

Documentation for

Atlantia, My Home

A song for Atlantia, with 4-course guitar and 5-course guitar accompaniment

by Johann von Solothurn

Music, lyrics, guitar accompaniment and notation by **Lord Johann von Solothurn**

Contents

- I. Introduction / Background
- II. The Song
- III. The Instruments
- IV. The Arrangements
- V. Summary/Contact
- VI. References

Appendices

Appendix A: Judge's Copy of the Song (staff notation)

Appendix B: Montesardo's Alfabeto chords, transcribed to staff notation and modern tablature

List of Figures

Figure 1: Atlantia, My Home staff notation and lyrics

Figure 2: Examples of French and Italian tablature for the four-course guitar.

Figure 3: Facsimile of a guitar song from Le Roy (1555)

Figure 4: Four-course guitar arrangement of "Atlantia, My Home" in French tablature

Figure 5: Staff notation of the four-course guitar arrangement of "Atlantia, My Home"

Figure 6: Examples of alfabeto chords and strum patterns from Montesardo (1606)

Figure 7: Example strumming pattern for five-course guitar arrangement of "Atlantia, My Home"

I. Introduction / Background

The song “Atlantia, My Home” is one of my original compositions, and is my performance piece for the second round of the Royal Bard Competition. For this round of the competition, an original piece about Atlantia was requested, something suitable for marching in procession or into battle. I decided to write an anthem-style piece, one that would (hopefully) not only be suitable for processions, but also serve double-duty as a useful war rallying song as well (in the manner of the typical anthem).

In addition to writing the song’s lyrics and music, I have also arranged the piece for the late period 4-course and 5-course guitars. My interest in period instrumental compositions for lute, vihuela, four-course and five-course guitar and the lute songs of Dowland, Johnson and others has recently piqued my curiosity for composing in a period style. Additionally, I have transcribed numerous pieces for those instruments (especially for the 4-course guitar) from facsimiles of the originals. Through this undertaking over the past several years, I have developed a more sophisticated “feel” for the late period music of the fretted stringed instruments, and for late period compositional styles. Although my current understanding of late period music is by no means perfect or complete, nonetheless, I have endeavored to arrange accompaniments for the song in a manner that would have been done in period. This attempt is documented, in brief, over the following pages.

II. The Song

I composed an earlier version of “Atlantia, My Home” a few years ago, as a story about an Atlantian Lord going off to war for love of his Kingdom, all the while lamenting the need to leave his Lady at home. I have planned for some time to revisit the song, and attempt to give it more of a Kingdom song/anthem character. This competition gave me reason to set to that task (only the first verse remains from the original version of the song). The melody of the song is stately, as an Atlantian anthem should be, as well as straightforward and simple, suitable for an anthem-type song to be sung by the masses. The overall feel of the melody and lyrics, I believe, are appropriate for the SCA setting, and I have further attempted to make the piece as period-appropriate as possible, while also appealing to a modern audience. The melody of the piece could certainly have been written by the period lutenists/guitarists of the French and English schools. See figure 1 for staff notation of the song. The new song lyrics are as follows:

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|
| 1. | My heart doth dwell in Atlantian lands
From mountain tops to sea-shore sands
I love my home, Atlantia
I love her hills, I love her trees
I love her lands, I love her seas | 3. | This land I love, I shall defend
Until my time on earth shall end
Come, stand and fight along with me
For our Kingdom by the sea
For our Kingdom by the sea |
| 2. | In battle shall I bear my shield
And for Atlantia take the field
I’ll ride to war for God and King
Swift victory our swords shall bring
Swift victory our swords shall bring | 4. | Dear Lords and Ladies of this land
Come gather now and with me stand
In chorus let our voices raise
And ever sing Atlantia’s praise
And ever sing Atlantia’s praise |

Atlantia My Home

Lyrics by Johann von Solothurn (mka John Surber, Jr.)

Music by Johann von Solothurn

$\text{♩} = 150$

Voice

My heart doth dwell in At- lan- tian lands, from moun- tain
 In bat- tle shall I bear my shield And for At-
 This land I love I shall de- fend Un- til my
 Dear Lords and Lad- ies of this land Come ga- ther

tops to sea- shore sands. I love my home, At-
 lan- tia take the field I'll ride to war for
 time on earth shall end Come, stand and fight a-
 now and with me stand In chor- us let our

lan- ti- a! I love her hills, I love her trees.
 God and King! Swift vic- to- ry our swords shall bring
 long with me raise And For our King- dom by the sea
 voic- es raise And ev- er sing At- lan- tia's praise

I love her lands I love her seas.
 Swift vic- to- ry our swords shall bring!
 For our our King- dom by the sea.
 And ev- er sing At- lan- tia's praise!

