

Benny Thomasson Fiddle Transcriptions
by Peter Martin

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Benny Thomasson

Fiddle Transcriptions

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Introduction

This book is a collection of fiddle tunes transcribed from the playing of Benny Thomasson. It contains Texas style breakdowns, waltzes, rags, old time tunes and other pieces. I have transcribed the notes and bowing from the original recordings as accurately as possible.

The tunes are not presented in order of difficulty. Some are more difficult than others, but none are for the beginner. This book is advised for intermediate and advanced players.

All position shifts I heard on the recordings are marked, with the marking being over the first note in the new position. Sometimes Benny would stretch a finger to a note in a higher position, but would not move his hand up to the higher position. When this is the case, I don't indicate a position change.

New sections of each tune are marked with double bar lines. All 4th fingers I heard Benny play are marked when not obvious. Sometimes fingering suggestions are indicated when Bennys fingerings are not obvious on the recording.

Basic chords are given for each part the first time that part is encountered. Repeating chord patterns are not marked in new parts.

When learning each tune, play through the music slowly and closely watch the bow directions! If you have the recording, listen many times and try to copy Bennys sound.

A number of transcriptions of Benny also appear in the books **“Texas Style Fiddle Transcriptions, Volume 1 and 2”**, by Peter Martin. For information on this and other books, see www.petimarpress.com.

I would appreciate any comments you may have on this book. Drop me a line at the address on the inside back cover. Thank you and good music to all.

Many Thanks to:

Benny, for countless hours of inspiration and listening pleasure; Starr McMullen, Bob Culver, Bruce Lites, Larry Brandon and Leah Larson for their proof reading; Brad Pinkerton, Pinkerton Graphic Design, for the drawings and the jokes; Carol for her support and love; Gary Lee Moore for fiddling fun and Benny stories; all my fiddling friends. Last, thanks to every musician I was inspired by and whom I have stolen tunes from.

About the Author

Peter Martin is a musician living in Seattle, Washington. Peter has performed and recorded with many Northwest artists. With the Skyline Drifters he appeared on the Nashville Network Bluegrass show “Fire on the Mountain”.

Peter has won or placed near the top in many regional and national instrumental competitions. In 1983, Peter placed in the top 5 at the Walnut Valley Mandolin Contest, Winfield, Kansas. In 1994, Peter was Adult Division National Fiddle Champion, held each year at Weiser Idaho.

Collecting and transcribing tunes and solos has been a hobby of his for years. At the suggestion of students and friends, Peter founded Petimar Press in 1994 to publish some of his collections.

Recordings by Benny Thomasson

These recordings are in print as of February 1997:

“The Weiser Reunion”, Voyager 309

Voyager Records, 424 35th Ave., Seattle, WA 98122,
www.voyagerrecords.com. Recorded in 1974 at a jam session at Weiser,
Idaho. Cotton Patch Rag, Apple Blossom, Sally Johnson and Cripple Creek
are transcribed from this recording. Features Jerry Thomasson on tenor
guitar. Reissued on CD. Benny at his best.

“Say Old Man, Can You Play The Fiddle”, VRCD 345

Voyager Records, 424 35th Ave., Seattle, WA 98122,
www.voyagerrecords.com. Recorded at many jam sessions in the northwest
from 1972 to 1978. 32 tunes. A great recording.

“Benny Thomasson, Volumes 1 and 2”, GRS Productions 48014 &
48015. Available from Gillian Music, Rt. 3 Box 39, Chandler, OK 74834.
Ook Pic Waltz, Wild John and Little Joe are transcribed from these
recordings.

“Mark O’Connor, Heroes”, Warner Brothers 9 45257-4. Benny
plays Sally Johnson (not the version transcribed in this book) along with
Mark, Terry Morris and Texas Shorty (Jim Chancellor).

Watch for these out of print recordings. They may be re-issued sometime:

“Country Fiddling from the Big State”, County 724. Bush In The
Shucks (misnamed “Dry and Dusty” on the recording),

“Texas Hoedown”, County 703.

