

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

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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, slurs, and accents. Chord diagrams are provided for measures 25, 34, and 40. Measure 25 has a 'D' chord diagram above the staff. Measure 34 has an 'A3' chord diagram above the staff. Measure 40 has an 'A4' chord diagram above the staff. There are also boxed '3' symbols above the staff in measures 31 and 40, indicating triplets. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, and some measures contain chords. The piece concludes with a fermata over the final note in 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

73 A6

76

79

82 B5

85

88 B6

91

94

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 17. The piece concludes with a 2/4 time signature in measure 24.

Musical score for guitar, measures 25-46. 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 chords and positions indicated.

- Measure 25: Chord D, 3rd pos. (D major triad on the 3rd fret).
- Measure 28: Chord D, 3rd pos. (D major triad on the 3rd fret); Chord B1, 3rd pos. (B major triad on the 3rd fret).
- Measure 31: Chord G, 3rd pos. (G major triad on the 3rd fret); Chord A, 1st pos. (A major triad on the 1st fret); Chord D, 3rd pos. (D major triad on the 3rd fret).
- Measure 34: Chord A, 1st pos. (A major triad on the 1st fret); Chord D, 3rd pos. (D major triad on the 3rd fret).
- Measure 37: Chord A3, 3rd pos. (A major triad on the 3rd fret); Chord A, 1st pos. (A major triad on the 1st fret).
- Measure 40: Chord A, 3rd pos. (A major triad on the 3rd fret).
- Measure 43: Chord A, 1st pos. (A major triad on the 1st fret).
- Measure 46: Chord A, 3rd pos. (A major triad on the 3rd fret); Chord A, 1st pos. (A major triad on the 1st fret).

The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents (V), and a triplet in measure 28. The time signature changes from 4/4 to 2/4 in measure 40.

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 sections A1, A2, and B1. Section A1 (measures 1-6) begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp. It features a sequence of notes with guitar-specific markings: a box labeled 'A1' above measure 2, a 'G' chord above measure 3, a '4' above measure 4, a 'C' chord above measure 5, and a 'V' (bend) above measure 6. Section A2 (measures 7-9) continues the melody with a 'V' above measure 7, a 'C' chord above measure 8, a '3' (triple) above measure 8, a 'D' chord above measure 9, and a 'G' chord above measure 9. Section B1 (measures 10-22) includes a box labeled 'A2' above measure 10, a '4' above measure 11, a 'V' above measure 13, a 'V' above measure 16, a '3' (triple) above measure 16, a 'V' above measure 17, a '3' (triple) above measure 18, a box labeled 'B1' above measure 18, a '4' above measure 19, a 'V' above measure 20, a 'V' above measure 22, a '3' (triple) above measure 22, a '4' above measure 22, and a '0' (open string) above measure 22. The notation includes various rhythmic values, accidentals, and articulation marks such as slurs and accents.

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 is a musical score for guitar, consisting of eight staves of music. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score includes various musical notations such as eighth notes, quarter notes, and slurs. Vibrato marks (V) are placed above several notes. Boxed labels 'C1', 'C2', and 'A5' are positioned above specific measures. Measure 64 features a '4' above the final note, and measure 70 features a '3' above a triplet of notes. The music concludes with a double bar line at the end of the eighth staff.

73 A6

76

79 B3

82

85

88 B4

91

94

97 A7

100

103

106 A8

109

112

114 G D G

Jack of Diamonds

♩ = 214

Traditional

1 A1

4 Bm E A

7 D E A

10 A2

13

16 B1

19 D A E

22 A D E

25

A

B2

28

31

A3

34

37

40

A4

43

46

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

61 V 3 V

64 V V 3 A5 4

67 V 4 V V 3

70 V 4 V

73

76

79

82

85

88

91

94

A6

B5

B6

97

100

103

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 1st pos.

22 V 3 4 3

Detailed description: The image shows a musical score for 'Cotton Patch Rag' in treble clef, common time. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 220. The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains measures 1 through 16. Measure 1 is marked with a box 'A1' and a 'C' chord. Measures 4, 7, 10, and 13 contain triplets and are marked with 'V' (accents) and '3'. Measure 16 is marked with a box 'B1' and '3rd pos.'. The second system contains measures 19 through 22. Measures 19 and 22 contain triplets and are marked with 'V' and '1st pos.'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, beams, and slurs.

25 3rd pos. 1st pos.

28 3rd pos. 1st pos. 3 4 3

31 V

C1 34 4 4 4 4

37 V

40 4 4

43 4 4

46 V

49 D1

52

55

58

61

64 E1

67

70 1st pos.

2nd pos.

73

76

79

82

A2

85

88

91

94

97

A3

100

103

106

109

112

F1

115

118

Detailed description: This is a musical score for guitar, consisting of eight staves of music. The music is written in treble clef. Measure 97 features a box labeled 'A3' above a chord. Measure 100 has a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 103 has a sharp sign on the final note. Measure 106 has a sharp sign on the first note. Measure 109 has three triplet markings over eighth notes. Measure 112 has a box labeled 'F1' above a chord. Measure 115 has a sharp sign on the second note. Measure 118 has a sharp sign on the second note. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

121

Musical staff 121: Treble clef, starting with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass line consists of eighth notes G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. A fermata is placed over the final G4 note.

