

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

4

7

10

13

16

19

22

A1 D G

D A D

G A D

A2

B1 A

D

A D A

25 **D** **B2**

28

31 **A3**

37

40 **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 such as eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. There are several triplets indicated by a '3' in a box over a group of notes. Dynamic markings include accents (v) and slurs. Chord diagrams are provided for measures 25, 34, and 40, labeled D, B2, A3, and A4 respectively. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end 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 features various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Chord diagrams are provided for measures 73, 82, 85, 88, and 94. Measure 73 includes a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 82 includes a triplet of eighth notes and a four-measure rest. Measure 85 includes a four-measure rest. Measure 88 includes a four-measure rest. Measure 94 includes a triplet of eighth notes. The score is divided into measures 73-75, 76-78, 79-81, 82-84, 85-87, 88-90, 91-93, and 94.

73 A6

76

79

82 B5

85 B6

88

91

94

97

V

3

A7

100

V

103

V

3

A8

106

109

V

V

112

V

3

Detailed description: This musical score is for guitar, spanning measures 97 to 112. It is written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. Measure 97 includes a triplet of eighth notes and a box labeled 'A7'. Measure 103 features another triplet and a fermata over a pair of notes. Measure 106 has a box labeled 'A8'. Measure 109 contains two fermatas over individual notes. Measure 112 concludes with a triplet of eighth notes. The score is punctuated by several 'V' symbols, likely indicating vibrato or breath marks. The piece ends with a double bar line at the end of measure 112.

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 notation includes various rhythmic values, slurs, and accents. Chord diagrams are placed above the staff, and specific fretting instructions such as "1st pos.", "3rd pos.", and "1 1" are provided. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of 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.

49

52

55

58

61

64

67

70

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 tablature (A1, G, C) and fingering (4) above. Section A2 (measures 10-15) continues the melodic line with similar notation and includes a triplet of eighth notes. Section B1 (measures 16-22) concludes the piece with a final triplet and a measure containing the tablature "4 0". The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings (V).

25

B2

28

31

34

A3

37

40

A4

43

46

49 C1

52

55

58 C2

61

64 A5

67

70

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. A box labeled 'C1' is positioned above the first staff, and 'C2' is above the fourth staff. A box labeled 'A5' is above the sixth staff. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' and a bracket in the eighth staff. A '4' is written above the final note of the sixth staff. 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

Musical score for guitar, measures 73-94. The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The music features various chords and techniques:

- Measure 73: Chord A6, triplets, and a 4th finger note.
- Measure 76: Chord V, triplets, and a 4th finger note.
- Measure 79: Chord V, triplets, and a 4th finger note.
- Measure 82: Chord B5, triplets, and a 4th finger note.
- Measure 85: Chord V, triplets, and a 4th finger note.
- Measure 88: Chord B6, triplets, and a 4th finger note.
- Measure 91: Chord V, triplets, and a 4th finger note.
- Measure 94: Chord V, triplets, and a 4th finger note.

Musical score for three staves in G major (one sharp).
Staff 1 (measures 97-100):
- Measure 97: Treble clef, G4 quarter, A4 quarter, B4 quarter, C5 quarter, D5 quarter, E5 quarter, F#5 quarter, G5 quarter.
- Measure 98: Treble clef, G4 quarter, A4 quarter, B4 quarter, C5 quarter, D5 quarter, E5 quarter, F#5 quarter, G5 quarter.
- Measure 99: Treble clef, G4 quarter, A4 quarter, B4 quarter, C5 quarter, D5 quarter, E5 quarter, F#5 quarter, G5 quarter.
- Measure 100: Treble clef, G4 quarter, A4 quarter, B4 quarter, C5 quarter, D5 quarter, E5 quarter, F#5 quarter, G5 quarter.
Staff 2 (measures 100-102):
- Measure 100: Treble clef, G4 quarter, A4 quarter, B4 quarter, C5 quarter, D5 quarter, E5 quarter, F#5 quarter, G5 quarter.
- Measure 101: Treble clef, G4 quarter, A4 quarter, B4 quarter, C5 quarter, D5 quarter, E5 quarter, F#5 quarter, G5 quarter.
- Measure 102: Treble clef, G4 quarter, A4 quarter, B4 quarter, C5 quarter, D5 quarter, E5 quarter, F#5 quarter, G5 quarter.
Staff 3 (measures 103):
- Measure 103: Treble clef, G4 quarter, A4 quarter, B4 quarter, C5 quarter, D5 quarter, E5 quarter, F#5 quarter, G5 quarter.
Chord symbols: A7 (boxed) above measure 99.
Fingering: '3' above measure 99, '4' above measure 100.
Articulation: Accents (V) above measures 97, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103. Slurs under measures 99, 100, 101, 102, 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 2/4 time. The score is written on a single treble clef staff. It begins with a tempo marking of quarter note = 220. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score is divided into two sections, A1 and B1. Section A1 consists of measures 1 through 15. Section B1 consists of measures 16 through 22. The score includes various musical notations such as chords (C, F, G), triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings (V). Measure numbers 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, and 22 are indicated at the start of their respective lines. Boxed labels 'A1' and 'B1' are placed above the staff to denote the sections. Specific fingering or position instructions like '1st pos.', '3rd pos.', and '3rd pos.' are also present.

