

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Robin Hood and Queen Katherine 3

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STOUT Robin Hood, a most lusty out-law,
As ever yet lived in this land,
As ever yet lived in this land.
His equal I'm sure you never yet saw,
So valiant was he of his hand,
So valiant was he of his hand.

No archers could ever compare with these three,
Although from us they are gone;
The like was never, nor never will be,
To Robin Hood, Scarlet and John.

Many stout robberies by these men were done,
Within this our kingdom so wide;
Vpon the highway much treasure they have won,
No one that his purse ere deny'd.

Great store of money they from the kings men
Couragiously did take away;
Vnto fair Queen Katherine they gave it again,
Who to them these words did say.

If that I live but another fair year,
Kind Robin Hood, said the fair queen,
The love for this courtesie that I thee bear,
Assure thy self it shall be seen.

Brave Robin Hood courteously thanked her Grace,
And so took leave of the queen;
He with his bold archers then hied him apace,
In summer time, to the woods green.

`Now wend we together, my merry men all,
To the green wood to take up our stand:'
These archers were ready at Robin Hoods call,
With their bent bows all in their hand.

`Come, merrily let us now valiantly go
With speed unto the green wood,
And there let us kill a stout buck or a do,
For our master, Robin Hood.'

At London must now be a game of shooting,
Where archers should try their best skill;
It was so commanded by their gracious king;
The queen then thought to have her will.

Her little foot-page she sent with all speed,
To find out stout Robin Hood,
Who in the North bravely did live, as we read,
With his bow-men in the green wood.

When as this young page unto the North came,
He staid under a hill at his inn;
Within the fair town of sweet Nottingham,
He there to enquire did begin.

The page then having enquired aright
The way unto Robin Hoods place,
As soon as the page had obtained of him sight,
He told him strange news from her Grace.

`Her Majestie praies you to haste to the court,'
And therewithall shewd him her ring;
We must not delay his swift haste to this sport,
Which then was proclaimd by the king.

Then Robin Hood hies him with all speed he may,
With his fair men attired in green,
And towards fair London he then takes his way;
His safety lay all on the queen.

Now Robin Hood welcome was then to the court,
Queen Katharine so did allow;
Now listen, my friends, and my song shal report
How the queen performed her vow.

The king then went marching in state with his peers
To Finsbury field most gay,
Where Robin Hood follows him, void of all fears,
With his lusty brave shooters that day.

The king did command that the way should be
Straight mete with a line that was good;
The answer was made to him presently,
By lusty bold Robin Hood.

`Let there be no mark measured,' then said he soon;
`I,' so said Scarlet and John,
`For we will shoot to the sun or the moon;
We scorn to be outreacht with none.'

`What shall the wager be?' then said the queen,
`Pray tell me before you begin:'
`Three hundred tuns of good wine shall be seen,
And as much of strong bear for to win.

`Three hundred of lusty fat bucks, sweet, beside,
Shall now be our royal lay:'
Quoth Robin Hood, What ere does betide,
I'll bear this brave purchase away.

`Full fifteenscore,' saith the king, 'it shall be;'
Then straight did the bow-men begin,
And Robin Hoods side gave them leave certainly
A while some credit to win.

The royal queen Katharine aloud cried she,
Is here no lord, nor yet knight,
That will take my part in this bold enmity?
Sir Robert Lee, pray do me right.

Then to the bold Bishop of Herefordshire
Most mildly spoke our good queen;
But he straight refused to lay any more,
Such ods on their parties were seen.

`What wilt thou bet, seeing our game is the worse?'
Unto him then said Robin Hood:
`Why then,' quoth the bishop, aell that's in my purse;'
Quoth Scarlet, That bargain is good.

`A hundred good pounds there is in the same,'
The bishop unto him did say;
Then said Robin Hood, Now here's for the game,
And to bear this your money away.

Then did the kings archer his arrows command
Most bravely and with great might,
But brave jolly Robin shot under his hand,
And then did hit the mark right.

And Clifton he then, with his arrow so good,
The willow-wood cleaved in two;
The Miller's young son came not short, by the rood,
His skill he most bravely did show.

Thus Robin Hood and his crew won the rich prize,
From all archers that there could be;
Then loudly unto the king Queen Katherine cries,

Forgive all my company!

The king then did say, that for forty daies,
Free leave then to come or go,
For any man there, though he got the praise,
'Be he friend,' quoth he, 'or be he foe.'

Then quoth the queen, Welcome thou art, Robin Hood,
And welcome, brave bow-men all three;
Then straight quoth the king, I did hear, by the rood,
That slain he was in the countrey.

'Is this Robin Hood?' the bishop did say,
'Is this Robin Hood certainly?
He made me to say him mass last Saturday,
To him and his bold yeomendry.'

'Well,' quoth Robin Hood, 'in requital thereof,
Half thy gold I give unto thee;
'Nay, nay,' then said Little John in a scoff,
"Twill serue us ith' North Countrey.'

Then Robin Hood pardon had straight of the king,
And so had they every one;
The fame of these days most loudly does ring,
Of Robin Hood, Scarlet and John.

Great honours to Robin Hood after were done,
As stories for certain do say;
The king made him Earl of fair Huntington,
Whose fame will never decay.

Thus have you heard the fame of these men,
Good archers they were every one;
We never shal see the like shooters again
As Robin Hood, Scarlet and John.

Child #145
Version C in Child
LMP
July01