Forked Deer

♩ = 208

Traditional

Transcribed from jam session tape

1 A1 D G

4 D A D

7 G A D

10 A2

13

16 B1 A

19 D

22 A D A

25 D B2

28

31 3 3

34 A3

37

40 3 A4

43

46

Detailed description: This is a musical score for guitar in the key of D major (two sharps). It consists of eight staves of music, numbered 25 to 46. The notation includes various rhythmic values (quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes), rests, and dynamic markings such as accents (v) and slurs. Chord diagrams are provided for measures 25, 34, and 40. Measure 25 features a D chord and a B2 chord. Measure 34 features an A3 chord. Measure 40 features an A4 chord. Trills are indicated by a '3' in a box over a note. The score concludes with a fermata over the final note of measure 46.

49 V 3 3rd pos. B3 V 4 2

52 V 3

55 1st pos. 3rd pos.

58 B4 V 3 V 3

61 1st pos. 3rd pos. V V V 1st pos.

64 V 4 V A5

67 V

70 V V V

Musical score for guitar, measures 73-94. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The music consists of a single melodic line with various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Chord diagrams are provided for measures 73, 82, 85, 88, and 94. Measure 73 features a trill (V) and a triplet (3). Measure 82 features a trill (V) and a fourteenth-note figure (4). Measure 85 features a trill (V) and a fourteenth-note figure (4). Measure 88 features a trill (V). Measure 94 features a trill (V) and a triplet (3). The chords are labeled as A6, B5, and B6.

97

V

3

A7

100

103

V

3

V

106

A8

109

112

V

3

Steeley's Rag

♩ = 188

by Red Steeley

The musical score for "Steeley's Rag" is presented in standard notation on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 188. The score is divided into two systems, A1 and A2, each containing eight measures. Measure numbers 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, and 22 are indicated at the start of their respective lines. The score includes various guitar-specific notations: "1st pos." and "3rd pos." for fretting positions, "V" for vibrato, and "1 1" for double naturals. Chord symbols (G, D, E, A, B) are placed above the staff. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a bracket and the number "3" in measure 16. The piece concludes with a 2/4 time signature in measure 22.

25 D 3rd pos. V A 1st pos.

28 D V 3 B1 3rd pos. V 1st pos.

31 G 3rd pos. V 1st pos. D 3rd pos. V

34 A 1st pos. V D V

37 A3 3rd pos. V 1st pos.

40 3rd pos.

43 V 1st pos. V

46 3rd pos. V 1st pos.

Bitter Creek

♩ = 196

Traditional

Transcribed from County 724

The musical score for "Bitter Creek" is presented in a hybrid format, combining standard musical notation with guitar-specific instructions. The piece is in the key of D major (one sharp) and 4/4 time, with a tempo of 196 beats per minute. The score is divided into two main sections, A1 and A2, and includes a bridge section B1. Measure numbers 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, and 22 are clearly marked. Chord diagrams for G, D, and C are provided above the staff. Performance techniques such as triplets (marked with a '3' and a bracket), slurs, and accents (marked with a 'V') are indicated throughout the piece. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and a final double bar line at the end of the piece.

25

B2

28

31

34

A3

37

40

A4

43

46

49

C1

52

55

C2

58

61

A5

64

67

70

4

3

Detailed description: This musical score is for guitar, written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of eight staves of music, numbered 49 to 70. The notation includes various rhythmic values, slurs, and vibrato marks (V). Specific techniques are highlighted with boxes: 'C1' at measure 49, 'C2' at measure 58, and 'A5' at measure 64. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' at measure 70. A four-measure rest is indicated by the number '4' at the end of measure 64. The music concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 70.

Musical score for guitar, measures 73-94. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music consists of a single melodic line with various rhythmic patterns and articulations.

Measures 73-75: Measure 73 includes a box chord **A6**. Measure 74 has a fermata over a dotted quarter note. Measure 75 has a fermata over a quarter note.

Measures 76-78: Measure 76 has a fermata over a dotted quarter note. Measure 77 has a fermata over a quarter note. Measure 78 has a fermata over a quarter note.

Measures 79-81: Measure 79 has a fermata over a dotted quarter note. Measure 80 has a fermata over a dotted quarter note. Measure 81 has a fermata over a dotted quarter note.

Measures 82-84: Measure 82 includes a box chord **B3**. Measure 83 has a fermata over a dotted quarter note. Measure 84 has a fermata over a quarter note.

