

**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](http://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

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 such as eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. There are several slurs and accents (marked with a 'V') throughout. 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. Measure 40 has an 'A4' chord diagram. Trills are indicated by a bracket with the number '3' above the notes in measures 31 and 40. The piece concludes with a fermata over the final note in measure 46.



49  $\text{V}$   $\text{3}$   $\text{3rd pos.}$   $\text{B3}$   $\text{V}$  4 2

52  $\text{V}$   $\text{3}$

55  $\text{1st pos.}$   $\text{3rd pos.}$

58  $\text{B4}$   $\text{V}$   $\text{3}$   $\text{V}$   $\text{3}$

61  $\text{1st pos.}$   $\text{3rd pos.}$   $\text{V}$   $\text{V}$   $\text{V}$   $\text{1st pos.}$

64  $\text{V}$  4  $\text{V}$   $\text{A5}$

67  $\text{V}$

70  $\text{V}$   $\text{V}$   $\text{V}$

73 A6

76

79

82 B5

85

88 B6

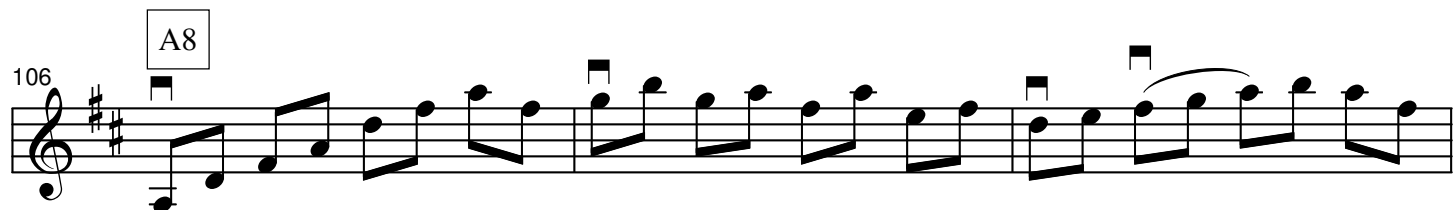
91

94

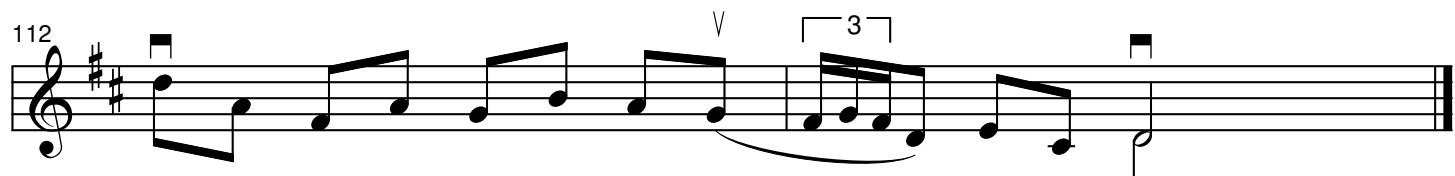
97 

100 

103 

106 

109 

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 score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings. Chord diagrams are provided above the staff, and guitar-specific instructions like "1st pos." and "3rd pos." are included. The piece concludes with a 2/4 time signature change in measure 13.

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

**A2** 3rd pos. 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. V

43 V 1st pos. V

46 3rd pos. V 1st pos.

Detailed description: This is a musical score for guitar, consisting of eight staves of music. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The score includes various chords (D, G, A, B1, A3) and positions (1st pos., 3rd pos.). It features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. Some measures contain triplets or slurs. The notation includes stems, beams, and flags. The staves are numbered 25, 28, 31, 34, 37, 40, 43, and 46. The score ends with a double bar line at the end of the eighth staff.

49

52

55

58

61

64

67

70

B2

B3

3rd pos.

1st pos.

