

John Brown's March

Traditional

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The image displays a guitar tablature for the piece "John Brown's March". It is written in 4/4 time and consists of seven lines of music, each representing a measure or a group of measures. The strings are labeled D, A, G, D, G from top to bottom. The tablature includes various fret numbers (0, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12) and techniques such as slurs, bends (SI), and hammer-ons (H). Chord changes are indicated by letters above the staff: G, Em, D7, C, and G. The piece is divided into two main sections, with the first section ending at measure 10 and the second section starting at measure 11. The first section has two endings, and the second section also has two endings. The final measure of the second section ends with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

2. G

20

SI-0
2 ⇒ 5

H-0
2-0

Em G

23

H-0
1 ⇒ 2

SI-0
2 ⇒ 5

D7 1. G

26

H-0
H-0

2. G Em C

29

7

G Em

32

H-0
H-0

C G D7 1. G

35

H-0
H-0

2. G

38

0 0 0 0 0 0 14 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 12 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 17 0

Em G

41

12 0 0 12 14 12 0 0 0 0 14

0 9 9 0 0 0 9 12

0 0 0 0 0 0 12 0

1. G

44

17 16 14 9 12 0 0 12 14 12 0 0 0 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

2. G Em C

47

0 0 0 17 17 16 14 17 14 17 16 17 14

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

G Em

50

17 16 14 14 16 17 17 16 17 17 16 14 17

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0


C G D7 1. G

53

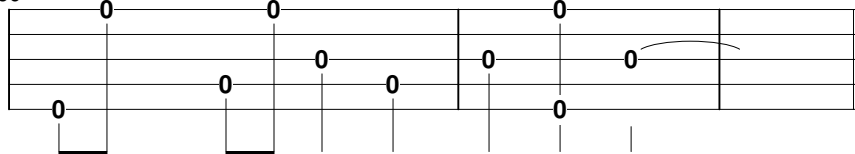
17 19 17 14 17 0 0 14 14 0 0 0 0 17

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

2. G  G

56



Doing some web browsing, I ran across an old Harper's Weekly lithograph from a University of Virginia website with the caption "Marching On!- the Fifty-Fifth Massachusetts Colored Regiment singing John Brown's March in the Streets of Charleston, February 21, 1865." The Fifty-Fifth was a sister regiment of the Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts, made famous in the movie "Glory," and had an equally distinguished record, proving to a skeptical nation, North and South, that black troops would, indeed, fight to the death for the Union cause.

John Brown's March is often played in medley with John Brown's Dream, although I can't do that myself, because I use two different tunings. I first ran across this tune in a little book called "Welling's Hartford Tunebook," published by New England fiddler Bill Welling in 1974. The tune is played by Dwight Diller, Norman Blake, and Dan Levenson, to name a few.

Remember that the ghost notes, the notes in parentheses, are not actually played. They are inserted so that the earlier notes continue ringing in the MIDI playback, in order to make the MIDI have the proper dynamic.

The guitar track includes a finger style guitar lead, which I think often sounds great with three finger style banjo. When I was in Wry Whiskey, guitarist Brian Clancey and I often did arrangements using guitar finger picking. Listen to our version of Cindy in the Pickin' the Banj'r section of the Banj'r CD.