

The Holly and the Ivy



1. The holly and the ivy,
Now both are full well grown.
Of all the trees that are in the wood,
The holly bears the crown.
Refrain
Oh, the rising of the sun,
The running of the deer.
The playing of the merry organ,
Sweet singing in the quire.
2. The holly bears a blossom
As white as lily flower;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To be our sweet Savior.
Refrain
3. The holly bears a berry
As red as any blood;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
To do poor sinners good.
Refrain
4. The holly bears a prickle
As sharp as any thorn;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
On Christmas day in the morn.
Refrain
5. The holly bears a bark
As bitter as any gall;
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ
For to redeem us all.
Refrain
6. The holly and the ivy,
When they are both full grown,
Of all the trees that are in the wood,
The holly bears the crown.
Refrain

The words are the lyrics collected by Cecil Sharp from Mrs. Mary Clayton at Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire and published in **English Folk-Carols** (1911). The melody given here is not the one Sharp collected but is instead a French tune. It appears in Bramley and Stainer's **Christmas Carols New and Old, Second Series** (ca. 1871).

The lyrics and tune as collected by Cecil Sharp are included in **The New Oxford Book of Carols** (#26).