



Robin Hood: Myth, History & Culture

Nick Rennison

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An informative, lively guide through the rich mythology of Robin Hood, across all mediums

Everyone knows the story of England's greatest folk hero, the outlaw who robbed from the rich and gave to the poor. This highly entertaining book begins with the search for the historical Robin, looking at the candidates for the "real Robin Hood" who have been proposed over the years, from petty thieves to Knights Templar, before moving on to examine the many ways in which he has been portrayed in literature and onscreen. He began as the hero of dozens of late medieval ballads, appeared in plays by contemporaries of Shakespeare, and in the Romantic era was reinvented by Walter Scott as a Saxon champion in the struggle against the Normans. During the 19th century, Robin Hood emerged as a hero in children's literature, while more recently he has been portrayed as everything from proto-socialist man of the people to anarchist thug. In the cinema he put in an appearance as early as 1908 and Douglas Fairbanks and then Errol Flynn turned him into the typical hero of Hollywood swashbucklers. In the last 20 years, Kevin Costner and Russell Crowe have provided their own very different interpretations of the character. On the small screen, Robin has been the hero of half a dozen TV shows from the 1950s series starring Richard Greene, which used many writers blacklisted by Hollywood, via the well-remembered Robin of Sherwood in the 1980s, to the recent BBC series. Robin Hood is still very much with us, as the subject of graphic novels and computer games. Robin is an archetypal hero who, it seems, can never die. This engaging book charts his life so far.

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