Samuel Hunsberger, weaver of Franconia Township, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania

Only scattered references to Samuel Hunsberger exist, and it is from these that this sketchy biography is drawn. He was the third child of Christian and Hannah [Sellers] Hunsberger, and was born in Franconia Township, Montgomery county about 1799. His great grandfather Hunsberger came to Pennsylvania from Switzerland about 1730 and settled within a few miles of Samuel's home.

Samuel was first taxed as a single man in March of 1821, so from this it is likely that he had just turned twenty-one and was born some time between March 1799 and March of 1800. In 1822 he is still listed as single, but by 1824 he is taxed for a 20 acre farm, which he probably rented, and finally bought from Christian Benner in 1835. By the time he was first taxed for the 20 acre farm, he had probably married Maria Erdman who seems to have been born about 1794. Their first child, Aaron was born about 1825. In 1873, Aaron was declared "insolvent and not competent to administer" his father's estate. Aaron was a stone mason and died single. The second child was Sarah, born March 22, 1827 and died December 29, 1901, who had married William Bloom. The Blooms had three children, none of whom had descendants who survived. The third child was Hannah who was born about 1830 and married Samuel Wentzel. They had nine children who have left a large progeny.

In 1819 Samuel bought a blank folio size book [12.5"x8"] that was to become his account book and weaving pattern book. The earliest dated notation is from that year and says *"Dieses schriebuch Gehöret Mier Samuel Hunsberger Wan es Verlohren Solgehn So Kan Man Hiermein namen Sehen So Viel Von Mir 1819"*. [Trans. This writing book belongs to me Samuel Hunsberger. Should it be lost you may see my name here. So much from me 1819.] The earliest transactions recorded are for day laboring for Jesse Franz, Johannes Herzel, Abraham Cob, and Fridrich Hunsberger are for the year 1821. In 1822 he records his first weaving for Johannes Clemmer, and Abraham Schwarz. His weaving in that year totaled only 96 yards, and consisted of 21 ½ yards of linsey, 40 yards of linen, 20 yards of coarse tow, and another 14 ½ yards of linsey. All the while he was day laboring.

The following year he increased his weaving activity, weaving for nine customers. For them he produced coverlets, of which one was a goose eye, and four were "point work" [*beint work*]. He made fabric for tablecloths, 27 ¼ yards [one piece 17 ¼ and another of 10 yards] which he called "Flauerhockelbeck," [spot weave], 14 ½ yards of goose eye, 17 ¼ yards of

table cloth of an unidentified weave. He wove 55 yards of linen sheeting, 11 yards of fine tow stripe, 9 ¼ yards of fine tow, and 16 yards of coarse tow. His production in 1823 totaled 5 coverlets, and 150 ¼ yards of linen and tow yardage.

The book records nothing after 1823, so it is possible that when he married in 1824, he started another account book, which is now lost. He certainly continued to weave for he is listed as a weaver in the tax lists of 1831 and 1838. He is also listed as a weaver in the Federal Census for 1850 and 1860, however by the 1870 census he was listed as a farmer. It seems more likely that by this time he was a retired weaver rather than a farmer, because by this time the demand for custom hand weaving had waned and Samuel had grown old. Since he was never taxed for more that 20 acres, at times had no live stock, at others had one or two cows, sometimes had a horse, and at others did not, it is not likely that he was ever a farmer in the true sense of the word.

The weaving patterns consist of those in the book and loose scraps of paper lying in the front of the book. Many of the drafts are duplicates of others on the same page, that differ from the one above it only by giving the total number of dents in the 45 inch reed. As many Pennsylvania German weavers did in their pattern books, he gives tie-ups for turned twill and double cloth. He gives the drafts first. All have a number that in some instances relates to the tie up given in the succeeding section. The tie-ups range from four to twenty shafts, and include point twill, turned twill, gebrochene und gesteint, double cloth and float work. There are nearly sixty tie-ups, and about 110 threading drafts. The book contains twenty some five-block turned twill drafts, so it would appear that Samuel Hunsberger learned to weave on a twenty shaft loom.

In January of 1987, Jake Frederick gave The Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania an eight shaft float-work coverlet that had come down in the Frederick family of Souderton, Pennsylvania. It has a white cotton tabby ground, red and blue wool filling, and is in fair condition with some heavily worn areas. A look into Jake Frederick's ancestry showed that his grandfather, John H. Frederick, married Samuel Hunsberger's niece Hannah Benner in the early 1840s. So it is probable that Samuel wove this coverlet as part of his niece's wedding dowry in the late 1830s. The coverlet is woven in the eight shaft float-work pattern on page [19] of Samuel's book labeled "*Nom 7 Rosa Muster*" [Number 7, Rose pattern]. The table on the coverlet is one twelve-ends unit smaller than the pattern drafted in the book. There is a red, white and blue hand loomed, applied fringe on two sides and the bottom.

Samuel Hunsberger died on December 17, 1873, and according to family tradition was buried in the Rockhill Mennonite Cemetery east of Telford, Pennsylvania. However, neither Samuel nor his wife has a grave stone. His pattern book, one coverlet, and his descendants are his only surviving memorial.

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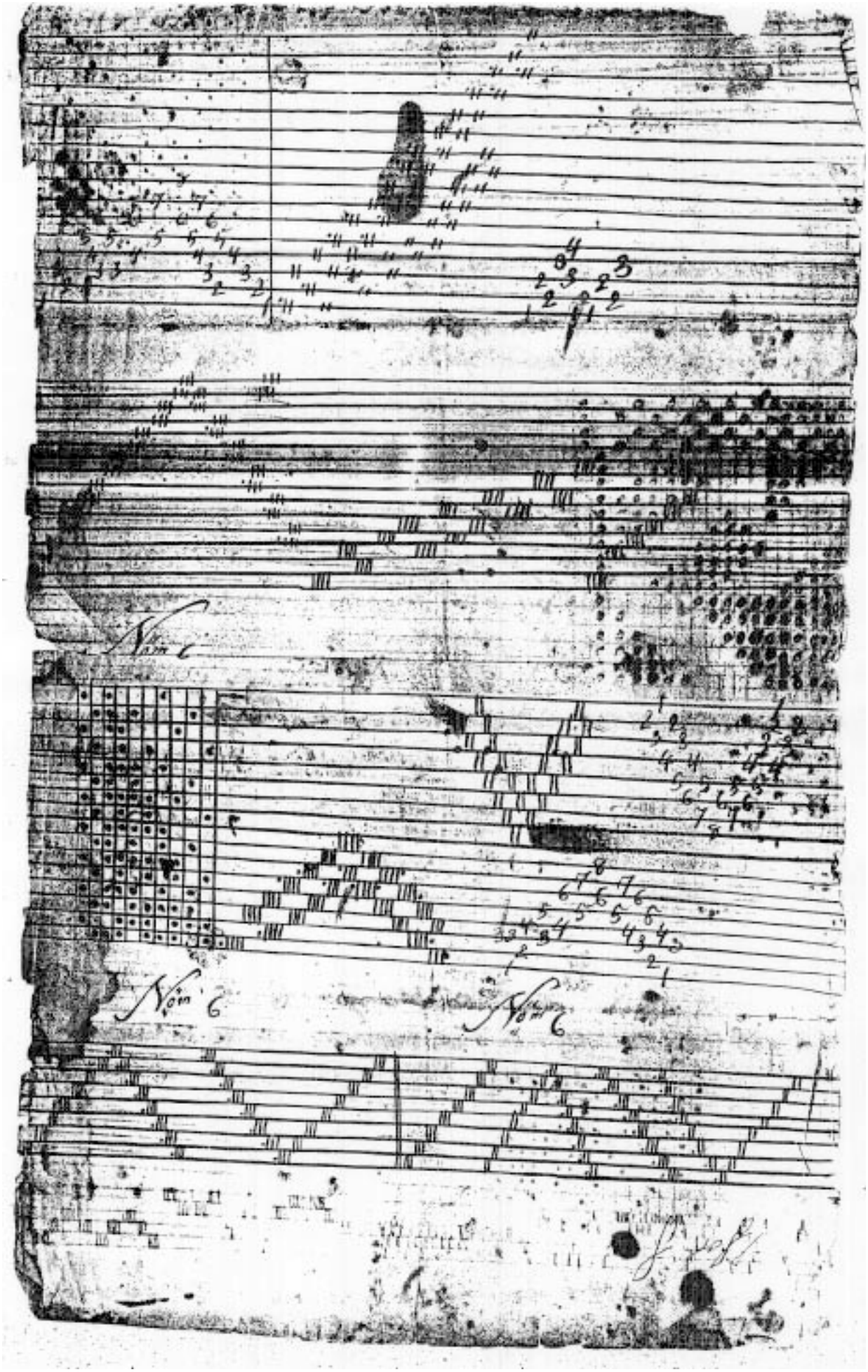

