

The stars are shining bright and clear

Ethelbert William Bullinger (1837 - 1913)

1. The stars are shin-ing bright and clear, The hills are white with snow: Our Christ-mas eve has

9 come a-gain, Our hearts with joy o'er - flow; The Christ-mas car-ols, sweet and glad, Are

17 sound-ing on the air; And Christ-mas wreaths, in glist'-ning show, Make bright the house of prayer.

2. Not here across the snow was heard
The first sweet Christmas song;
But where the crimson lilies bloom,
Judaea's hills among:
Those hills where David long before
His father's sheep had kept;
And where, o'er Rachel's lonely tomb,
The mourning Jacob wept.

3. And not by earthly choristers
Was that first carol sung;
Not through the temple's shining courts
Its faultless music rung;
No listening crowds had gathered there,
That wondrous chant to hear;
Save watchful shepherds on the hills,
No human soul was near.

4. 'Twas sung by countless multitudes
Of Angels pure and bright,
And o'er the bare and silent hills
There shone a glorious light;
Such heavenly music ne'er was heard
Before by sons of men,
And never more shall song like that
Be heard on earth again.

5. We know the tidings which they brought
Of Christ our Saviour's birth,
Their song of "Glory be to God,
Good-will and peace on earth;"
And so the Christmas carol, sung
By Angels long ago,
Is sweeter than all other songs
Which Christians sing below.

(Source: Carols old and carols new, Boston, 1916)