

T

HE LEGEND OF ROBIN HOOD

Was he real?

Stories about the famous outlaw Robin Hood have been made into many films and television series, but how did the stories get started and come down to us today?

Someone did not make them up just to make a good film or exciting Saturday night telly! Hundreds of years ago, stories were passed on by people actually telling them to others, around the fire or in communal meetings. When you've heard a story a few times you may want to tell it to someone else, but you are quite likely to change a few details or add some colour of your own or

simply make more of your favourite part of the story than the rest. In these ways the stories get changed as they are passed on to more people over the years.

Sometimes the stories are about real people and sometimes about characters the storyteller makes up, but more likely it will be a mixture of the two. This is how it is with the stories of Robin Hood.

Just over 200 years ago a man called Joseph Ritson went in search of the historical Robin Hood. He came to the conclusion that his real name was Robert Fitzooth, who was born in Loxley in Nottinghamshire around 1160. He was a brave-hearted outlaw who robbed from the rich to help the poor, never killed anyone except in self-defence, did not allow women to be badly treated and was never captured.



But there were other real people who may also have been Robin Hood. He might have been the Earl of Huntingdon or a simple yeoman, born in Nottinghamshire or Yorkshire, and he might have always behaved according to those noble ideals or, sometimes, he might have had to kill someone to stop them betraying him and his fellow outlaws.

The first mention of Robin Hood in writing is in a poem called *Piers Plowman*, which was written around 1377. It was about another 100 years before the half dozen ballads with Robin as the hero were written, but in-between the stories were being handed down by word of mouth. It was in William

Shakespeare's time that Anthony Munday wrote two plays about Robin Hood and he makes him the Earl of Huntingdon. Shakespeare also mentions Robin Hood in one of his plays, *As You Like It*.

Life was often very hard in these centuries after William the Conqueror became king in 1066. The Norman lords and their descendants did not always treat the ordinary people of England very well. The rivalry between the two brothers King Richard I [the Lionheart] and Prince John created a battle between good and evil. In this situation Robin Hood became the champion of the downtrodden people of England, loyal to King Richard, who was away fighting the Crusades

But we cannot really identify a single historical person who we can definitely say was Robin Hood. What we will always have though is the mythical figure, the idea of the hero, the 'little man' who stands up for the poor and the oppressed against wickedness in high places. Every age needs its heroes and that is why, whether or not a real Robin Hood ever existed, we will keep reinventing him and, however impossible the odds, he and his loyal band of outlaws will always win the day.

Elaine Peake
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MEET THE

WANTED
LITTLE JOHN

LITTLE JOHN

Some of the stories about this character say that he was over seven feet tall! We think that is very tall even today but, hundreds of years ago, it would have been very unusual indeed. He was supposedly buried in the village

of Hathersage in Derbyshire where on his grave is written: "Here lies Little John, the friend and Lieutenant of Robin Hood." The story goes that someone opened the grave about 200 years ago and found a thigh bone nearly 75cms long!

What we learn from the stories is that he was Robin's second-in-command and had many adventures of his own. He was an excellent swordsman and archer, although he is most famous for using the quarterstaff. He was carrying one of these sturdy weapons the day he met Robin.

An old meaning of the word Little is tricky or clever. In some of the stories John is very gentle, but he can also be very angry. He is certainly Robin's most trusted and loyal friend.

WANTED
FRIAR TUCK

FRIAR TUCK

The popular picture of Friar Tuck is of a rather round and jolly character who seems to spend as much time on food and drink as he does on his religious duties! He does not appear in the early Robin Hood stories, but a play written in 1475 does

include him as a member of Robin's band.

He is the friar in the tale of *Robin and the Curtal Friar*. 'Curtal' means corded and refers to a cord which Franciscan friars wore around their waists. They used this to 'tuck' in their habits so it was

easier to move about as they travelled the land teaching and preaching. This is where the name Tuck probably came from. Tuck might have been his real name, of course, but it could also have been this nickname. In some stories, Friar Tuck is a bit of a double agent, as the Sheriff and evil abbots do not realise that he is really working for the outlaws.

