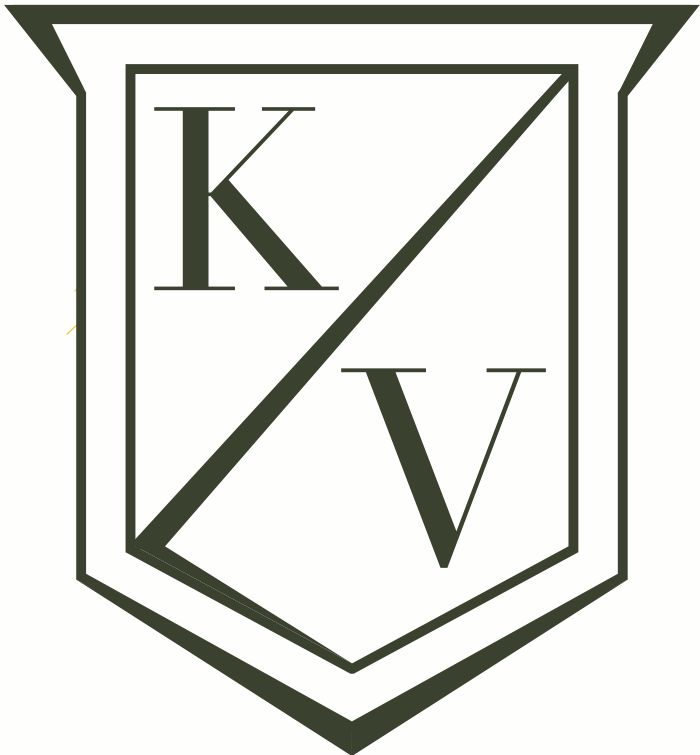


Heroes Who Inspire

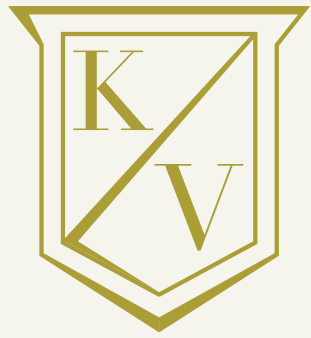
Knightly Virtues



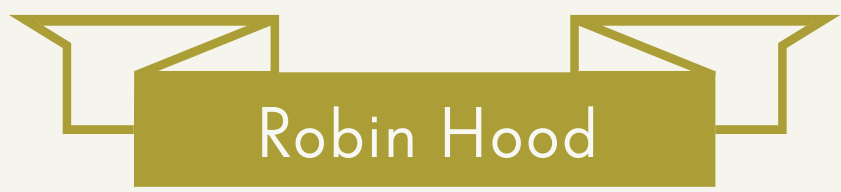
Robin Hood

Learning About the
Virtues of Charity and Justice

Heroes Who Inspire



THE STORY



Robin Hood

Story retold by Jon Davison

Robin Hood — The Story

Prologue

In 1194, when King Richard was released from prison, Sir Robin of Locksley escorted him back to England. Robin served King Richard as one of his personal bodyguards in the royal palace in Winchester. In 1196, King Richard announced that he was to leave for France. The king was going to take back Normandy from the French king, who had captured it while Richard was in prison.

'My king,' said Robin, 'I am happy to travel with you.'

'Sir Robin, my faithful Saxon knight,' replied King Richard, 'you are the finest archer I have ever seen and you have served me well. You have not seen Nottingham for many years. You have earned the right to return home.'

'But I am happy to continue to serve you, sire.'

'I do not doubt you, Locksley, and I shall call upon you on my return to England, when I have defeated our foes,' smiled the king. 'Now is the time to enjoy your rewards, your title and your land.'

Although Robin was sad to see King Richard leave, he said, 'I have never disobeyed you, your highness, and nor shall I do so now. I wish you safe travels and I await the day of your return to serve you once more.'

Early next morning with the first sunlight tinting the towers red, two riders left the royal palace in Winchester. King Richard riding south to the coast with his army – Sir Robin of Locksley riding north to Nottingham.

Outlawed

The journey from Winchester to Nottingham took Robin four days. As he rode, he thought of his home many times: the manor of Locksley and its village, his friendly villagers farming the fields. He remembered the bustle of carts at daybreak trundling along the road to Nottingham market. He was eager to be home after so long.

