

WON'T YOU COME HOME, BILL BAILEY?

1902 by Hughie Cannon, composer from Detroit (1877 - 1912) was a pianist for many vaudeville performers. His other great hit was "He Done Me Wrong", written in 1904 for the musical Frankie and Johnny.

G

Won't you come home, Bill Bailey won't you come home?

D7

She moans the whole day long

G

I'll do the cooking, darling, I'll pay the rent, I know I've done you wrong

'member that rainy evening that I drove you out

G7

C

with nothin' but a fine tooth comb?

E7 Am

C

G

E7

I - know I'm to blame, well, ain't that a shame?

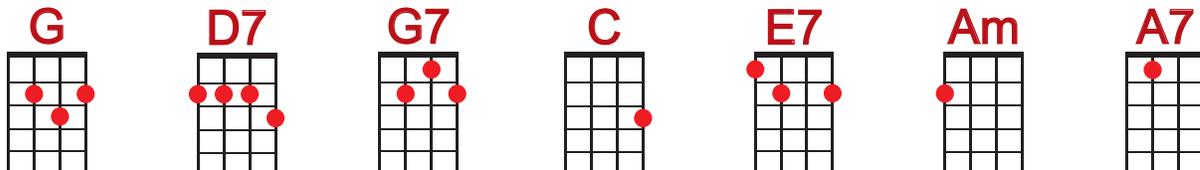
A7

D7

G

(turnaround A7 D7)

Bill Bailey, won't you please come home?



SONGS IN THE
PUBLIC DOMAIN
UKULELE CLUB OF SANTA CRUZ
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This song was an instant hit when first introduced in 1902. Often recorded, and in recent years most often associated with the great Louis Armstrong, the song has been somewhat "sanitized" as have other lasting hits from the era. A number of musical luminaries besides Armstrong kept this work vibrant and alive over the last century. Among them are Ella Fitzgerald and Della Reese, Jimmy Durante and Bobby Darin whose version was a million seller. Though the chorus stands well alone, the verses before the chorus are very unfamiliar, but add a dimension that makes the song make more sense overall. After all, with this additional information we can finally learn why Bill Bailey was gone, and why he needs to come home! Supposedly, the song is based on a "real" Bill Bailey who was a black vaudeville performer, member of the team of Bailey and Cowan. One night he was locked out of his house by a wife, who had reached her limit for his late night revelry with friends. It is said that Hughie Cannon (the composer) was one of these friends who partook of these nocturnal pleasures with him. Cannon bought a room for Bailey at a local hotel, and assured him that a night away from home would surely cause his wife to plead for his return!