WANTED
WILL SCARLETT

WILL SCARLETT

Here is another famous member of Robin Hood's band and another who is known by several different names: Scarlet, Scarlett, Scadlock and Scatheloke. Whichever name he turns up with, he has been a member of the outlaw band since the earliest stories of Robin Hood.

One of the ballad stories says that Robin met a stranger dressed in scarlet silk and, after an argument and a fight which the stranger won, Robin asked him who he was. It turned out that he was the son of Robin's own sister and so his nephew! In other stories he is called his cousin, but in those days that just meant a close relative. When he joined Robin's band he was christened Will Scarlett because of his clothes. He was made very welcome and was next in importance only to Little John and Robin himself. Some legends say that he was killed by the Sheriff of Nottingham's men.

WANTED
ALAN-A-DALE

ALAN-A-DALE

Alan - sometimes spelt Allen, Allan or even Alin! - is not always a member of Robin Hood's outlaw band. He came into the later stories and is often the storyteller of Robin's

MERRY MEN



adventures. It seems that Alan was a villager, and the girl he was to marry was suddenly being made to marry an old and cruel, but rich knight. Robin and the outlaws helped to rescue her. In return, although Alan did not become a fighting member of Robin's band, he often provided music and songs for the outlaws' feasts.



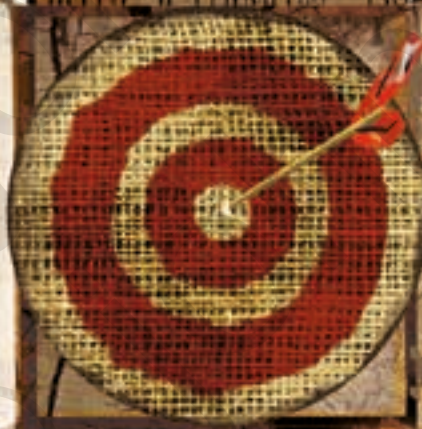
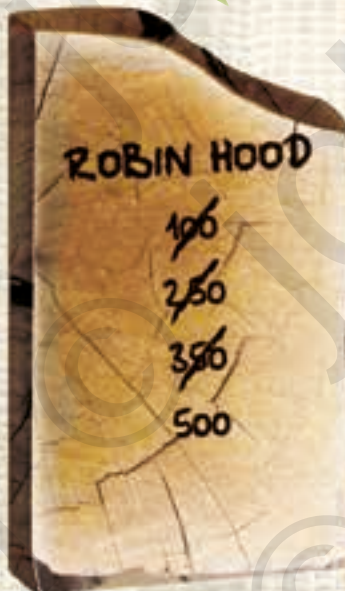
It's certainly a strange name isn't it - Much? This character is mentioned quite a bit in the early tales of Robin Hood. Sometimes he's called Nick the Miller's Son or Midge rather than Much. It seems that this original character was supposed to be strong enough to carry Little John but, in other stories, he is quite a young man who is saved by Robin when he is about to be punished for killing a deer. He does not always appear in the stories but, in the most recent television series, he is Robin's best friend.

Elaine Peake
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Knock, knock.
Who's there?
Robin.
Robin who?
Robin the rich to give to the poor!

Why couldn't Robin Hood hit the target?
Because his arrows were all in a quiver!



How does Robin Hood tie his shoelaces?
With a long bow!

If Friar Tuck was a monk, why did he get involved in a life of crime?
It was his habit!





I NTO THE WOODS

Up until only a few hundred years ago, much of Europe was covered by forest. A lot of it was impossible to get through and full of dangers, both human and animal, so it is not surprising that woods and forests turn up time and time again in our fairy tales. There is darkness and danger, but the journey into the forest is often seen as something the characters must do and, if they come through the ordeal, what they have found out helps them to become better people.