It was midday when Robin rode into Sherwood Forest. 'Not far now,' he thought. The sun was high. The air was hot. He stopped by a stream for a cooling drink of water. Robin bent down to drink and when he looked up he saw a fine deer at the edge of the clearing. Looking behind the deer and into the woods, Robin noticed a boy aged about twelve years silently stalking through the ferns with an arrow drawn in his bow. It was the miller's son, Much. Moving very slowly and holding his breath, the boy tiptoed through the bushes with his eyes firmly fixed on the deer.

Then everything seemed to happen at once. There was a deafening galloping of hooves, the jingle of harness and six riders clad in black crashed through the bracken into the clearing. The startled deer sprang to escape. Even more startled, Much let go of the arrow that swished through the air. The deer fell where it stood.

Robin mounted his horse and rode towards the clearing to join the group of men and the frightened boy.

'Seize the boy!' commanded the Sheriff, his eyes blazing with fury.

'I...I'm...' Much attempted to explain, but was silenced as one of the Sheriff's guards grabbed him.

'You have committed a grave crime boy!' said the Sheriff furiously. 'All deer in Sherwood Forest belong to the Crown. Since the time of King William this has been royal land. My judgment is that the first two fingers of your right hand be chopped off immediately. Let's see how well you draw a bow after that!'

One of the Sheriff's men drew his sword.

In the commotion of the event, nobody had noticed Robin approaching, but now he spoke.

'Good afternoon, my lord Sheriff. Good afternoon, gentlemen,' he said courteously.

Everyone turned to look at Robin.

'Locksley!' said the Sheriff, no longer angry, 'you have returned to Nottingham at last. I am sorry that you should have to witness such a dreadful crime by this wretch'.

'He is not a wretch, Sheriff,' said Robin. 'He is Much. One of my villagers and son of Will the Miller.'

'He may be one of your villagers, but he has broken the law of the land,' the Sheriff snapped. 'Well, enough of this, I have made my judgment. Carry out the sentence.'

'Without letting the boy speak?' inquired Robin. 'The accused must be allowed to speak,' said Robin calmly, but firmly. 'Come Much – do not be afraid – what do you have to say in this matter?' he continued gently.

'M..my lord Sheriff, gentlemen,' he began. Even though this was a very serious situation, Robin smiled slightly to hear his own words echoed by this young man.

'Sirs, my mother is very poorly. She has had a fever since Lammas – some three weeks now. She grows weaker and weaker. We have but little food. My father has no money to pay the apothecary for potions and healing balms. The high taxes have taken most of his money and although the price of bread has increased, he actually receives less now for selling his flour to the bakers. It's not fair.' Much stopped on the edge of tears.

The Sheriff looked irritated and about to speak, but Robin slowly raised a hand and said quietly, 'Go on boy'.

Much looked at the ground and said, 'the Sheriff demands more and more flour to be given to his men without payment. We are so poor and hungry. We cannot afford to buy from the butcher, so I said to my father that I would go and get some meat from the forest. My father forbade me because hunting in the forest is illegal. He also said my archery skills were not good enough. I thought I would practise my stalking skills so that one day I might be able to hunt. The sudden arrival of the horses... the noise ... startled me and the arrow slipped from my grasp.'

'Enough!' bellowed the Sheriff. His fury had returned. 'He is clearly guilty. Seize him!'

Much was seized, but in an instant Robin had drawn his bow and had aimed an arrow squarely at the Sheriff. Everyone froze in amazement.

'Do you not think your judgment too harsh, my lord Sheriff?' asked Robin calmly.

'I have no time for sentiment, Locksley. My job is to collect taxes for Prince John, to catch outlaws, sentence them and imprison or execute them!' was the stern reply from the Sheriff.

'But my villagers are poor and hungry,' urged Robin.

'Hunger makes men virtuous, Locksley. A hungry man is a virtuous man. He has more things to think about than creating mischief. He worries about his family, how to pay his taxes, how to feed himself and his children.'

'You and your men seem to be well fed, Sheriff. Does that mean you are NOT virtuous?'

The Sheriff's face turned purple with rage. His eyeballs bulged. Robin lowered his bow.

