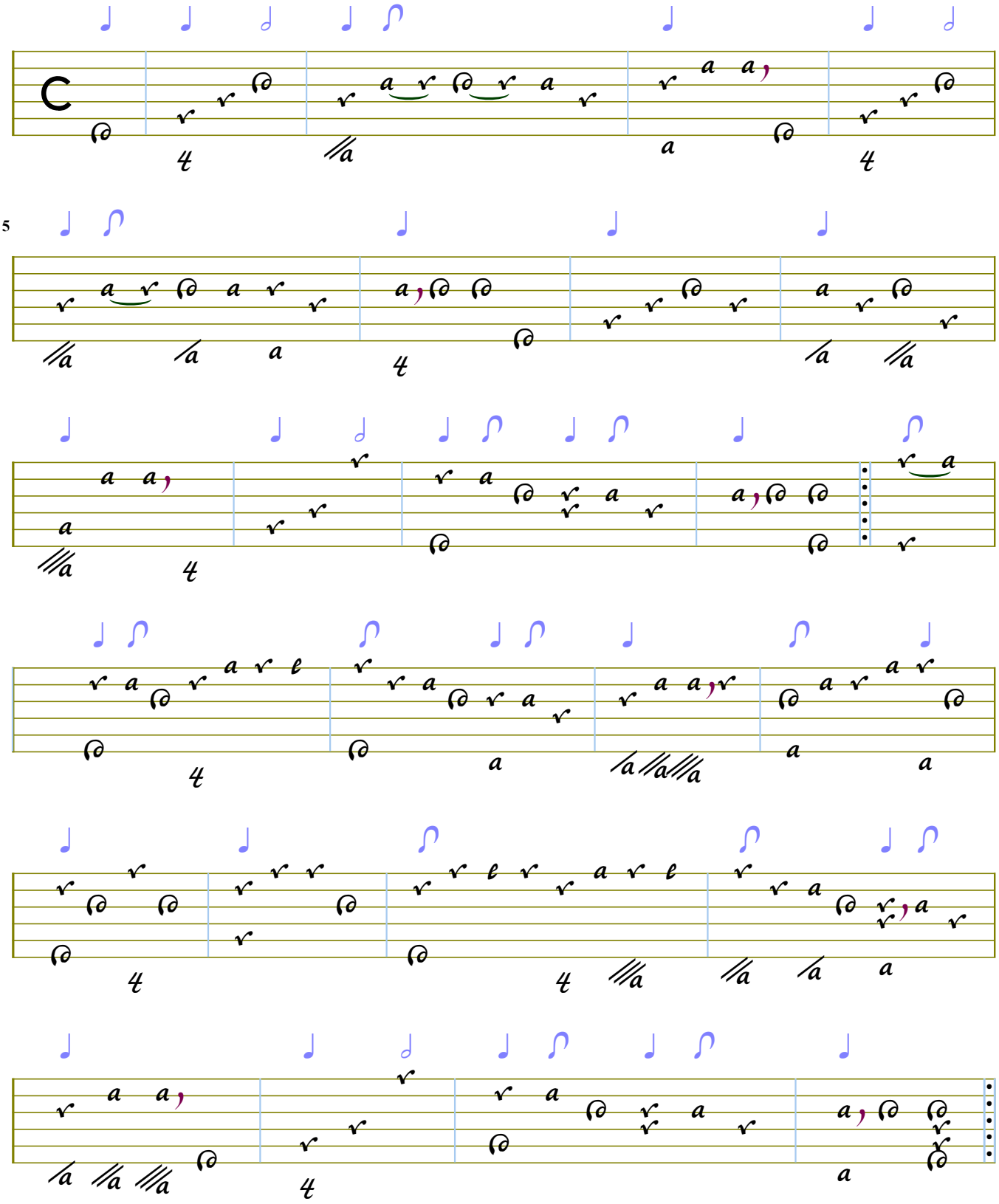
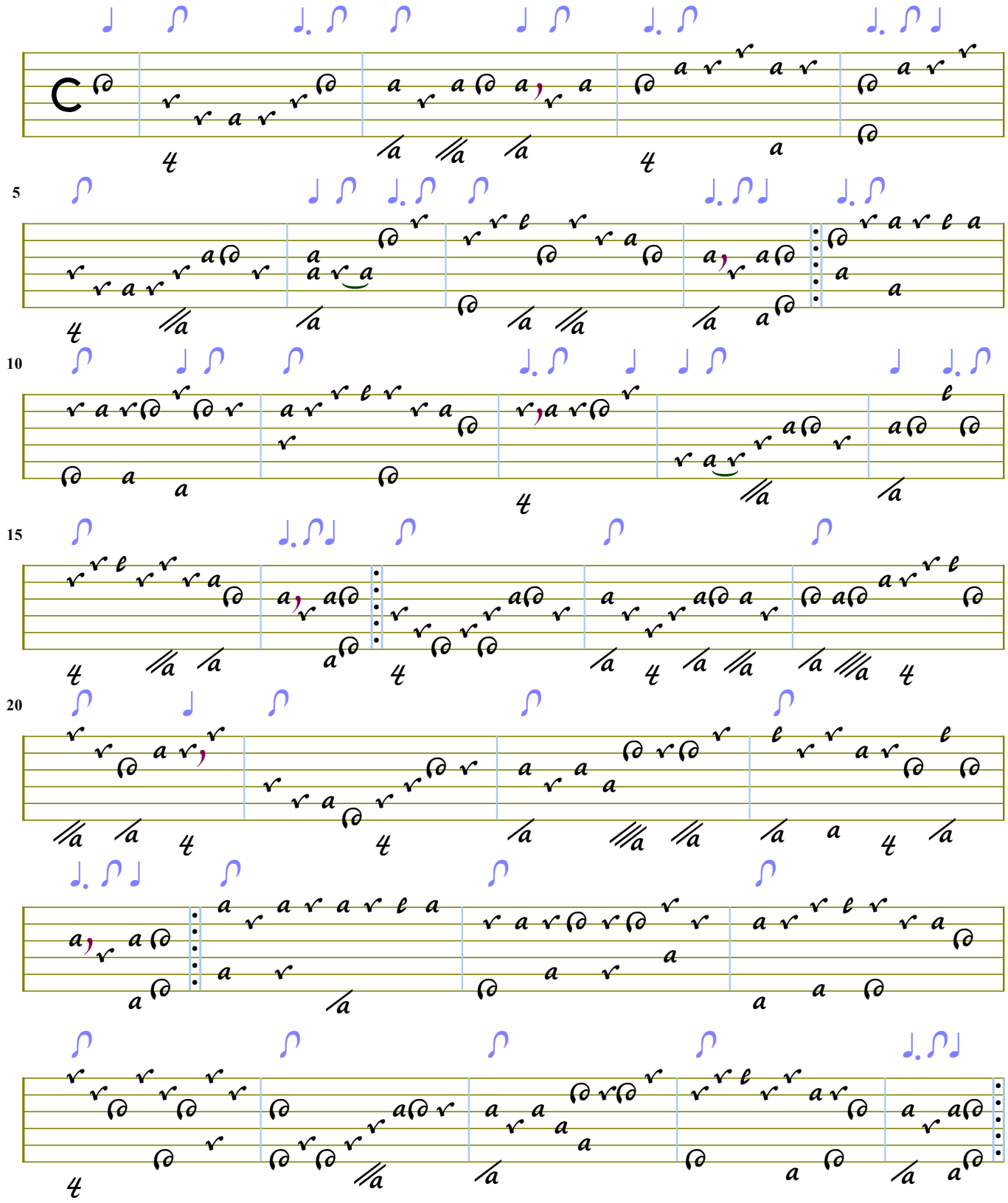
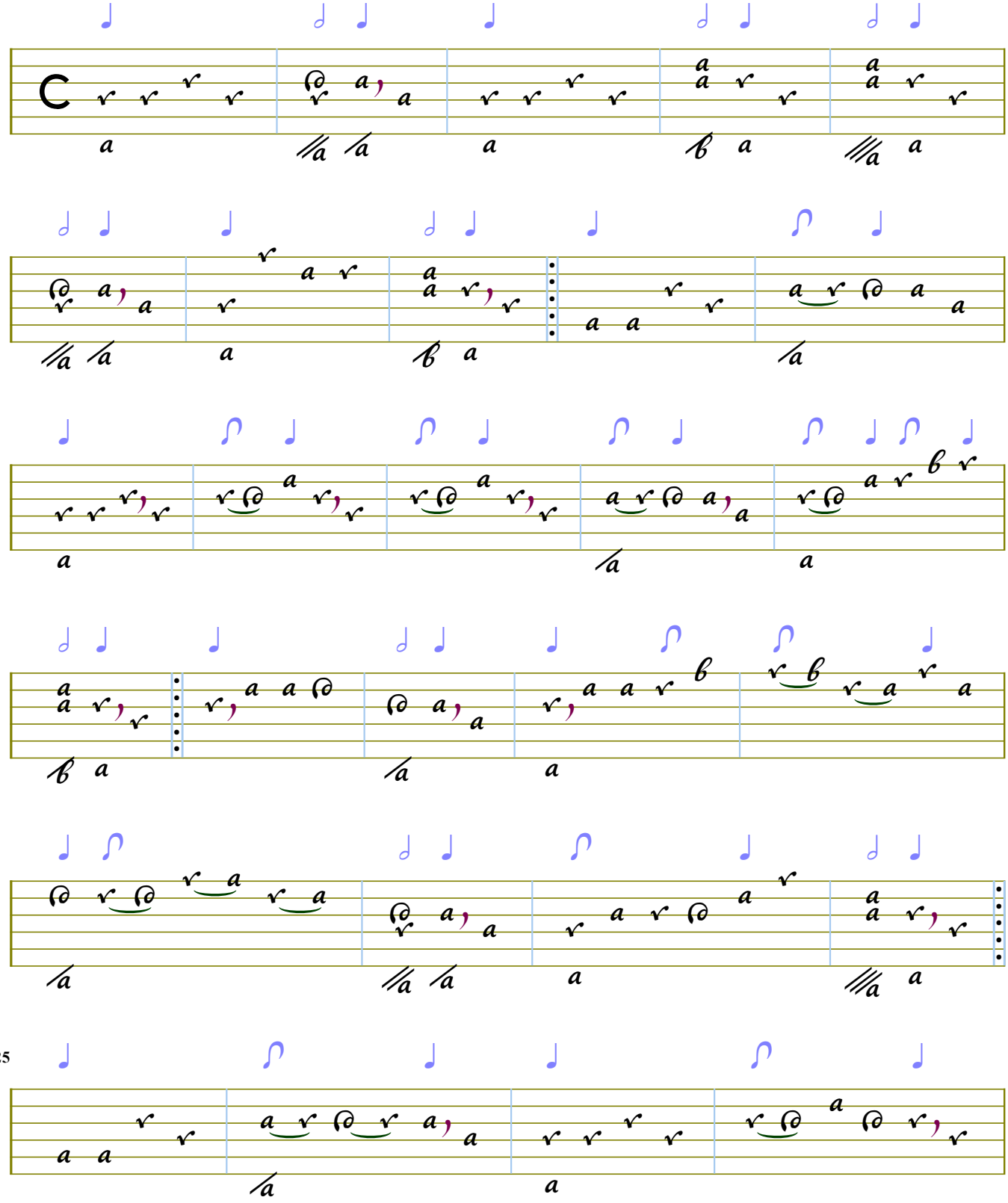
Help's gige, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

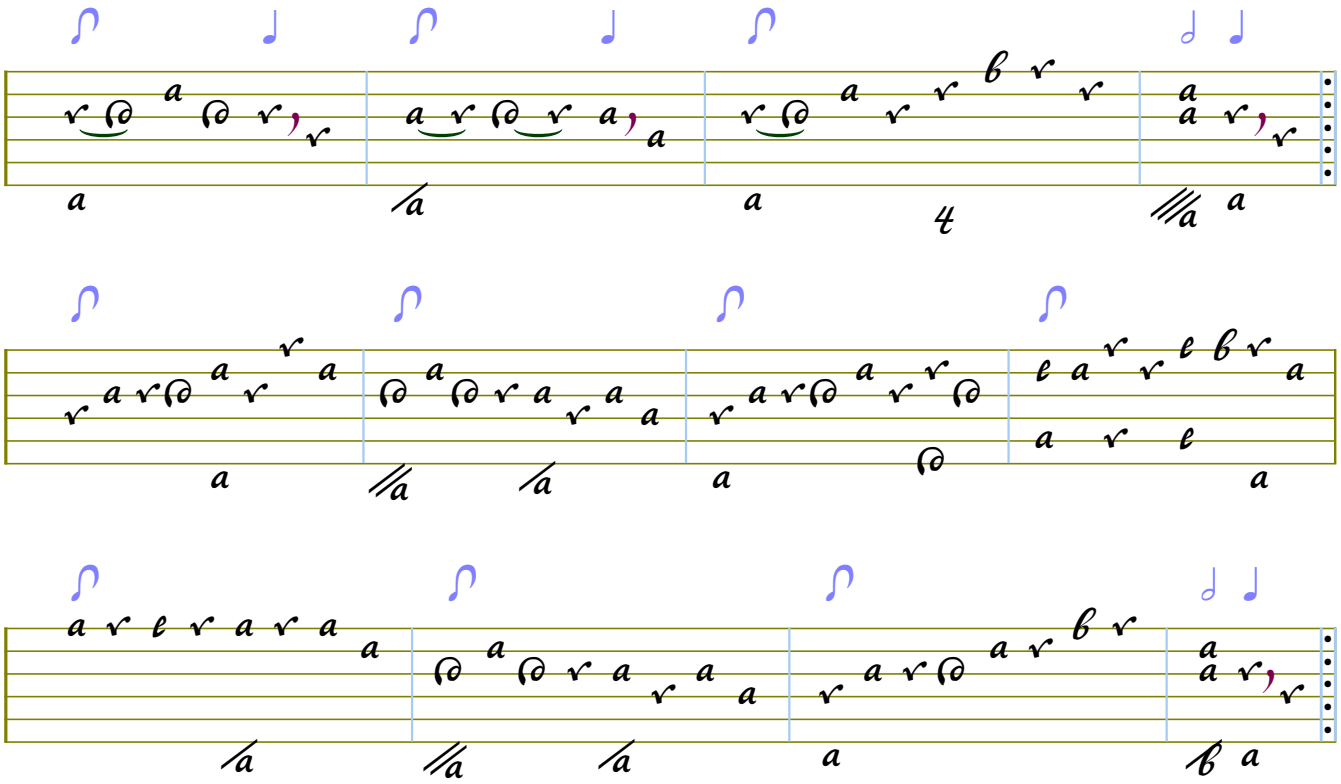


Woes the heart, that we should sunder, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

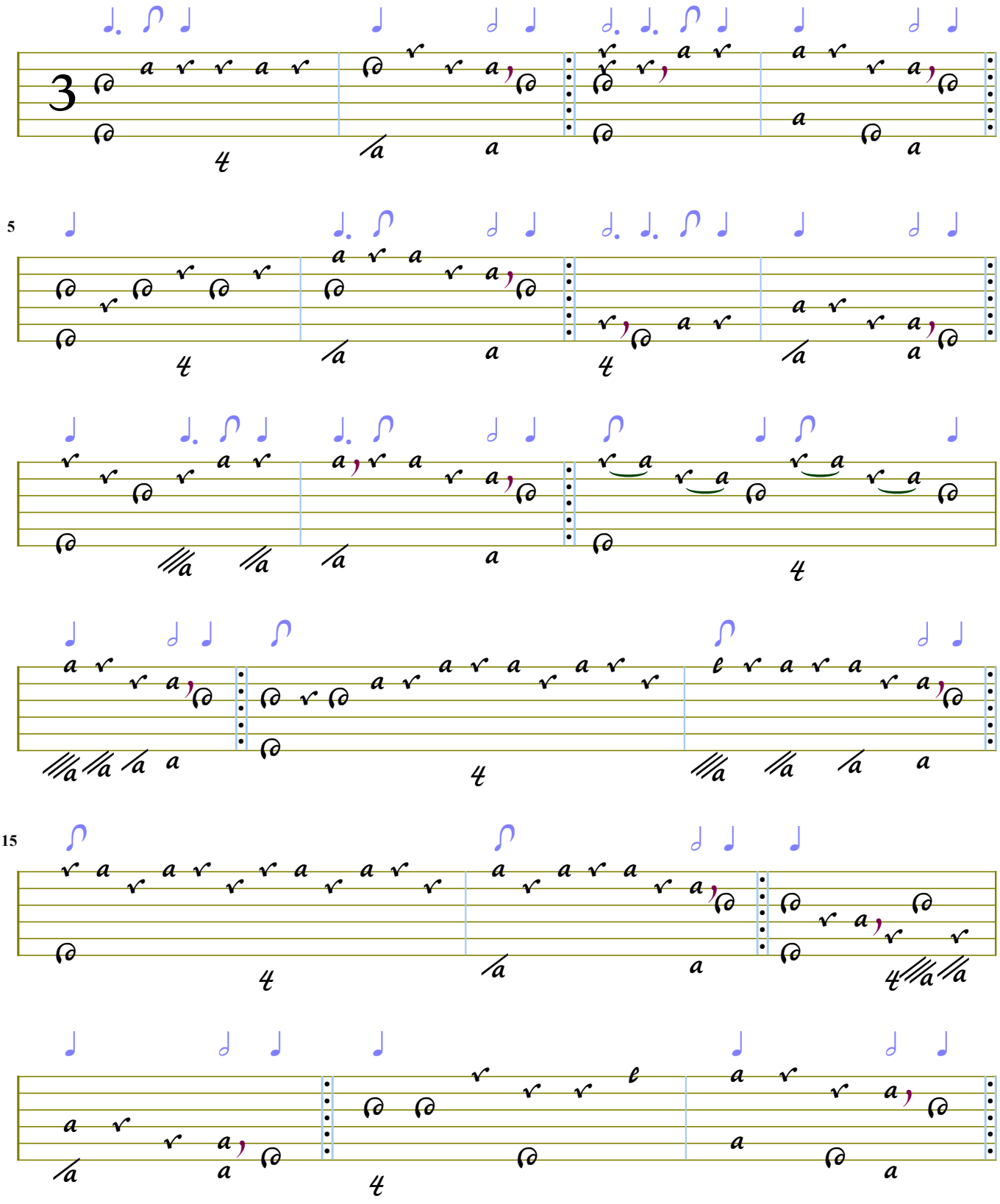


Cuttie spoon and tree ladle, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

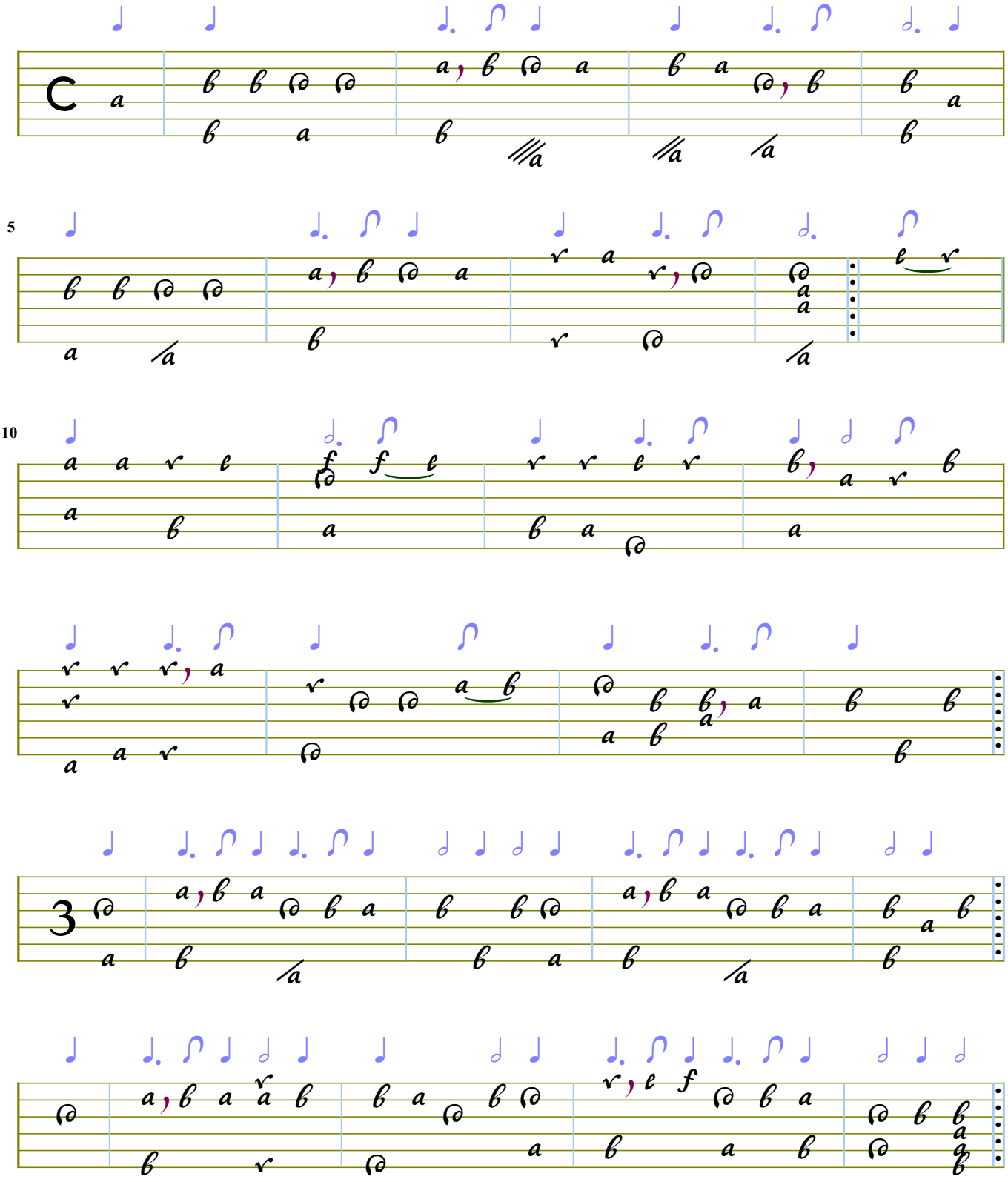




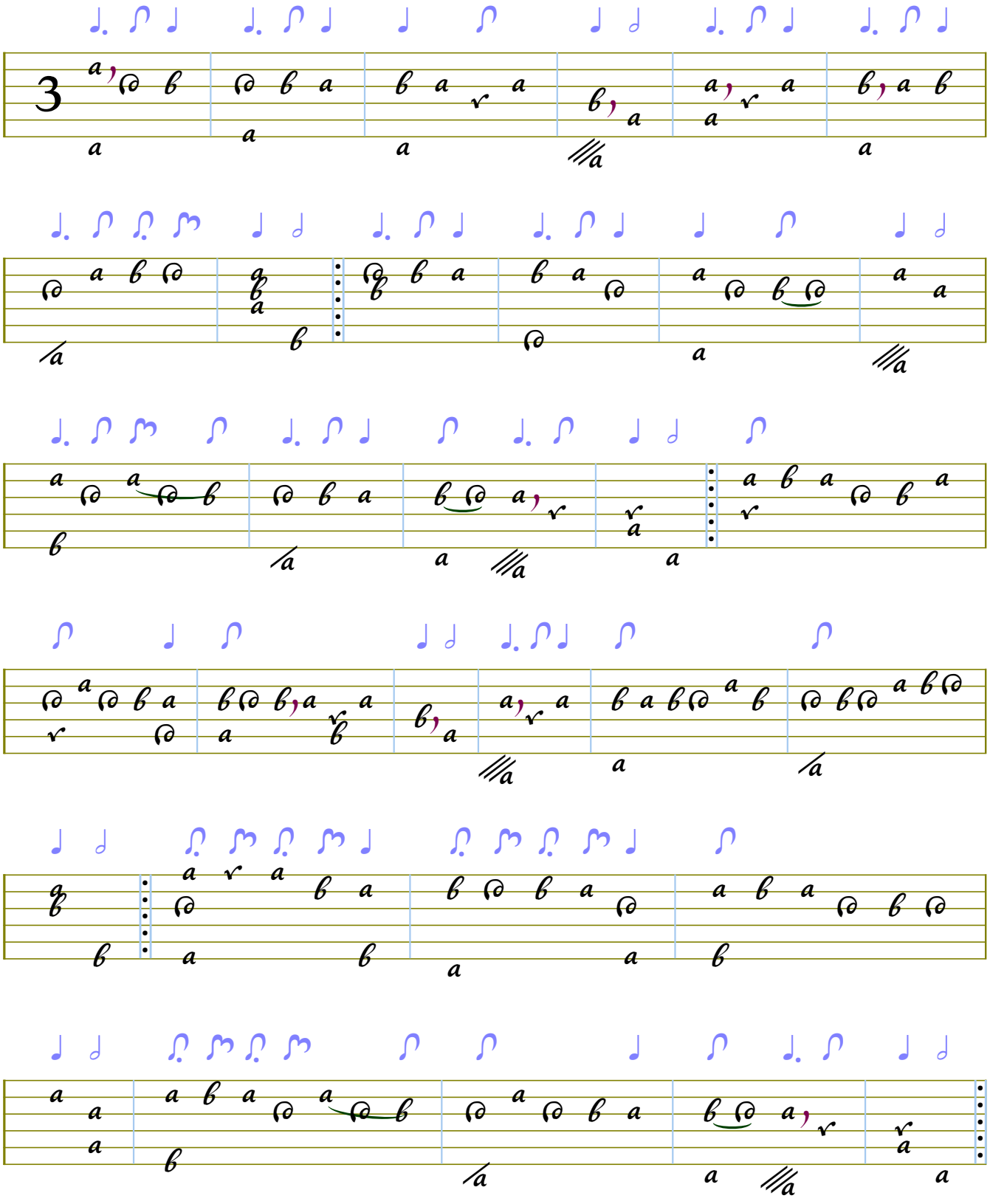
The canaries, the old way, in mr mclaughlan's fashion, by mr. Beck



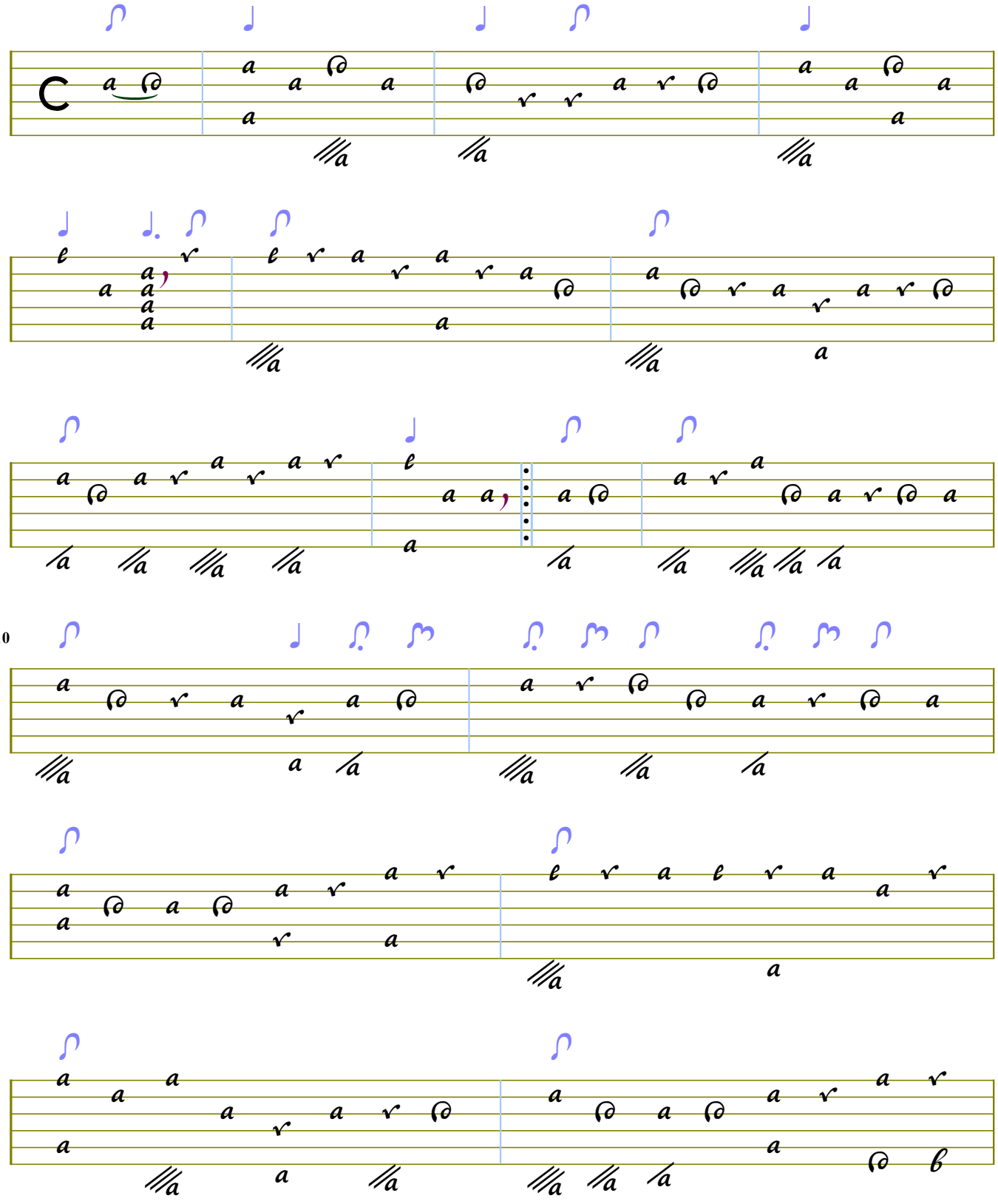
The canaries, the new way,
with the 9th string lowed half a note, in mr. mclaughlan's fashion, by mr. Beck

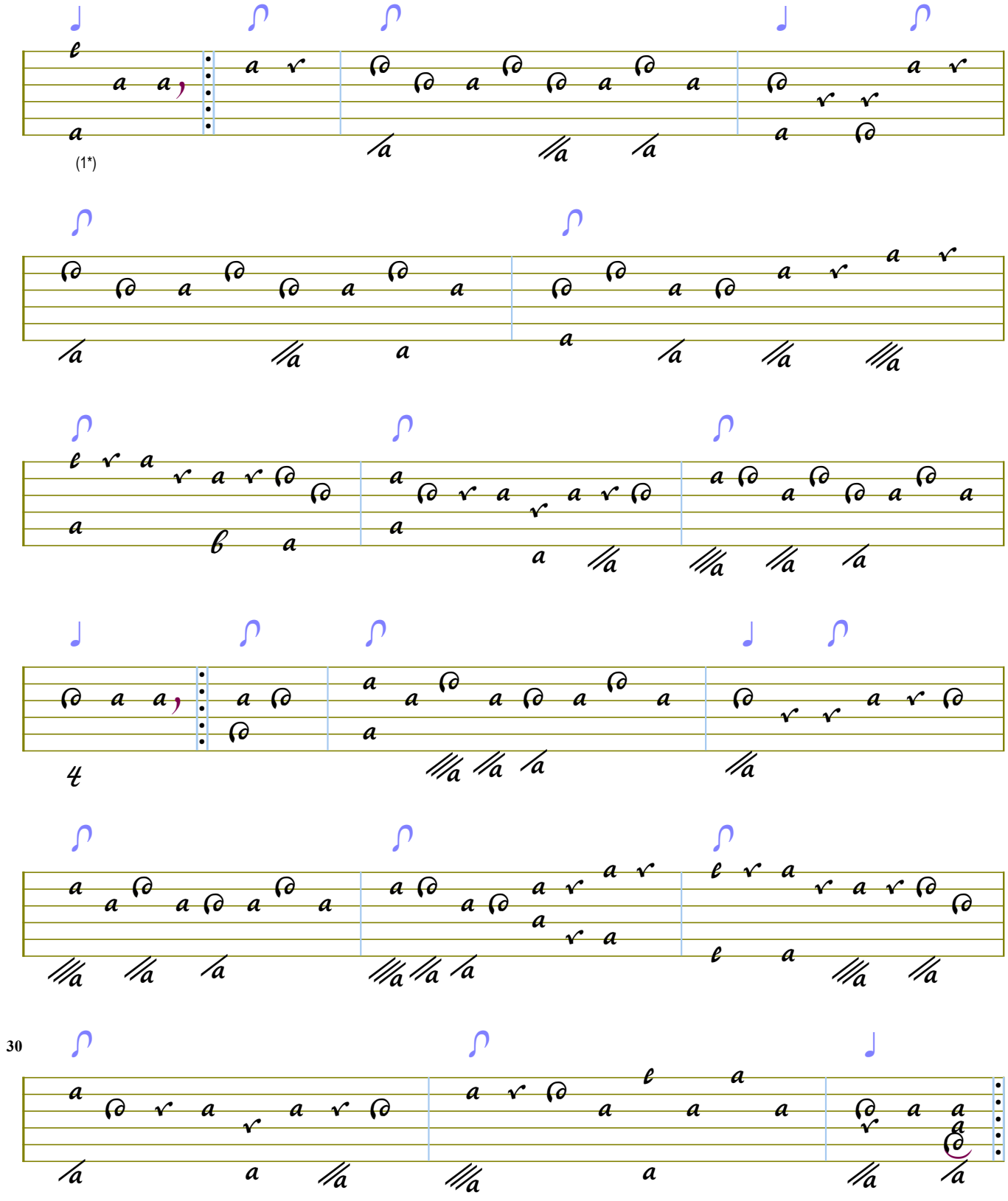


After the Paunges of a desperate lover, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck



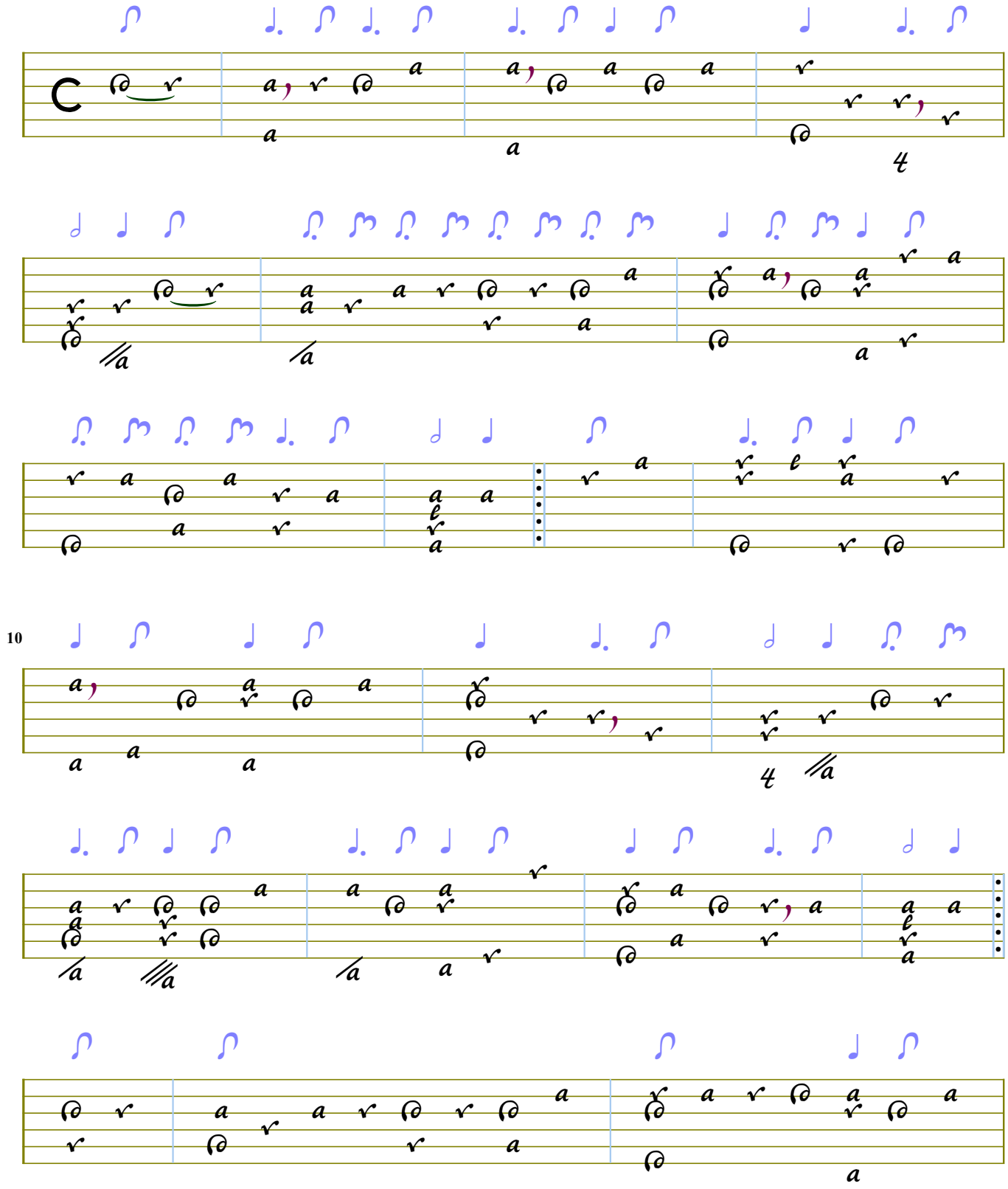
Cause give the bride her supper, the new way,
in John mclaughlan's way, by master Beck

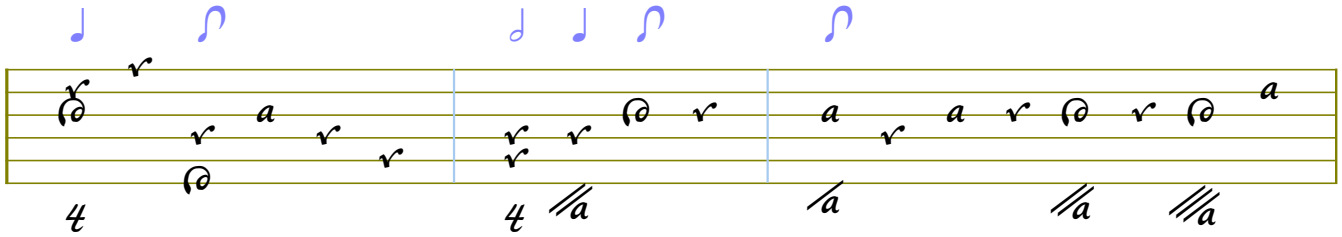


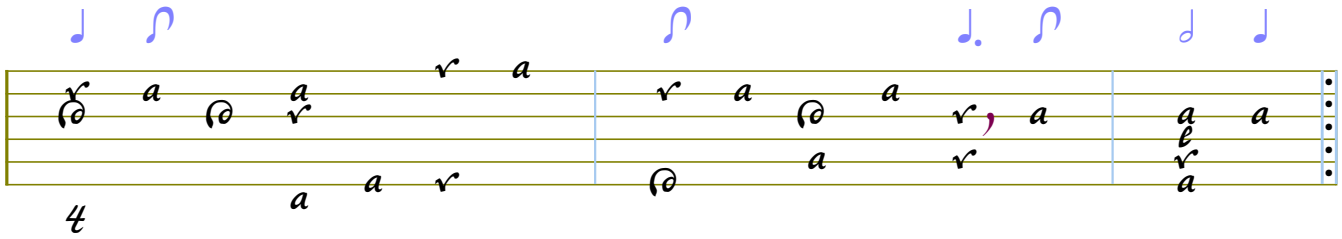


1. Orig. a on 7th course

The new gilderoy, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr beck







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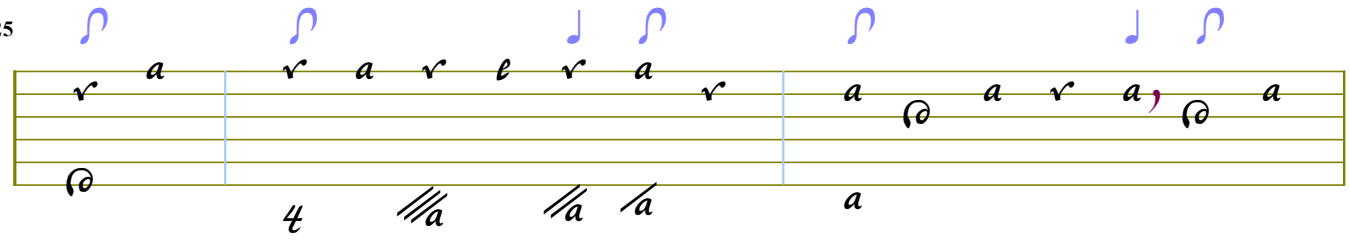

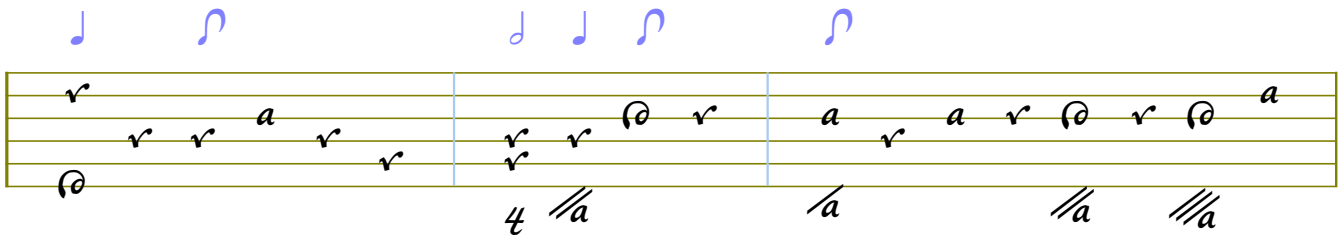

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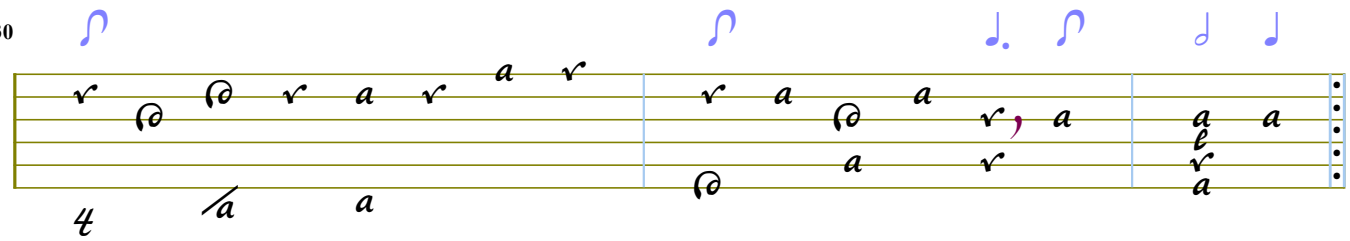
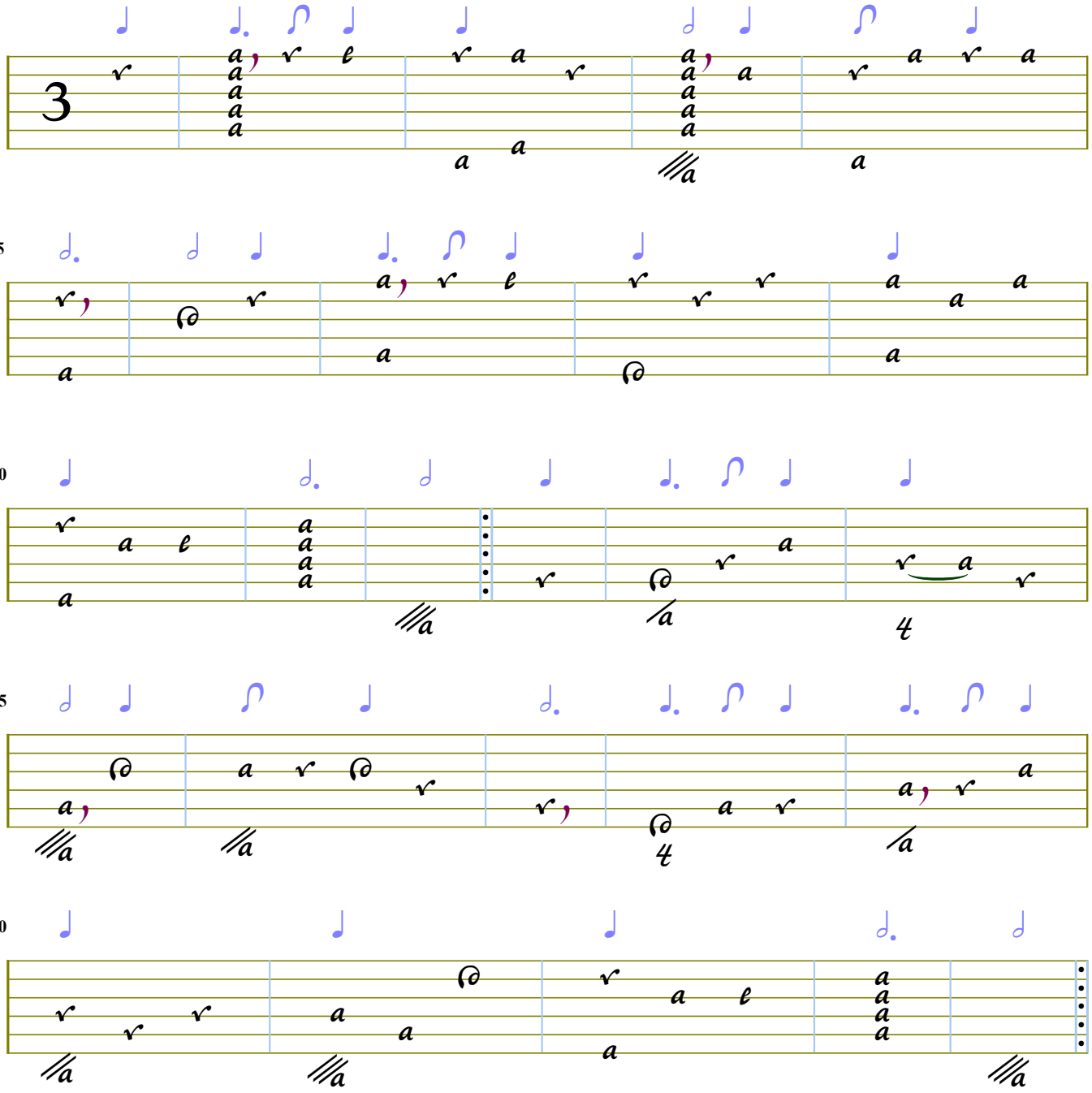
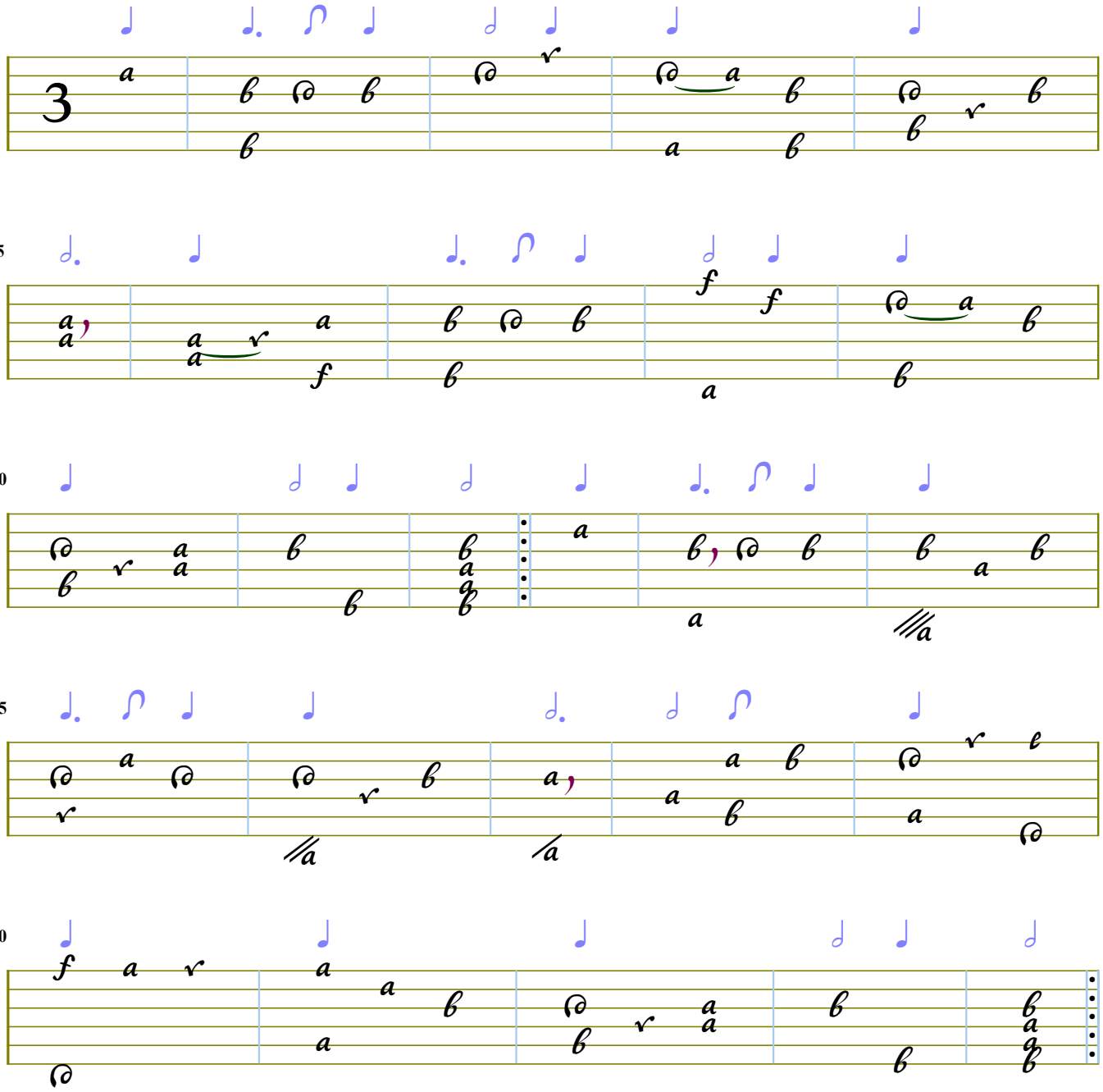