Little Red Riding Hood goes into the wood because she wants to, confidently facing any dangers which may lurk there. Snow White and Hansel and Gretel do not go willingly: Snow White manages to escape being killed by softening the heart of the man sent to murder her by her stepmother, the Queen, but she still

has to journey some way through the wood alone before she finds sanctuary at the cottage of the seven dwarfs. Even then she is not safe - the Queen is able to catch her alone and trick her twice more!

Hansel and Gretel too are abandoned in the forest. At first they manage to escape by leaving a trail of pebbles back to their cottage, but the second time they are lost. In the forest they find the gingerbread house belonging to what seems to be a kind old lady. Appearances can be deceptive however, and they need to use all their cunning to finally escape from the witch's clutches.

In *Sleeping Beauty*, the forest of thorns which grows up around the palace where the Princess and the royal court are sleeping for a hundred years seems to be for their protection, but seen from the point

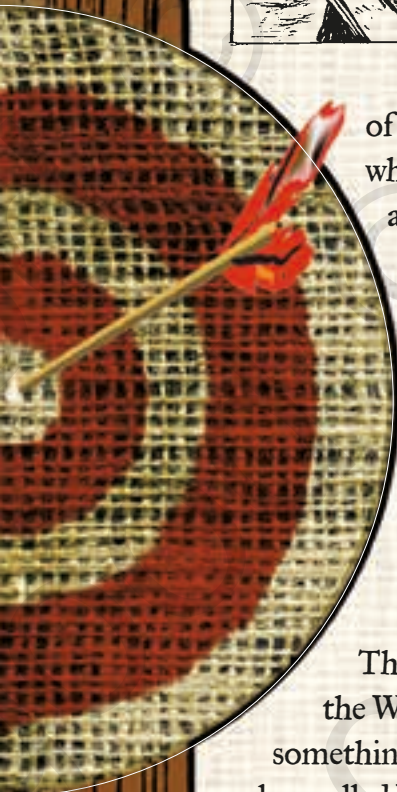


WELCOME TO
SHERWOOD FOREST
PLEASE WIPE YOUR FEET



all the money. The uncle told them he was sending them off to London with two men, but he had hired the men to kill the two children deep in the woods.

When they reached the woods, however, one of the men had a change of heart and an argument started between them, which resulted in the kind one killing the other. However, he wasn't kind enough to care more for the children than for his own skin and, telling them to wait for him to bring them food, he abandoned them in the forest.



of view of the various suitors who try to get through it, it is a barrier to their wishes and hopes of future happiness. It is only when the right person and the right time come together that it is possible to find a way through the forest, and even then it requires great courage and perseverance.

The story of the Babes in the Wood is actually based on something that really happened, in a place called Wayland Wood. The story goes that, in the late 1400s, two young children were sent to live with their uncle when their father died. If they grew up they would receive a good inheritance but, if they died young, their uncle would get

Later versions of the story bring in another legend associated with forests, Robin Hood, to rescue them. Robin Hood himself may have been one real person or a legendary figure made up from the lives of several different men, but the stories of his life with his fellow outlaws in Sherwood Forest still stir our imaginations today.

Even though we know the woods may hold unknown dangers and we run the risk of being lost for ever, we still want to go into the woods because it is there we may just find the key to our real happiness.

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Maid Marian has been locked in a secret dungeon by the Sheriff
code [at the bottom of the page] and the trail of clues she has

R

ROBIN'S RESCUE ROMP

1. Maid Marian's Mysterious Message

Your first word is 3 8 ♥ ♣ 0

Go to Friar Tuck's Tuck Shop for next clue!

2. Friar Tuck's Tuck Shop

Using the prices on Friar Tuck's board, work out the total cost of Robin's shopping list. Then use the code to turn these numbers into letters and reveal the second word!

