Cousin Sally Brown

Traditional

Banjo Tuning: gDGAD, capo on 2

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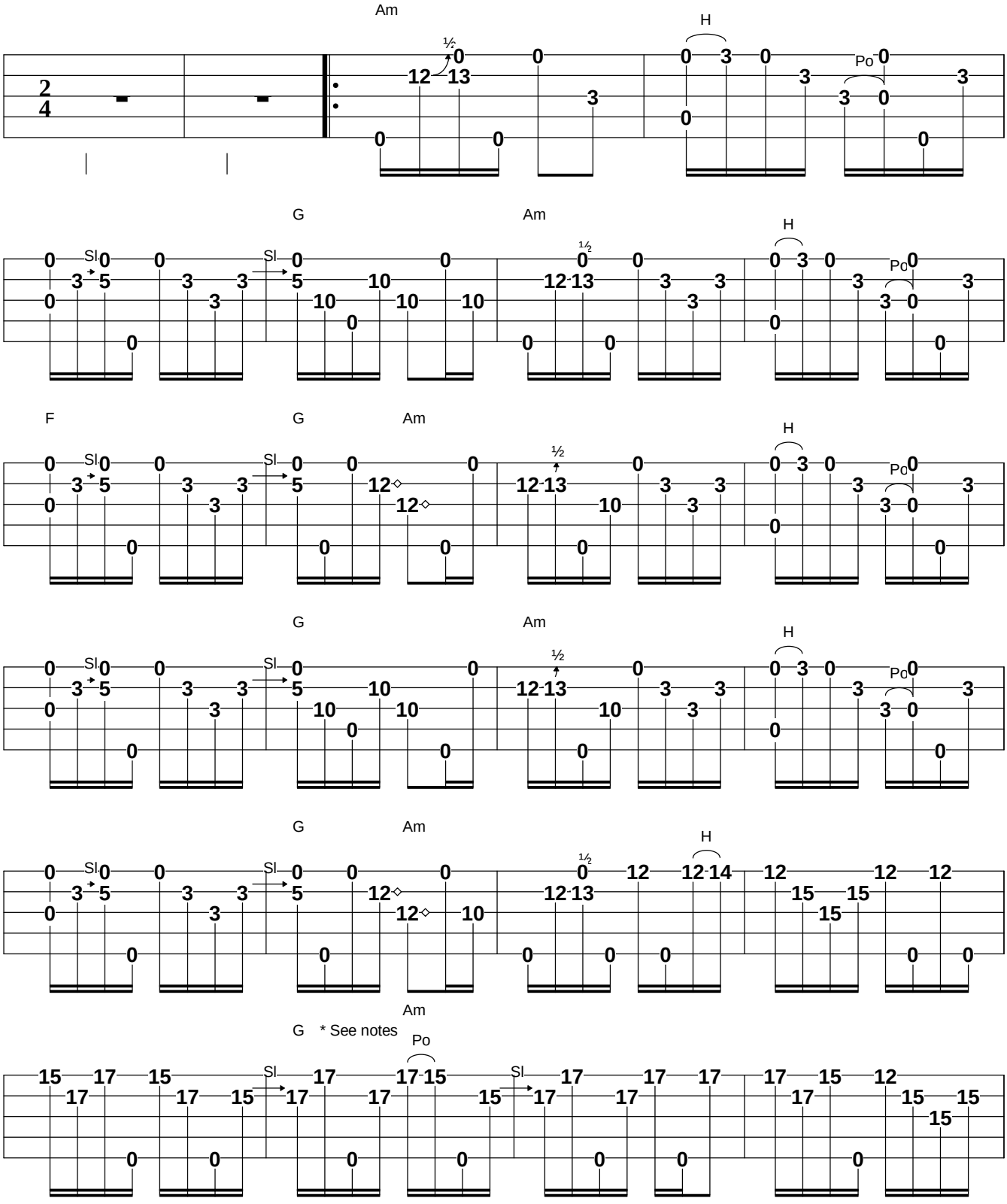