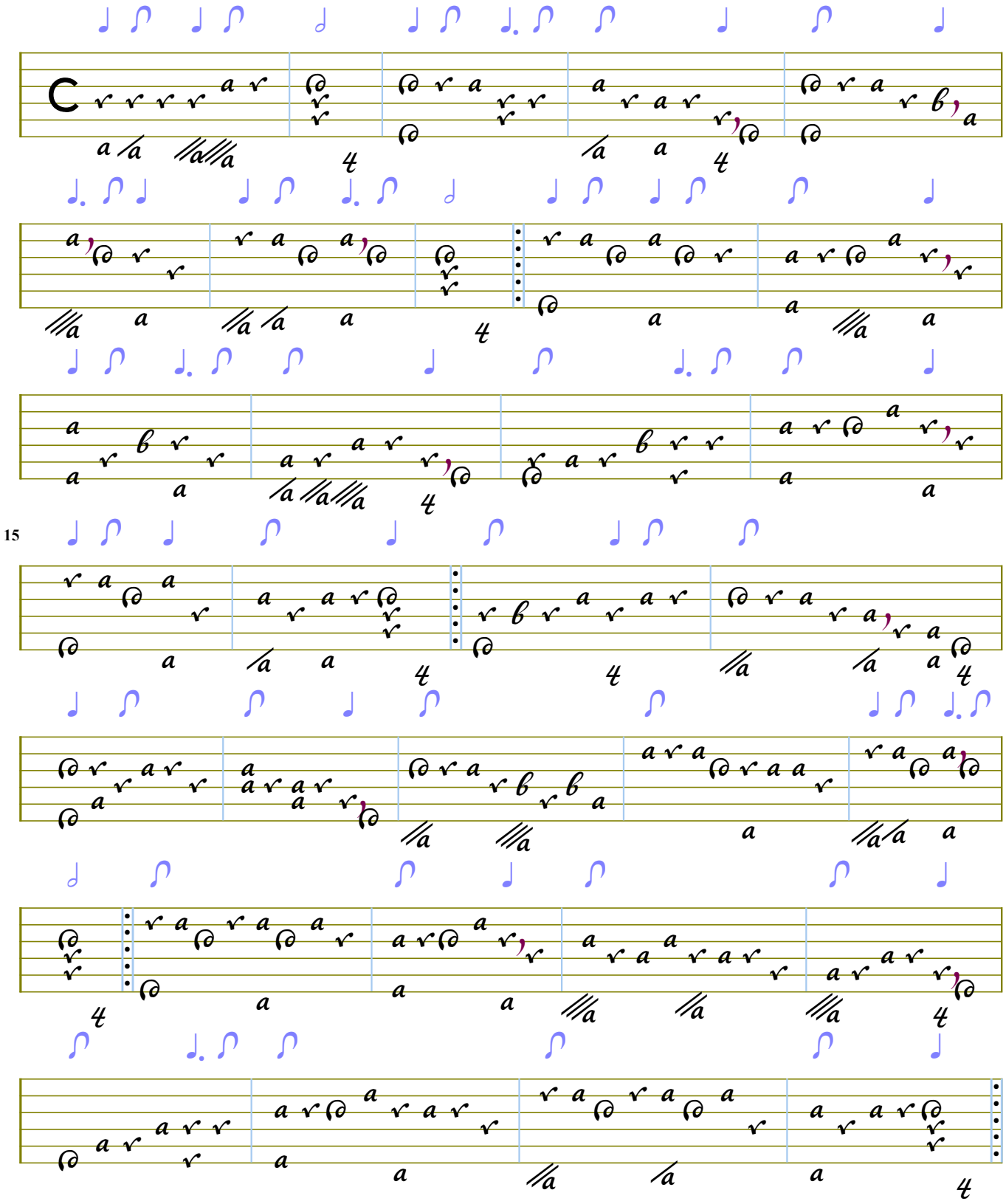
Devo's gige, by mr. beck



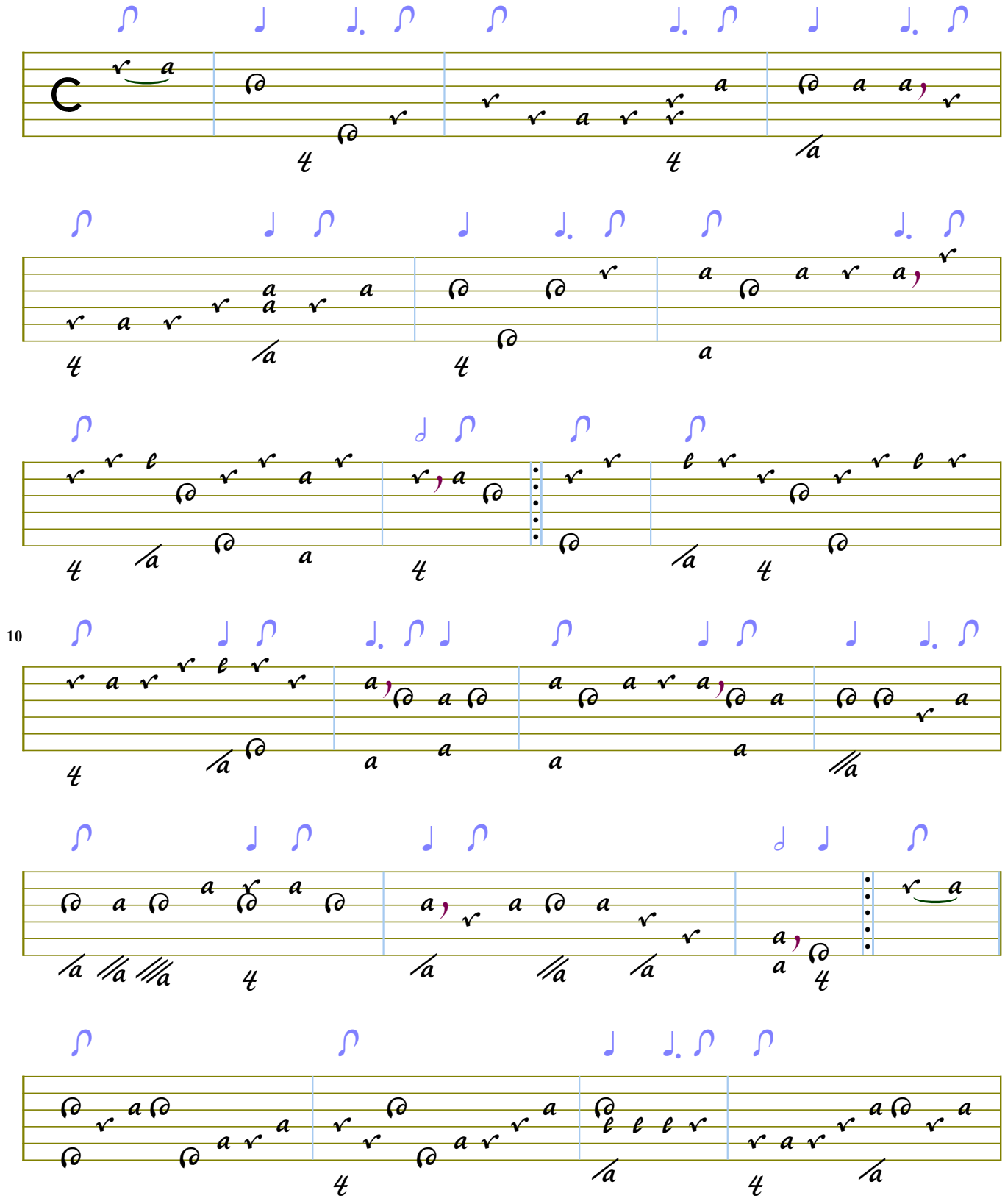
Another of Devo's giges, by mr. Beck

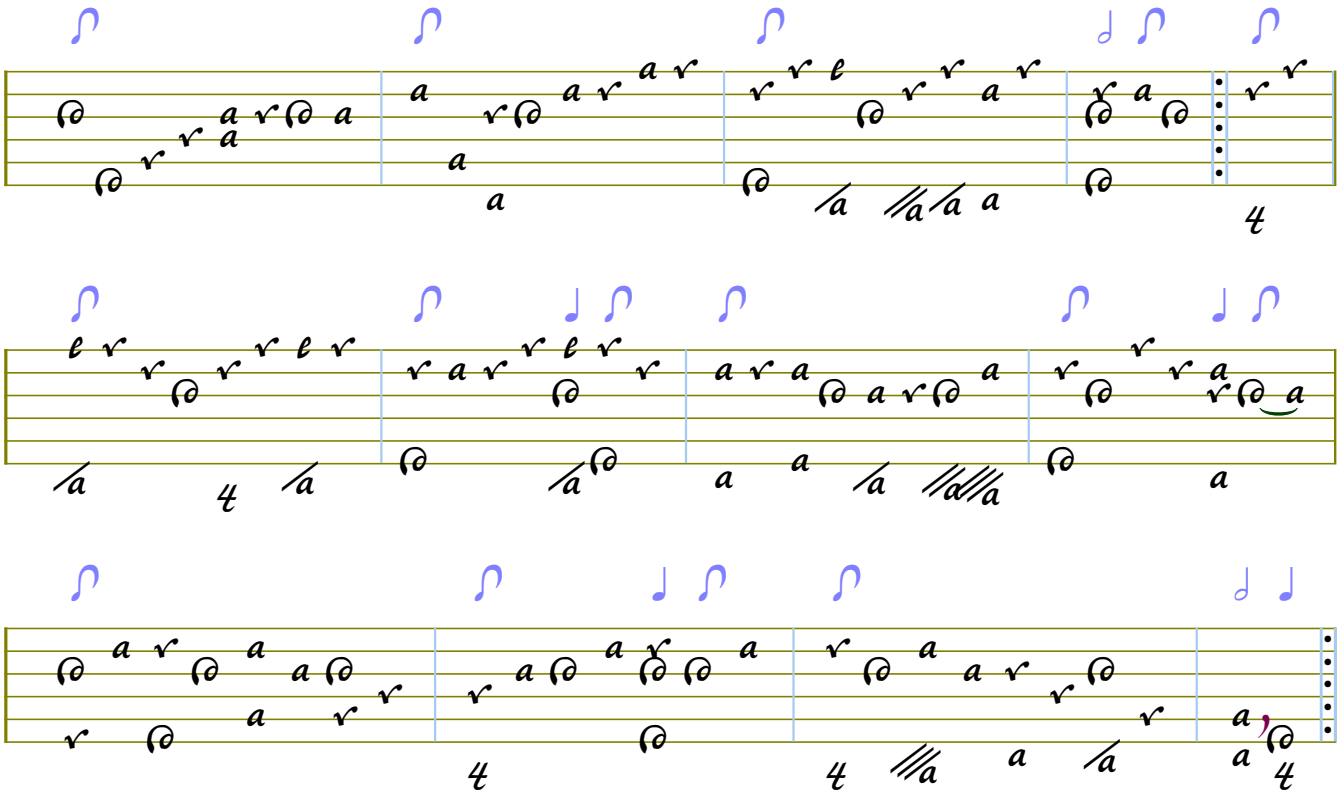


Hallow my fancie, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

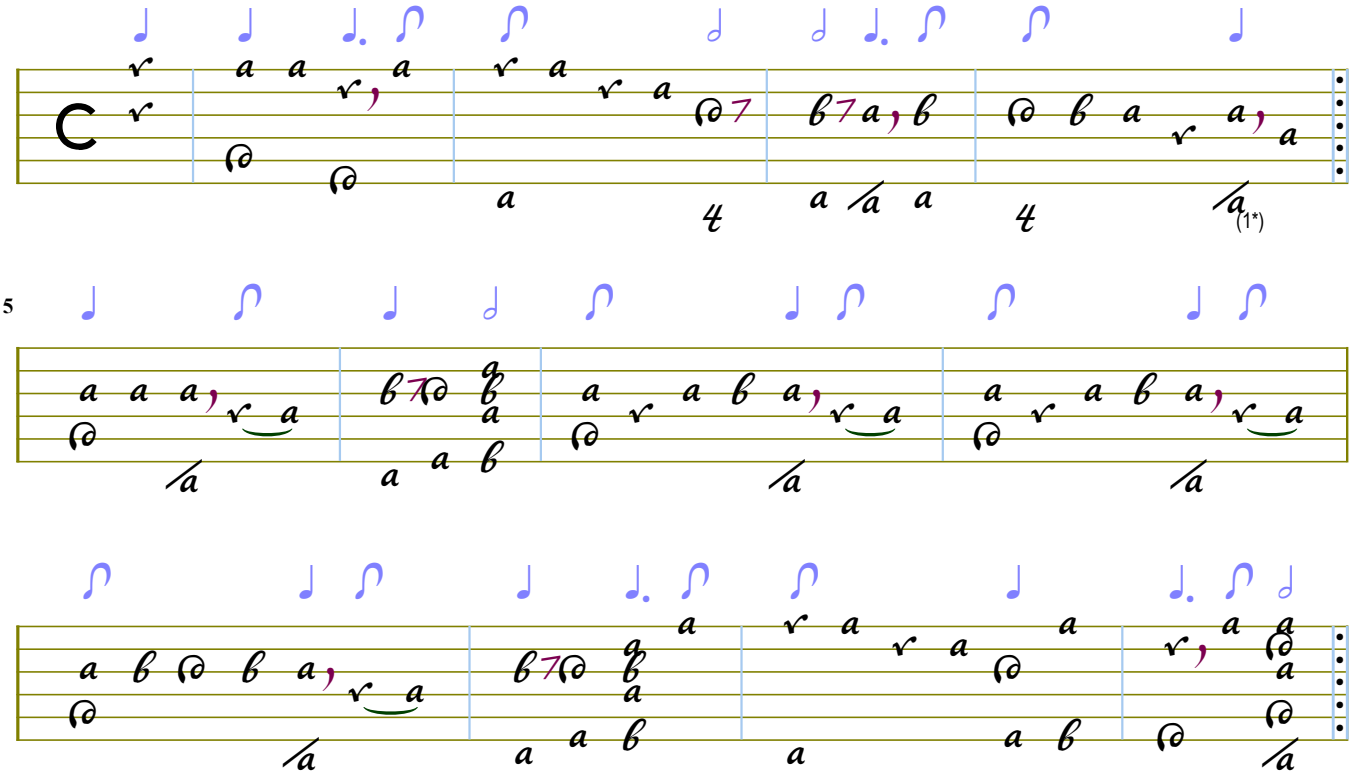


The Caping trade, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck



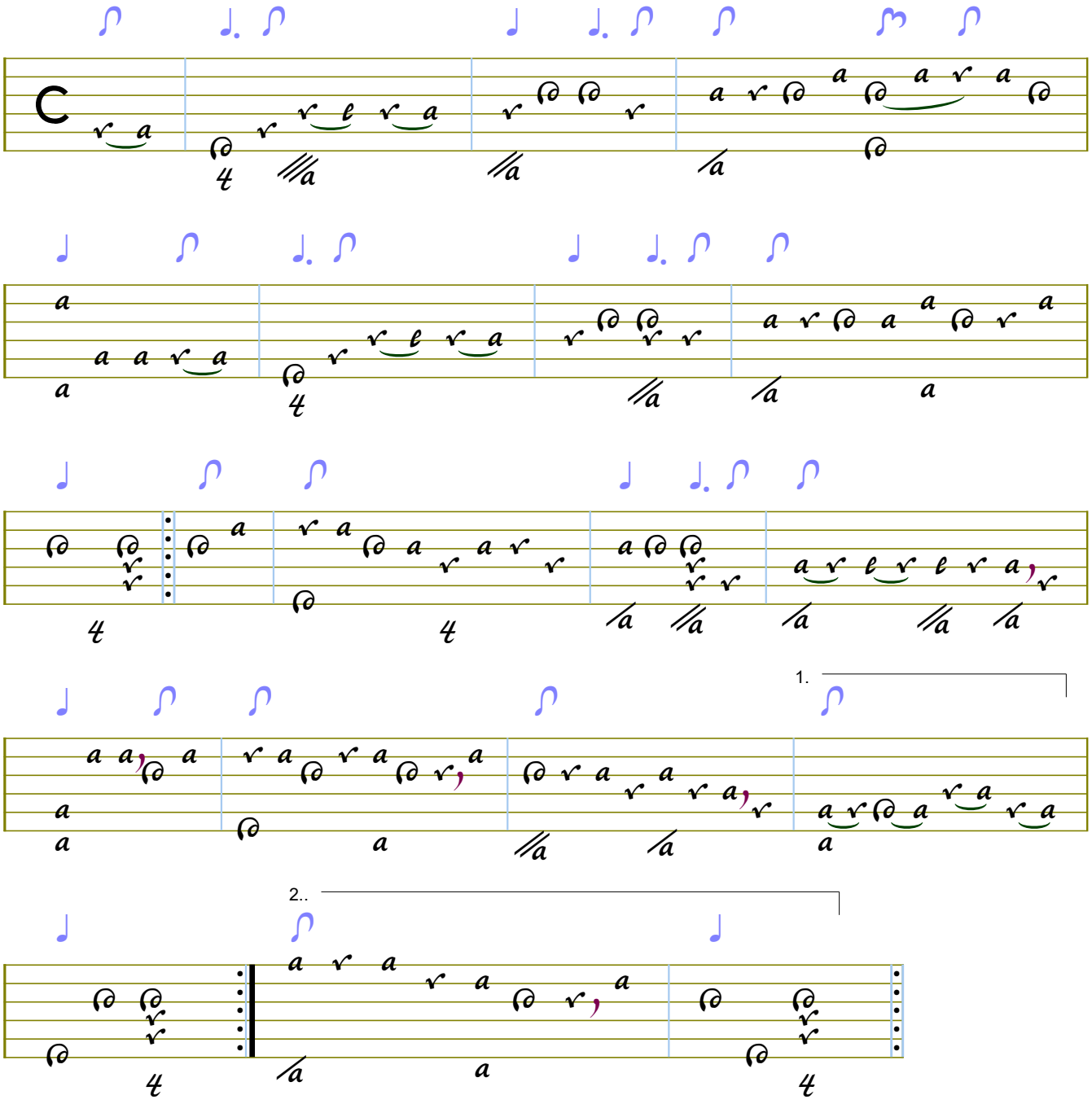


The new Moutar, by david grieve

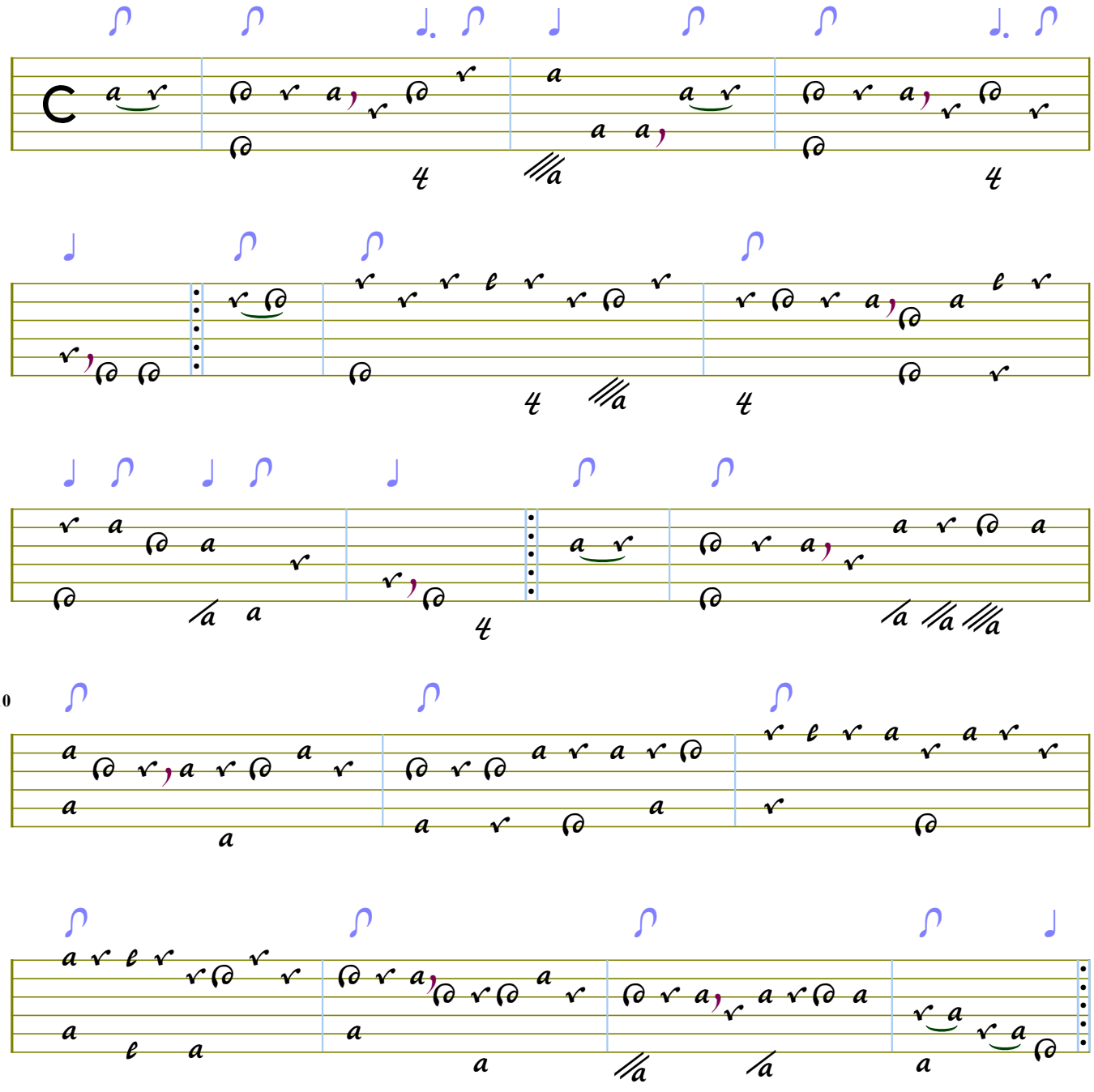


1. Orig: bass 'a'

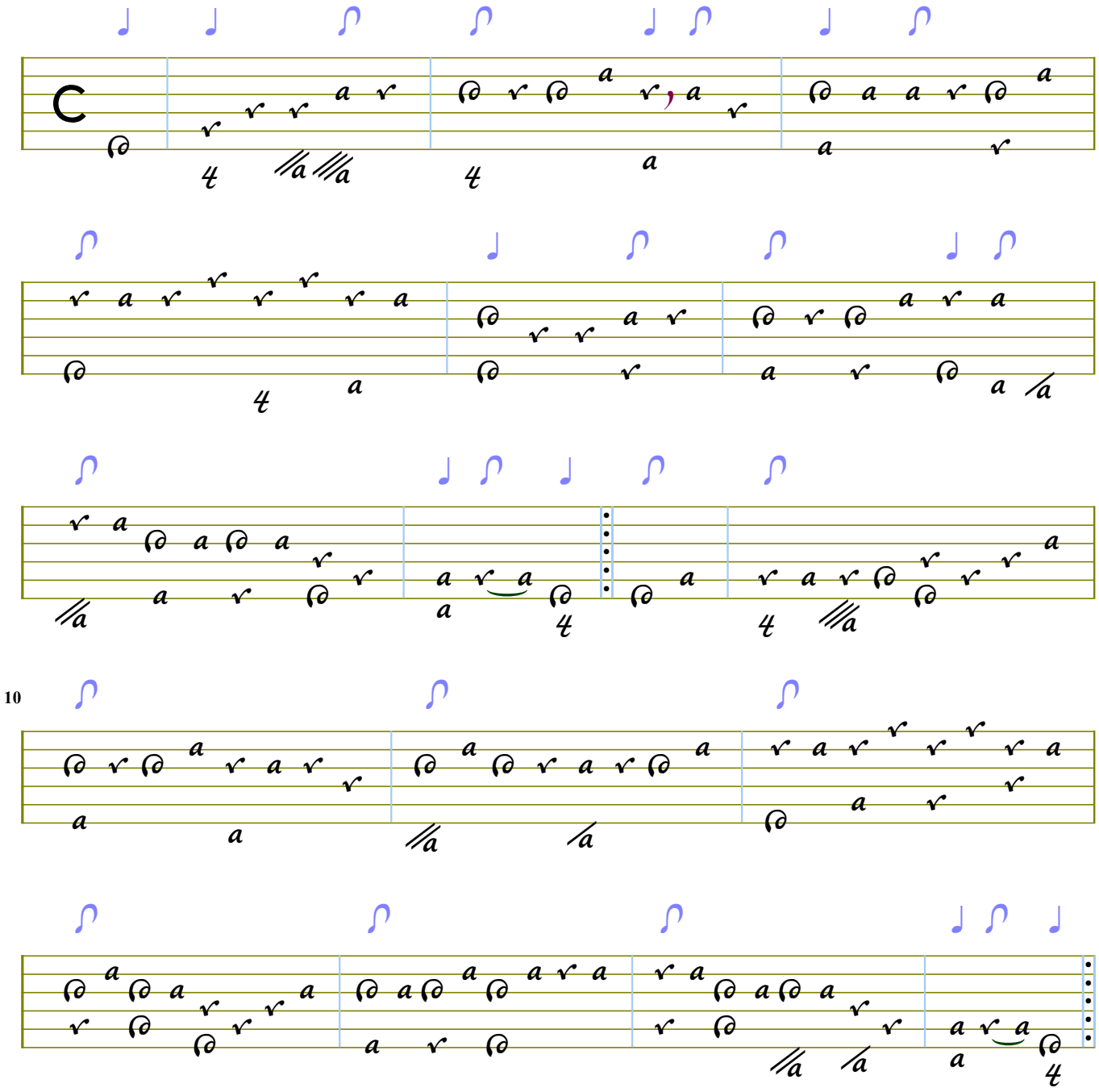
Over the Moore, to Katie, Jean Mores way, by mr. Beck



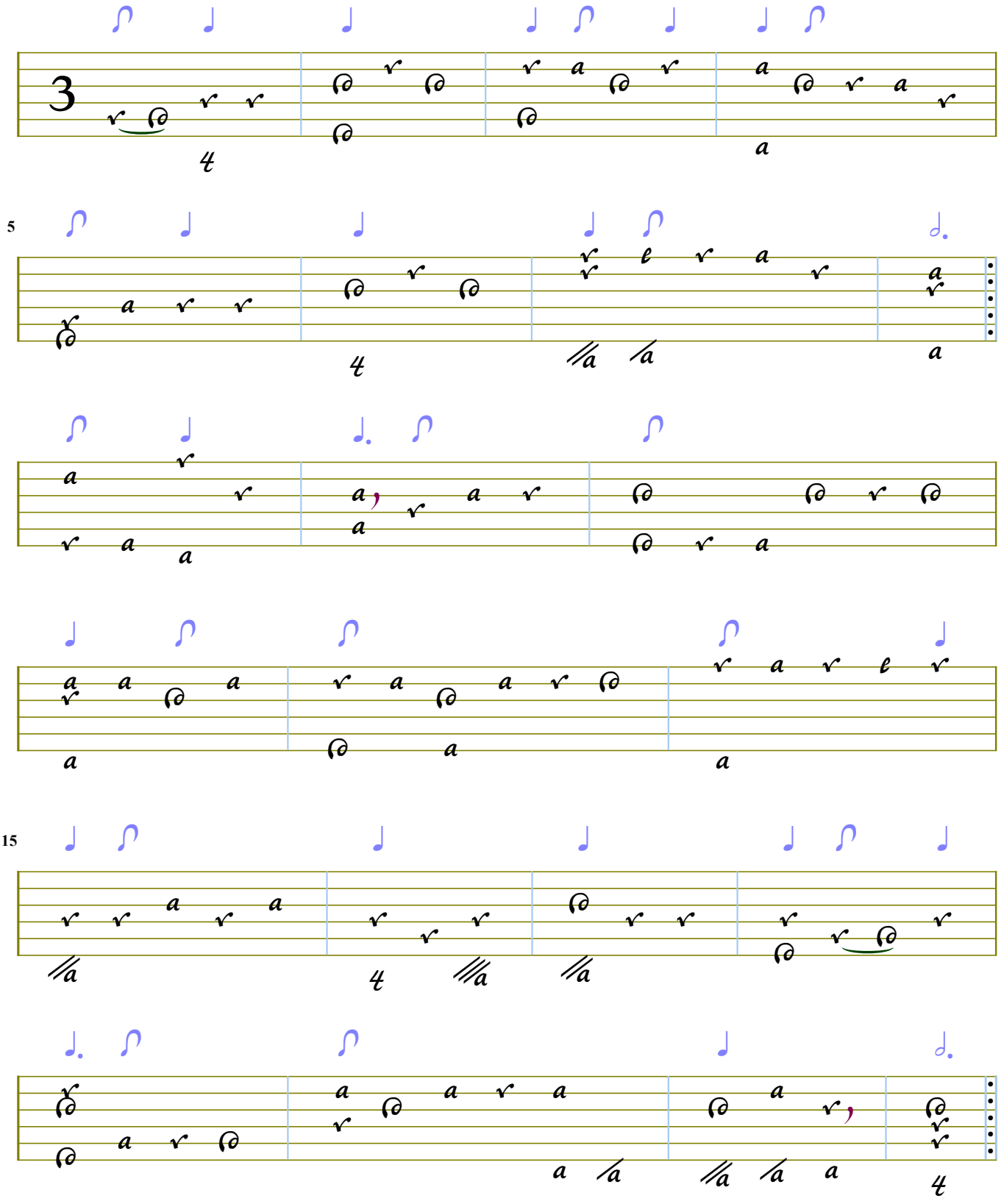
Janet drinks no water, Jean more's way, by mr. beck



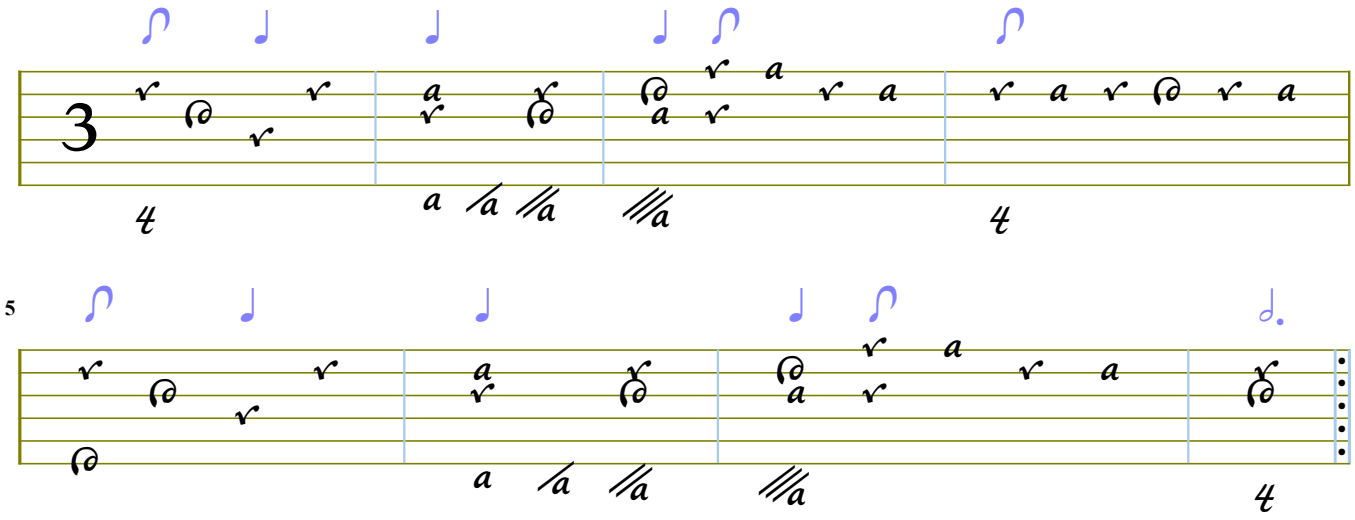
If thy wife n'ere dead ladie, Jean more's way by mr. beck



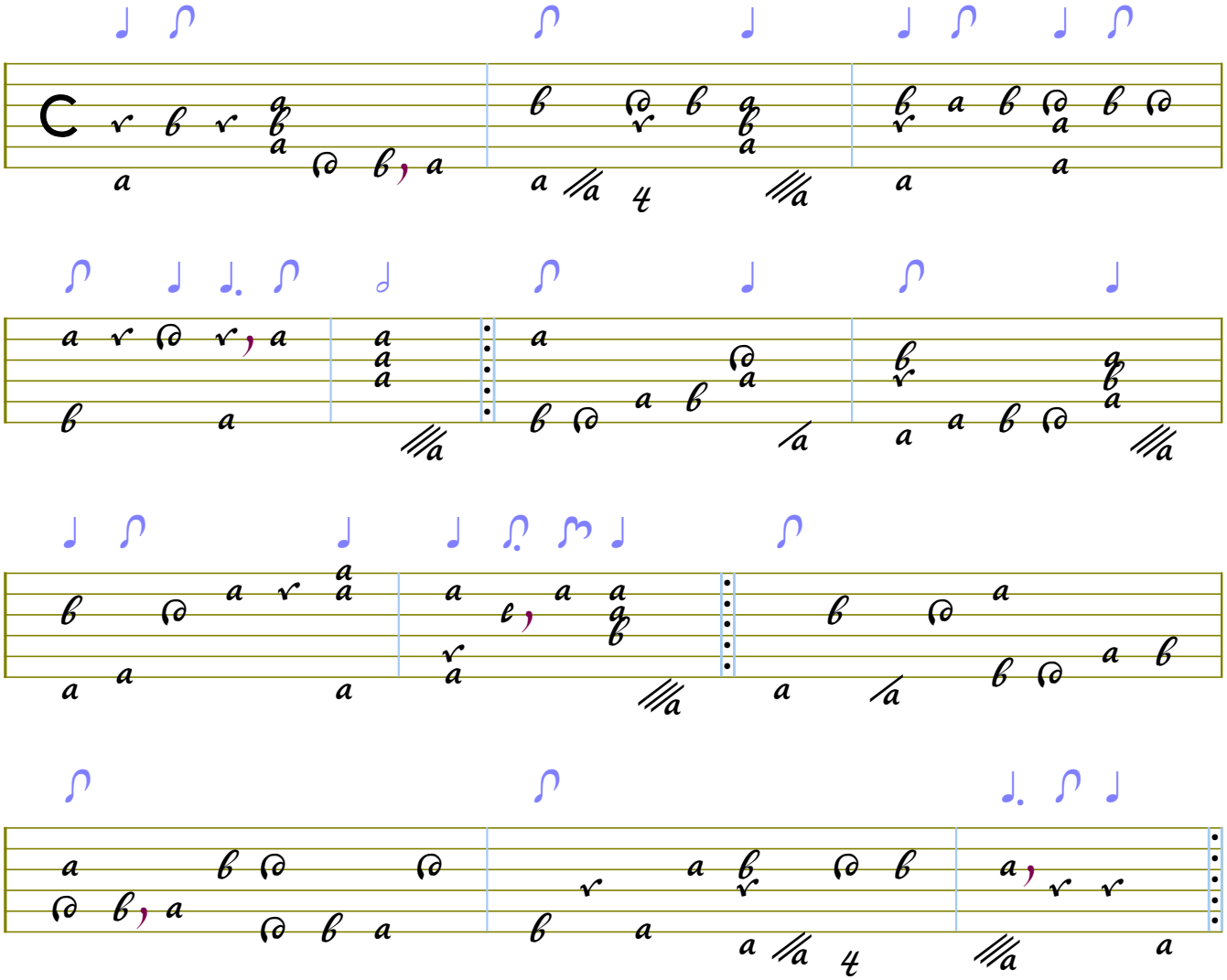
Minuet, Jean more's way, by mr. beck



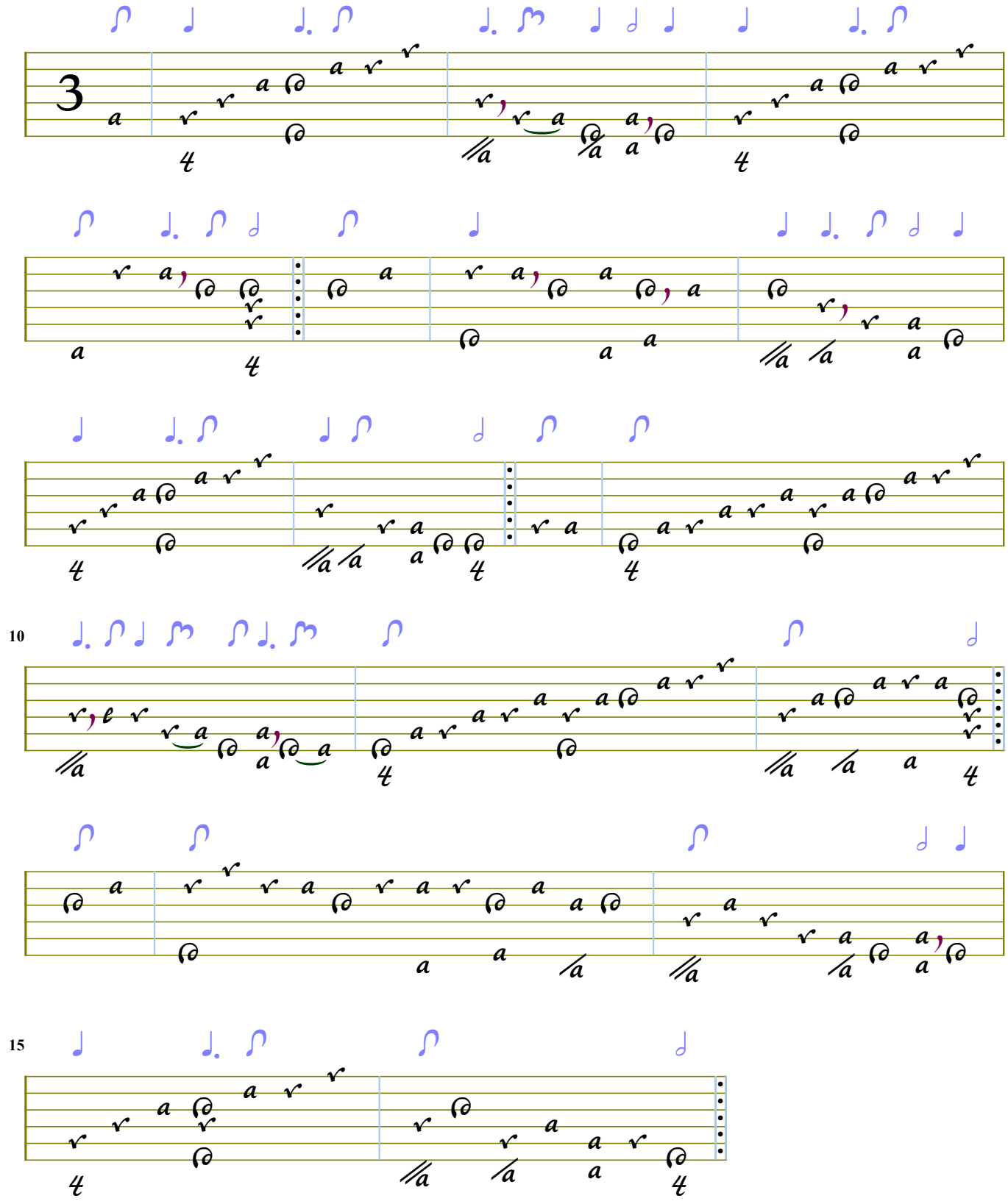
Minuet, Jean more's way, by mr. beck



What if a day, a month, or a year,
with th 9th lowed half a note, Jean more's way, by mr.Beck