Measures 85-87: Measure 85 has a fermata over a dotted quarter note. Measure 86 has a fermata over a quarter note. Measure 87 has a fermata over a quarter note.

Measures 88-90: Measure 88 includes a box chord **B4**. Measure 89 has a fermata over a dotted quarter note. Measure 90 has a fermata over a quarter note.

Measures 91-93: Measure 91 has a fermata over a dotted quarter note. Measure 92 has a fermata over a quarter note. Measure 93 has a fermata over a quarter note.

Measures 94-96: Measure 94 has a fermata over a dotted quarter note. Measure 95 has a fermata over a quarter note. Measure 96 has a fermata over a quarter note.

97

A7

100

103

106

A8

109

112

114

G D G

Jack of Diamonds

♩ = 214

Traditional

1

A1

4

4

4

Bm

4

3

E

A

4

7

D

E

A

10

A2

4

4

4

13

16

B1

A

4 0

19

D

A

4

3 0

E

3

22

A

3

3

D

E

25 A B2

28 3 4 3 3

31 3

34 4 4 3

37 4 3 3

40 4 A4

43 4 3

46 4

49 B3 3 4 0 4

52 4 V 3 V 3 3

55 V 3

58 B4 V 4 3 4 0 3 V V

61 V 3 V

64 V 3 A5 4 V

67 V 4 V V 3

70 4 V V

Detailed description: This musical score is for guitar, spanning measures 49 to 70. It is written in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The score includes various guitar techniques: triplets (indicated by a bracket and the number 3), fourths (indicated by the number 4), and vibrato (indicated by a 'V' above a note). Boxed chord diagrams are provided for measures 49 (B3), 58 (B4), and 64 (A5). The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, and rests. Measure 49 starts with a quarter rest followed by a quarter note, then a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 52 features a triplet of eighth notes followed by a quarter note. Measure 58 has a triplet of eighth notes followed by a quarter note. Measure 64 includes a triplet of eighth notes followed by a quarter note. Measure 67 has a triplet of eighth notes followed by a quarter note. Measure 70 has a triplet of eighth notes followed by a quarter note.

Cotton Patch Rag

♩ = 220

Traditional

Transcribed from Voyager 309

1 **A1** C

4 F 3 V 3 G V

7 C G

10 C V 3 F

13 G 3

16 **B1** 3rd pos. C

19 1st pos. 3rd pos. V V 1st pos.

22 V 3 4 3

Detailed description: The image shows a musical score for 'Cotton Patch Rag' in 2/4 time. The score is written on a single treble clef staff. It consists of 22 measures. Measure 1 is marked with a box 'A1' and a chord 'C'. Measure 4 has chords 'F', 'G', and 'V' above it, with triplets and slurs. Measure 7 has chords 'C' and 'G'. Measure 10 has chords 'C', 'F', and 'V'. Measure 13 has a chord 'G'. Measure 16 has a box 'B1' and '3rd pos.' above it, with a chord 'C'. Measure 19 has '1st pos.' and '3rd pos.' above it, with chords 'V' and '1st pos.'. Measure 22 has chords 'V', '3', '4', and '3' above it. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, triplets, and dynamic markings.

25 3rd pos. 1st pos.

28 3rd pos. 1st pos.

31

C1
34

37

40

43

46

49 D1

52

55

58

61

64 E1

67

70 1st pos.

2nd pos.

73

76

1st pos.

79

A2

82

85

88

91

94

97 A3

100

103

106

109

112 F1

115

118

121

124

127

130

A4

133

136

139

142

145 B2 3rd pos. 1st pos.

148 3rd pos. 1st pos.

151 3rd pos.

154 1st pos. 3rd pos.

