

Heretofore, the bulk of scholarly interest in this country in had been only with the words of the songs. She was so stirred with the lovely modal melodies that, in her travels through the mountains afterwards, although an untrained musician, she recorded a remarkable and accurate, and at the same time unique, collection of texts with melodies. When she learned later that Cecil Sharp, the English scholar who had been doing so much to emphasize the beauty of the music in his work with folk songs in England, was coming to the United States, she took what she considered her humble collection to him in Massachusetts. She so



Singing  
in the  
early  
days.

astonished him with the wealth of material that it represented, material that few even knew the existence of, that although he was in ill health, he made several extensive and very difficult trips through our inaccessible Southern Mountains from 1916 to 1918. His thorough research set a new standard which applies today. Elizabeth Watts recalls:

"Cecil Sharp's visit to Hindman was a memorable incident in the history of the school. The night he came, he told us he was doubtful of finding anything worthwhile in a school that had been established as long as Hindman and that was located in a county seat, but he told us most interestingly of his ballad collecting in England--about getting parts of a song from one singer and parts from another and about the different versions. His scepticism was an added incentive to us to have as many people sing for him as possible. Sometimes the singers came to the Settlement, and sometimes he went to their homes. His remarkable ability to get even the most timid ones started brought to light a wealth of material that even the Settlement staff hadn't heard.

"One morning I had the pleasure of taking Mr. Sharp and his secretary, Maud Karpeles, to a home in the community where, we had been told, the mother of the family knew many ballads if we could get her to sing. This time I was the one who was skeptical, for I knew how timid she was and had never heard of her singing to anyone. Mr. Sharp greeted her and sat down to chat. After a bit he said he understood that she knew some ballads. She said she used to