25

3rd pos. 1st pos.

28

3rd pos. 1st pos.

31

V

C1

34

4

37

V

40

4

43

4

46

V

49 D1

52

55

58

61

64 2nd pos. 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

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 109 has three triplet markings over eighth notes. Measure 112 has a box labeled 'F1' above a chord. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

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 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 major), D (G major), and B2 (G major). Techniques include vibrato (V) and a 4-measure phrase.
- Staff 2 (Measures 28-30):** Continuation of the melodic line with vibrato (V) and a 4-measure phrase.
- Staff 3 (Measures 31-33):** Continuation of the melodic line with vibrato (V) and a 4-measure phrase.
- Staff 4 (Measures 34-36):** Chord A3 (G major). Techniques include a 4-measure phrase and a 3-measure phrase.
- Staff 5 (Measures 37-39):** Continuation of the melodic line with vibrato (V) and a 3-measure phrase.
- Staff 6 (Measures 40-42):** Continuation of the melodic line with vibrato (V) and 4-measure phrases.
- Staff 7 (Measures 43-45):** Chord A4 (G major). Techniques include vibrato (V) and 3-measure phrases.
- Staff 8 (Measures 46-48):** Continuation of the melodic line with vibrato (V).

49

52

55

58

61

64

67

70

B3

B4

A5

1st pos.

3rd pos.

V

4

3

0

73 

76 

79 

82 

85 

88 

91 

94 

97 A7

100

103

106 A8

109

112

115 B7

118

Detailed description: This musical score is for guitar, written in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It spans measures 97 to 118. Measure 97 begins with a box chord labeled 'A7'. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Techniques such as vibrato (marked with a 'v' and a curved line) and bends (marked with a '4' and a curved line) are indicated. Measure 106 features a box chord labeled 'A8'. Measure 115 features a box chord labeled 'B7'. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 118.

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 score consists of eight staves of music, numbered 1 through 22. The music is a single melodic line with various ornaments (V) and triplets (3). Chords are indicated by letters above the staff: G, C, Em, D, and A1/A2. The score is divided into sections A1, A2, and B1. Section A1 starts at measure 1 and ends at measure 10. Section A2 starts at measure 10 and ends at measure 16. Section B1 starts at measure 16 and ends at measure 22. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some measures containing triplets and ornaments. The chords are G, C, Em, D, and A1/A2. The score is transcribed from Voyager 309.

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 3 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' above it and a '2' below it, followed by a 'V' marking. Measure 58 has a triplet of eighth notes and a box labeled 'A4'. Measure 61 contains a triplet of eighth notes and a 'V' marking. Measure 64 features a 'V' marking, a 'D1' box, and the text '1st pos.' below it. Measure 67 has a triplet of eighth notes, a '0' above a note, and a '4' above a note. Measure 70 has a '4' above a note and a 'V' marking. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

73 D2

76

79

82 A5

85

88 A6

91

94

97 A7

100

103 A8

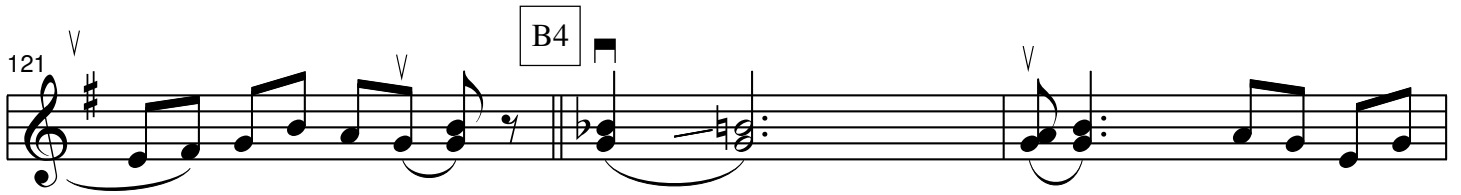
106 2nd pos.

109 1st pos. 0

112 B3

115

118

121 

124 

127 

130 

133 

136 

139 

142 

145

A9

148

151

A10

154

157

160

Detailed description: This musical score is for guitar, spanning measures 145 to 160. It is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score consists of six staves. Measure 145 starts with a treble clef, a sharp sign, and a box labeled 'A9'. The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes A4-B4, and a quarter note C5. Measure 148 features a triplet of eighth notes (G4-A4-B4) and a quarter note C5. Measure 151 has a triplet of eighth notes (G4-A4-B4) and a quarter note C5. Measure 154 includes a box labeled 'A10' and a triplet of eighth notes (G4-A4-B4). Measure 157 has a triplet of eighth notes (G4-A4-B4) and a quarter note C5. Measure 160 ends with a double bar line and a final chord consisting of a bass clef, a sharp sign, and a whole note G3.