124

Musical staff 124: Treble clef, starting with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass line consists of eighth notes G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. A fermata is placed over the final G4 note.

127

Musical staff 127: Treble clef, starting with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass line consists of eighth notes G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. A fermata is placed over the final G4 note.

A4

130

Musical staff 130: Treble clef, starting with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass line consists of eighth notes G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. A fermata is placed over the final G4 note.

133

Musical staff 133: Treble clef, starting with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass line consists of eighth notes G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. A fermata is placed over the final G4 note.

136

Musical staff 136: Treble clef, starting with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass line consists of eighth notes G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. A fermata is placed over the final G4 note.

139

Musical staff 139: Treble clef, starting with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass line consists of eighth notes G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. A fermata is placed over the final G4 note.

142

Musical staff 142: Treble clef, starting with a quarter rest, followed by eighth notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass line consists of eighth notes G2, F2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1. A fermata is placed over the final G4 note.

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 consists of eight staves of music in G major (one sharp). The key signature is G major. The score includes various chords and techniques:

- Staff 1 (Measures 25-27):** Chord A (G-B-D), chord D (D-F-A), and chord B2 (B-D-F). Includes a 4-measure rest and vibrato (V) markings.
- Staff 2 (Measures 28-30):** Continuation of the melodic line with vibrato (V) markings.
- Staff 3 (Measures 31-33):** Continuation of the melodic line with vibrato (V) markings.
- Staff 4 (Measures 34-36):** Chord A3 (G-B-D), includes a 4-measure rest.
- Staff 5 (Measures 37-39):** Includes a triplet (3) and vibrato (V) markings.
- Staff 6 (Measures 40-42):** Continuation of the melodic line with vibrato (V) markings and a 4-measure rest.
- Staff 7 (Measures 43-45):** Chord A4 (G-B-D), includes multiple triplet (3) markings and vibrato (V) markings.
- Staff 8 (Measures 46-48):** Continuation of the melodic line with vibrato (V) markings.

49

52

55

58

61

64

67

70

B3

B4

A5

4

4

4

4

4

4

3rd pos.

3

3

1st pos.

0

3

73 

76 

79 

82 

85 

88 

91 

94 

97 

100 

103 

106 

109 

112 

115 

118 

121

124

127

130

B8

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 above the staff: G, C, Em, D, and A. Ornaments (V) are placed above specific notes. Trills (3) and a four-note group (4) are also indicated. The score begins with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The first measure is marked with a '1'. The second measure has a '7' above it. The fourth measure is marked with a '4'. The seventh measure has a '7' above it. The tenth measure is marked with a '10'. The thirteenth measure has a '13' above it. The sixteenth measure is marked with a '16'. The nineteenth measure has a '19' above it. The twenty-second 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

58

A4

61

64

D1 1st pos.

67

70

Detailed description: This page of a guitar score contains ten staves of music, numbered 49 to 70. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The music is written in a single melodic line on a treble clef staff. It features various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Technical markings include fingerings (0, 2, 3, 4), triplets, and vibrato (V). Chord diagrams for A3, A4, and D1 (1st position) are provided. The score concludes with a double bar line at measure 70.

73 D2

76

79

82 A5

85

88 A6

91

94

97 **A7**

100

103 **A8**

106 2nd pos.

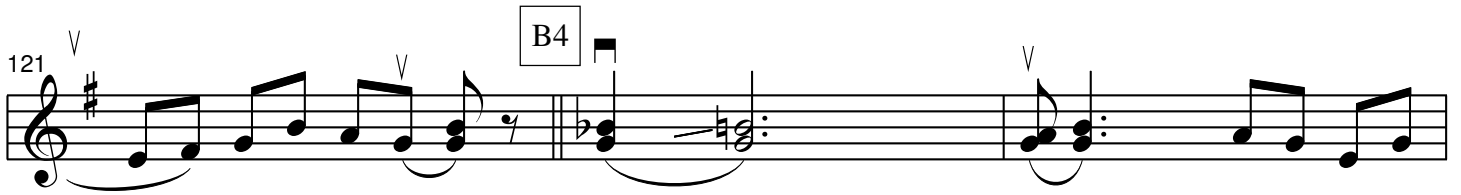
109 1st pos. 0

112 **B3**

115


118

Detailed description: This musical score is for guitar, spanning measures 97 to 118. It is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score includes various guitar-specific notations such as fret numbers (4, 3, 2nd pos., 1st pos., 0), vibrato marks (V), and slurs. Chord boxes for A7, A8, and B3 are present. Measure 97 starts with a vibrato on the first note and a fret number of 4. Measure 103 features several triplets. Measure 106 includes a '2nd pos.' instruction. Measure 109 includes '1st pos.' and '0' instructions. Measure 112 features a B3 chord box. Measure 115 has a triplet. Measure 118 has a vibrato on the final note.

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#). Measure 145 is marked with a box containing 'A9'. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents (V), and triplets (3). The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 160.