Figure 1: Atlantia, My Home staff notation and lyrics

III. The Instruments

The **4-Course Guitar** (also referred to as the Renaissance Guitar, and in period, referred to as the “guitarra” in Spain, the “gyterne” in England and “guisterne” or “guitarre” in France). The four-course guitar was smaller than the modern guitar and vihuela, but shared the figure – eight body shape with these instruments. It had either a flat back, or a gently rounded back. This instrument is the beginning of the evolution of the modern guitar. It was tuned to the same set of intervals as the modern guitar, with 4 courses (pairs) of strings. The fourth course was often tuned as a pair of octaves. The frets were made of gut, and tied around the guitar neck. It was also strung with gut strings. Note that the terms “chitarra” and “guittara,” etc. were also used in the 15th century to refer to a round-backed instrument that evolved into the mandolin (Tyler 1997). In the 16th century, these same terms began to be used to describe the guitar (four-course and five-course). The guitar seems to have originated in the early – to mid – 15th century. Jaun Bermudo (1555) mentions rhythmic strumming of the guitar as well (Tyler 1997). Several lute-style (plucked) guitar books in both French and Italian tablature survive from the mid-1500s. Examples of French and Italian tablature are shown in Figure 2.

Guitar / Lute Notation (A Comparison between Standard Notation, Modern Tablature, and Period Tablature)

a. **French Tablature** – from Gregoire Brayssing (1553)

The image shows the French tablature for the piece 'Antafic' from Gregoire Brayssing's 1553 manuscript. It features a decorative initial 'A' and a staff with rhythmic flags above it. Below the staff is a six-line tablature with numbers 0-5. A modern transcription is provided below, showing a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 2/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff, and the guitar tablature is shown on a six-line staff with fret numbers. The dynamic marking 'mf' is present.

b. **Italian Tablature** – from Miguel de Fuenllana (1554)

The image shows the Italian tablature for the piece 'Fatafia. D.' from Miguel de Fuenllana's 1554 manuscript. It features a decorative initial 'F' and a staff with rhythmic flags above it. Below the staff is a six-line tablature with numbers 0-5. A modern transcription is provided below, showing a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 2/4 time signature. The melody is written on a single staff, and the guitar tablature is shown on a six-line staff with fret numbers. The dynamic marking 'mf' is present.

Figure 2: Examples of French (a) and Italian (b) tablature for the four-course guitar. Staff notation and modern guitar tablature shown for comparison. Transcribed by Johann von Solothurn.

The **five-course guitar** (also referred to as the Spanish guitar “chitarra/guitarra spagnola” and often called “Baroque Guitar”) is a direct descendent of the four-course guitar (“renaissance guitar”) and appears to have been developed in the mid-16th century (Tyler 1980, 1997, 2002). Both of these instruments share the figure-eight shape of the Spanish vihuela, and appear to have evolved from that instrument. The instrument referred to by Fuenllana in 1554 as a “vihuela de cinco ordenes” is very likely the five-course guitar. The five-course instrument was (or, became) larger bodied than the four-course guitar, but was still smaller bodied than the modern guitar. The five-course guitar was tuned to the same set of intervals as the modern guitar (at least initially), with the 4th and 5th courses tuned as octave pairs (Amat, 1596). The instrument was strung with gut strings and had tied gut frets. Jaun Carlos Amat published guitar treatise for 5-course guitar in 1596. This indicates the instrument was quite popular at least by the late 1500s. The guitar seemed to largely replace the vihuela by the early 1600s. The earliest surviving 5-course guitar dates from 1581 (Royal College of Music, London) and has a vaulted back. A larger 5 – course guitar with a flat back and built c. 1590 also survives and is

preserved at the Royal College of Music, London (Tyler 2002). Three pre-1600 alfabeto (strummed chords) manuscripts survive for the five-course instrument (Zuluaga, 2013), in addition to several early 1600s printed guitar books and Amat's five-course guitar treatise of 1596. Fuenllana (1554) also contains several five-course pieces in his vihuela and guitar book, which appear to have been written for the five-course guitar.

IV. The Arrangements

I have arranged the song for both four-course guitar (lute-style) and five-course guitar (alfabeto style). For the four-course guitar arrangement, I have borrowed stylistic elements from Le Roy (author of four mid-1500s guitar books) and John Dowland (lutenist). My decision to produce a four-course guitar arrangement was inspired by the guitar songs in Le Roy's second guitar book (1555). See figure 3 for an example of a guitar song from Le Roy. As in Le Roy, I have written the guitar accompaniment for the song in French tablature. See figures 4 and 5 for the French tablature accompaniment and staff notation of the arrangement.