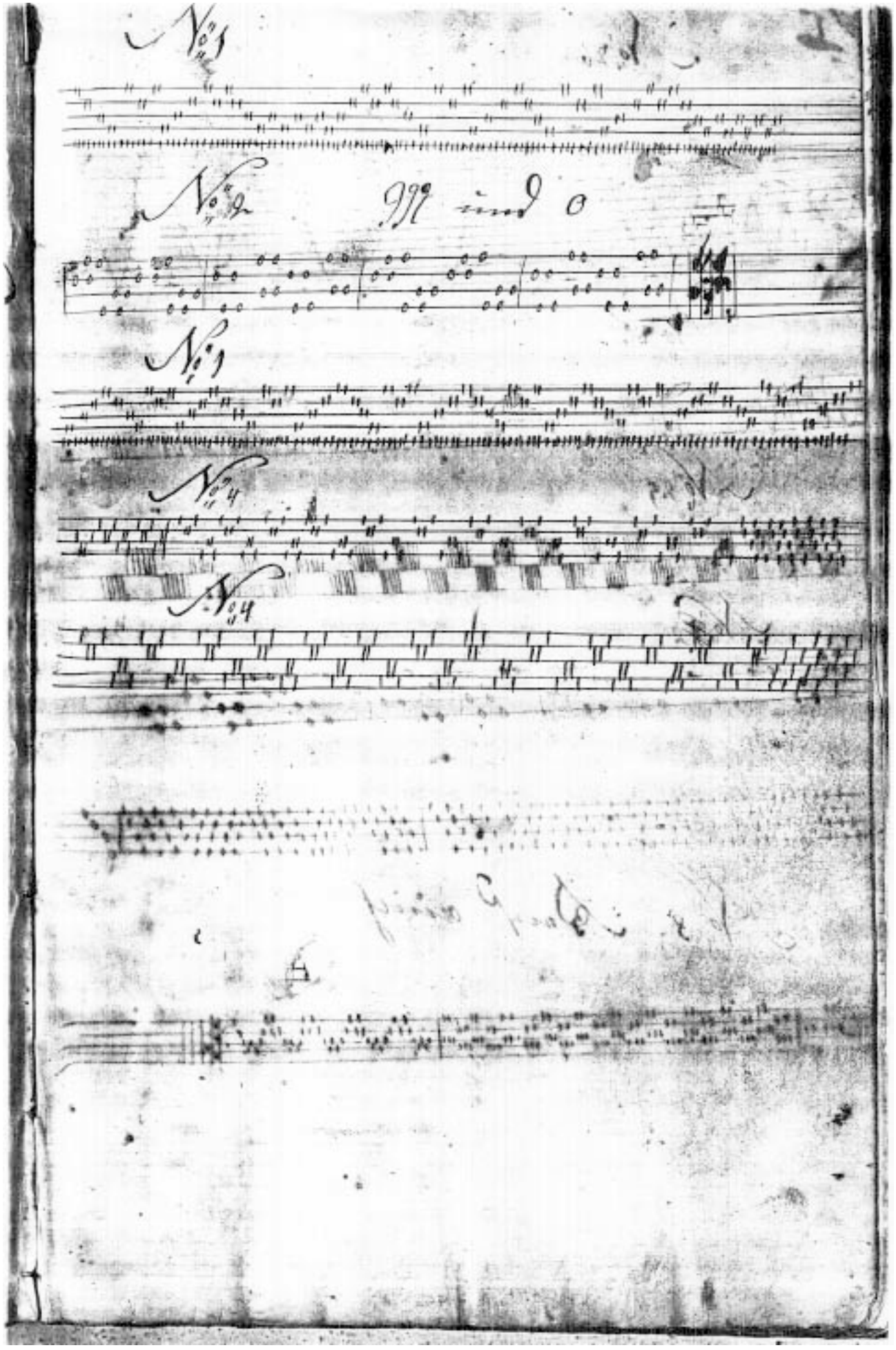

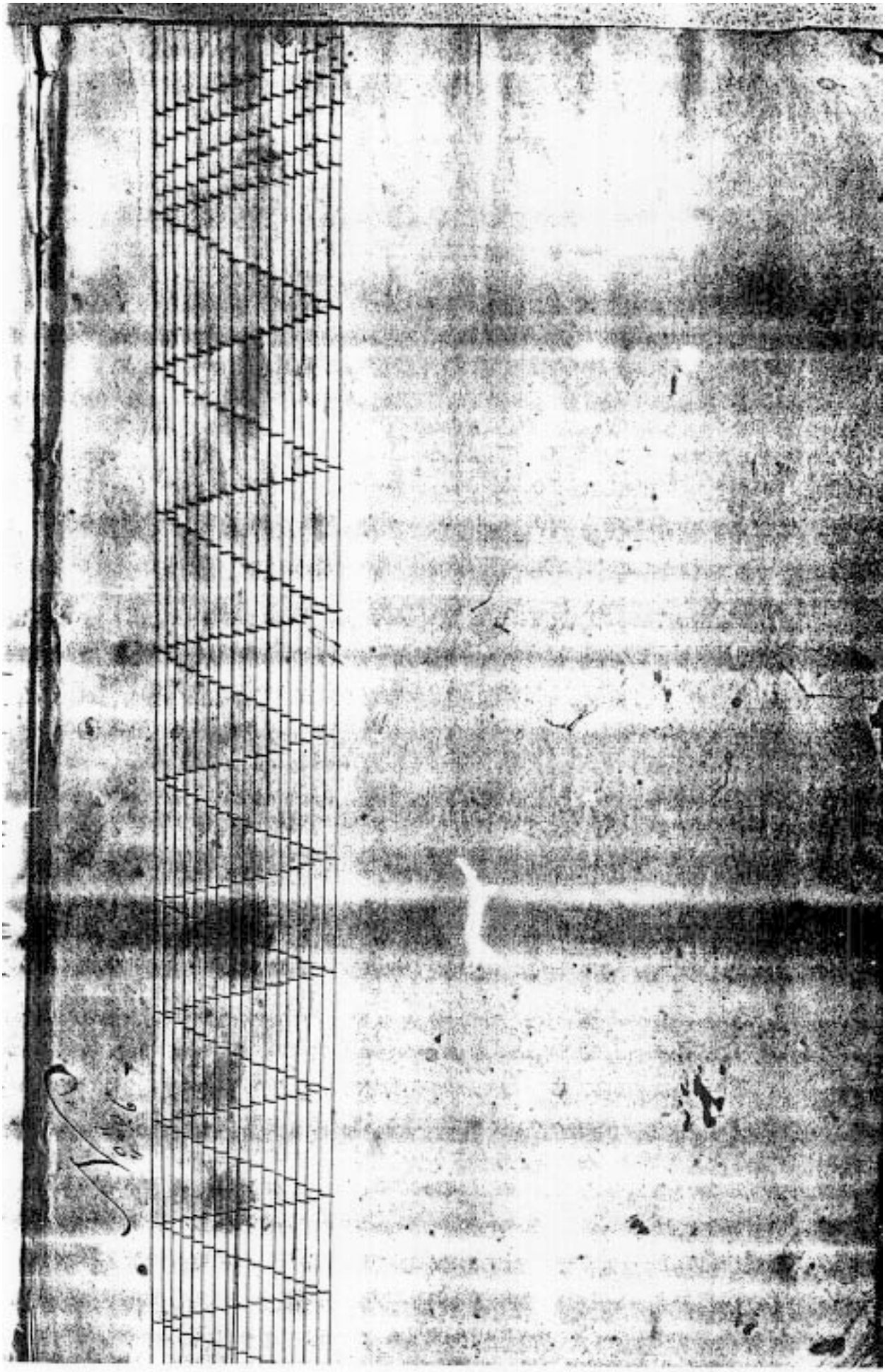

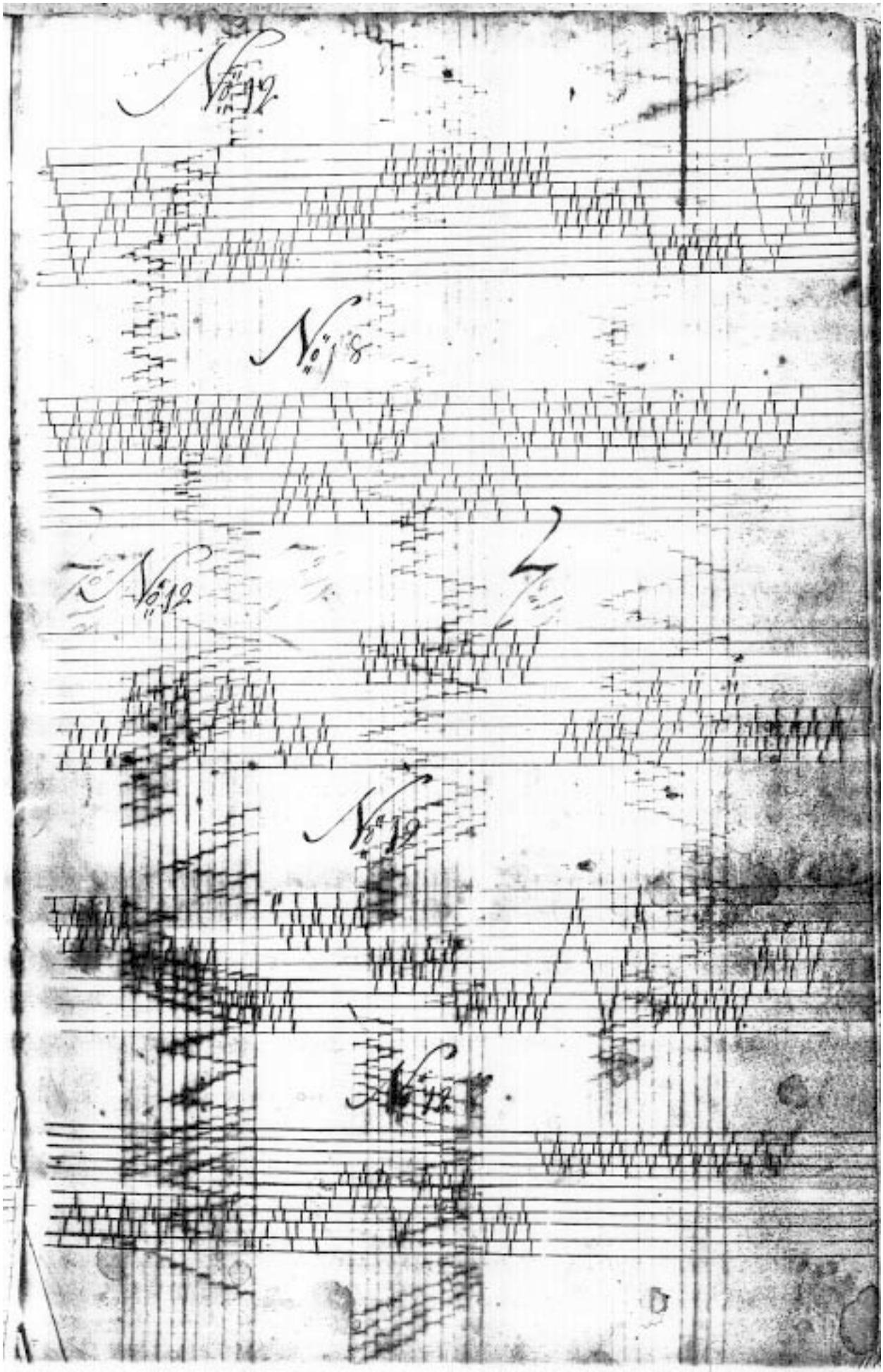

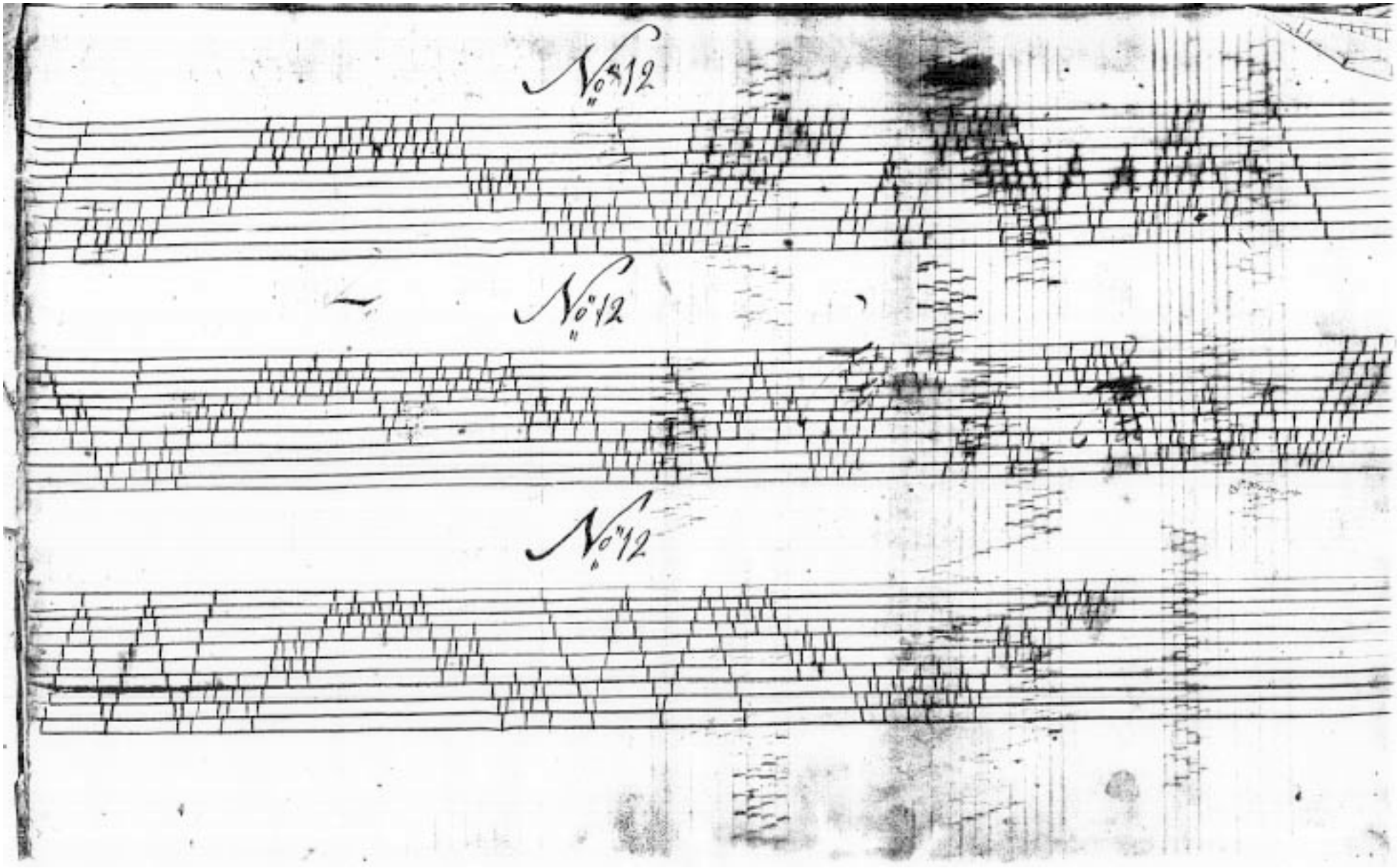
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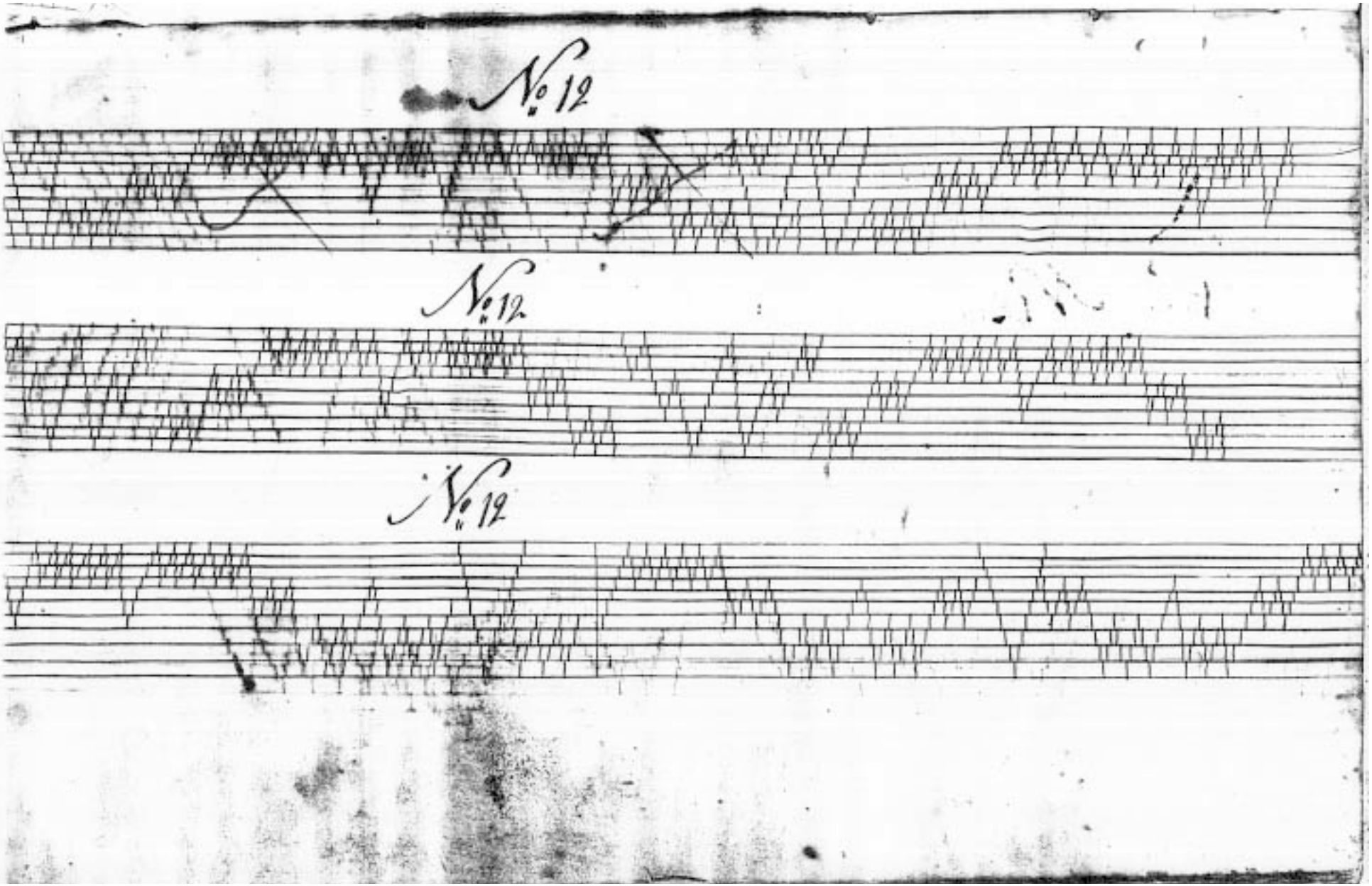
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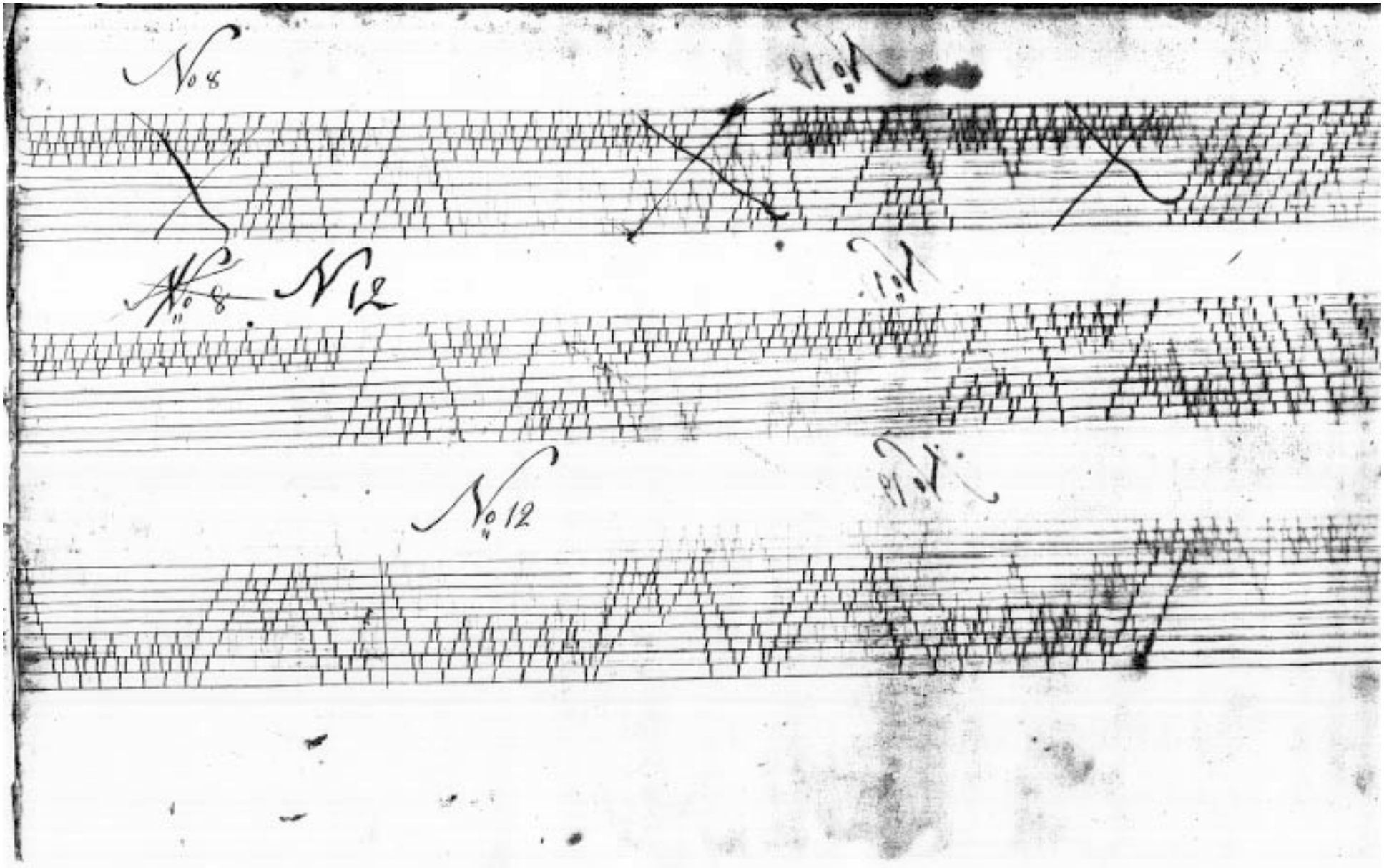
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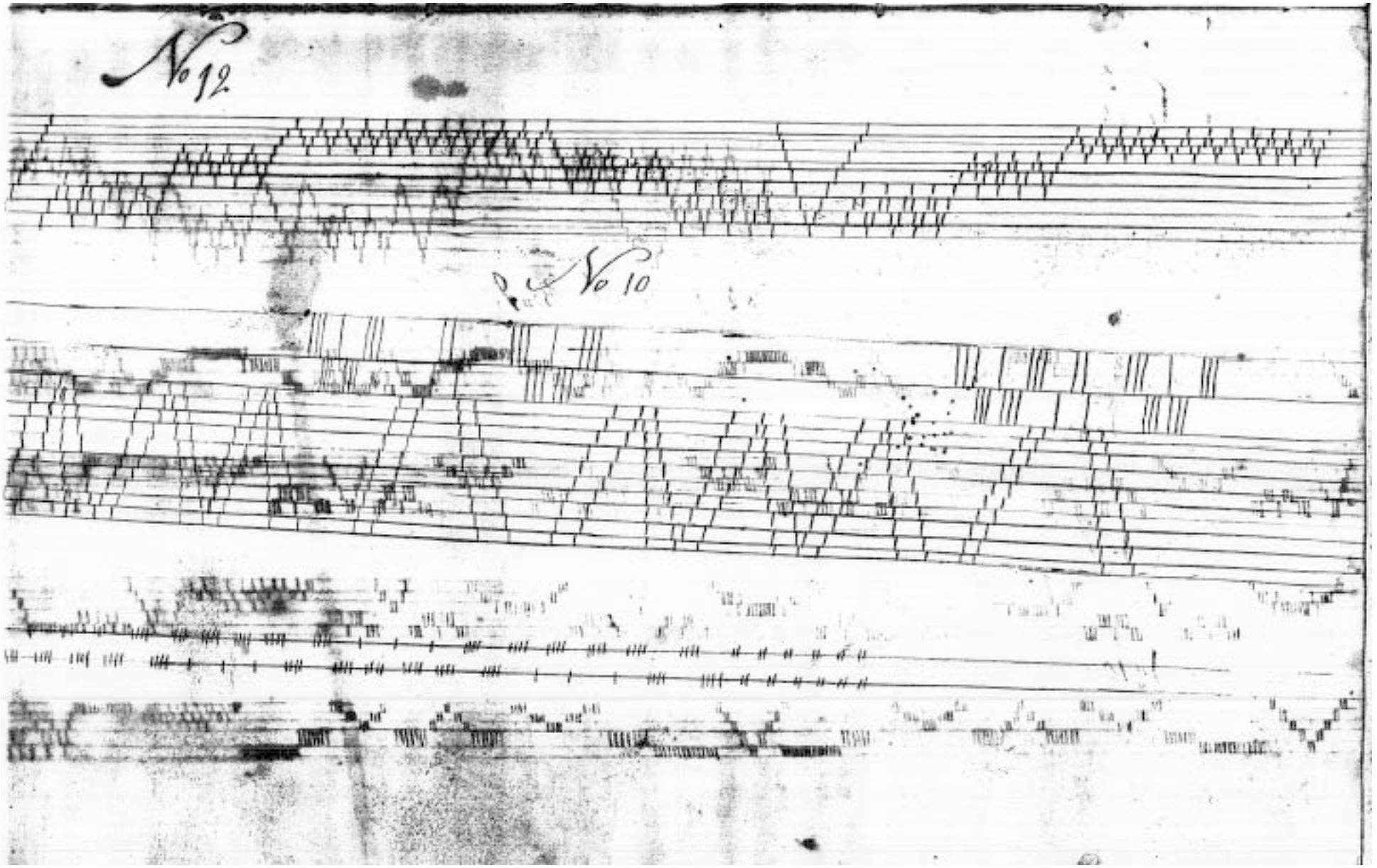
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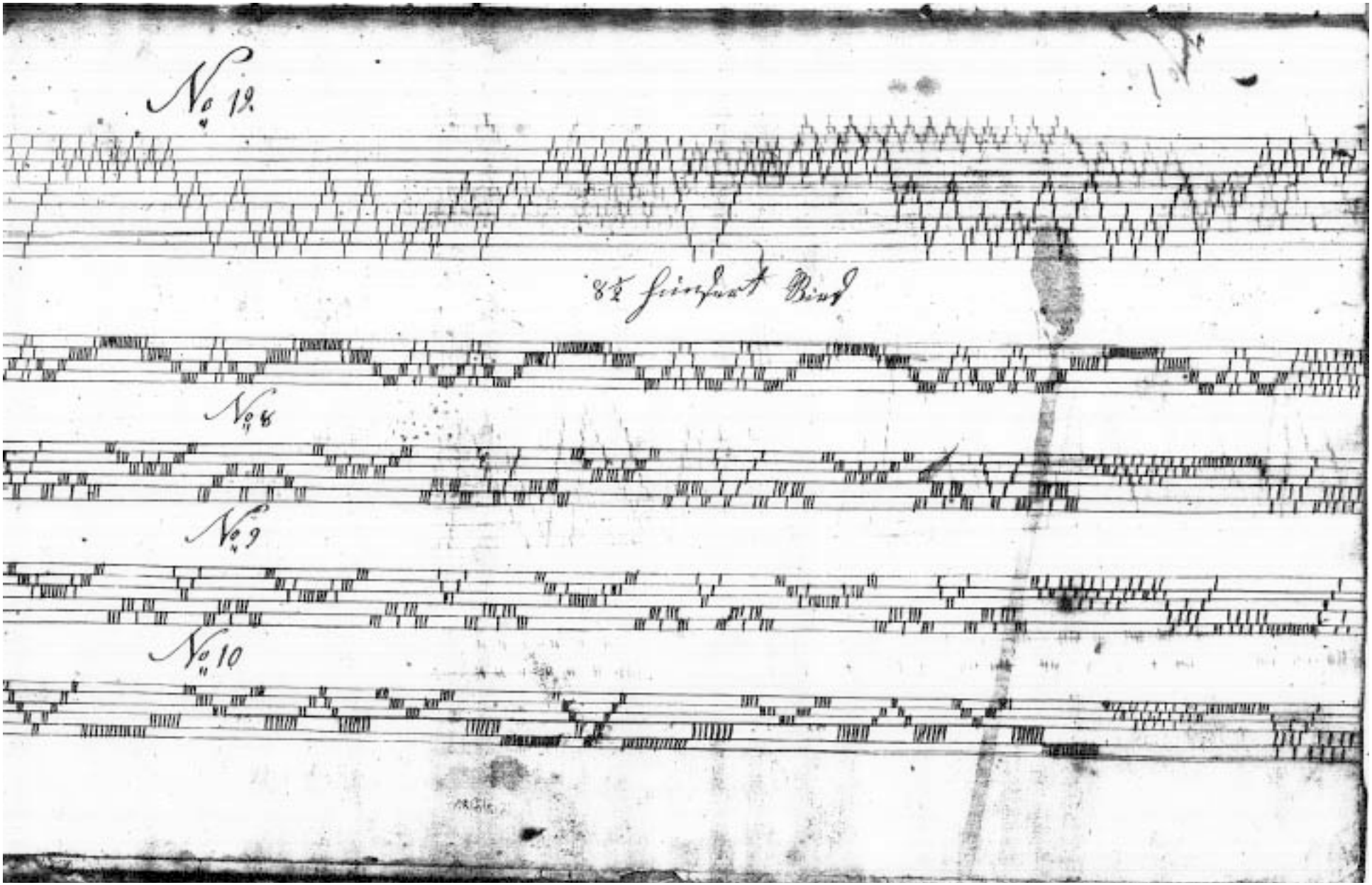
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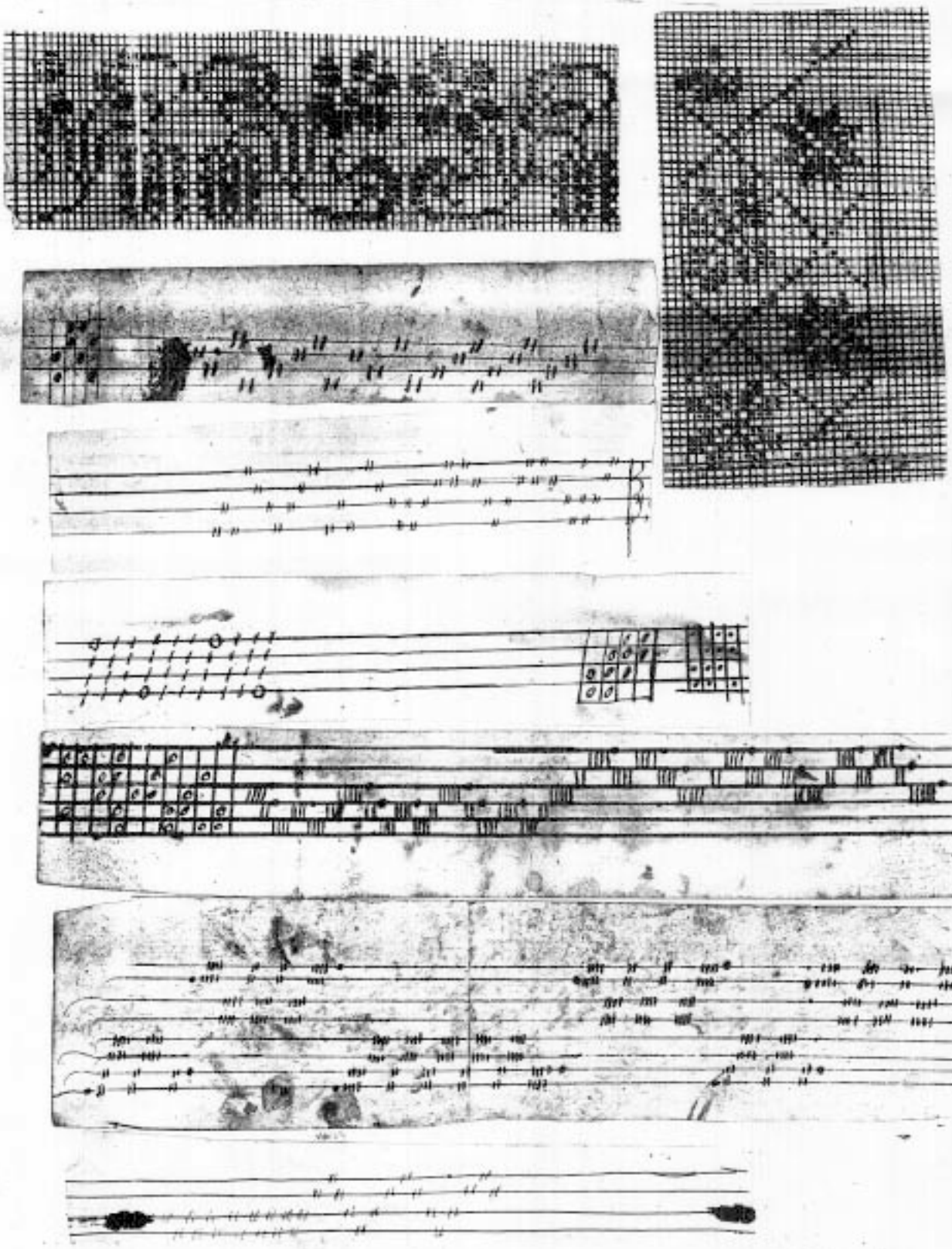
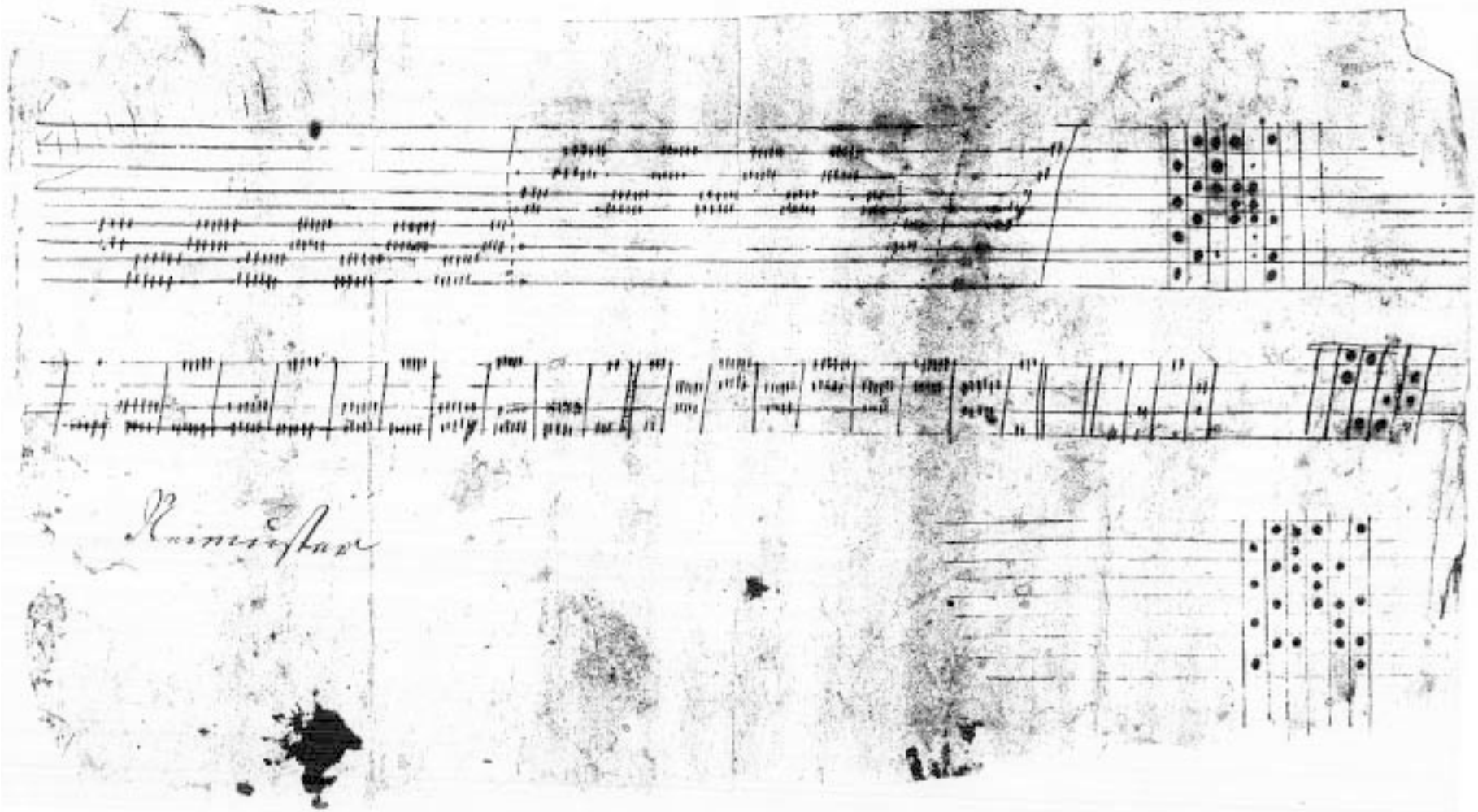
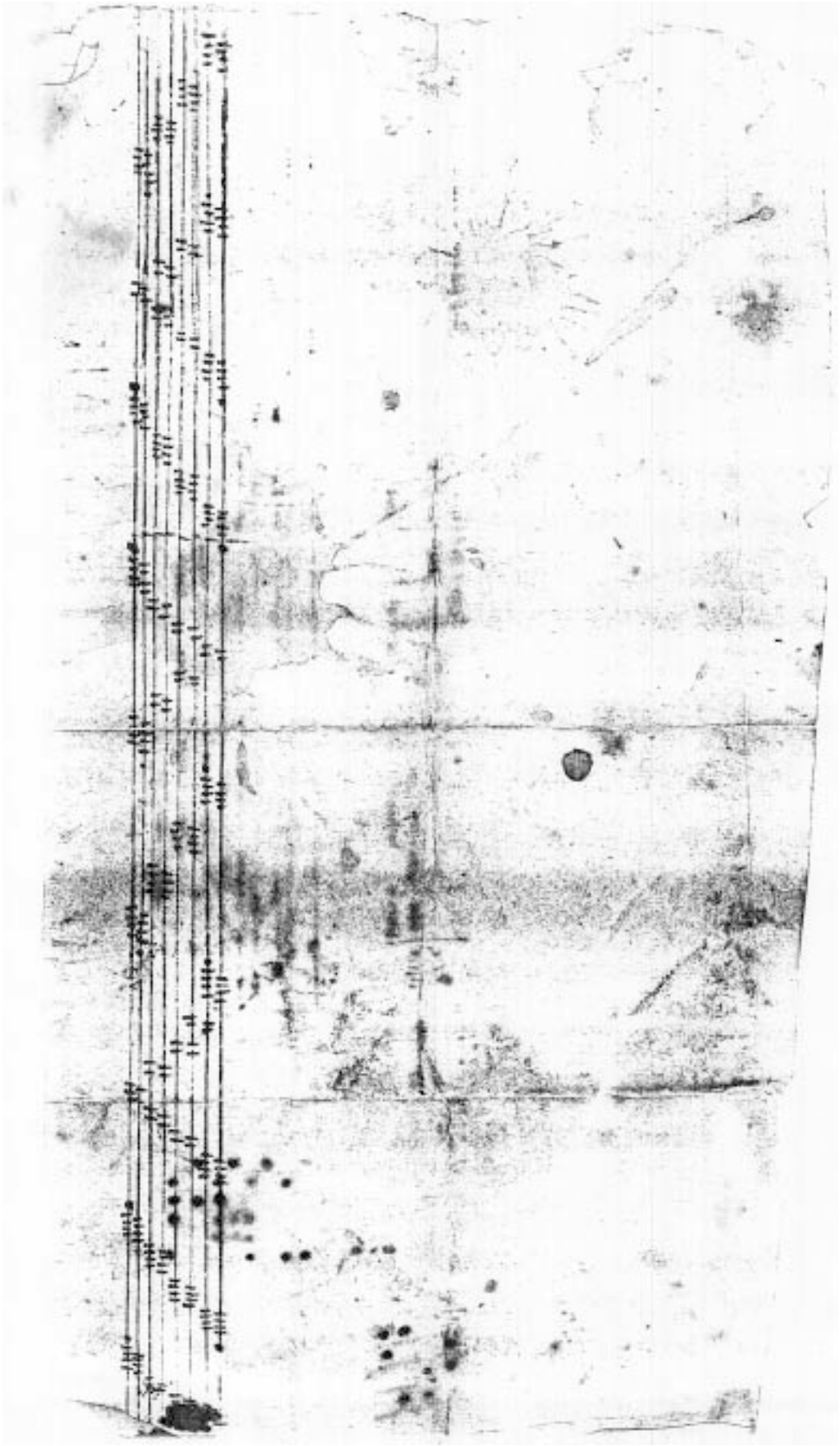
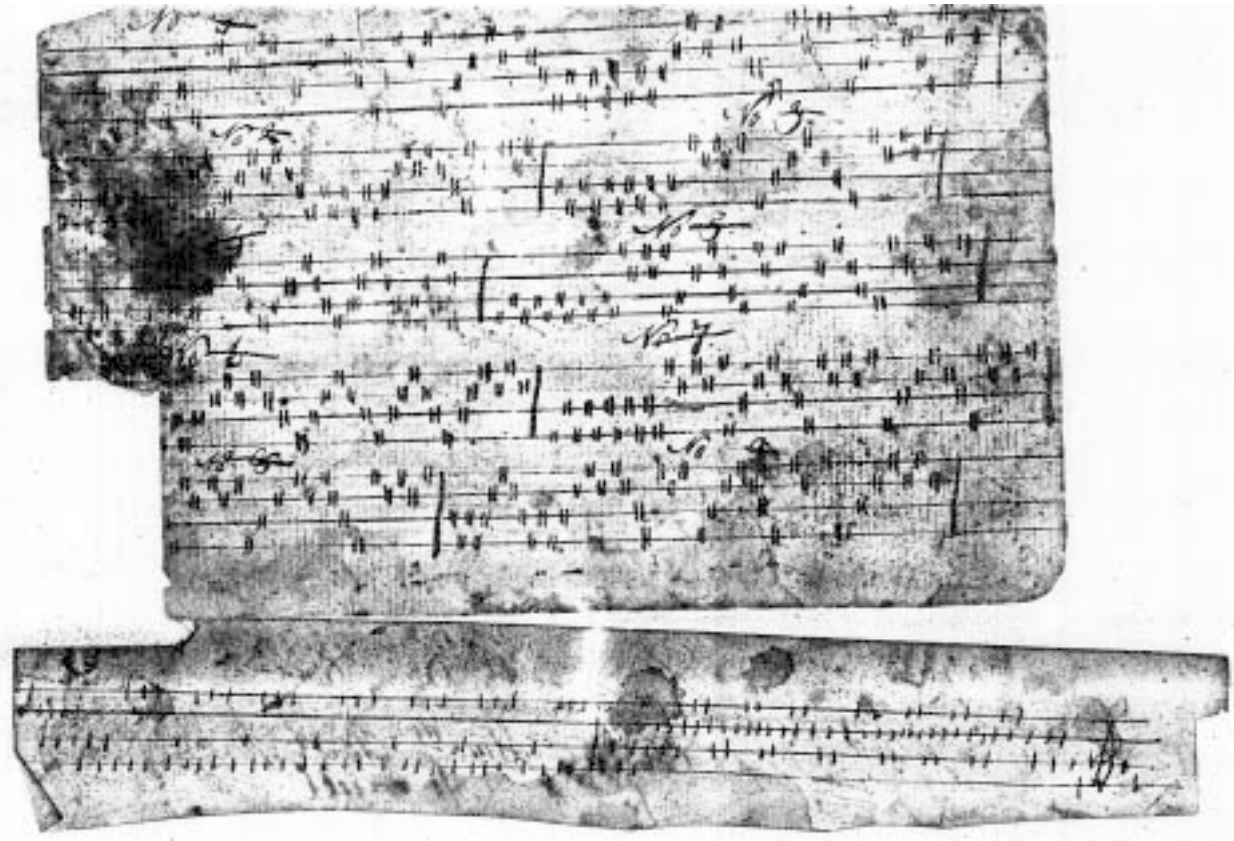
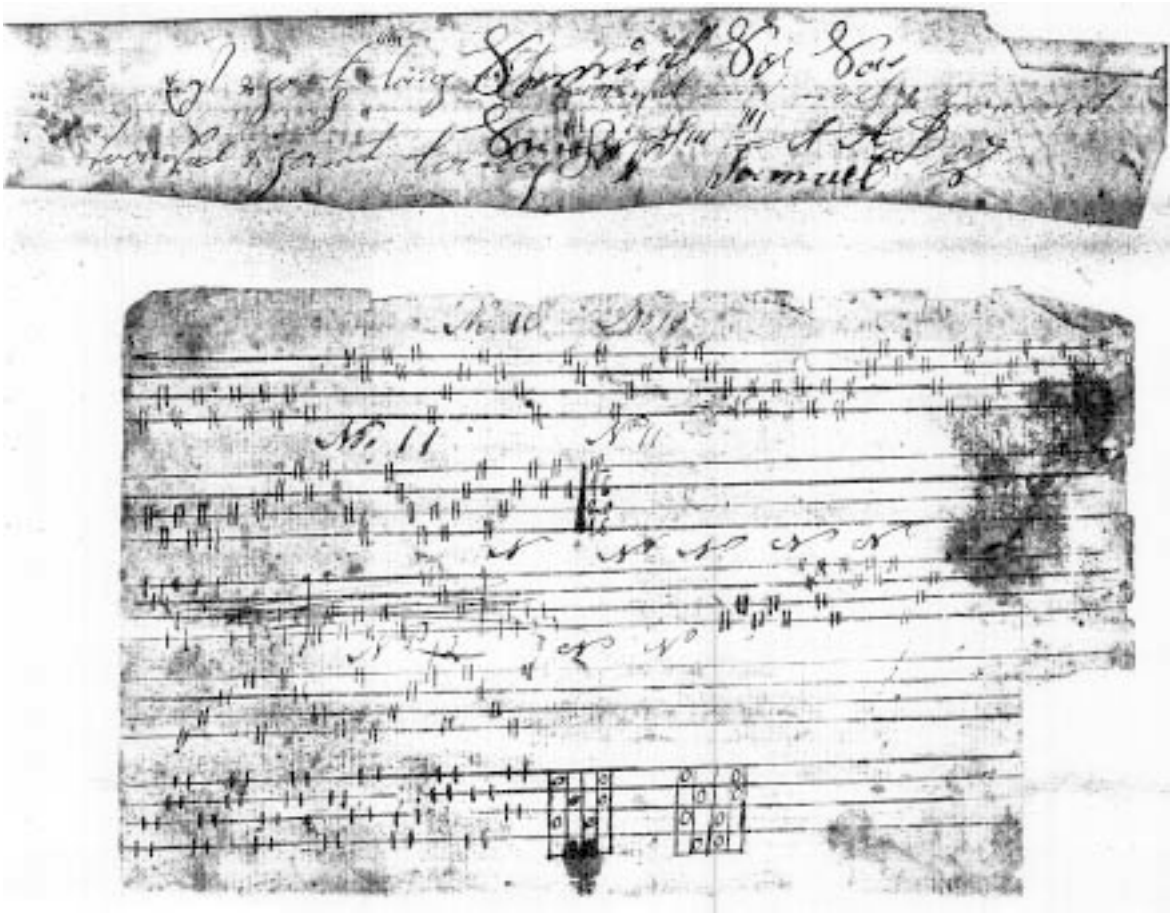


