



Robin Hood and His Merry Outlaws

J. Walker McSpadden , Michael J. Marshall (Editor)

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From the Introduction

Two heroes from the Middle Ages still stir our imaginations. One is King Arthur, with his knights of the Round Table. The other is Robin Hood, with his band of forest outlaws. King Arthur and his knights live at court. They go into the dark woods when they are after adventure. But forests hold no danger to Robin Hood and his men. Sherwood Forest is their home, and they feel safe there. The King Arthur stories tell of the mighty noblemen who rule. The Robin Hood stories tell of common men who defy their masters and rule themselves.

Robin Hood and His Merry Outlaws Details

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Author : J. Walker McSpadden , Michael J. Marshall (Editor)

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From Reader Review Robin Hood and His Merry Outlaws for online ebook

Jon says

This was an enjoyable enough book. At first I was hoping Robin Hood would get what's coming to him due to the way he randomly accosted strangers in the beginning, but eventually he grows on you and becomes more likable. This version is set up more like a collection of short stories than one larger novel.

Chris Keefe says

Delightful escapism, with a bent for mild violence. A stereotypical "book for boys", but a whole lot of fun.

Mellanie C says

Great story, with luminous illustrations by the amazing Greg Hildebrandt.

Bobby says

Three stars for the overly abridged McSpadden version of the story (bite-sized chapters aimed at younger readers or for bedtime storytime), but five stars for the wonderful painting illustrations by the great Greg Hildebrandt, the reason I bought this edition. Famous for his and his brother's Tolkein illustrations of the 1970s, Hildebrandt brings the same Old Master lighting, emotion, and fantastic characterizations to these medieval Robin Hood folktales set in the deep Sherwood Forest and castle locations.

Huda Aweys says

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Bethany says

Unlike many Robin Hood books aimed at children, McSpadden's telling does not focus on a single episode from the legends, instead devoting about a full-text page to each tale. Interestingly, because this book is adapted from a novel a great deal more detail about the beginning and end of Robin's life is included in the telling. The reader is actually given a good idea when the stories are set and it is explained why Robin lives as an outlaw, which is a rarity in adaptations aimed at children.

Though providing historical context and background, the telling is neither dry nor dull. Even though each of Robin Hood's best-known tales are given but a page to be told, many details are introduced and then brought up again, keeping the episodic tales from feeling disjointed and disconnected. The adaptation of McSpadden's prose does not shy away from informing readers that Robin killed a man in his youth, nor from marking the deaths of kings or the unfortunate events near the end of Robin's life. (view spoiler)

I have always intended to cut out Hildebrandt's illustrations and use them as wall art, but I cannot bring myself to damage the book, despite owning multiple copies, but it is the truth that Hildebrandt's artwork is breathtaking and even if McSpadden had gotten everything wrong, the book would still be worth reading for the illustrations alone.

Of course, the writing is fine, but as implied previously, what sells this version is undeniably Greg Hildebrandt's artwork. His depictions of major and minor characters are like enough to the stereotypes created by Errol Flynn and Howard Pyle that no one should have any question about who they're looking at, but at the same time they are uniquely his own interpretations (for instance, Hildebrandt's Robin is a well-built strawberry blond and Pyle's is a slender brunette). The techniques he uses to illuminate and shade his artwork does much to add to the tone of the words, the Golden Age and Dark Times shading put a reader unconsciously in the right mood for the story being told on the opposite page.

Valerie says

I plan on reading more retellings of Robin Hood so I figured why not read the original? Or at least one of the *more* original ones. This is why I read it, and also it is a free e-book. I hope the retellings are better. Not that this was bad. It just felt like a lot of short stories about the same person. And short stories are never my favorite. The stories were interesting but too simplistic for me.

Some of the chapters felt kind of repetitive even though they are all different and set up in a sequence of time; from the start of Robin Hood to the end of his tale. Robin recruits quite a few merry men like this: first telling the man to give him their money or something equally demanding, second the man refuses, third they start fighting while both characters are surprised by their opponent's skills, and fourth Robin usually has to call on his merry men because he is losing and then offers the yeoman to join them. There was a lot of fighting but it was not in a way that I felt like I was involved in it (i.e. I didn't feel like I was watching the action in my head). Perhaps this is a result of my lack of imagination but I kind of felt like I was just being told that it was a great duel instead of actually thinking it was. Not all the chapters are like this but there were more than three I'm pretty sure.

Also, and I hate to say this, but Robin Hood doesn't seem as noble as I wanted him to be. There wasn't so much giving to the poor as recruiting men, duping the sheriff and bishop, and killing the king's game. It does show Robin and his men giving to the poor a few times but nothing that's really heart warming.

There is this one part where Robin catches a man about to kill a deer or something and Robin feels possessiveness over the game. He stops the man from killing it and acts like he owns the forest and all the game in it. This I don't get, since he and his men are killing game that belongs to the king but no one else can?

In any case it was not bad just not what I was hoping for. Some of the tales were actually interesting but I just couldn't get into it.

Carina says

I really did like this retelling of the classic tale of Robin Hood. It was just how I would have pictured it, and I even learned something about the plot that I hadn't known before. I recommend this for anyone who wants a light read, as this is a nice quick to read book.

