

information. The person looking for novelty or bawdy material probably wouldn't be interested in forty-year-old blues, no matter how it was packaged.

Despite the packaging, these albums are worth having. The reissue of rare material is always worthwhile, even if the record sleeve is mink-lined and the record giggles when it is pulled from its jacket. I can only applaud Yazoo for devoting two albums to the less serious side of blues, and urge all blues scholars to buy these two records.

The New Beehive Songster, Volume 1: Early Recordings of Pioneer Folk Music. Collected by Austin and Alca Fife, Lester A. Hubbard and others. Compiled, edited, and produced by Tom Carter, Jan Harold Brunvand, and H. Reynolds Cannon. Okehdokee Records OK 75003. 370 West 1st South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84101.

Reviewed by Ormond Loomis

The Utah Mormons were called Brigham Young's bees, and the original Beehive Songster, published in 1860, was one of their song books. The New Beehive Songster is a regional sampler that takes its inspiration from the musical traditions of these Mormons and their descendants. It should be a welcome addition to the record collections of Utahans and others interested in Western folklore and American folksongs. All the cuts on it are made from early field recordings and until now, all but one have not been available commercially.

The album contains sixteen selections, each by a different western performer. There are eleven unaccompanied vocals, three vocals with instrumental accompaniment, and two fiddle pieces. Most of the songs relate specifically to Mormon history. "The Handcart Song" tells of a scheme for crossing the wilderness, whereas "Tittery-Irie-Aye" and "This Is the Place" describe the migration more generally. Other Mormon songs, like other regional folksongs, are based on successes, hardships, and memorable events of earlier days. "All Are Talking of Utah" expresses pride in the group's firmly established identity. "Once I Lived in Cottonwood" reflects the bitterness of one who had to abandon good land for poor. "The Double Tragedy" is a local murder ballad. The record is more than a Mormon sampler, however. There are occupational songs: "The Bull Whackers" and "The Days of '49;" cowboy songs: "The Strawberry Roan" and "The Gol Darned Wheel;" and, as a reminder of the influence of early popular music, a minstrel song: "Watermelon Smilin' on the Vine." Possibly the most delightful of all is "Gay Paree," a breath defying brag (nineteen run-on stanzas).

The sound on the album is surprisingly good when one considers that the average age of the field recordings from which it was made is about thirty years. A scratchy, background hiss is noticeable on several cuts, but the lyrics are always clear, and the tunes easy to follow. According to a record note, they were "electronically filtered." So, the quality is a credit to the field-

workers who did the early collecting, and to the technicians who put this record together.

The record notes fill a handsome, abundantly illustrated, thirty-six-page booklet. Collection data, full transcriptions--texts of the lyrics or music of the fiddle tunes--and detailed comments are supplied for each song. The comments furnish historical background and direct the reader to sources of further information. They deal too little with the songs as music, perhaps, but this is not unusual in folksong studies. All this is prefaced by an introduction which fills in some relevant facts about Utah history and the work of the original collectors.

Now that Volume 1 of The New Beehive Songster is out, hopefully Volume 2 will not be long coming.

Fiddle Jam Session. Lonnie Peerce, Bill Long, Dave Frisbee, Byron Berline, Jim Widner, Bill Mitchell, Vivian Williams, Loyd Wanzer, Bud Merideth, Dwayne Youngblood, J. C. Gentle, Bill Yohee, Fay Sneed, Don Wiles.
22 selections, fiddling with string band accompaniment.
Voyager VRLP 301. Voyager Recordings, 424 35th Ave., Seattle, Wash. 98122.

More Fiddle Jam Sessions. Bill Long, Bill Mitchell, Ora Spiva, Don Gish, Loyd Wanzer, Ray Osborn, Bick Barrett, Llewellyn Sexsmith, Pete McMahan, Vivian Williams, Herman Johnson.
26 selections, fiddling with string band accompaniment.
Voyager VRLP 304. Voyager Recordings, 424 35th Ave., Seattle, Wash. 98122.

Twin Sisters. Vivian Williams and Barbara Lamb, fiddles with bluegrass accompaniment by Tall Timber: Phil Williams, mandolin; Barney Munger, banjo; Dick Marvin, guitar; Lou Harrington, bass.
18 selections, fiddling with bluegrass accompaniment.
Voyager VRLP 316-S. Voyager Recordings, 424 35th Ave., Seattle, Wash. 98122.

Reviewed by Philip Nusbaum

Here are three more fine releases from Voyager Records. Voyager is a Seattle-based concern which has been successfully recording old time Southern country music transplanted to the Northwest.

The Jam Session records were recorded from the mid-1960s to early 1970s at various jam sessions in Montana and Idaho (in the case of Fiddle Jam Sessions) and in Washington and Idaho (in the case of More Fiddle Jam Sessions). The discs point out the futility of assigning "regional styles" to fiddling, as fiddlers from all over North America are represented, and their styles generally do not seem to have been geographically determined. For example, More Fiddle Jams features Bill Long of Montana and Bill Mitchell of Mississippi fiddling a version of "Sally Goodin" that sounds as if they played it together every day of their lives. Rather, style seems to be a matter of personal preference.