

# ROBIN NURUDDIN HOOD

**H**e sprawled exhausted against the tree and let fly with his last arrow, possibly the most famous arrow ever to be loosed from bow in England.

“Where it falls there bury me,” he faintly gasped so that all had to lean closer to catch the words, but then he spoke with unanticipated force, “As a Muslim, mind!” and they nodded their heads. Thus passed away one of the great men indeed of the English, Robin Nuruddin Hood, and it is my task to put right the record on the man which has been so maliciously altered.

My name is Abdullah Tuck, his Imam many a long year in the wonderful forest of Sherwood, perhaps the most beautiful mosque in the world, certainly the only one I’ve seen, so I have no real means of comparing to know.

The men went and found the arrow. A party have gone with shovels to dig, carrying his blessed body which is so light and sweet in death as never did I see the like of. And

the abbot of my first ordaining, how heavy in comparison, how quick to rot and how glad were we to see him under the soil. But let me go back to the beginning of the story while they are away and use my scrivener's training for this one last task to tell the true story of noble Robin Hood which otherwise may never be told in truth.

'Twas while serving in far and distant lands his king, he that is called Richard the Lionheart though Cravenheart did we come to call him, that my Master Nuruddin got the name that I will call him by at that point in the narrative which suits. Robin, as then he was, went not as many a merry adventurer and freebooter for pillage, rape and spoils, but driven by a longing to see the Holy Land where the Messiah, peace be upon him, had walked upon its soil. True he also accepted, what all of us had been told from the cradle, that Mahometans were infidels, enemies of our Lord and truly worthy of extermination. Yet Robin, ever a tenderhearted being, most passionately longed for their conversion to the 'true' faith, as indeed did many a noble knight.

Yet, strange to say, a coincidence set him off on his path, on a very different footing from what he had imaged. By a marvellous chance he had cause to visit the learned Abbot of a monastery not far from the lands of his noble father. The revered old man was steeped in lore of both the ancients and the Bible; he was a reservoir of Greek knowledge, Syriac, Aramaic, Hebrew and other learning that few others of any age master. And still the old man remained strangely unsatisfied. His learning