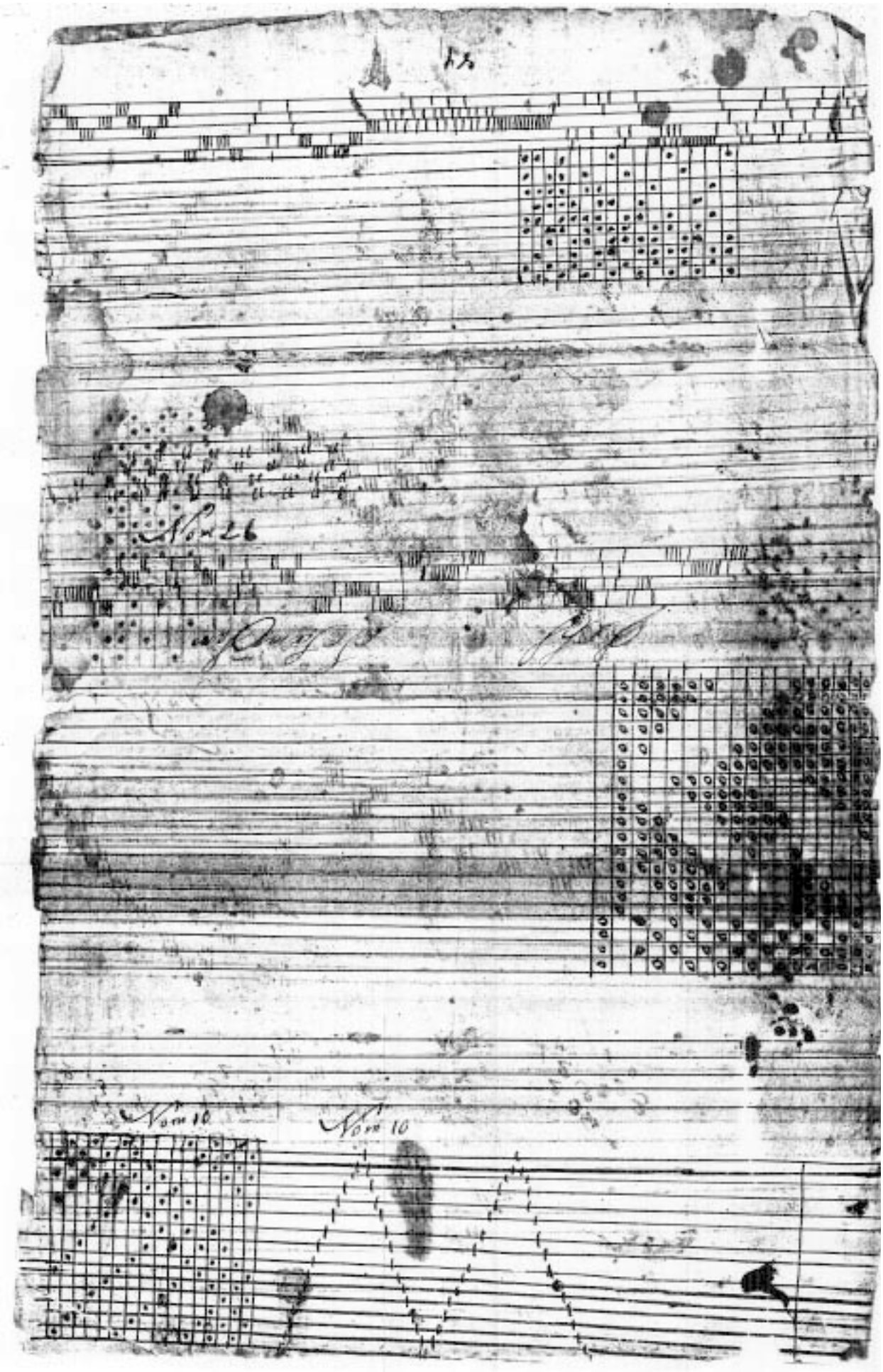
This page and the next six sheets are lying loose in S. Hinsberger's book.

