

# Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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## Robin Hood and the Bishop

Robin Hood and the Bishop

COME, gentlemen all, and listen a while,  
Hey down down an a down  
And a story I'll to you unfold;  
I'll tell you how Robin Hood served the Bishop,  
When he robbed him of his gold.

As it fell out on a sun-shining day,  
When Phebus was in his prime,  
Then Robin Hood, that archer good,  
In mirth would spend some time.

And as he walked the forrest along,  
Some pastime for to spy,  
There was he aware of a proud bishop,  
And all his company.

'O what shall I do?' said Robin Hood then,  
'If the Bishop he doth take me,  
No mercy he'll show unto me, I know,  
But hanged I shall be.'

Then Robin was stout, and turned him about,  
And a little house there he did spy;  
And to an old wife, for to save his life,  
He loud began for to cry.

'Why, who art thou?' said the old woman,  
'Come tell it to me for good!'  
'I am an out-law, as many do know,  
My name it is Robin Hood.

'And yonder's the Bishop and all his men,  
And if that I taken be,  
Then day and night he'll work me spight,  
And hanged I shall be.'

'If thou be Robin Hood,' said the old wife,  
'As thou dost seem to be,  
I'll for thee provide, and thee I will hide  
From the Bishop and his company.

'For I well remember, one Saturday night

Thou bought me both shoos and hose;  
Therefore I'll provide thy person to hide,  
And keep thee from thy foes.'

`Then give me soon thy coat of gray,  
And take thou my mantle of green;  
Thy spindle and twine to me resign,  
And take thou my arrows so keen.'

And when that Robin Hood was so araid,  
He went straight to his company;  
With his spindle and twine, he oft lookt behind  
For the Bishop and his company.

`O who is yonder,' quoth Little John,  
`That now comes over the lee?  
An arrow I will at her let flie,  
So like an old witch looks she.'

`O hold thy hand, hold thy hand,' said Robin then,  
`And shoot not thy arrows so keen;  
I am Robin Hood, thy master good,  
And quickly it shall be seen,'

The Bishop he came to the old womans house,  
And he called with furious mood,  
`Come let me soon see, and bring unto me,  
That traitor Robin Hood.'

The old woman he set on a milk-white steed,  
Himselfe on a dapple-gray,  
And for joy he had got Robin Hood,  
He went laughing all the way.

But as they were riding the forrest along,  
The Bishop he chanc'd for to see  
A hundred brave bow-men bold  
Stand under the green-wood tree.

`O who is yonder,' the Bishop then said,  
`That's ranging within yonder wood?'  
`Marry,' says the old woman, `I think it to be  
A man calld Robin Hood.'

`Why, who art thou,' the Bishop he said,  
`Which I have here with me?'  
`Why, I am an old woman, thou cuckoldly bishop;  
Lift up my leg and see.'

`Then woe is me,' the Bishop he said,  
`That ever I saw this day!'  
He turnd hum about, but Robin so stout  
Calld him, and bid him stay.

Then Robin took hold of the Bishops horse,  
And ty'd him fast to a tree;  
Then Little John smil'd his master upon,  
For joy of that company.

Robin Hood took his mantle from 's back,  
And spread it upon the ground,  
And out of the Bishops portmantle he  
Soon told five hundred pound.

`So now let him go,' said Robin Hood;  
Said Little John, That may not be;  
For I vow and protest he shall sing us a mass  
Before that he goe from me.

Then Robin Hood took the Bishop by the hand,  
And bound him fast to a tree,  
And made him sing a mass, God wot,  
To him and his yeomandree.

And then they brought him through the wood,  
And set him on his dapple-gray,  
And gave the tail within his hand,  
And bade him for Robin Hood pray.

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