'Very well,' said Robin. 'Young Much is one of the villagers of my manor of Locksley. I have a duty to you for all my villagers. I am responsible for Much hunting the deer. Therefore, I am the one who should face the sentence.'

'You are a nobleman Locksley - you do not have to worry about these people,' the Sheriff almost spat.

'There is nothing noble about not caring for the poor and hungry, my lord Sheriff,' replied Robin sternly.

'Very well Locksley – have it your way. From this moment and for all time, you are outlawed. You lose everything. You may have come back here to enjoy your home and village, but because of your behaviour,

‘There is nothing noble about not caring for the poor and hungry, my lord Sheriff.’

I am taking everything away from you. I hereby seize your goods, chattels and land. I give them all to Sir Guy of Gisbourne. Come... leave the boy. Away to the castle!’

The Sheriff spurred his horse, gave Robin one last look and quickly rode away.

Robin and Much watched the riders as they galloped away along the forest trail. They listened as the thunder of hooves faded in the distance until all that could be heard was the tinkling waters of the stream and the sparkling trill of a tiny bird on a branch close by – it was a robin.

A Departure

Times were hard and they were getting harder. Posters offering a reward for the capture of the outlawed Sir Robin of Locksley were put up in towns and villages. Word of Robin’s encounter with the Sheriff spread quickly through the countryside of Nottinghamshire and many people were on Robin’s side.

For a month Robin had stayed secretly at Locksley mill with Will the Miller. On the first night he had gathered fallen branches in the forest for firewood. Early next morning he had returned with a basket of mushrooms and duck eggs for breakfast. He had given Will the Miller three silver pennies to buy medicine from the apothecary and to buy food for the family from the market. Much’s mother was now recovered from her illness.

Robin had also watched as Sir Guy of Gisbourne had moved into the manor house in Locksley. The villagers were very unhappy. Sir Guy was leading the hunt for Robin and questioned villagers constantly. Nobody told Sir Guy anything. Robin realised that he could no longer stay with Will the Miller. If Robin were found at Locksley mill, Will and his family would be imprisoned – or worse. Robin decided to leave.

At supper one evening Robin told Will the news. ‘My dear friends, I have enjoyed my time with you all here at the mill. But when you wake tomorrow morning, I shall be gone.’ A fork clattered onto the table. Much dropped the bread he was eating.

‘But Master Robin,’ said Will, ‘there’s no need for you to leave.’

Tears welled in Much’s eyes and glistened in the firelight.

‘It is too dangerous, Will. First thing in the morning, I shall go to the *Blue Boar Inn* in the heart of Sherwood Forest. I think that the Sheriff and his men rarely go there. The innkeeper is an old friend. I shall be safe there for a while,’ said Robin sorrowfully. Supper finished very quietly that night...

And so it was, that just after sunrise, with a silver-white mist drifting through the trees, Robin was walking along a forest path with his longbow over his shoulder. ‘Crack!’ Robin stopped as still as a statue. He listened intently: the buzz of an early bee, the cooing of a sleepy dove, a church bell ringing for matins in the next valley. Robin began to relax, but then ‘Crack!’ again. Someone, or something was following him.

There were wolves, wild boar and bears in Sherwood Forest. But wolves were silent. Bears and wild boar crashed through the undergrowth. No, this was not an animal. Robin listened again. Now he was sure. Someone was following him. Robin quickly slipped into the dense canopy of beech and bracken. He heard urgent footsteps coming along the track. A hunter? Or was it one of the Sheriff’s men coming to arrest him? The pursuer came closer and closer...

Sword drawn, Robin sprang out from his hiding place and came face to face with a terrified Much!

'Much! What are you doing here? You could have got yourself killed. If not by me, then by a wolf or a bear!' exclaimed Robin.

'I just wanted to walk with you to the *Blue Boar Inn*. Yesterday my father told me that my uncle Peter the cooper was delivering barrels there today. I was going to travel back home to Locksley with him on his cart this afternoon. Please let me come with you,' pleaded Much.

'Very well,' laughed Robin, 'but you must leave for home with your uncle.'

'I promise,' smiled Much and they set off together.

John Little

Robin and Much had been walking and talking for about an hour when they came to a broad stream. The thick trunk of a fallen tree had bridged the stream from bank to bank to form a path wide enough for one person to cross.