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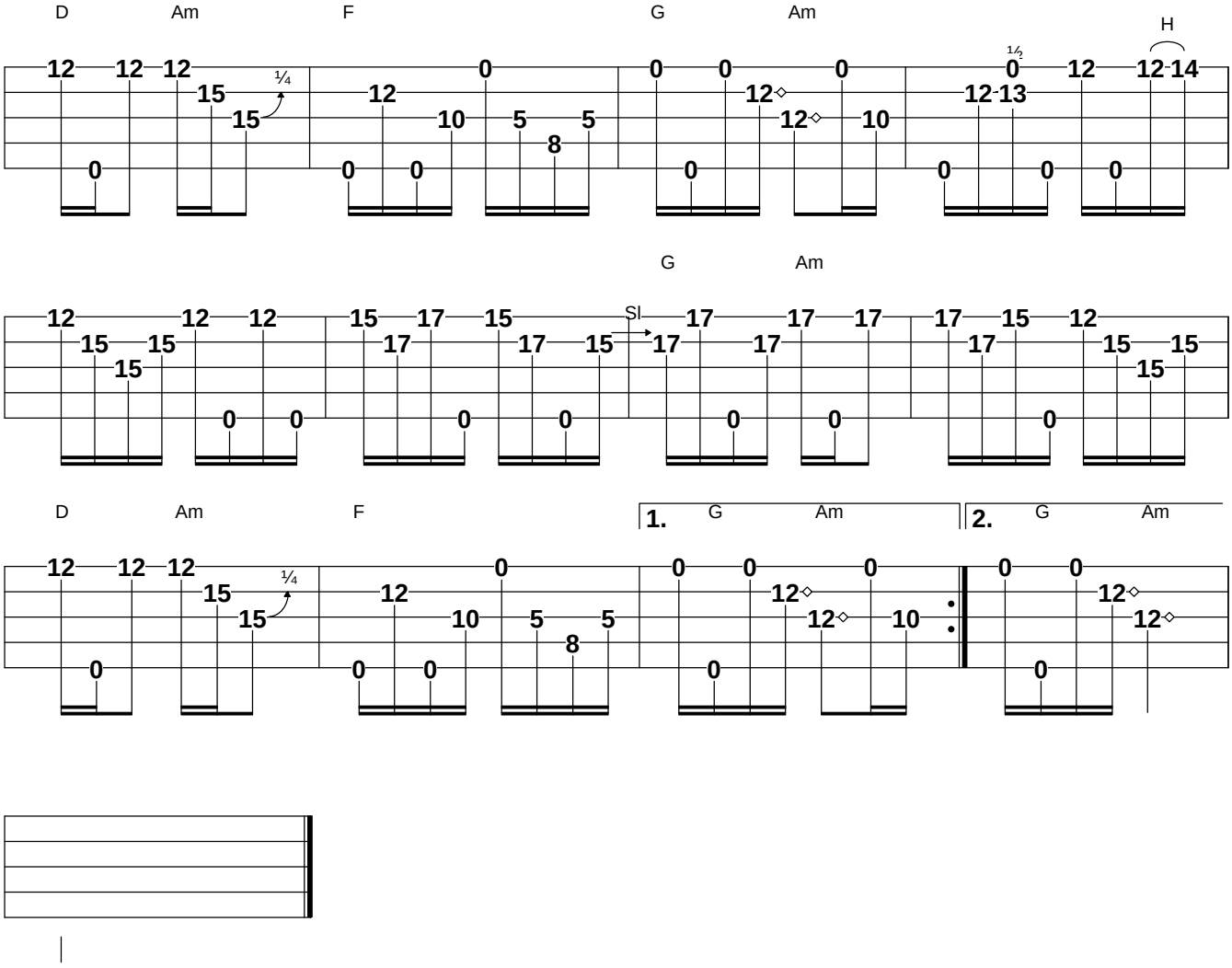

This A modal tune comes originally from a 1942 Library of Congress recording of the legendary Swannanoa, North Carolina fiddler Marcus Martin (1881-1974). On that brief recording, Martin is not rythmically consistent in how he plays the B part. The first time he plays the tune, the B part melody lasts for 18 beats (9 measures) the first time he plays it, but on the repeat, he drops a two beat phrase, making the strain a square 16 beats (8 measures). But he only does this the first time through the tune. The second and final time he plays the tune, he does not drop the extra phrase from the B part, so that both strains are a crooked 18 beats. As he segues into the tune a third time, the recording fades out, so there is no way of guessing how he normally played it. That has apparently spawned a wide variety of interpretations among today's old time fiddlers who play the tune. I have used the structure applied by fiddler Dirk Powell. Powell plays the B part the first time through with Martin's full 18 beats, but on the repeat, he drops the two beat phrase found in this tab in measure 22, so that it is a square 16 beats.

Note also the harmonics at the 12th fret at the end of each strain.