

Benny Thomasson Fiddle Transcriptions
by Peter Martin

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Benny Thomasson

Fiddle Transcriptions

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	iii
About the Author.....	iv
Recordings by Benny Thomasson.....	v

The Tunes

Apple Blossom.....	26
Bitter Creek.....	9
Bonaparte's Retreat.....	39
Bonnie Kate's Reel.....	71
Bush In The Shucks (Dry and Dusty).....	79
Cotton Patch Rag.....	19
Cripple Creek.....	85
Don't Let The Deal Go Down.....	50
Forked Deer.....	1
Forty Years Ago Waltz.....	44
Jack of Diamonds.....	14
Little Joe.....	74
Morpeth's Hornpipe.....	68
Ook Pic Waltz.....	58
Sally Johnson.....	32
Steeley's Rag.....	6
Wild John.....	63

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). The score consists of eight staves of music, numbered 25 through 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 bracket. Dynamic markings include accents (v) and slurs. Chord diagrams are provided for measures 25, 34, and 40, labeled D, B2, A3, and A4 respectively. Measure 25 shows a D chord with a B2 extension. Measure 34 shows an A3 chord. Measure 40 shows an A4 chord. The music concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 46.

49 3rd pos. B3

52

55 1st pos. 3rd pos.

58 B4

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

64 4 A5

67

70

73 A6

76

79

82 B5

85

88 B6

91

94

Detailed description: This is a musical score for guitar, consisting of eight staves of music. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and accents. Chord diagrams are provided for measures 73, 82, and 88. Measure 73 features a triplet of eighth notes and a chord diagram for A6. Measure 82 features a chord diagram for B5. Measure 88 features a chord diagram for B6. The music is written in a single melodic line on a treble clef staff.

97

V 3 A7

100

103

106

A8

109

112

V 3

Steeley's Rag

♩ = 188

by Red Steeley

The musical score for "Steeley's Rag" is presented in a single system with eight staves of music. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 2/4. The score includes guitar-specific notation such as fret numbers (1st pos., 3rd pos.), vibrato marks (V), and dynamic markings (f). Two sections are highlighted with boxed labels: A1 and A2. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the eighth staff.

1st pos. A1 D 3rd pos. 1st pos. 1 1

4 G V V D

7 3rd pos. 1st pos. E V V V V

10 V A V D 3rd pos. V

13 V 1st pos. G V D

16 V G G#° D B 3

19 E A D A2 3rd pos. V

22 1st pos. G 3rd pos. V 1st pos.

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 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 melodic line with various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Chord diagrams for G, D, and C are placed above the staff. Section A2 (measures 10-15) continues the melodic development with similar rhythmic patterns and includes a four-measure rest. Section B1 (measures 16-22) introduces more complex rhythmic figures, including triplets and sixteenth-note runs, with corresponding chord diagrams for G, D, and C. The score concludes with a final melodic phrase in measure 22. The page number 9 is centered at the bottom.

25

28

31

34

37

40

43

46

B2

A3

A4

49 C1

52

55

58 C2

61

64 A5

67

70

The musical score consists of eight staves of music in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation includes various rhythmic values, slurs, and vibrato marks (V). Measure 49 contains a circled 'C1'. Measure 58 contains a circled 'C2'. Measure 64 contains a circled 'A5'. Measure 70 features a triplet of eighth notes marked with a '3' and a 'V' above it. The piece concludes with a final double bar line at the end of measure 70.

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

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

22

A

3

3

D

E

25

A

B2

28

31

A3

34

37

40

A4

43

46

49 B3 $\overset{4}{\underbrace{\quad}_3}$ $\overset{0}{\underbrace{\quad}_3}$ 4

52 4 V $\overset{3}{\underbrace{\quad}_3}$ V $\overset{3}{\underbrace{\quad}_3}$ $\overset{3}{\underbrace{\quad}_3}$

55 V $\overset{3}{\underbrace{\quad}_3}$

58 B4 V 4 $\overset{3}{\underbrace{\quad}_3}$ V $\overset{4}{\underbrace{\quad}_3}$ $\overset{0}{\underbrace{\quad}_3}$ V

61 V $\overset{3}{\underbrace{\quad}_3}$ V

64 V $\overset{3}{\underbrace{\quad}_3}$ A5 V 4

67 V 4 V V $\overset{3}{\underbrace{\quad}_3}$

70 V 4 V

73 A6

76

79

82 B5

85

88 B6

91

94

Detailed description: This is a musical score for guitar in the key of A major. It consists of eight staves of music, numbered 73 to 94. The notation includes various rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Key features include:

- Measures 73-74: A triplet of eighth notes on the G string, followed by a quarter note on the A string.
- Measures 75-76: A triplet of eighth notes on the G string, followed by a quarter note on the A string.
- Measures 77-78: A quarter note on the G string, followed by a quarter note on the A string.
- Measures 79-80: A quarter note on the G string, followed by a quarter note on the A string.
- Measures 81-82: A quarter note on the G string, followed by a quarter note on the A string.
- Measures 83-84: A quarter note on the G string, followed by a quarter note on the A string.
- Measures 85-86: A quarter note on the G string, followed by a quarter note on the A string.
- Measures 87-88: A quarter note on the G string, followed by a quarter note on the A string.
- Measures 89-90: A quarter note on the G string, followed by a quarter note on the A string.
- Measures 91-92: A quarter note on the G string, followed by a quarter note on the A string.
- Measures 93-94: A quarter note on the G string, followed by a quarter note on the A string.