157 1st pos. 3 3

160

Apple Blossom

♩ = 222

Traditional

Transcribed from Voyager 309

1

4

7

10

13

16

19

22

A1

D

Bm

G

A

A2

B1

V

4

3

Musical score for guitar, page 27. The score is in G major (one sharp) and consists of eight staves of music. The measures are numbered 25 through 46. The score includes various chords and techniques:

- Staff 1 (Measures 25-27):** Starts with chord **A** (measures 25-26) and chord **D** (measure 27). Measure 27 contains a 4-measure rest. Measure 28 contains chord **B2**.
- Staff 2 (Measures 28-30):** Continues the melodic line with various chordal accompaniment.
- Staff 3 (Measures 31-33):** Features a 4-measure rest in measure 31 and continues the melodic development.
- Staff 4 (Measures 34-36):** Contains chord **A3** in measure 34 and a 4-measure rest in measure 35.
- Staff 5 (Measures 37-39):** Includes a triplet in measure 37 and continues the melodic line.
- Staff 6 (Measures 40-42):** Features a 4-measure rest in measure 40 and continues the melodic line.
- Staff 7 (Measures 43-45):** Contains chord **A4** in measure 43 and includes several triplet figures in measures 44 and 45.
- Staff 8 (Measures 46-48):** Continues the melodic line with various chordal accompaniment.

49

52

55

58

61

64

67

70

B3

B4

A5

4

4

4

4

3rd pos.

3

3

0

1st pos.

73 

76 

79 

82 

85 

88 

91 

94 

121

124

127

130

B8

4

4

3

4

Sally Johnson

♩ = 220

Traditional

Transcribed from Voyager 309

The musical score for "Sally Johnson" is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 220. The piece is transcribed from Voyager 309 and is a traditional tune. The score consists of 24 measures, divided into sections A1, A2, and B1. Chords are indicated by letters G, C, D, Em, and V (representing a V-shaped ornament). Ornaments are marked with a 'V' above the note. Trills are indicated by a bracket with the number '3' above it. The score begins with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The first measure is marked with a '1'. The second measure is marked with a '4'. The third measure is marked with a '7'. The fourth measure is marked with a '10'. The fifth measure is marked with a '13'. The sixth measure is marked with a '16'. The seventh measure is marked with a '19'. The eighth measure is marked with a '22'. The score ends with a double bar line.

25

G

B3

28

31

34

C1 3rd pos.

37

40

C2

43

46

49 A3

52

55 0 2

58 A4

61

64 D1 1st pos.

67 0 4

70 4

Detailed description: This is a musical score for guitar, consisting of eight staves of music in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score is numbered 49 through 70. Measure 49 features a triplet of eighth notes and a box labeled 'A3'. Measure 52 has a triplet of eighth notes and a 'V' marking. Measure 55 includes a whole note with a '0 2' fingering and a 'V' marking. Measure 58 has a triplet of eighth notes and a box labeled 'A4'. Measure 61 contains a triplet of eighth notes with a flat and a 'V' marking. Measure 64 features a 'V' marking, a 'D1' box, and '1st pos.' text. Measure 67 has a triplet of eighth notes, a '0' fingering, and a '4' fingering. Measure 70 has a '4' fingering and a 'V' marking. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and articulation marks.

73 D2

76

79

82 A5

85

88 A6

91

94

97 A7

100

103

106 A8 2nd pos.

109 1st pos. 0

112 B3

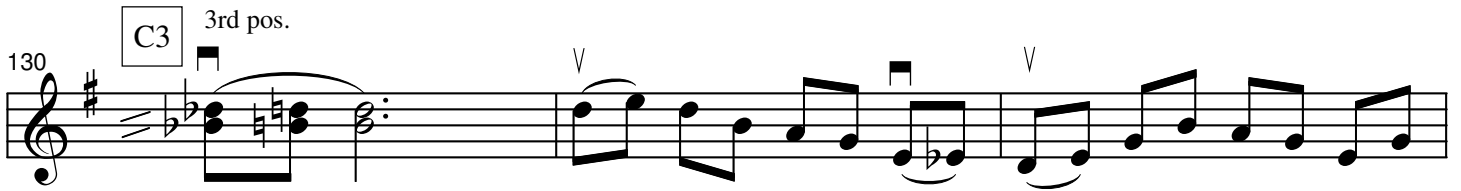
115

118

121 

124 

127 

130 

133 

136 

139 

142 

Musical score for guitar, measures 145-160. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. Measure 145 is marked with a box containing 'A9'. Measure 148 includes a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 151 also features a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 154 is marked with a box containing 'A10' and includes two triplet markings. Measure 157 includes a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 160 ends with a double bar line. The notation includes various articulation marks such as accents (v) and slurs.