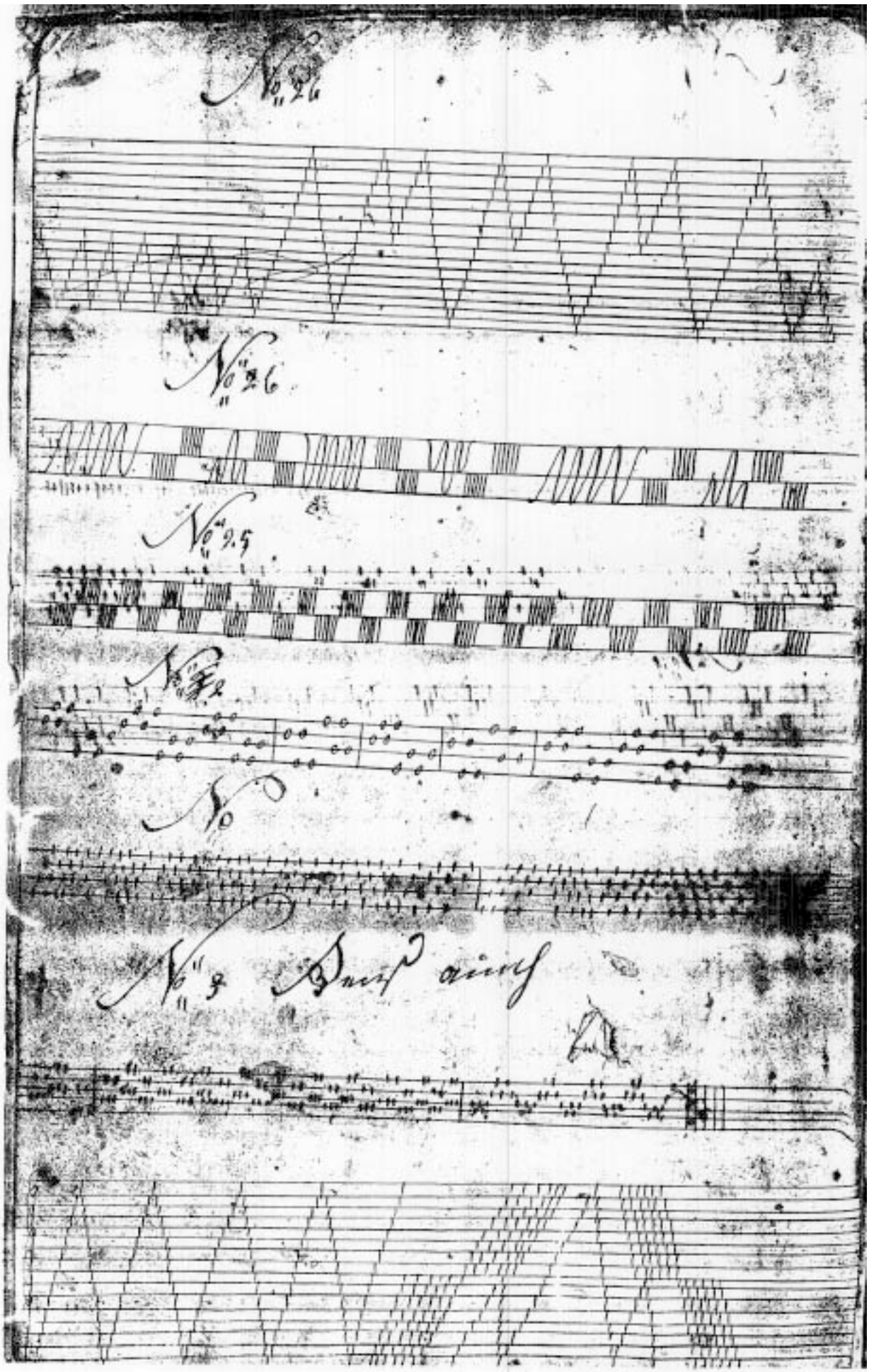












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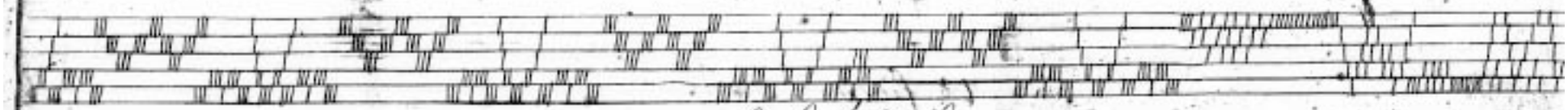

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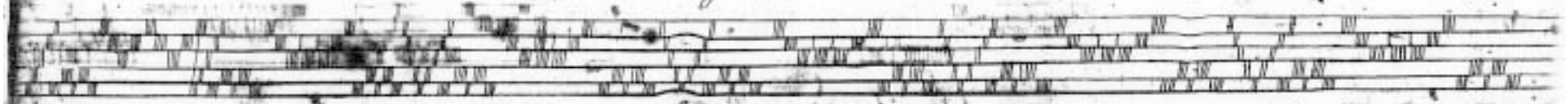

