Billy in the Loweground

Traditional

As played by John Salyer

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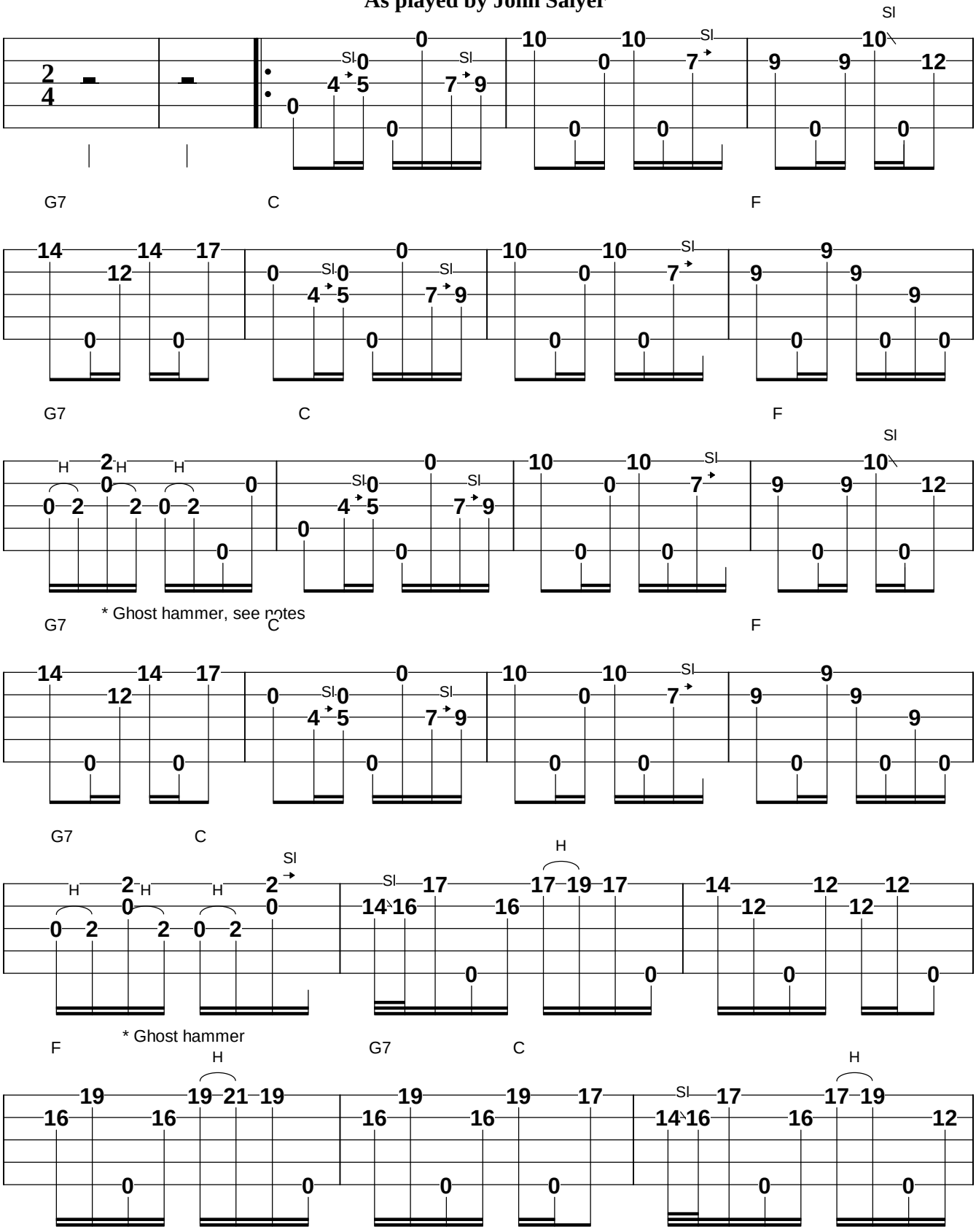
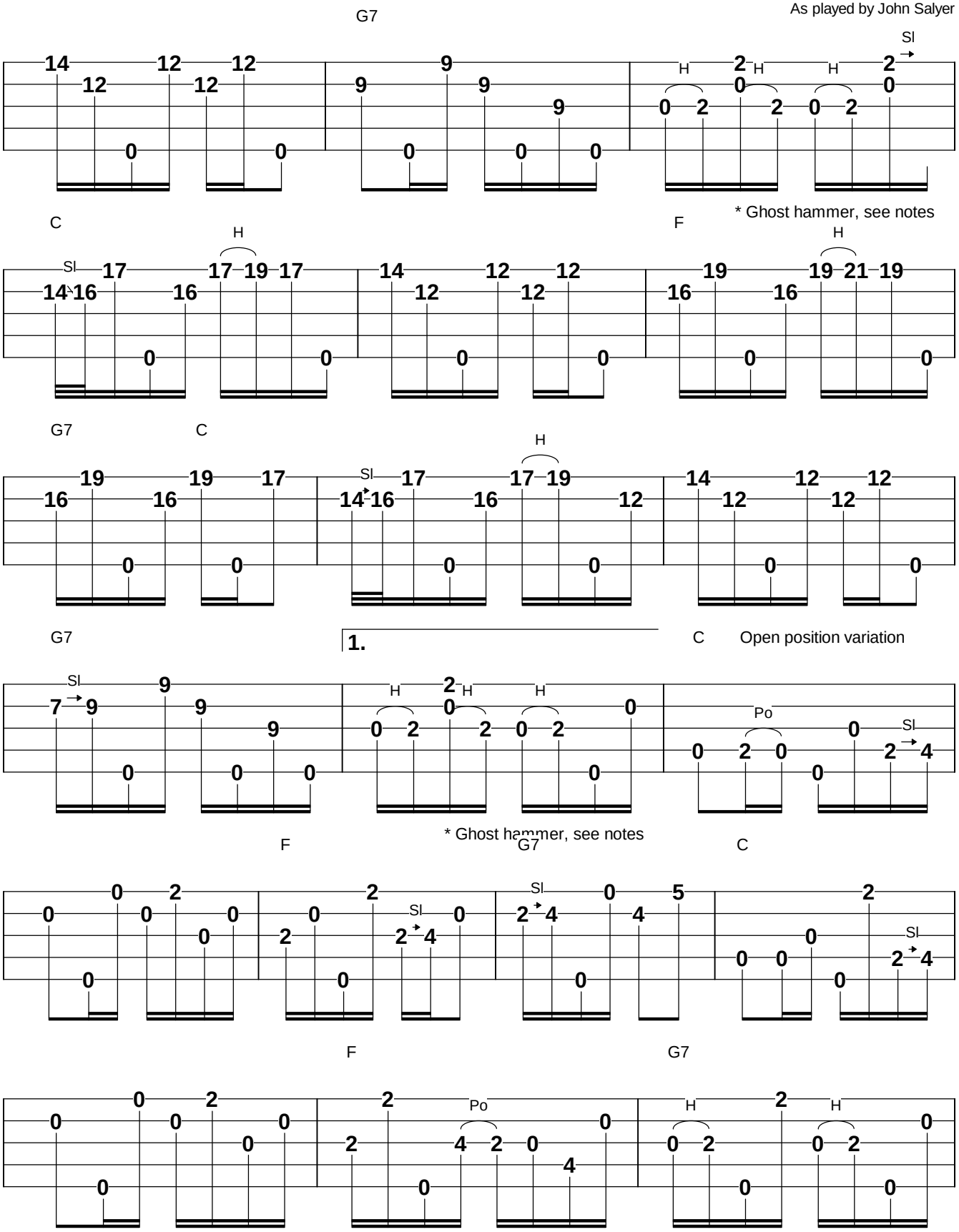
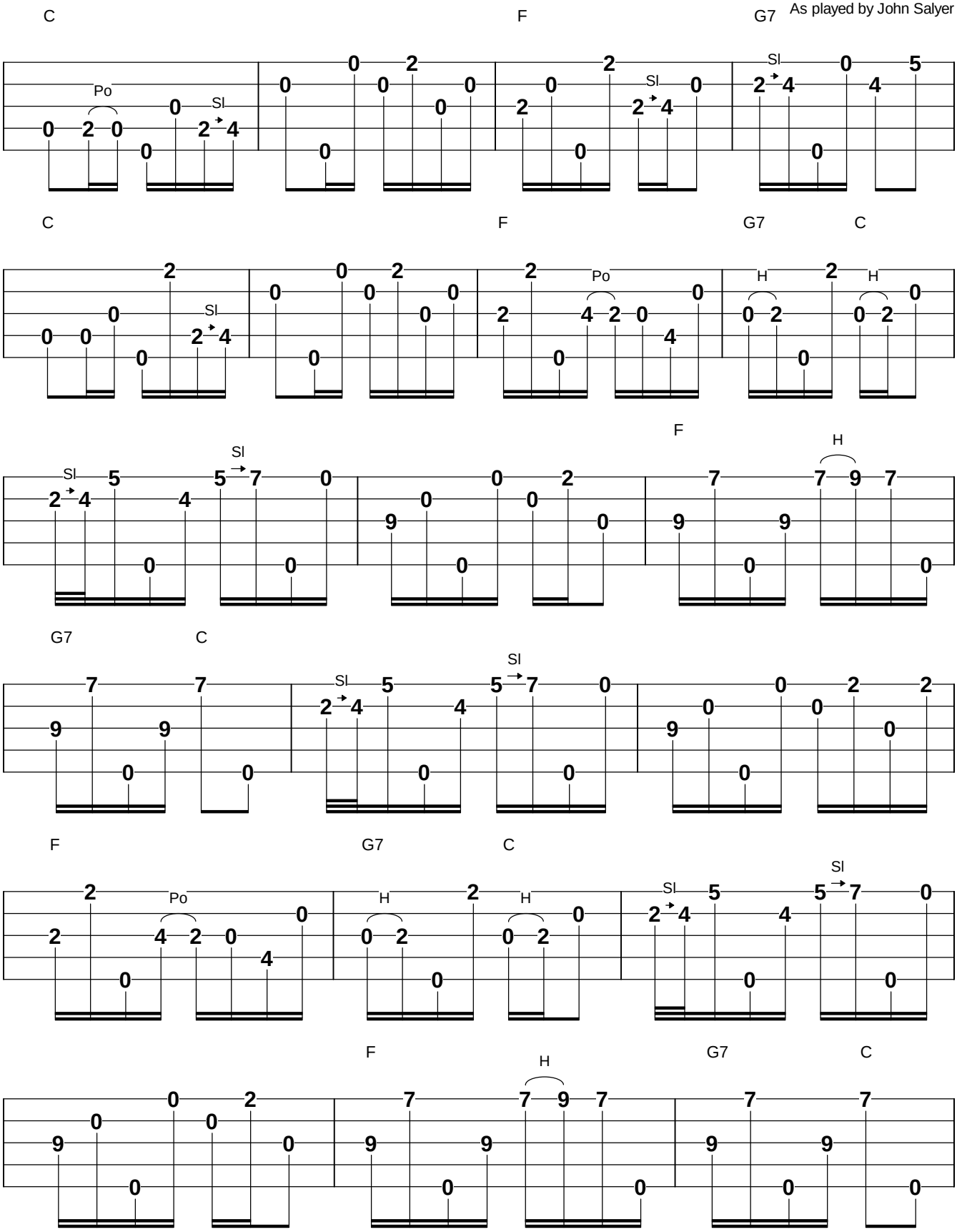



