

Greensleeves

Greensleeves, one of the most popular tunes in history, was already a favorite in Elizabethan times. It was twice mentioned in Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor*, and first appeared in the stationer's register of 1580 when Richard Jones had licensed to him "A new Northern Dittye of the Lady Greene Sleeves." There is, however, evidence that the tune is of much earlier origin, perhaps in Henry VIII's time, this registration and the many that followed it being evidence of a new wave of popularity in the late sixteenth-century.

In the following century it was adopted during the revolution by the cavaliers, who wrote many political songs to this tune, and in 1728 appeared again as one of the melodies selected for the *Beggar's Opera*.

One of the earliest instrumental settings occurs in William Ballet's manuscript lute book (late sixteenth-century), and a transcription of this is included in Brian Jeffery's *Elizabethan Popular Music*, (Oxford University Press, 1966). The same author has transcribed a duet version from the Dowland lute book in his *Elizabethan Duets* (Schott and Co. Ltd., 1970).

Cutting's version lies very well on the guitar and is a pleasure to play. The manuscript of this is now in the British Museum (Add. 31392).

Suggested tempo is a lilting ♩ = 138.

- 1 This is a common chord on the lute which makes some demand on the left hand, but it is possible with practice.
- 2 Note the fourth finger, which makes a necessary change of position for the quick move to the D chord.
- 3 The first finger is necessary if the B is to sustain. It is an awkward jump from the previous chord, which may be played staccato to allow for this.

Francis Cutting

The musical score for 'Greensleeves' by Francis Cutting is presented in three staves of guitar notation. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a 6/8 time signature, and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains the first line of the melody, starting with a 7th fret barre and a circled '2' above the second measure. The second staff continues the melody, featuring a circled '3' above the first measure and various fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4) and dynamics (p, f). The third staff concludes the piece, marked with a Roman numeral 'III' and a circled '1' above the first measure, indicating a repeat or a specific fingering instruction. The notation includes numerous fingerings, dynamics, and articulation marks throughout.

2

3

III

1/2 V

Detailed description: This block contains a musical score for guitar, consisting of four staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a 2/4 time signature. It features a series of chords and melodic lines with various fret numbers (0, 1, 2, 3, 4) and fingerings (1, 2, 3, 4) indicated above the notes. A circled number '2' is placed above the first measure. The second staff continues the piece, starting with a circled number '3' above the first measure. The third staff shows further development of the melody and harmony. The fourth staff concludes the piece with a circled number 'III' above a measure and a '1/2 V' marking at the end. The score is densely packed with musical notation, including stems, beams, and chord symbols.