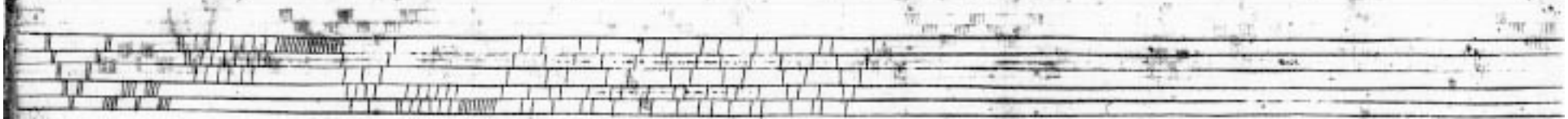

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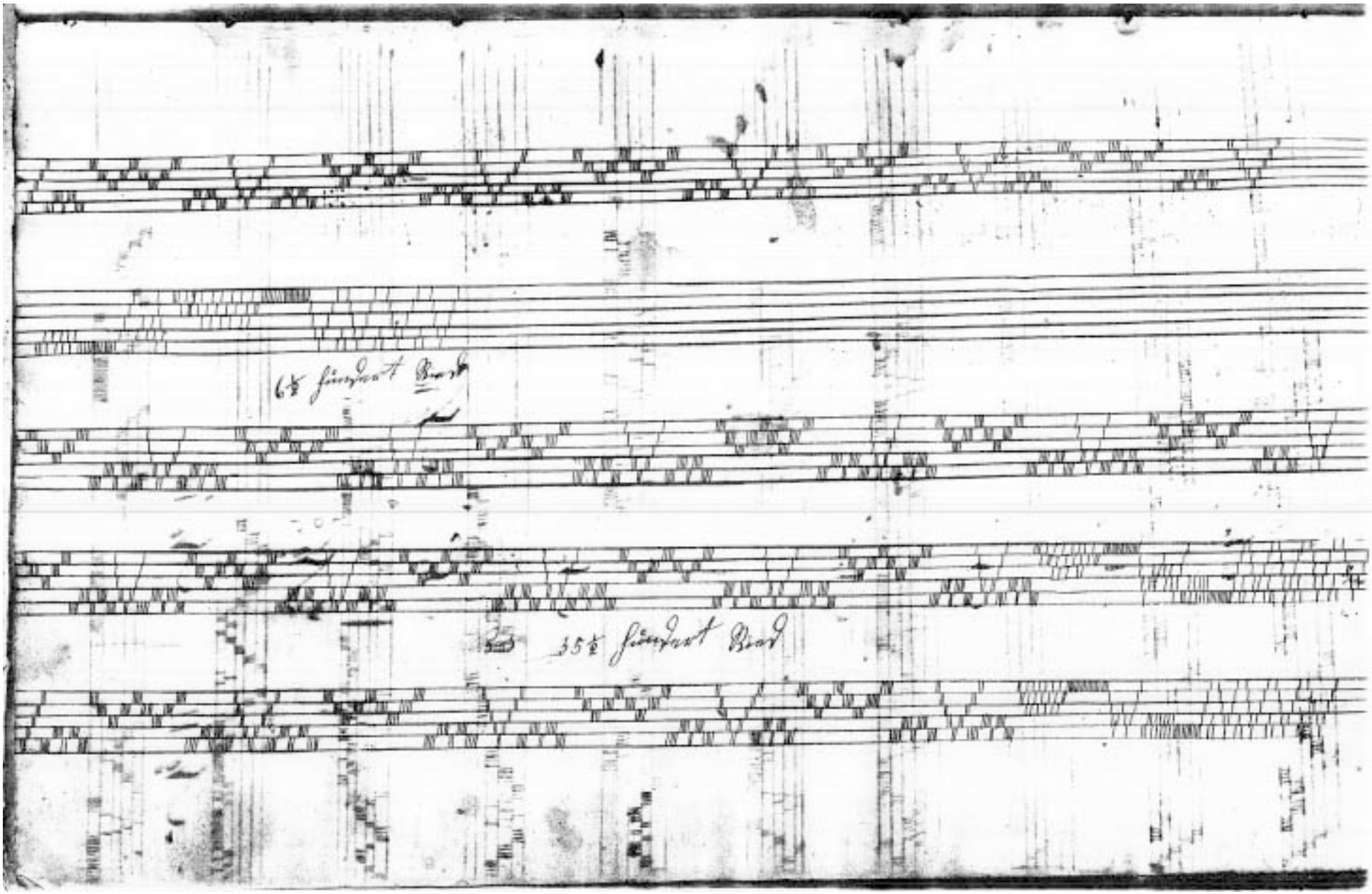
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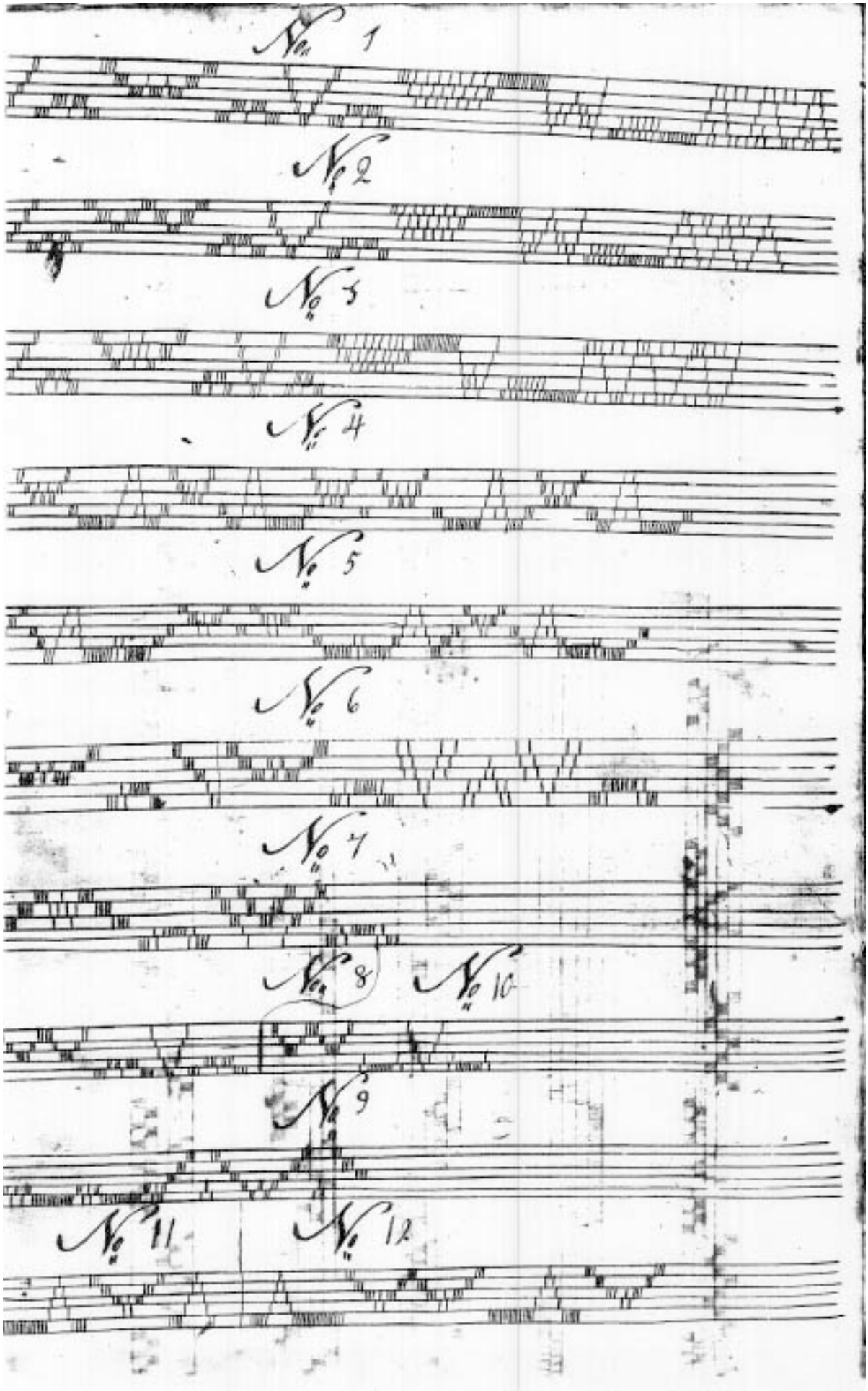
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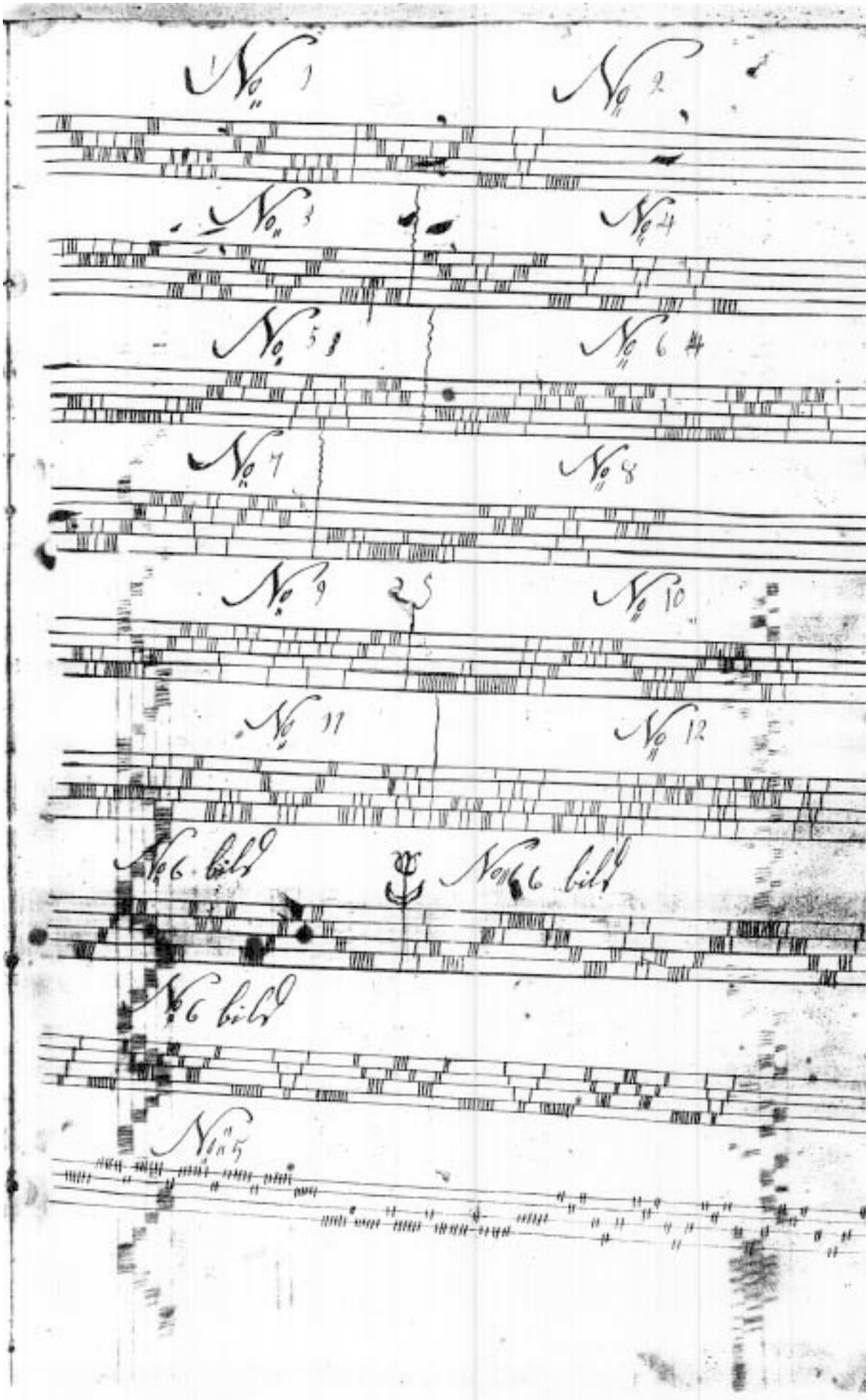
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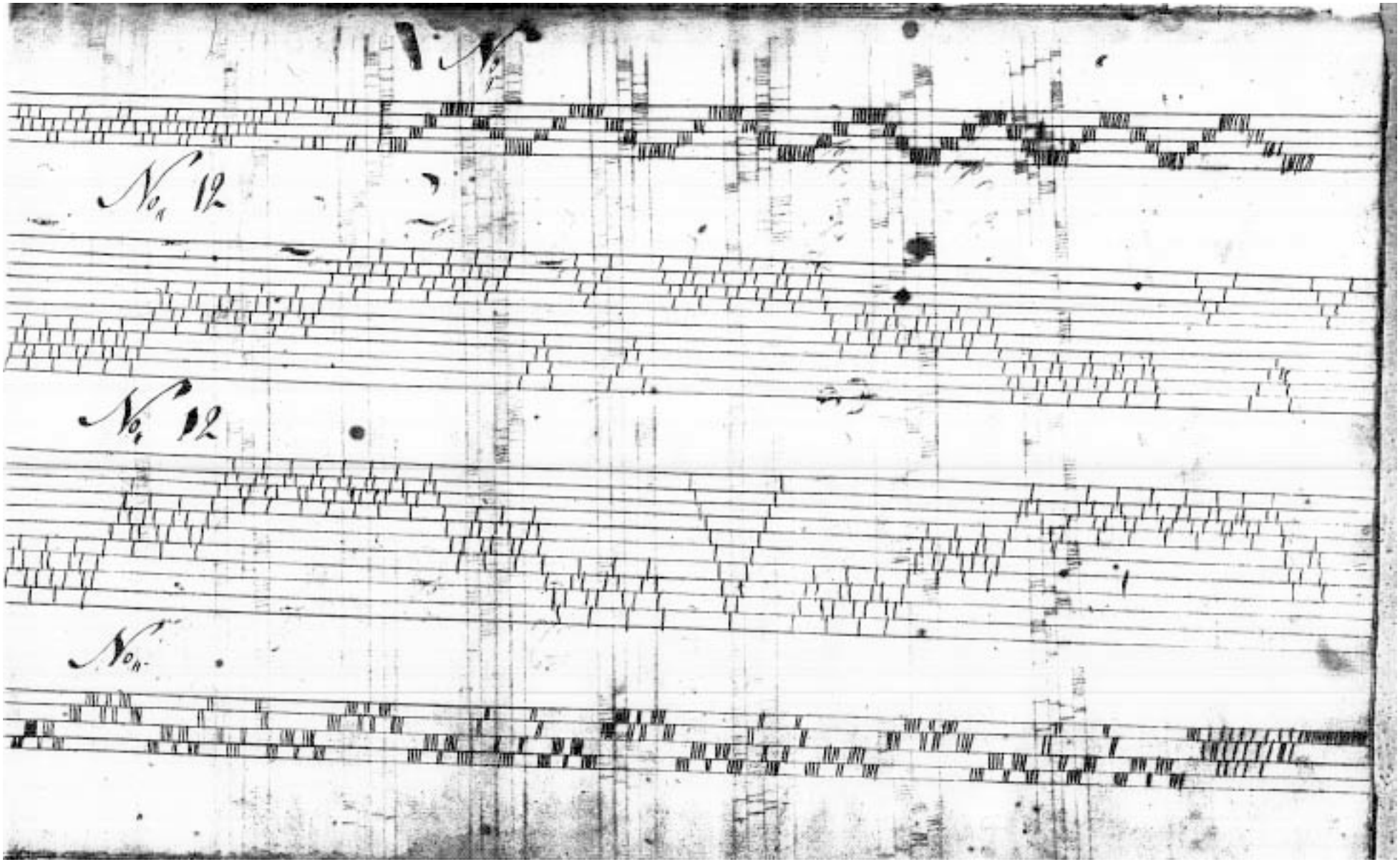
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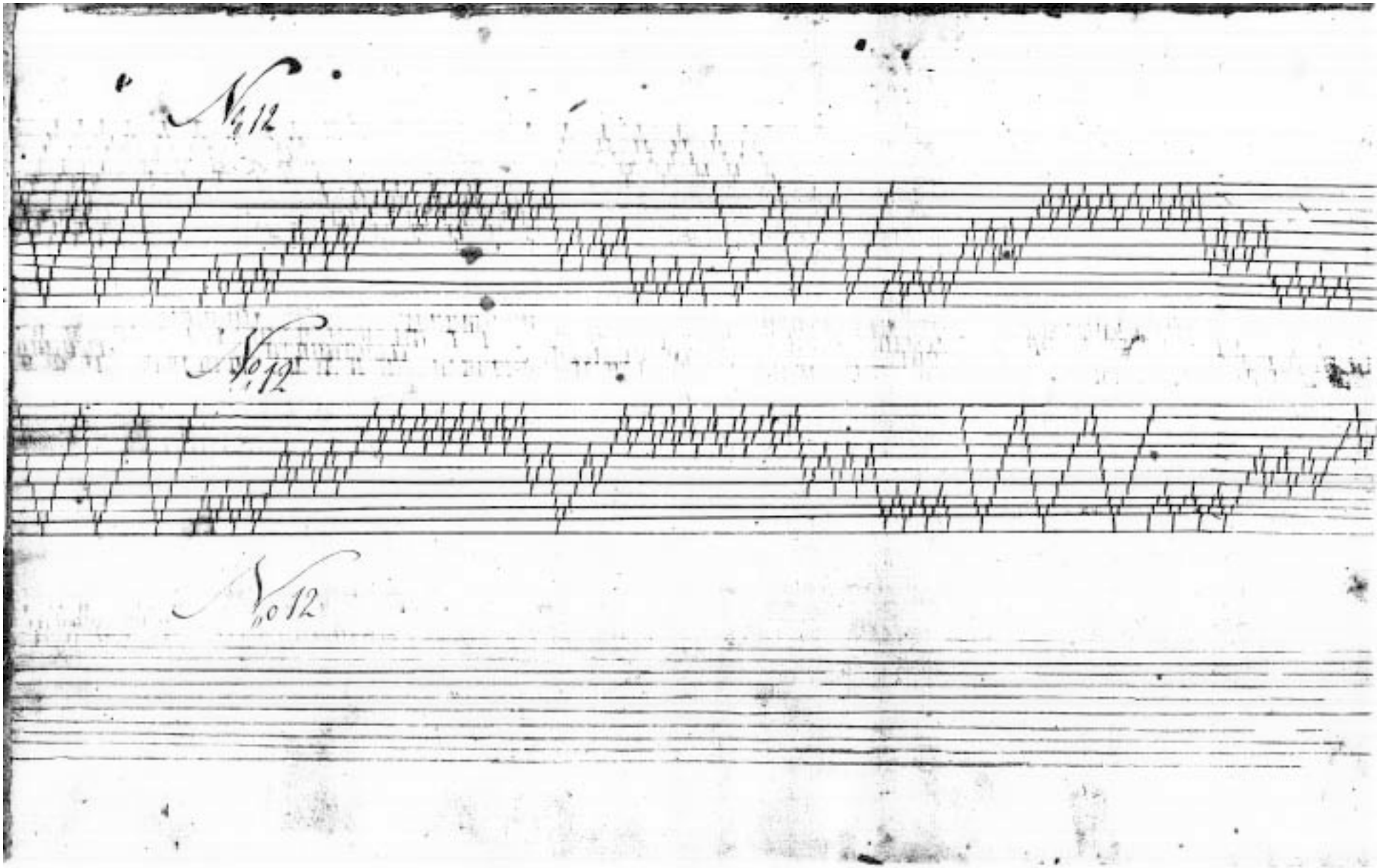
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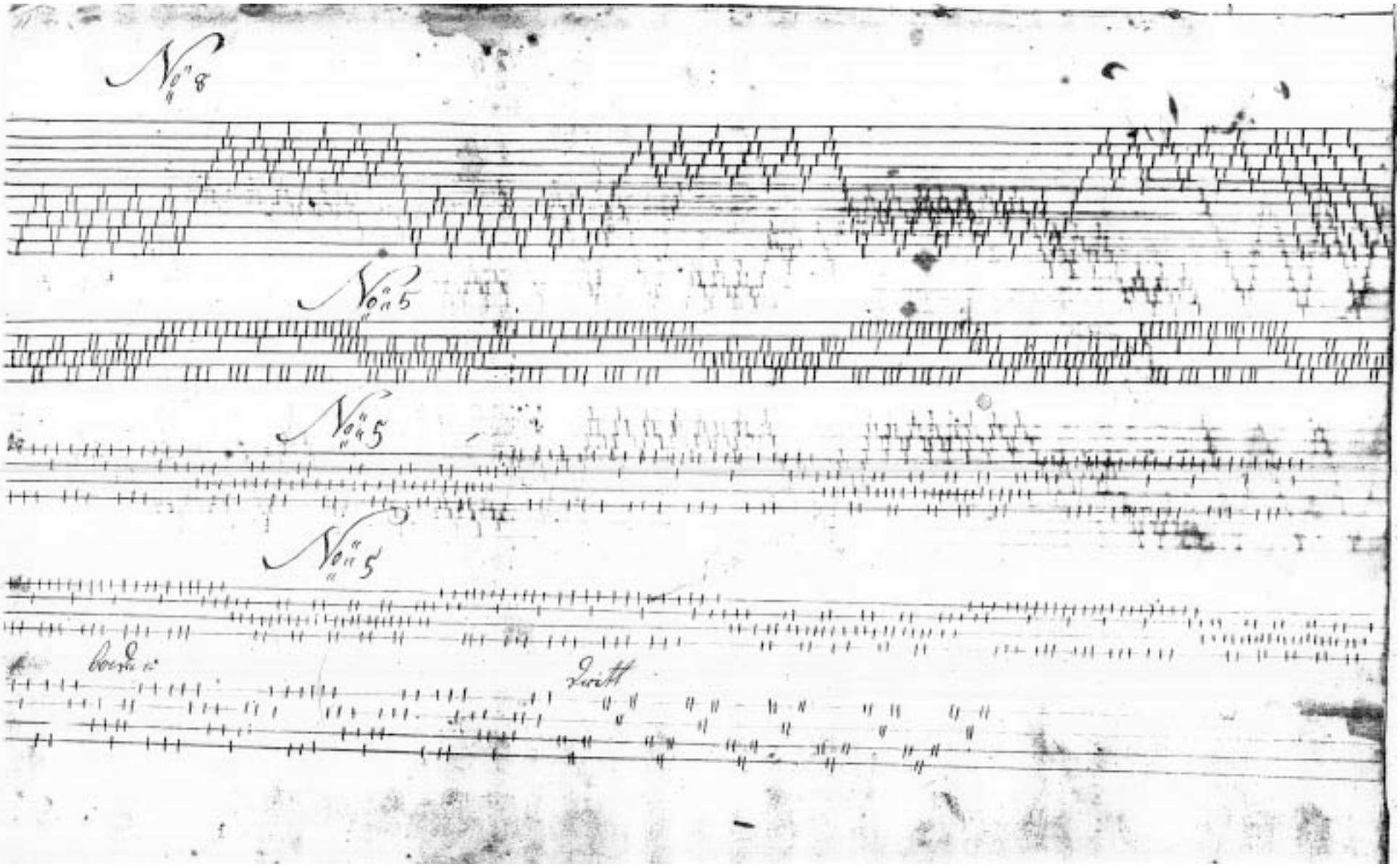
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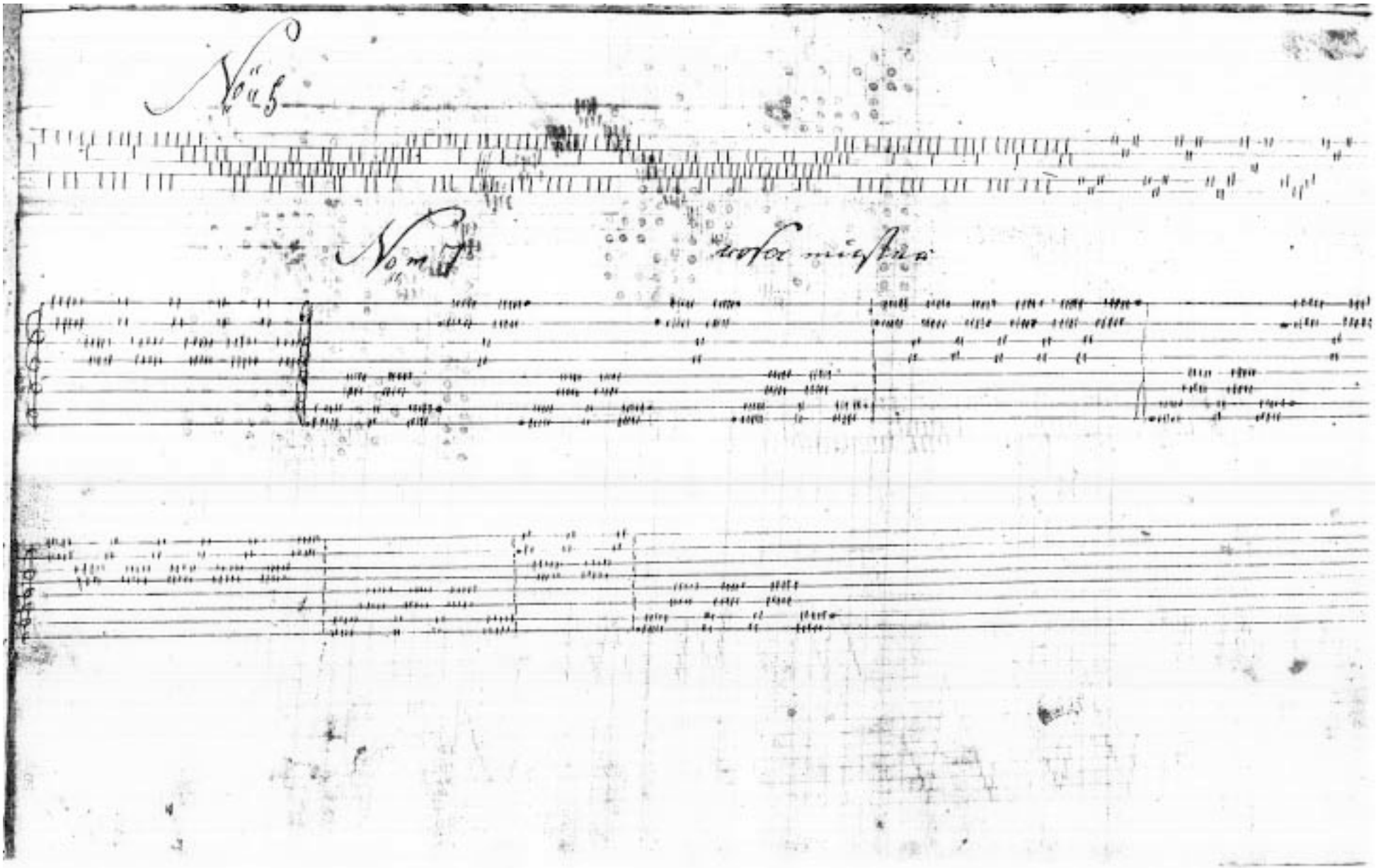
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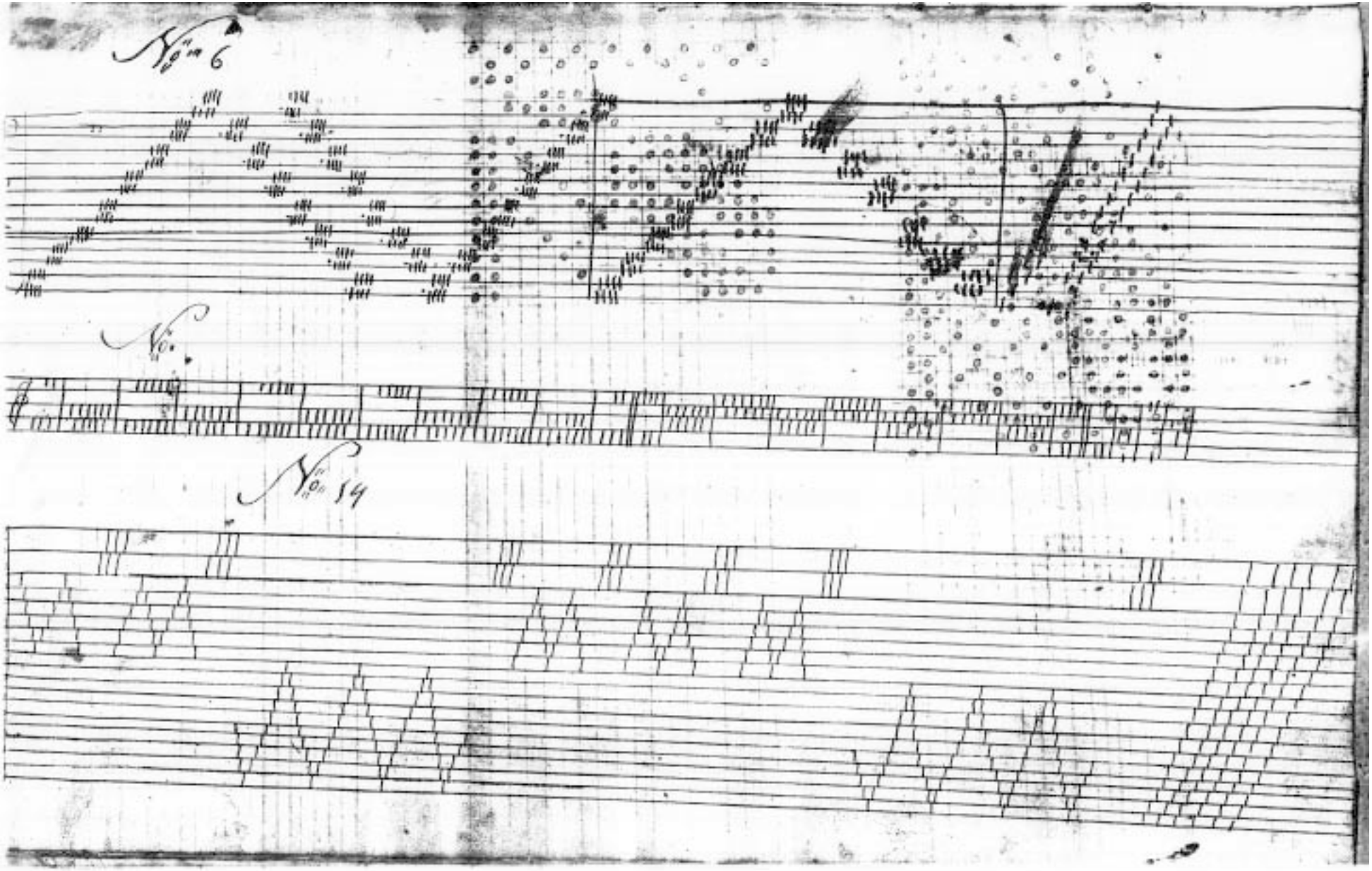
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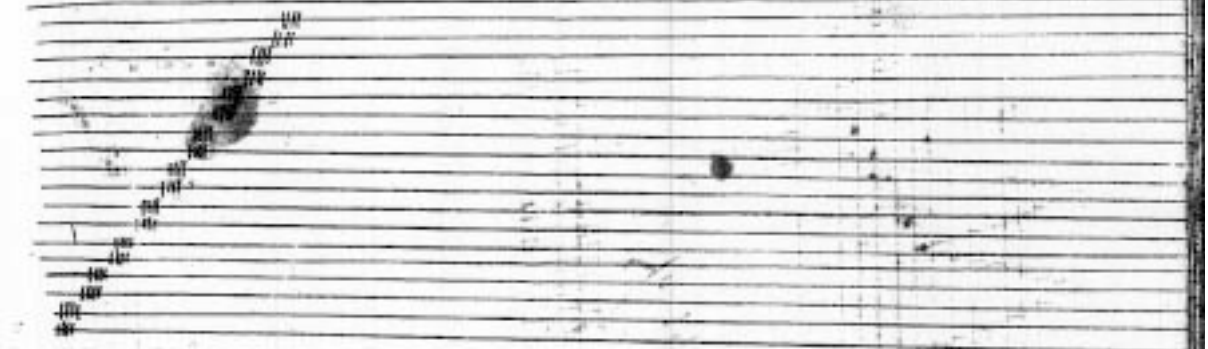

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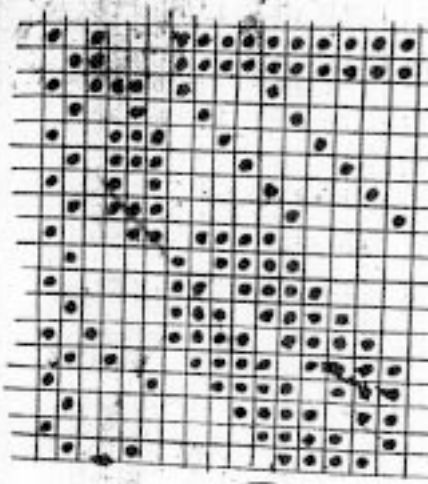

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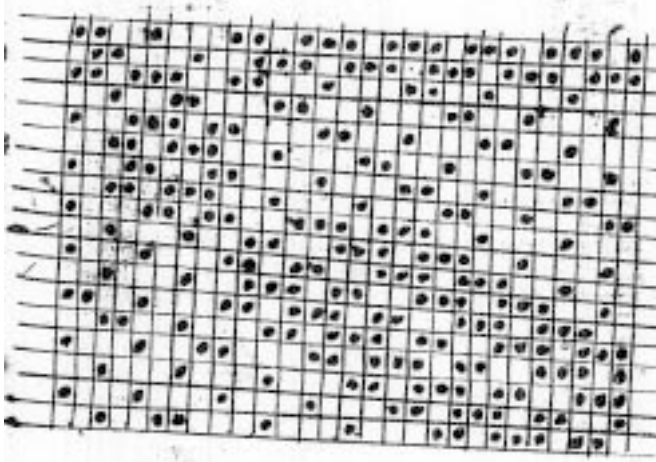

