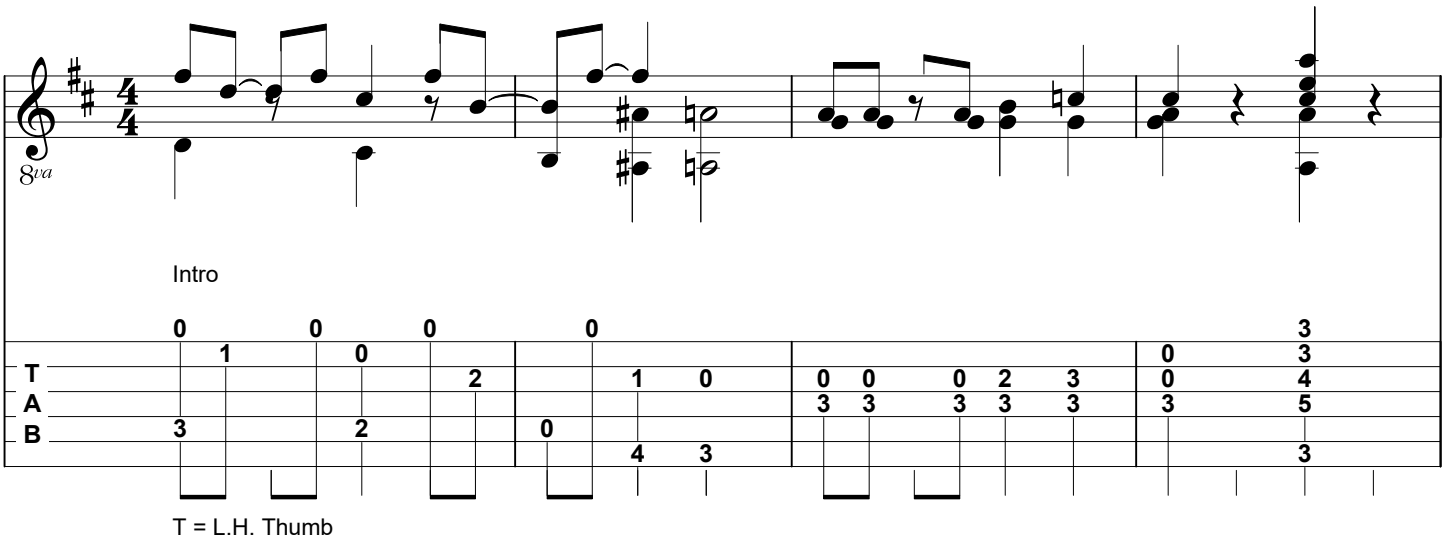
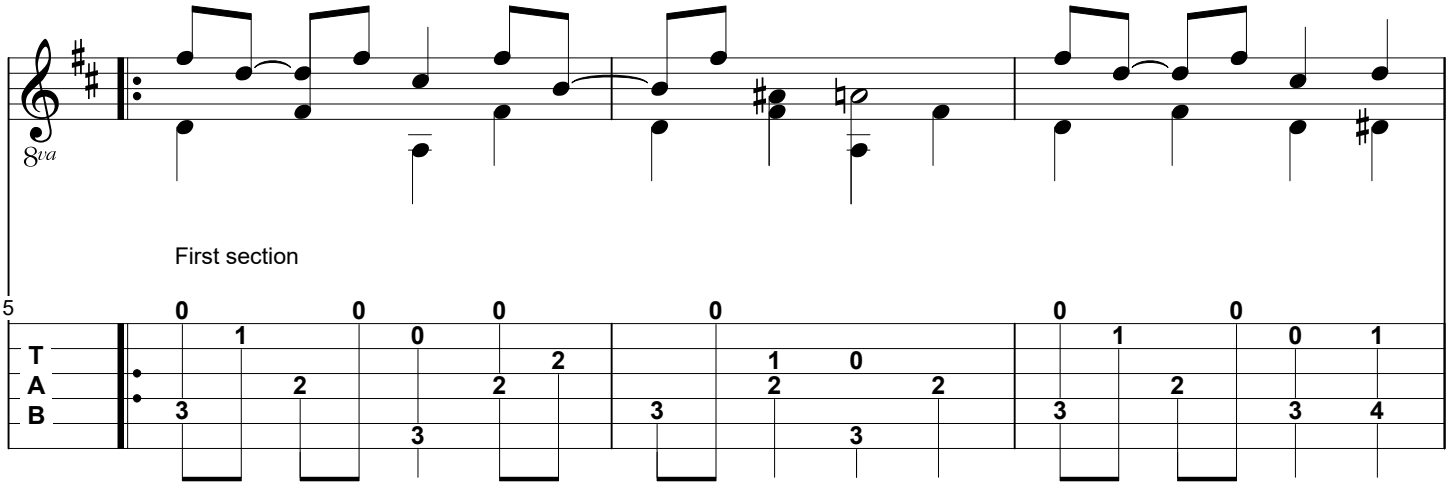
Calliope Rag