G7
Sl
H
C
F
* Ghost hammer, see notes
G7
C
1.
Open position variation
Po
* Ghost hammer, see notes


C
F
G7
Po
Sl
C
F
G7
C
Po
H
H
F
Sl
Sl
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G7
C
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G7
C
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G7
C
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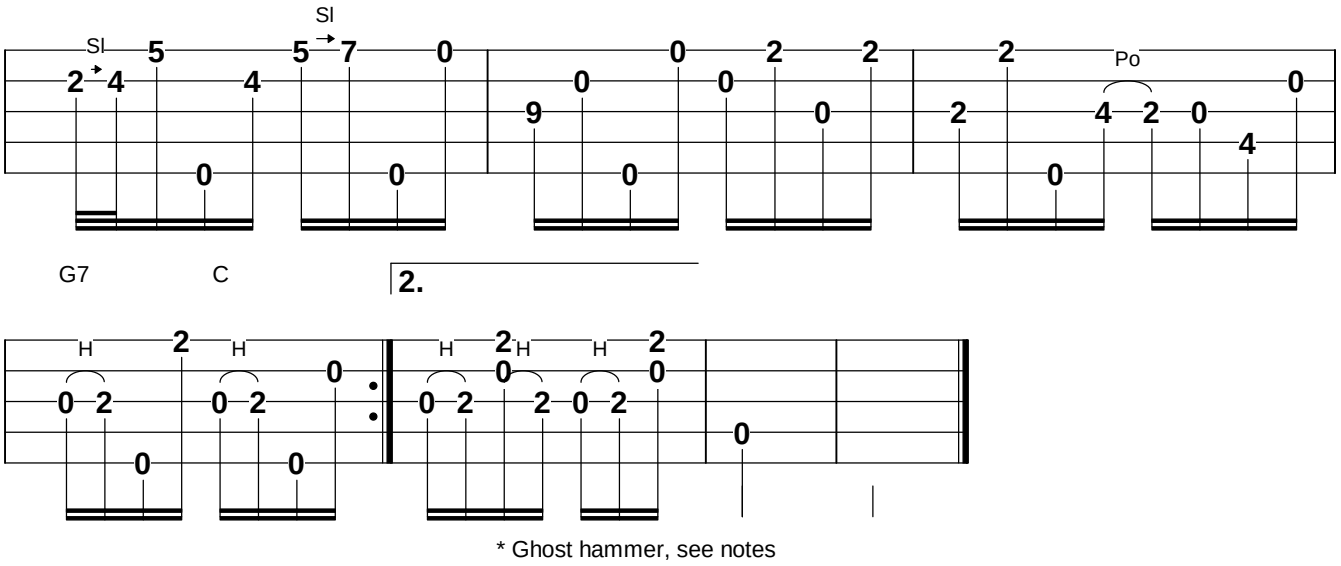

* Ghost hammer, see notes

This unusual setting for this classic key of C fiddle tune comes from fiddler John Salyer (1882-1952), from Salyersville, Magoffin County, Kentucky. Salyer was recorded in 1941 and 1942 in his home by his sons, on a disk recording machine. The Billy in the title refers to King William III, known as William of Orange, who deposed the Jacobite King James II at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. King Billy, as he was known, ruled England, Scotland and Ireland jointly with his wife Mary II, the Protestant daughter of the Catholic James II.

Unlike the more common version of this tune, there is no A minor chord in the melodic structure of this tune. At the end of both parts, Salyer plays a little shuffling move that I try to imitate with a ghost hammer, where you hammer onto the 3rd string at the 2nd fret, without picking it first with the right hand. The preceding open "ghost" note, the note in parentheses, is not actually played, it is only there so that the hammer will sound in the MIDI playback.