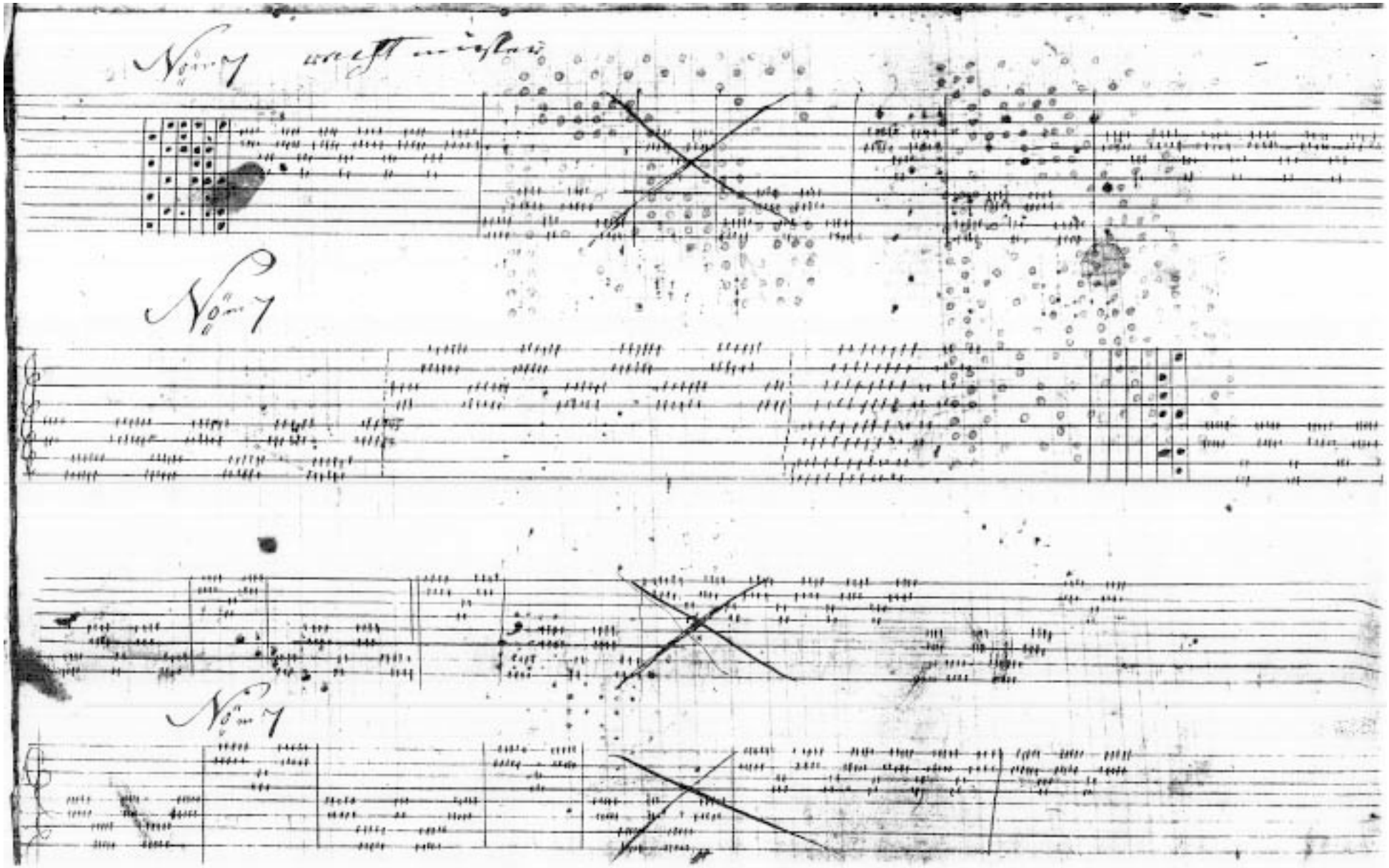

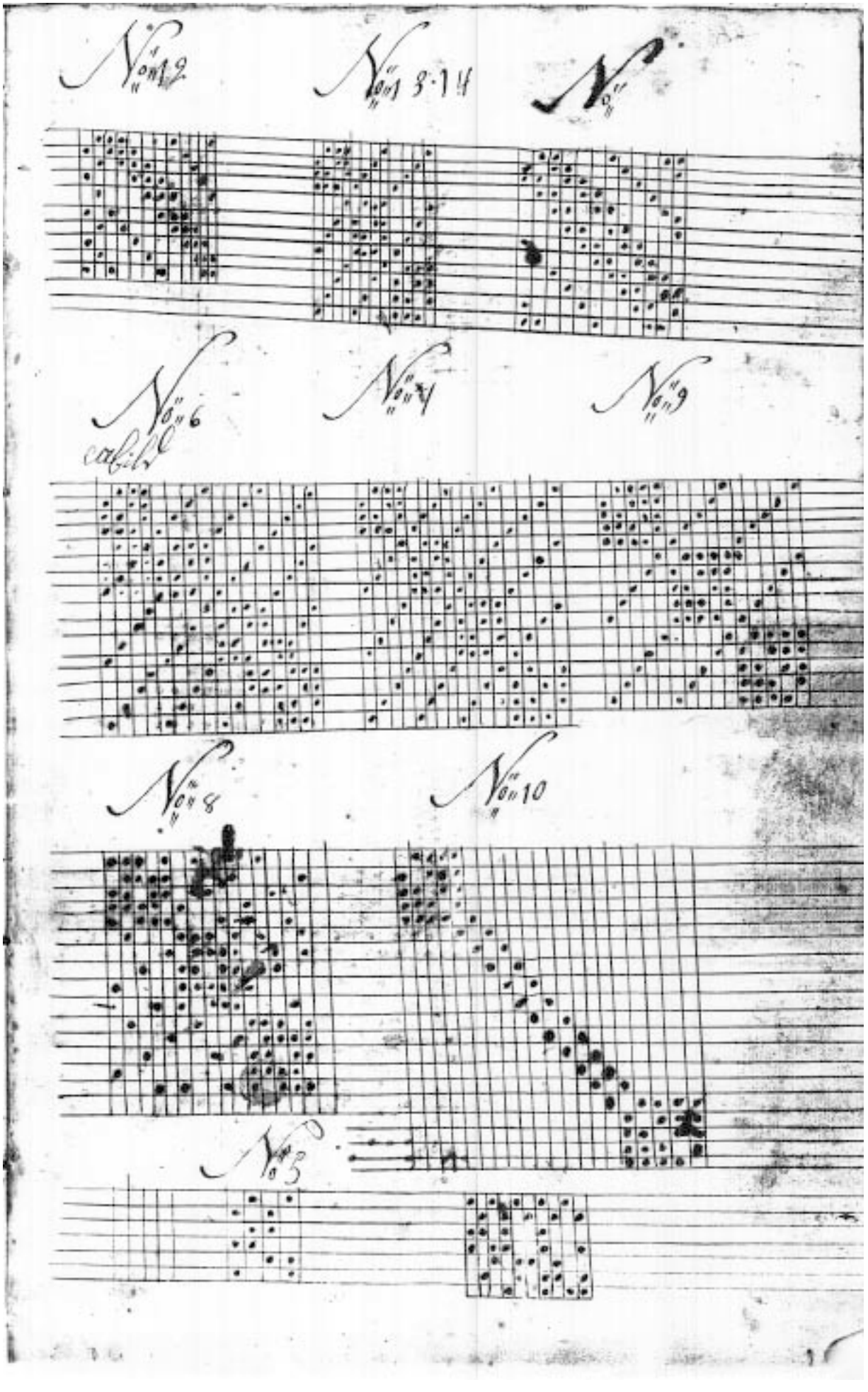
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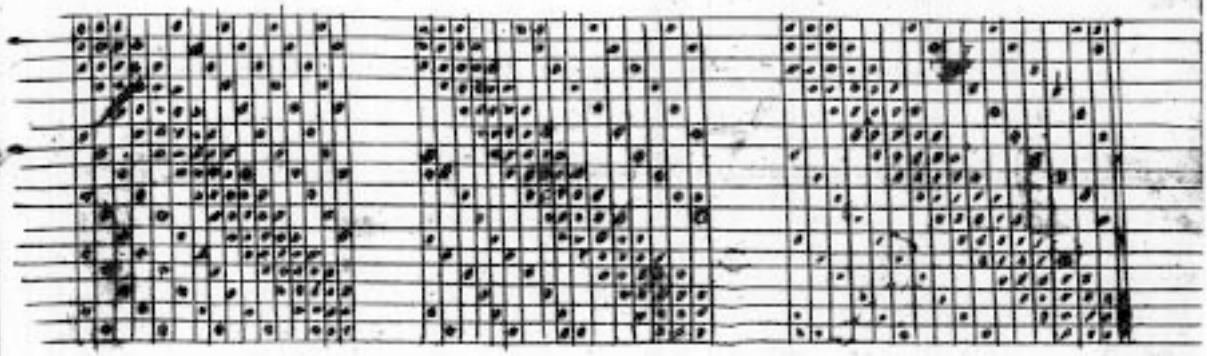

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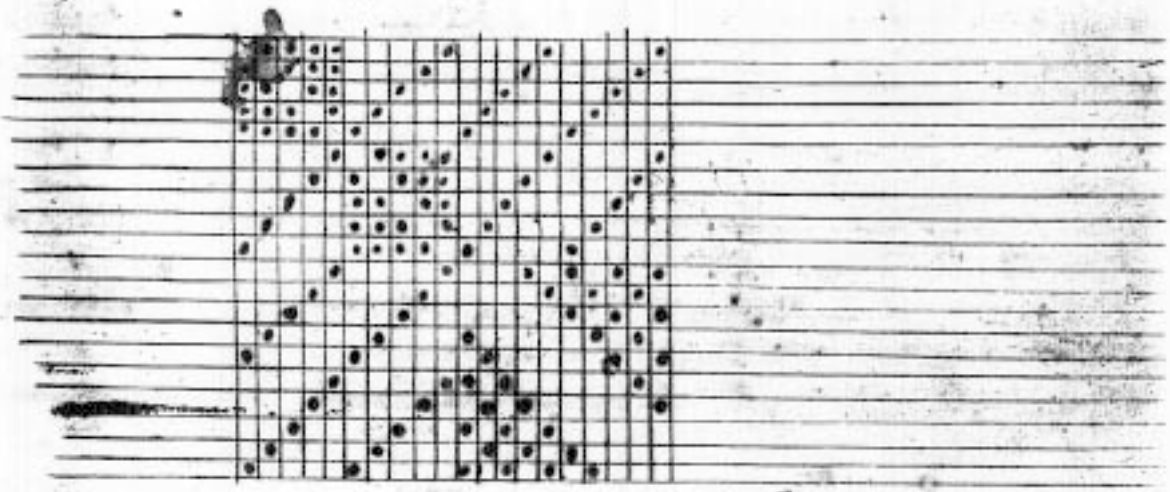

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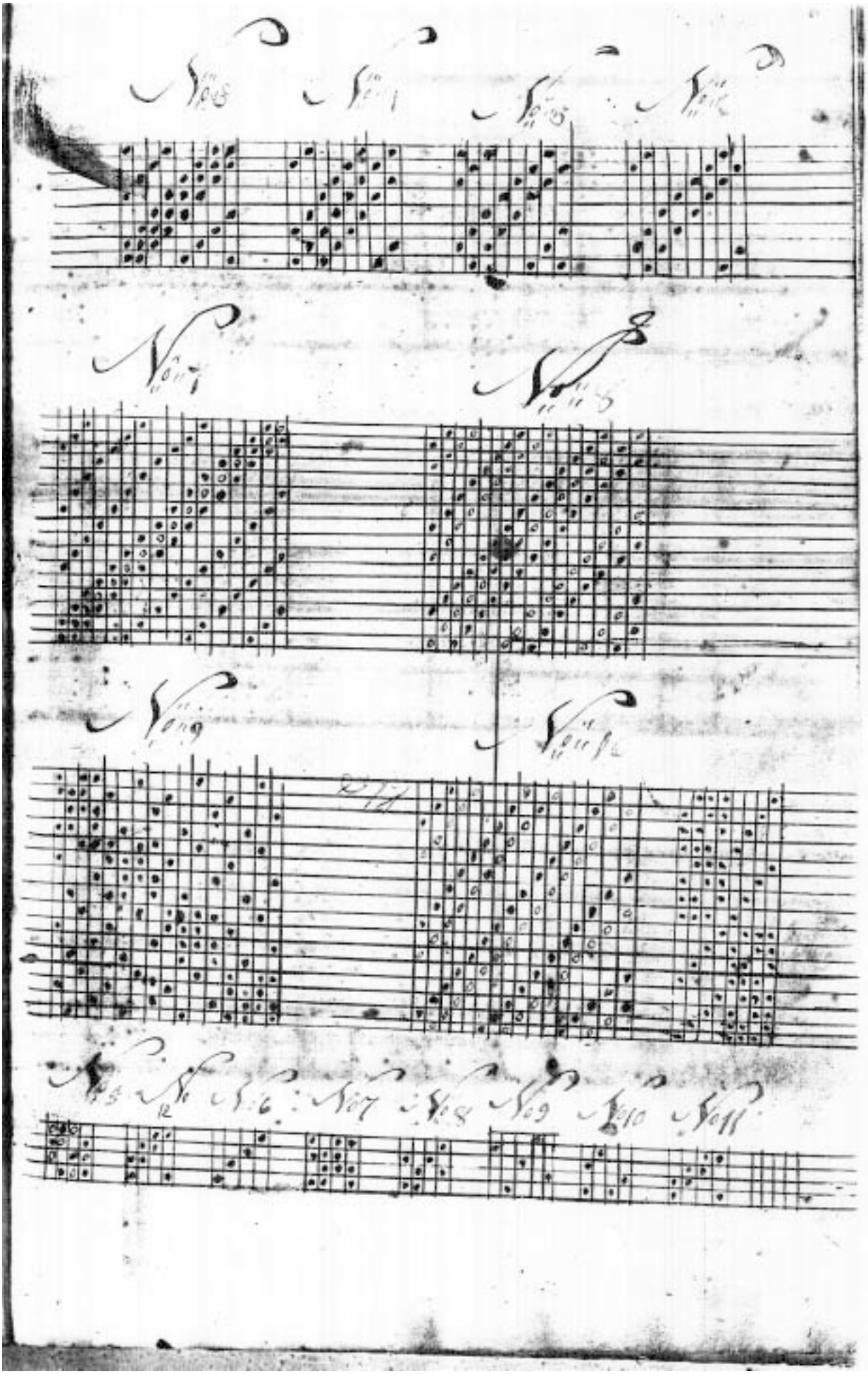

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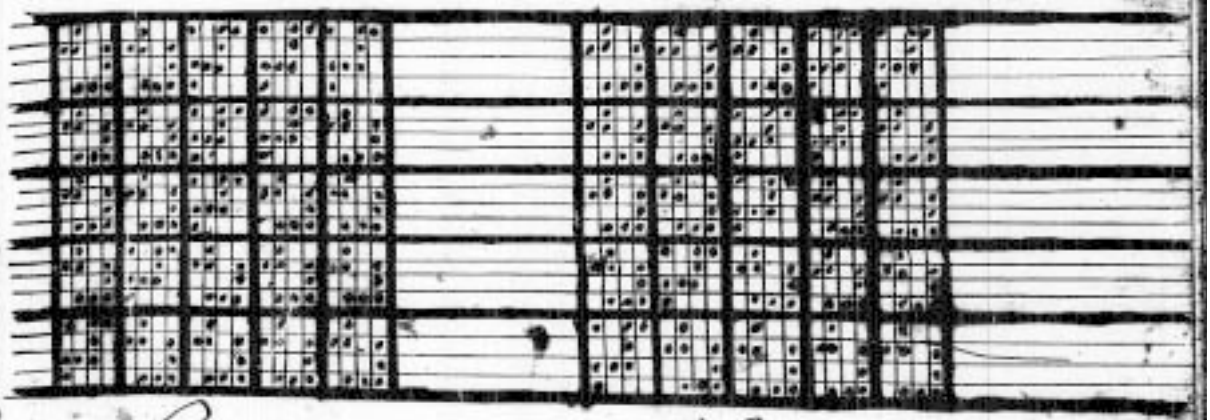

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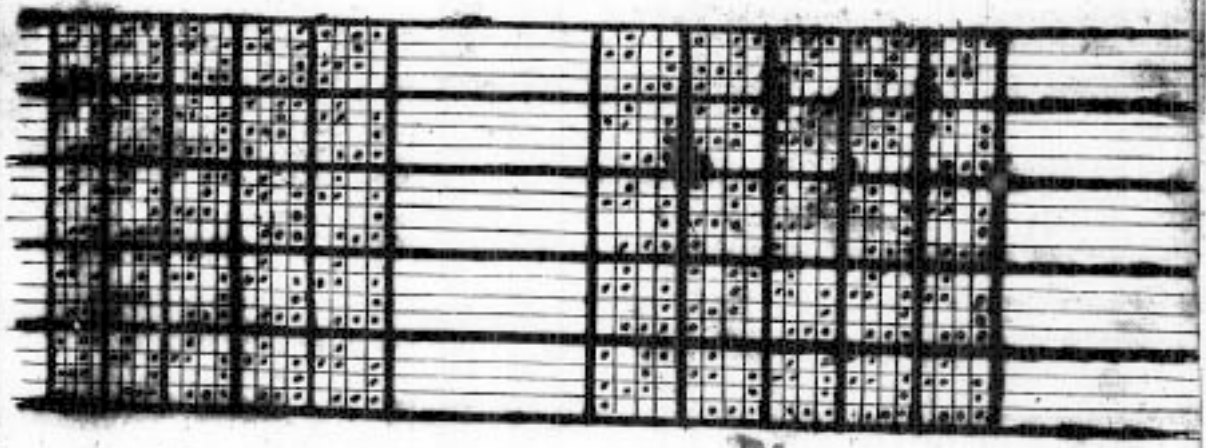

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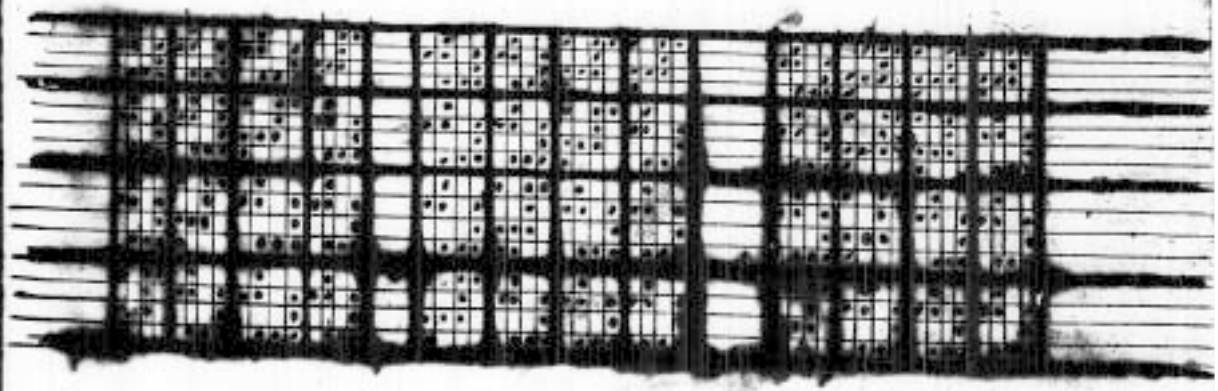

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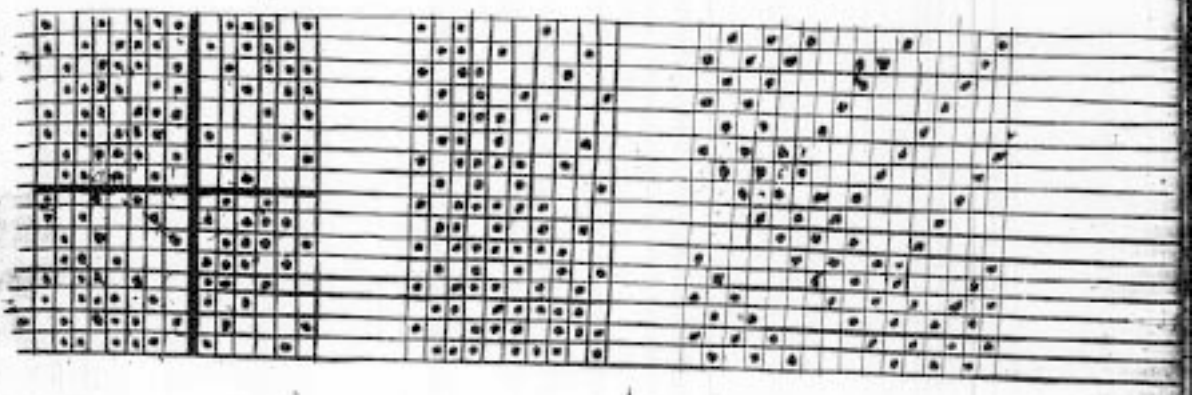

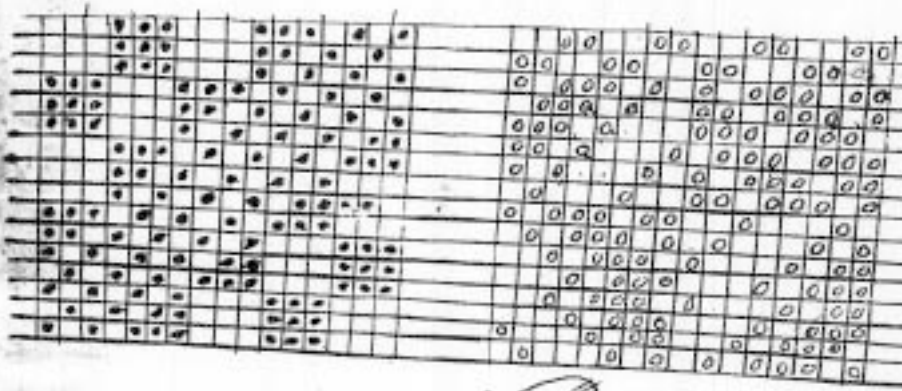

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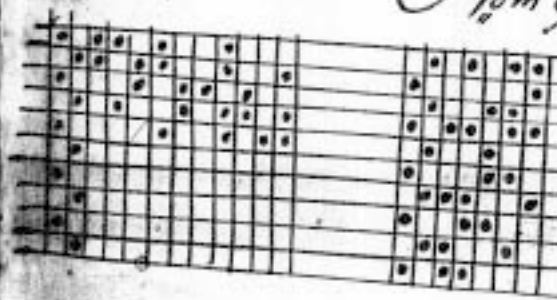