Robin and Much stepped onto one end of the makeshift bridge. A very large man stepped onto the other. 'Give way, friend!' the large man called out.

'Give way, yourself,' called Robin, 'there are two of us and only one of you.'

'Oh,' said the large man, 'I didn't see anyone behind you. Who is that with you?'

'Much,' said Robin.

'Ha! He doesn't look much to me!' laughed the large man, who had now reached half way across. 'Now give way please, or I'll have to fetch you a clout with my staff,' he said raising his long wooden staff.

At that point Robin took up his longbow, loaded an arrow and aimed it at the large man's chest. 'Now you give way my large fellow, or I shall loose this arrow,' said Robin sternly.

'Now, now, sir,' said the large man, 'this is not fair at all – is it? I have but my staff and you have a fine longbow and a deadly arrow. It is not fair, sir. Not fair at all.'

'What you say is true,' said Robin. 'Wait there while I go to the bank, find a sapling and cut myself a staff to match yours. Then we shall be evenly matched. It will be a fair fight.' So saying, Robin and Much went to the riverbank. Robin cut and trimmed a sapling of the right size and he was soon back on the bridge facing the large man.

'Now let us begin,' said Robin.

Just as Robin raised his staff, the large man did fetch Robin a clout that made his ears ring and head spin. Robin just had time to regain his senses when he felt a strong jab in the ribs that seemed to knock all the breath from him. Robin felt dizzy. Much looked alarmed as the large man swiped Robin sideways and into the stream.

'Splash!'

The icy water revived Robin's senses. He stood up, knee-deep in water. The large man laughed loudly, raised his staff and swung it down towards Robin's head. Robin just had time to step aside, grab the staff as it came down and drag the large man from the bridge into the water.

'Splash!'

Now Robin and Much were laughing. As the large man surfaced and stood up spluttering, he was laughing too!

'Well, indeed!' he said, 'it's a long time since anyone got the better of me. Tell me, sir, who is it that has bettered me today?'

'Sir Rob...' began Robin, 'I mean Robin, once of Locksley, now an outlaw. But who are you, my fine fellow?'

'Why, I'm Little. John Little of Beeston,' he said.

'Hmmm!' said Robin, 'you don't look little to me!'

With that both Robin and John started laughing again as they waded across the stream to join Much, who was also laughing with such force, his sides were aching as badly as Robin's.

.....

As they walked through Sherwood Forest on their way to the *Blue Boar Inn* John Little told Robin that he had been sent by a group of his friends to find Robin.

'But why, Little ...er, John?' asked Robin.

Much laughed, 'Little John... oh yes! That's the perfect name!'

'Well, if such a mite as you can be called Much, I don't see why I can't be Little John. So be it!' smiled Little John.

'But why did you come to find me, Little John?' Robin asked again.

'We heard how you stood up to the Sheriff and how you lost everything. Many people want to stand up to the Sheriff and his men, but one individual cannot do it alone. But if we look after each other, perhaps together we can improve things. We are looking to you to help us,' said Little John.

Robin and Little John talked all the way to the *Blue Boar Inn*. The inn looked inviting with its wooden walls and thatched roof with a long, thin plume of smoke coming from the chimney. There was the sound of laughter and a clatter of plates and pots echoing through the windows. Much saw his uncle unloading barrels from a cart and ran over to greet him.

As Little John and Robin walked past a group of horses and approached the bustling entrance to the inn, Robin pulled up his hood to shield his face. It was just in time, because as they entered the inn Little John and Robin walked straight into three of the Sheriff's guards. At that moment, Much ran in.

Because things were so plentiful, there was much more than Robin and his men needed, so they began to leave food at night at the homes of less fortunate villagers in the county.

'Robin!' he called. 'My uncle says...' but he stopped short as the inn went silent and he saw the three guards place their hands on their swords and look towards Little John and Robin.

'Robin, eh?' said the meanest-looking of the three. 'Robin who?'

Little John stepped forward, 'Robin... er,' he looked at his companion. 'Robin... er, Hood. Yes, that's him Robin Hood,' said Little John and smiled.

'Oh,' said a guard. 'we can't be too careful these days. Come on men. Back to the castle.'