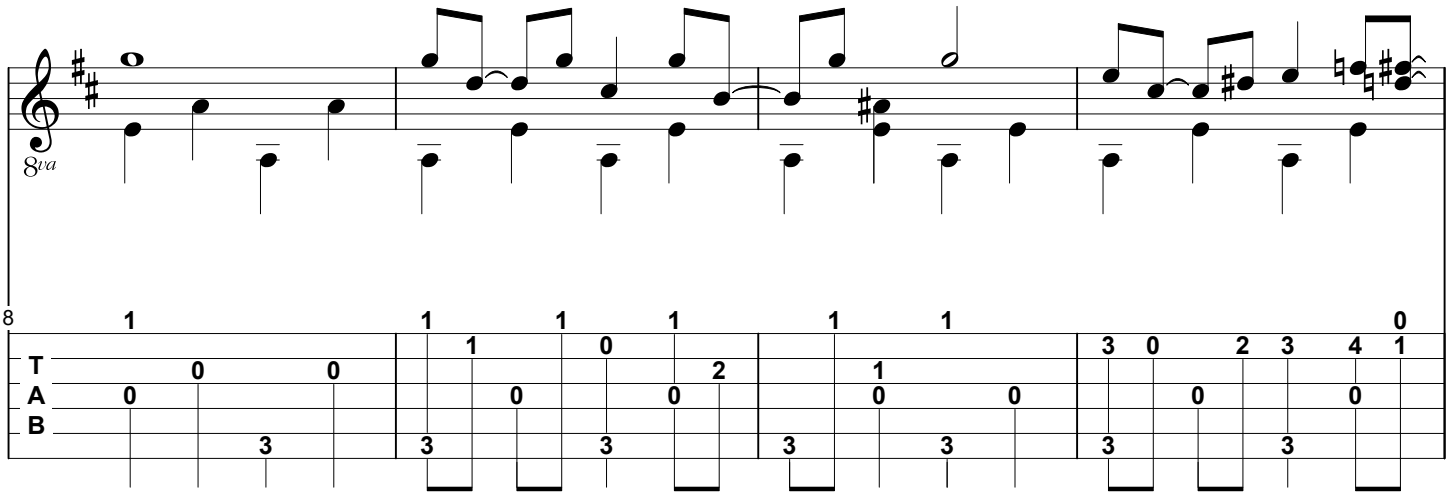
James Scott (1910) - Robert R. (Ragtime Bob) Darch (1966)

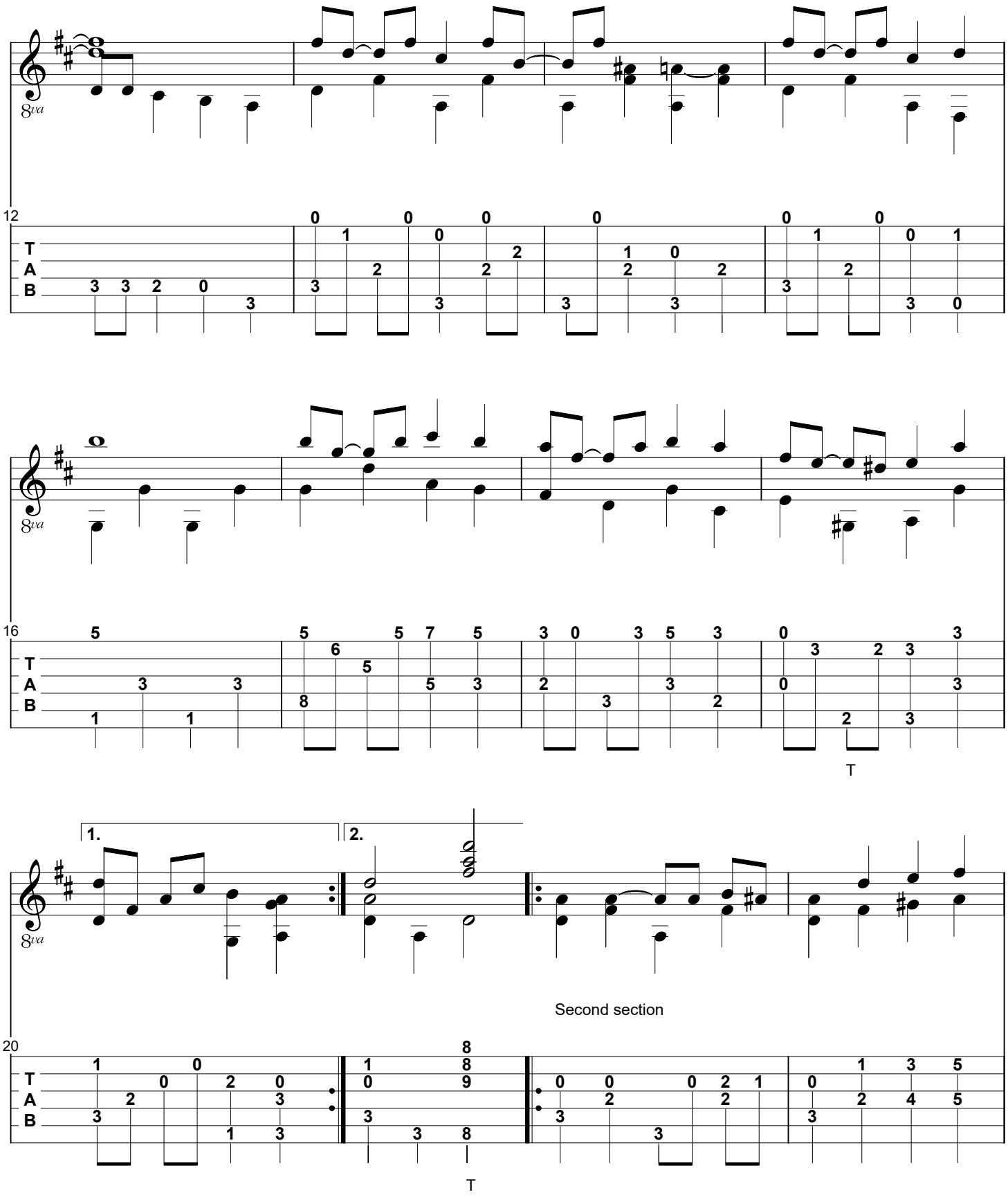
Arr: Tom Thomason (1975)
TablEdited by Tom Thomason (1998)