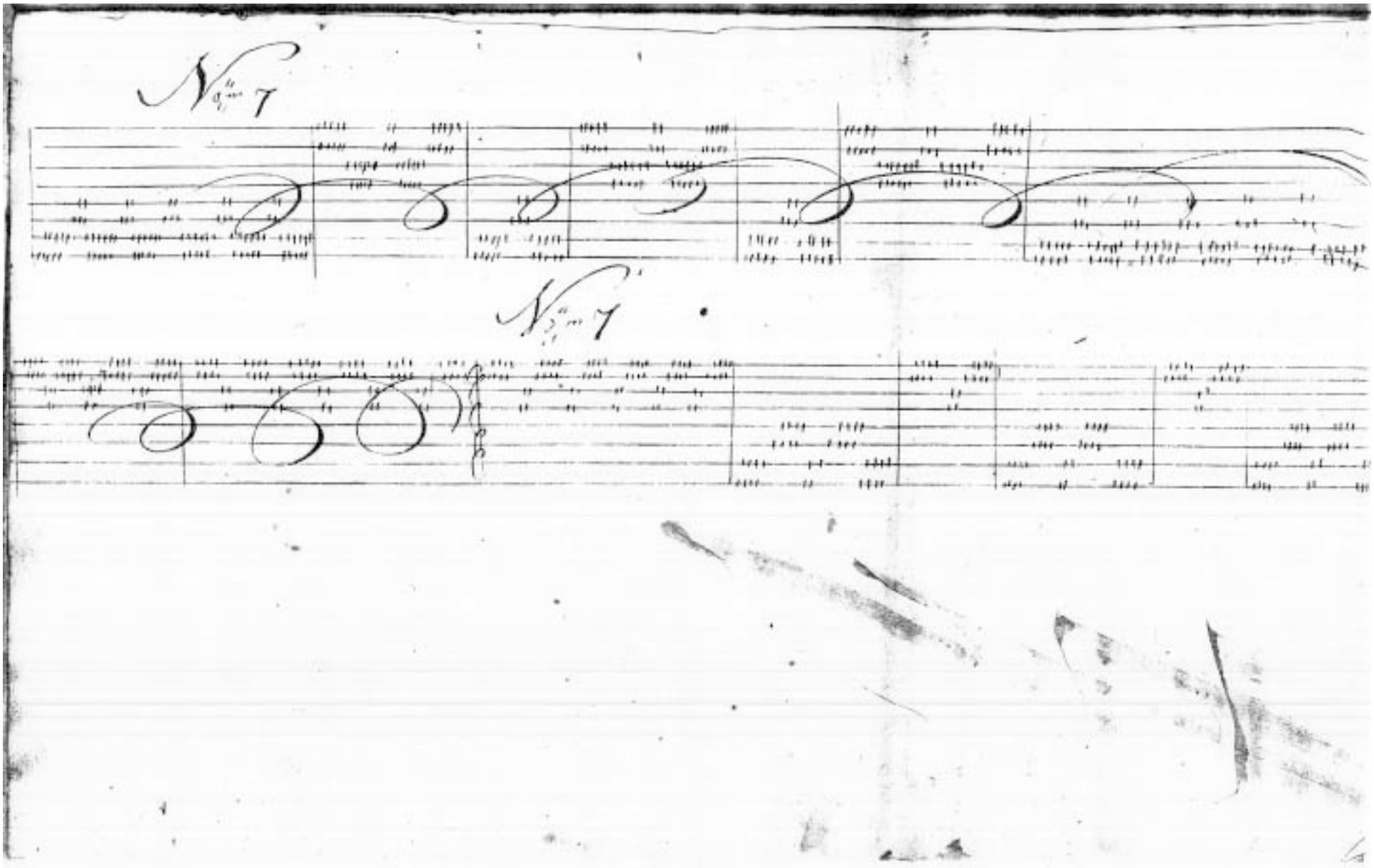
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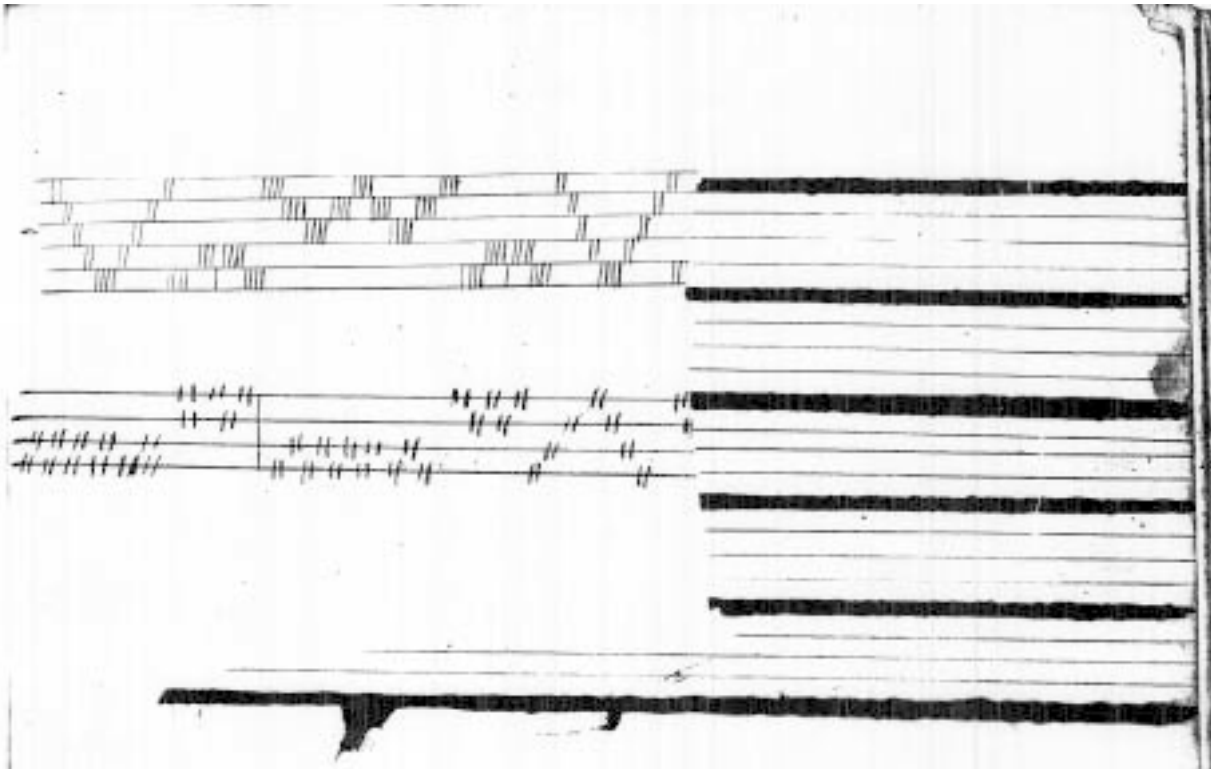

Im Jahr 1823	$	
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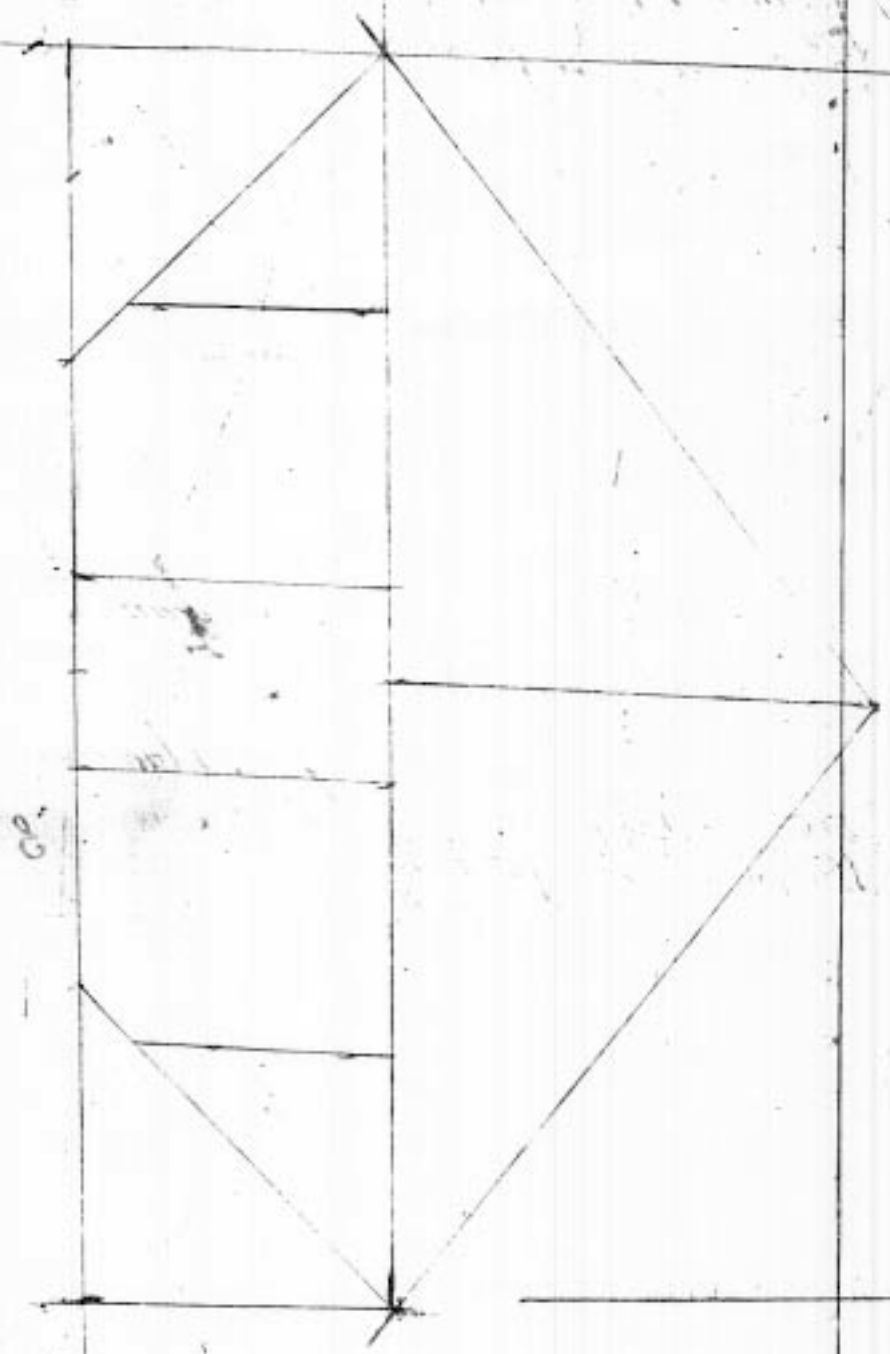


Im Jahre 1825

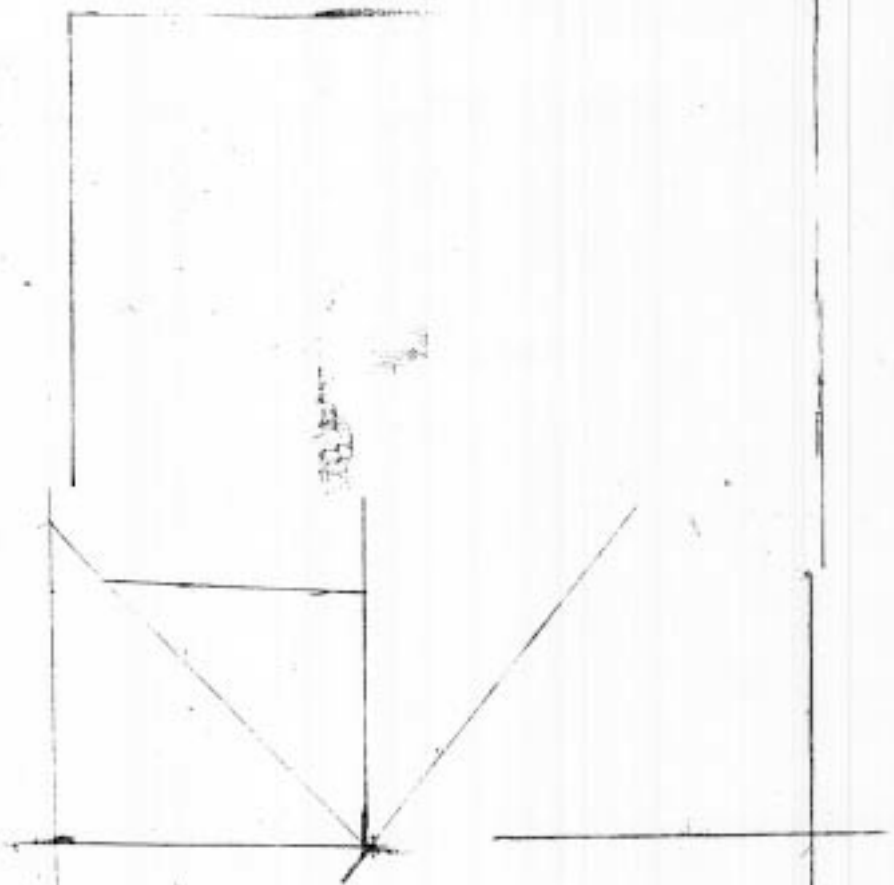
Georg Bauman

2 Tag und 1 halben geschafft	1	50
Tag und 1 halben geschafft	1	50
Ein [illegible] warm		25

Ihm Jahr 1822	8	
Carl Schellenberger		
4 dag geschafft	2	[illegible]
Bleib mir schuldig 1 Dalen 15 Sept		
Georg Henge		
2 dag und 8 fert	1	37
Ihm Jahr 1822	8	
Johannes Klemmer		
Ein stück halbleinen geweben		
Von 21 jart und 1 halbe	2	36
Ein stück fleckes geweben Von 40 jart		
und 1 halbe 11 fent die jart	4	45
Ein stück Krobwerden geweben		
Von [illegible] jart 6 die jart	1	20
Ein stück [illegible] 1 fent die jart		

Ihm Jahr 1823	8	5
Georgen Leidy Ein stück distiger geweben Von 17 jahrt 1 fertel Bauerhodel bes 15 sent die jart	2	58
Ihm Jahr 1823 Christian Sauder Alt Ein stück distiger geweben ~~[illegible]~~ Von 10 jart 1 fertel Bauerthodel bes 18 sent die jart	1	84
George Schellenberger Ein stück distiger geweben Von 17 jart und 1 halbe 18 sent die jart	3	17
Christ stück halbleina geweben Von 21 jart und 1 halbe	2	36½
Ein stück fleder geweben Von 40 jart und 1 halbe 11 sent die jart	4	45½
Ein stück Krobwerden geweben Von 20 jart 6 die jart	1	20
Ein stück Krob werden 7 sent die jart		

Ihm Jahr 1823	ß	5
Jacob Leidig Jung Ein stück dißiger gensäuig Von 1/4 part 1 Viertel 15 Dentdiart	2	13
Abraham Gerhart 2 Dubig geweben beintwod	3	50

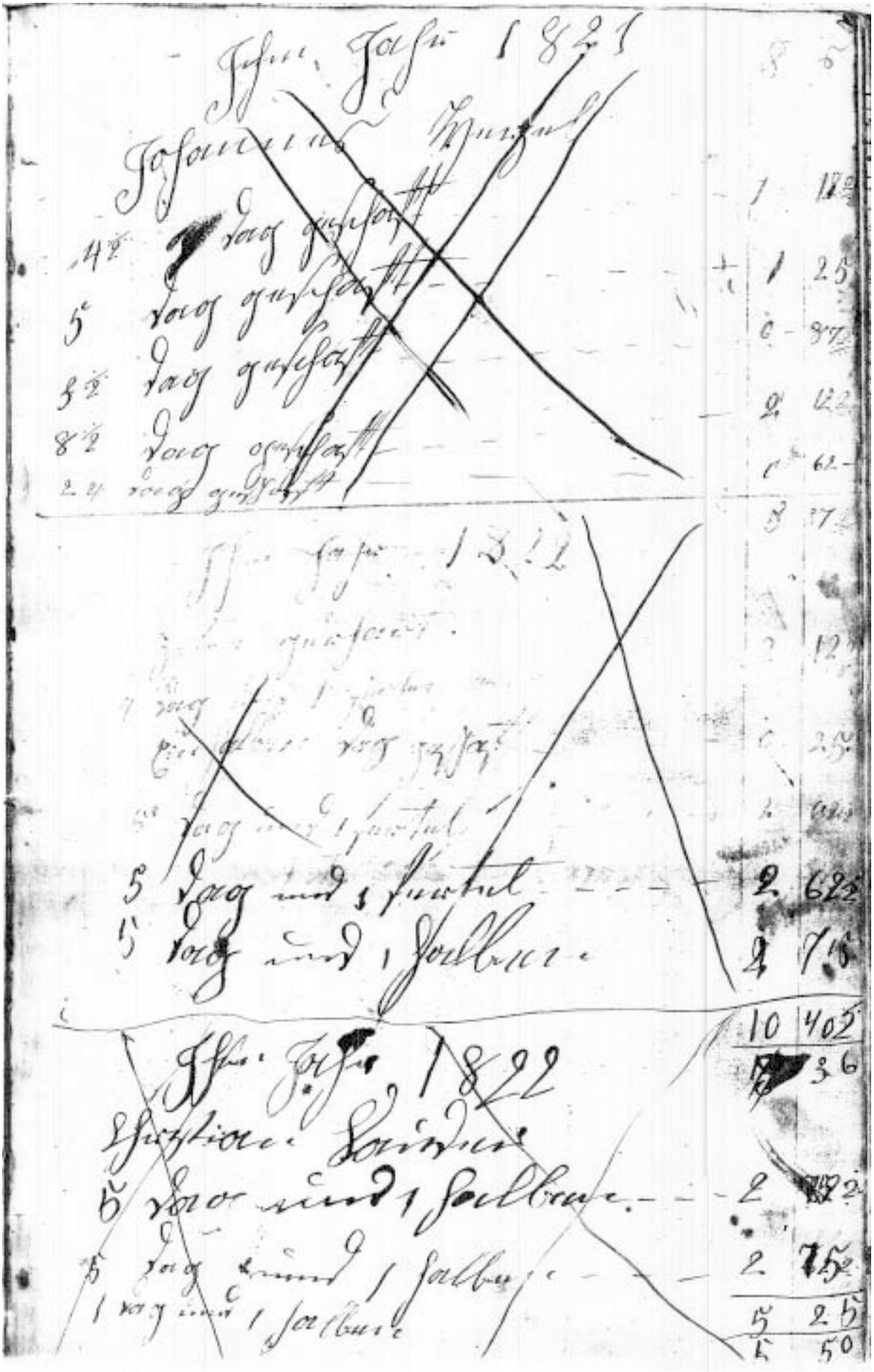


Im Jahr 1823	$	c
Christian Bemmer		
1 dag geschafft	0	25
1 dag geschlacht	0	25
1 zahr hosta	2	0
Ein stück fleisch gegeben		
Von 22 jart 11 fent die jart	2	42
Ein holz schlidel gemacht 1 dag und 1 halbe	0	34
2 dag und 8 fent	1	37½

Im Jahr 1822		
Henrich Hellenberger		
1 dag geschafft		0

Im Jahr 1822	$	
Johannes Bemmer		
Ein stück halbleina gegeben		
Von 21 jart und 1 halbe	2	36½
Ein stück fleisch gegeben Von 40 jart und 1 halbe 11 fent die jart	4	45
Ein stück Krobwerden gegeben		
Von 20 jart 6 die jart	1	20
Ein stück Krob werden 1 fent die jart		

Ihm Jahr 1821	8	6
Samuel Wunsperger		
Jeste Franz		
5 dag geschafft	1	37½
4½ dag und 1 halben geschafft	1	12½
5 dag geschafft	1	25
6 dag geschafft	1	50
4½ dag geschafft	5	25
5 dag geschafft		
Ihm Jahr 1822	8	
Samuel Leidy		
1 dag und 1 halben gedroschen	0	75
Ihm Jahr 1822	8	
Christian Bemmer zur Hora	2	50
Bezahlt		
1 dag geschlacht	0	25
1 dag geschafft	0	50
Ihm Jahr 1823		
Jeste Franz Hotmir bezahlt	12	63½



Ihm Jahr 1812

Abra Ham Cob

2 Dag und 1 halben mist geladen

Ihm Jahr 1822 | $

Abra Ham Schwarz

Ein stück halbleina geweben

Von 14 jart und halbe 11 sent -- | 1 | 59½

Ein Schu gemacht - - - - - - | 10 | 0

Ihm Jahr 1821		
Friedrich Hunsberger		
1½ Tag geschafft		
Ihm Jahr 1823	8	
Johannes Flemmer		
Ein Stück Krobwerden Mon 16 jart		
7 Sent die jart	1	12
Ihm Jahr 1823		
Johannes Leidy	12 12 12 37	
Ein Lebigbeintwort	1	50
Johannes Wenzel	6	37