3

4

Detailed description: This is a musical score for guitar, consisting of eight staves of music. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 2/4. The score includes various musical notations such as treble clefs, notes, rests, slurs, and accidentals. Measure 49 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps. Measure 52 features a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 55 has a boxed label 'B2' above the staff. Measures 58, 61, 64, and 67 contain annotations for '1st pos.' and '3rd pos.' (third position). Measure 64 has a boxed label 'B3'. Measure 70 includes a '4' above the staff. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

# Bitter Creek

♩ = 196

Traditional

Transcribed from County 724

The musical score for "Bitter Creek" is presented in standard notation on a treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 196. The score is divided into sections A1, A2, and B1. Section A1 (measures 1-6) includes guitar chords G, D, and C, and features a four-measure rest at the beginning. Section A2 (measures 7-15) includes chords C, D, and G, and contains two triplet markings. Section B1 (measures 16-22) includes a triplet marking and a four-measure rest. The score concludes with a final measure at measure 22.

25

28

31

34

37

40

43

46

B2

A3

A4



49

C1

52

55

C2

58

61

A5

64

67

70

4

3

Detailed description: This musical score is for guitar, spanning measures 49 to 70. It is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score includes various performance techniques: vibrato (marked with 'v'), slurs, and accents. Specific sections are labeled with boxes: 'C1' at measure 49, 'C2' at measure 58, and 'A5' at measure 64. Measure 64 also features a '4' indicating a four-measure phrase. Measure 70 includes a triplet of eighth notes marked with a '3' and a slur. The bass line is indicated by a double bar line and a downward-pointing stem.

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

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

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

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

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

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

70 V 4 V

73 **A6**

76 **4**

79 **4**

82 **4**

85 **4**

88 **B6**

91 **3**

94 **3**

97

Musical notation for measures 97-100. Measure 97 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). It contains a sequence of eighth notes. A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' and a bracket. A box labeled 'A7' is positioned above the first note of the triplet. A fermata is placed over the final note of the triplet. Measure 98 continues the eighth-note sequence. Measure 99 features a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 100 concludes with a quarter note marked with a '4' and a fermata.

100

Musical notation for measures 101-103. Measure 101 begins with a treble clef and a key signature of three sharps. It contains a sequence of eighth notes with a fermata over the final note. Measure 102 continues with eighth notes and includes a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 103 ends with a quarter note marked with a '4' and a fermata.

103

Musical notation for measures 104-107. Measure 104 starts with a treble clef and a key signature of three sharps. It contains a sequence of eighth notes with a fermata over the final note. Measure 105 continues with eighth notes and includes a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 106 continues the eighth-note sequence. Measure 107 concludes with a quarter note marked with a '4' and a fermata.



# 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 treble clef, 2/4 time. The score consists of eight staves of music, numbered 1 through 22. Measure 1 is marked with a box 'A1' and a chord 'C'. Measure 4 has chords 'F', 'G', and 'V', with triplets and slurs. Measure 7 has chords 'C' and 'G'. Measure 10 has chords 'C', 'F', and 'V', with triplets and slurs. Measure 13 has a chord 'G' and a triplet. Measure 16 is marked with a box 'B1' and '3rd pos.', with a chord 'C'. Measure 19 has '1st pos.' and '3rd pos.' markings above slurs, and 'V' markings above chords. Measure 22 has 'V' markings above slurs and '4' and '3' markings above triplets.

25 3rd pos. 1st pos.

28 3rd pos. 1st pos.

31

C1  
34

37

40

43

46

49 **D1**

52 **E1**

55 **D1**

58 **E1**

61 **D1**

64 **E1**

67 **D1**

70 **E1**

2nd pos.

73

76

79

82

A2

85

88

91

94

97

A3

100

103

106

109

112

F1

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 musical notations such as slurs, accents (marked with a 'V'), and triplets (marked with a '3'). A box labeled 'A3' is placed above measure 97, and a box labeled 'F1' is placed above measure 112. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, with some measures featuring triplets. The piece concludes with a final sharp sign at the end of measure 118.

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



25 A D 4 B2

28

31 4

34 4 A3

37 3

40 4

43 A4 3 3 3 3

46

Detailed description: This page contains eight staves of musical notation for guitar, all in the key of G major (one sharp). The notation includes various chords (A, D, B2, A3, A4), fingerings (4, 3), and techniques such as vibrato (V), triplets (3), and slurs. The staves are numbered 25, 28, 31, 34, 37, 40, 43, and 46. The music is written in a single melodic line on a treble clef staff.