Little John watched the guards leave and then quickly moved Robin to a table in a shadowy corner where he could not be seen easily. What was easy for Little John to see, however, was that it would be far too dangerous for all concerned for Robin to stay at the *Blue Boar Inn*.

Taking from the rich

It was six months later and a great deal had happened in Sherwood Forest. Winter had come and gone. Spring was moving towards summer. Robin, Little John and a group of about twenty had set up camp in the Vale of Hyde – a very secluded part of Sherwood Forest. The Vale had a series of dry sandstone caves along one side of it that Robin and his men had made their home. Furniture had been made from wood finely crafted by Bryce the carpenter who had also joined Robin's group from the village of Beeston.

One cave had been turned into a large kitchen with its larder filled with game that had been caught in the forest: venison, wild boar, pheasant, partridge, all manner of fish from the streams and rivers, hare and rabbit. They had bought barrels from Much's uncle and in another cave they brewed a light golden ale, which they called 'Sheriff's Ruin'. Every morning the comforting aroma of freshly baked bread wafted through the camp. As well as gathering fruit, berries and nuts that grew in the forest, the men had cleared areas of scrubland and had been growing their own vegetables. Robin had also bought some cows and goats that were grazed on the heathland.

Because things were so plentiful, there was much more than Robin and his men needed, so they began to leave food at night at the homes of less fortunate villagers in the county. At first villagers were amazed that fresh food appeared outside their doors, but after a while, it dawned on them just who might be providing them with the fruits of Sherwood Forest.

One bright summer morning, Robin called all his men together.

'Men, we are extremely fortunate. We live very well indeed,' said Robin. 'I want everyone in Nottinghamshire to live as well as we do – especially the poor folk living under the curse of the Sheriff.'

'Yes, of course!' said Little John, 'and we are already helping them by sharing our food and drink with the less fortunate.'

'You are right,' said Robin, 'but I wish to do more. I wish to help by inviting wealthy travellers to dine with us.'

There was uproar. Cries of 'What?' - 'No!' - 'Share with the wealthy?' filled the air.

When the commotion died down, Robin explained his plan and the more the men heard, the more they liked it. Every day very wealthy merchants, noblemen, traders on the way to market, merchants and clergy travelled the roads through Sherwood Forest. Robin proposed that they stop travellers and bring them to the camp and share a meal with them. Robin and his men would then invite the travellers to pay for their meal by sharing some of their own good fortune with Robin and his men.

'And what we get from our guests,' concluded Robin, 'we give to the poor.' The cheer that went up startled a flock of wood pigeons in a nearby tree.

A meal is prepared

Before they could invite their guests, Robin and his men had certain preparations to make. They posted lookouts on a number of the main routes through Sherwood Forest and took note of when, where and how folk travelled. They also searched out narrower, more secluded parts of the tracks that could easily be used for ambush.

They disguised good strong ropes with fern leaves across paths between trees that could be pulled up to block riders and startle horses. They made platforms in the trees, hidden by branches and dense leaves, from which the men could jump and capture guests. Finally, they made some thick blindfolds for their guests – nobody wanted the guests to know the secret location of the camp.

When all was ready, Robin announced, 'Tomorrow, we invite our first guests'...

Early in the morning, long before daybreak Rowan the farmer had left home near Mapperley headed for the market in Nottingham. He had spent the previous evening loading his cart with fruit and vegetables. The cart fairly groaned under the weight of the load. The two chestnut horses pulling the cart snuffed and coughed with the effort. Their breath sent clouds of steam into the chill early morning air.

Things had been going very well for Rowan. The harvest had been very good, Spring had come early and his new crops had ripened well. But things did not, perhaps, go so well as he drove his cart between two tall oak trees. 'Whoosh!' In a cloud of bracken and leaves three stout ropes shot up across the path of his horses. They reared and whinnied. 'Whoah!' cried Rowan as three men clad in Lincoln green jumped down from the trees into the cart.

'Good morrow fair traveller!' said Little John.

'Help!' said Rowan. 'If you mean to rob me, please take all you need. I ask only that you spare my life, so that I might return home to care for my wife and children.'

'Dear fellow,' said Little John, 'we mean you no harm. We simply ask that you come and dine with us. But we ask that you wear this blindfold as our forest home is secret.'