 Chord labels A6, B5, and B6 are placed in boxes above the staff at measures 73, 82, and 88 respectively. The score also includes various musical notations such as triplets, fourths, and slurs.

97

100

103

A7

3

4

3

4

V

V

V

V

V

V

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 like 'V' (accents). Measure numbers 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, and 22 are indicated at the start of their respective lines. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and bar lines.

25 3rd pos. 1st pos.

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

31 V

C1 34 4 4 b 4 4

37 V V

40 4 4

43 b 4 4

46 V

49 D1

52

55

58

61

64 E1 2nd pos.

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 and includes various rhythmic patterns, accidentals, and performance markings. Measure 97 features a box labeled 'A3' above a chord. Measures 100, 109, and 112 contain triplets, indicated by a '3' in a box above the notes. Measures 106, 112, and 115 have 'V' markings above notes, likely indicating vibrato. Measure 112 also has a box labeled 'F1' above a chord. The score includes a variety of note values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests.

121

124

127

A4

130

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 music includes various chords and techniques:

- Staff 1 (Measures 25-27):** Starts with chord **A**. Includes a grace note and a 4-measure phrase. Ends with chord **B2**.
- Staff 2 (Measures 28-30):** Continues the melodic line with various chord voicings.
- Staff 3 (Measures 31-33):** Features a 4-measure phrase and a grace note.
- Staff 4 (Measures 34-36):** Includes chord **A3** and a 4-measure phrase.
- Staff 5 (Measures 37-39):** Contains a triplet and a 3-measure phrase.
- Staff 6 (Measures 40-42):** Features a 4-measure phrase and a 4-measure phrase.
- Staff 7 (Measures 43-45):** Includes chord **A4** and several triplet figures.
- Staff 8 (Measures 46-48):** Continues the melodic line with various chord voicings.

49

52

55

58

61

64

67

70

B3

B4

A5

4

3rd pos.

1st pos.

0

3

3

Detailed description: This is a musical score for guitar, consisting of eight staves of music. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score is numbered 49 through 70. Measure 49 features a sequence of eighth notes with a '4' above the staff and a 'V' above the first note. Measure 52 has a 'V' above the first note. Measure 55 has a 'V' above the first note. Measure 58 has a '4' above the staff and a 'V' above the first note. Measure 61 has a 'V' above the first note. Measure 64 has a '4' above the staff and a 'V' above the first note. Measure 67 is marked 'A5' in a box and contains a triplet of eighth notes with a '3' above them, followed by a '3rd pos.' marking. Measure 70 is marked '1st pos.' and contains a triplet of eighth notes with a '3' above them, followed by a '0' marking. The score includes various musical notations such as beams, slurs, and dynamic markings.

73 

76 

79 

82 

85 

88 

91 

94 

97 A7

100

103

106 A8

109

112

115 B7

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 G, C, D, Em, and V (representing a natural breath or 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

The musical score consists of eight staves of music in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The piece is in 4/4 time. Measure numbers 25, 28, 31, 34, 37, 40, 43, and 46 are indicated at the start of each staff. Chord diagrams for G, B3, C1, and C2 are provided above the staves. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, with slurs and accents. Trills are marked with a '3' over a bracket. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots at the end of the eighth staff.

49 A3

52

55 0 2

58 A4

61

64 D1 1st pos.

67 3 0 4

70 4

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 Musical notation for measures 121-123. Measure 121 starts with a V-shaped fingering symbol. Measure 122 has a box labeled "B4" above it. Measure 123 ends with a V-shaped fingering symbol.

124 Musical notation for measures 124-126. Measure 124 has a "3" with a bracket above it. Measure 126 ends with a V-shaped fingering symbol.

127 Musical notation for measures 127-129. Measure 127 has a "3" with a bracket above it. Measure 129 ends with a V-shaped fingering symbol.

130 Musical notation for measures 130-132. Measure 130 has a box labeled "C3" and "3rd pos." above it. Measure 132 ends with a V-shaped fingering symbol.

133 Musical notation for measures 133-135. Measure 135 ends with a V-shaped fingering symbol.

136 Musical notation for measures 136-138. Measure 138 has a box labeled "C4" above it. Measure 138 ends with a V-shaped fingering symbol.

139 Musical notation for measures 139-141. Measure 139 has a "3" with a bracket above it. Measure 141 has a "3" with a bracket above it. Measure 141 ends with a V-shaped fingering symbol.

142 Musical notation for measures 142-144. Measure 142 has a "3" with a bracket above it. Measure 144 ends with a V-shaped fingering symbol.

145 A9

148

151

A10

154

157

160