

Abe's Retreat

Traditional

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G (A) (see notes) F (G) G (A)

D7 (E7) G (A) (see notes) F (G) G (A) D7 (E7)

6

10

1. G (A) 2. G (A) F (G)

G (A) D7 (E7) G (A) F (G)

14

G (A) D7 (E7) 1. G (A) 2. G (A) G (A)

18

I first learned this tune at a Monday night old-time jam session at Sandy's Music in Cambridge, Massachusetts. This old tune supposedly was composed by some forgotten fiddler to commemorate the Confederate victory at Bull Run. The tuning used here is basically the standard open G tuning with the second string dropped to A, which allows the tuning to be used for either major or modal tunes. Since the fiddle tune is actually played in the key of A, the banjo is capoed on the second fret. There is a liberal use of open strings for drones, particularly in the B part, which gives the arrangement a particularly haunting quality. Note in particular the fourth string drones in measures 11, 13 and 15. These should not be picked too hard, or they will clang. The need to be played a little more softly than the melody notes, so that they ring almost subconsciously in the background.

The fourth string hammer found in measures 3, and 7 is a hammer of a string which has not been picked by the right hand, at least not since the earlier note in the measure. It will have to be hammered especially hard to be heard. In order for the hammer to be played in the MIDI playback, I had to place a ghost note in front of the hammer, but that open ghost note should be ignored.

The guitar chords are provided over the tab lines, though in old-time modal music chordal back-up is in some sense out of place. The chords in parantheses are the chords in the key of A, which is the key of the MIDI playback, since the banjo module/track is

designated as capoed on the second fret, to be in the same key as the fiddle.