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

A B C D E F G H I J

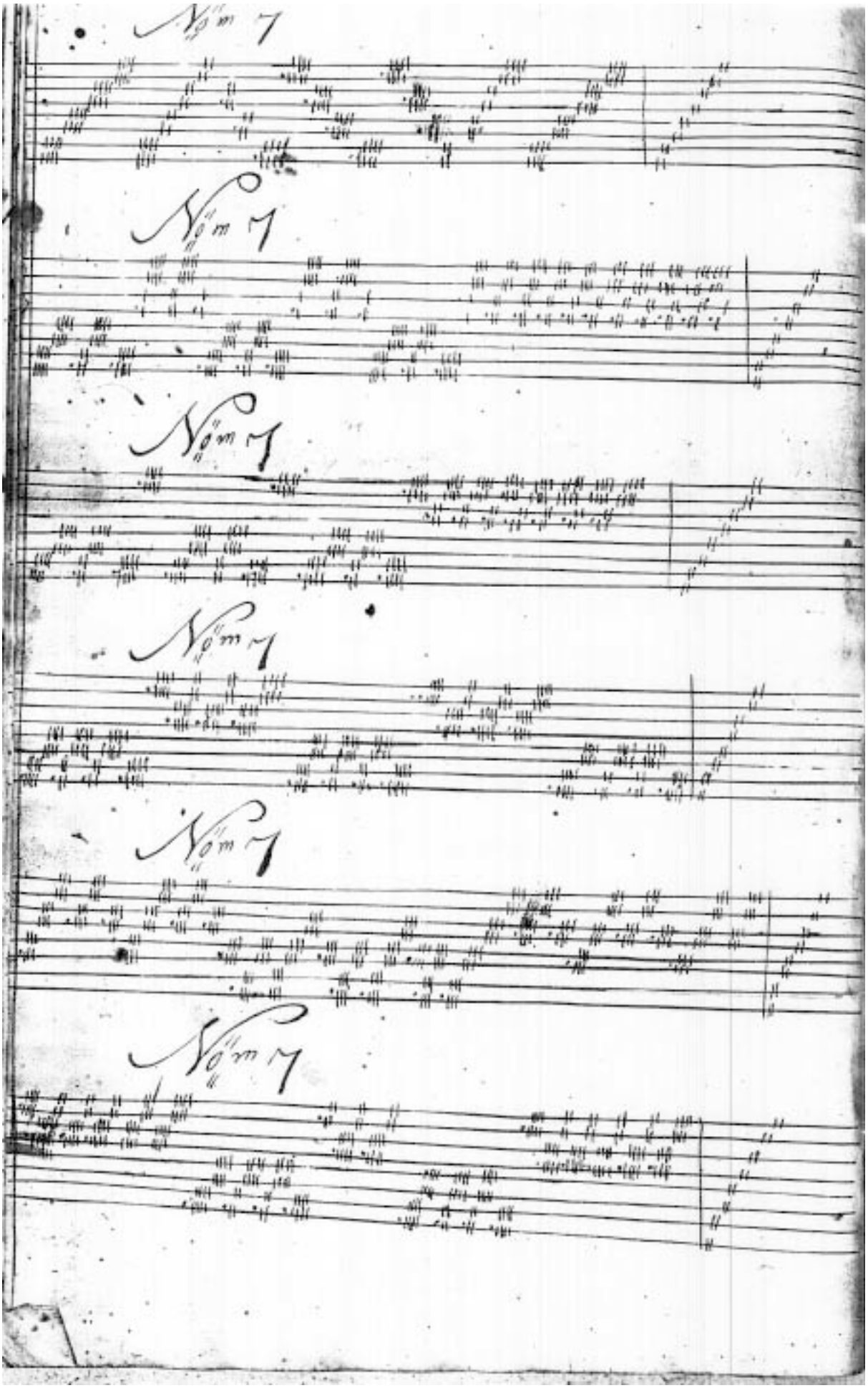
K L M N O P Q R S

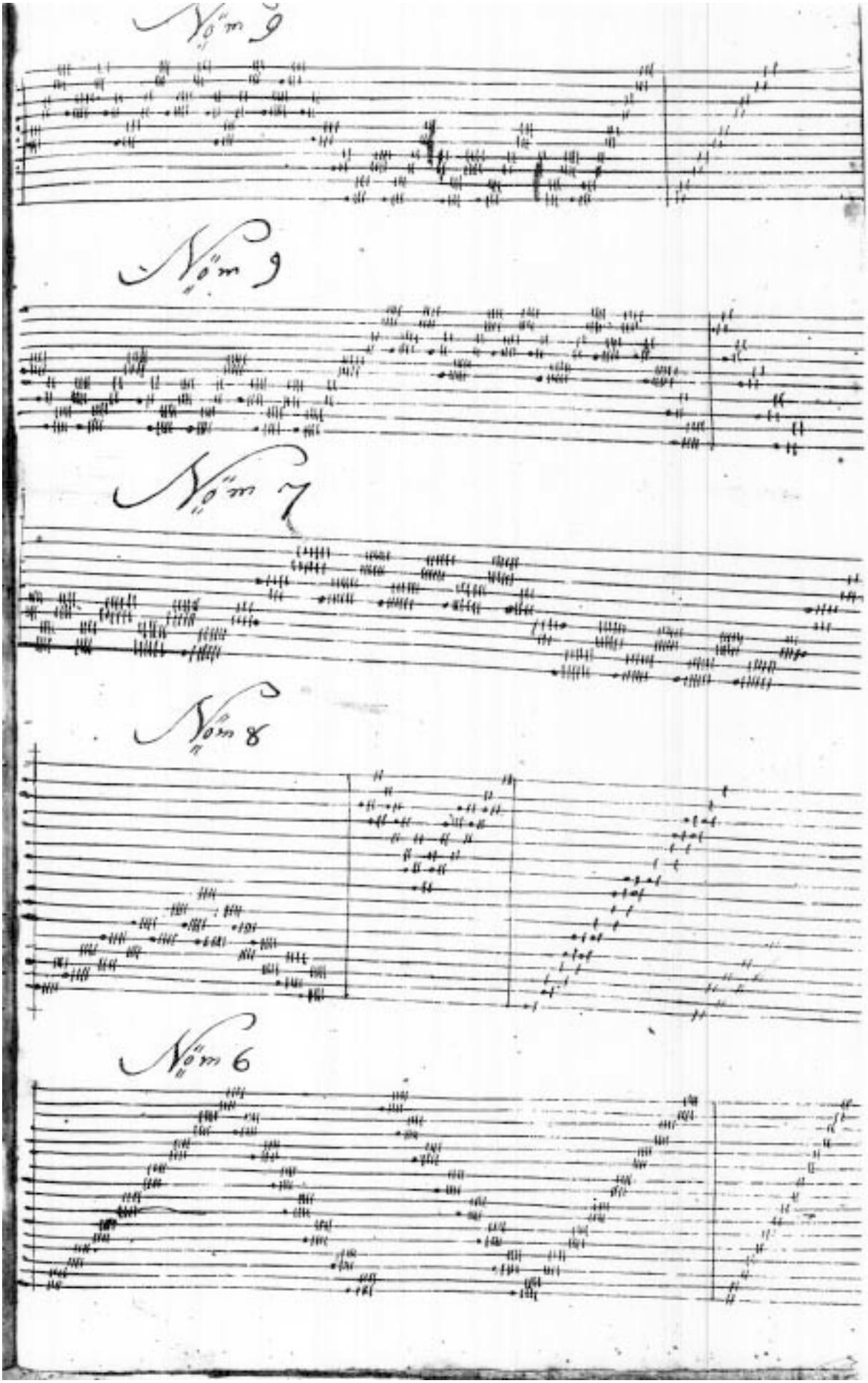
T U V W X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q

r s t u v w x y z

Ihm Jahr 1823	$	c
George Freeman		
Ein dubig geweben genaugig	1	0
Ein dubig geweben beintwort	1	75
Ein stück stedsa geweben von 33 jart 11 sent die jahrt	3	96
Ein stück fein werden geweben von 20 und 1 fertel 11 jart streiben 1 distug 8 sent di jart	1	90




No 9
No 9
No 7
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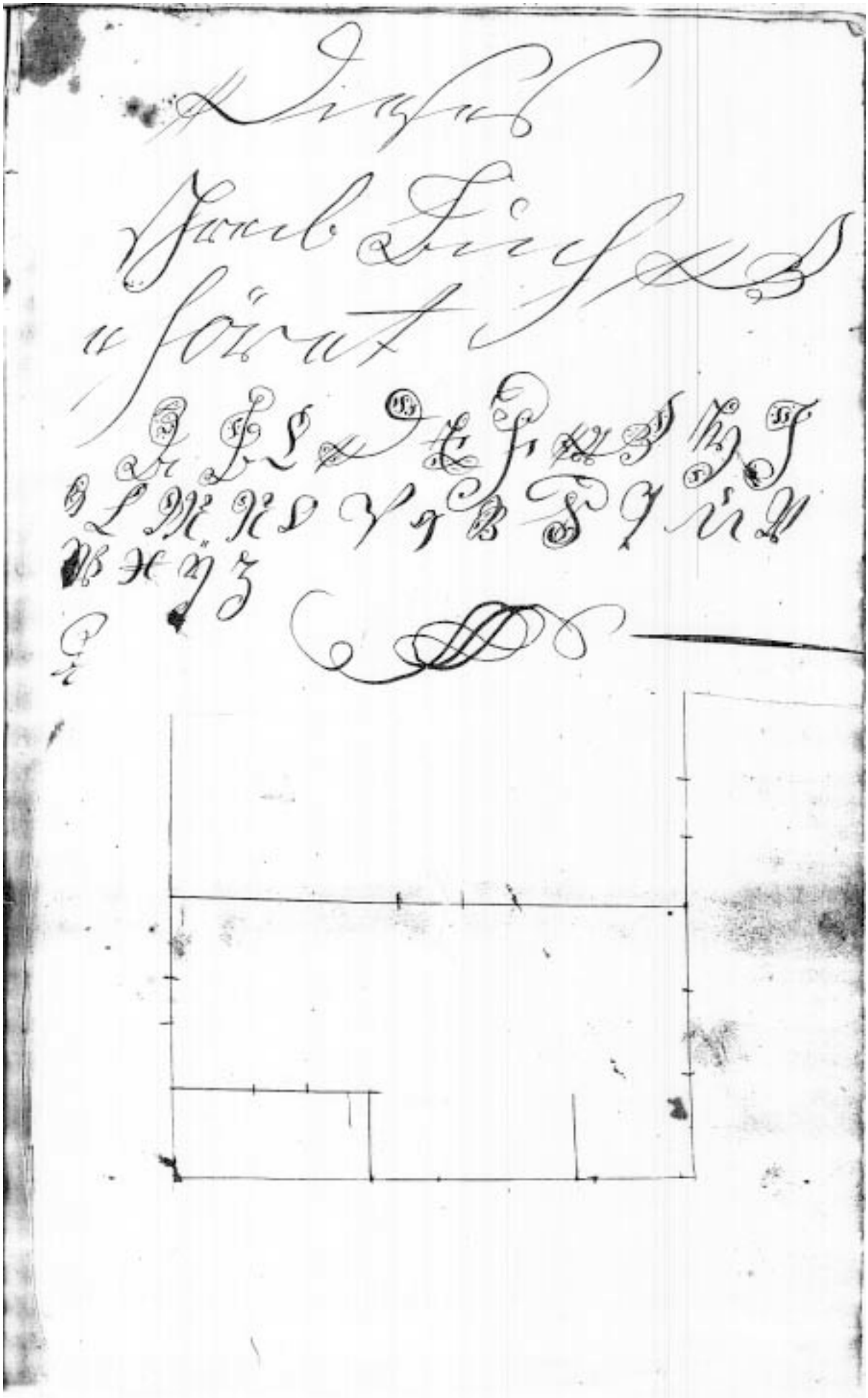
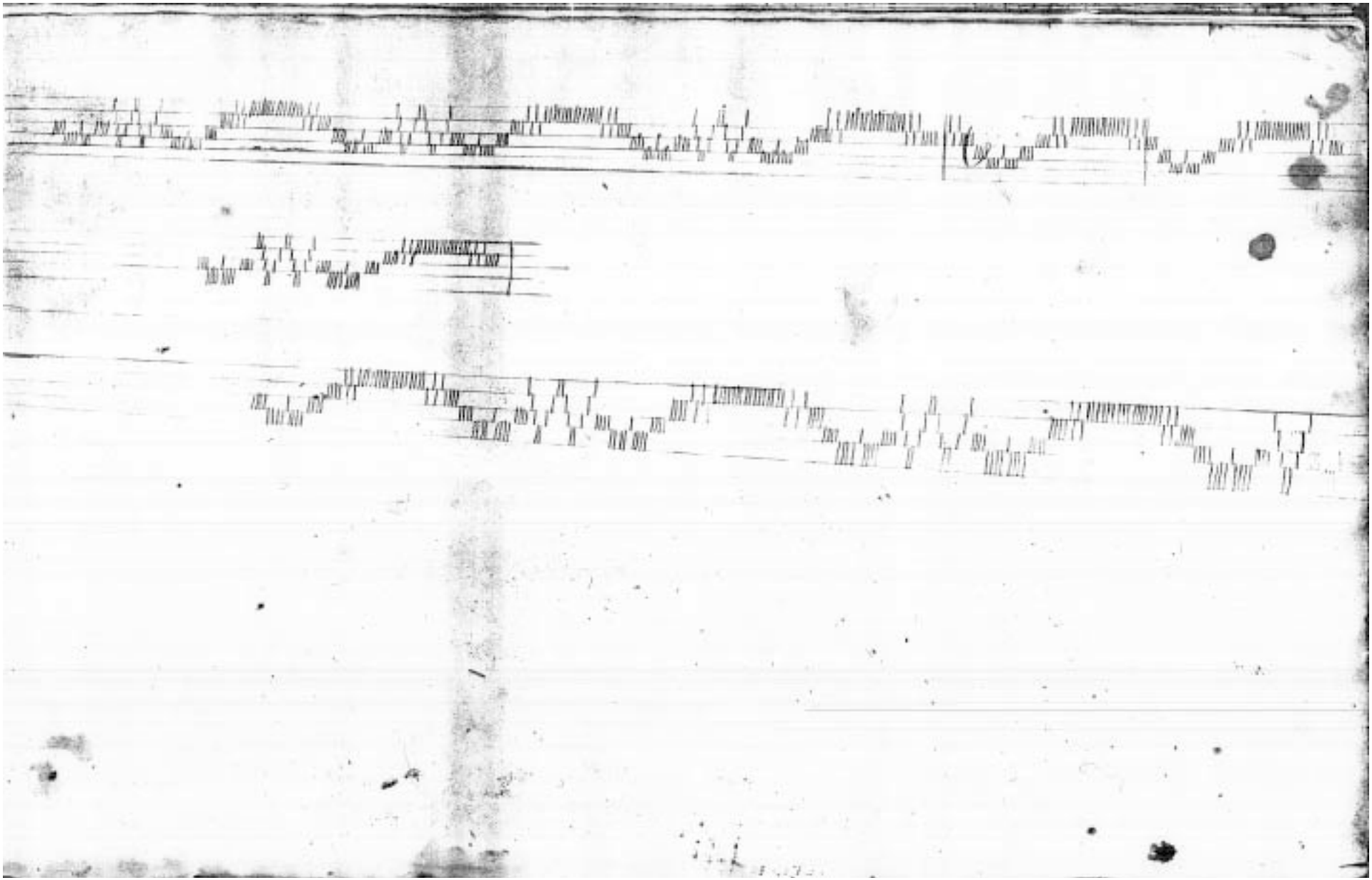
No 6





thought is known by him who made no 13 adrenalin

thought is known by him who made no 13 adrenalin

By a light and some care we come to we 13 1838

A lad that woul excell must mind his 13

Illiterate People experienced many trees 13 1234

Govern your life by reason not by fancy 13

Keep your promised and you always be late 13

Jan Jam Jam Jam Nom 10 Nom 10 Jan

Nom 26 Nom 6 Nom 6 Jan Jan Jan 1823

Henry Miller Demerel [illegible] 96 0

25

[illegible] 35

22
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22
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22
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59

2
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30
330

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[illegible]

50
25
[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Fea

Bot 40 weis 40 schwarz 40 weis 40 Bot 4
schwarz 40

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] 1234567 8 9 10 11

[illegible] 1234567 8 9 10 11

[illegible] 8 8

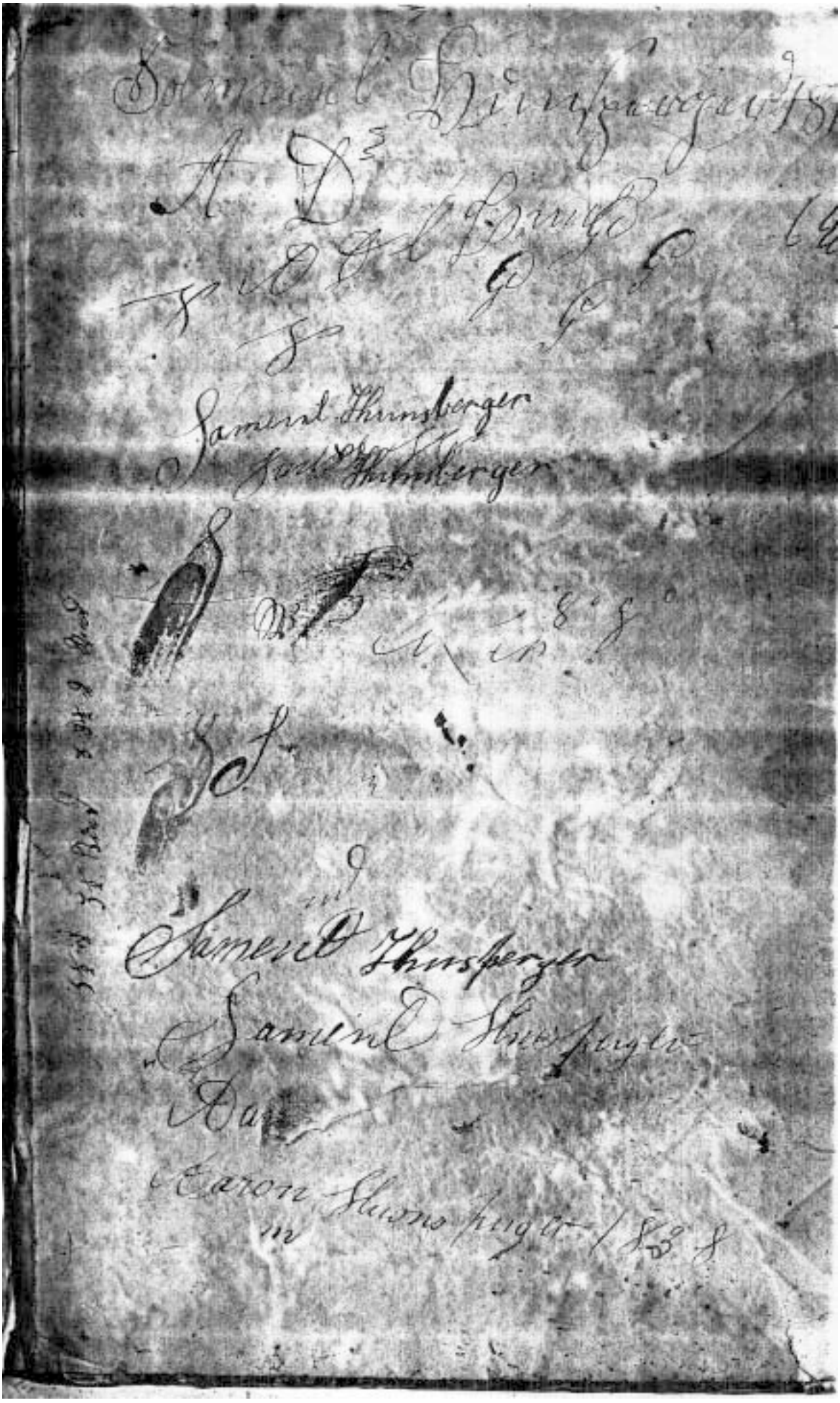
[illegible] 8 8 8

A. D. mne 22 [illegible] 22

Dieser Hunsperger [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Samuel Hunsperger

Samuel Hunsperger 1838
1838 1839