Prices

- Apples 20p each
- Acorns £1.50 a bag
- Plums 15p each
- Oranges 25p each
- Sherwood Shortbread £1.25 a box



Your second word is _____

SHOPPING LIST:

- 5 BAGS OF ACORNS
- 5 APPLES
- 12 PLUMS
- 6 ORANGES
- 2 BOXES OF SHERWOOD SHORTBREAD

TO DO LIST:

- ROB FROM THE RICH ✓
- GIVE TO THE POOR ✓
- ASK MAID MARIAN OUT ON A DATE

3. Will Scarlett's Word Search

Find all the words listed in this wordsearch - they can go up, down, backwards, forwards or diagonally!

The letters left over will spell the third word!

N	H	O	J	E	L	T	T	I	L
D	O	O	W	R	E	H	S	A	E
N	E	M	Y	R	R	E	M	L	X
S	H	E	R	I	F	F	A	T	H
N	A	I	R	A	M	D	I	A	M
I	W	B	O	W	A	R	I	C	H
D	O	O	H	N	I	B	O	R	C
F	R	I	A	R	T	U	C	K	U
R	R	L	F	O	R	E	S	T	M
M	A	H	G	N	I	T	T	O	N
D	R	E	B	B	O	R	O	O	P

- ALAN-A-DALE
- ARROW
- BOW
- FOREST
- FRIAR TUCK
- LITTLE JOHN
- MAID MARIAN
- MERRY MEN
- MUCH

- NOTTINGHAM
- POOR
- RICH
- ROBBER
- ROBIN HOOD
- SHERWOOD
- SHERIFF
- TAX

Your third word is _____

A B C D E F G H I J K

7 🔍 9 👍 4 3 🖐️ 😊 8 💣 ☠️

of Nottingham. Using their secret left behind, help Robin find the five words that will help him find his way through the maze and rescue her!



5. Little John's Little Riddle!

Can you solve Little John's riddle to reveal the final word?

My first is in answer but isn't in question
 4 the next use the code but that's just a suggestion!
 My third is silent in psychic and pseudo
 My fourth is in lego but never in ludo.
 My fifth appears four times in Alan A-Dale
 So if you can't count that far
 then MM stays in jail!
 My last's not in nine but you'll find it in ten
 Now you should have your answer so do it again!

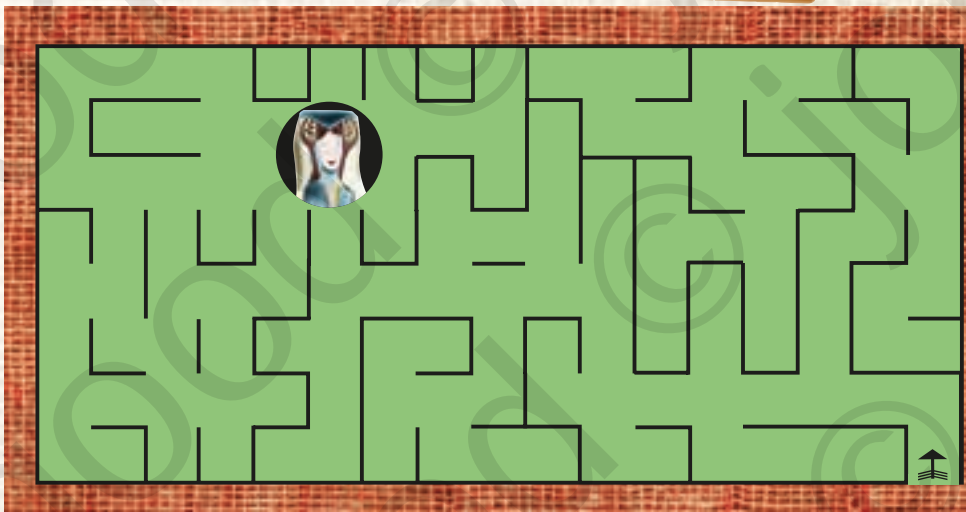
The fifth and final word is

4. Much's Muddled Marbles!

Much the Miller's Son has dropped his marbles, which have the code symbols on them, and they have rolled all over the place! There are two for each symbol except five. When you have found all the pairs, see what letters the remaining symbols represent and rearrange them into the fourth word.

