

album. I have often wondered why folksong scholars have been so little concerned with the hymn, and the powerful performance given here only increases my curiosity for it would be hard to find a better example of traditional singing than Tommy Jarrell's rendition of "Sorrow's." The main emphasis of Back Home in the Blue Ridge, however, is on the contrast between the more rhythmic, and probably older, style of fiddling represented by Tommy Jarrell and the mellower, less rhythmic playing of Oscar Jenkins.

If it can be assumed that the selections on this album are representative of the traditional material found in the sections of northwestern North Carolina and southwestern Virginia where Jarrell, Cockerham and Jenkins live then the folk music repertoire there is composed almost entirely of post-1860 items. It would, however, be incorrect to assume that such numbers have been in local tradition for the past one-hundred and thirteen years. For example, "Cumberland Gap" (originally known in the area as "Tumberland Gap") was not known in the region until about 1915 and "Bile 'Em Cabbage Down" did not "come around" until about 1925. A number of other old songs and fiddle tunes were first introduced to this section during the decade after 1915. Their arrival then was perhaps facilitated by improved roads and transportation.

Although the accompanying pamphlet by Richard Nevins does not contain as much song genealogy as some folksong specialists would like it is nevertheless a useful supplement to the album because it provides important information about the lives of the musicians and how they acquired the tunes recorded here. I realize that with the last sentence I have committed the cardinal sin of reviewing by lauding everything about Back Home in the Blue Ridge, but the praise is well deserved. In fact, if this record can be said to have any fault then it is that which all recordings have; namely, that the audio portion by itself cannot supplant the audio and visual aspects of a performance of traditional (or any other kind of) music. While one can hear the interplay between Fred Cockerham's clawhammer banjo and Tommy Jarrell's fiddle on "Sally Ann" his appreciation would undoubtedly be heightened if he could also see the musicians in action. And we can listen and enjoy the skillful use of double stops and open string harmonies used by Tommy Jarrell on "Old Joe Clark" and "Breaking Up Christmas" and yet never fully comprehend Jarrell's technical brilliance or ever achieve the excitement of seeing these feats accomplished. But, given the limitations of a record, this is an outstanding sampling of traditional music and unquestionably one of the best albums of its type on the market today.

Da Costa Woltz's Southern Broadcasters. Ben Jarrell and Frank Jenkins.
County 524. \$3.50 from County Sales

by Jens Lund

Compared to such luminaries of old-time string band music as Charlie Poole's North Carolina Ramblers, Uncle Dave Macon, and Gid Tanner's Skillet Lickers, Da Costa Woltz's Southern Broadcasters are relative unknowns. Yet, their arrangements have often been used by revivalist string bands, particularly the New Lost City Ramblers. Unfortunately for old-time music buffs no vault masters of this group remain -- only the worn Gennett, Champion, and Challenge discs from which this County LP was apparently

assembled. According to the liner notes, two of their best surviving examples, "Roving Cowboy" and "Jack of Diamonds" are in such poor condition that they had to be excluded from the album. The material offered is, however, indicative of the high degree of talent present in this little-known band. The musicians consist of Da Costa Woltz, lead banjo; Frank Jenkins, second banjo; and Ben Jarrell, fiddle. The role of the fourth member of the band, twelve-year-old Price Goodson, is unclear. He is pictured on the cover with ukulele and mouth-harp, but there is no information in the notes about his role in the recordings. The confusion is compounded by the fact that a Champion record label for "Lost Train Blues," (a harmonica solo present on the album) is pictured on the jacket listing Stanley Miller as the artist. Harlan Daniel's "Who Was Who? An Index of Hill Country Recording Pseudonyms" (in Chris Strachwitz and Pete Welding's The American Folk Music Occasional [New York: Oak Publications, 1970], 62-72) lists several pseudonyms associated with Woltz's band but none of these is Stanley Miller. Vocals are primarily by fiddler Ben Jarrell. The Southern Broadcasters display the wild liveliness of the earliest recorded string bands. Although these sessions took place in 1927, the year of Jimmie Rodgers and the Carter Family's debut, the Woltz band had grown up in a sufficiently isolated region of North Carolina to be unaffected by most nonindigenous music. The exception is, as so often, late nineteenth century parlor music, represented here by "When You Ask a Girl to Leave Her Happy Home" and "Merry Girl." The bittersweet "The Sweet Sunny South" and the popular "Yellow Rose of Texas" are perhaps the best songs on the album. The instrumentals, particularly those including mouth-harp, are superb and the tenor-banjo style banjo solo concluding "Home Sweet Home" is unique.

Great praise is due Dave Freeman and County Records for their efforts to make rare recordings available to the "esoteric" market, but they have rarely included sufficient discographical information. Since these records are directed at the collector, it could be assumed that many purchasers would like County to list such things as labels, release numbers, master numbers, recording dates, and personnel to the extent that this data is available. RCA Victor's Vintage series is a model in this respect.

Echoes of the Ozarks, Volume I. Pope's Arkansas Mountaineers, The Morrison Twin Brothers, Ashley's Melody Makers, The Arkansas Barefoot Boys, The Carter Brothers and Son, Dutch Coleman and Red Whitehead. County 518. \$3.50 from County Sales

by Thomas Adler

Though it seems unfair to review only one volume of a three-volume series, it rapidly becomes clear upon listening to Echoes of the Ozarks that Dave Freeman and company have again managed to put together a record that can easily stand alone. Moreover, Echoes of the Ozarks does double duty: it is part of a series of great interest and value to folklorists, and it is also an easily digestible serving of a relatively pure strain of hillbilly music. The lack of contamination of Ozark hillbilly performance by popular and vaudeville traditions may possibly help to explain the predominantly localized sale and dissemination of early Arkansas recordings. Even today the records of this region which were issued in the year 1928-32 are regarded by collectors as especially rare items. With the loan of