

Beaumont Rag

Traditional

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2/4

C7 F

6 C7 F

10 C7 F F7

15 B♭ G7 F D7 G7 C7 F C7

20 F C7

24 F C7

28 F F7 B♭ G7 F

Detailed description: This is a guitar tablature for the piece 'Beaumont Rag'. It is written in 2/4 time and consists of 28 measures. The notation is presented in seven systems, each with a six-line staff. The first system starts with a treble clef and a 2/4 time signature. Chords are indicated by letters above the staff: C7 and F. Fretting numbers are placed on the lines, and some include slurs and accents. The second system begins with a measure number '6'. The third system starts with '10'. The fourth system starts with '15' and includes a key signature change to B-flat (B♭) and a sharp sign (♯) before the C7 chord. The fifth system starts with '20'. The sixth system starts with '24'. The seventh system starts with '28'. The piece concludes with a final chord of F.

32 **D7** **G7** **C7** **Po** **F** **C7**

36 **F** **C7**

40 **F** **F7** **B \flat** **G7**

44 **F** **D7** **G7** **C7** **F** **F**

48 **F**

This old Texas rag is played in the key of F, the original key, in open G tuning. As a result, the fingering can get a bit cramped, particularly in the B part. A lot of bluegrass musicians play this out of the key of C or D, perhaps because Doc Watson's landmark guitar version was in the key of C. A lot of fiddle players, however, have gravitated back to the original key of F, and I prefer it there, myself. You will need all four fingers of the left hand for this one.

This is one of a number of tunes, including Dallas Rag, and I believe, Back Up and Push and Cotton Patch Rag, which were recorded in the twenties by a group of black Texas string bands, and they are clearly precursors to what we think of now as Western Swing. The original recordings that I remember hearing didn't include the complex double shuffling on the fiddle that is now an established part of many of the tunes. However, that basic swing, still foreign to the contemporary old-time music being recorded in the east at that time, is definitely there. This is one of a number of tunes, some of which have arrangements in this collection, which first entered the bluegrass repertoire through the picking of guitarist Doc Watson, one of just a few nationally renowned musicians who could routinely cross-over between old-time music and bluegrass.