



LANGUAGE LEVEL: **BASIC**

THE REAL ROBIN HOOD?

THE TRUTH BEHIND THE LEGEND

Robin Hood es una leyenda universal, a la que cada año la ciudad de Nottingham dedica un gran festival. Pero ¿qué hay detrás de este personaje del siglo XIV?

Robin Hood is back at Nottingham Castle this month: the evil¹ Sheriff has captured Maid Marion and only Robin can save her. This is all part of the Robin Hood Pageant² which takes place on the weekend of October 25th and 26th. Robin Hood is still very popular today, his courage and brilliance are legendary, but did he actually exist?

WHO WAS HE?

Historians have searched court records³ for Robin Hood without success. They have discovered that criminals often adopted the names

of Robin and his men, so 'Robynhod' became a synonym for criminal.

Hood is still associated with criminals: in 1930s American slang, gangsters were called hoods; while today we have hoodies – young criminals who wear hoods⁴ that cover their faces.

Robin Hood first appears in 14th century ballads which tell of a yeoman Robin⁵ who became an outlaw⁶, similar to modern heroes like Jesse James. Robin became popular because he broke the strict hunting laws⁷ introduced by William the Conqueror. One theory suggests he was a follower of Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester,

who died in a rebellion against King Henry III in 1265.

MAID MARION

The modern version of the Robin Hood legend transforms him into the Earl of Huntingdon, a Saxon aristocrat, who robs from the tyrannical Norman aristocracy to help the poor, common people. These ideas were literary inventions added in the 16th century. Marion, his true love, is also a later invention.

It's impossible to discover the truth today: experts suggest, however, a real Robin Hood did exist, but was soon forgotten, and that the legend took on a life of its own⁸.

Hollywood

On April 14th last year, 165 people in Robin Hood costumes met outside Nottingham Castle and set a new world record.

The BBC have made several Robin Hood series over the years;

the latest, in 2006, starred Jonas Armstrong and was a great success.

There have been many famous films of the legend, such as Errol Flynn's *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938) and Kevin Costner's *Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves* (1991). Ridley Scott will soon direct *Nottingham* (2009), which will show Robin Hood as less virtuous. The film stars Russell Crowe as the Sheriff of Nottingham.



GLOSSARY

- 1 **EVIL:** malvado
- 2 **PAGEANT:** festival, espectáculo
- 3 **HAVE SEARCHED COURT RECORDS:** han buscado en los registros judiciales
- 4 **HOOD:** capucha
- 5 **TELL OF A YEOMAN ROBIN:** hablan de un vasallo llamado Robin
- 6 **OUTLAW:** fugitivo
- 7 **HE BROKE THE STRICT HUNTING LAWS:** infringió las severas leyes de caza
- 8 **THE LEGEND TOOK ON A LIFE OF ITS OWN:** la leyenda tomó vida propia
- 9 **TO JOUST:** pelear o combatir en las justas
- 10 **TO JUGGLE:** hacer malabarismos
- 11 **PUPPET SHOW:** espectáculo de marionetas
- 12 **TEST THEIR SKILLS AT ARCHERY:** practicar el tiro con arco