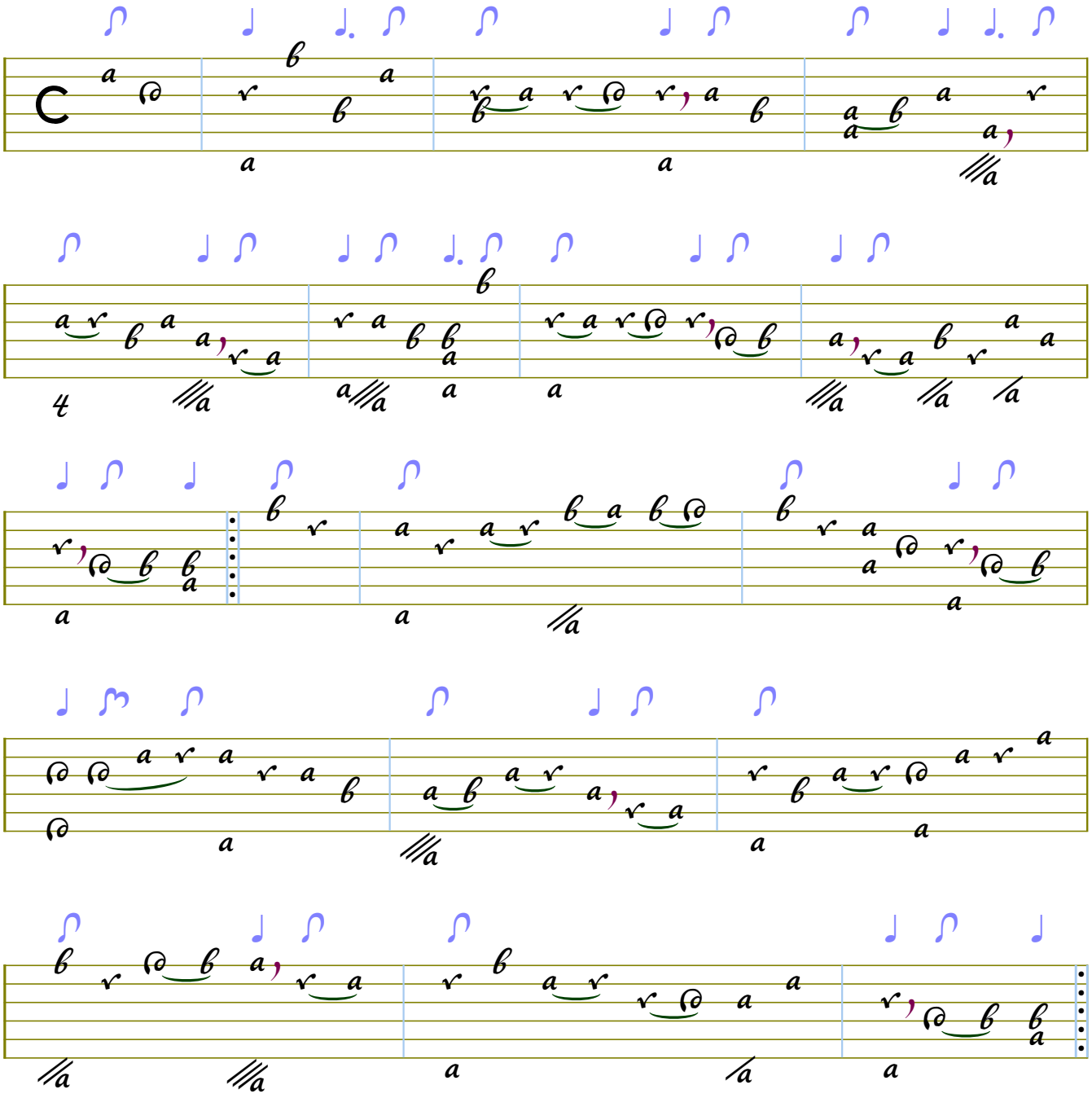


The yellow haired ladie, heneretta imbrie's way, by mr beck, much helped



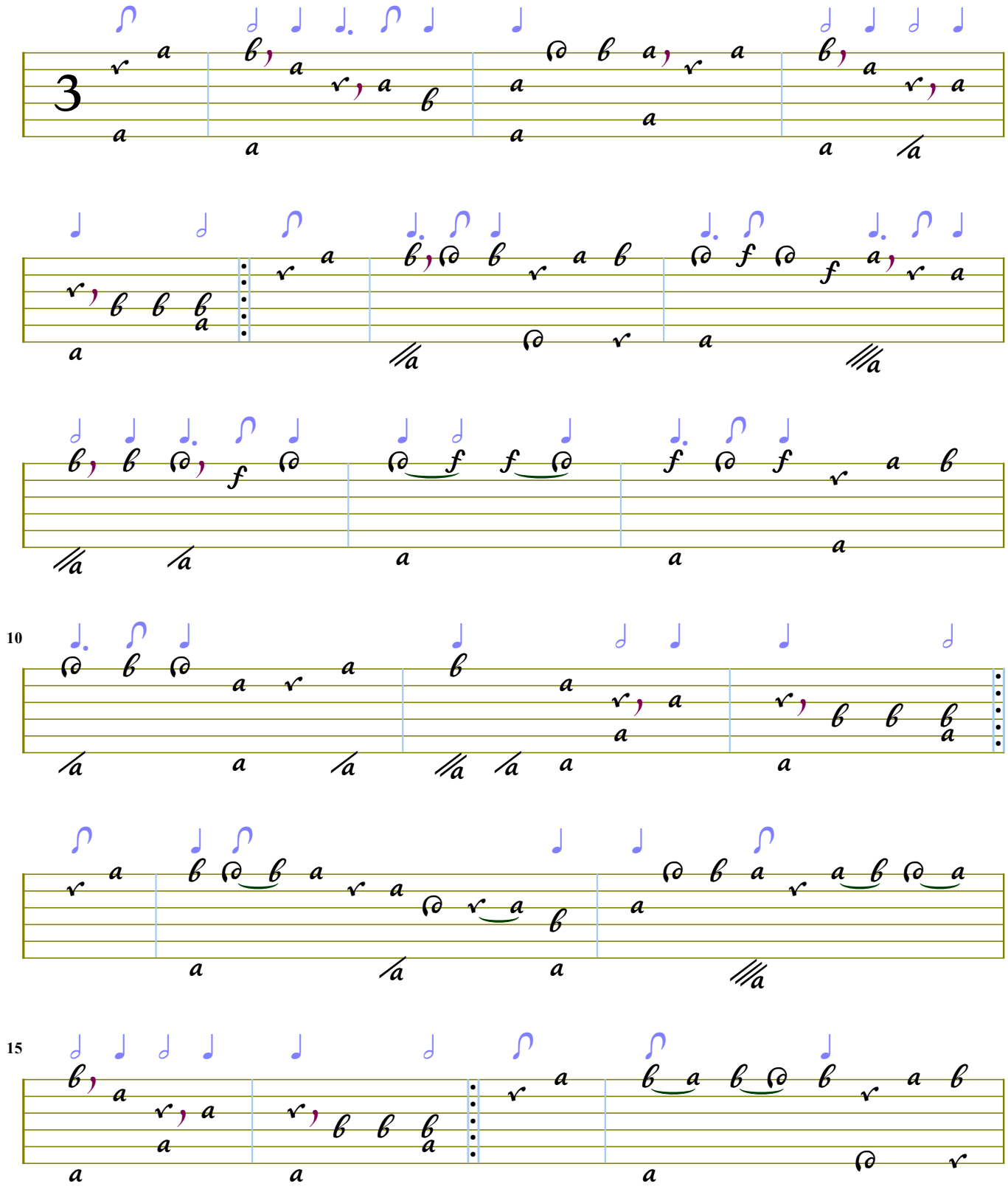
Sharp Tuning (A - d -f# - a - d' - f'#)

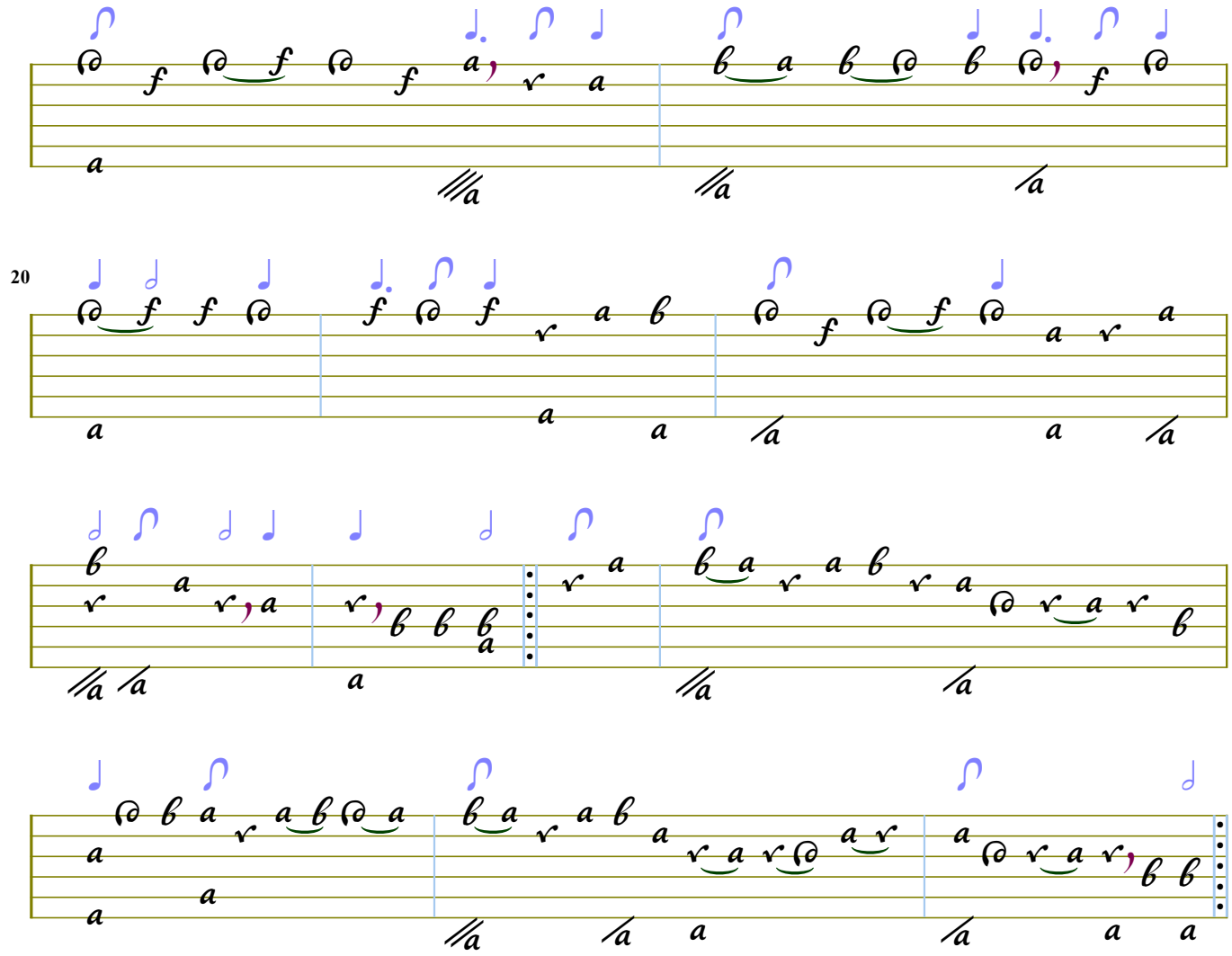
Sir william hope's scotts measure, by mr beck



Sharp Tuning (A - d - f# - a - d' - f'#)

Buffcoat, by mr beck

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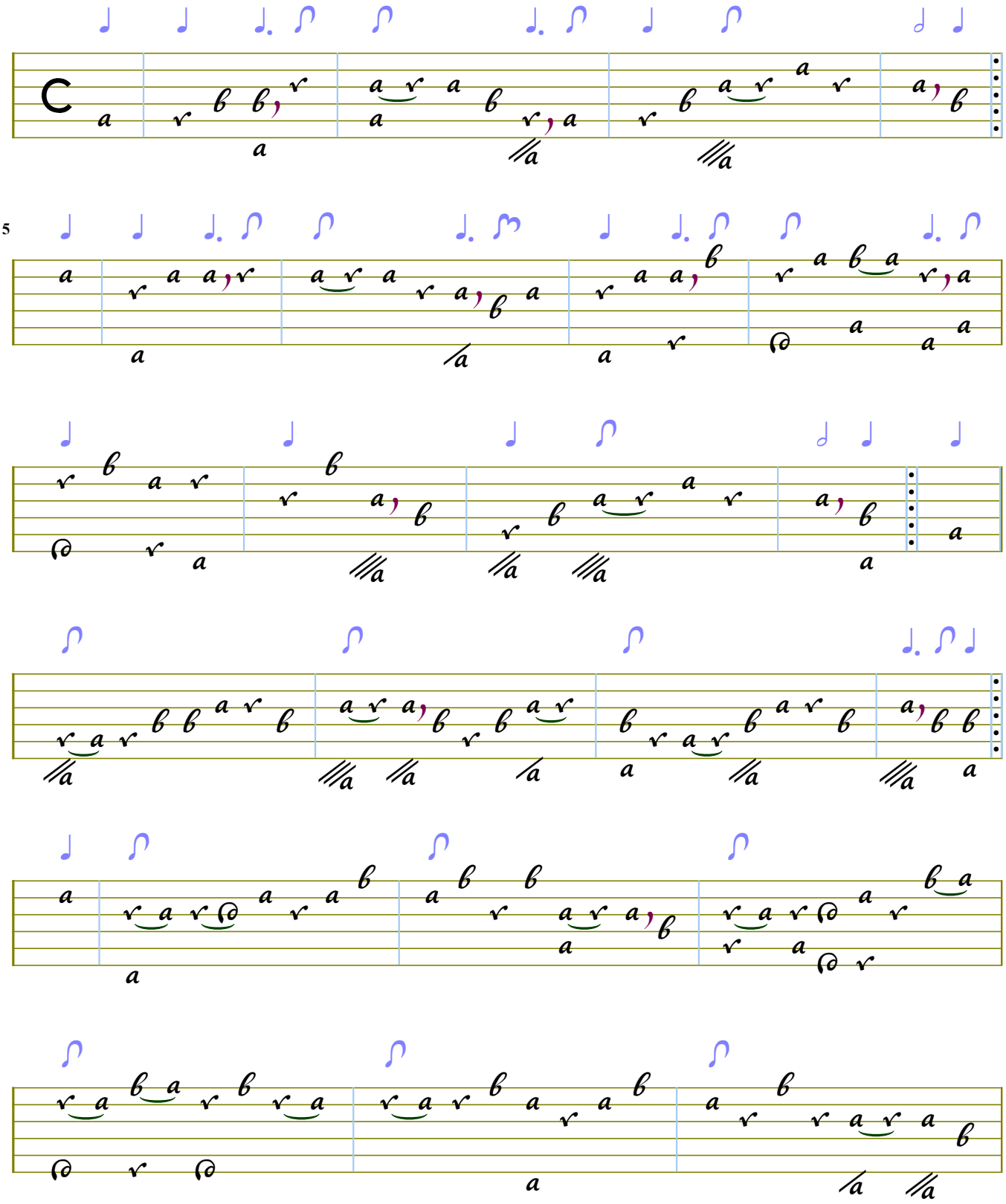
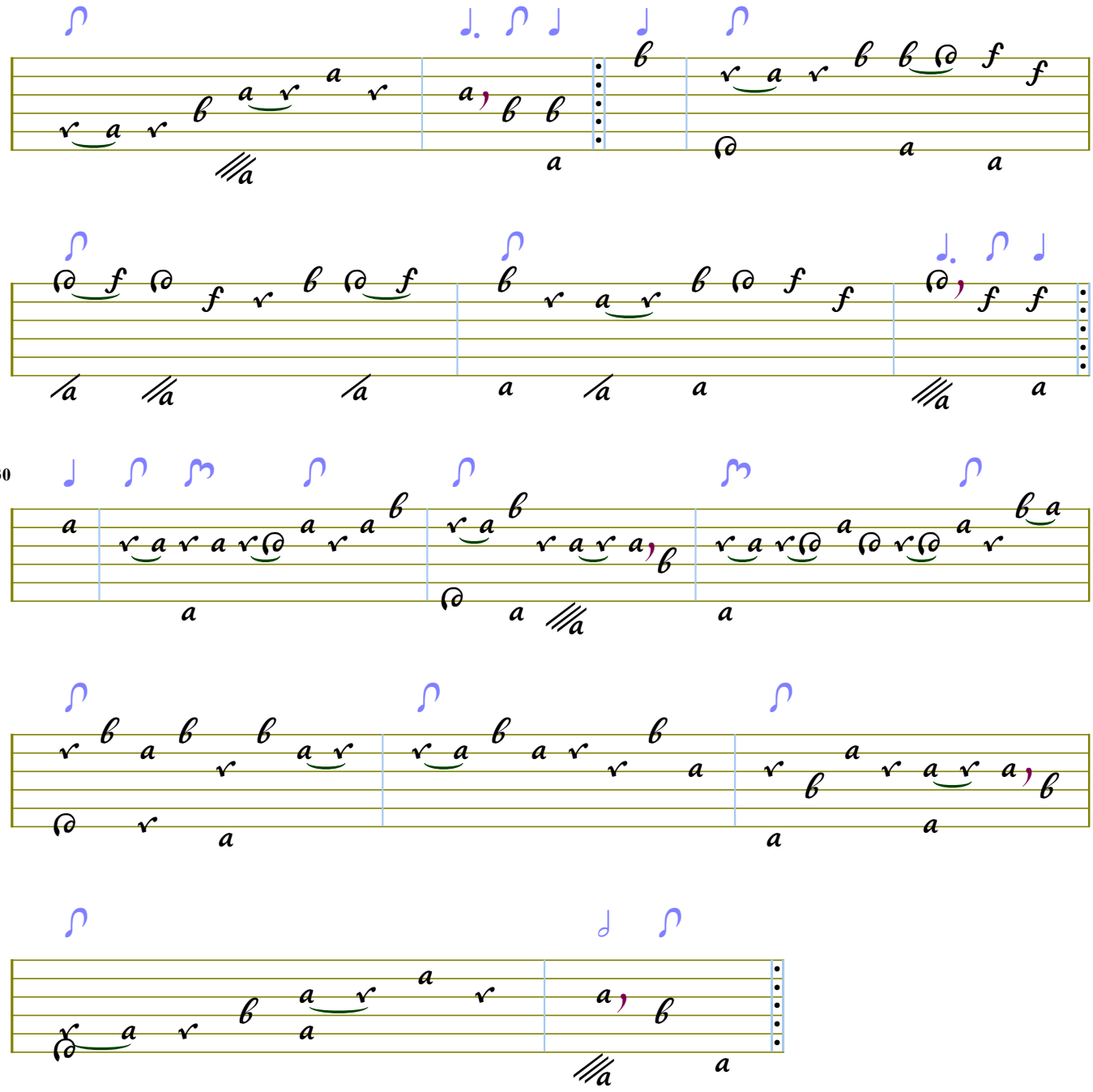
Peggie, I must love thee, by mr. beck

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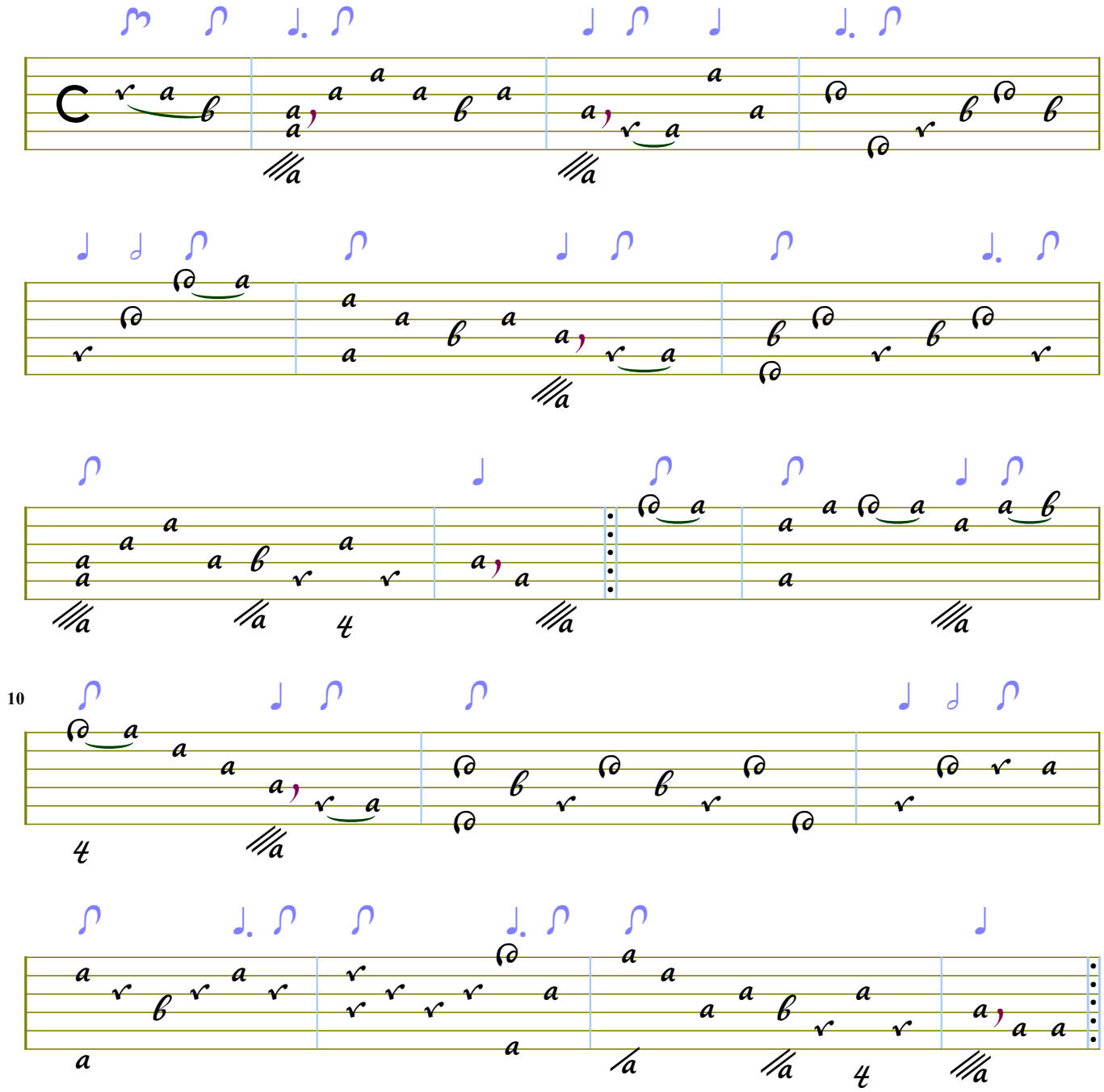
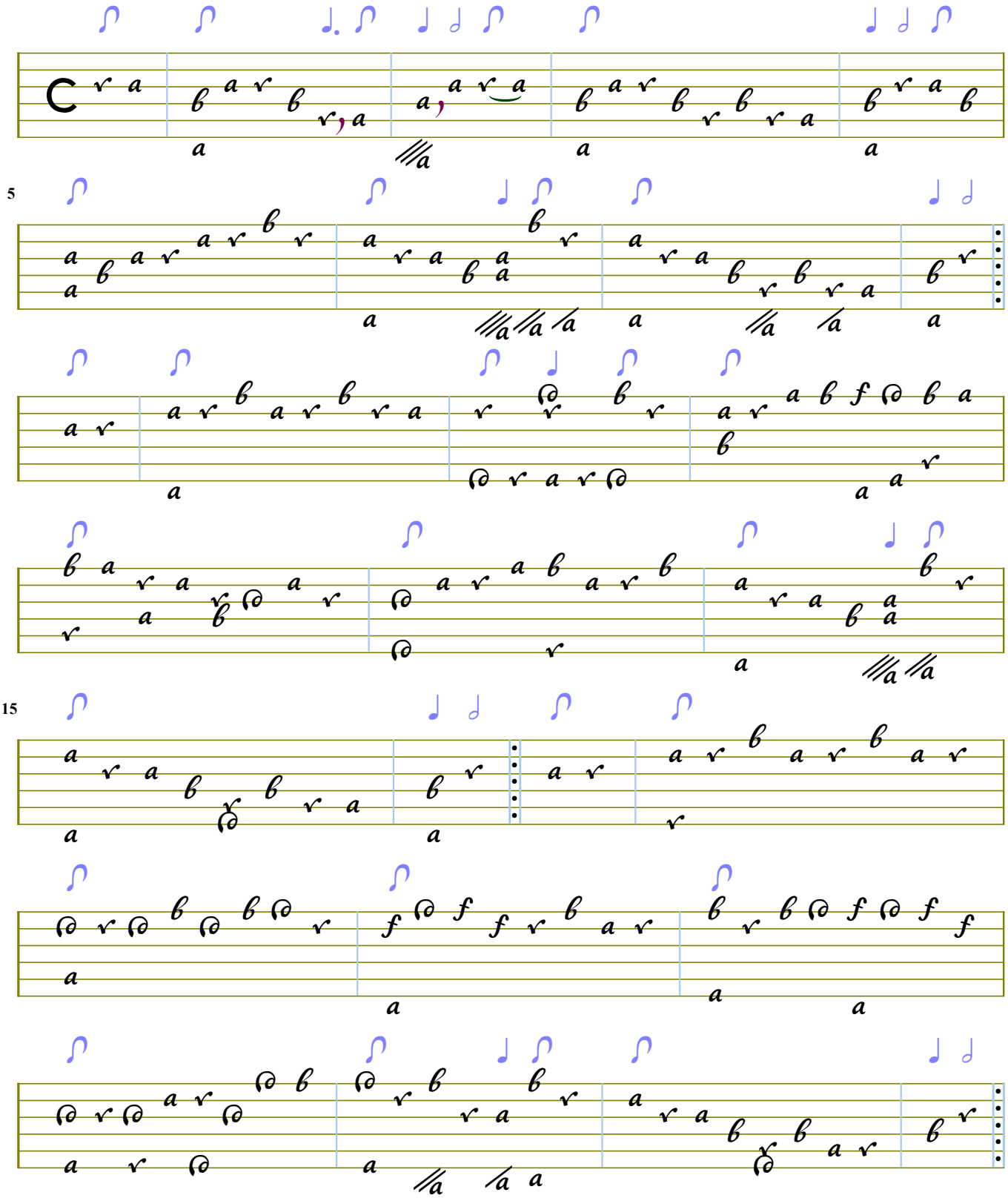
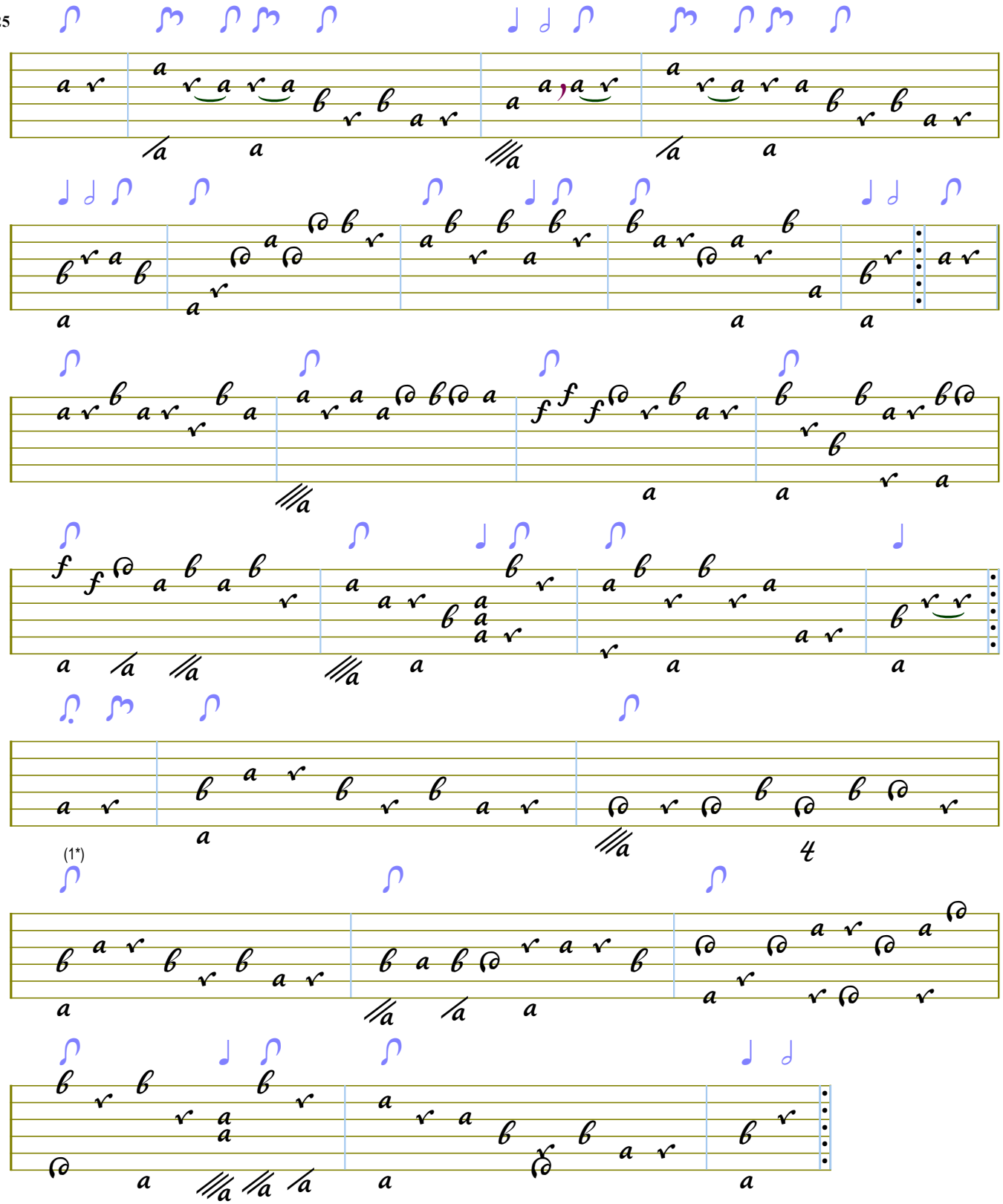
Sharp Tuning (A - d - f# - a - d' - f'#)

Mr beck's new tune



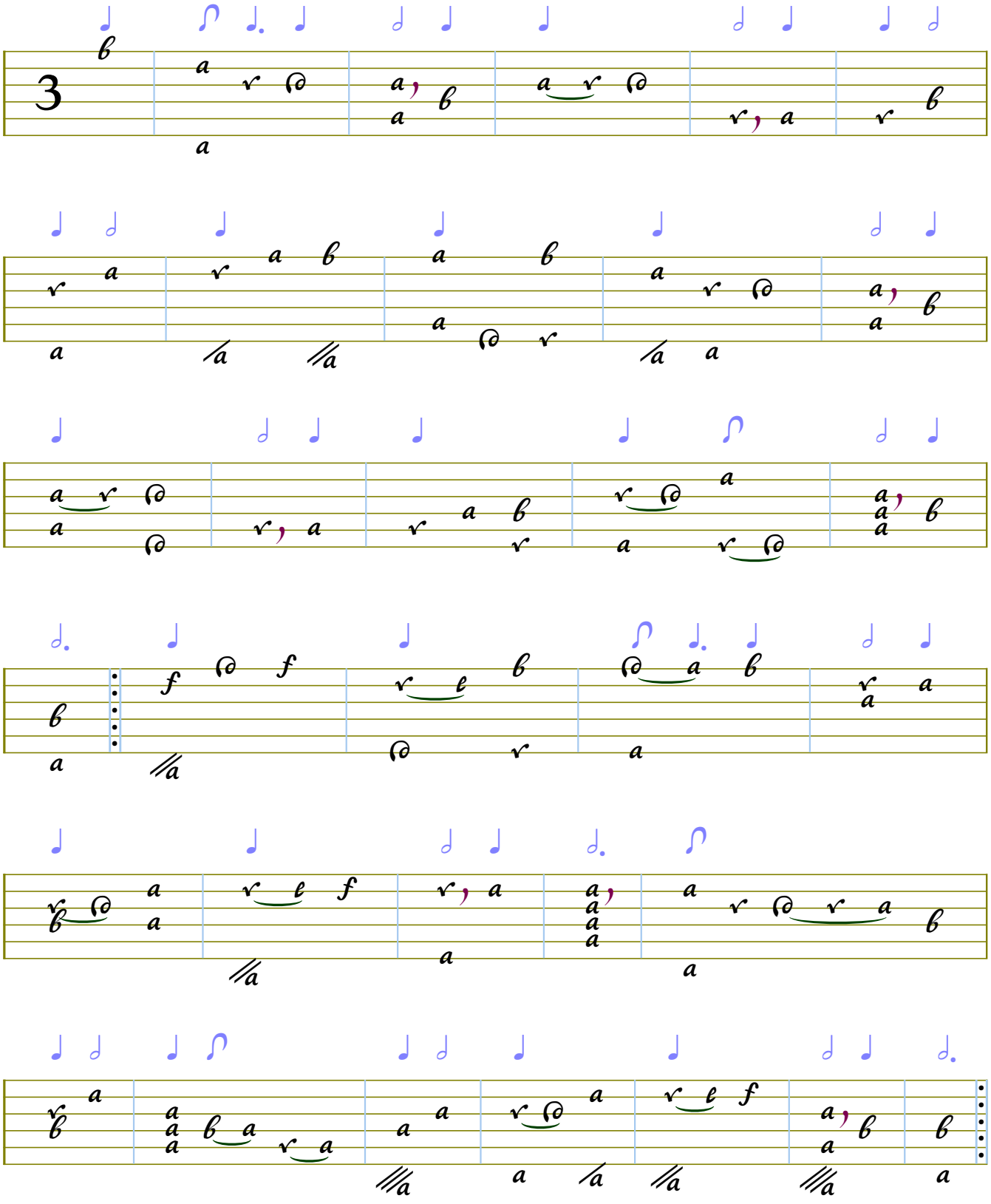
The captain shall not gett thee, by mr Beck



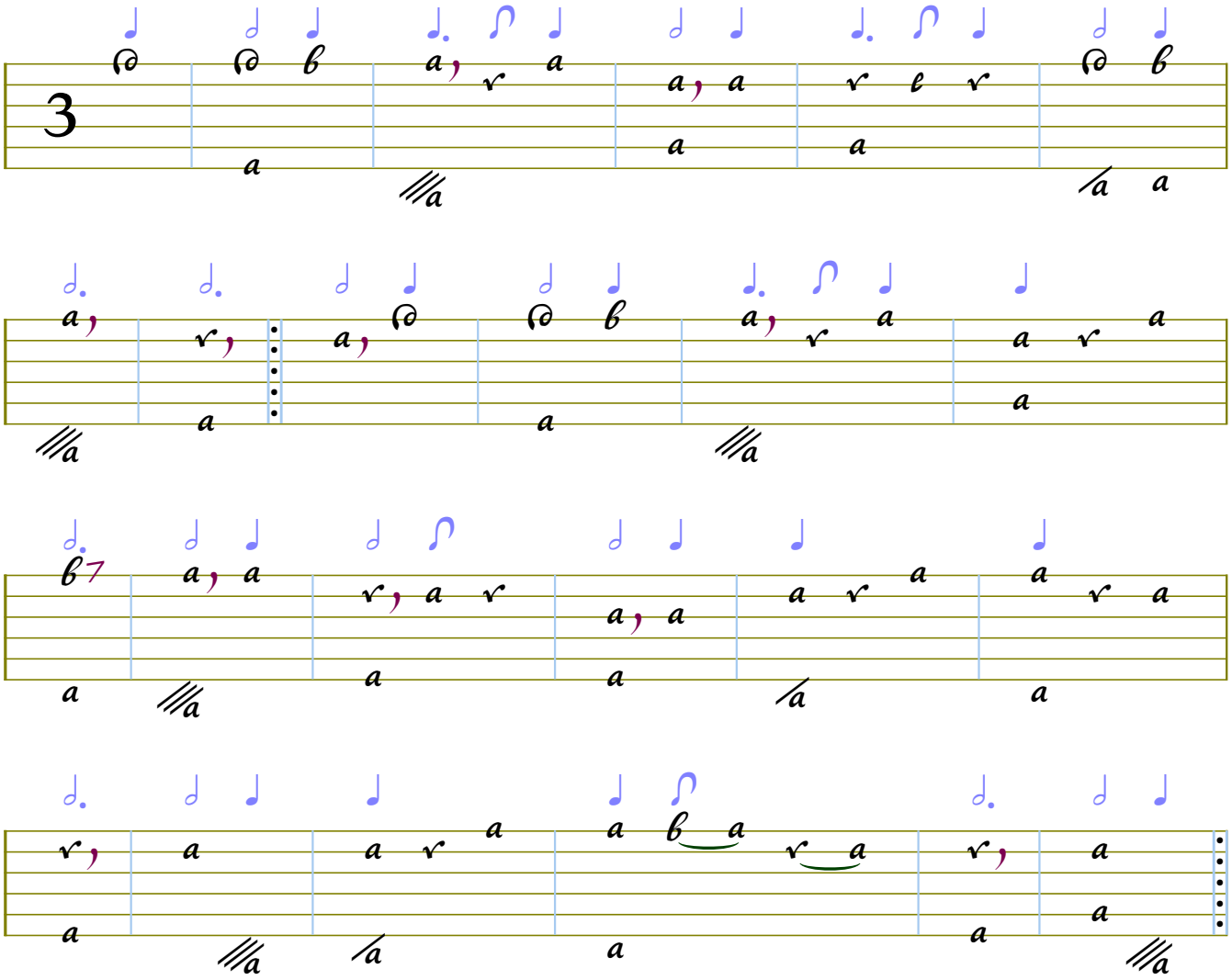


1. the last division, of this tune, comes in, at this mark, and the last excepting one, ends the air.

No charms above her, by mr. beck

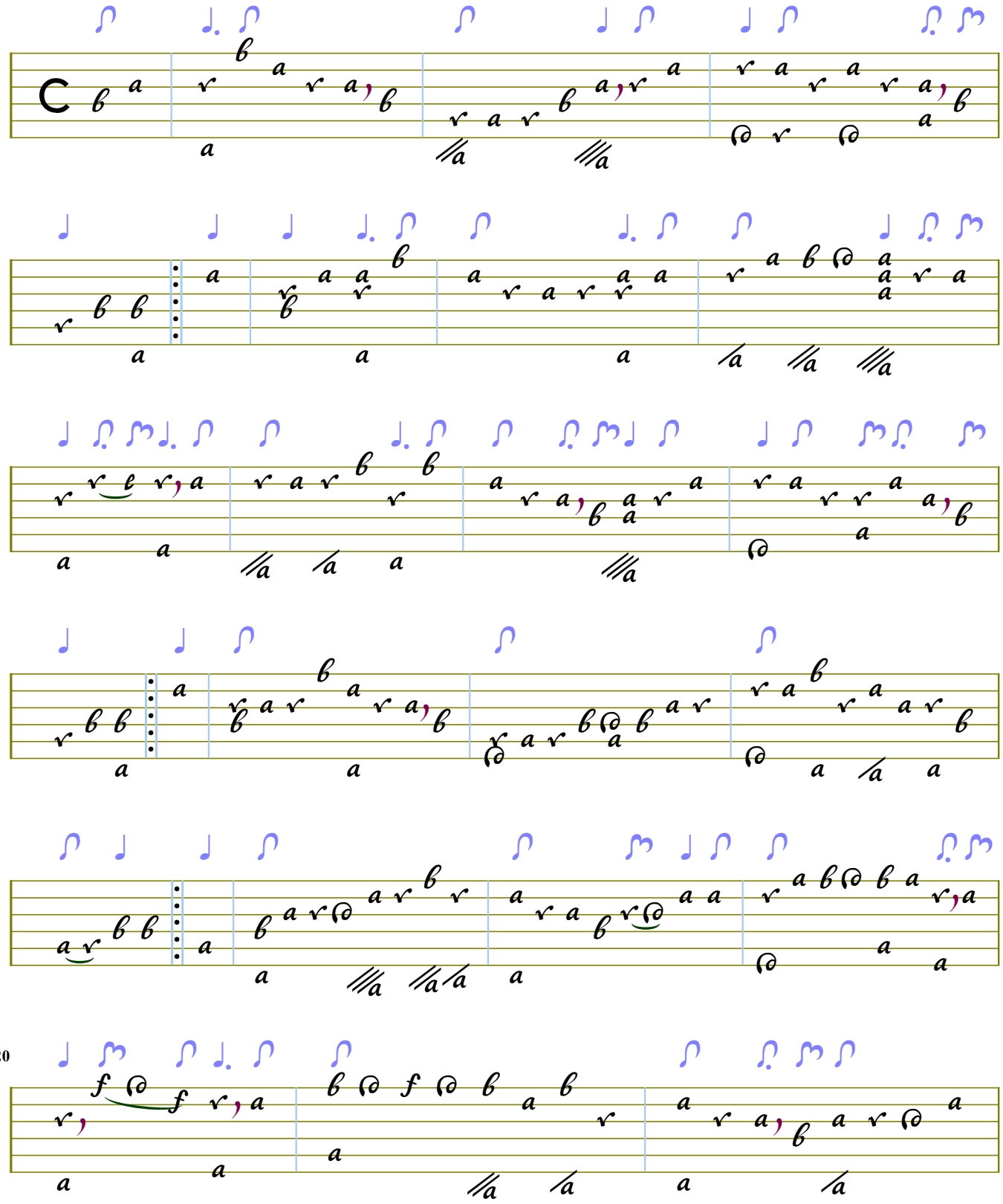


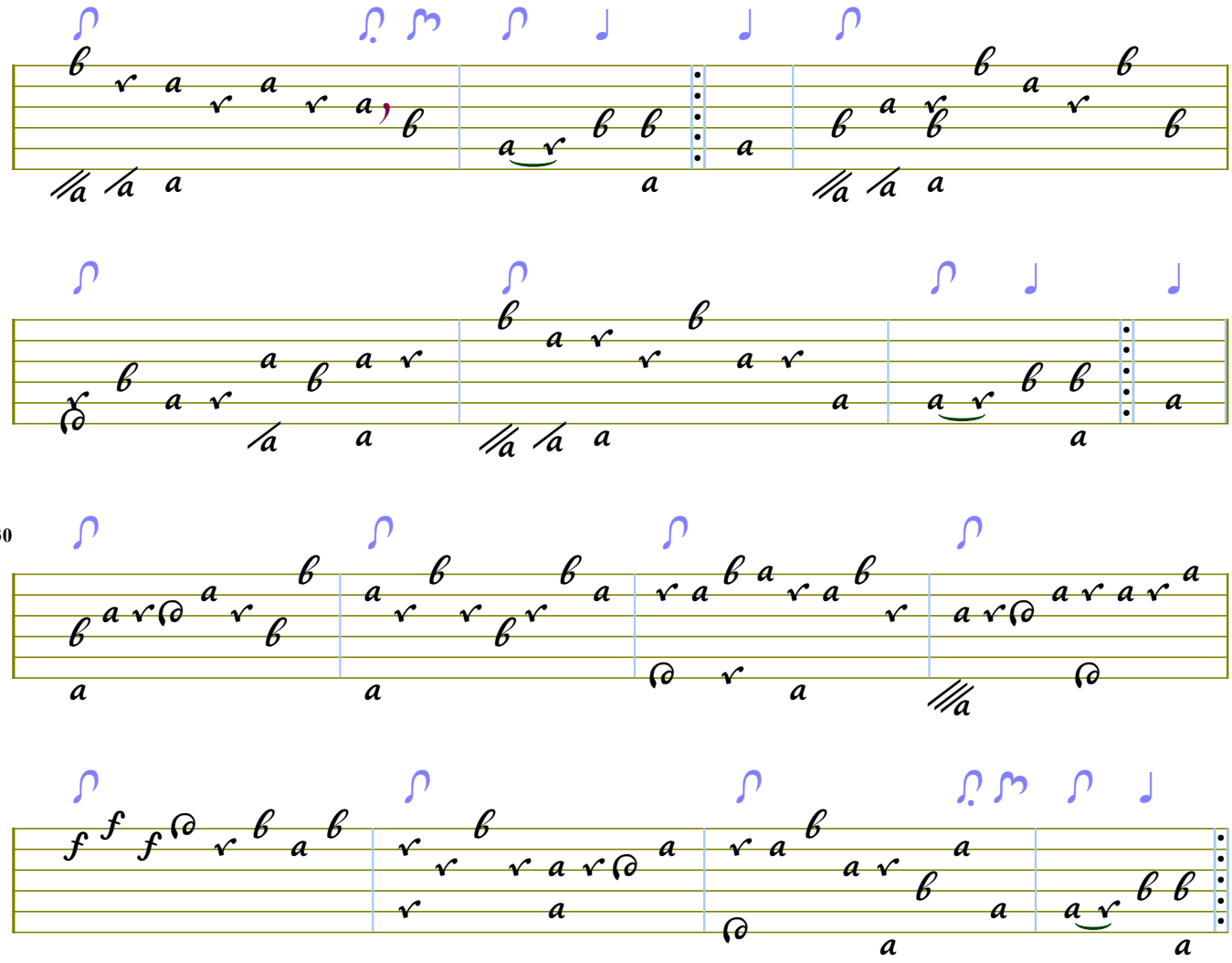
The king's Delight, by mr leslie



Sharp Tuning (A - d - f' - a - d' - f'#)