49

52

55

58

61

64

67

70

B3

B4

A5

4

4

3

3rd pos.

1st pos.

0

3

73

75 **A6**

76 3rd pos.

77 1st pos.

79

82 **B5**

85

88

91 **B6**

94

This musical score consists of ten staves of music, numbered 97 through 119. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The notation includes various guitar-specific techniques:

- Measures 97-102:** Feature vibrato (V) over several notes and a trill (4) in measure 100.
- Measure 103:** Features a vibrato (V) over a note and a trill (4) over another.
- Measures 106-108:** Measure 106 has a trill (4) and a vibrato (V). Measures 107 and 108 have vibrato (V) over notes.
- Measures 109-111:** Measure 109 has a vibrato (V) over a note. Measure 110 has a trill (4) over a note. Measure 111 has a vibrato (V) over a note.
- Measures 112-114:** Measure 112 has a vibrato (V) over a note. Measure 113 has a trill (4) over a note and a grace note (0) over another. Measure 114 has a vibrato (V) over a note.
- Measures 115-117:** Measure 115 starts with a chord box labeled **B7** and features vibrato (V) over notes and trills (4) over notes. Measures 116 and 117 have vibrato (V) over notes.
- Measures 118-119:** Measure 118 has a vibrato (V) over a note. Measure 119 has a vibrato (V) over a note.

Chord boxes are labeled **A7** (measures 98-100), **A8** (measures 107-109), and **B7** (measures 115-117).

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 eight staves of music, numbered 1 through 22. The music features a single melodic line with various chords and ornaments. The chords are indicated by letters above the staff: G, C, Em, D, and A1/A2. The ornaments are indicated by 'V' above the notes. The piece 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 includes triplets, slurs, and accents. The piece ends with a final ornamented note in measure 22.

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 ten 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 triplet of eighth notes, a 'V' marking, and a box labeled 'D1' with '1st pos.' written next to it. Measure 67 includes 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

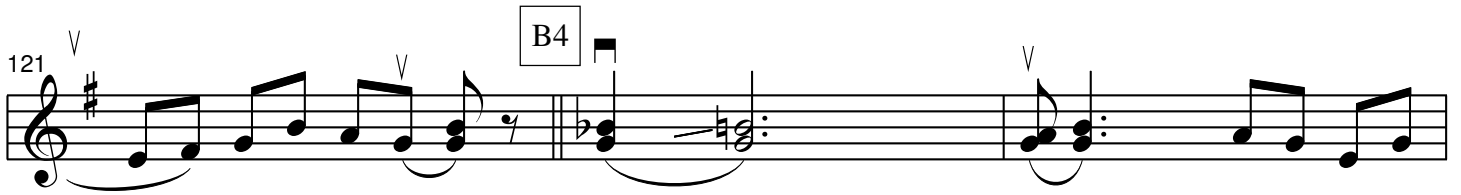
106 2nd pos.

109 1st pos. 0

112 B3

115

118

121 

124 

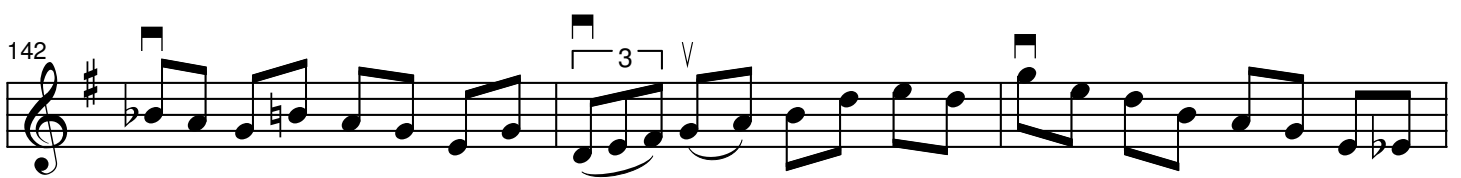
127 

130 

133 

136 

139 

142 

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 eighth notes, quarter notes, and sixteenth notes, along with slurs, accents (V), and triplets (3). Measure 148 features 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 a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 157 features a triplet of eighth notes. Measure 160 ends with a double bar line.