

# THE LUTE SOCIETY MUSIC EDITIONS

70 Easy to Intermediate Pieces  
for Renaissance Lute

Chosen and edited by John H. Robinson from sources of  
music from England, France, Germany, Italy  
and the Low Countries

‘On Musick’:

‘Musics a Crotchet the sober thinks it vain  
 The Fiddles a Wooding Projection  
 Tunes are but Flights of a Whimsical Brain  
 Which the Bottle Brings Best to Perfection  
 Musesians are half Witted Mery and Mad  
 And Those are the same that Admire Them  
 They’re Fools if they Play Unless their Well Paid  
 And the others are Blockheads to Hire them.’

*From the William Vickers tune book, Northumberland Collections Service, Woodhorn, Northumberland*

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## GRADING

Easy lute music is perhaps a contradiction in terms, and each piece has its own challenges, but to give this anthology some structure the pieces have been arranged in approximate order of difficulty. As with the previous two anthologies, the approach has been to think in terms of successive hurdles which the lute student has to surmount: the 'B flat' and 'E flat' chord shapes where the player has to stretch the third or fourth fingers across the neck; higher positions and frets; and barre or half barre chords. As with the previous two anthologies, we begin with the very easiest kind of piece; but here we progress to pieces requiring a more advanced technique than the preceding volumes. Fingering has not been indicated here except where it appears in original sources; beginners wanting a good stock of fully-fingered pieces to get a good grasp of the principles of fingering should consult those earlier volumes, which also include some general advice on practising, and suggestions for further teaching materials, and repertoire.

## INTRODUCTION

Following the success of two previous editions, *58 Very Easy Pieces for Renaissance Lute* (The Lute Society, 1999) and *40 Easy to Intermediate Pieces for Renaissance Lute* (The Lute Society, 2002), this third edition presents a further anthology of lute solos selected from less well-known sources graded to provide practice pieces of progressive difficulty for students of the renaissance lute. However, much of the music is also novel and attractive enough to be of interest to experienced players looking to extend their repertoire. The selection includes a wide range of genres: preludes, fantasias, vocal intabulations and dances from all over Europe. The bibliography includes details of the available modern and facsimile editions in case the reader wishes to pursue particular sources in more depth, which is highly recommended.

The anthology includes music spanning the early sixteenth through to the early seventeenth centuries, and begins with the simplest of exercises, a 'Fundamentum' from Pierre Phalèse's first print. More interesting examples of such exercises are found as no. 31, from the same print, and no. 38, from one of the manuscript sources. The two preludes and four fantasias include one in the form of an exercise, no. 54, 'for the Tuning of the Lute' (which can be heard as the first track on Paul O'Dette's CD *Tabulatures de Lute*, Astrée Auvidis E7776), together with a number of manageable and quite short intabulations of vocal models, but the majority of the music in this anthology is devoted to a variety of French, German and Italian dance forms. Of particular note are the correntes, including no. 40, which provides practice at sustaining the upper and lower parts of this essentially two-part arrangement. The many ballets and ballettos often have delightfully fluid divisions, including no. 67, which is the Continental tune on which John Dowland based his 'Lady Hunsdon's Puffe'. A French rustic dance, the bransle, is well represented here with many of the best lute settings, and German dances include two settings of the shepherd's (*Schäfers*) dance, the first combined with a version of the dance of death (*Todten Tantz*), while many others have named dedicatees. Italian popular forms include a composite of two sets of variations on the four-note bergamasca ground (F-B flat-C-F), and two versions of the spagnoletta. Of the four galliards one is English, while the one that ends this anthology has three strains of irregular lengths employing occasional hemiolas (varying the rhythm from three two-crotchet beats per bar to two three-crotchets beats per bar, to great effect if you can get it right) and the third strain is extended by the addition of not one but two imaginative sets of divisions.

The music has been edited from ten prints and ten manuscripts, half the items coming from just three of the sources. The majority are for six-course renaissance lute, with the addition of twenty five items for a lute with a seventh course tuned to F (assuming a lute tuned in G). An F an octave higher than the seventh course has been added editorially in grey on the fourth course as an alternative to the low F on the seventh course where necessary so that all the music can be played on a six-course lute – with just one exception, no. 68, which really requires a seven-course lute. Two items employ a scordatura tuning to great effect, with the seventh course tuned down from G to F; these could equally well be played on a seven-course lute.

## EDITORIAL PRINCIPLES

The tablature is reproduced in French tablature using Wayne Cripps tablature-setting programme TAB version 4.3.39 running in system OSX (10.5.6) on an Apple iMac. Music from sources in Italian and German tablature (see bibliography) is transcribed into French tablature. This edition is intended as a playing rather than a scholarly edition and so obvious errors have been tacitly corrected and the tablature has been edited for ease of performance in a few places without comment. Double bar lines have often been added to reveal the structure of the dances, but no repeat signs have been included - repeats have been left to the player's discretion. Playing indications have been added when present in the original sources (tacitly edited in places), such as: (i) single dots under tablature letters, indicating 'weak beats' plucked with the right-hand index finger or chords plucked without the use of the thumb, and occasionally two dots to indicate middle finger; (ii) numbers to indicate right-hand fingering positions (no. 8 'Branle de village' is easier to play than you think if the first finger is kept on the second fret of the fourth course from bar one onwards, until it is changed to the second finger in bar 34, which should be held until the final bar); (iii) vertical ties to indicate chords not to be spread or arpeggiated; (iv) sloping lines under the tablature letters or 'x' to the right of a tablature letter to indicate holding the bass note until the next one. No concordances or cognates are provided, although some of the music may appear with more familiar titles in other sources - so see what you can identify!