The lord Aboin's Air, or Welcome home, from London, by mr. Beck

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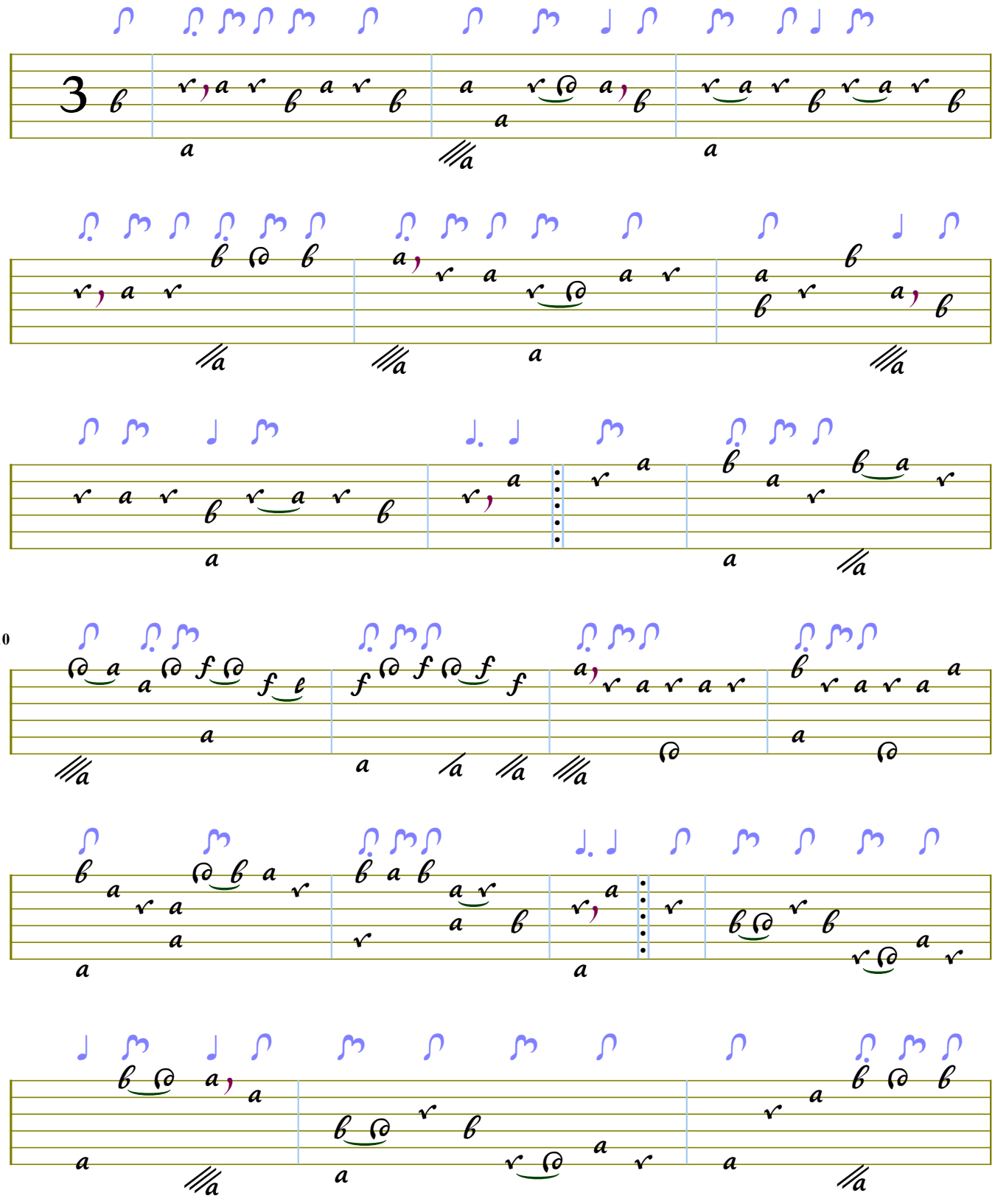
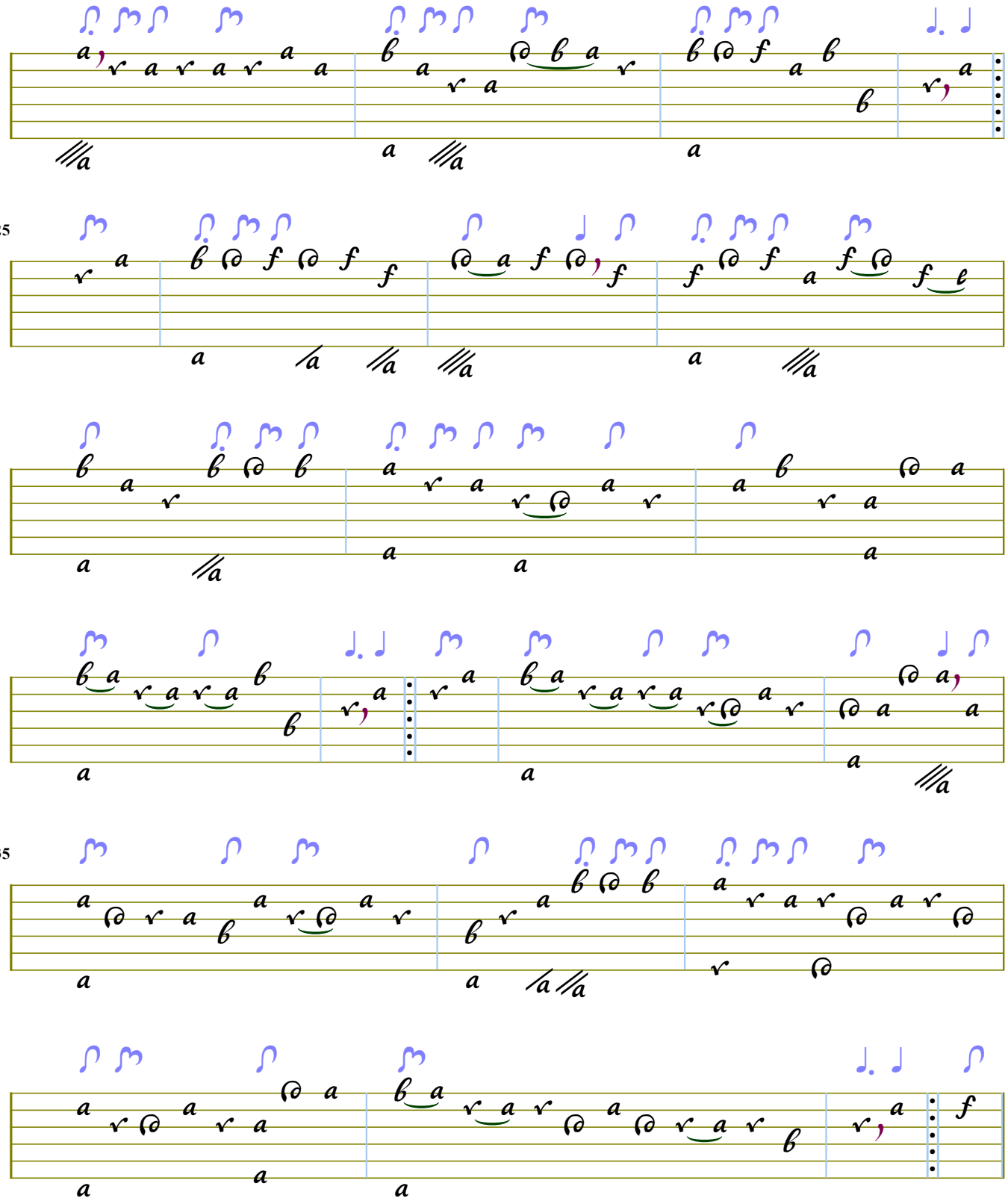
Wapp at the Widdow, my ladie, the new way, by mr. Beck

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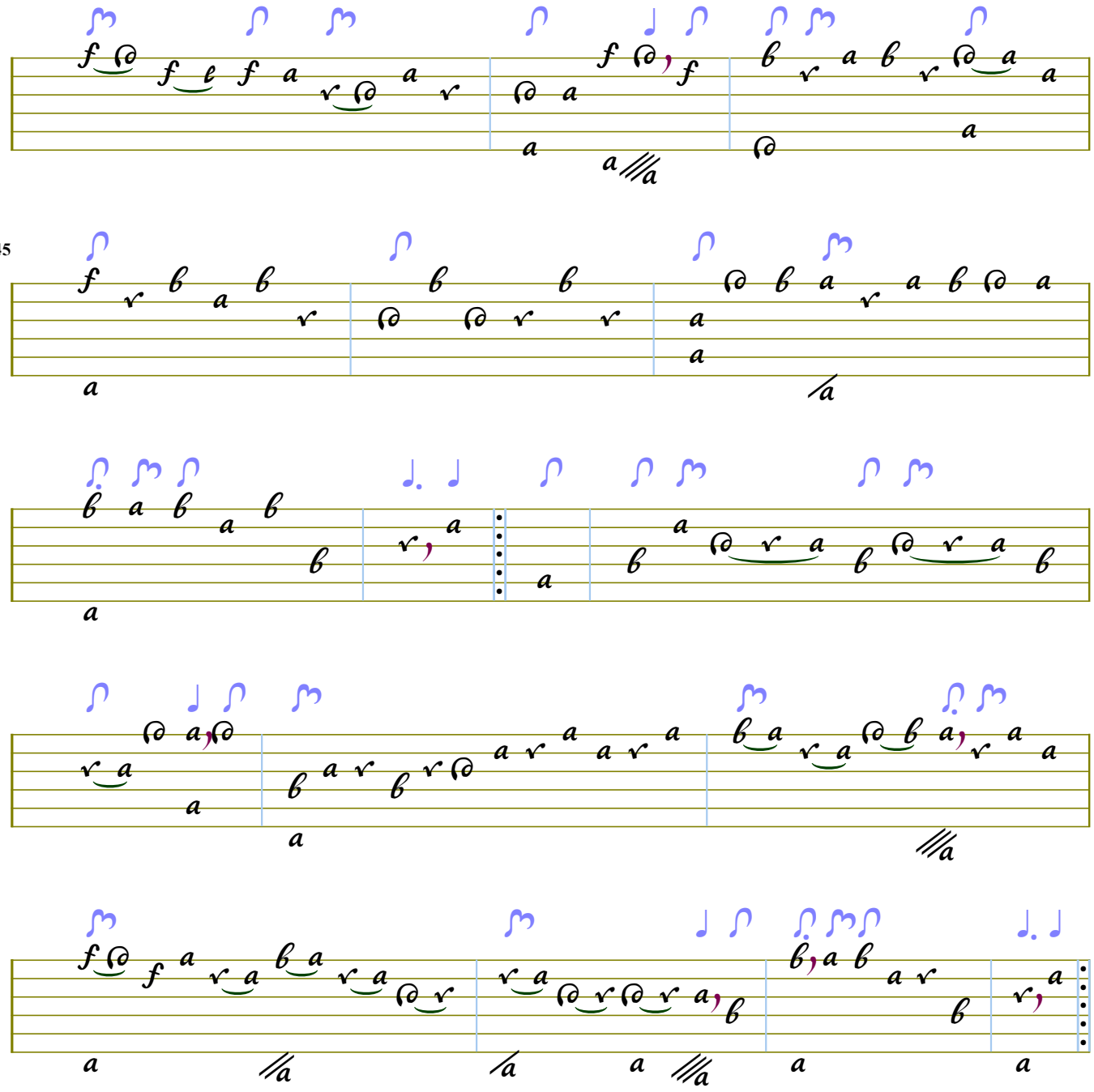
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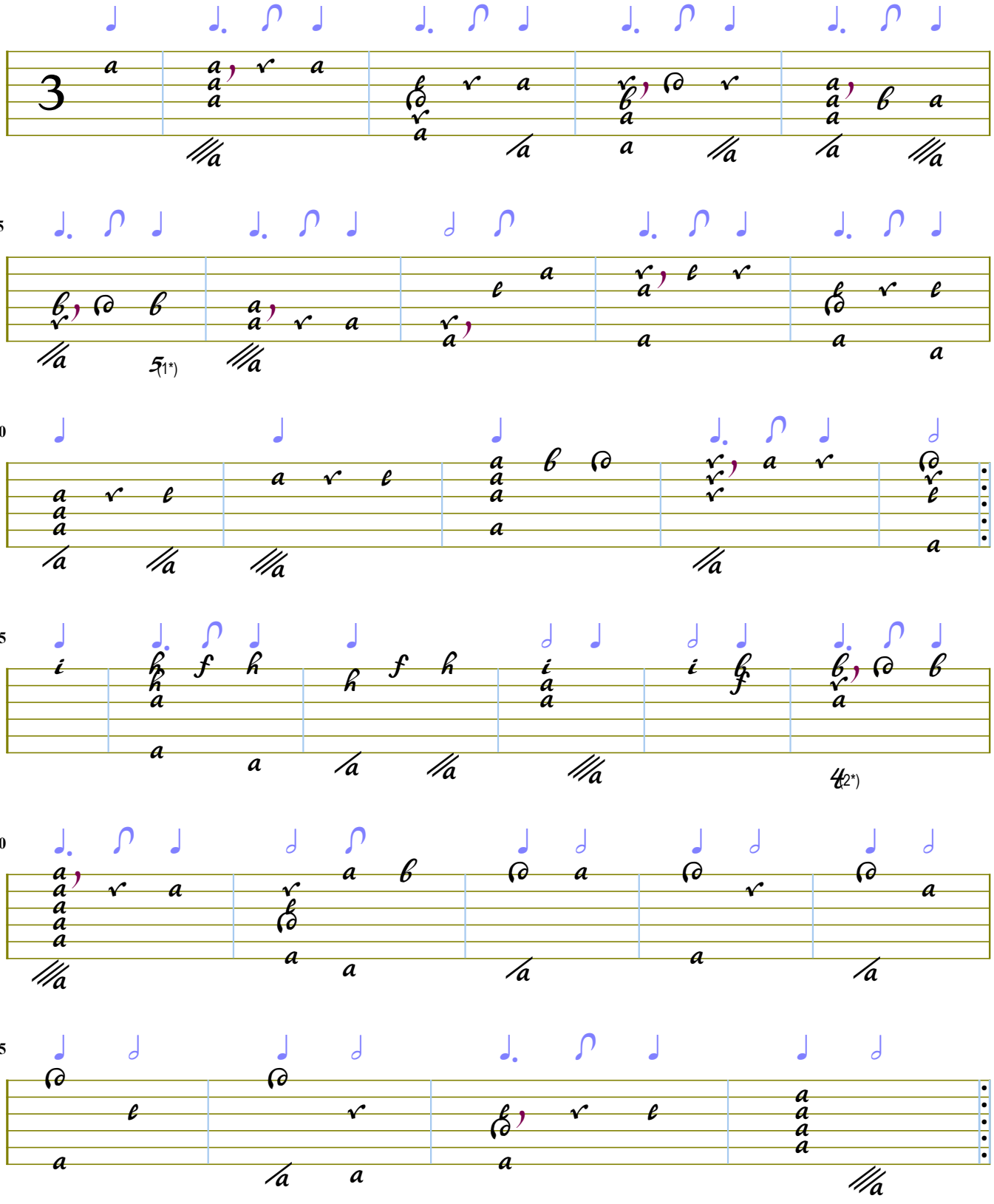
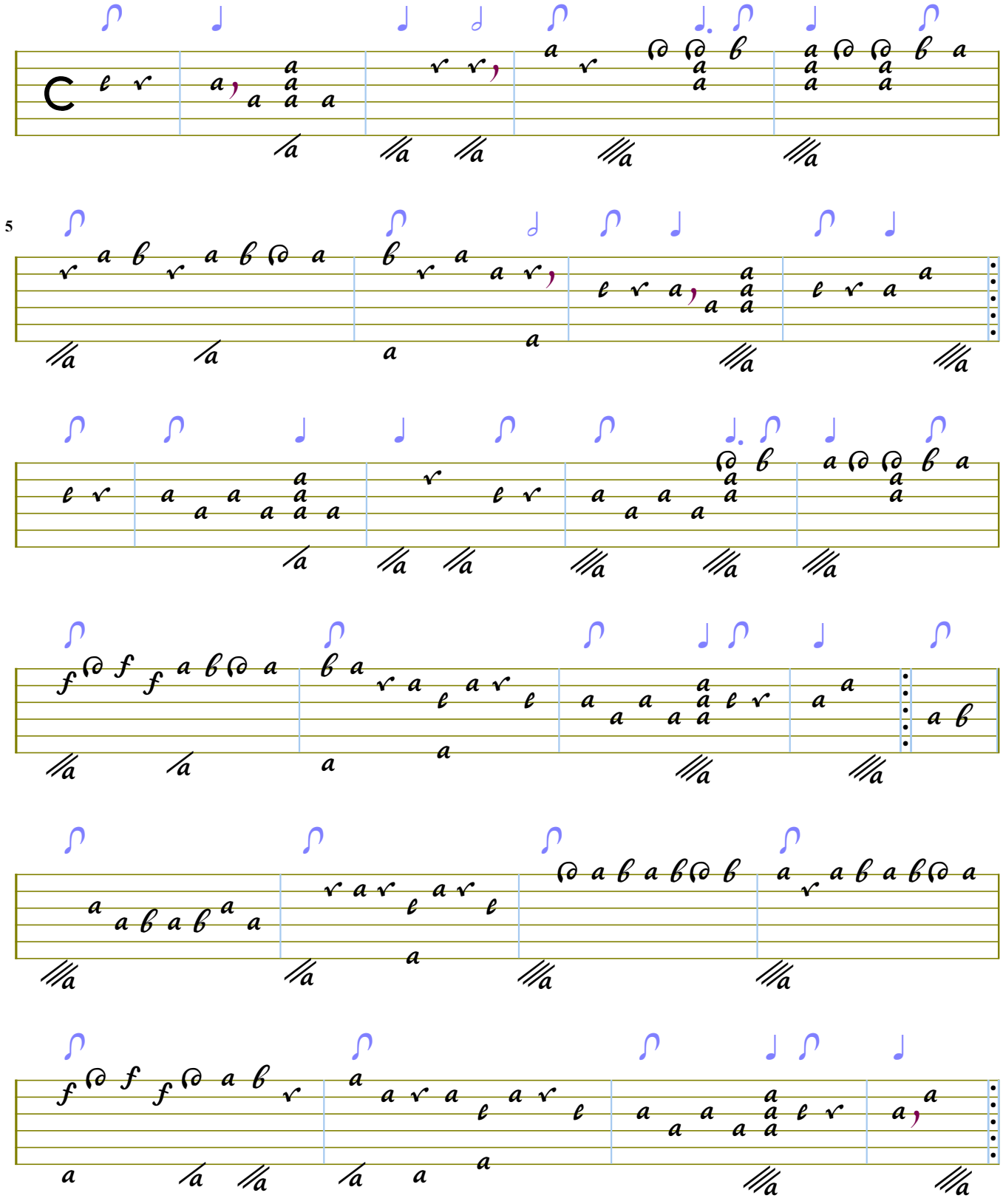
The Mytor's Randt, by david grieve



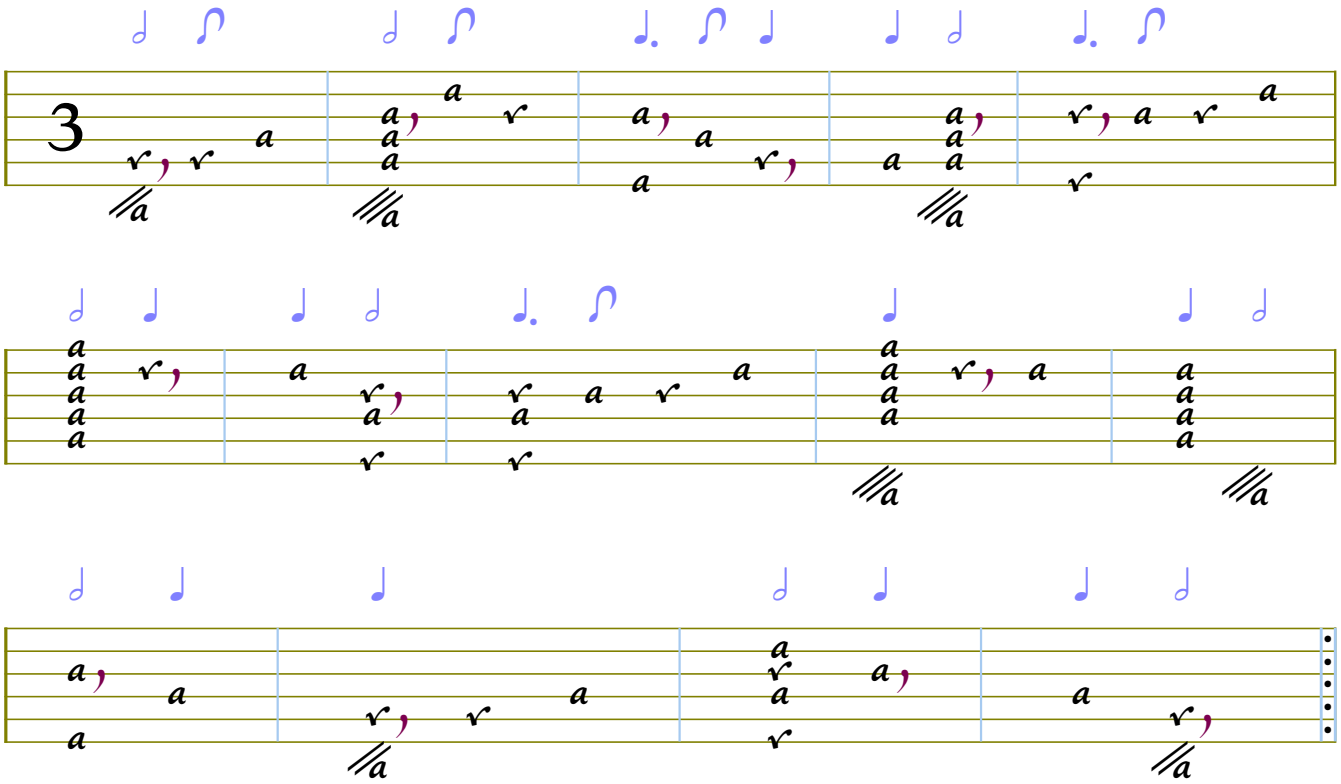
1. Orig: '4' (retuned)
2. Orig: '4' (retuned)

Over the moor, to Maggie, the old way, by david grieve

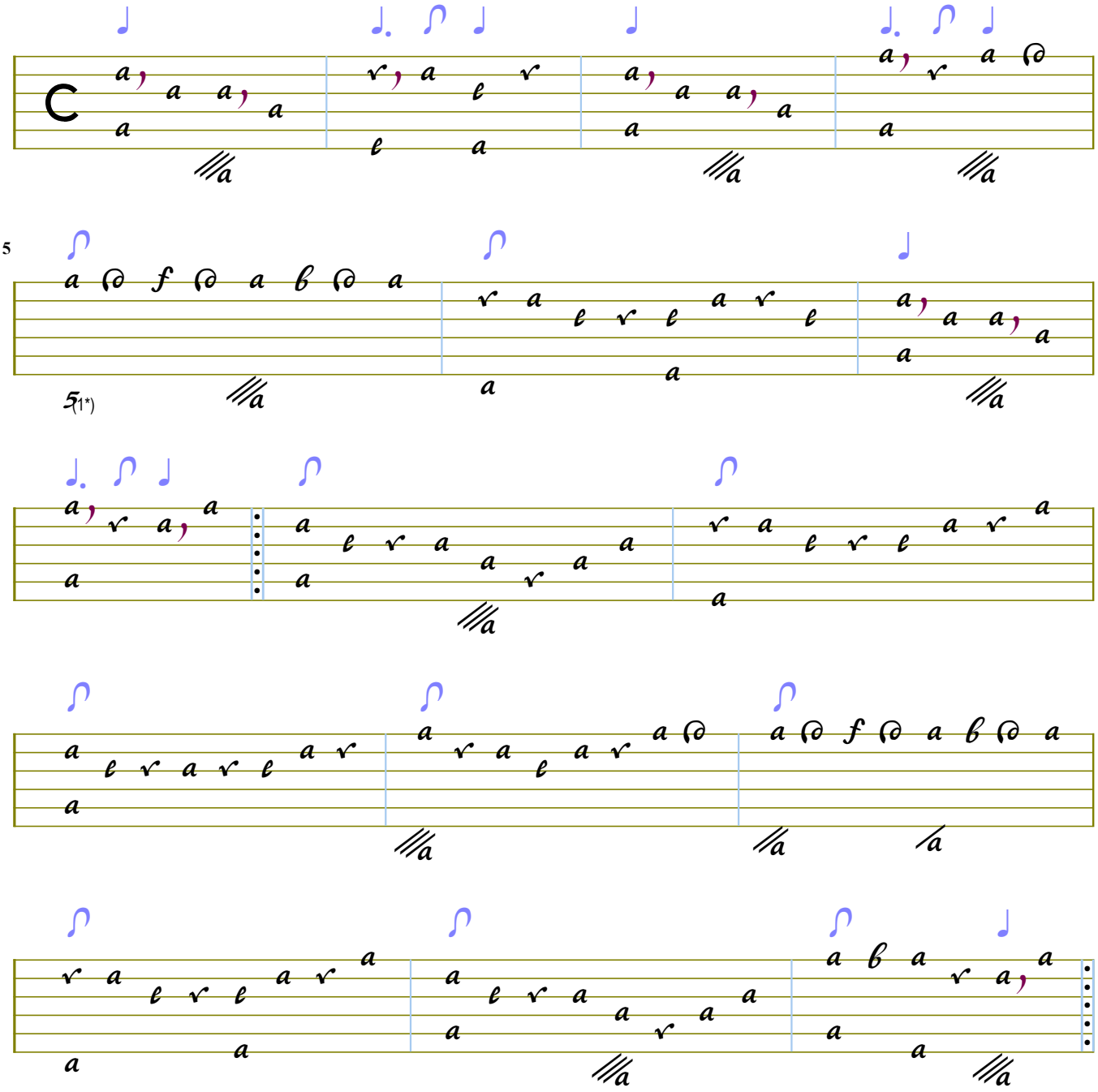


Sharp Tuning (A -d- f# - a - d' - f'#)

The brome of Caudinknows, by david grieve

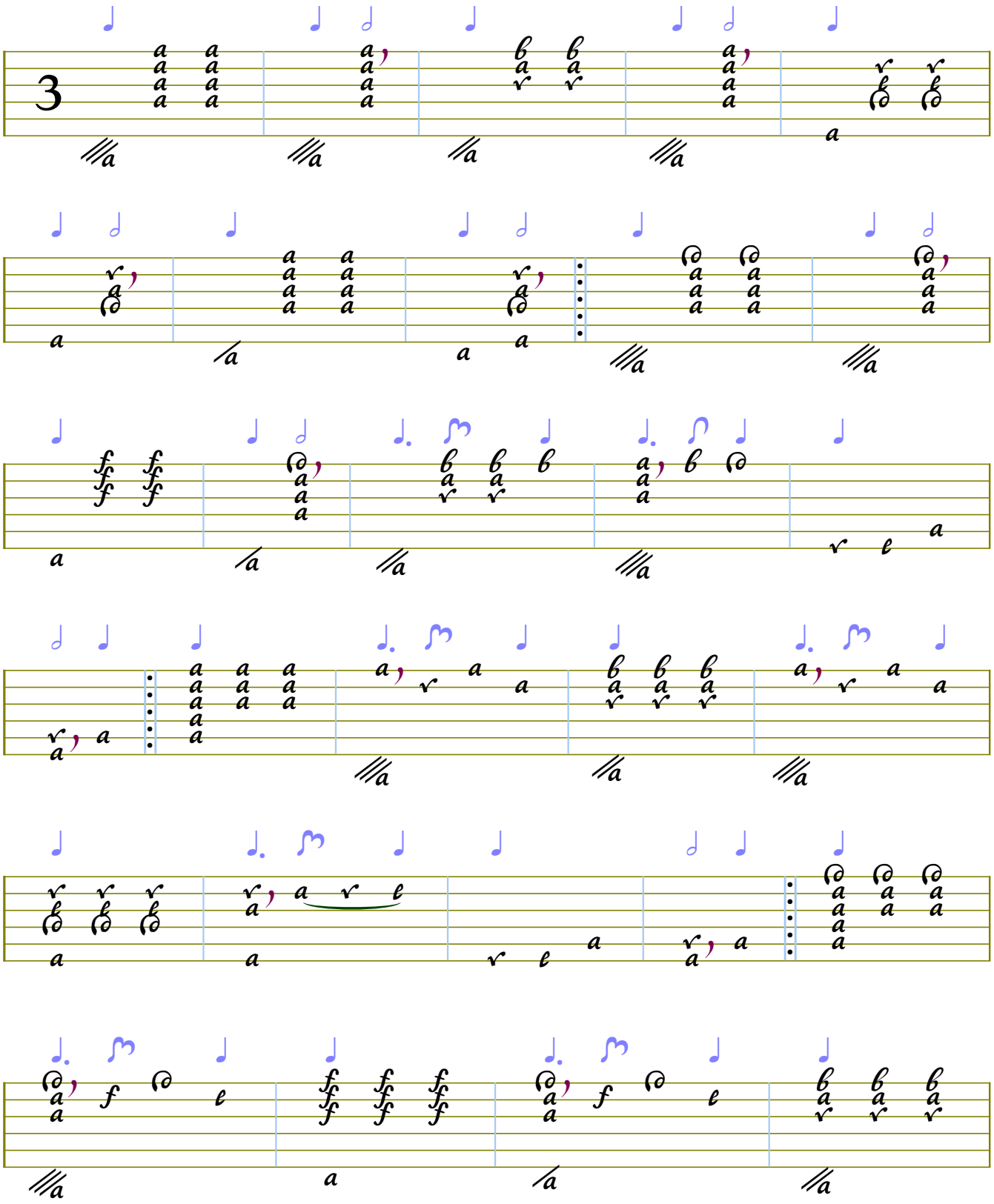


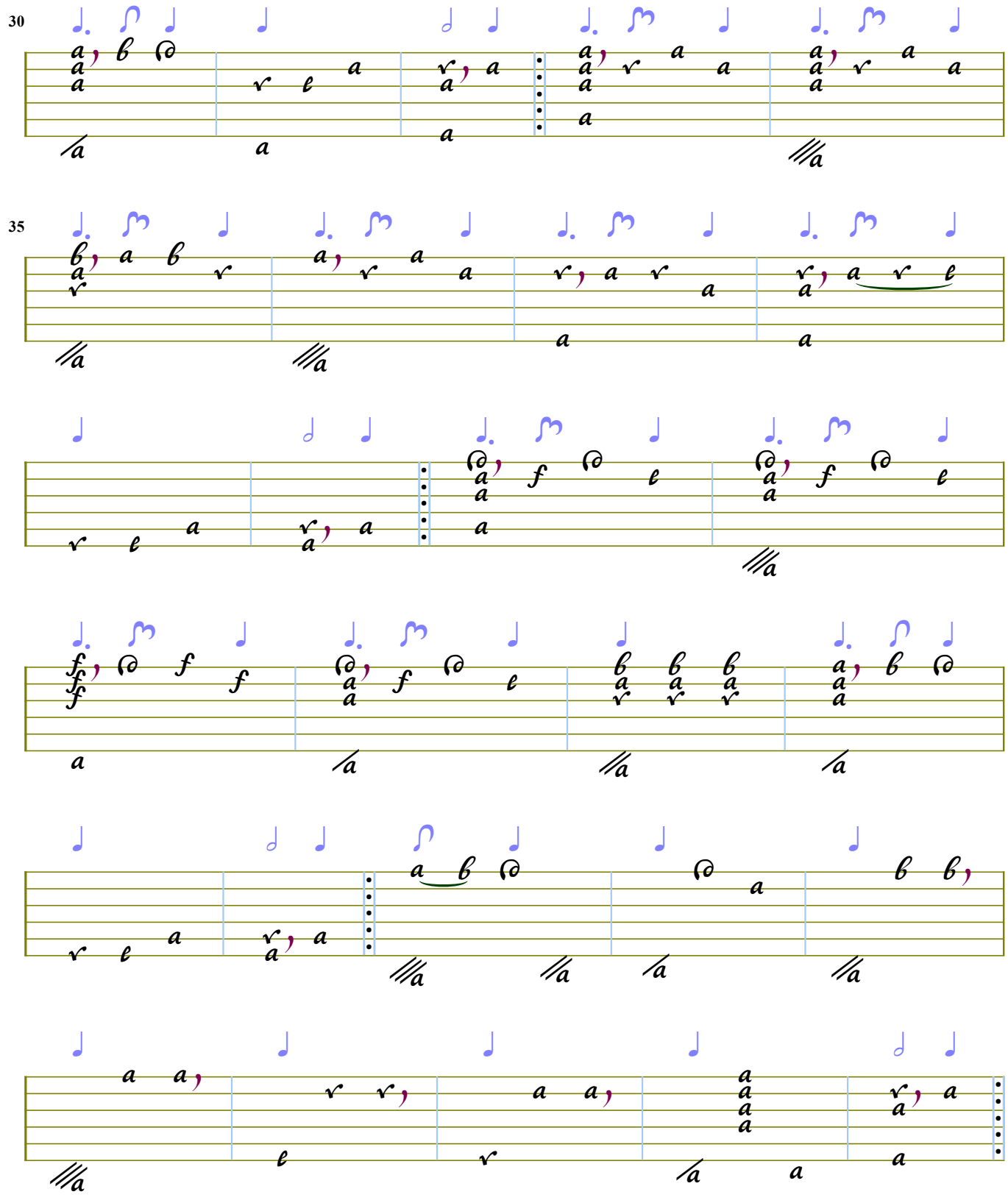
Minnie's dutie, by david grieve



1. Orig: '4' adjusted

Buckingham's Sarraband, mr leslie's way, worth nothing

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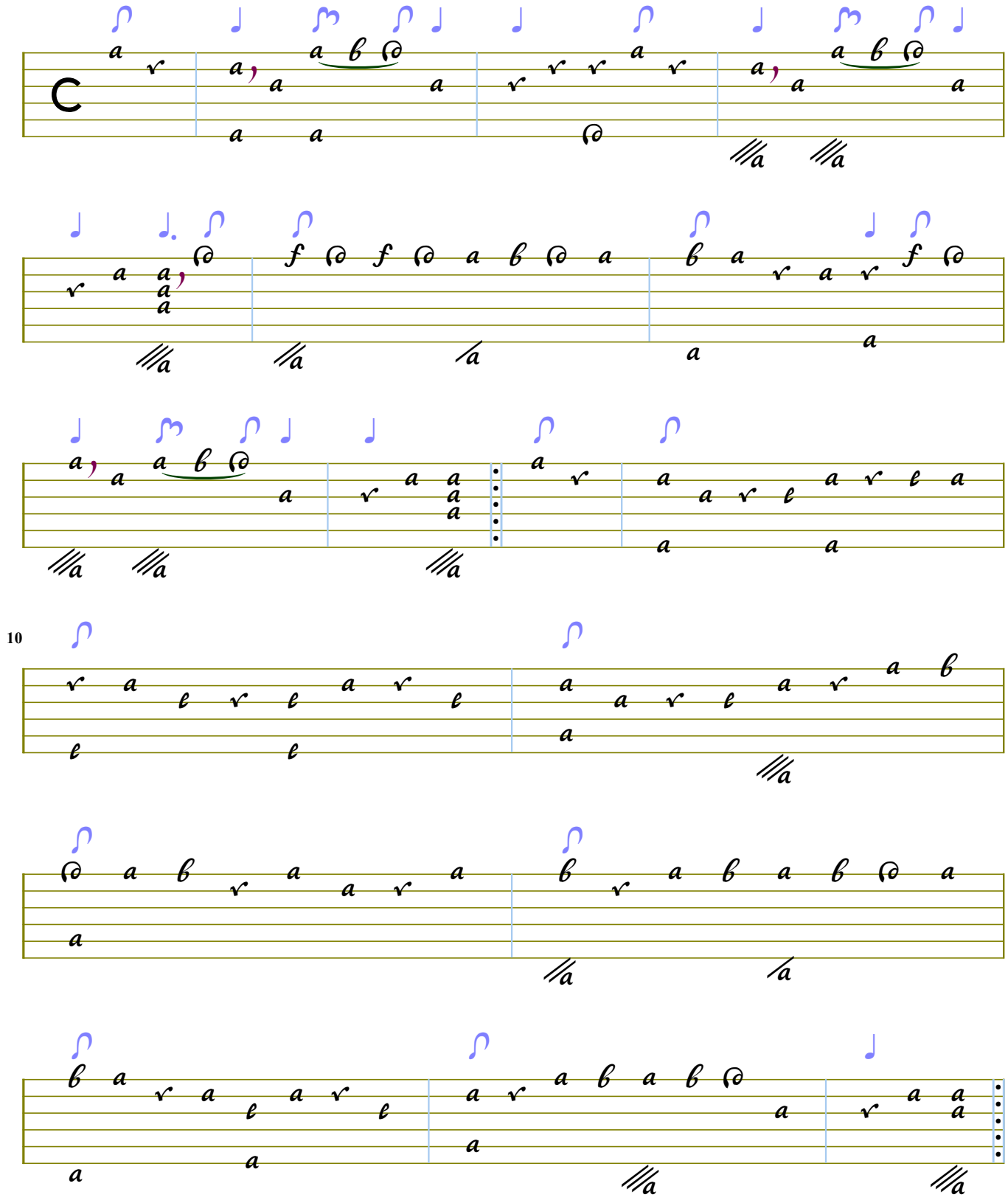
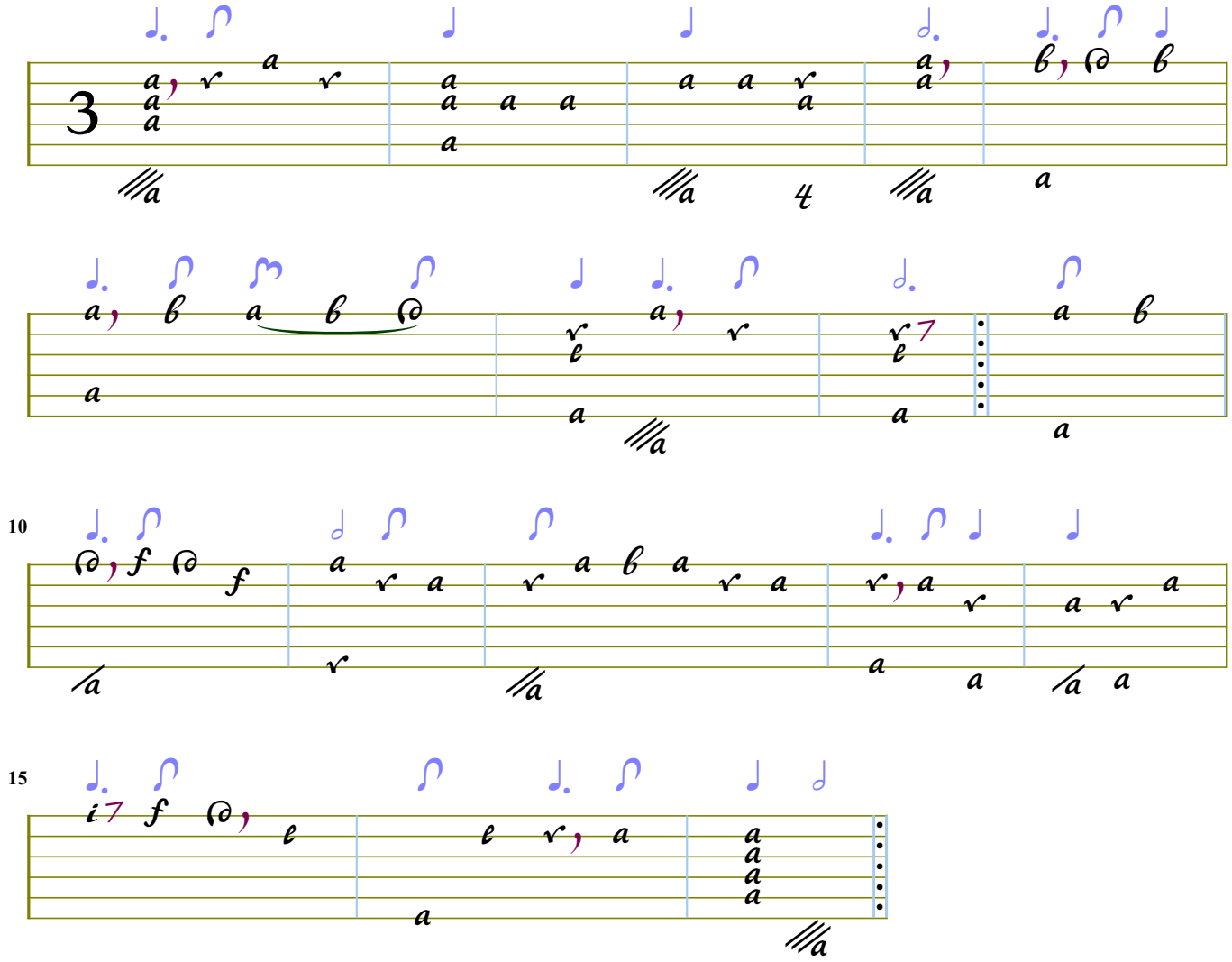
Sharp Tuning (A - d - f# - a - d' - f'#)

I love my love in secret, mr leslie's way

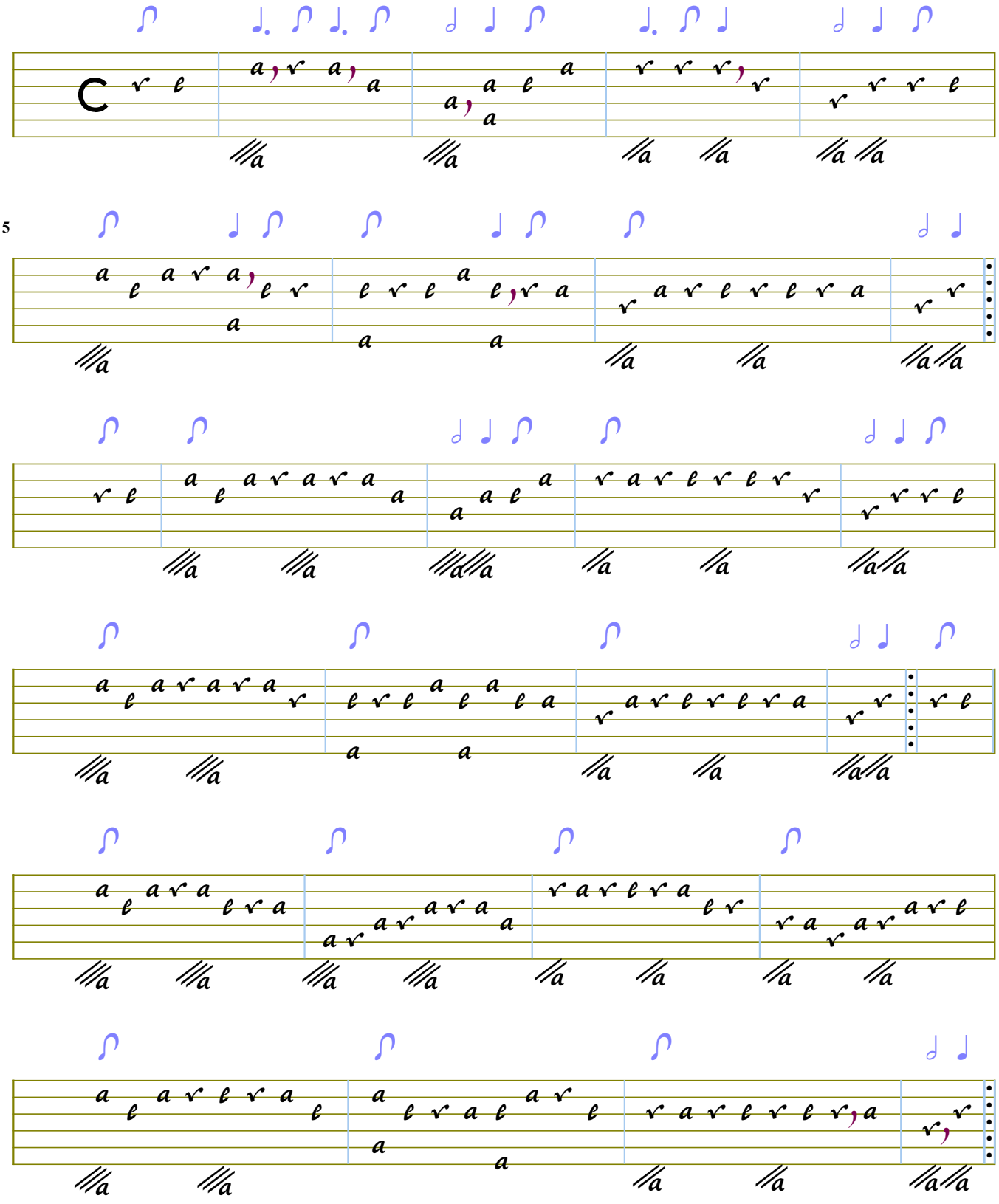


Franking is fled away, mr leslie's way

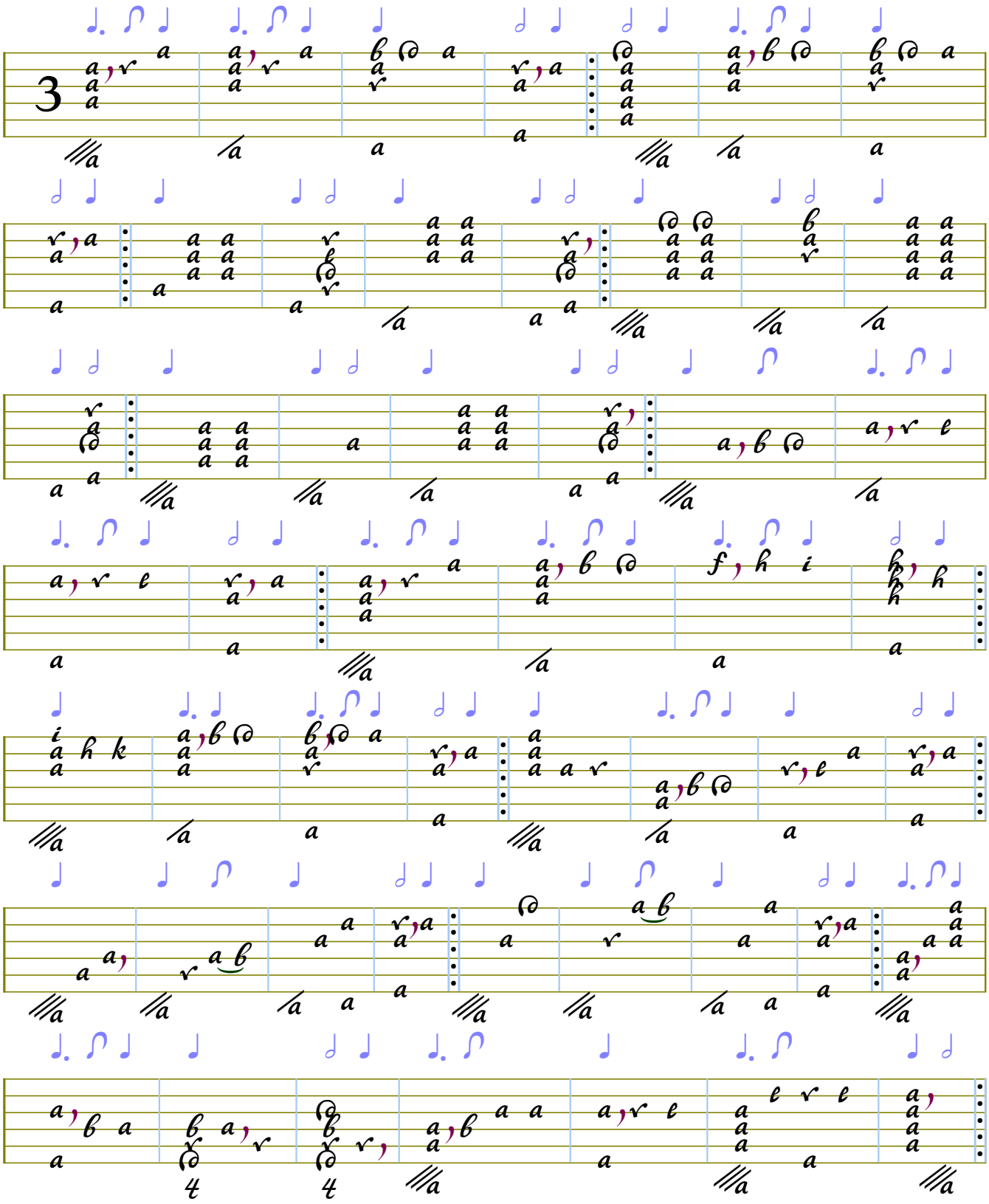


Sharp Tuning (A - d - f# - a d' f'#)

