

The Legend of Robin Hood

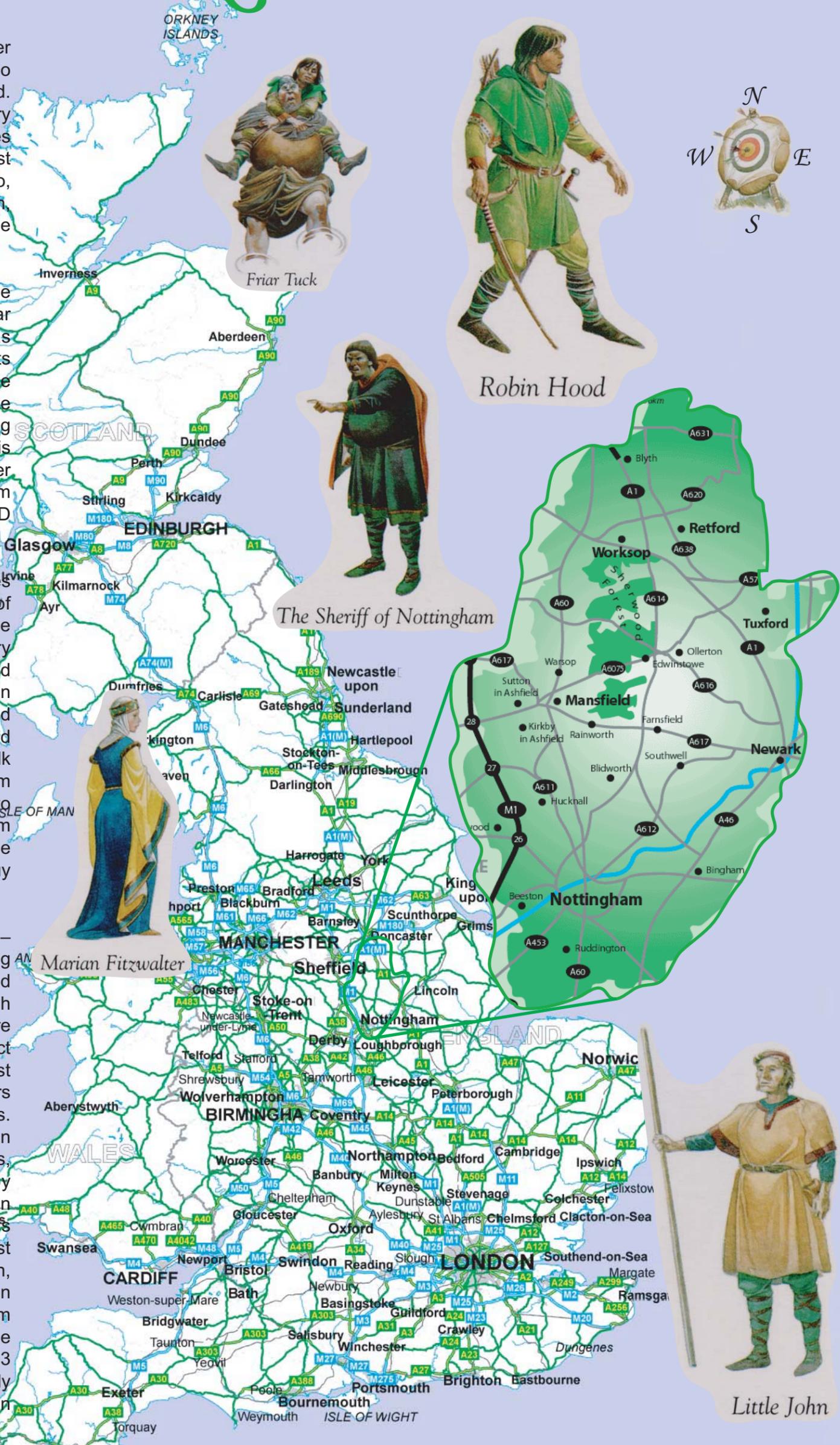
Who was Robin Hood? Did he ever exist or was he just a fairy tale? No one really knows if he truly existed. But, that has not stopped the story from living on throughout the ages – a legend that continues to persist to this day of the noble outlaw who, did not rob for his personal gain, but helped fight for justice for the common folk of medieval England.

Historically, Robin Hood cannot be pinpointed to any one particular time period. His name has appeared on various manuscripts as early as 12th century A.D. The most generally accepted time period is during the reign of King Richard I (The Lionheart) and his disloyal and cruel younger brother Prince John. They reigned from 1189-99 and 1199-1216 AD respectively.

Although some of his adventures took place outside the area of Sherwood Forest, it is still the accepted area of his legendary exploits. What makes the legend live on is the character of Robin and his merry men. Robin disliked people of authority who misused their power over the common folk in medieval England. He stole from the rich and gave to the poor to curb the suffering wrought on them from people like Prince John, the Sheriff of Nottingham and Sir Guy of Gisbourne.

Robin Hood, or Robert Locksley – Earl of Huntingdon prior to being made an outlaw, has been passed on through the generations through stories and ballads. Although there is some disagreement as the exact date of Robin Hood being first mentioned in print, some scholars suggest that was in the late 1300's. From that time, Robin has been sung about by wandering minstrels, his adventures performed by playgroups and at festivals and in 1909, over 600 years later, his exploits finally arrive for the first time on film in England. Since then, Hollywood has used Robin Hood in many films including the classic film starring Errol Flynn in 1938, the great Disney animation of 1973 with Robin portrayed appropriately as a fox, to the new face of Robin Hood by Kevin Costner in 1991.

This is one legend that will never die, even though the historical Robert Locksley died in 1247 and is buried at Kirklees, Nottinghamshire.



Here, underneath this little stone
Lies Robert, Earl of Huntingdon
No archer was as he so good
And people called him Robin Hood
Such outlaws as he and his men
Will England never see again

Sources

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- 2: <http://www.nottinghamshiretourism.co.uk/travel/bigview.htm>
- 3: <http://www.nottinghamshiretourism.co.uk/index.htm>
- 4: <http://www.geocities.com/puckrobin/rh/>
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