'In that case,' said Rowan, 'lead the way. It has been many hours since I had my breakfast...'

In another part of Sherwood Forest, Robin Hood and his men waited silently in the trees. It was not long before they heard the sound of three horses approaching at speed. 'I think we will also need the net,' said Robin to his men as the three riders approached.

'Whoosh!' – up went the ropes. One horse reared so high its rider clattered to the forest floor. The net was thrown down covering men and horses. Heavy logs at the corners weighed down the net.

'Be still, or die!' commanded Robin. 'Throw down your weapons!'

The men did as they were told. It was as his men were untangling the captives that Robin saw he had captured not only two of the Sheriff's guards, but also Sir Guy of Gisbourne.

'Well,' said Robin, 'good morrow, Sir Guy. What brings you here?'

'Nothing, Locksley!' said Sir Guy angrily. Robin noticed that as Sir Guy replied, he had shot a brief glance at the saddlebags on his horse. They looked stuffed full of something. Robin looked at the saddlebags on the other two horses, which were also bulging fit to burst.

'I'm glad you and your companions have nothing to do, because we are inviting you to dine with us.'

'I am on the Sheriff's business,' said Sir Guy, 'I am loyal to the Sheriff and to Prince John – as you should be Locksley.'

'Loyalty grows out of respect, Sir Guy,' replied Robin. 'Both loyalty and respect have to be earned and I respect neither the Sheriff, nor Prince John. Nor you, Sir Guy.'

'You must really hate Normans,' said Sir Guy.

'I hate no man, nor woman – Norman or Saxon,' said Robin. 'What I hate is injustice.'

With that Robin's men blindfolded Sir Guy and his guards and they were led with their horses to the camp deep in the forest.

Food for thought

Everyone – Robin, his men and their guests were back at the camp in the Vale of Hyde. The air was filled with the heavy aromas of fine food: roast venison, wild boar and pheasant. Pewter bowls of steaming boiled, baked and roasted vegetables were on the large wooden table at the centre of the clearing.

'Welcome one and all!' said Robin. 'Let us eat, drink and be merry!'

Rowan the farmer was delighted. He ate and drank heartily. Everyone was feasting and happy. Everyone, that is, except for Sir Guy of Gisbourne.

'Not hungry, Sir Guy?' asked Robin kindly.

'Do you really expect me to eat and drink stolen food with you and your men Locksley?' scorned Sir Guy.

'None of this is stolen,' said Robin. 'True, we have hunted in Sherwood Forest, but there is more than enough game for the Sheriff, the barons, knights and even Prince John himself if he came here. There is also more than enough for all the men and women in Nottinghamshire. Sherwood Forest once belonged to everyone and I hope it will again. As for the vegetables, we grew them. The ale we brewed and the bread

we baked. There is nothing stolen here.'

'So you've created a comfortable life just for you and your outlaw friends in the forest,' said Sir Guy, 'and you let the others pay taxes and serve the Sheriff?'

'Far from it,' said Robin. 'There is far more here than we need. We also give food to the weak and needy. My men have also helped villagers when they needed help harvesting, or building.'

'You are a strange man Locksley,' said Sir Guy.

'Strange?' said Robin, 'just because I care about the weak and the poor?'

'No,' said Sir Guy, 'strange because you actually want to do something about it. You have defied my lord Sheriff and it has cost you your title, your home, your land and you are now a hunted outlaw. You could have lived a comfortable, safe and wealthy life. You have lost everything and now you want to help the weak and the poor. Where's your reward in all this?'

'Reward?' asked Robin. 'Sir Guy, you just do not understand – do you?'

'I understand that you are now an outlaw in the eyes of the Sheriff,' said Sir Guy.

Robin looked long and hard at Sir Guy and said, 'Is it a crime to fight injustice, to be charitable, to protect the weak, and be loyal to King Richard?'

Sir Guy said nothing but looked down at the ground.

'Well my friends,' said Robin, 'we have dined well. Now it is time for the reckoning. Put simply, we ask our guests to help us to contribute to the poor of Nottinghamshire. You dine with us and you pay us what you can afford for what you think your meal is worth.'

