

ROBIN HOOD

Since the 1400s, there have been songs and stories about Robin Hood and his men. But who was he? Was he really the people's hero? Was he even a real person?



When?

People believe that Robin Hood lived in the late 1100s and early 1200s, when Richard I and then his brother John were King of England.

Where?

In most of the stories, Robin Hood lives in Sherwood Forest, near the town of Nottingham in the centre of England. The road from London to York ran through the forest. This road could be very dangerous. Sometimes, outlaws took money from travellers.

What is the legend?

The legend says that Sir Robin of Locksley fought for King Richard in the Middle East. When he came back to England, he lost his lands to the Sheriff of Nottingham. He chose to live as an outlaw in the forest with a group of men – Will Scarlett, Little John and others. He was quick, funny and a brilliant archer.



An early picture of Robin Hood

Who was the real Robin Hood?

No one knows for sure. We know that there was an outlaw called Robert Hod in 1225. There were a lot of people with the surname Hood, Hod and Hode in England at that time, and Robert and Robin were popular first names. This makes the search for the real Robin Hood very difficult!

~ the legend

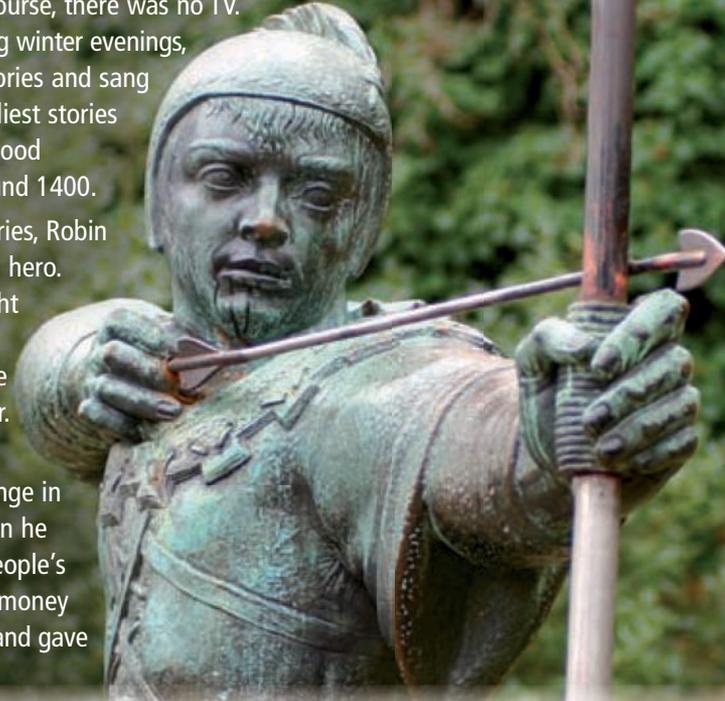
The first stories

In the 1400s and 1500s, most people couldn't read and, of course, there was no TV.

During the long winter evenings, people told stories and sang songs. The earliest stories about Robin Hood appeared around 1400.

In the first stories, Robin Hood wasn't a hero. He only thought about himself and didn't care about the poor.

The stories started to change in the 1500s. Then he became the people's hero. He took money from the rich and gave it to the poor.



The Robin Hood Fair, Nottingham

Robin Hood today

The outlaw of Sherwood Forest is as popular today as he was six hundred years ago. Every year, in Nottingham, there is a big Robin Hood fair. There are also many films and TV shows about him.

Do you have any legends about heroes like Robin Hood in your country?

What do these words mean? You can use a dictionary.

legend hero forest outlaw