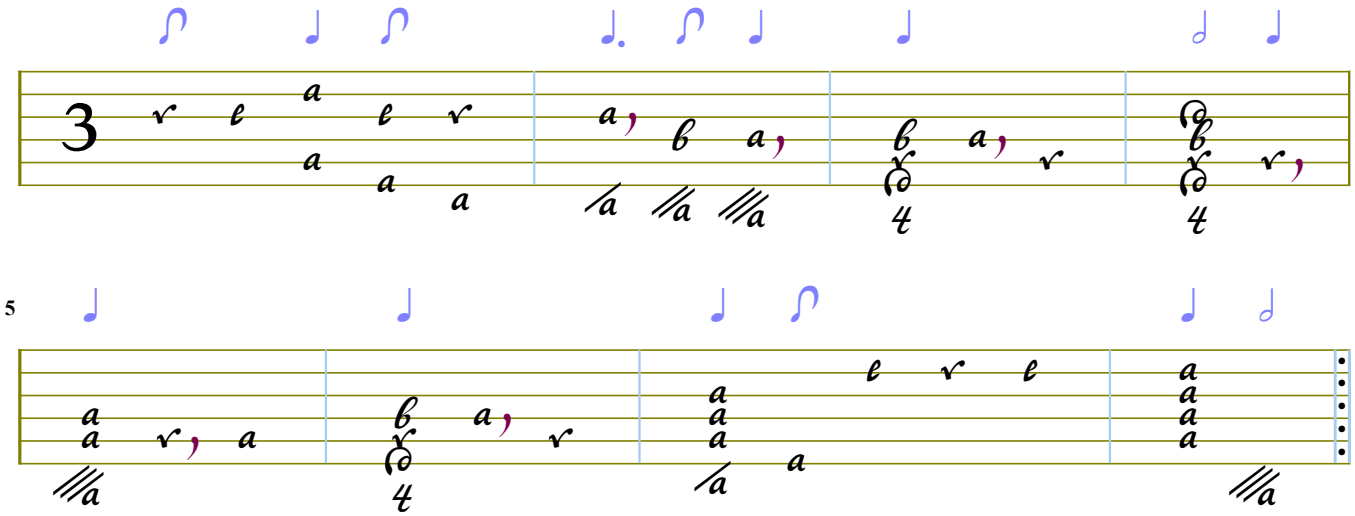
The Parliaments Rantt, david grieve's way



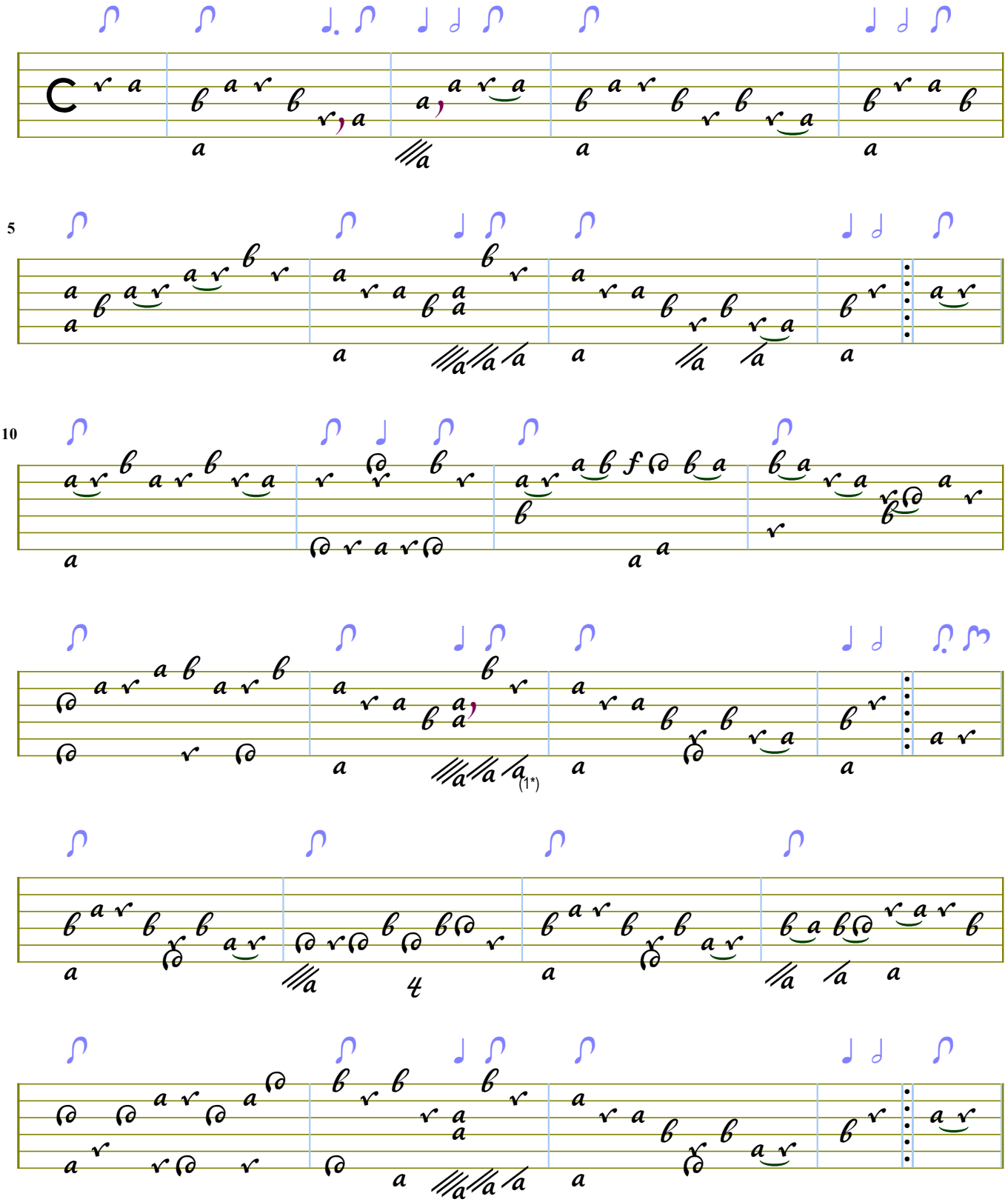
The Canaries, mr leslie's way



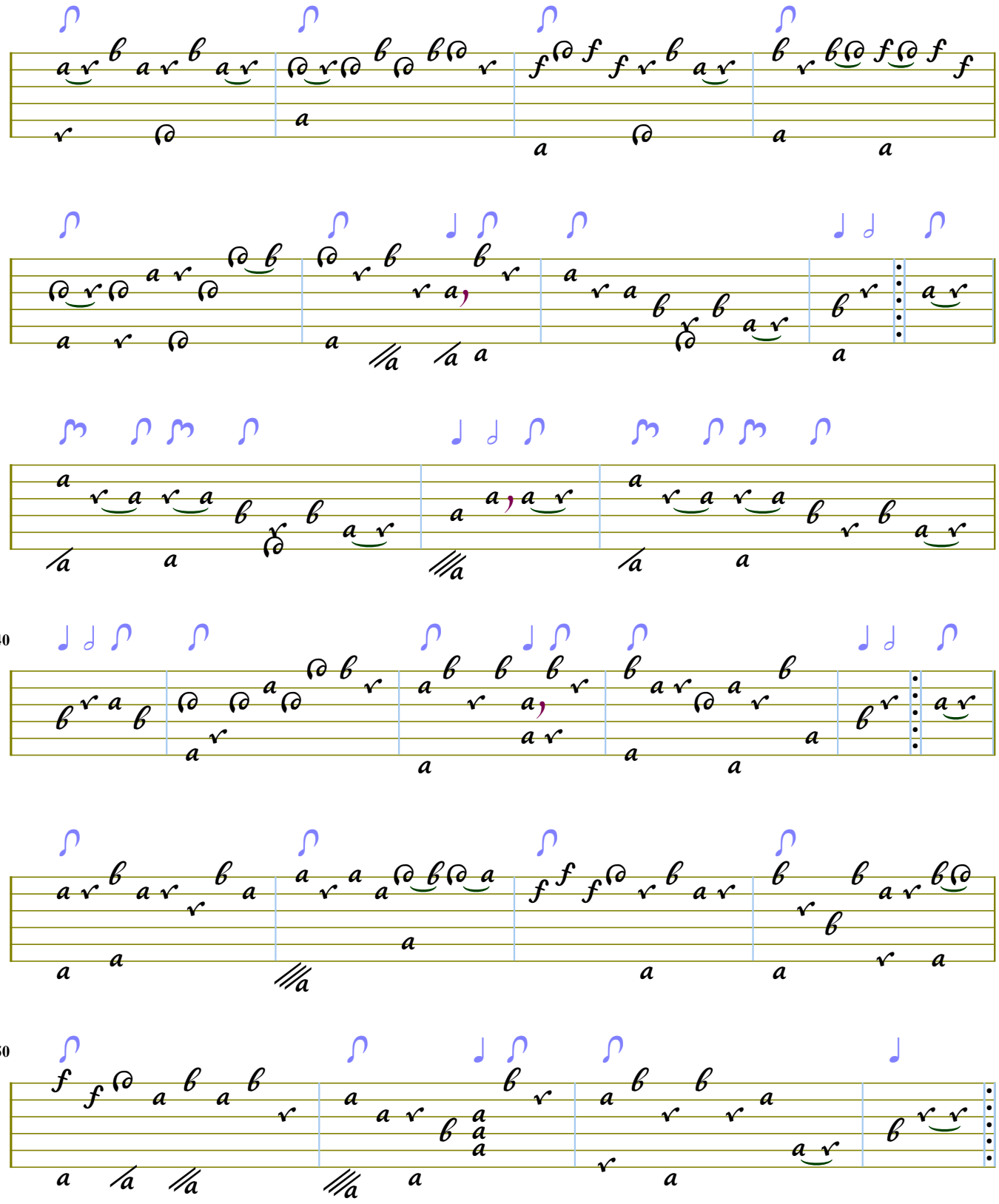
News are come to town, with the 11th lowed half a note, mr leslies way



The captain shall not gett thee, mr. Beck's way, right marked



1. Bass added - as elsewhere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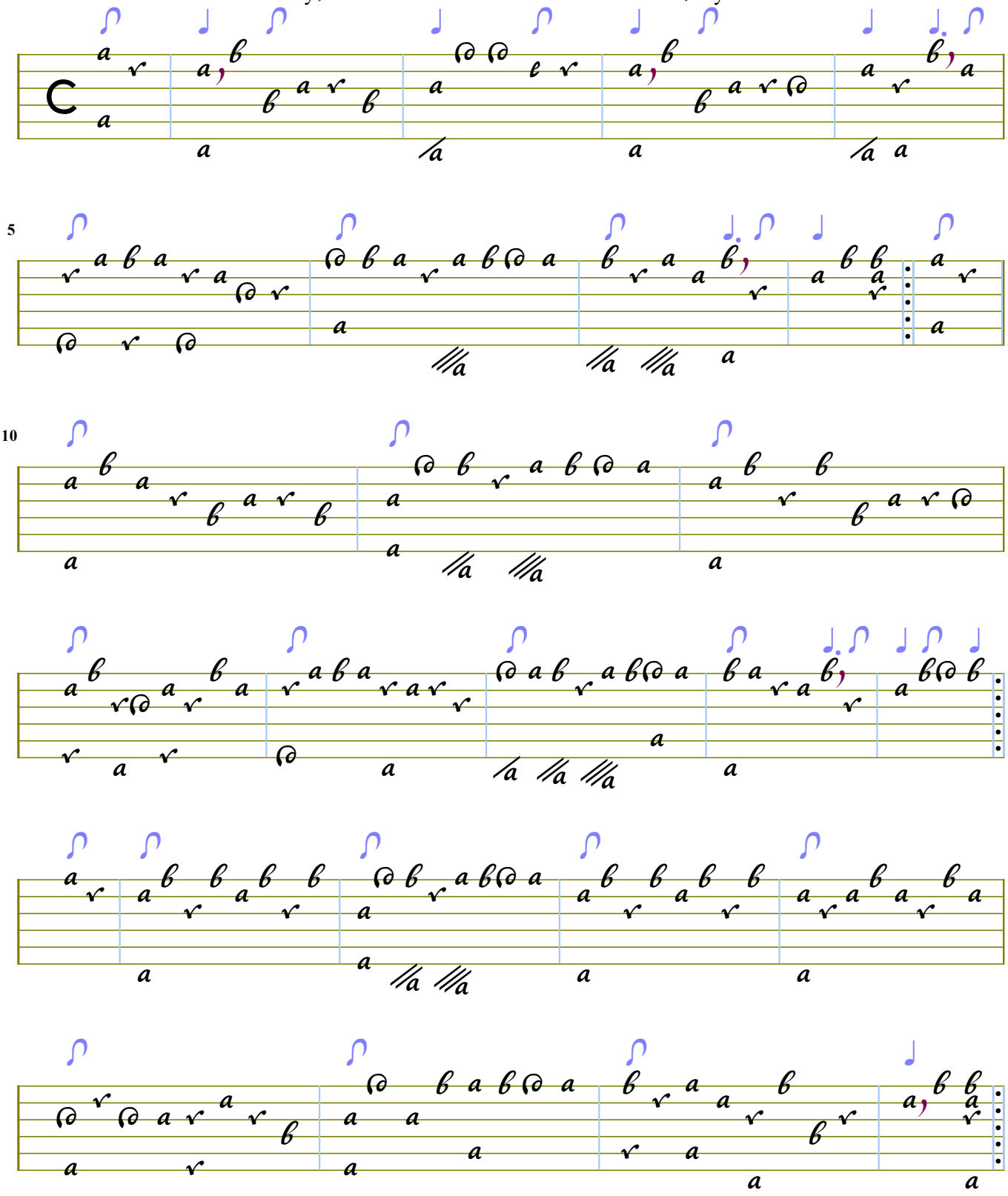
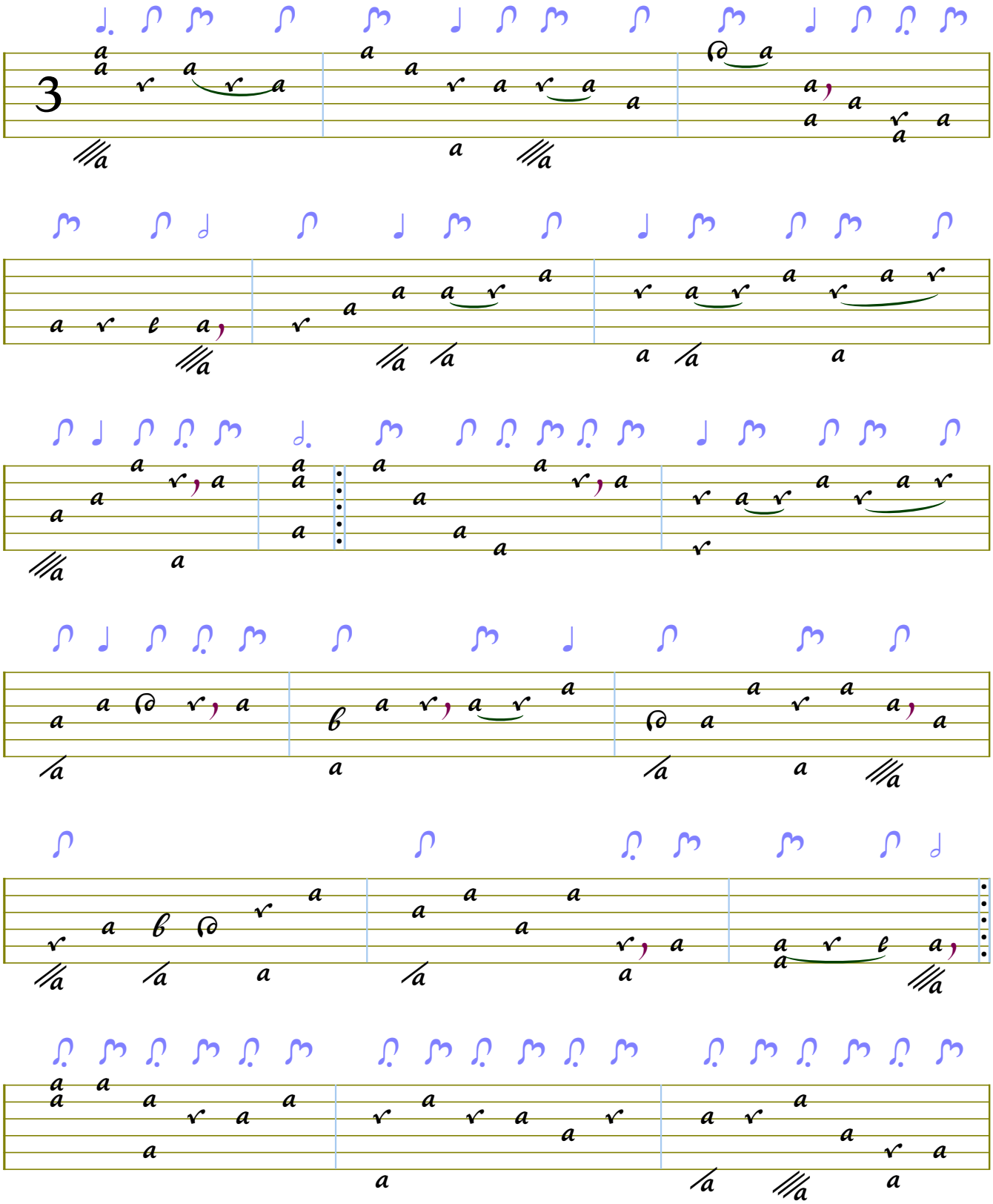
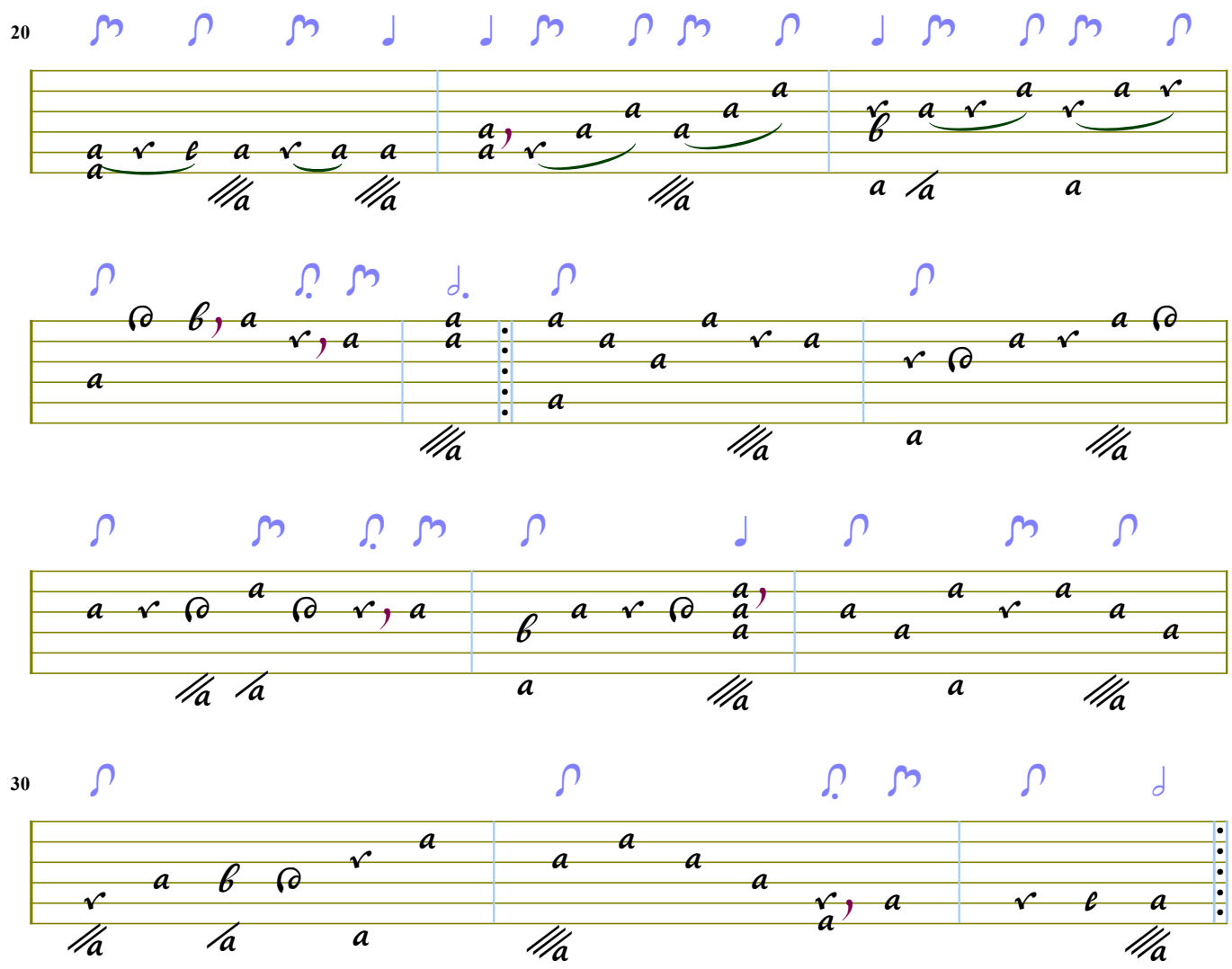
Over the moore, to maggie,
the old way, in mr macklachlan's fashion, by mr Beck



Cromlick's lilt, mr macklachlan's way, by mr Beck

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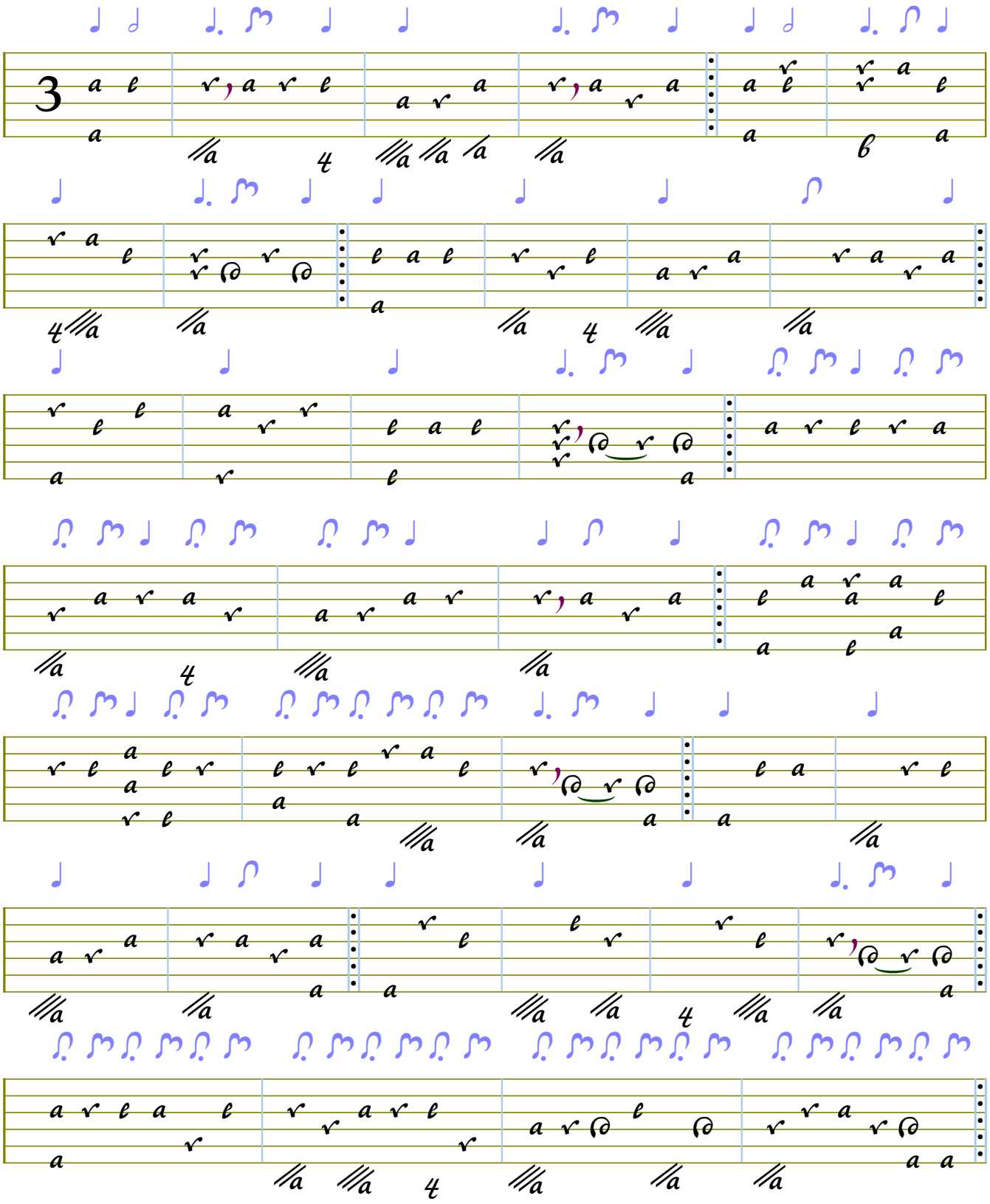
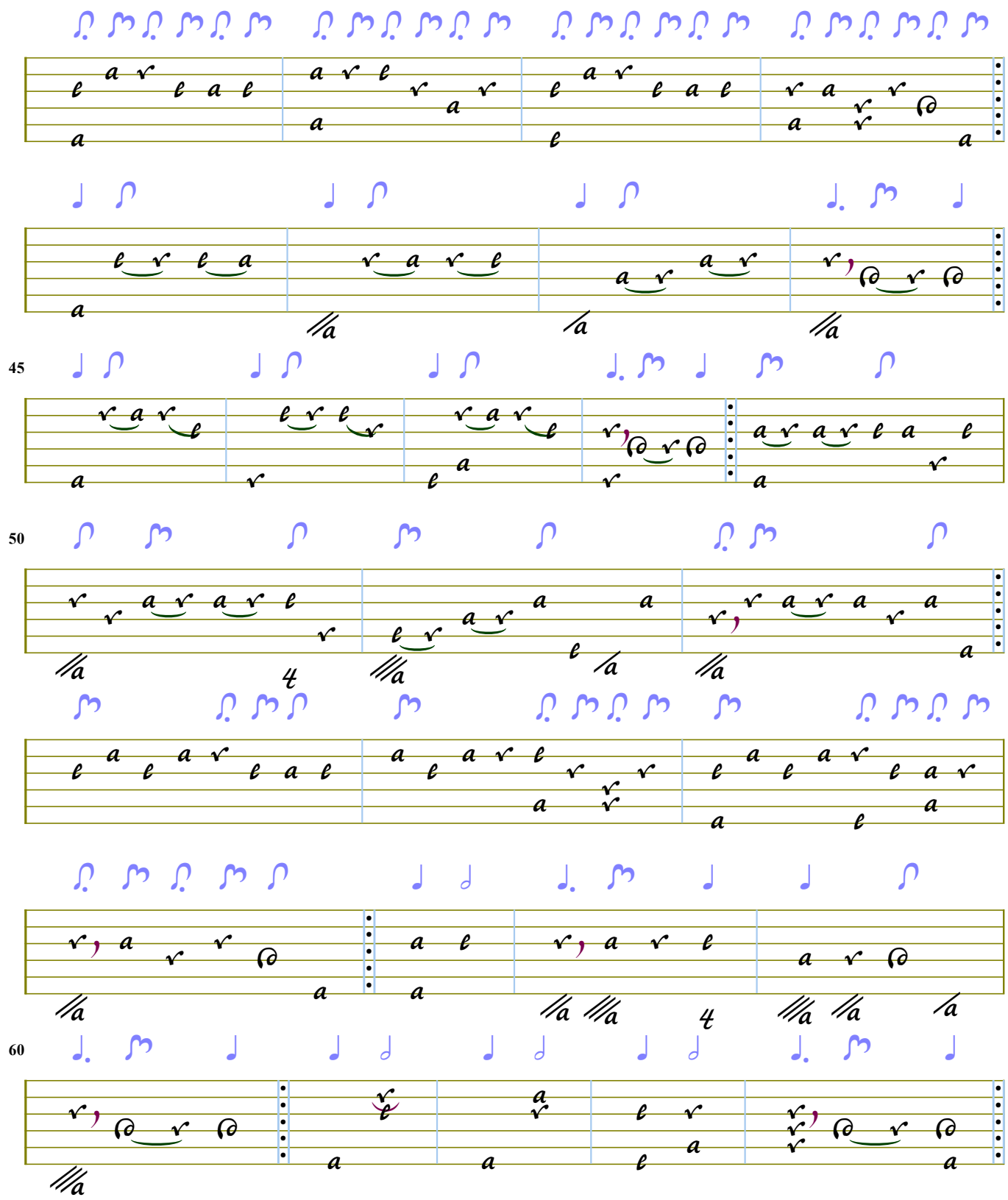
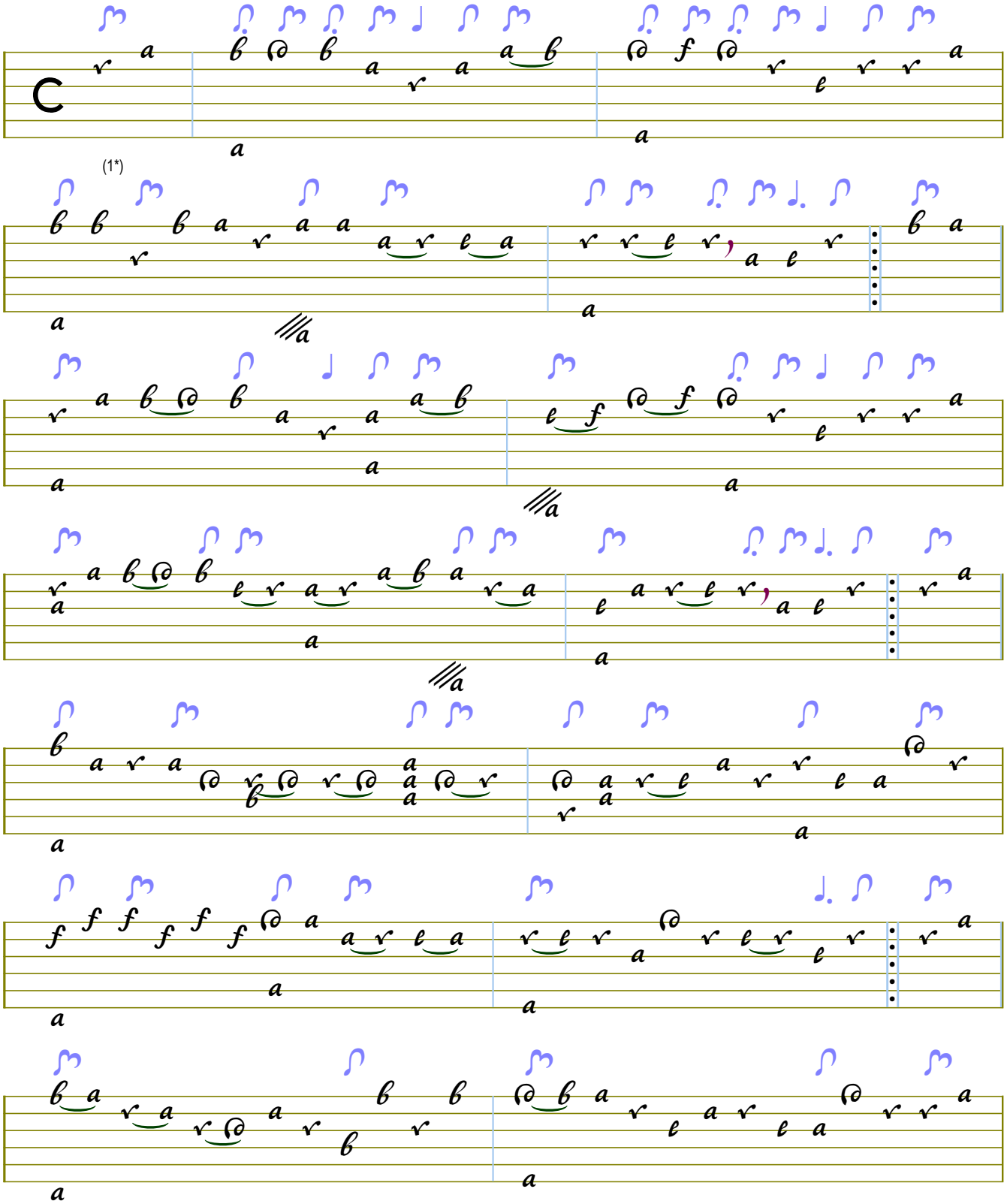
Minuett, mr. Beck's way



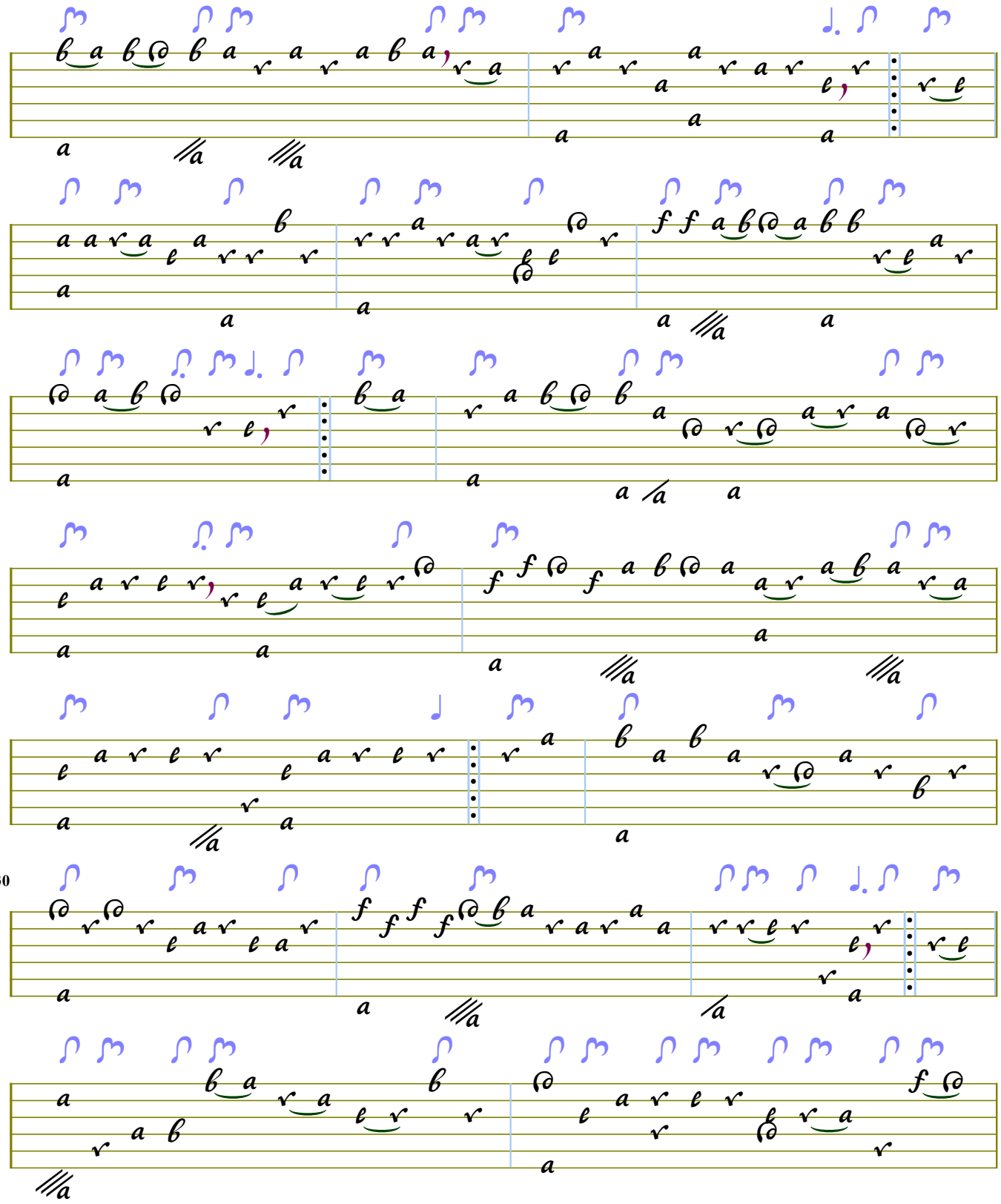

45
50
60

Sharp Tuning /A - d - f# - a - d' - f'#)

The Parliament's Rant, mr macklauland's way, by mr Beck



1. After the piece's title: "to want the 10th measure, and to have another in its roome, sent to me by mr. Beck / all is amended"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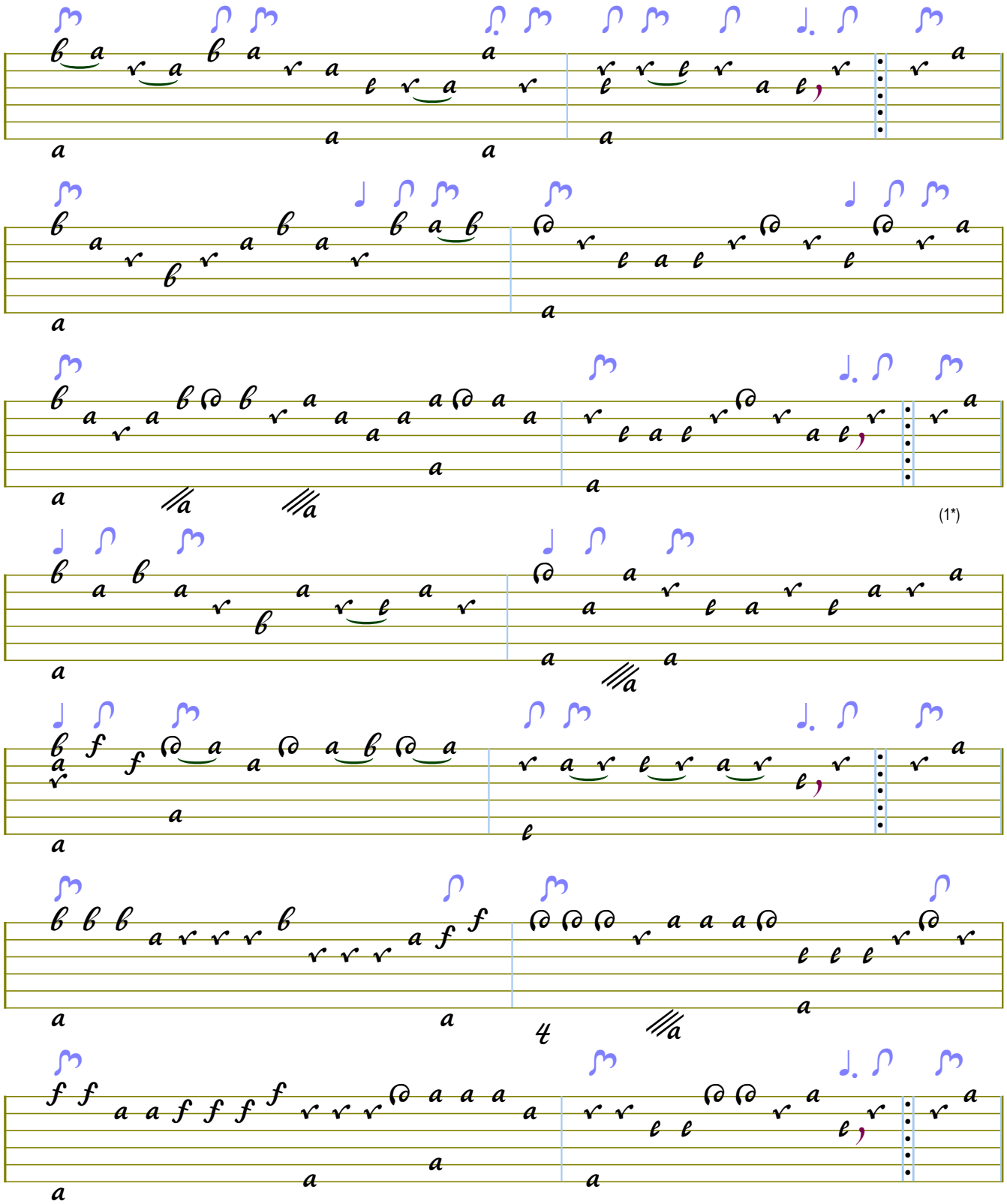
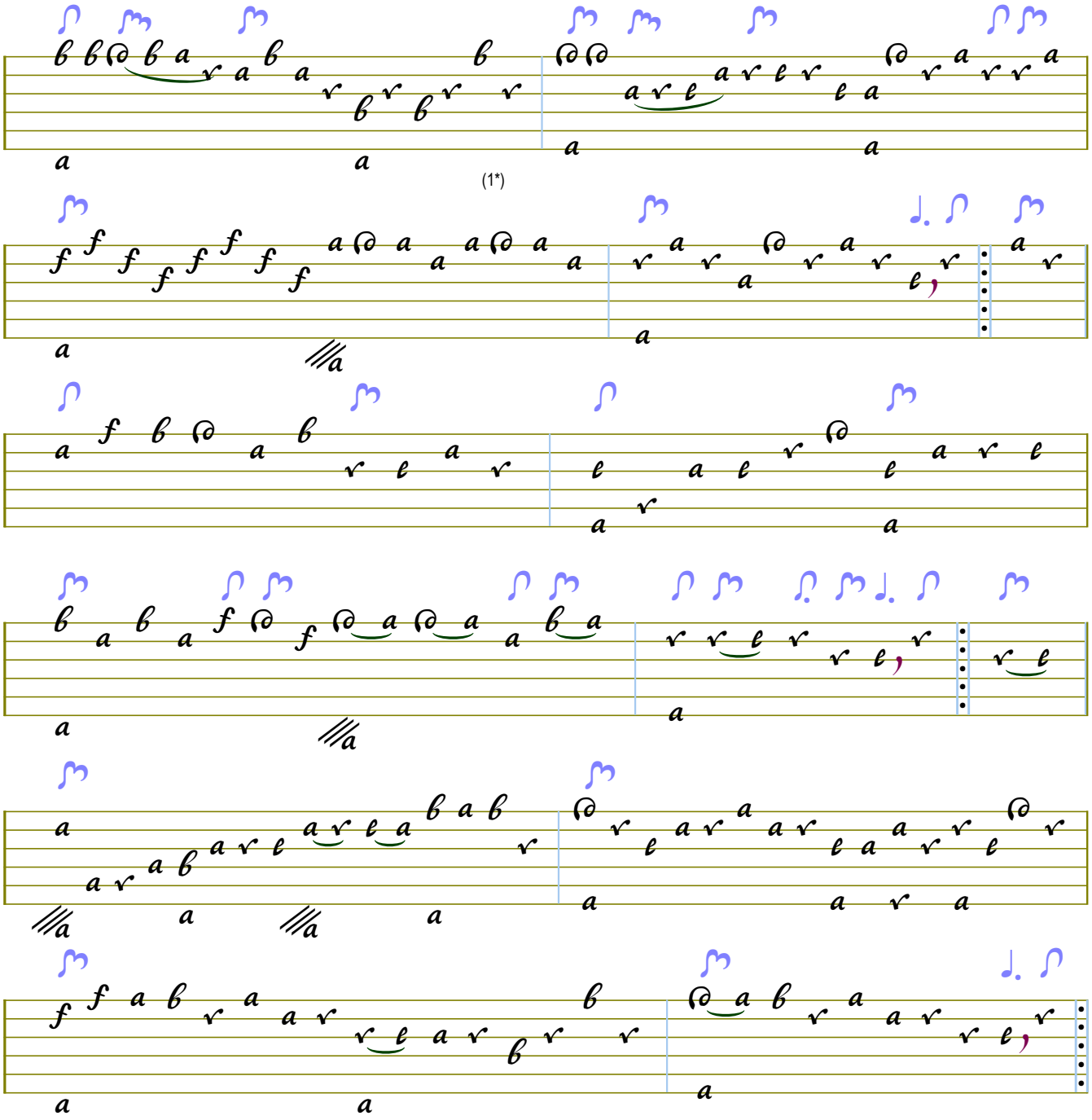
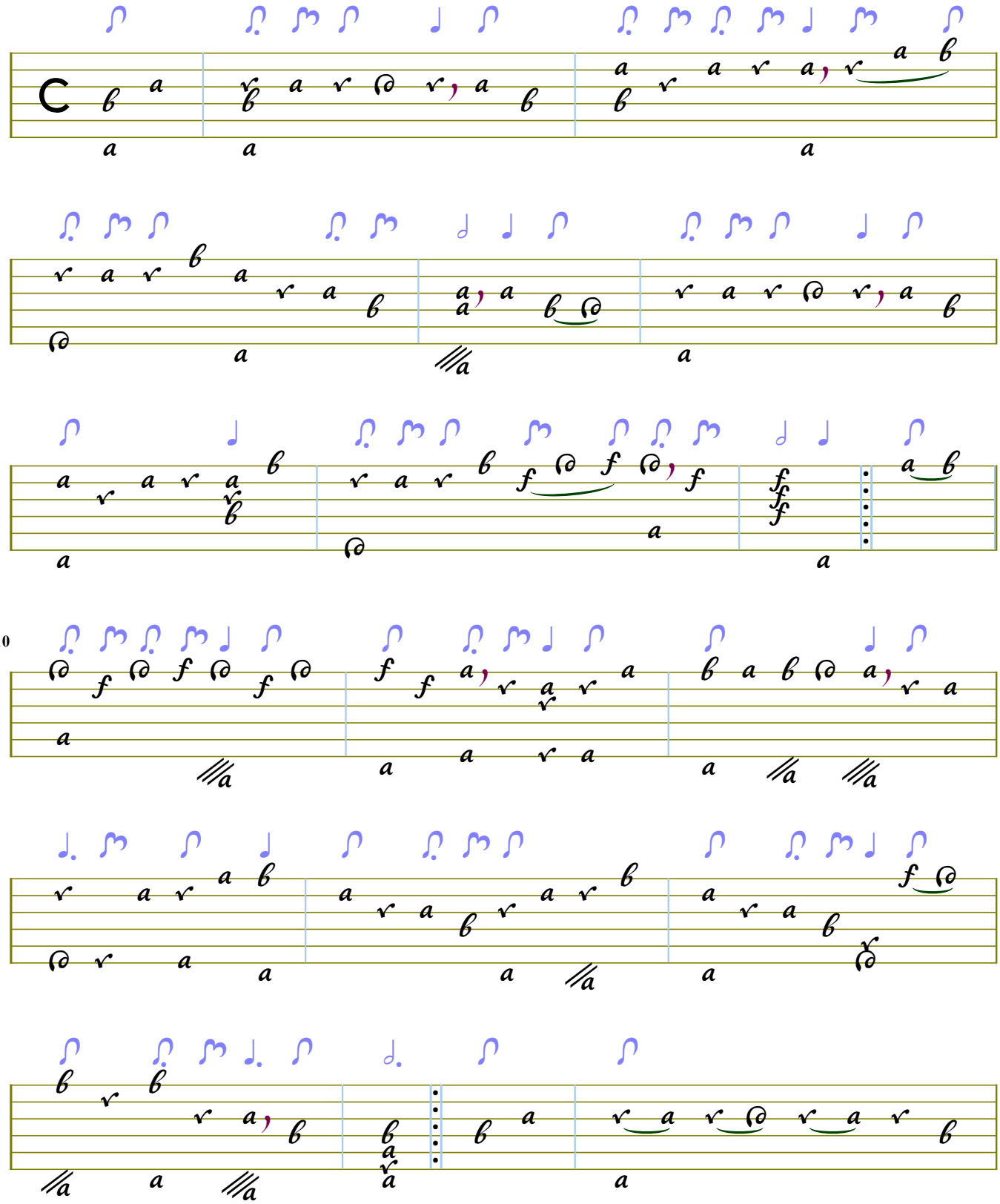