'What an excellent idea!' said Rowan the farmer, 'I've had a delicious meal. My crops have done well for the past few years. I am happy to give to you and your men half the contents of my cart over there and...'

'Only half!' sneered Sir Guy.

'If you had let me finish, Sir Guy, what I was about to say was,' said Rowan, 'and the other half I'll gladly give to the poor at the market.'

'You're a splendid, fellow!' said Robin. 'Tell me – how much do you think the contents of your cart would be worth if you had sold them?'

'About ten silver pennies,' said Rowan.

'In that case, here are fifteen silver pennies,' said Robin giving him the coins. 'Take your cart to market and give all the food to the poor.'

'Why thank you kind sir. I will,' said Rowan. 'So all the stories of your kindness and good deeds are true.'

Turning to Sir Guy, Robin asked, 'And you, Sir Guy, what can you afford?'

'Unfortunately,' smiled Sir Guy, 'I have but a silver penny or two and the guards carry no money.'

'Really, is that so?' said Robin. 'Little John, be so kind as to take two men and bring over the saddlebags from Sir Guy's horses.'

Little John did as he was asked, but not without some difficulty. As big as he was, he only just managed to carry two saddlebags. The others lifted one bag between them.

'Stop that immediately,' snapped Sir Guy. 'The bags contain important papers I am taking to Prince John for the Sheriff.'

'Hmmm...' said Robin, 'they are mightily heavy papers'. At that point, one of the two men carrying a saddlebag dropped his end of the bag. The bag crashed to the ground, burst and hundreds of silver pennies flooded out.

'Very well,' said Sir Guy, 'we were secretly taking taxes collected by the Sheriff to Prince John. We thought that if we travelled fast as a small group, we would not be noticed by robbers that might attack a slow armoured cart and convoy of guards. Clearly, we were wrong.'

'Well,' said Robin, 'as this money once belonged to the good folk of Nottingham, I think it is our duty to give it back, where it is needed most. Don't you?'

There was an enormous cheer and a deafening chorus of 'Yes!' from all present – except, of course, from Sir Guy of Gisbourne.

Afterword

Robin Hood and his men entertained many more guests and had many adventures over the following years. The stories tell how he won a silver arrow, the title of *Finest Archer in all England* and outwitted the Sheriff in the process. Robin and his men became a symbol of charity and justice for the poor of England.

Sadly, King Richard I never came home. He was killed in France in 1199 and his brother John became king and ruled for over fifteen years. He was as ruthless as ever. During this time, the knights and barons of England came to understand the injustices in their country, just as Robin Hood had.

In 1215, the barons forced King John to sign the *Magna Carta*, possibly the most important legal document in the history of England: it gave the forests and rivers back to the people. It brought trial by jury into Law, so that no longer could the King, or men like the Sheriff of Nottingham, impose sentences on people unfairly.

King John died in 1216. Robin Hood has lived on for almost a thousand years in poems, songs, stories and films, as well as in the hearts of people who believe in justice and charity.

Robin Hood — Glossary

Characters

Sir Robin of Locksley	Knight at the court of King Richard I, outlawed and known as Robin Hood
King Richard I	King of England called Richard the Lionheart
Prince John	Brother to King Richard, ruled England in Richard's absence
Sheriff of Nottingham	Governed Nottingham for the King
Sir Guy of Gisbourne	Supporter of the Sheriff
Much	The miller's son
John Little	Known as Little John, he is one of Robin's men

The Story

apothecary	a pharmacist, visited poor people instead of doctors
balms	ointments
Beeston	a village near Nottingham
canopy	cover
chattels	belongings
chestnut	brown
courteously	politely
Crown	the king and his royal family
game	food from wild animals such as deer, wild boar, pheasant
Lammas	an old festival day on 1 August
Magna Carta	The Great Charter of the Liberties of England the first legal document imposed upon a king of England to limit his power
Mapperley	a village near Nottingham
matins	church service of morning prayer
mite	tiny creature
of law	and to protect people's rights
Pewter	a silver-grey metal used for plates, bowl and tankards
plume	column or trail
reckoning	the bill
sapling	a young, thin tree
sire	the old form of 'sir'
staff	a strong wooden pole used for walking and as a weapon
trill	a song of high notes
trundling	moving slowly and rumbling