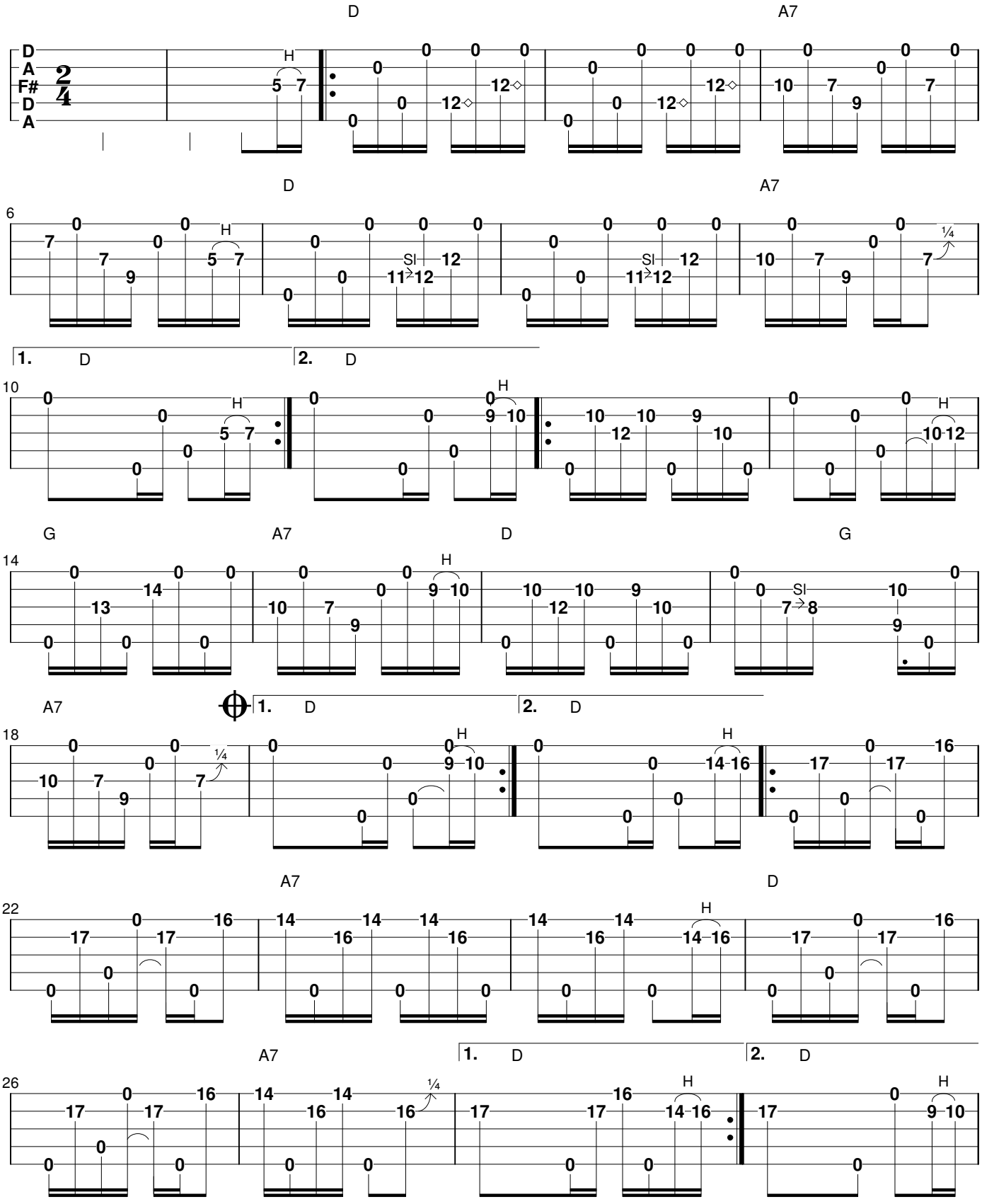
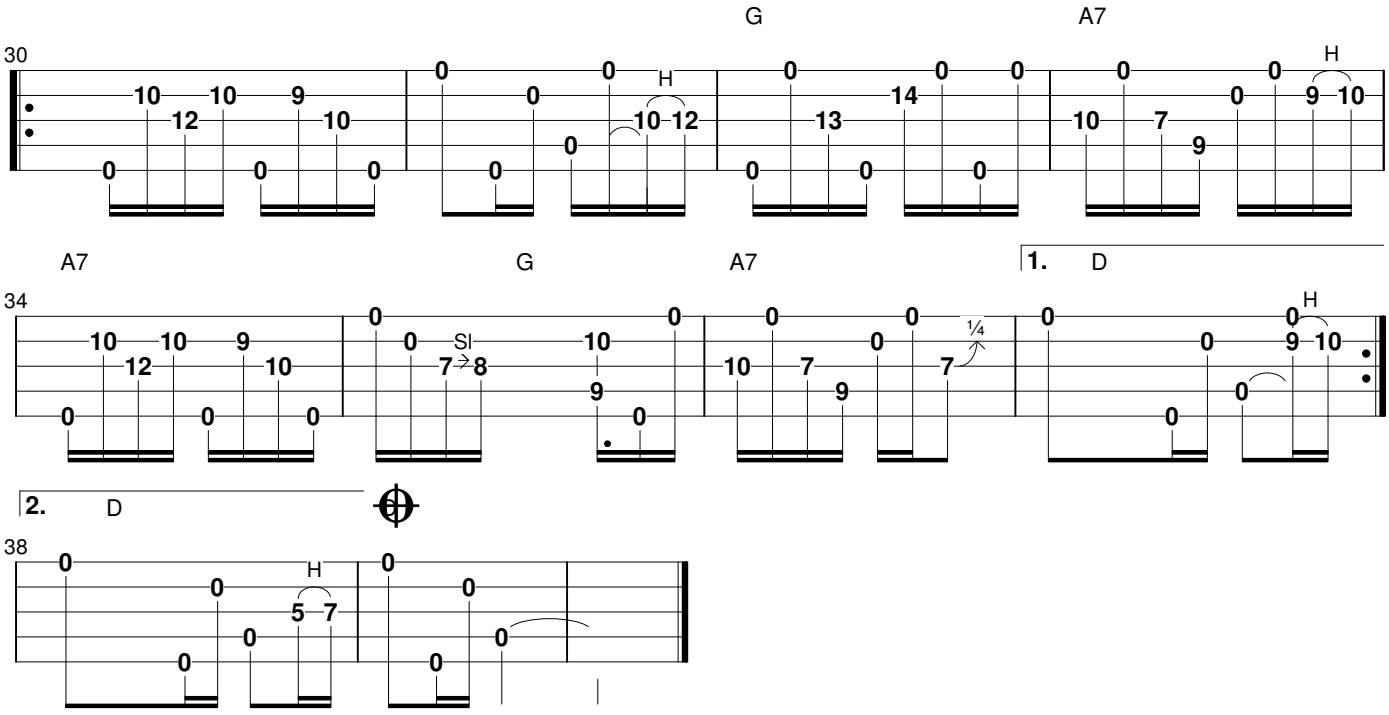
Green Willis

Traditional

Arrangement (c) Copyright 2006 by Donald J. Borchelt.
All rights reserved.





I first heard this tune on one of the Fuzzy Mountain String Band albums released by Rounder Records in the early 70s. These were the same recordings that first exposed urban old-time musicians to Alan Jabbour's Henry Reed repertiore. I finally got around working up an arrangement after following along at a midnight jam at the Old Songs festival outside of Albany last year, and realizing what a good tune it was.

Note the 12th fret harmonics in measures 3 and 4; as a variation I use slides instead in measures 7 and 8. This phrasing presents a more patterned rather than linear version of the melody, which just sounds more like a banjo, to me. It fits well with what everyone else is generally doing.

There is a slight hesitation when making the partial G chord in measure 17, and again in measure 35. It comes in just a little after the beat. Listen to the MIDI, it gets the hesitation pretty close.

Measure 21 brings back that open 4th string drone. Remember to pick that note with little less force, so that it stays in the background, but let it sustain for as long as possible.