

# WESTPHALIA WALTZ

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The western swing waltz, **Westphalia Waltz**, is associated with Texas fiddler, Cotton Collins. Legend has it, in 1946 while performing his so-called, ‘No Name Waltz’ in Westphalia Hall, in Westphalia, TX, it was suggested Collins name the tune ‘Westphalia Waltz’ in honor of the town.<sup>1</sup> The tune itself predates Collins in that the melody originated from the Polish folk tunes, *Wszystkie Rybki* and *Pytala Sie Pani* (among other names).<sup>2</sup> Various tune origin stories with no solid documentation include Collins hearing the song while serving in the US Army in Germany during WWII, Collins hearing the song performed in Bremond, TX a nearby town to Westphalia with a large Polish community, and Collins hearing a recording of the tune as it was recorded in America several times during the 1930s.<sup>3</sup> Cotton Collins recorded the tune with his band, Lone Star Playboys in 1946, but it wasn’t until Hank Thompson’s 1955 recording that the tune caught on, eventually becoming extremely popular in the Missouri Ozark region as a fiddle contest tune.<sup>4</sup>

—Kitty Steetle

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<sup>1</sup><https://secondhandsongs.com/work/235180/all>

[https://tunearch.org/wiki/Annotation:Westphalia\\_Waltz](https://tunearch.org/wiki/Annotation:Westphalia_Waltz)

[http://www.joeweet.com/documentaries/westphalia\\_waltz.htm](http://www.joeweet.com/documentaries/westphalia_waltz.htm)

<sup>2</sup> According to Joe Weed, “‘Pytala Sie Pani’ was a unifying and bawdy favorite that the overworked, underpaid, ostracized and homesick Polish-Americans sang to forget the Great Depression.” According to Google Translate, Stanislaw Gresiuk’s version of *Wszystkie Rybki* is about fish and drinking alcohol. (See lyrics in video notes of Joe Weed’s site.)

<sup>3</sup>secondhandsongs, tunearch

<sup>4</sup>tunearch, Joe Weed