Eighth of January

Traditional

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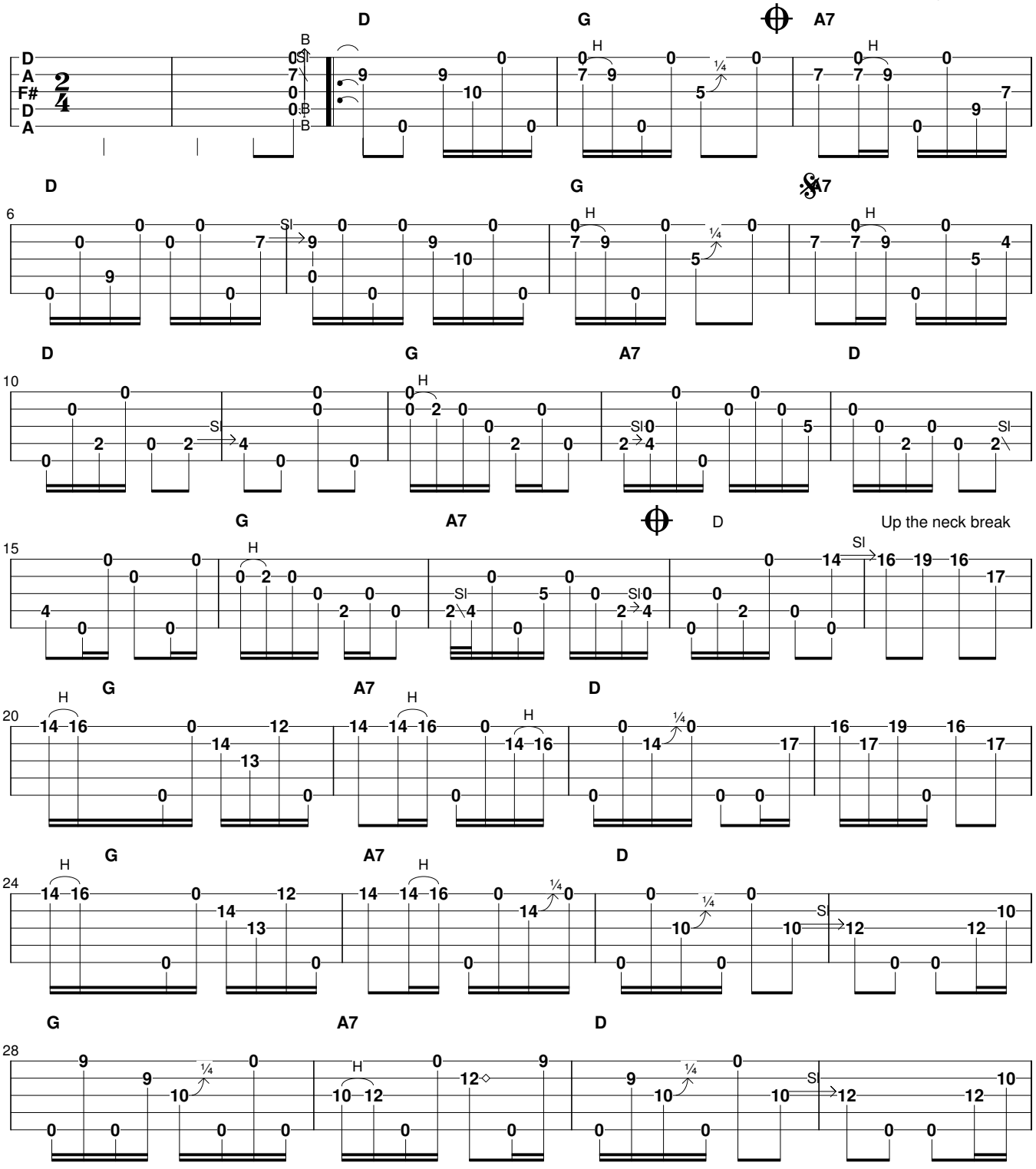

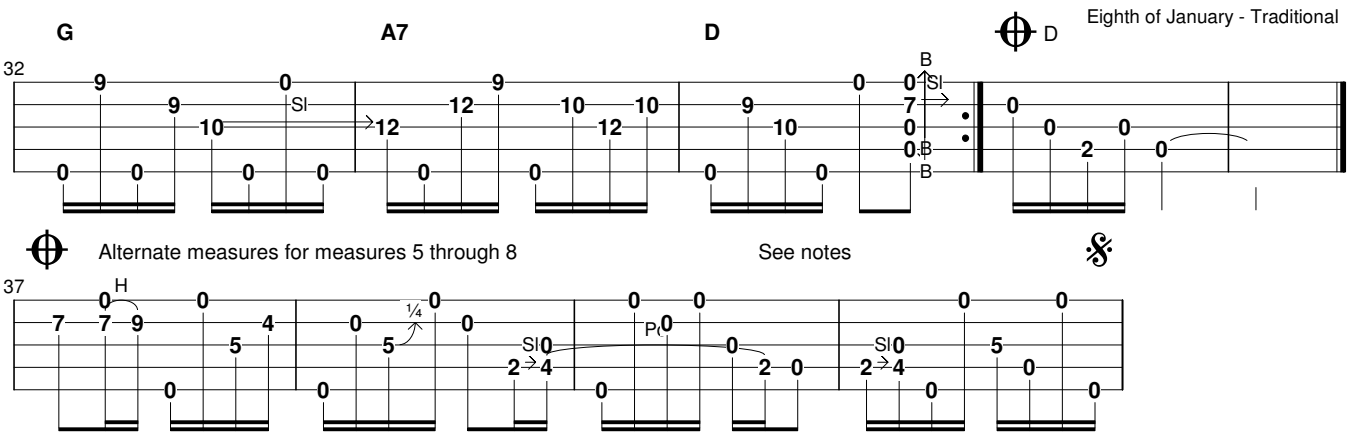

As everyone knows, the Eighth of January commemorates the victory of Andrew Jackson and his Tennessee volunteers over the British forces in the Battle of New Orleans in 1814. Folklorist and songwriter Jimmy Driftwood later wrote words to the tune, which was made into a hit by fifties rocker Johnny Horton. I can't help but draw attention to how this bit of trivia demonstrates the importance of the "singability" of southern fiddle tunes.

The original fiddle tune is in the key of D, which is where I've set this arrangement. I've tried, as with many of my settings, to make this somewhat lyrical, particularly with the stronger association pickers have with the tune's supposed origins. A couple of licks are worth noting. First, make sure to pay attention to the long, lazy slide at the beginning of the B part, connecting measures 10 and 11, and later measures 14 and 15. There should be a slight hesitation before that slide actually begins. The MIDI playback comes pretty close. There is a little syncopated figure in measure 17, at the end of the first B part. The same timing is repeated in the up the neck version, in measure 33, I've played with the MIDI dynamics, and I think the playback is fairly accurate.