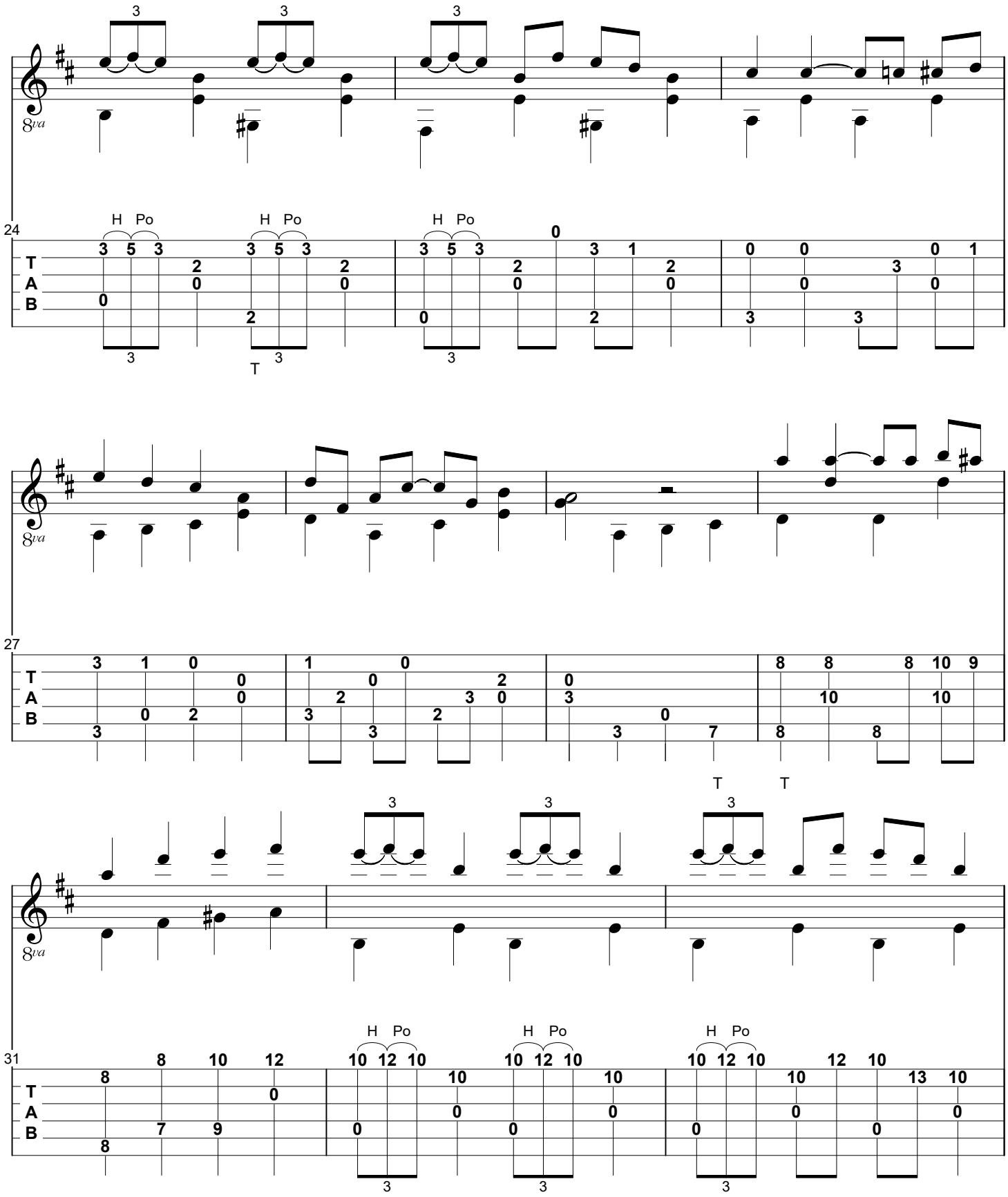


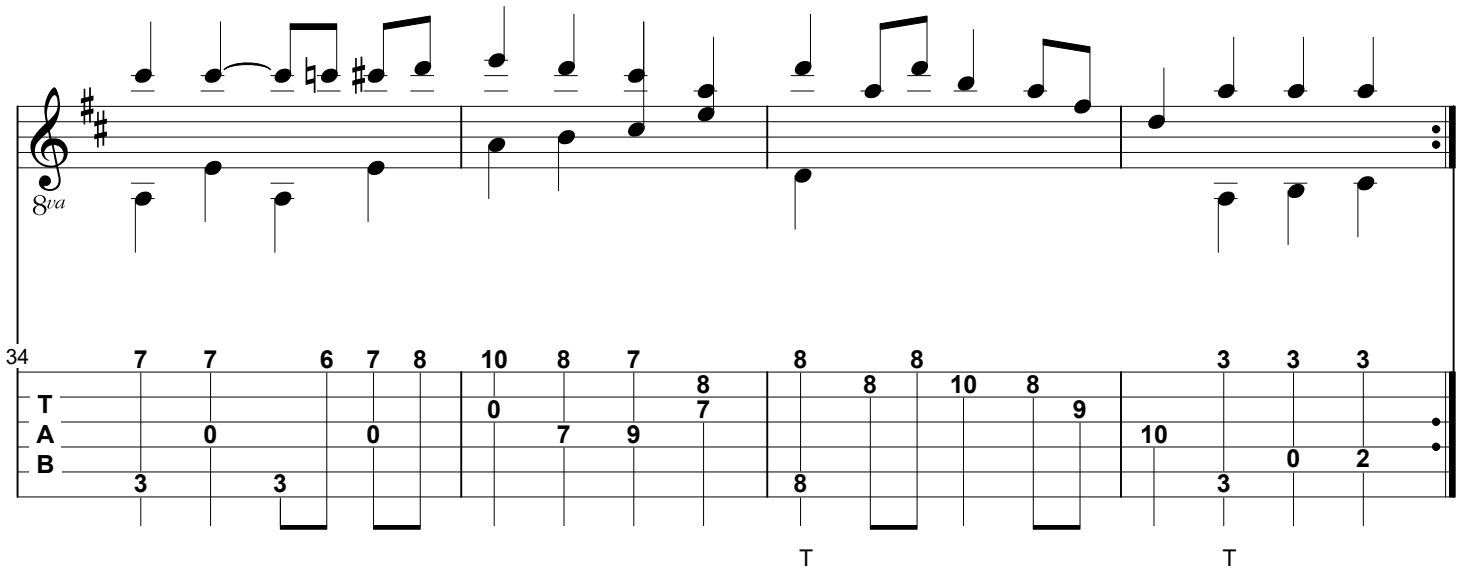
T = L.H. Thumb

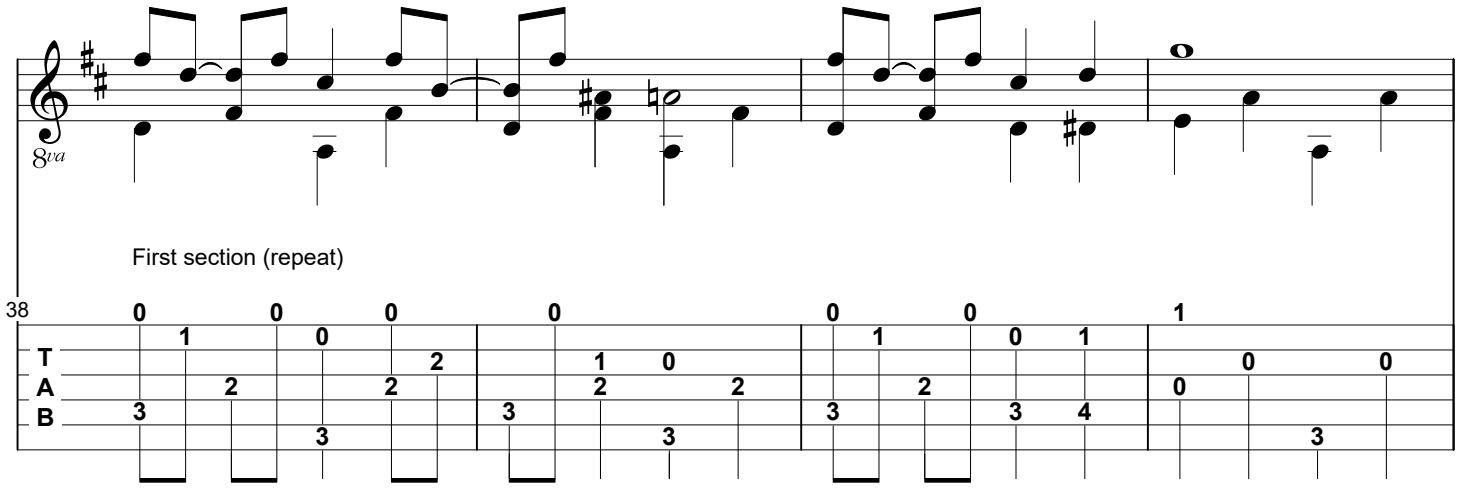


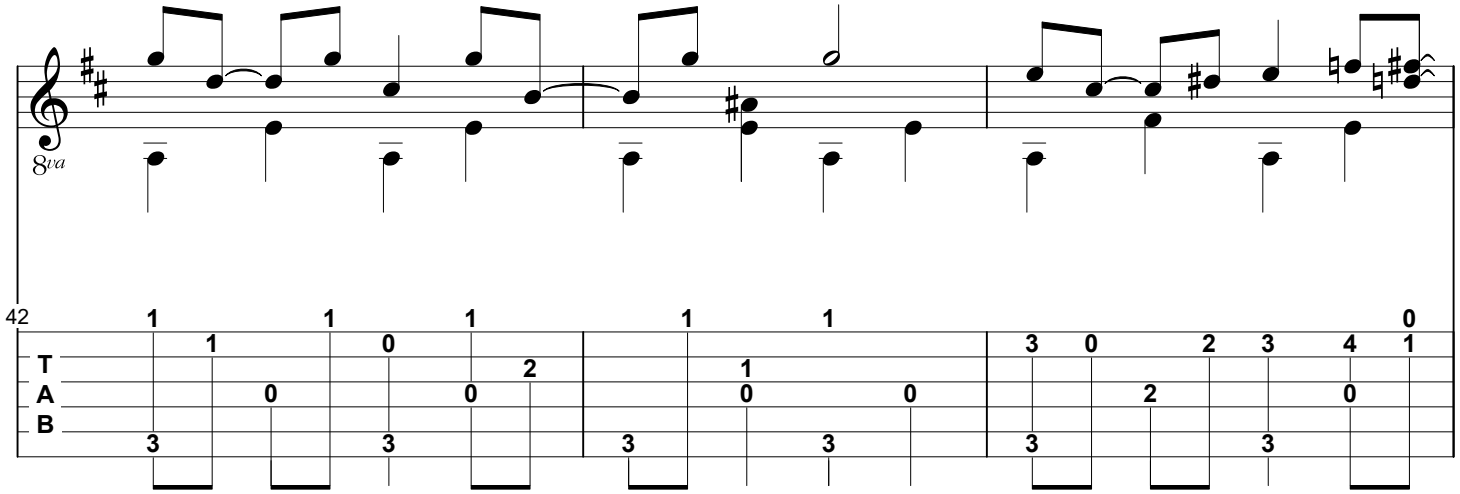


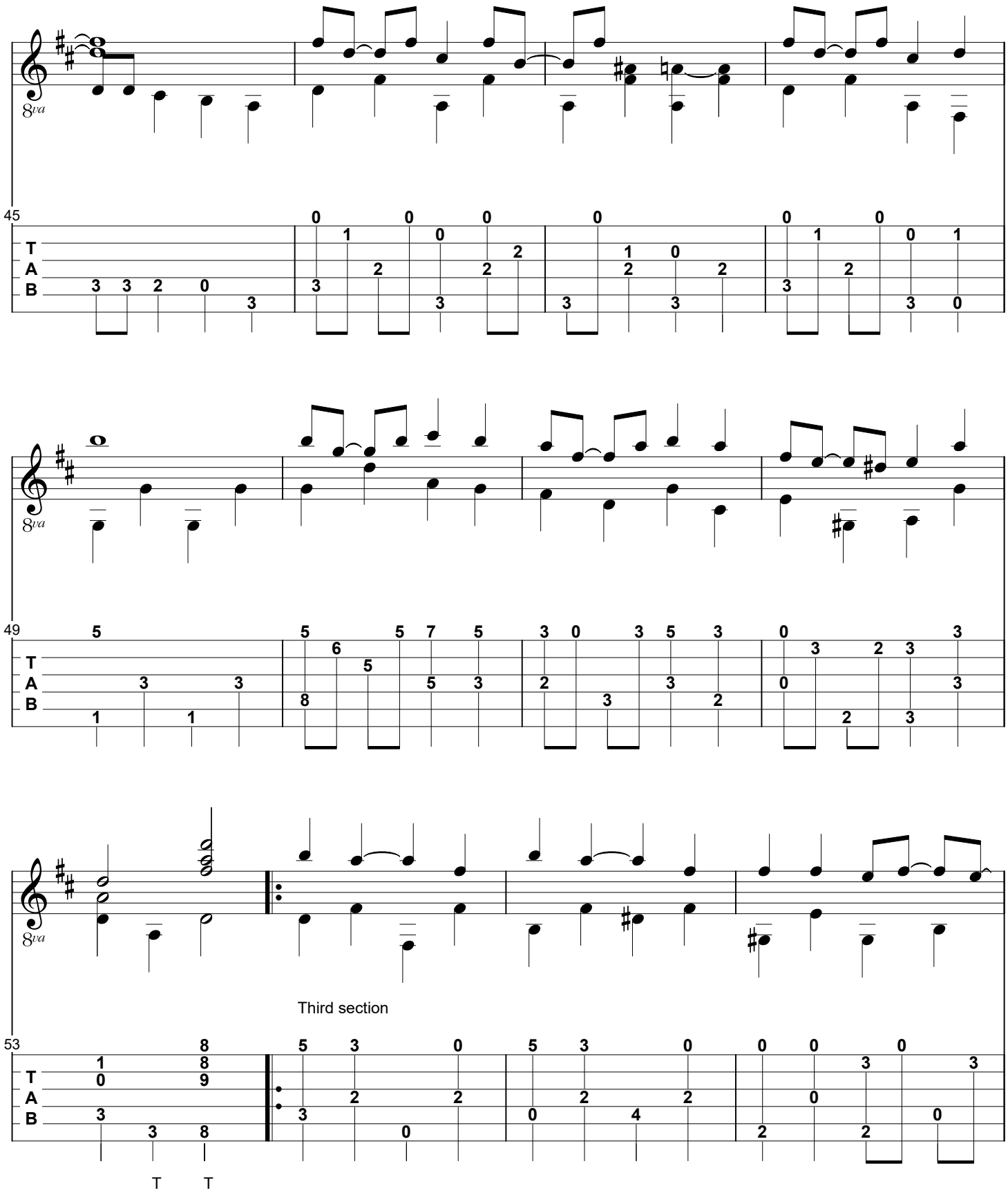

8va
12
T
A
B
8va
16
T
A
B
T
1.
2.
8va
Second section
20
T
A
B
T

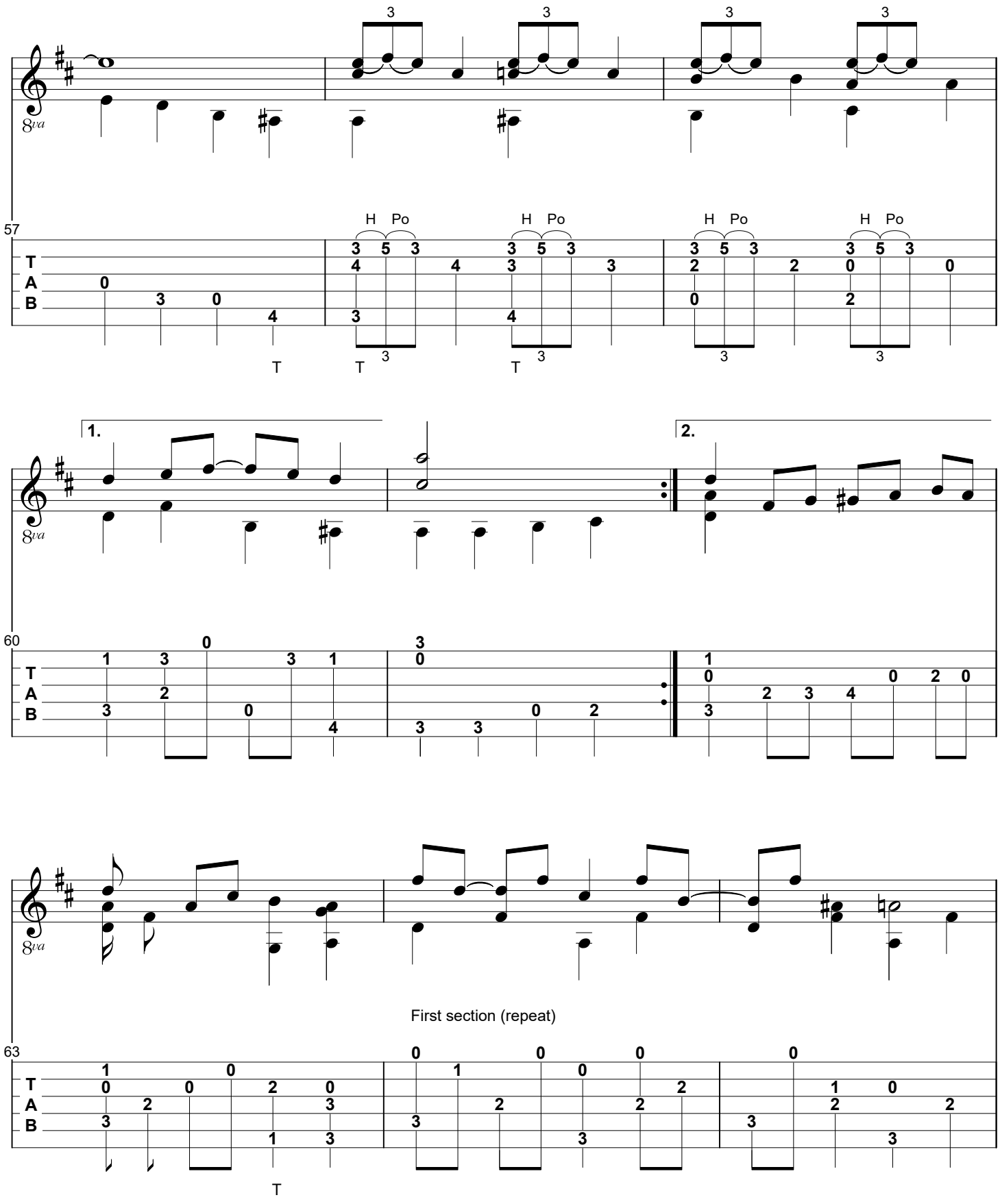

24
27
31
8va
T
A
B
H Po
T

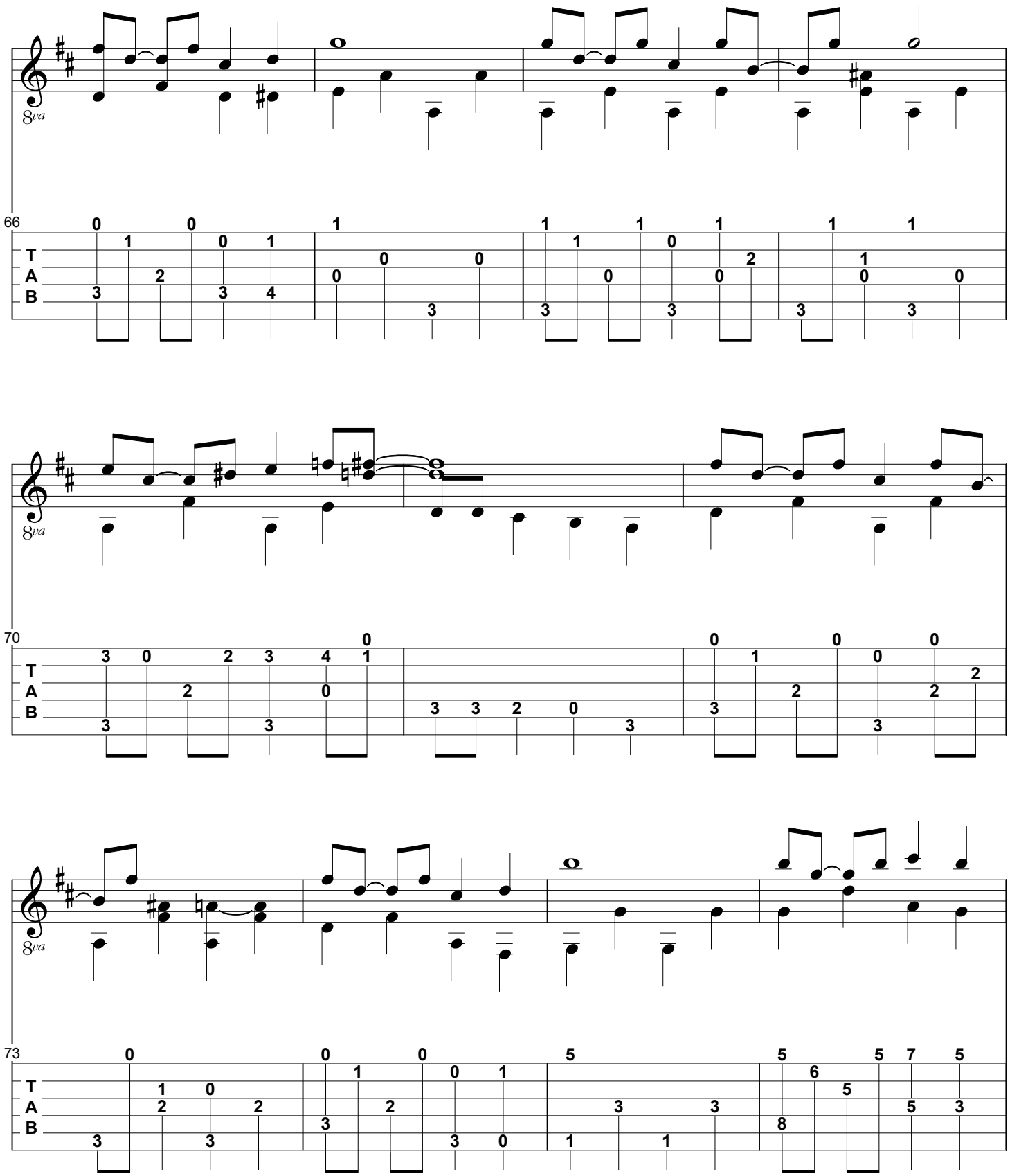

8va
34
T
A
B
