



# **English Folk Songs From the Southern Appalachians: Comprising 122 Songs and Ballads, and 323 Tunes (Classic Reprint)**

*Olive Dame Campbell*

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Excerpt from English Folk Songs From the Southern Appalachians: Comprising 122 Songs and Ballads, and 323 Tunes

The effort that has been made to collect and preserve in permanent form the folk-songs of England during the last twenty or thirty years has resulted in the salvage of many thousands of beautiful songs. It was pardonable, therefore, if those who, like myself, had assisted in the task had come to believe that the major part of the work had been completed. So far as the collection in England itself was concerned, this belief was no doubt well founded, Nevertheless, in arriving at this very consolatory conclusion, one important, albeit not very obvious consideration had been overlooked, namely, the possibility that one or other of those English communities that lie scattered in various parts of the world might provide as good a field for the collector as England itself, and yield as bountiful and rich a harvest. The investigation which my colleague Mrs. Campbell began, and in which later on I came to bear a hand, has proved that at least one such community does in fact exist in the Southern Appalachian Mountains of North America. The region is an extensive one, covering some 110,000 square miles, and is considerably larger than England, Wales, and Scotland combined. It includes about one third of the total area of the States of North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Alabama, and Georgia. The total population exceeds five millions, or, excluding city dwellers, about three millions.

The Country and its Inhabitants. The reader will, I think, be in a better position to appreciate and assess the value of the songs and ballads which form the major part of this volume if, by way of preface, I give some account of the way in which they were collected and record the impression which the inhabitants of this unique country made upon me. But I must bid him remember that I claim to speak with authority only with respect to that part of the mountain district into which I penetrated and that the statements and opinions which are now to follow must be accepted subject to this qualification.

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