

ROBIN HOOD AND ALLIN A DALE

by Francis James Child

Come listen to me, you gallants so free,
All you that loves mirth for to hear,
And I will tell you of a bold outlaw,
That lived in Nottinghamshire.

As Robin Hood in the forest stood,
All under the greenwood tree,
There was he ware of a brave young man,
As fine as fine might be.

The youngster was clothed in scarlet red,
In scarlet fine and gay;
And he did frisk it over the plain,
And chanted a roundelay.

As Robin Hood next morning stood,
Amongst the leaves so gay,
There did he espy the same young man
Come drooping along the way.

The scarlet he wore the day before,
It was clean cast away;
And at every step he fetcht a sigh,
“Alack and a well a day!”

Then stepped forth brave Little John,
And Nick the miller’s son,
Which made the young man bend his bow,
When as he see them come.

“Stand off, stand off,” the young man said,
“What is your will with me?”
“You must come before our master straight,
Under yon greenwood tree.”

And when he came bold Robin before,

Robin askt him courteously,
“O hast thou any money to spare
For my merry men and me?”

“I have no money,” the young man said,
“But five shillings and a ring;
And that I have kept this seven long years,
To have it at my wedding.

“Yesterday I should have married a maid,
But she is now from me tane,
And chosen to be an old knight’s delight,
Whereby my poor heart is slain.”

“What is thy name?” then said Robin Hood,
“Come tell me, without any fail”:
“By the faith of my body,” then said the young man,
“My name it is Allin a Dale.”

“What wilt thou give me,” said Robin Hood,
“In ready gold or fee,
To help thee to thy true-love again,
And deliver her unto thee?”

“I have no money,” then quoth the young man,
“No ready gold nor fee,
But I will swear upon a book
Thy true servant for to be.”

“How many miles is it to thy true-love?
Come tell me without any guile”:
“By the faith of my body,” then said the young man,
“It is but five little mile.”

Then Robin he hasted over the plain,
He did neither stint nor lin,
Until he came unto the church,
Where Allin should keep his wedding.

“What dost thou do here?” the bishop he said,
“I prithee now tell to me”:

“I am a bold harper,” quoth Robin Hood,
“And the best in the north countrey.”

“O welcome, O welcome,” the bishop he said,
“That musick best pleaseth me”:
“You shall have no musick,” quoth Robin Hood,
“Till the bride and the bridegroom I see.”

With that came in a wealthy knight,
Which was both grave and old,
And after him a finikin lass
Did shine like glistering gold.

“This is no fit match,” quoth bold Robin Hood,
“That you do seem to make here;
For since we are come unto the church,
The bride she shall chuse her own dear.”

Then Robin Hood put his horn to his mouth,
And blew blasts two or three;
When four and twenty bowmen bold
Came leaping over the lee.

And when they came into the church-yard,
Marching all on a row,
The first man was Allin a Dale,
To give bold Robin his bow.

“This is thy true-love,” Robin he said,
“Young Allin, as I hear say:
And you shall be married at this same time,
Before we depart away.”

“That shall not be,” the bishop he said,
“For thy word shall not stand;
They shall be three times askt in the church,
As the law is of our land.”

Robin Hood pulld off the bishop’s coat,
And put it upon Little John;
“By the faith of my body,” then Robin said,

“This cloath doth make thee a man.”

When Little John went into the quire,
The people began for to laugh;
He askt them seven times in the church,
Lest three times should not be enough.

“Who gives me this maid?” then said Little John;
Quoth Robin, “That do I,
And he that doth take her from Allin a Dale
Full dearly he shall her buy.”

And thus having ended this merry wedding,
The bride lookt as fresh as a queen,
And so they returned to the merry greenwood,
Amongst the leaves so green.