Your fourth word is

6. Maid Marian's Amazing Maze



L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

1 [key] [sun] [teardrop] [megaphone] 5 [heart] [shield] 0 [gift] [spiderweb] [diamond] 2 [wheel] 6



M

MAKE A ROBIN HOOD HAT

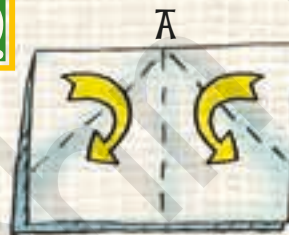


IF YOU FOLLOW THE PICTURES AND THE EXPLANATIONS, IN JUST A FEW MINUTES YOU SHOULD HAVE A HAT SIMILAR TO THOSE WORN BY ROBIN HOOD AND HIS MERRY MEN!

1



2



1. Start with a rectangle of paper [about 59cm by 38cm]. A sheet taken from a newspaper should do, but try different sizes for a snug fit.

Fold the paper in half. Where you make the fold is shown by a dotted line.

2. Fold the paper in half again and open out to find the middle [the line A to B]. Now fold over along the diagonal lines shown above.

3



4



3. The paper should now look like the above diagram. The part of the paper which is the shape of a rectangle [only the upper sheet] should be folded along the dotted line, so the edge comes halfway up the rectangle and touches the bottom of the triangles.

4. Now fold this part again over the bottom of the triangles.

5



6



5. It should now look like this. Now fold over the small triangular pieces so they go behind the hat. Turn over the paper.

6. You should now be able to see the triangles you folded behind. Similar to before, fold the rectangle of paper up so that its edge meets the bottom of the triangles.



7



8



9



7. Now fold where you see the dotted lines and fold the band up as you did in part 4.

8. You've nearly completed the hat. Fold one corner of the hat over where you see the dotted line, and then back again. This will help in the next move, which is to tuck the corner inside the hat to get the next shape.

9. With the corner inside the hat it should now be this shape. What the hat needs now is a feather.



NOW FOR THE FEATHER

1



2



3



4



1. For the feather take a new piece of paper [about 22 cm by 12 cm] and fold it in half lengthways along the dotted line.

2. The dotted line shows where to cut through both thicknesses. Be careful with those scissors.

3. Finally, cut through the folded paper as shown, small cuts at an angle. Be careful, not all the way across.

4. When you open out the paper it should look feather-shaped with fronds.

Now tuck the feather into the hat band, like the picture on the opposite page. If it falls out, try securing it with a piece of sticky tape or a spot of glue. You might also like to paint the hat and feather. Have fun folding!

S

POT THE DIFFERENCE

THE SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM HAS TRIED TO DISGUISE HIMSELF IN THE HOPE OF SNEAKING UP ON ROBIN HOOD AND HIS MERRY MEN, BUT HE ISN'T VERY GOOD AT IT. CAN YOU SPOT TEN DIFFERENCES HE HAS MADE TO HIS APPEARANCE TO LOOK DIFFERENT?



C

COLOUR ME IN

THE SHERIFF
AND HIS MEN
ARE HUNTING
FOR ROBIN.
CAN YOU
COLOUR HIM
IN SO THAT HE
IS LESS EASY
TO FIND?