T
T

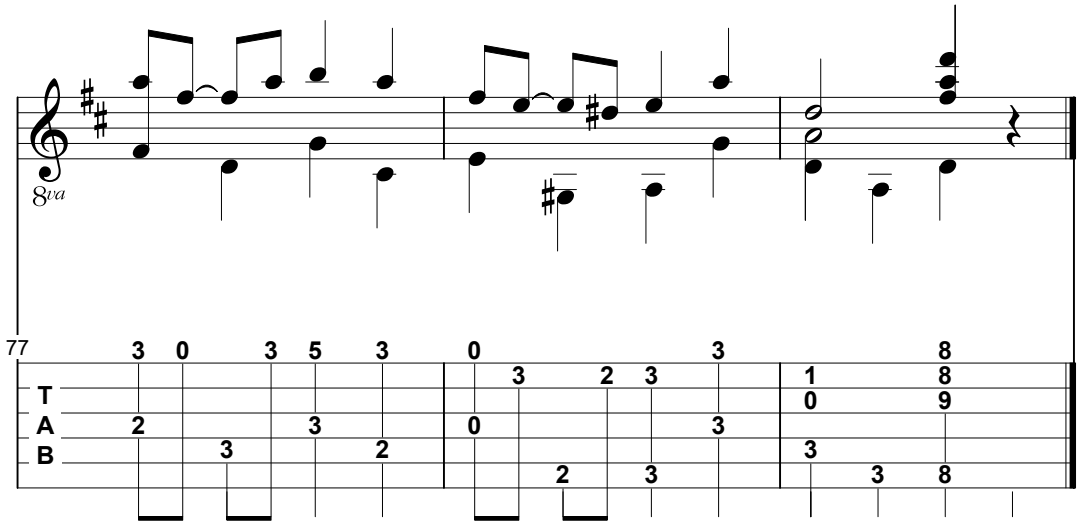

8va
First section (repeat)
38
T
A
B


8va
42
T
A
B


8va
45
T
A
B
8va
49
T
A
B
8va
Third section
53
T
A
B
T T


8va
57
H Po
T
A
B
1.
2.
60
First section (repeat)
63


8va
66
T
A
B
8va
70
T
A
B
8va
73
T
A
B



For those of you unfamiliar with the "Calliope" of the title, a calliope is an instrument (named after Calliope, the greek muse of epic poetry) consisting of a