Figure 3: Facsimile of a guitar song from Le Roy (1555). Staff notation on left page, guitar accompaniment on right.



Figure 4: Four-course guitar arrangement of "Atlantia, My Home" in French tablature, by Johann von Solothurn.

Atlantia My Home

Lyrics by Johann von Solothurn (mka John Surber, Jr.)

Music by Johann von Solothurn

$\text{♩} = 150$

My heart doth dwell in At- lan- tian lands, frommoun- tain
 In bat- tle shall I bear my shield And for At-
 This land I love I shall de- fend Un- til my
 DearLords and Lad- ies of this land Come ga- ther

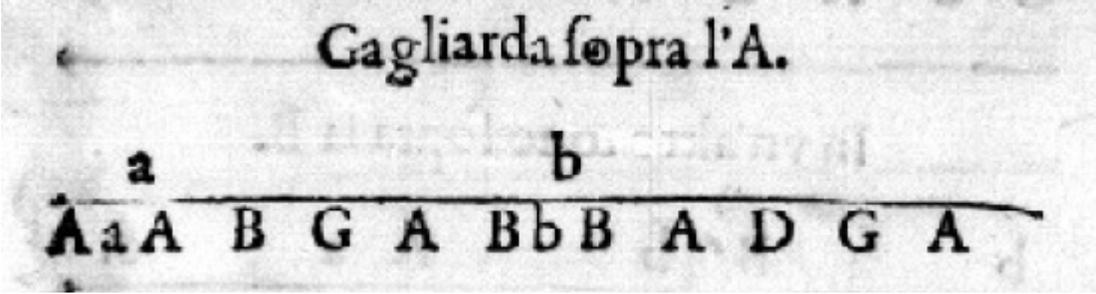
tops to sea- shore sands. I love my home, At-
 lan- tia take the field I'll ride to war for
 time on earth shall end stand Come, stand and fight a-
 now and with me stand In chor- us let our

lan- ti- a! I love her hills, I love her trees.
 God and King! Swift vic- to- ry our swords shall bring
 long with me raise And For our King- dom by the sea.
 voic- es raise And ev- er sing At- lan- tia's praise

I love her lands I love her seas.
 Swift vic- to- ry our swords shall bring!
 For our Kingdom by the sea.
 And ev- er sing At- lan- tia's praise!

Figure 5: Staff notation of the four-course guitar arrangement shown in figure 4.

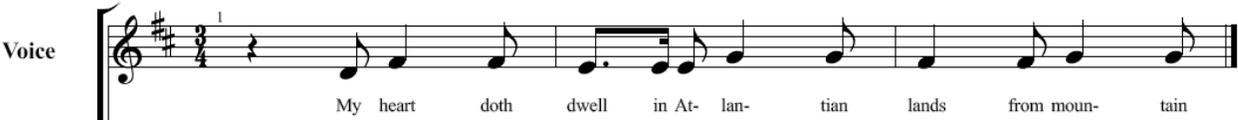
For the five-course guitar arrangement, I have chosen to use the simple galliard strumming pattern indicated in Montesardo (1606). This strumming pattern (counted 1- 2 & - 3) fits nicely with the song. Note that the 1- 2 & -3 pattern is applied in Montesardo (1606) where a single chord is held for the duration of at least 3 beats (Figure 6). This is the case throughout my alfabeto style arrangement of “Atlantia, My Home”, so this pattern is used exclusively for a simple, rhythmic arrangement that should be not only comfortable to the modern ear, but also quite period appropriate. An example of the strumming pattern along with staff notation of the song is included in Figure 7.

a. 

b. 

c. 

Figure 6: a. Galliard from Montesardo (1606)
 b. chords and rhythm of 5a, in modern notation (from Dean, 2009)
 c. Alfabeto chart from Montesardo (1606)

Voice 

Alfabeto 

Figure 7: Example strumming pattern for five-course guitar arrangement.

IV. Summary and Contact Information

“Atlantia, My Home” is one of my original songs, and is my entry for the second round of the Atlantia Royal Bard competition. The song is intended to be useful both as an anthem type song, suitable for processions, and a rallying song to inspire any Atlantian warrior who hears it. I have composed a four-course guitar accompaniment for the piece, as well as arranged the piece for alfabeto-style five-course guitar. It is my desire that any Atlantian who enjoys the song should freely sing it wherever they like. The song represents my true feelings about my Kingdom. I love Atlantia. Vivat Atlantia!

Feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss (or criticize) any aspect of this project in more detail than is permitted in this short document.

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VII. References

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Appendix A

Judge's Copy of "Atlantia, My Home"

Appendix B

Montesardo (1606) Alfabeto chords in staff notation and modern tablature

