

Robin Hood

Robin Hood was born in 1170 in Edwinstowe, North Notts. His parents are unknown except for their names, Robert and Judith. It was rumoured that Robin's father was wealthy and owned land but that was taken from them when Robin was young.

As a young man, Robin became very good at archery – practising for many hours. There were no schools when Robin was growing up but Robin would use what is now Wollaton Park to practice his forest skills. His family, after losing their land near Edwinstowe, moved to near the old Beechdale swimming baths – Robin would live here until he was 19 and is where he first met, and fell in love with, Maid Marian. He joined the King's army in 1189 and travelled the world before returning to Nottingham in 1193.

It was at this time Robin was outlawed by the Sheriff of Nottingham – banished from living in the town and forced to live in the forest – for standing up for some people who were being treated unfairly. It was at this time he met his companions like Little John – when they fought on a cross of the River Leen at Bulwell Bogs. This is also when he met his cousin Will Scarlett in Clifton – helping Will to save the winter stores of the villagers that the Sherriff was trying to steal.

In 1194, Robin disguised himself and entered the Sheriff's Golden Arrow archery competition (held on what is now The Forest Recreation Ground and Arboretum) and won. He shared his prize money with local people who were struggling to afford food in nearby Hyson Green.

After the Golden Arrow, Robin continued to help people by stealing gold and jewels from wealthy people travelling for Nottingham to York along the King's Road (We now know this as Mansfield Road – the A60 – which runs through Sherwood), using this to buy food and blankets for those who needed them.

After the Golden Arrow, Robin was captured by the Sherriff after attending church in the Lace Market (St Mary's) and imprisoned in dungeons below the Castle. He was rescued by Little John, Will Scarlet and Mia, the Miller's Daughter – evading the Sherriff's men by using what later became known as Robin Hood's Chase in St Ann's.

After nearly twenty years of robbing the rich and giving to the poor, in 1212, Robin was hiding in Kirklees Abbey in Yorkshire when he was tricked by the Prioress, Elizabeth de Staynton, who gave him poisoned soup. As he died, with the help of Little John, he fired one last arrow from the window of his room. Little John buried Robin on the spot where this last arrow had landed.