

## Other Merry Men – Robin Hood's 7 score

In many ballads, there are said to be seven score yeomen in the Merry Men. That's 140 outlaws. So, there are many more Merry Men than just the major figures. Sometimes, they are just like unnamed extras in a movie, but occasionally these supporting characters are given names.

Will Stutely (sometimes just another name for Will Scarlet and sometimes a separate character) is the most common. It's he who christened Little John into the greenwood band. There's also a ballad where Robin rescues Stutely.

Gilbert with the White Hand is nearly Robin's equal in archery, and a member of his band in one ballad. David of Doncaster is mentioned in another.

Then, there are the many tradesmen in the Merry Men. Robin comes across them, picks a fight and loses. Among these are the tinker Wat O' the Crabstaff, the pedlar Gamble Gold and the tanner Arthur a Bland, who is Little John's cousin. George a Greene is the pinder of Wakefield in Yorkshire and a star of his own tales.

There are almost no women in the classic Robin Hood stories. Alan a Dale's wife is sometimes a part of the Merry Men, and George a Greene is married to Bettris. And naturally, there's Maid Marian. In a couple of stories, Robin's love interest is Clorinda, queen of the shepherdess (a skilled archer and huntswoman) -- although a few have said this was merely Marian in disguise. Some modern writers have added a few more women to the outlaw band. These include Bold Jane Downey and Will Scarlet's sister Cecily. In a 2001 TV movie, Robin and Marian's daughter Gwyn joined the aging Merry Men.

But the most important addition to the Merry Men is a Muslim, either a Saracen or a North African Moor. The original one, Nasir, was a deadly ex-assassin in the Robin of Sherwood television series. The movie Prince of Thieves has the wise philosopher Azeem. And now, there's a black martial artist named Kemal among the band. It looks like the Arab Merry Man, with his ever-changing name and personality, is here to stay.