WANTED
ROBIN HOOD
FOR ROBBING FROM THE RICH
AND GIVING TO THE POOR
REWARD

M

AKE SHERWOOD SHORTBREAD

WHY NOT MAKE SOME SHERWOOD SHORTBREAD TO SHARE WITH YOUR MERRY CLAN. THIS SIMPLE RECIPE WILL MAKE 10-12 SHORTBREAD AND GIVE YOU ENOUGH ENERGY TO FIGHT OFF THE SHERIFF OF NOTTINGHAM!

Preparation time 20 minutes

Cooking time 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS

125g/4oz butter

55g/2oz caster sugar

180g/6oz plain flour

METHOD

1. Heat the oven to 190C/375F/Gas 5.
2. Beat the butter and the sugar together until pale.
3. Stir in all of the flour to get a smooth paste. Turn the contents upside down onto a work surface and gently roll out the paste to about a 1cm/1/2 inch thickness.
4. Cut into any shapes you might find in Sherwood Forest. They could be acorn-shaped, leaf-shaped or tree-shaped. The choice is yours. Sprinkle with a little extra caster sugar, put on a baking sheet and chill for about 20 minutes. Bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes until pale golden. Leave to cool for a while on a wire rack, but make sure the Sheriff doesn't get his greedy hands on them. Enjoy!

Ask an adult to help you

Where did Robin's Merry Men go to buy their sweets?
Friar's Tuck Shop!

What did Robin say when he nearly got hit at the archery contest?
"That was an arrow escape!"

Why did Robin Hood steal from the rich?
Because the poor didn't have anything worth stealing!

A

ANSWERS PAGE



Robin's Rescue Romp

Spot the Difference

Maid Marian's Mysterious Message

Maid Marian's coded message should read:
FIRST

Friar Tuck's Tuck Shop

The total bill is £14.30. Using the code it spells
LEFT

N	H	O	J	C	L	T	T	I	L
D	O	O	W	R	C	H	S	A	E
N	C	M	Y	R	R	E	M	L	X
S	H	C	R	I	F	P	A	T	H
N	A	I	R	A	M	D	I	A	M
I	W	B	O	W	A	R	I	C	H
D	O	O	H	N	I	B	O	R	C
F	R	I	A	R	T	U	C	K	U
R	R	L	F	O	R	C	S	T	M
M	A	H	G	N	I	T	T	O	N
D	R	C	B	B	O	R	O	O	P

Will Scarlett's Word Search

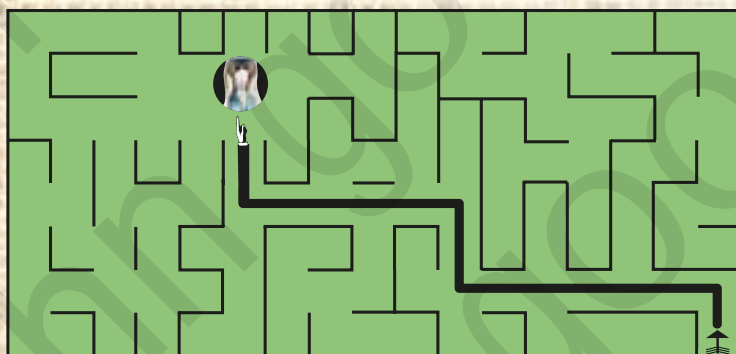
The letters left over from the wordsearch spell
THIRD

Much's Muddled Marbles!

The missing marbles spell out the word
RIGHT

Little John's Little Riddle!

The answer to Little John's riddle is
REPEAT



A

ANSWERS PAGE

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Robin's Rescue Romp

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N	H	O	J	E	L	T	T	I	L
D	O	W	R	R	C	H	S	A	E
N	C	M	Y	R	R	C	M	L	X
S	H	C	R	I	F	F	A	T	H
N	A	I	R	A	M	D	I	A	M
I	W	B	O	W	A	R	I	C	H
D	O	O	H	N	I	B	O	R	C
F	R	I	A	R	T	U	C	K	U
R	L	F	O	R	E	S	T	M	
M	A	H	G	N	I	T	T	O	N
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