Jerricka Habib says

I used the Readercoin app to listen to this book. I don't like that the audio speed can't be changed because the narrator spoke slowly. Anyways, this book was very repetitive. I realized every chapter ends the same and there is hardly any "stealing from the rich and giving to the poor" that I grew up hearing. He picked a lot of fights and when he was close to losing would call on his merry men to save him. He's a fantastic shot with a bow and arrow but that seems to be all.

Angela Blount says

A delightful short-story collection recounting the origins and legendary escapades of England's most famous outlaw.

Aside from the anthropomorphic Disney version, and the occasional satire, this reader's Robin Hood experience was pretty limited. I was pleasantly surprised at how enjoyable this read turned out to be. Robin Hood himself is a wry, puckish character with a consistent moral code and a boyish sort of enthusiasm for freedom. With unparalleled charisma and a knack for improvisation under pressure, his skill in archery is nearly eclipsed by his sheer guile.

The way in which he gradually assembles his loyal band of Merry Men was continually amusing. New recruits were, in most cases, either men who'd been sent to collect a bounty on him--whom he won over through wily charm and chivalry...or they were initially targets of his sanctimonious thievery who proved formidable enough to match or even best him. Perhaps the most endearing part about Robin Hood was the fact that he wasn't invincible. The cocksure rogue gets taken down a notch on several occasions, and generally accepts these knocks to his pride with grace and optimism. Regarding his conflict with the Sheriff and Bishop, however, he is a tireless crusader against injustice.

A certain adolescent machismo runs thick through the whole of it, but in the most authentic and era-appropriate way possible. Good men can solve most of their problems though:

- a.) A rousing stick fight.
- b.) A ~~pissing~~ archery contest.
- c.) Disguising themselves and misleading their foes.

This reader's favorite element was actually found in the characterization of Maid Marion. The long-pined-for childhood playmate of Robin Hood, theirs is a pure and endearing sort of relationship. While she doesn't appear in many of the stories, Marion shows up often enough to assert she can hold her own in spite of societal expectations. She's no weepy damsel in distress. Not only does she prove to be an equal to Robin, her bravery very likely saves him and his men on more than one occasion.

Really, this classic was close to a 4 ½ star. The only detraction this reviewer made was purely one of personal taste. I wasn't a fan of the hurried summary that made up the final story, touching on the end of Robin's life. It didn't feel particularly fitting or satisfying as a conclusion. Then again...it may simply not be the ending I'd hoped for.

Callie says

"I like the adventure and I like the action and I thought it was pretty cool. I like the rescues and I like Robin Hood in general and I need to watch the movie. Robin Hood is the son of a noble, his lands get taken away because he's so nice and he gives money to the poor. All the nobles hate him because he's nice. One day he goes to Nottingham fair and shoots a deer and gets in trouble with the foresters and then he shoots the head forester and he hides in Sherwood Forest. Then he gathers a band of other outlaws and they go on pretty cool rescues and take lots of money from the rich and give it to the poor. They find good bowmen and so on. Other good characters were Little John and Maid Marian. Characters I didn't like were the tinker, the sheriff and the fat bishop of Hartford. And King Henry. I did like King Richard of the Lionheart. I recommend this book for 10 year olds who can understand old language cuz there's a little bit of it." - Jasur 10

*read as a free read for homeschool 5th grade.

P.S. Winn says

Great story as readers head to Sherwood forest and follow Robin Hood and his gang of thieves, who by the way, rob from the rich to give to the poor. This is an adventure that also shows what great friendships can do when set against extreme adversaries.

R. G. Nairam says

I need to re-read for a story review, but the illustrations are amazing.

Tori says

The reason I found this book interesting is because for all the Robin Hood based stories I've seen, I don't think I've actually read the original base stories such as these. Also, it was cool to read something and think, "Hey! I saw something like that in Hood by Lawhead. Or, "Look, that's something used in Ivanho!"

Kikat says

Robin is such a wimp!

Alex H. says

i loved it. the illustrations are stunning. i should read the full version. (made me wanna live in the forest lol.)

Mark A. says

Classic and timeless tale done well

Bailey says

I really enjoyed this book. It was a very classical episodic-style telling of Robin Hood. Chapters begin with a short poem telling the reader what will happen in the chapter and goes on to illustrate passionate, violent (although not explicitly so) adventures. As a teacher, I feel like I could use snippets of this book in order to tell the story, highlight literary devices, etc. I wouldn't use the whole thing as a read-aloud, etc. I wouldn't have a problem with keeping it in my classroom library; however, it would take a pretty linguistically-advanced elementary schooler to be able to navigate the traditional language. Probably better for a junior high/high school study.

Strider says

This book was one of the biggest surprise for me this year so far. I did not really expect anything from it mostly because I did not have a good opinion on the modern tales of this hero. This book however did a wonderful job at recreating these timeless stories in a chronological order. The outlaws and the whole atmosphere of Sherwood forest is brilliant and I really felt that I was there with them singing and fighting without a care in the world. Robin Hood was also a great hero and he was more human than I ever thought. There were some wonderful passages as well. It is true that the ending was depressive as hell after all the other tales but it made those happy times in the deep forest even more precious. The ending passages were truly beautiful. I am really glad that I found this book accidentally and decided to give it a try.

Aaron says

Charming adventures that alternate between Robin being petulant to just the person he was looking for, Robin trading clothing with some dude in order to trick his enemies, Robin winning an archery contest, or some combination of the three.
