



A Robin Hood Play





The Full English

The Full English was a unique nationwide project unlocking hidden treasures of England's cultural heritage by making over 58,000 original source documents from 12 major folk collectors available to the world via a ground-breaking nationwide digital archive and learning project. The project was led by the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS), funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and in partnership with other cultural partners across England.

The Full English digital archive (www.vwml.org) continues to provide access to thousands of records detailing traditional folk songs, music, dances, customs and traditions that were collected from across the country. Some of these are known widely, others have lain dormant in notebooks and files within archives for decades.

The Full English learning programme worked across the country in 19 different schools including primary, secondary and special educational needs settings. It also worked with a range of cultural partners across England, organising community, family and adult learning events.

Supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund, the National Folk Music Fund and The Folklore Society.



Produced by the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS), June 2014
Adapted by: Malcolm Taylor, Doc Rowe and Carolyn Robson

Copyright © English Folk Dance and Song Society, 2014

Permission is granted to make copies of this material for non-commercial educational purposes.
Permission must be sought from EFDSS for any other use of this material.

EFDSS is a Registered Charity in England and Wales No.3050999

A Robin Hood Play

Introduction

This version is adapted from a play printed in *The Mummers Play* by R.J.E. Tiddy. The play was written down in 1868 from a John Couling, a member of an old family in Kempford, Gloucestershire. These mummers went out to the large houses at Christmas time, knocked on the door and requested "Please let the Mummers act." The performers would walk round and round with the audience surrounding them.

Costume

The mummers' costume was described as hats of paper decorated with plumes or coloured ribbons hanging down and each man carried a sword. The character Tom Pinny, who also played Father Christmas, wore a mask leaving part of his face bare which was painted red! He wore a fool's cap and carried an instrument which he pretended to play as a fiddle. He was also made to appear a hunchback with straw stuffed up inside his coat and he carried a can to collect the money.

Characters

- Arthur Abland (a tanner)
- Robin Hood
- Little John
- Doctor
- Tom Pinny

A Robin Hood Play - script

Arthur Abland (a tanner)

A room a room brave gallants all
Please give me room to rhyme
This merry, merry Christmas time
Activity of youth and activity of age
Such life was never seen upon the stage

As I was walking one Summer's morning
Through the forest merry greenwood
To view the red deer
Then I saw bold Robin Hood

(Enter Robin Hood)

As soon as Robin Hood did me spy
Some sport he thought to make
He bid me fan he bid me stand
And he bid me thus for to spake.

Robin

Who art thou bold fellow,
Who comes so boldly here
Now to be brief though looks a thief
Come to steal the Kint's deer.
I'm the keeper over this forest
And the King put me in trust
To mind the red deer
That run here and run there.
So stop you Good fellow I must

Arthur

If you are keeper over this forest
And has any great command
I don't care a fig for you looking so big
So mind yourself where you can.

Robin

Let us measure staves, bold fellow
Before we begin our play
I won't have my staff half a foot longer than thine
Else that will come to foul play



Arthur My staff is eight foot and a half
 And growed straight on a tree
 An eight foot staff will knock down a calf
 And I'm sure it will knock down thee
(They fight)

Robin Oh, hold our hands,
 Oh, hold our hands
 And let our quarrels fall
 We shall beat our bones all to a meat
 And get nowhere at all
 If you will leave your tanning trade
 And bide in greenwood with me,
 My name's Robin Hood and
 I swear by the wood
 I will give you both gold and fee
(Enter Little John)

Little John What is the matter master
 I pray you to me tell
 You stand with your staff all in your hand
 I'm afraid things aren't too well

Robin That man that bid me stand
 Is the tanner by my side;
 He's a bonny blade
 And a master by trade
 And he swears he'll tan my hide

Little John If you be so big and stout
 You and I will have a bout
(They fight and Little John knocks down Arthur)

Robin A thousand pounds I'll freely give
 If Arthur Abland's life we can save
(enter Doctor on a Tom Pinny's back)

Doctor Hold my horse, Jack



Tom Pinny Yes Sir, I've got him fast by the tail

Doctor Rack him up with a faggot
Give him a bucket of ashes to drink
(rattling a pill box)
See Sirs, here comes the Noble doctor
Both stout and good
And with my hand and my skill
I will stop his blood

Robin What country do you come from?

Doctor From Italy, Tittaly, France, and Spain
And then twice round the world again

Robin What can you cure?

Doctor All sorts of diseases – just what the pill pleases
The heart corn and smart corn'
The itch, the snitch, the palsy and the gout
The pain within and the pains without

Robin What else can you cure?

Doctor Horses, cows, sheep and pigs
And so walk in Master Cleverlegs

Tom Pinny (from without)
What's the matter with my legs more than your own?

Doctor Walk in Tom Pinny

Tom Pinny Tom Pinny's not my name

Doctor What is your name?

Tom Pinny Master Tom Pinny, a man of great fame
Doesn't know my name?



Here come I as can't be hit
With my great head and my little wit
My head's so big and my wit's so small
I've come to try to please you all

Robin What can you cure?

Tom Pinny A magpie with the tooth ache

Robin How do you do that

Tom Pinny Cut off his head and throw his body into a ditch.

Robin What country do you come from?

Tom Pinny I come from the country
Where they knits horses shoes
And spins steel iron bars
And thatches pigsties with pancakes.
Have you got any?

Doctor Bellows, if you please missus!
(Takes a pair of bellows and blows into Arthur's mouth.)
Rise up bold Arthur Abland and
Give the Ladies and Gentlemen
A dance before you go away

(They all dance and Tom Pinny sings into his fiddle)
So here I am, a rub a dub, dub,
On my shoulder I carries my club
In my hand an empty can
Don't you think I'm a jolly old man.
Now my boys well dance apace
Hump back and hairy wig
Now me boys, we'll dance a jig.

The End



Explore The Full English digital archive

www.vwml.org

Discover more learning resources

www.efdss.org/resourcebank



At the English Folk Dance and Song Society, we champion the folk arts at the heart of England's rich and diverse cultural landscape.

Our award-winning Resource Bank contains over 100 resources – incorporating hundreds of audio files, videos and supporting documents, all free to download. They offer endless practical ways to use folk song, music, dance, drama and more in all sorts of community settings, as well as in formal education.

efdss.org/resourcebank

Please help us keep our learning resources freely available for all!

**Support us now:
efdss.org/donate**