## SOURCES

### Half the pieces in this anthology come from just three sources:

- Le Roy 1568 – *A briefe and easy instru[c]tion* (London, James Rowbothame, 1568) (6), the earliest printed lute book from England, known from a single copy in the British Library, itself a translation by J Alford of a now lost lute instruction published by Adrian Le Roy in Paris. Modern edition: Pierre Jansen and Daniel Heartz (Eds.), *Corpus des Luthistes Français* (Paris, CNRS, 1975).
- CH-Bu F.IX.70 – Basel, Öffentliche Bibliothek der Universität, Musiksammlung, Ms. F.IX.70: a huge manuscript collection of 500 lute solos copied in German tablature for Emanuel Wurstisen and dated 1591 and 1594 (17).
- D-B 4022 – Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, Preussischer Kulturbesitz (formerly Danzig/Gdansk), MS 4022, a large manuscript of 250 lute solos copied in French tablature c1615-20 (12).

### The following are the sources for the remaining items:

- Adriaenssen 1584 – Emmanuel Adriaenssen, *Pratum Musicum Longe* (Antwerp, 1584) (1). Facsimile: with introduction and bibliography by Kwee Him Yong, Utrecht: Frits Knuf, 1971.
- Adriaenssen 1592 – Emmanuel Adriaenssen, *Novum Pratum Musicum* (Antwerp, 1592) (1). Facsimile: Genève: Minkoff Éditions, 1975.
- Attaignant 1529 – Pierre Attaignant, *Tres breve et familiere introduction* (Paris, 1529) (3). Facsimile: Genève: Minkoff Éditions, 1988.
- Besard 1617 – Jean-Baptiste Besard, *Novus Partus* (Augsburg, 1617) (1). Facsimile: Genève: Éditions Minkoff, 1983.
- Le Roy 1574 – *A briefe and plaine Instruction* (London, Roubothum, 1574) (1).
- Phalèse 1545 – Pierre Phalèse, *Des Chansons Reduictz en Tabulature de Lut ... Livre premier* (Louvain, 1545) (2).
- Phalèse 1547 – Pierre Phalèse, *Des Cha[n]sons Reduictz en Tabulature de Lvt ... Livre premier* revised (Louvain: 1547) (3). Facsimile: Genève, Minkoff, 1984.
- Phalèse 1574 – Pierre Phalèse and Jean Bellère, *Thesaurus Musicus* (Antwerp, 1574) (2).
- Terzi 1599 – Giovanni Antonio Terzi, *Il Secondo Libro De Intavolatura Di Liuto* (Venice, 1599), in Italian tablature. (1). Facsimile: Archivum Musicum 45 (Firenze: Studio Per Edizioni Scelte, 1981).
- A-Lla 475 – Linz, Österreichische Landesbibliothek, MS hs. 475: a manuscript of 255 lute solos comprising intabulations of music by Hans Leo Hassler interspersed with English lute music, copied in German tablature for Michael Eijserdt of Nürnberg c1610 (4).
- D-LEm II.6.15 – Leipzig, Musikbibliothek der Stadt, Ms. II.6.15, 1619, 582 lute solos copied in German tablature by a German Protestant student in Leipzig, but incorrectly known as the Albert Dlugoraj lute book. Facsimile: Lübeck, Tree Edition, 2001 (4).
- D-LEm II.6.23 – Leipzig, Musikbibliothek der Stadt, Ms. II.6.23, a manuscript inscribed 'Tabulaturbuch des Johannes Friedericus' containing 74 lute solos copied in French tablature in the early 17th-c (1).
- D-Lr 2000 – Lüneburg, Ratsbücherei und Stadtarchiv, Ms. Mus. ant. pract. 2000: lute book of Wolf Christian von Harling, 68 easy to intermediate lute solos copied by his teacher Jacques Metzner and dated 1643 (4). Facsimile: Lübeck, Tree Edition, 2005.
- F-Pn Rés 941 – Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Rés. 941: 94 lute solos copied in Italian tablature mainly lacking rhythm signs, inscribed 'Pierre de Pouille Tabulatura de Leuto' and dated 1609 and 1616 (3).
- US-BEm 759 – Berkeley, University of California Music Library, Ms. 759, 5 lute solos copied in Italian tablature and inscribed 'Io Carlo Banci Bolognese Anno Domini 1628' (1).
- US-BEm 761 – Berkeley, University of California Music Library, Ms. 761, 13 lute solos copied in Italian tablature with titles added by Carlo Banci c1615-30 (2).
- US-SFsc M2.1 M3 – San Francisco, California State University and Colleges, Frank V. De Bellis Collection, Ms. M2.1 M3, a manuscript of 80 lute solos inscribed 'Ascanio bentivoglio' and dated 1615 (3).