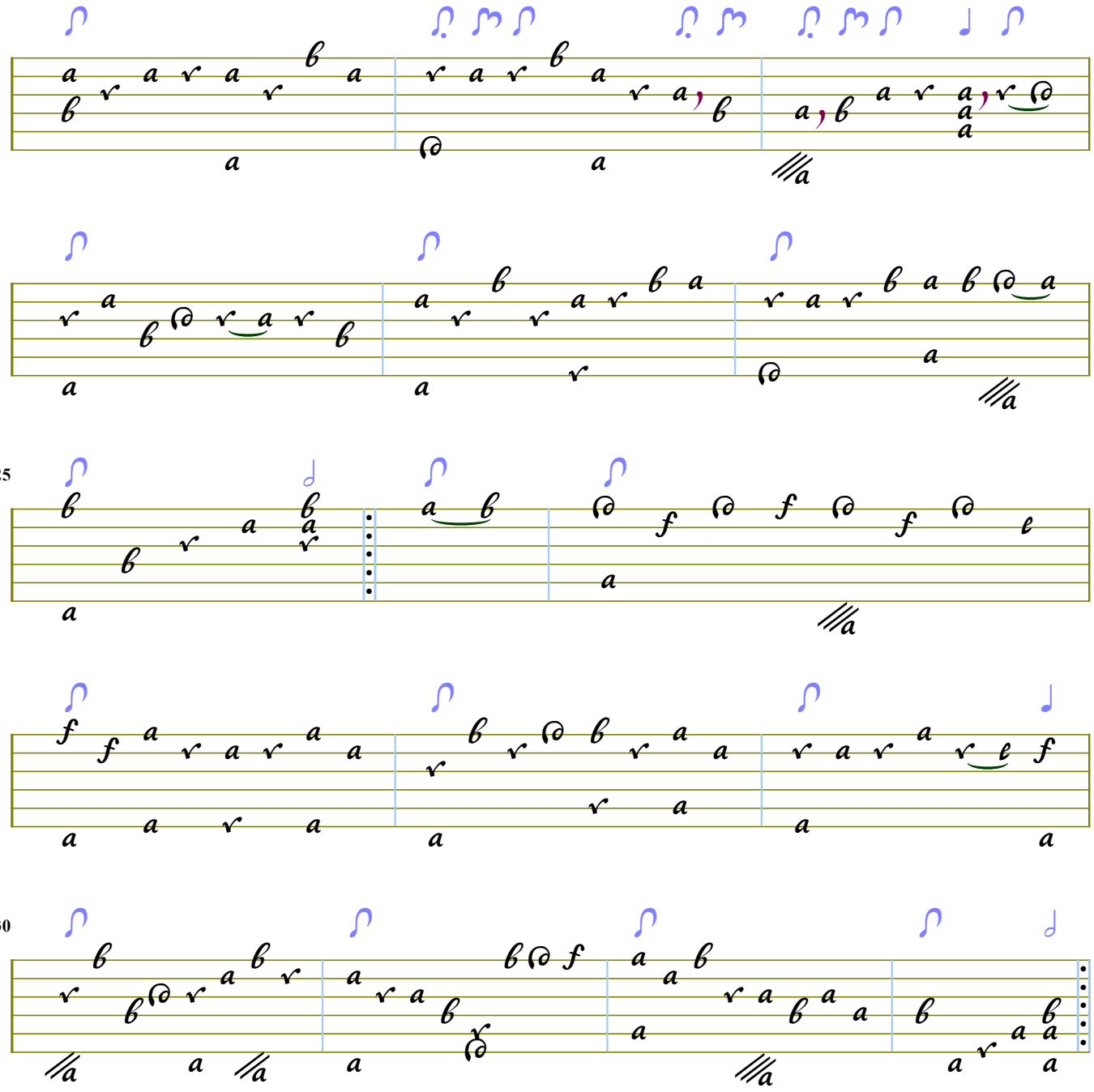
1. This whole measure is crossed out - see title



1. These two notes 1/8th in original

The Chancellour's farewell, mr mclaughland's way, by mr. Beck

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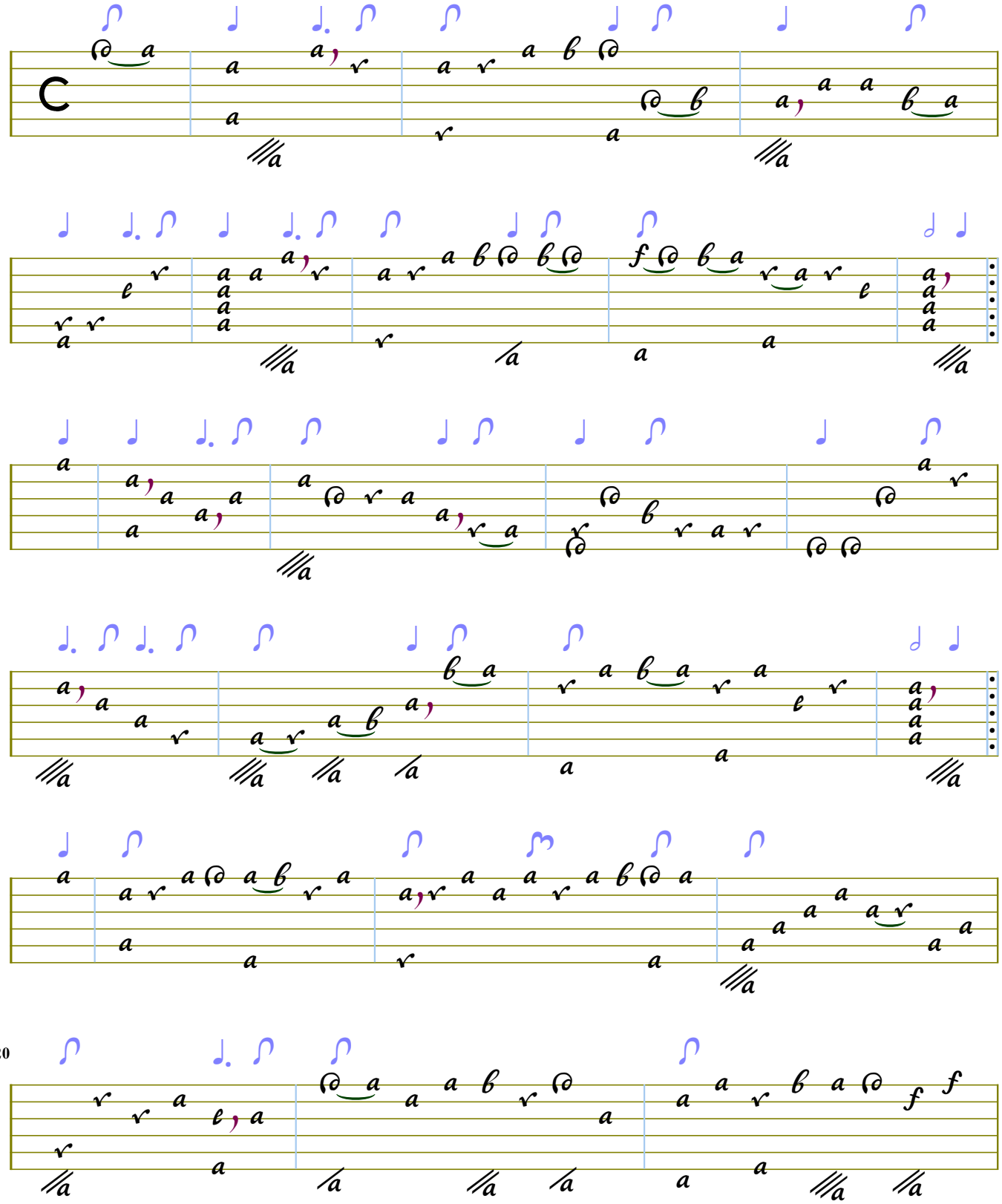
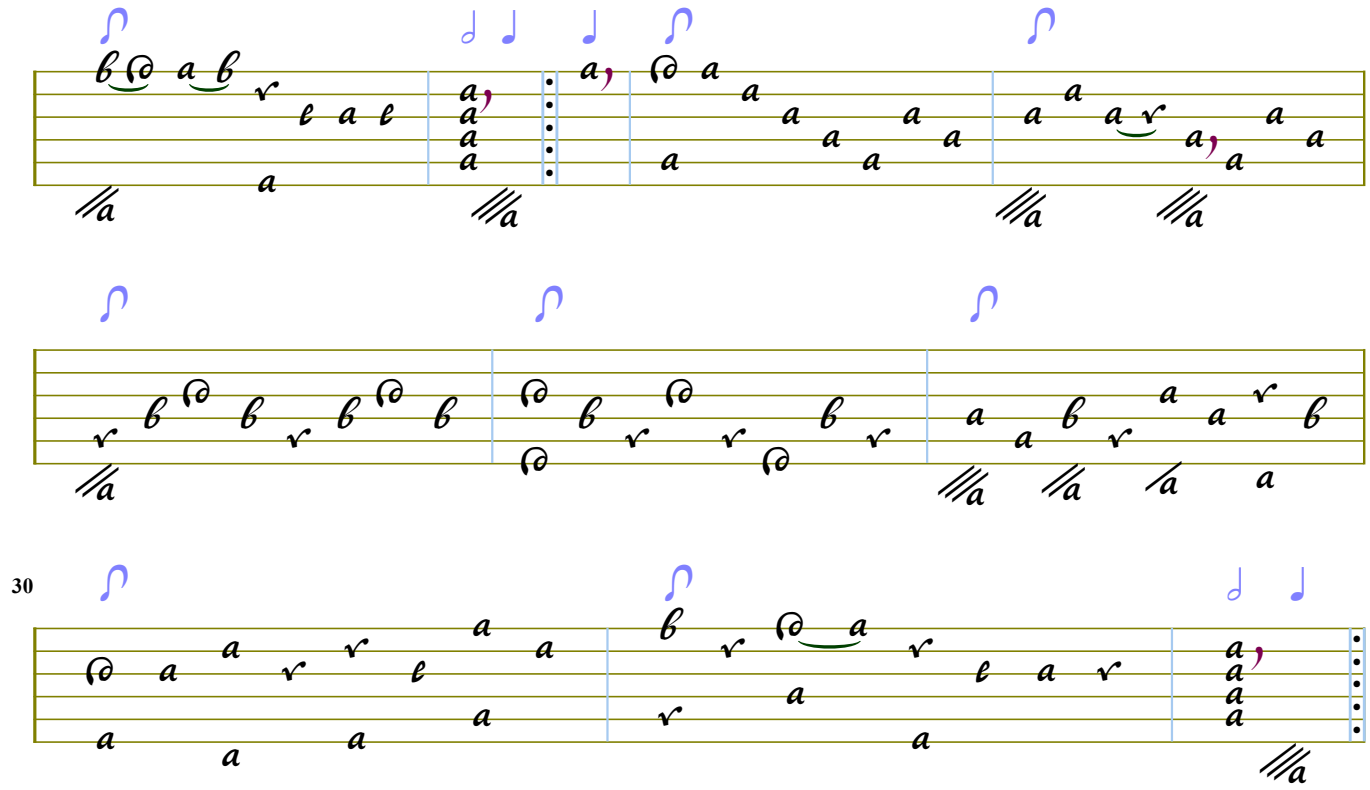
30

Hold her goeing, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck





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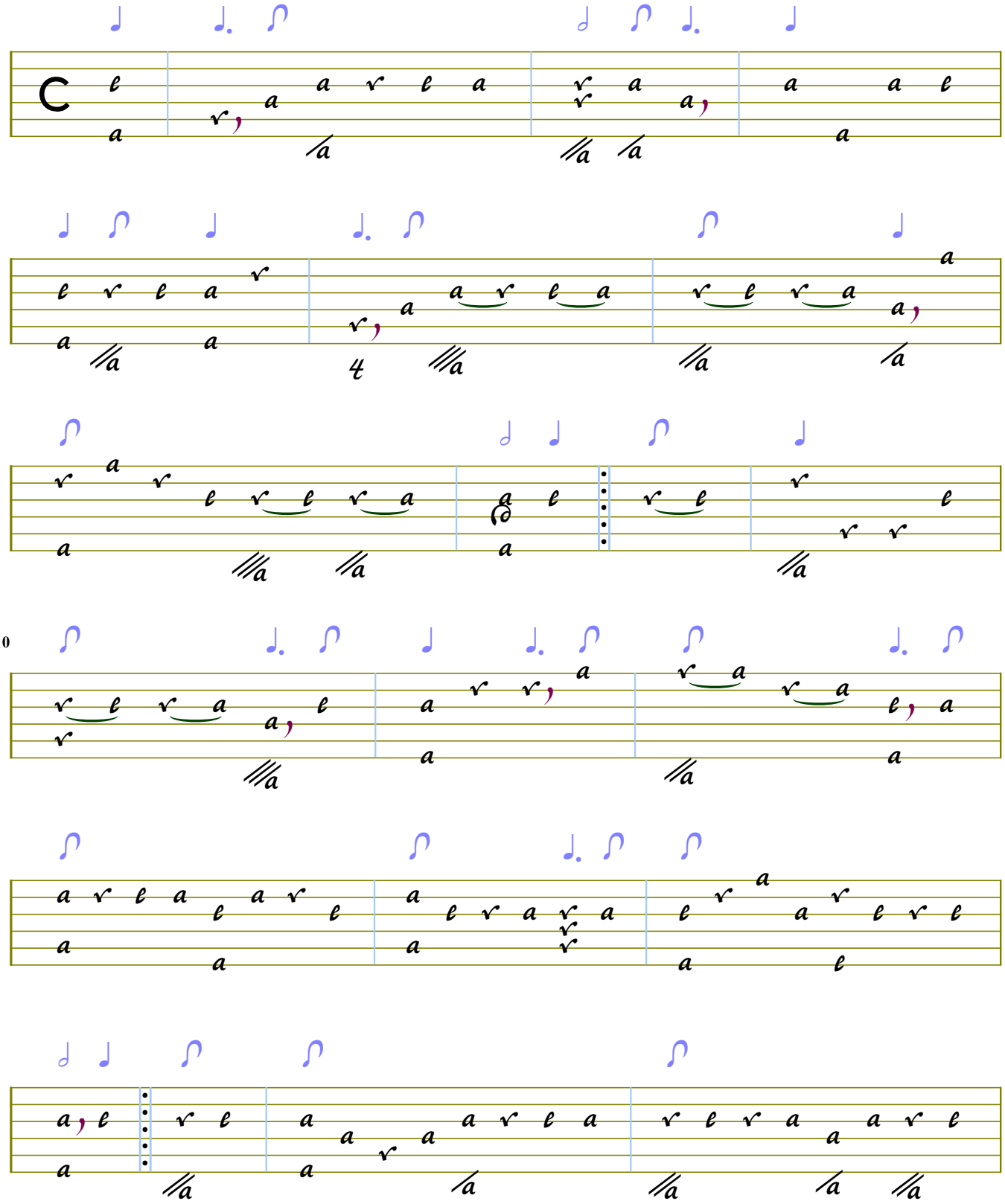
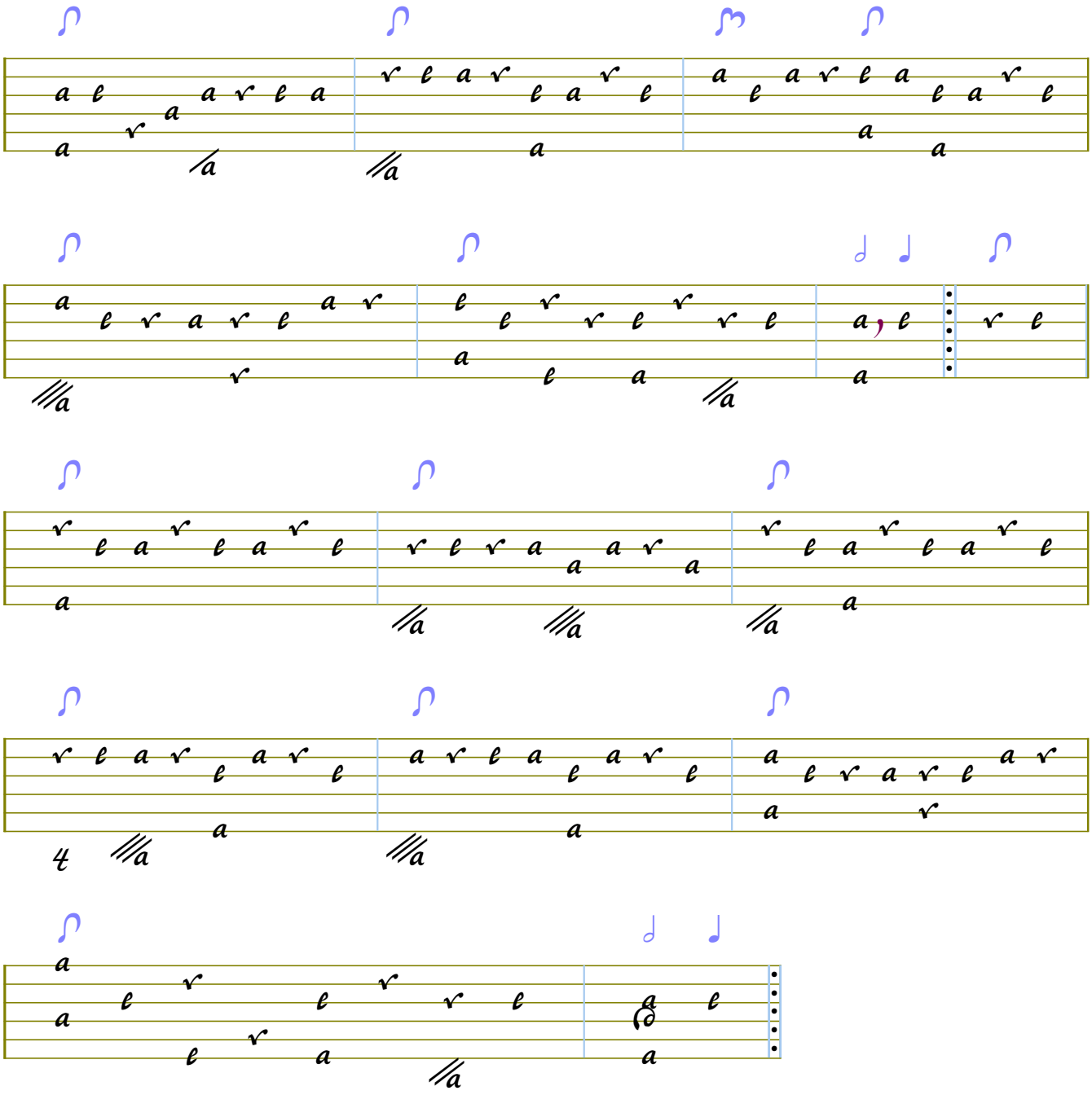
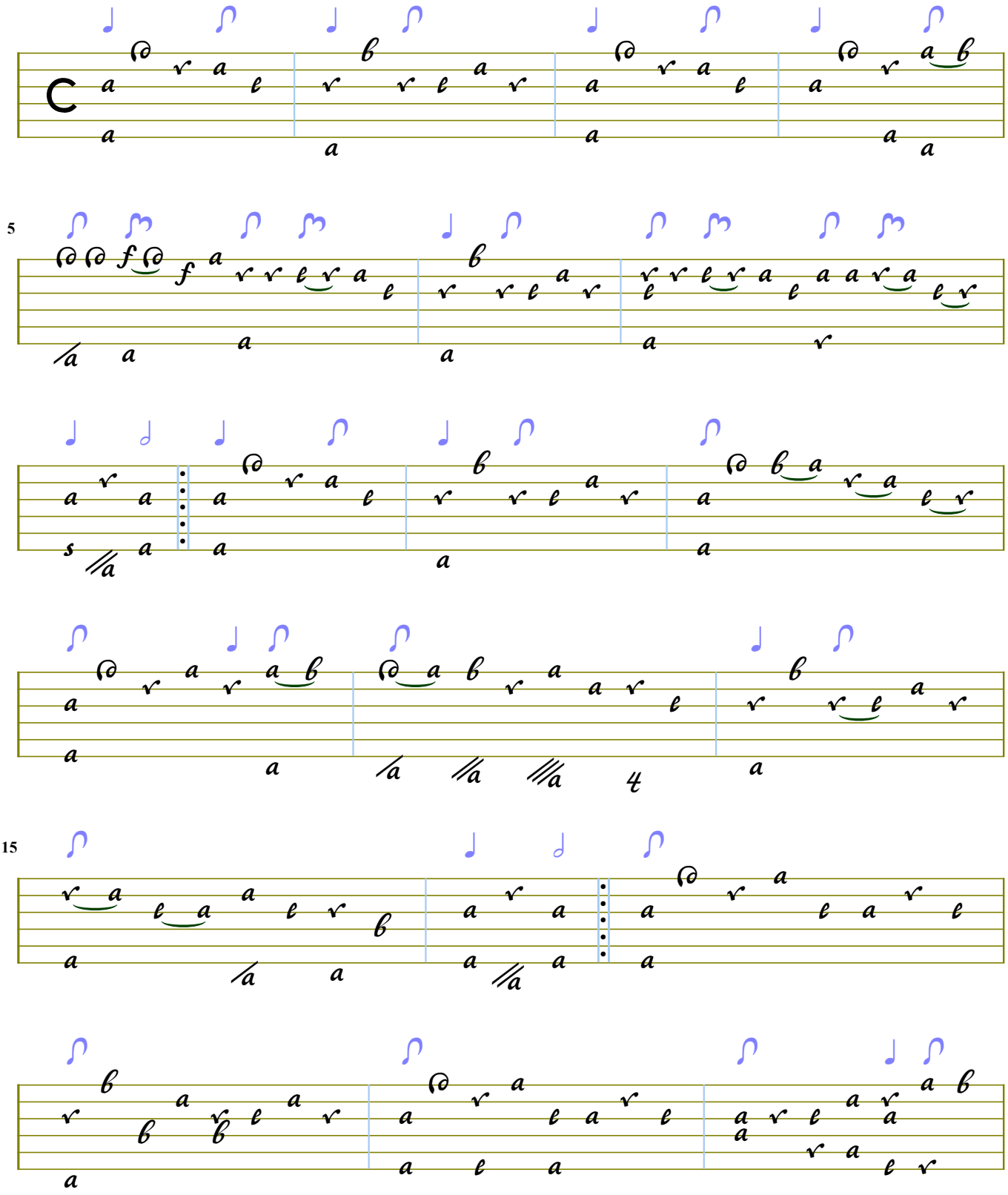
Sharp Tuning (A - d - f# - a - d' - f'#)

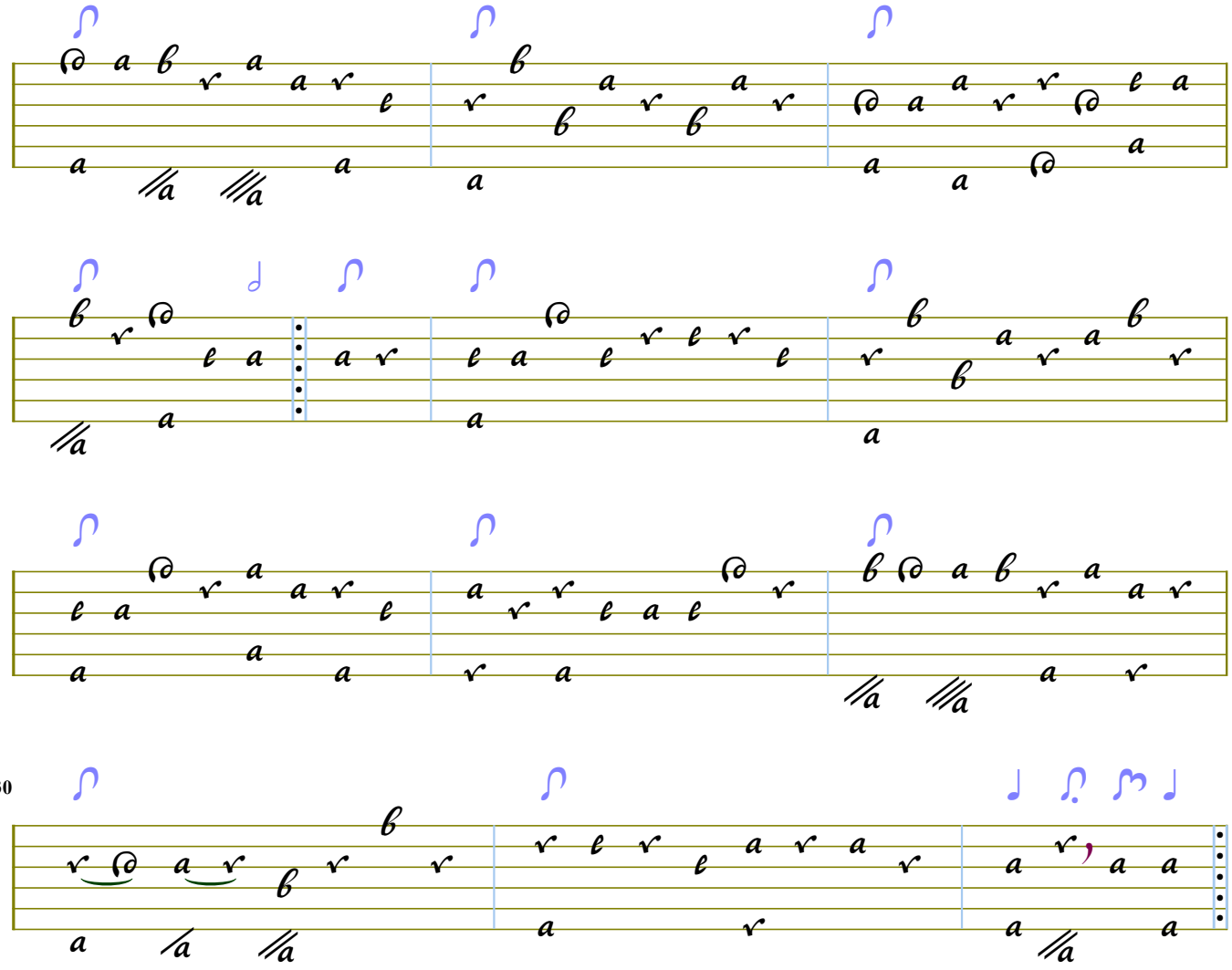
If thou wert myne own thing, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr Beck





The malt grinds well, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. beck





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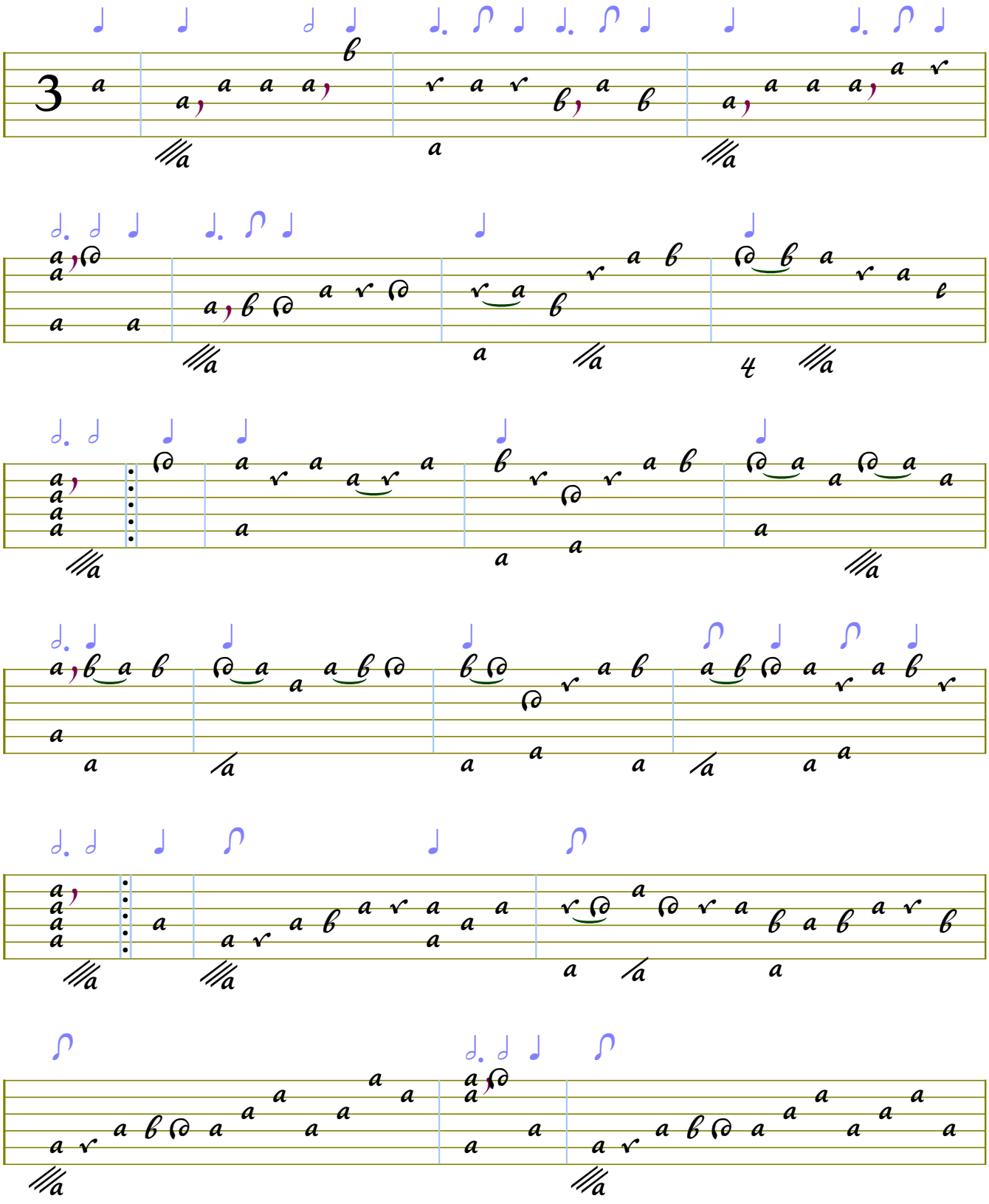
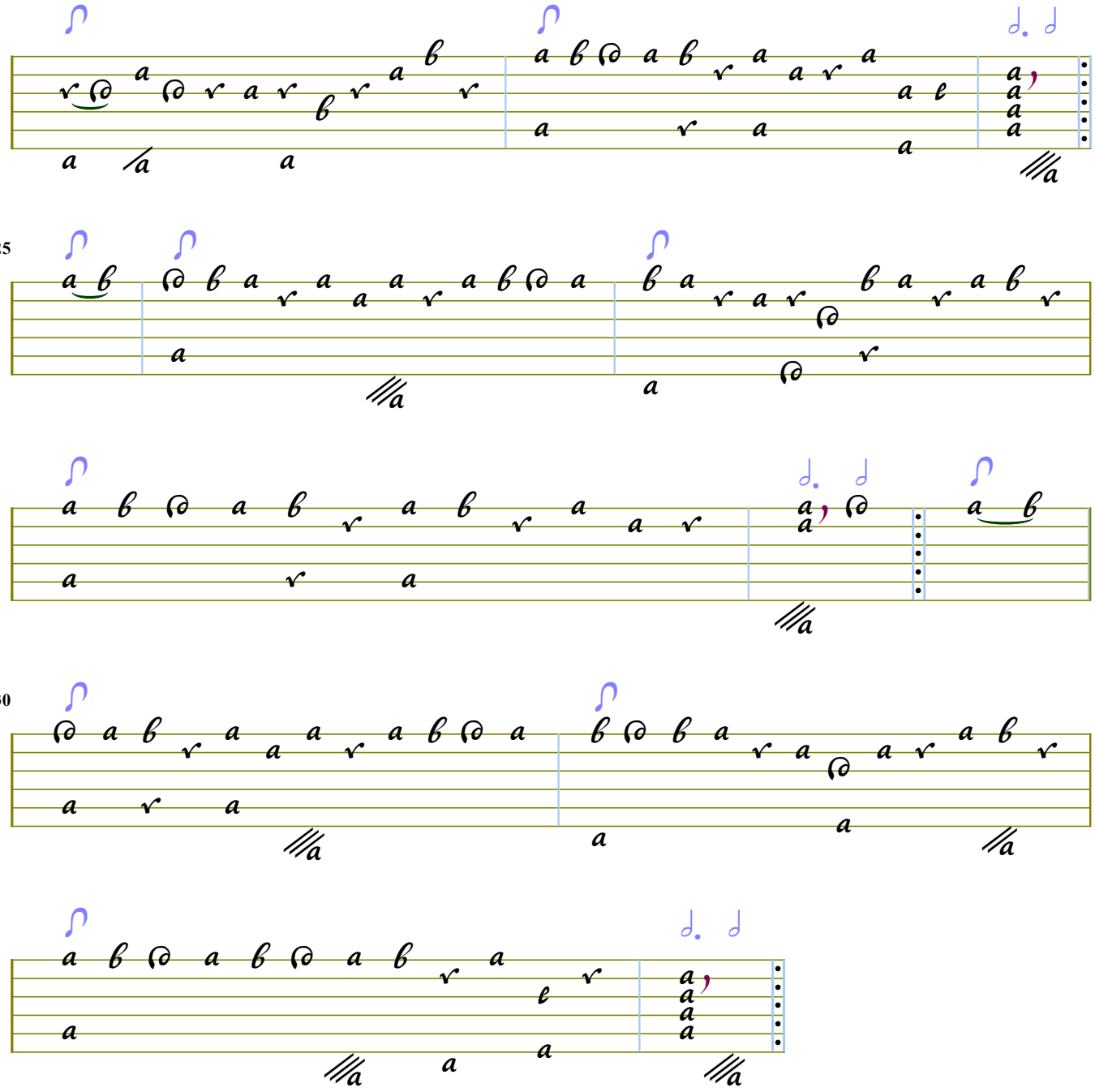
Bessie Bell, mr maclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

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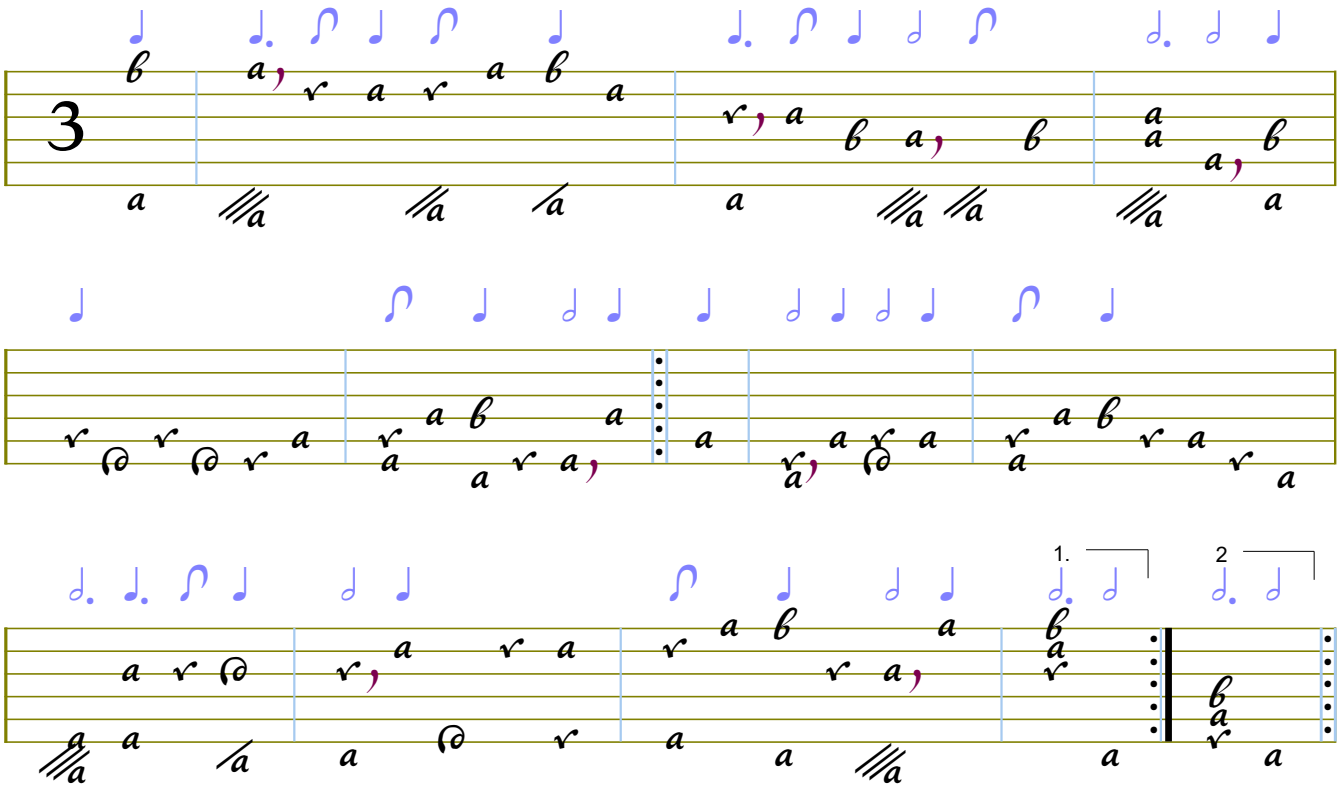
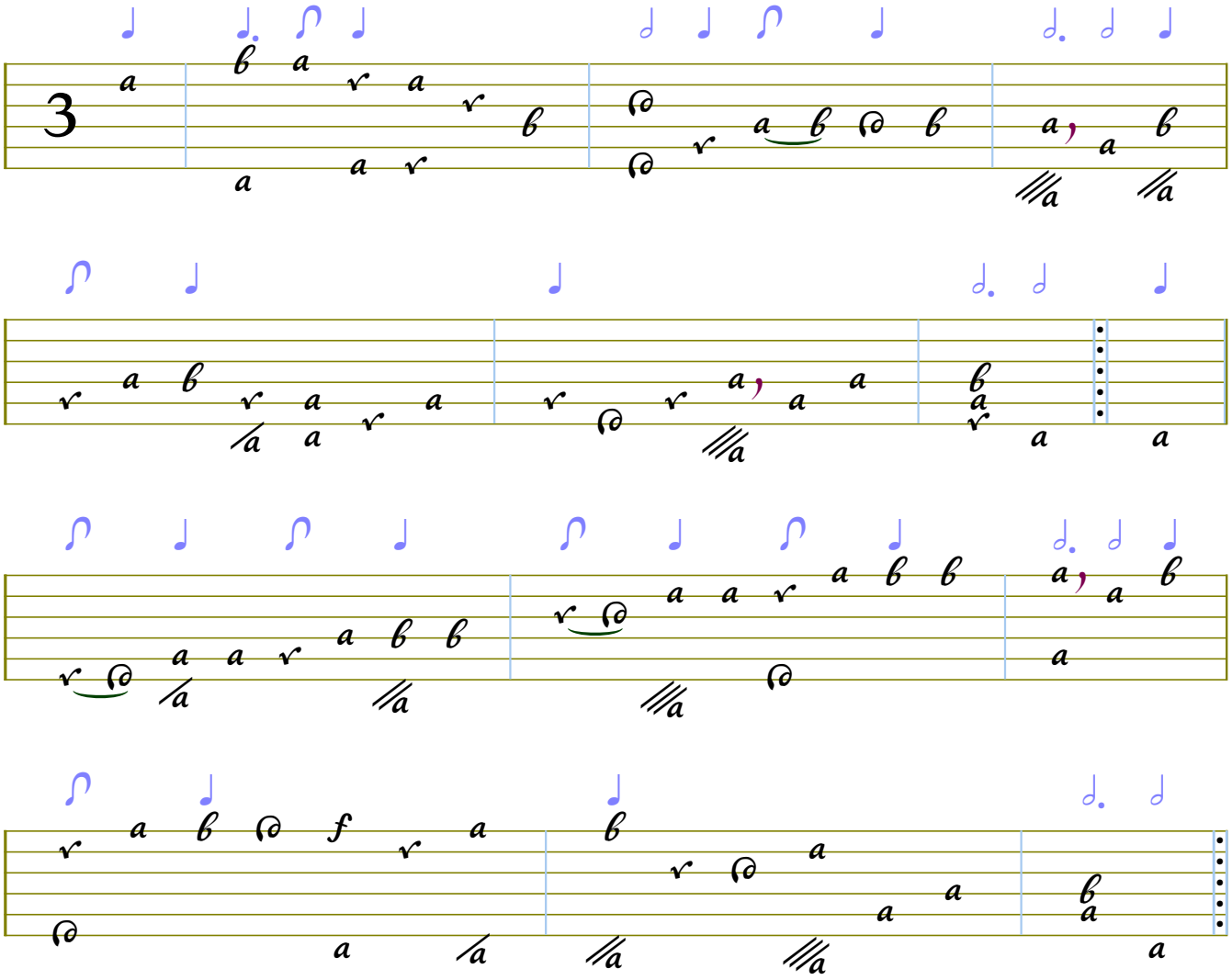
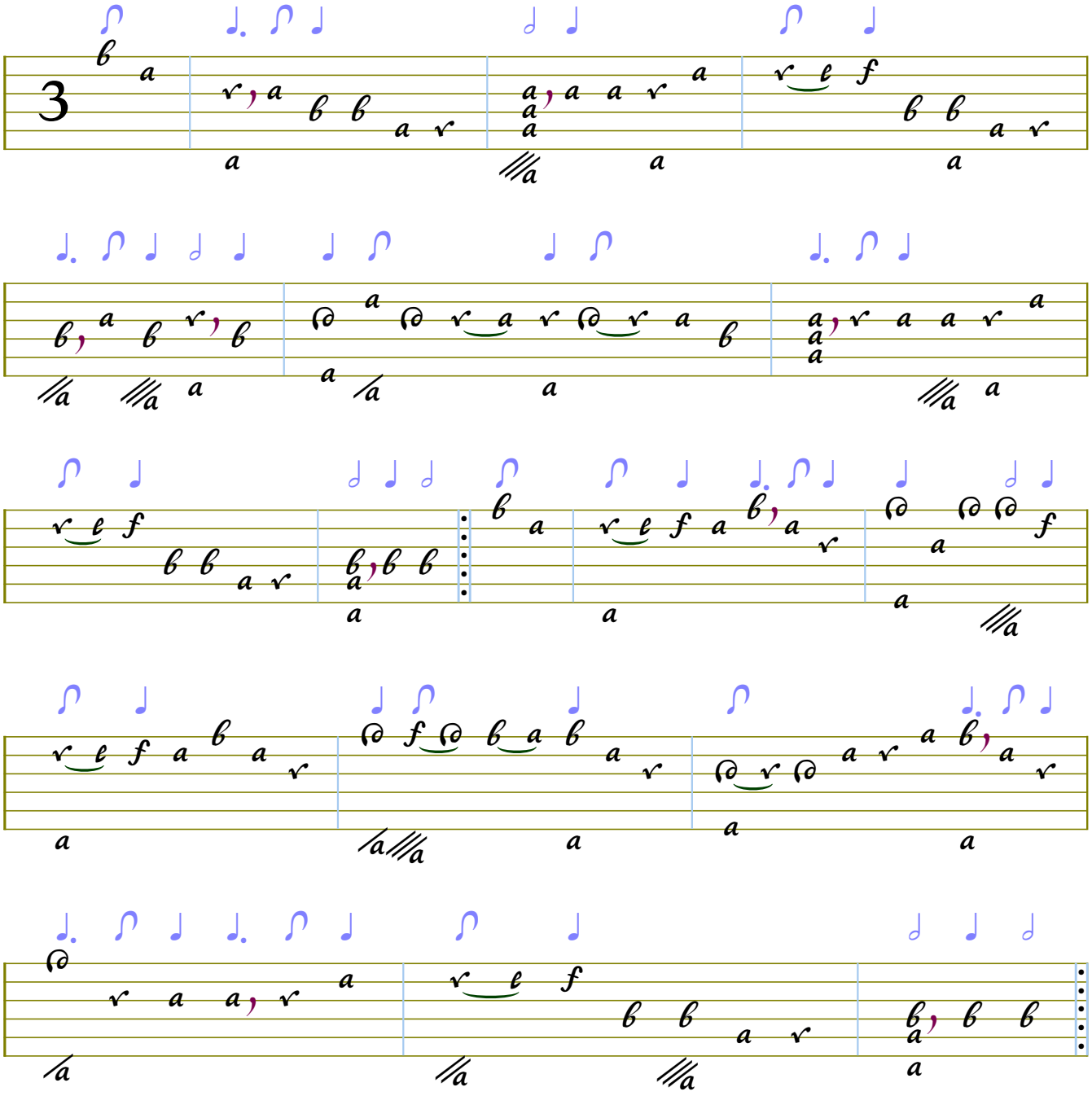
Yaughtnies gige, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck



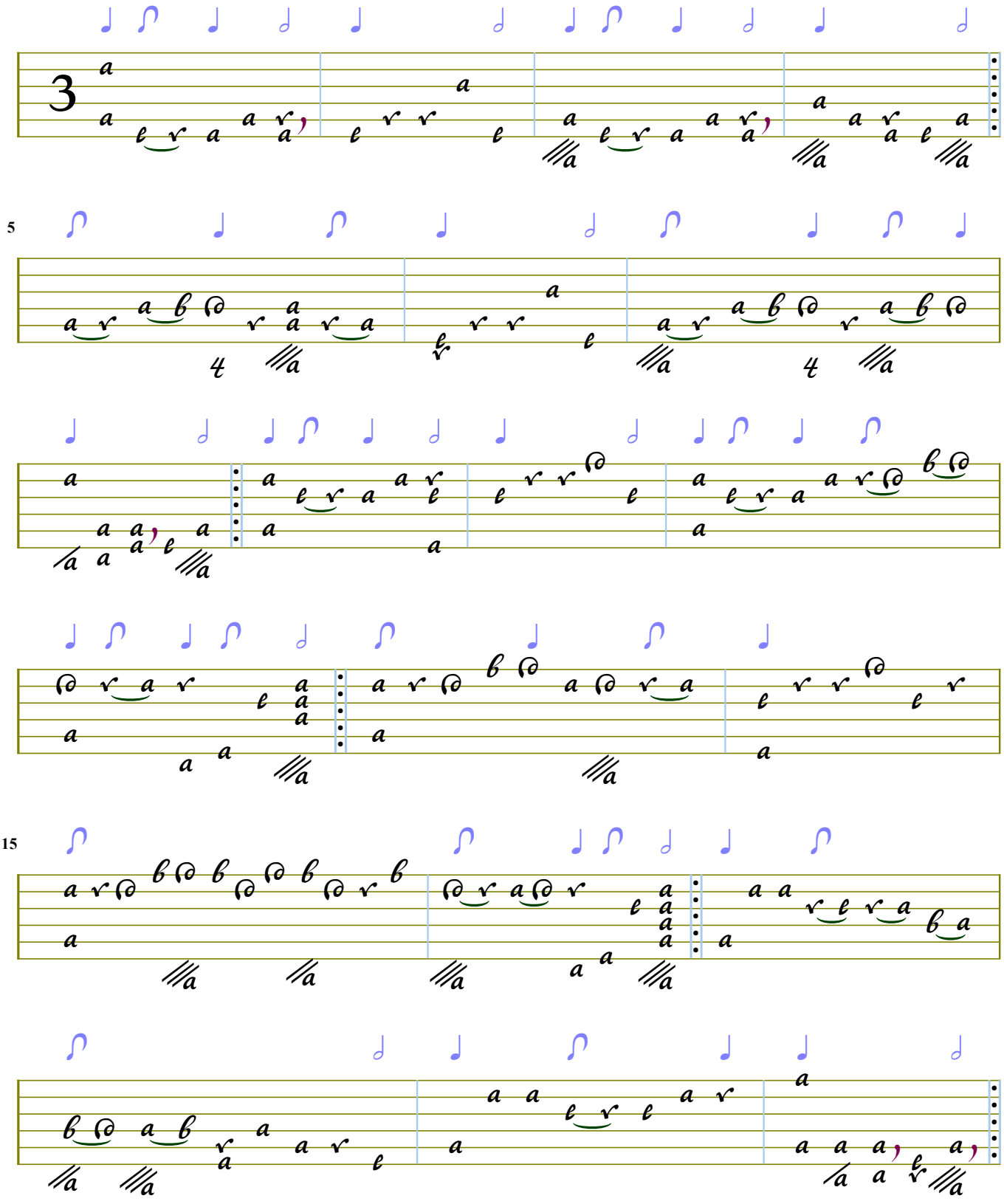
Another of Yaughtnies giges, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr beck



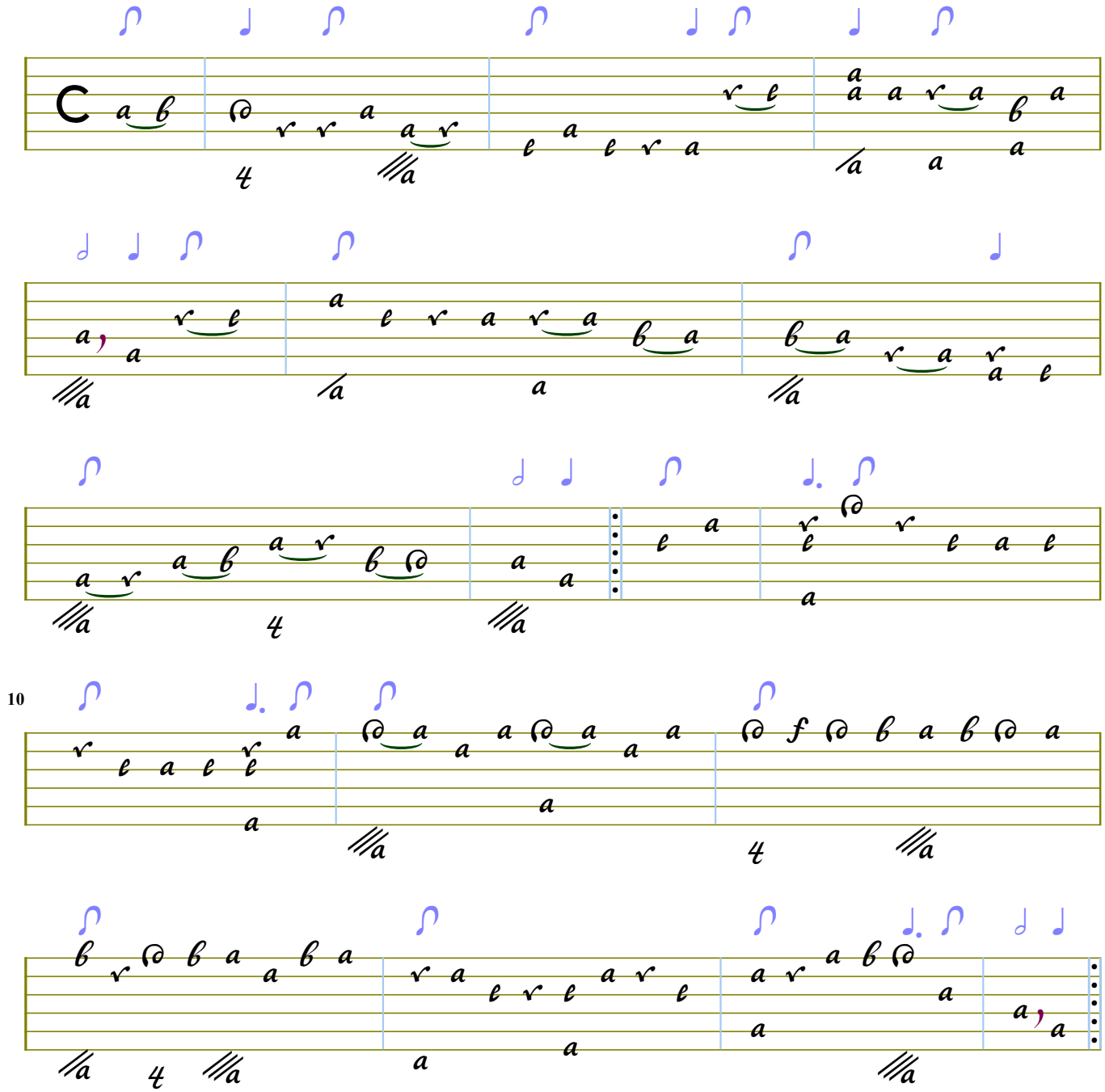
The Northland lad and the southland lassie,
mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. beck



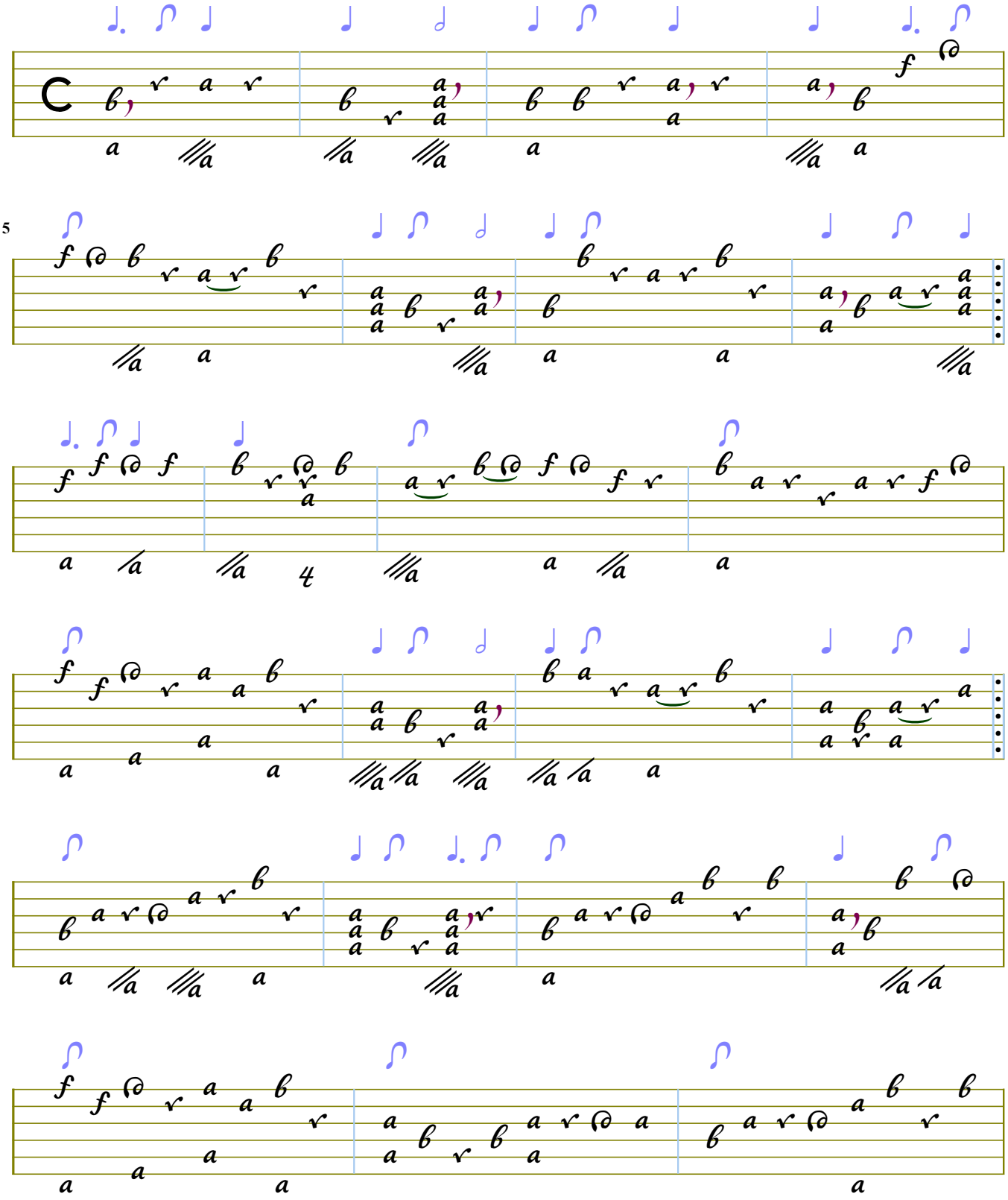
For the love of Jean, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr Beck

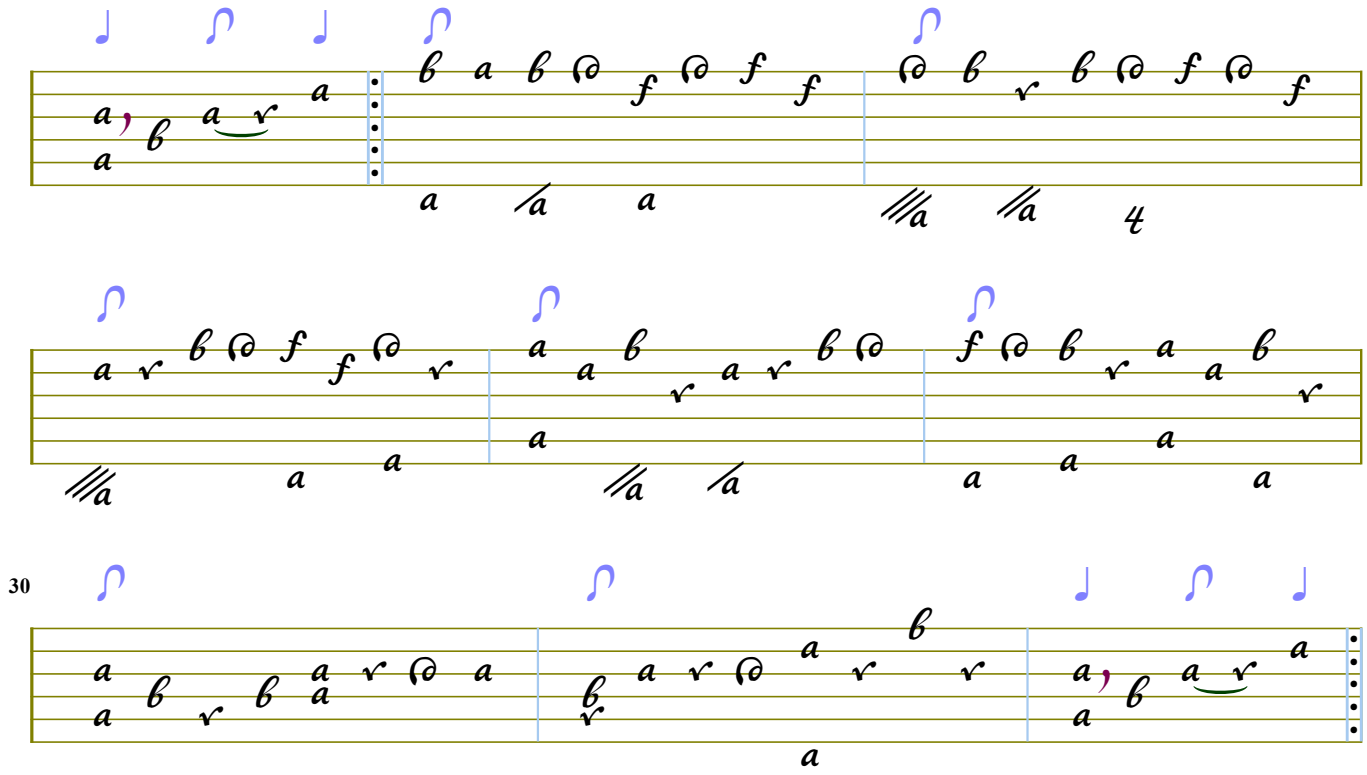


The blackman is the bravest, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr. beck



An thy minnie bidding thee, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr Beck





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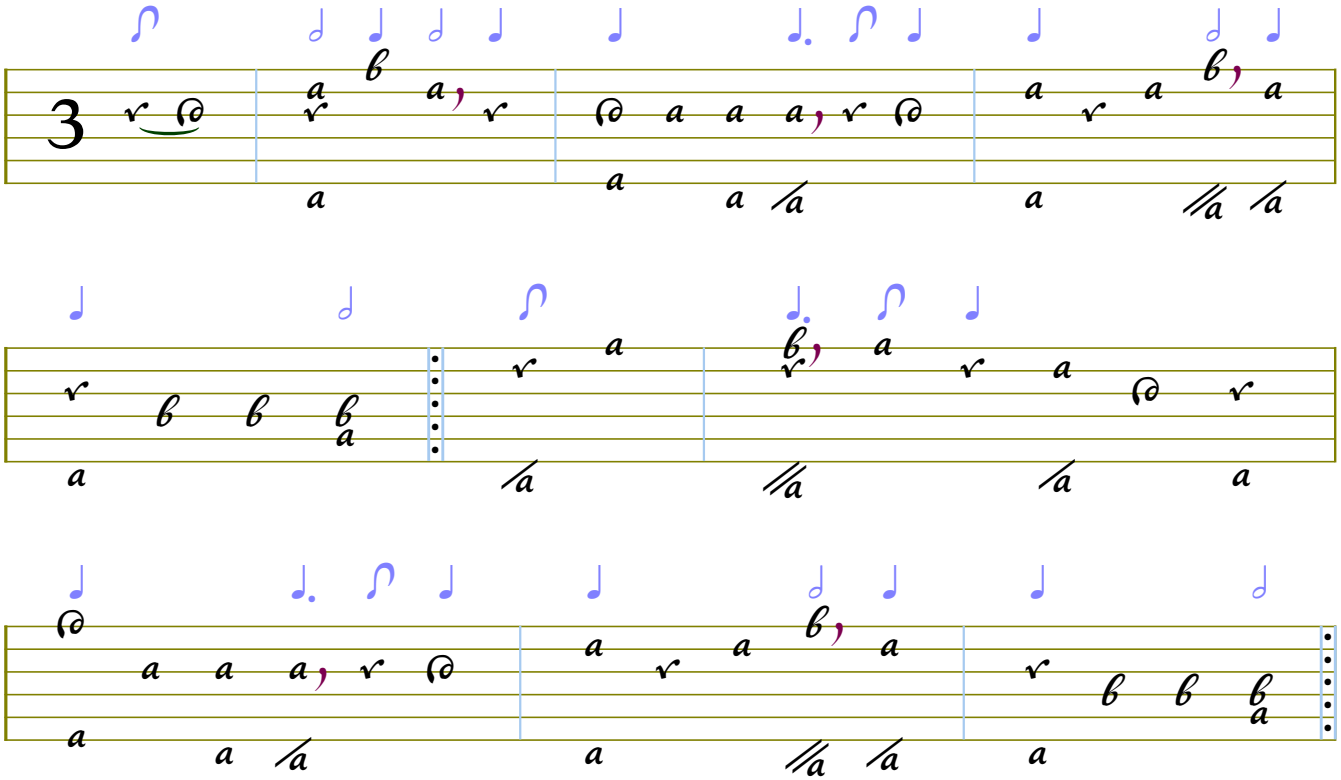
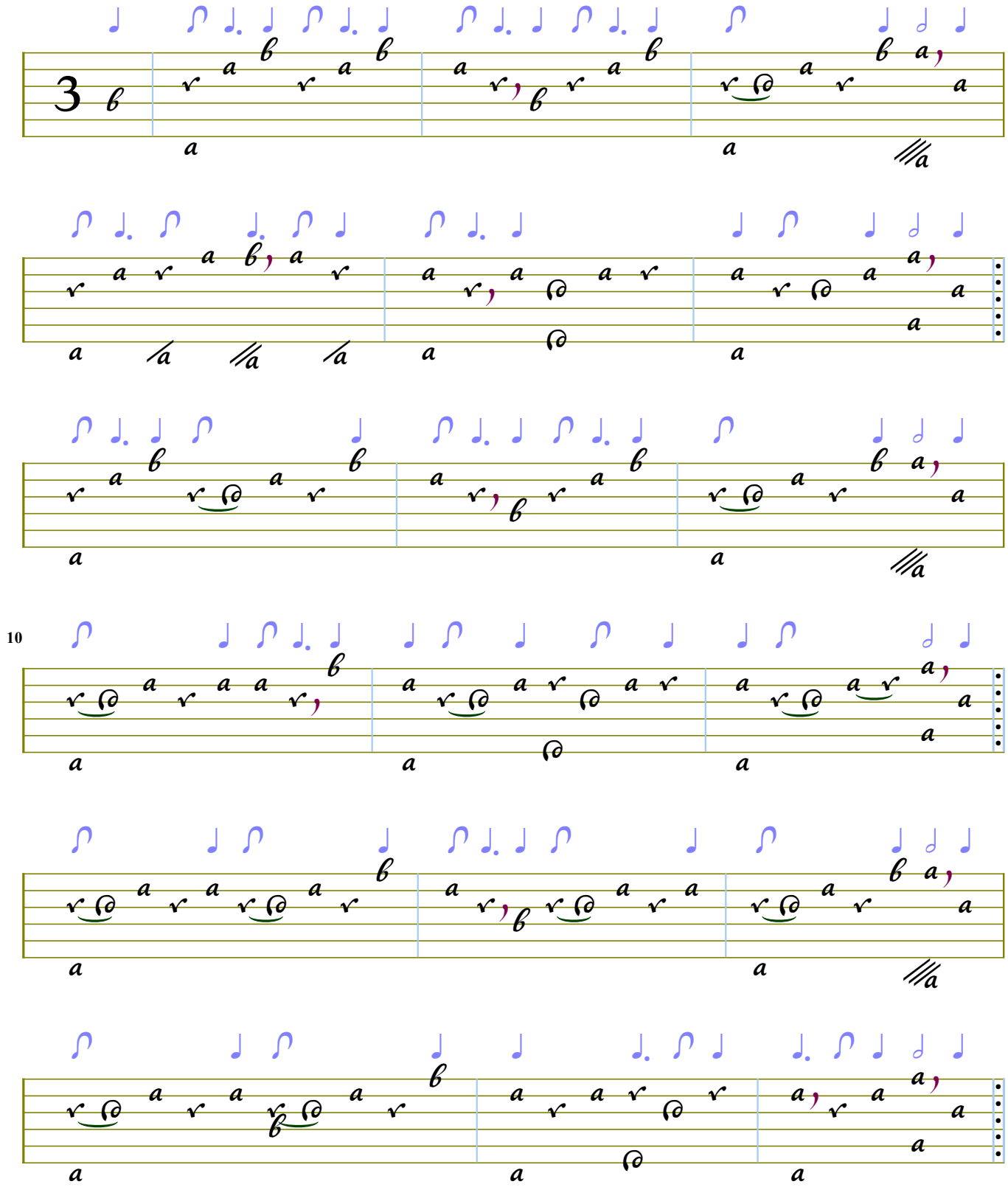
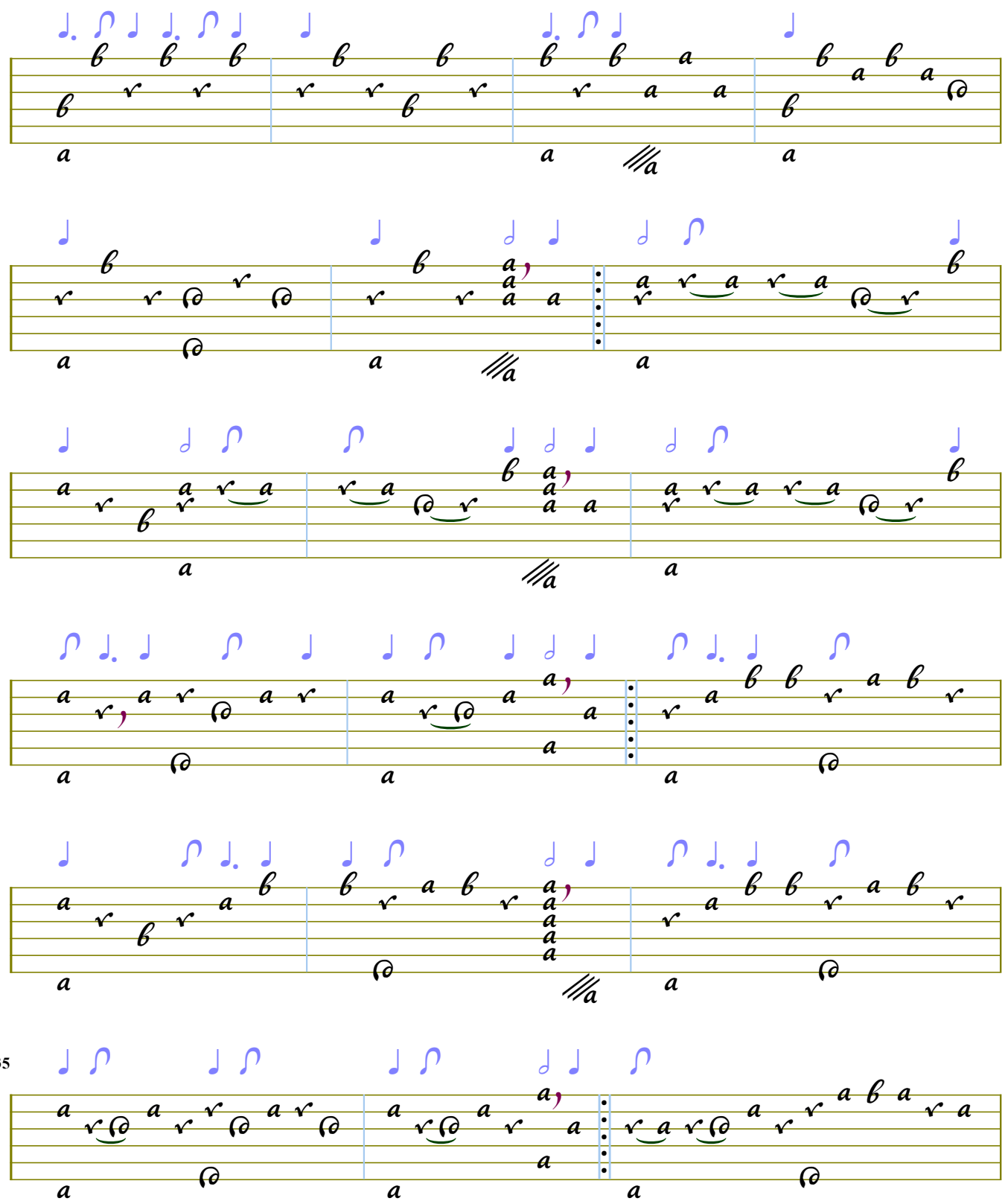
Keik bo, mr mclaughlan's way, by mr beck



The souters of Selkirk, mv mclaughlan's way, by mr. Beck

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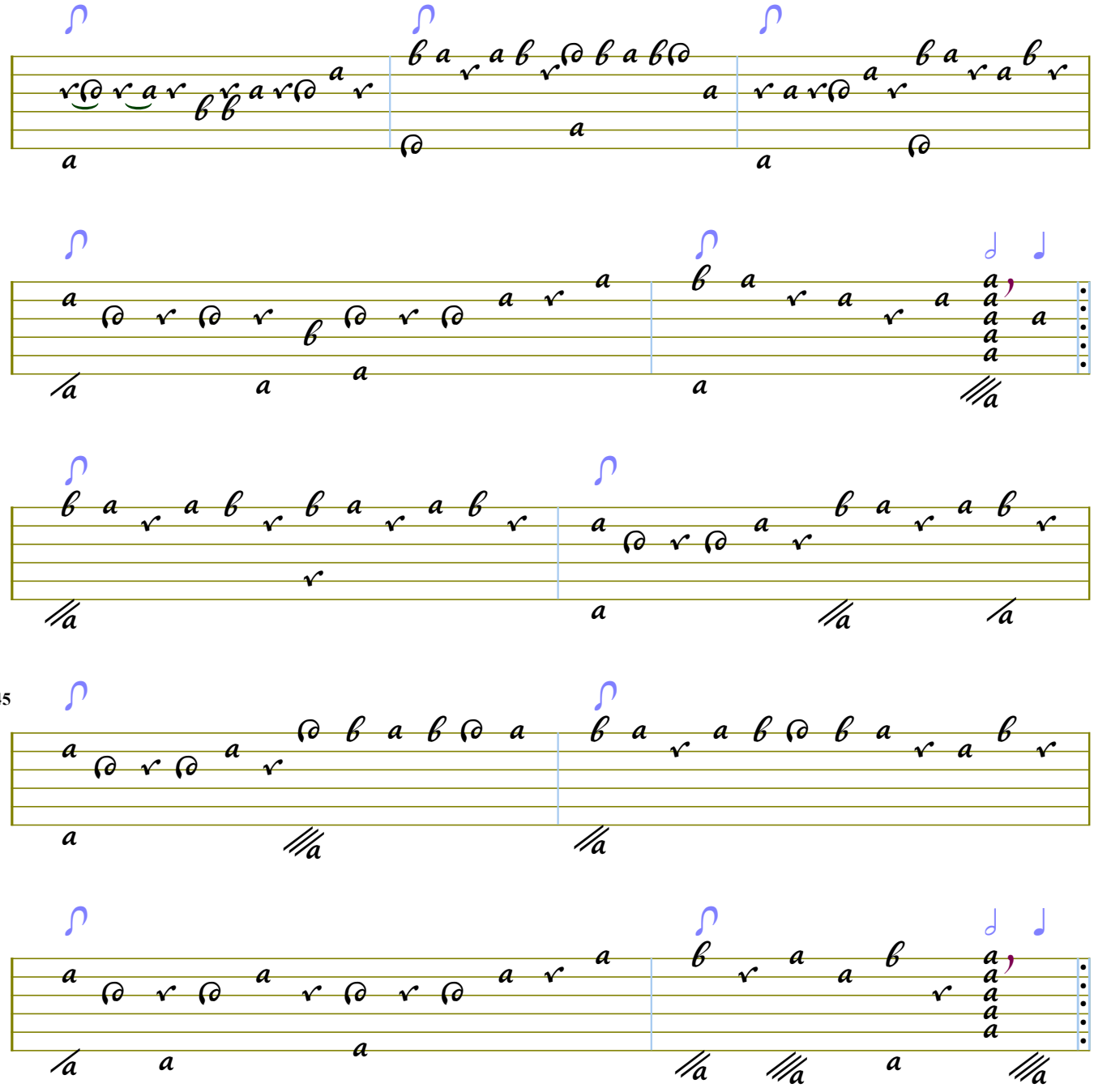
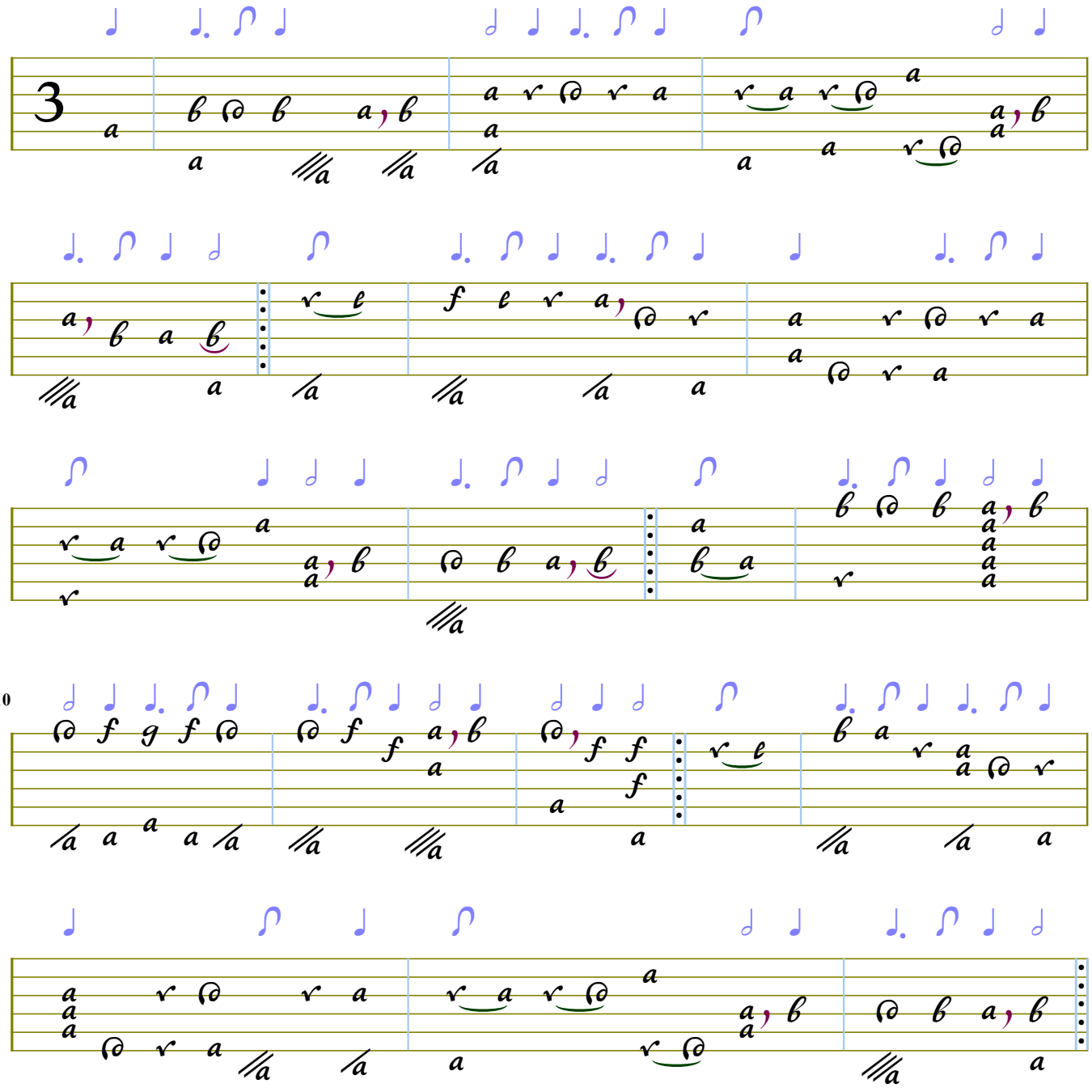
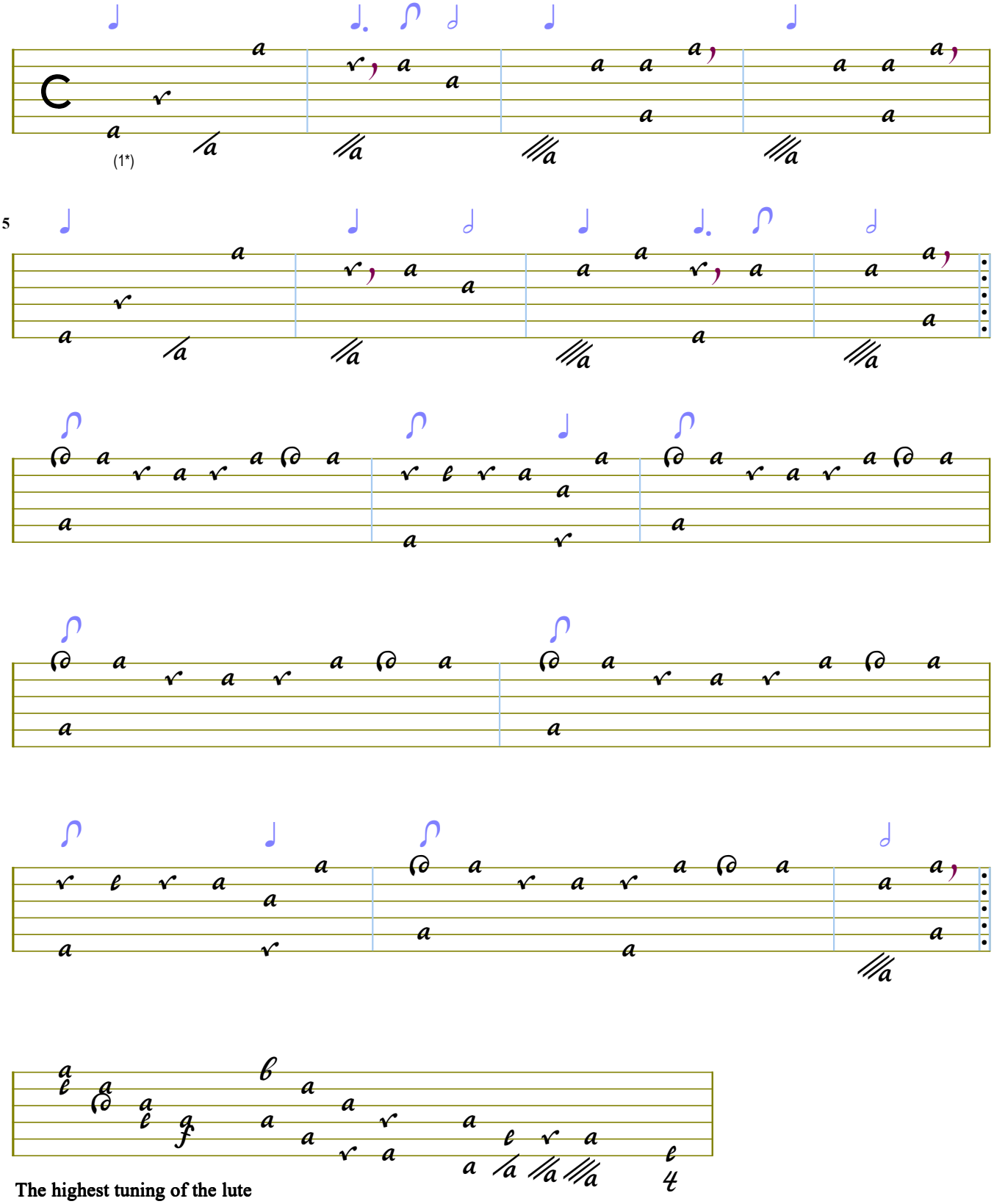

45

Sharp Tuning (A - d . f# - a - d' - f'#)

Northland Nannie, Jean More's way, by mr Beck



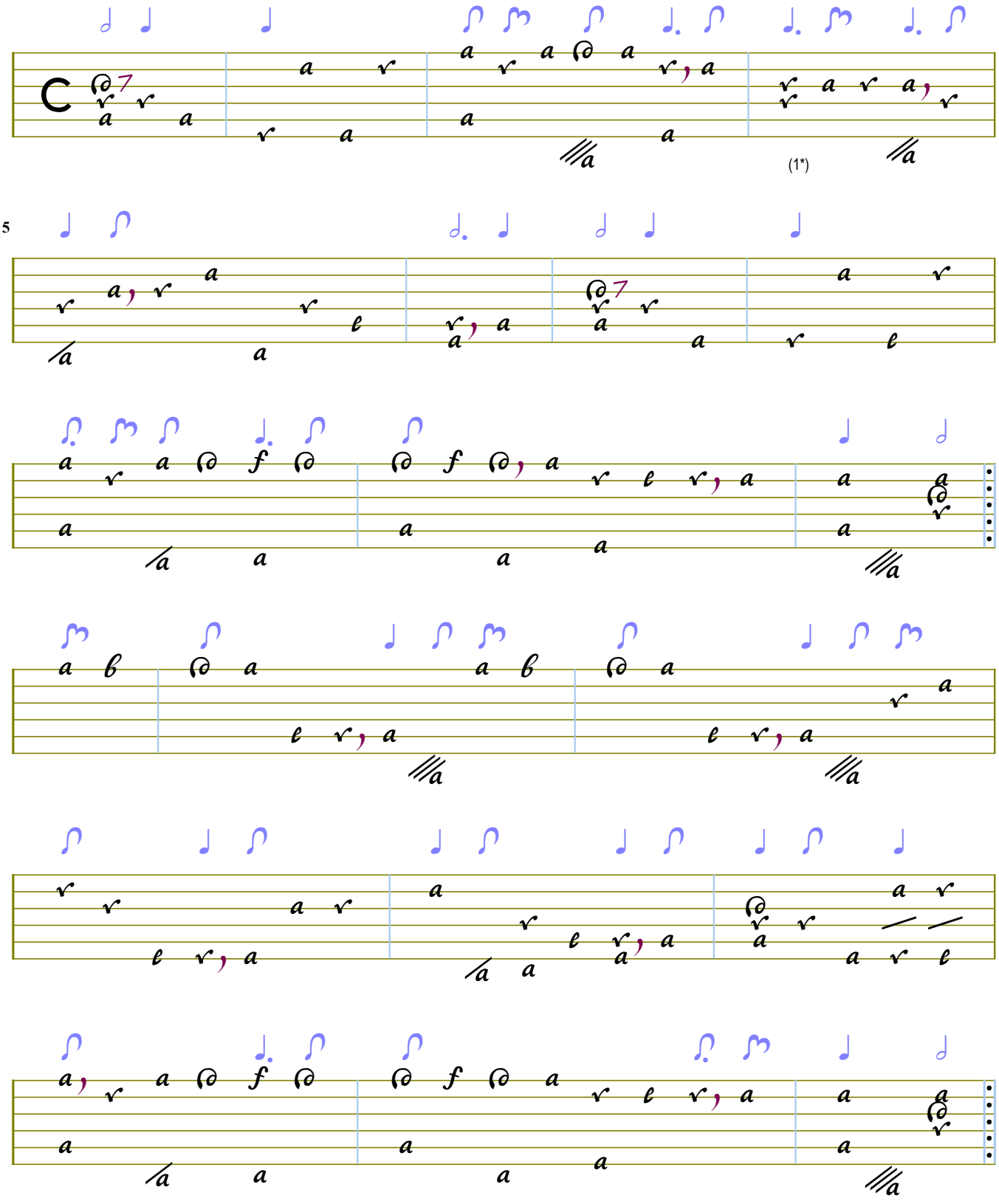
If thou wert my own thing, David Griev's way