keyboard connected to a set of steam driven whistles. These were commonly used on the great paddle-wheelers of the Mississipps River. They were also used in circuses. These instruments had an incredible volume and could be heard for miles, announcing the arrival of the riverboat or circus coming to town.

This particular rag was sketched out by James Scott in 1910 but wasn't completed until one of the giants of modern ragtime, Robert R. "Ragtime Bob" Darch, finished the arrangement in 1966. My resident ragtime expert and good friend Kjell Waltman informs me that ragtimer Donald Ashwander also had a hand in it. My guitar arrangement is fairly easy to play with only a very few rough spots.

The C chord movement at the beginning of the first section requires you to move your left-hand index finger from the 1st fret of the 2nd string to the 2nd fret of the 3rd string on the 3rd beat of the measure. This is a recurring figure.

The F chord at the beginning of measure 17 may be difficult for those not accustomed to using a barréd C shape. There's no getting around it here and you'll find the shape useful in other arrangements.

The first of the three hammer-ons in measure 37 is performed with the index and middle fingers of the left hand for accuracy when coming down from the 10th fret. The second and third are done with the middle and ring fingers. This makes it easier to catch the 2nd fret of the 5th string on the last beat of the measure.

The series of triplets beginning in measure 58 can be a bit awkward since there's an upward movement in the bass (played with the left hand thumb) at the same time as there's a downward movement in the treble.