The highest tuning of the lute

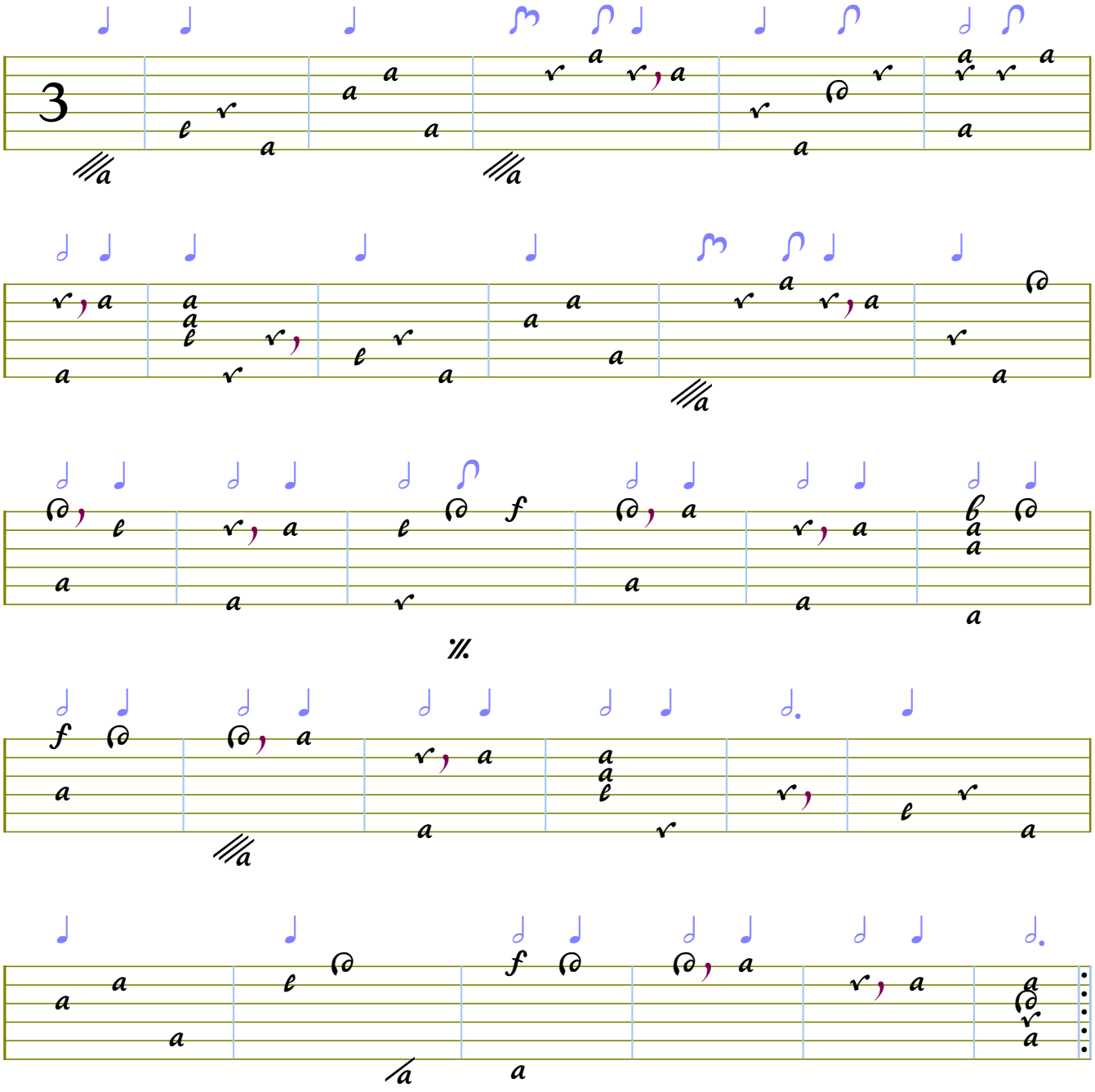
1. Pages 152-215 are blank

This one night, John Red's way

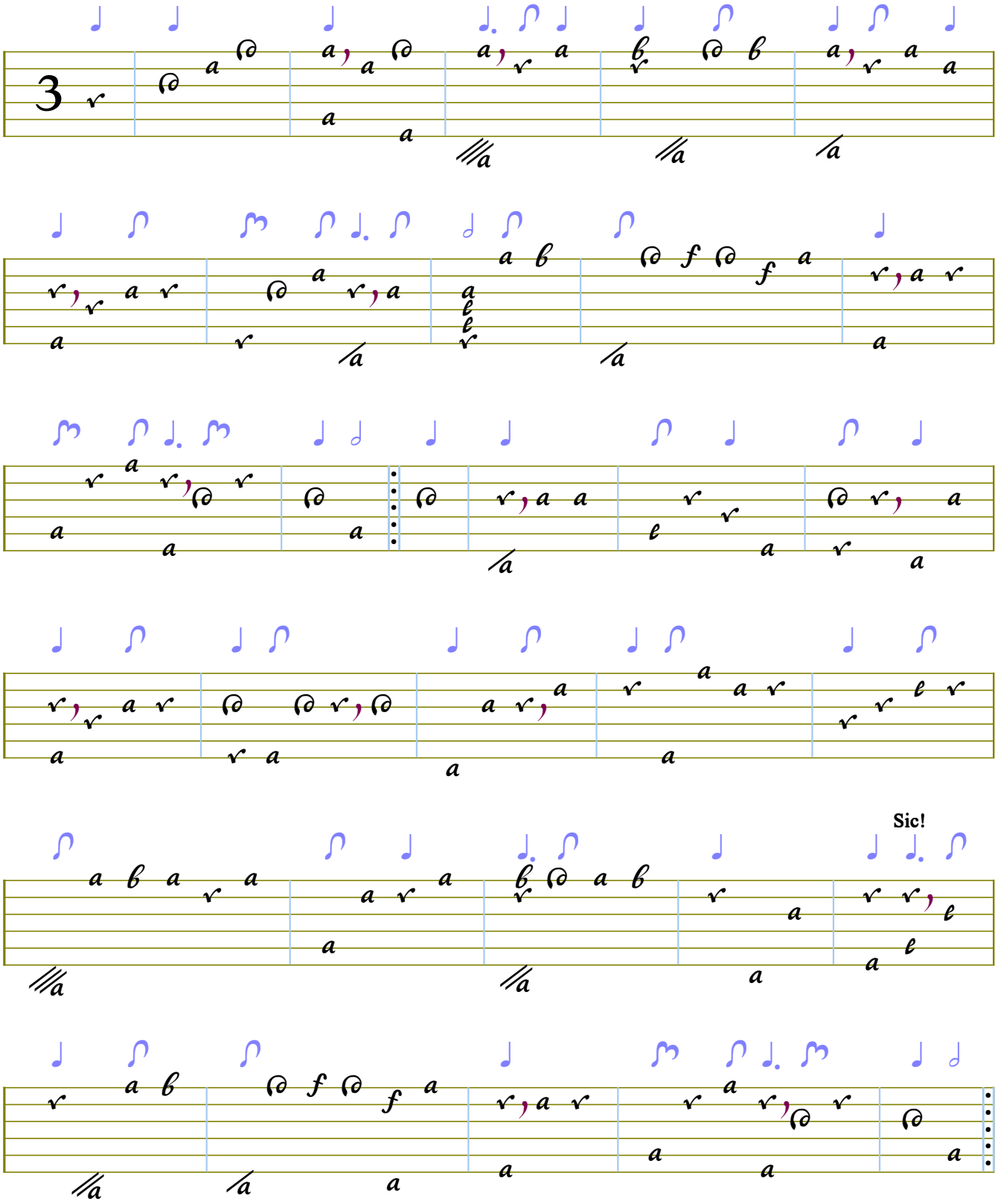


1. Flag length added

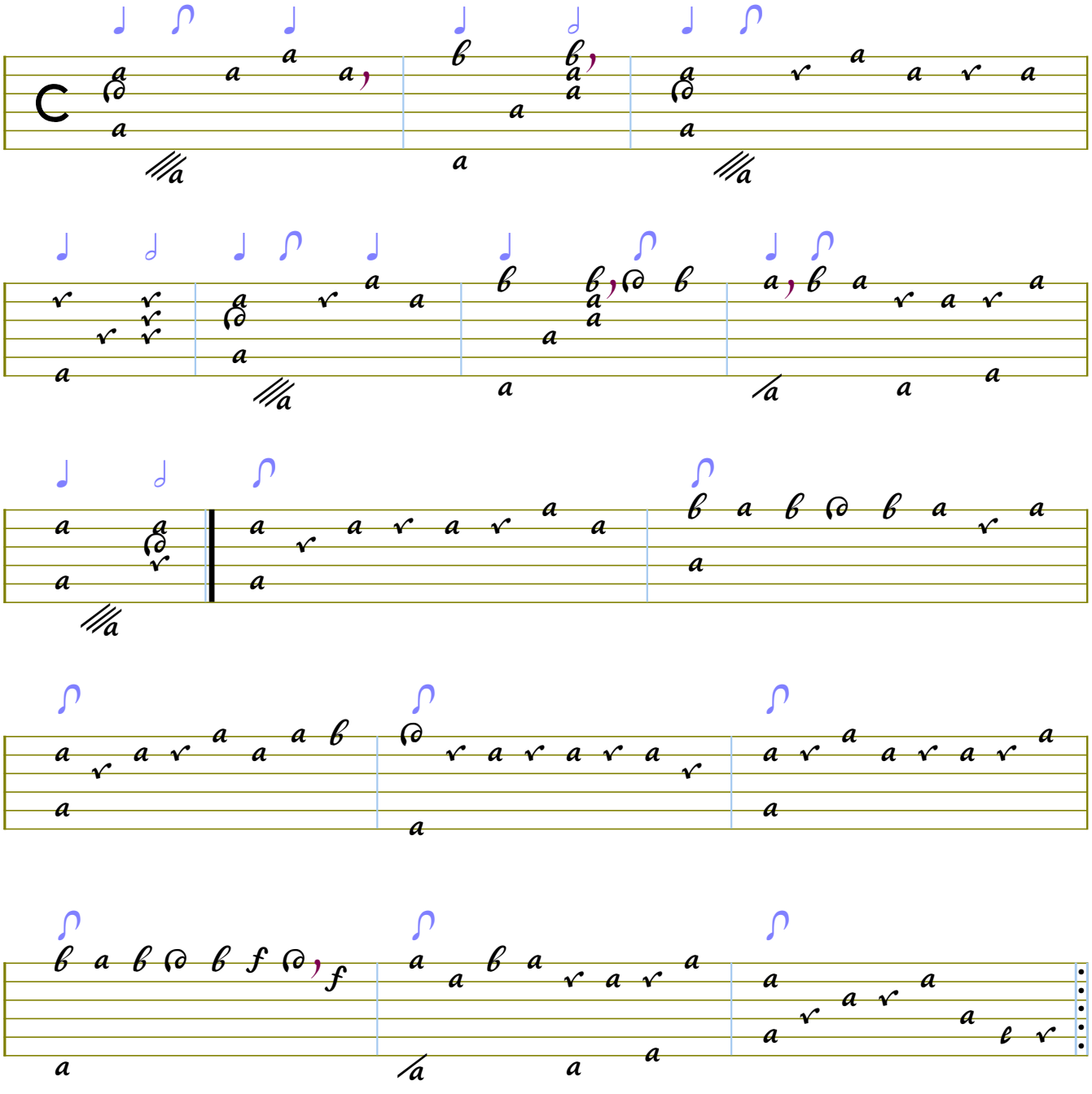
Montrose's Tune, John Red's way



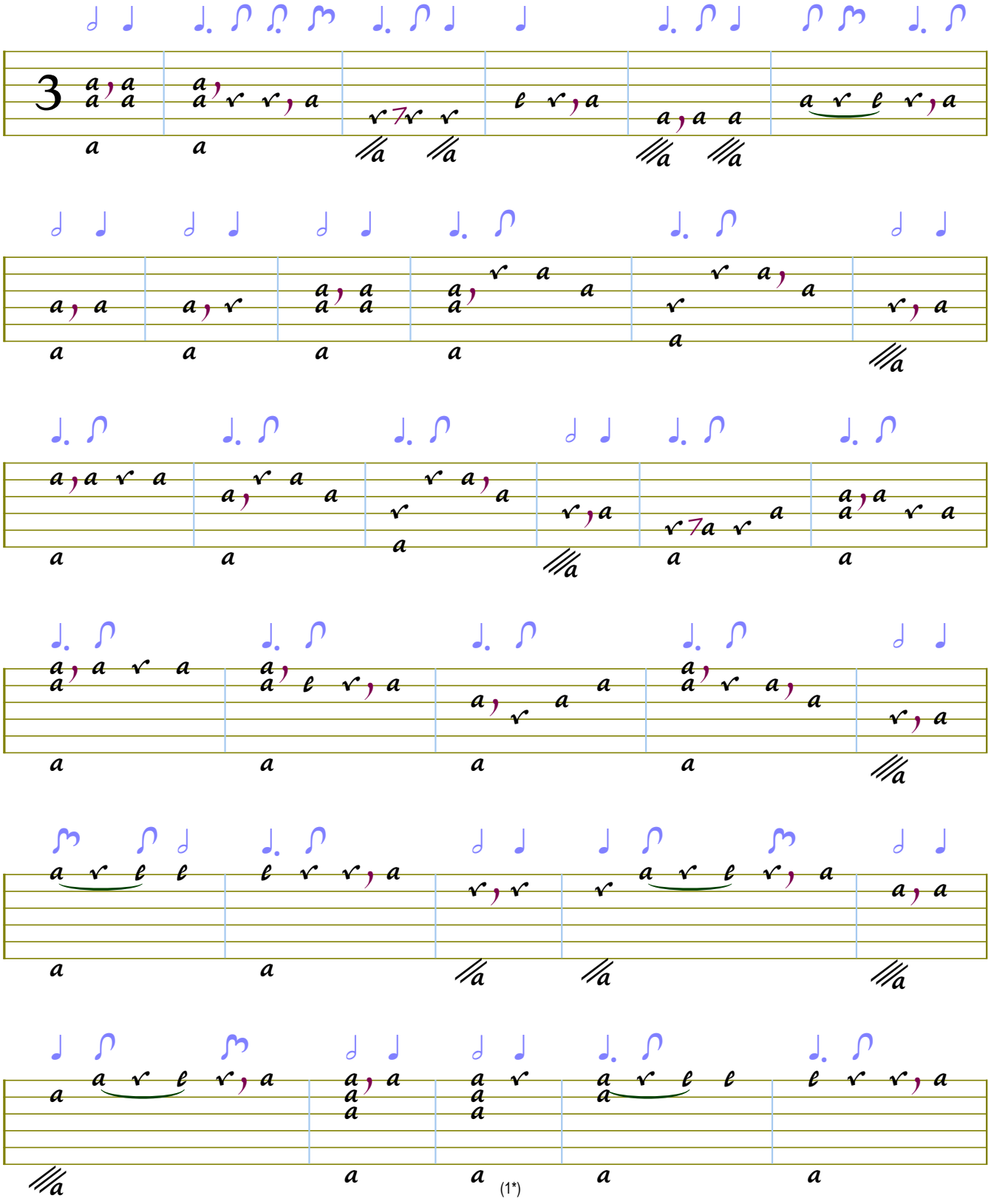
Full fortie tymes over, by John Red



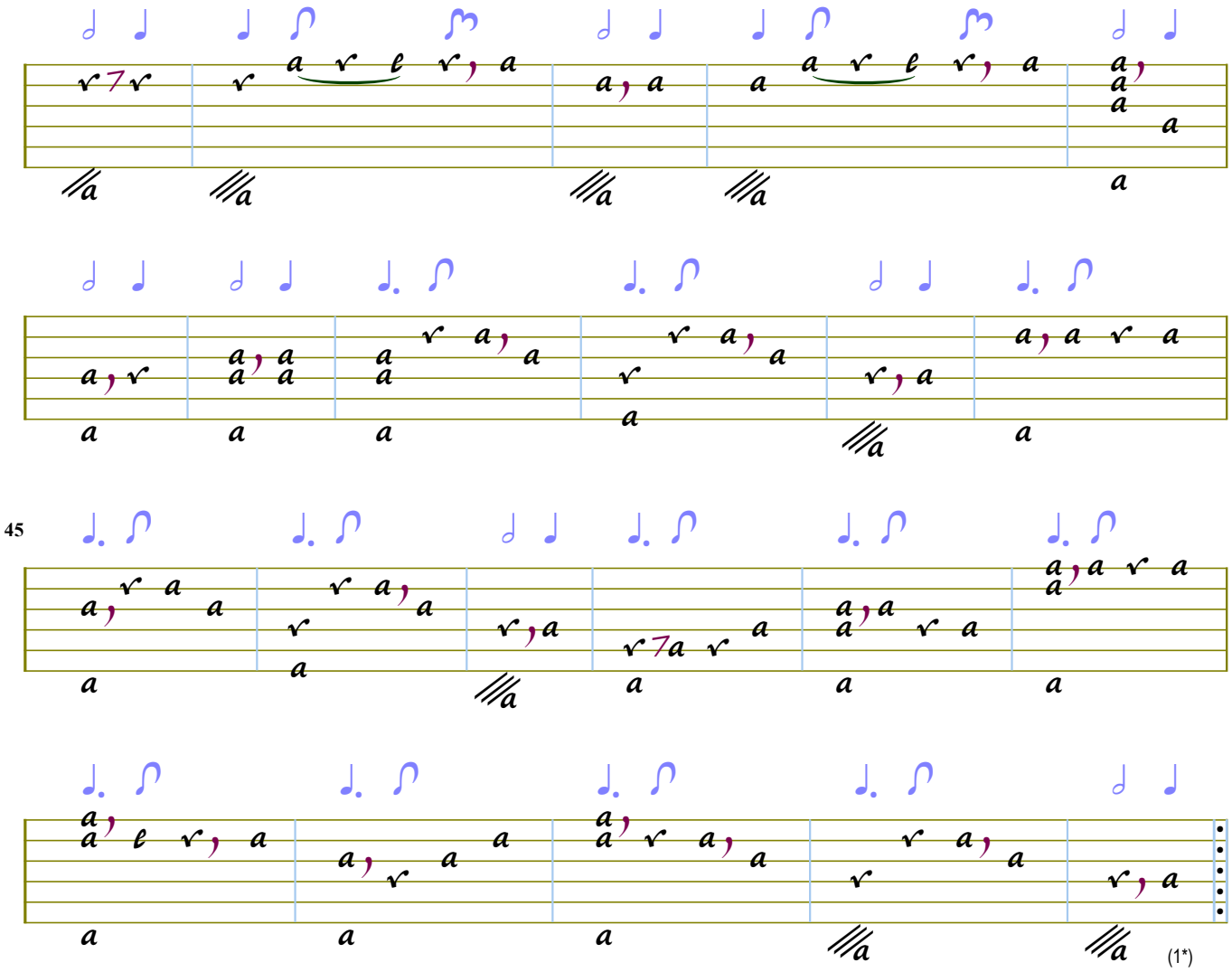
John come kiss me now, by John Red



Port Atholl, with the 1st string tuned up halfe a note, mr. Leslie's way, wrong marked

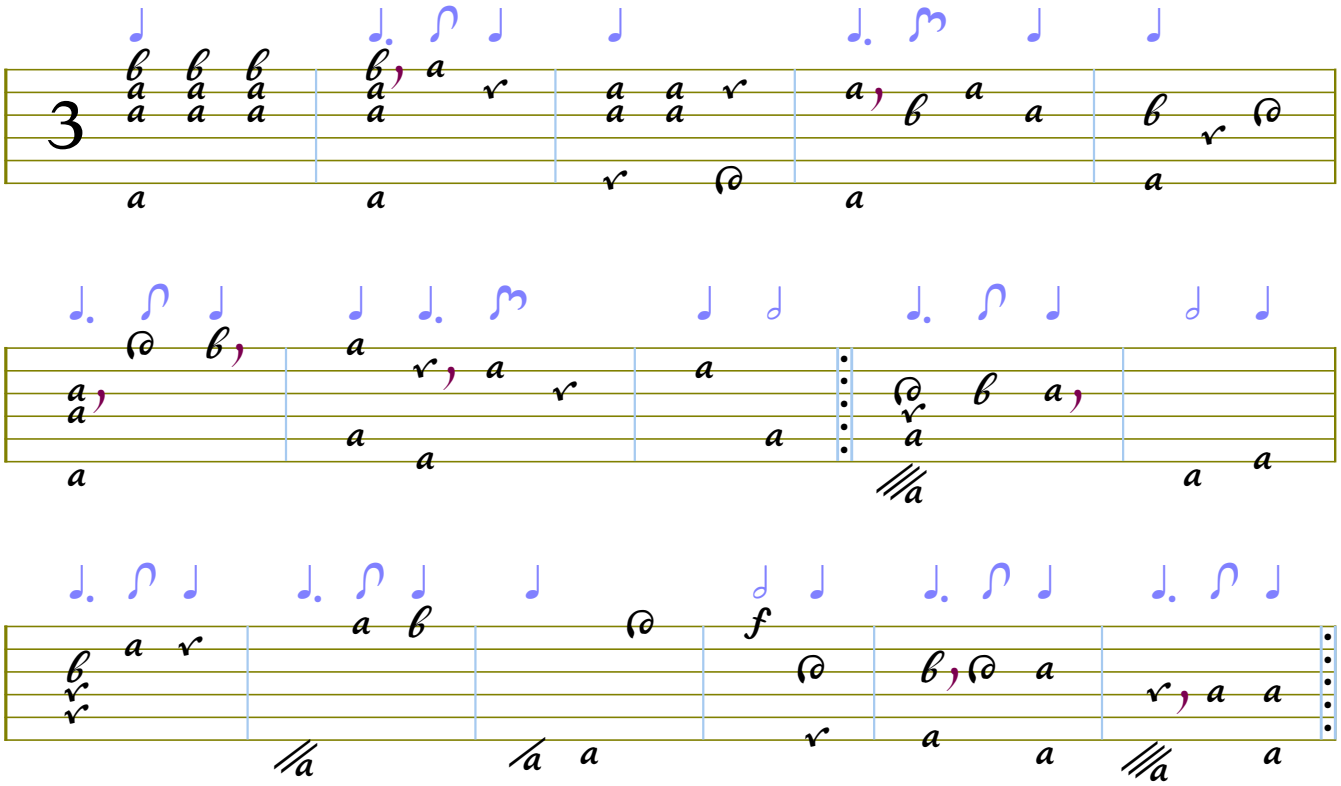


1. This bar omitted by mistake to be inserted from final bar marked with a cross in original

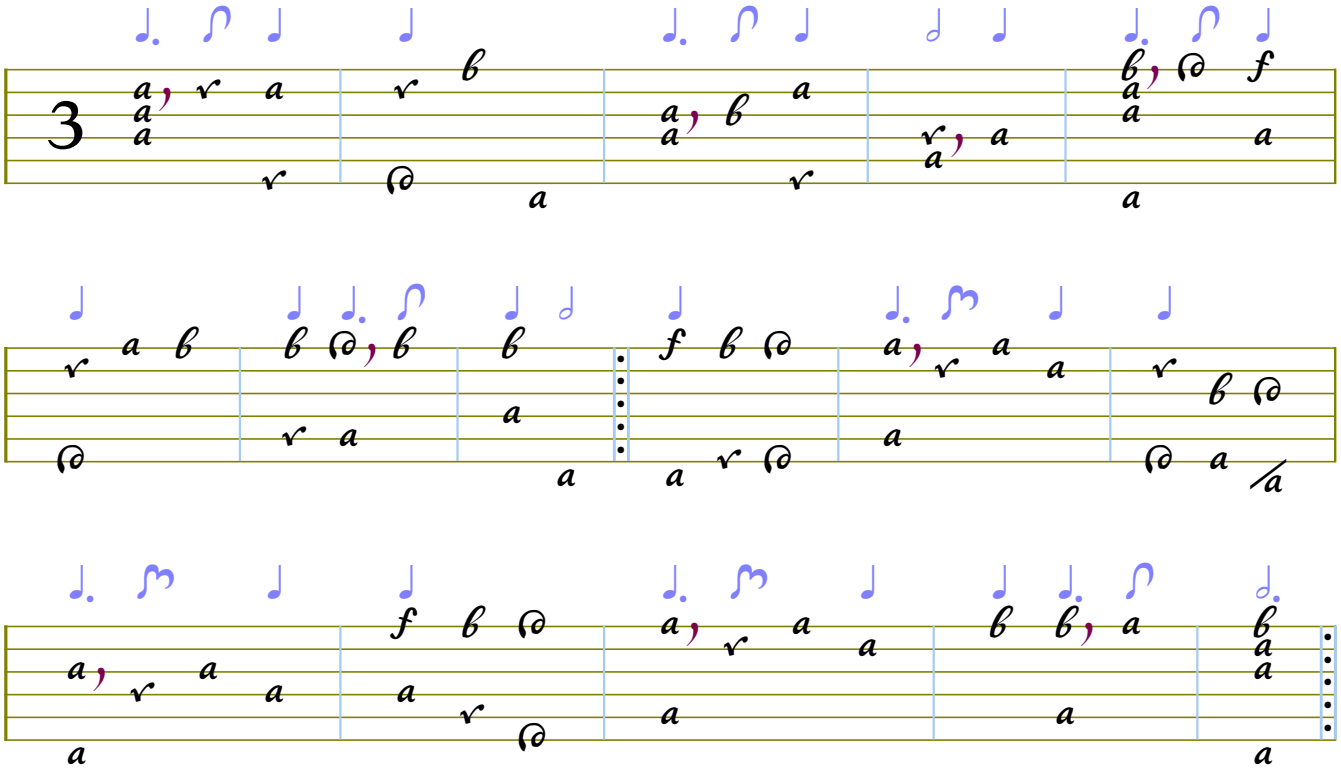


1. An additional bar after this is meant to be inserted as bar 31, originally omitted by the scribe

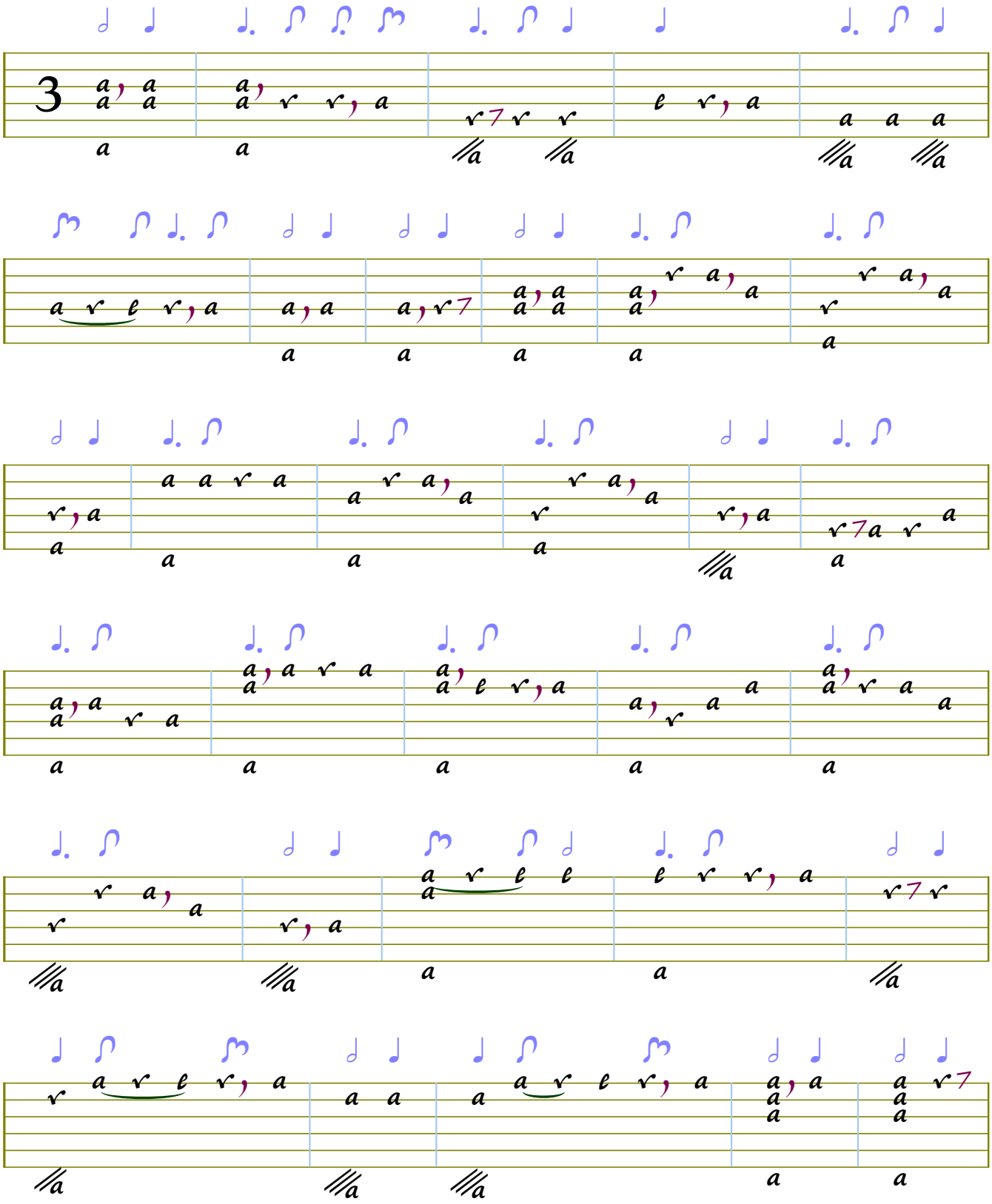
Saraband, by David Grieve

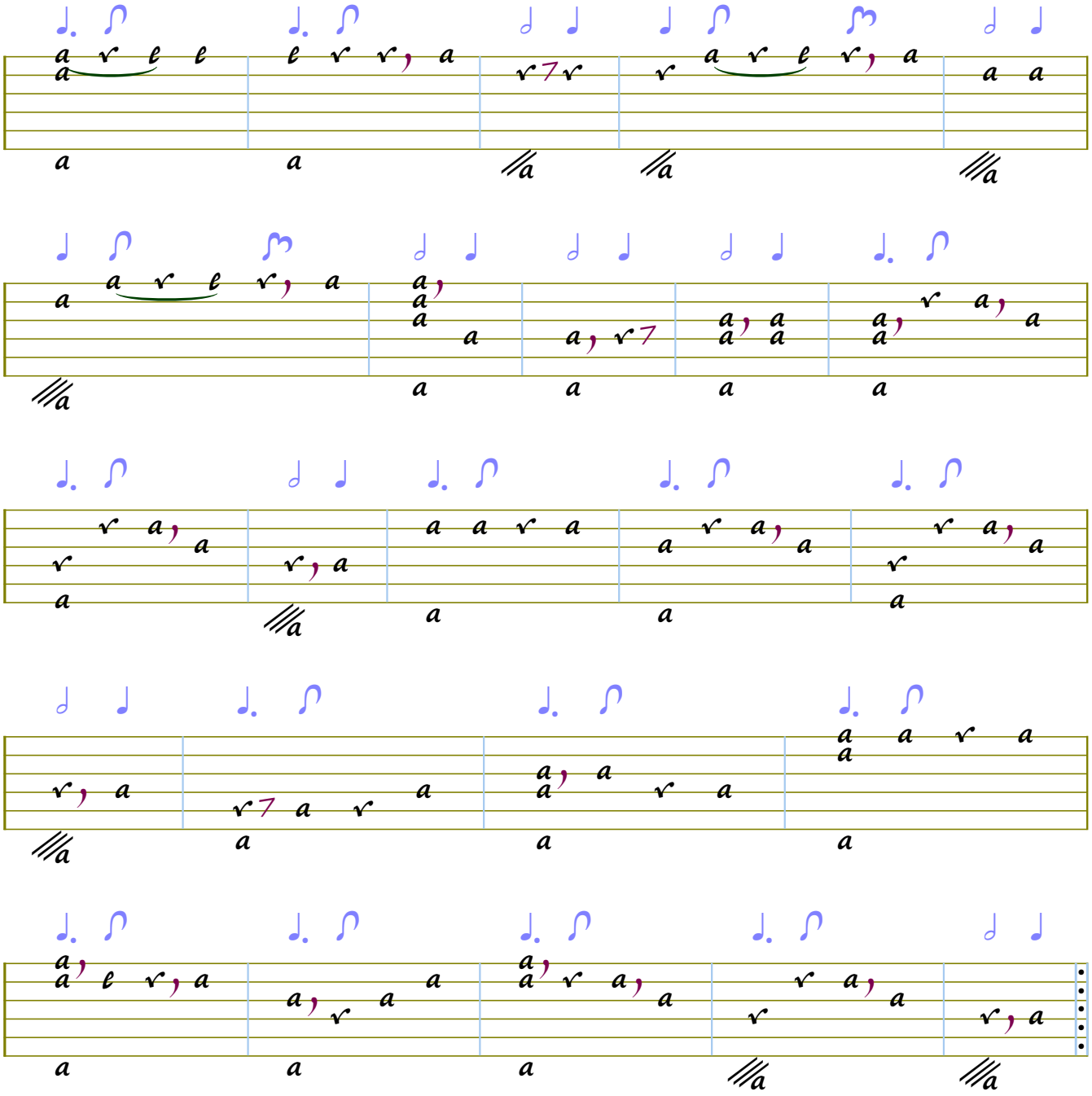


Sarabande, by David Grieve

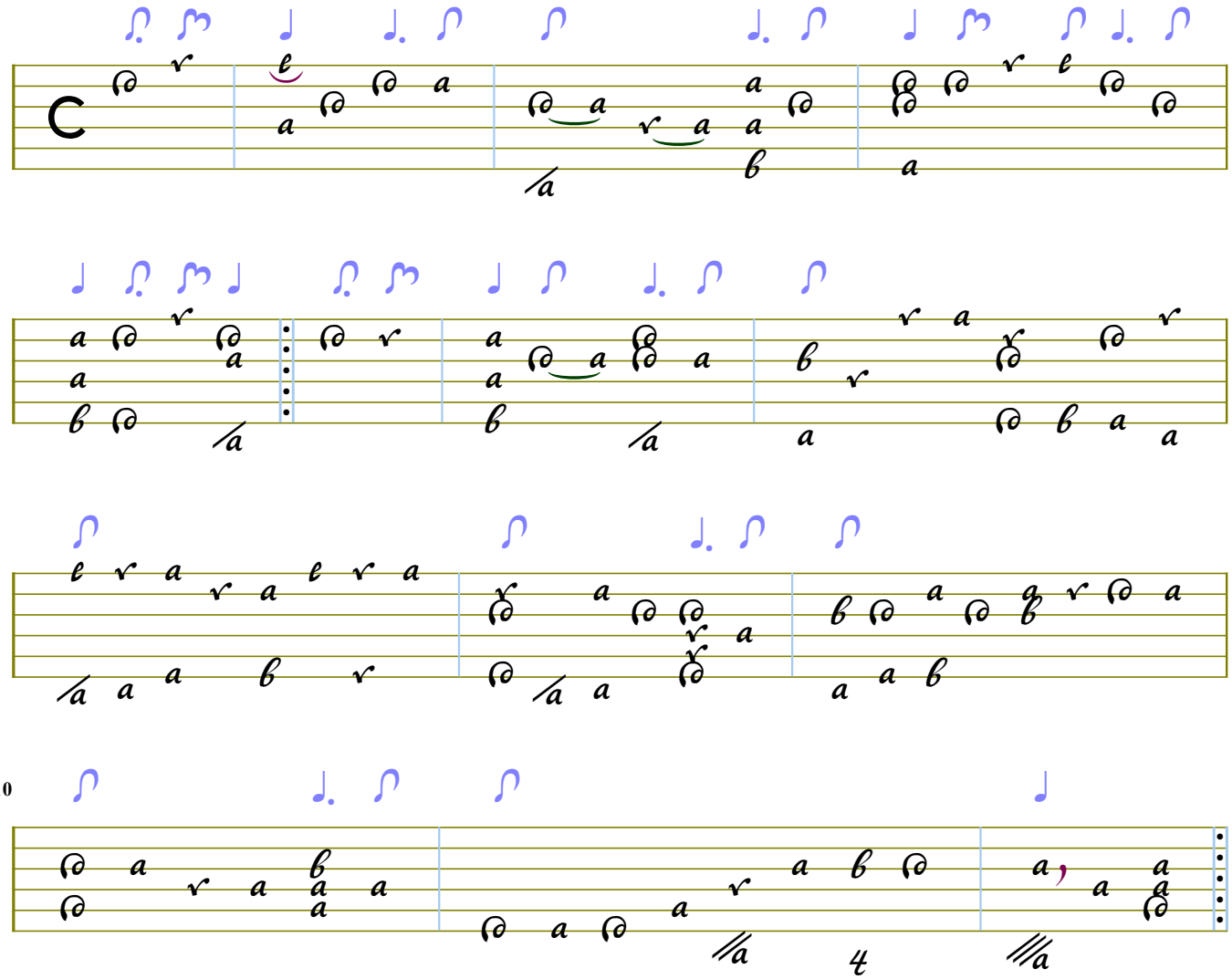


Port Atholl, with the 1st string tuned up halfe a note, mr Leslie's way, right marked

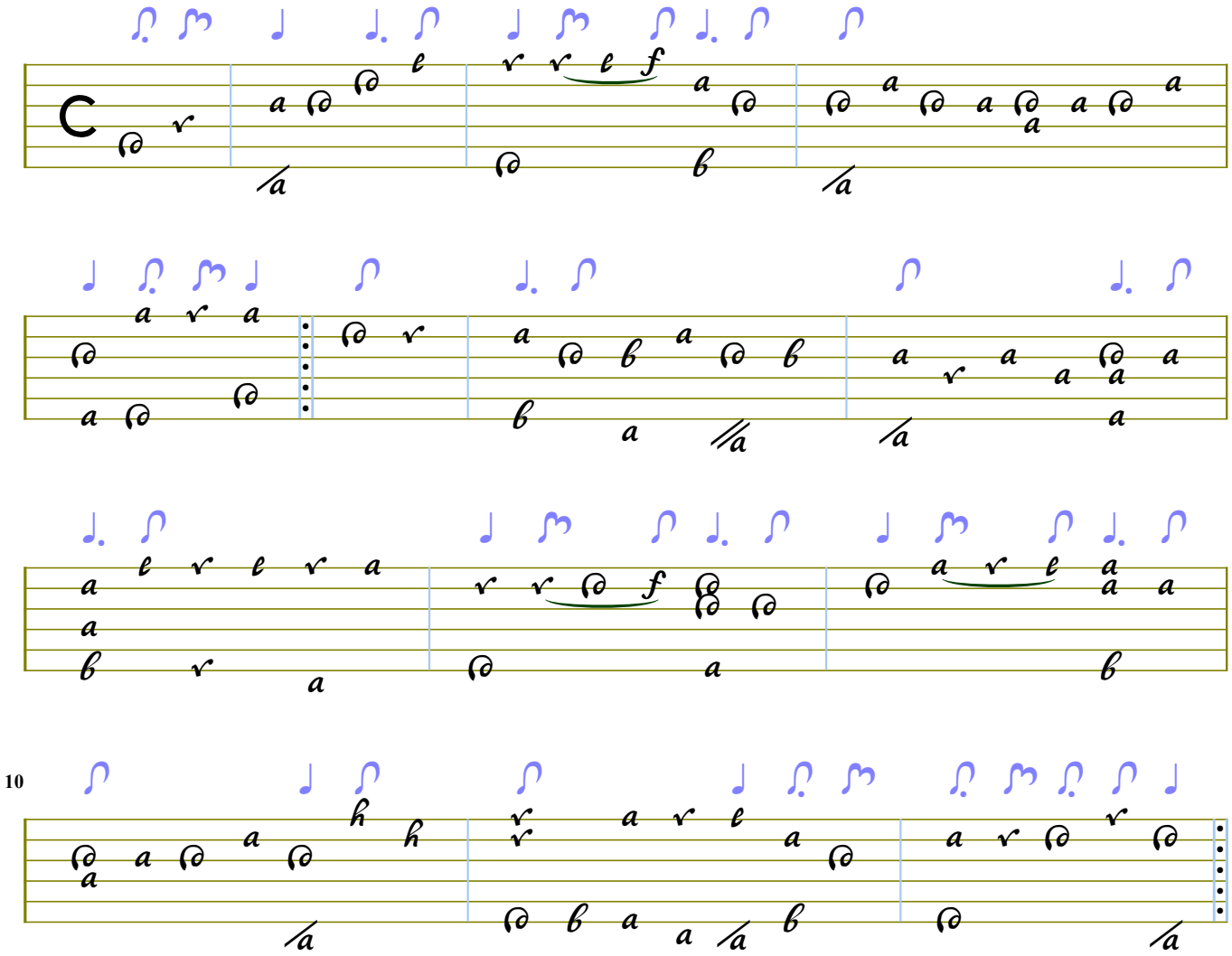




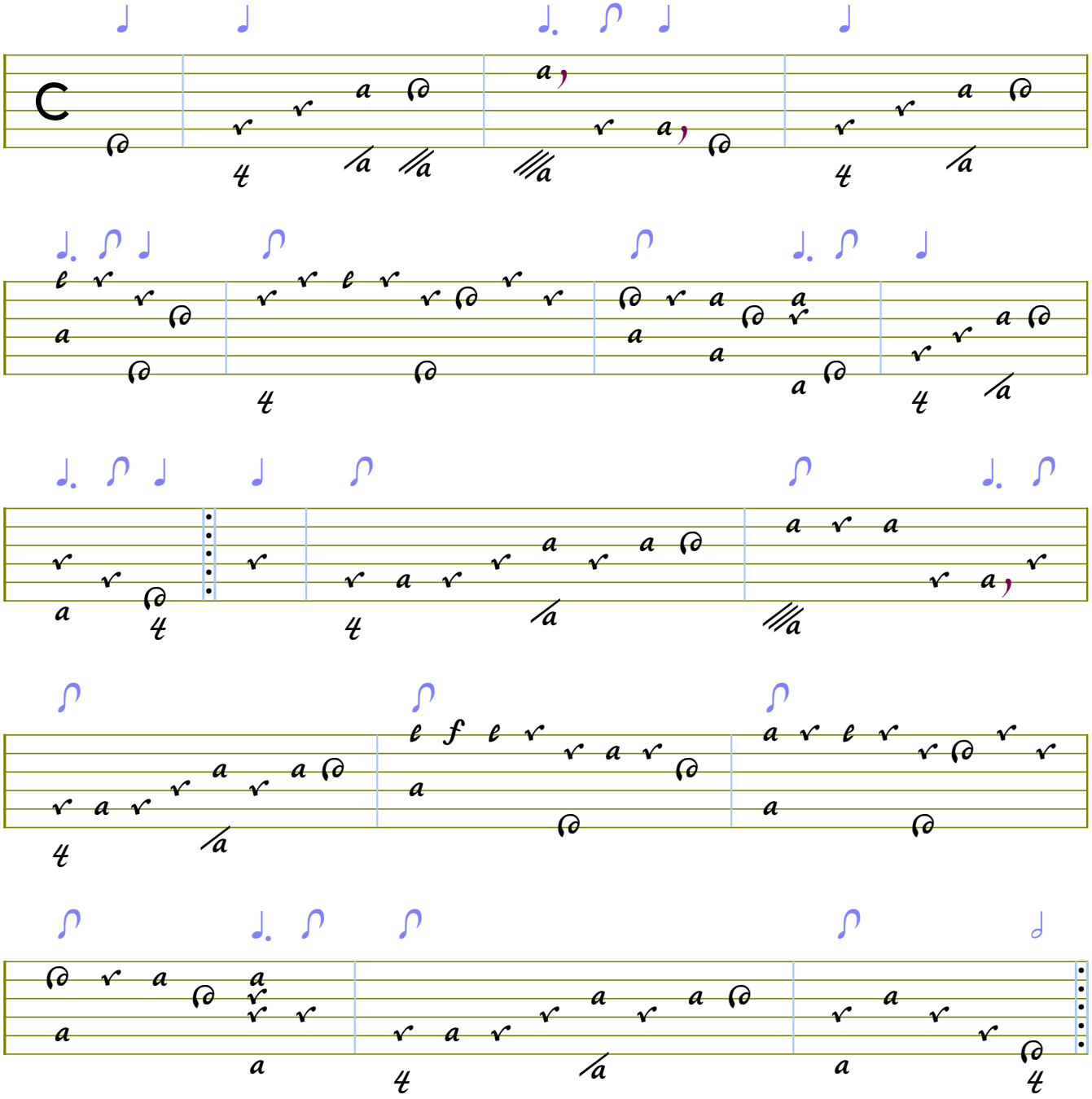
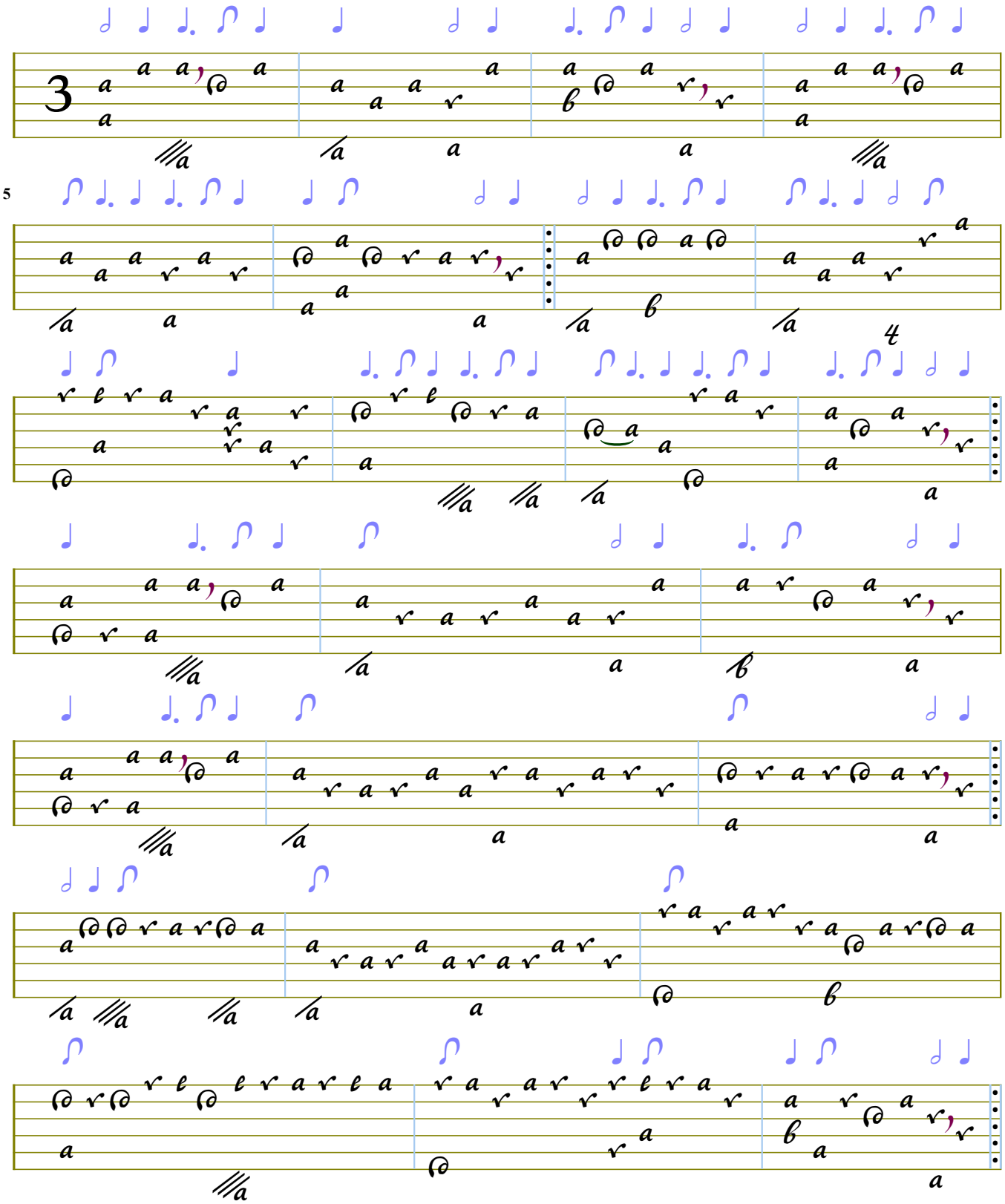
The 1st of mr Fermers airs, Jean mores way, by mr Beck



The 2nd of mr Fermers airs, Jean mores way, by mr. Beck



For noman's sake, I will lighthe him, Jean More's way, by mr. beck



Saw your own Portt slepe(?), Jean More's way, by mr Beck