

Vedanna 8

Robin Hood's pardon was discovered by David Pilling and Rob Lynley. It identifies him as coming from Wadsley which includes Loxley. His pardon reads, "Robert Hode (Hood), otherwise known as Robert Dore of Wadsley given the King's pardon on 22nd May 1382" (Roll of King's Pardons 4-5 Richard II 1382). Robin was outlawed for his participation in the Peasants Revolt when he rebelled against John Gisbourne who was the corrupt Lord Mayor of York. Robin along with several

Vedanna 10

more were pardoned a few months later. The sheriff was Ralph Hastings whose descendants are the Earls of Huntingdon. They christen their children Robin Hood as in the "Honourable Aubrey Craven Theophilus Robin Hood Hastings" and they can trace their ancestry back to Loxley through the Talbot and Furnival families. Robin was pardoned a few months later by another sher

Vedanna 12

Peasants Revolt The rioting revolved around John Gisbourne who is known in the rhymes as Guy of Gisbourne. (Guy means leader.) Gisbourne was the Lord Mayor and chief Burgomaster (magistrate) who controlled the trade guilds and imposed fines and penalties. Gisbourne had always been surrounded by scandal, he was a

Aerial 8

objected to the nomination of Gisbourne as bailiff and in 1364 the mayoral election was disturbed for a day and a half by rioting. Then in 1371 there was more trouble between Langton and Gisbourne who this time was standing for the office of mayor. King Edward III had to intervene; forbidding either man to become mayor but Gisbourne disregarded both the king's order and election rules and held the office for that year and the next. On 25th November 1380 a few months before

Aerial 10

the Peasants Revolt, Gisbourne was attacked by rioters and had to flee for his life. The citizens of York then broke into the Guildhall and finding Simon de Quixley who was the preferred choice swore him into the office of mayor against his will. John Gisbourn had a small army for whom fifteen hundred hoods were made indicating

Aerial 12

livery. This was a privilege reserved for the aristocracy and in the statute of 1390 even lords were prohibited from giving liveries to yeoman archers or anyone lower than an esquire. The giving of livery by both Gisbourne and Robin Hood who dressed his men in scarlet or Lincoln green liveries indicates a time as Keen suggests, "when liveries and personal badges were in

Times 8

aristocracy (Ohlgren) thus further evidence if more evidence was needed that Robin Hood and his men were active at this time of unrest and rebellion. When Gisbourne's men attacked the monks along with other citizens in York as well as in Scarborough and Beverly the trouble was so bad he had to flee the city again for his own safety. This time it was King Richard II who had to go from London to York to restore order and he instructed his uncle John of Gaunt to settle the dispute.

Times 10

However Gisbourne's day was coming to an end and Simon de Quixley became mayor until 1383 and his leading supporter William Selby was mayor in 1385, 1387 and 1388. Gisbourne died two years later in 1390 age fifty-four. When Parliament met to consider the proposals made by the leaders of the Peasants' Revolt at York the Churchmen, represented by bishops, abbots, and priors, joined with the city authorities in declaring that bondsmen were "the goods and chattels of the lords of

Times 12

the manors, and must remain so." This was little more than slave labour and needless to say nothing changed except that the cloth-making industry began to move over to the West Riding rural communities including Wakefield where weaving became a cottage industry free from such restrictions as existed at York, Ripon, Selby, Whitby and Beverly. Gisbourn's son-in-law William Plumpton was from

Georgia 8

went hunting. William's minstrel was paid eight pence for his performance at Fountains Abbey (Holt) which is where Friar Tuck was from and Gisbourn's wife Ellen was related to Robert and John Morton who were Sheriffs of Nottingham and Yorkshire respectively. Robert had family and property in Yorkshire which accounts for the Sheriff of Nottingham being in Yorkshire and he was one of John O' Gaunt's most trusted retainers. Robert's wife Joan was lady-in-waiting to Richard II's

Georgia 10

wife queen, Anne of Bohemia and their father Thomas Morton was secretary to King Edward III of England. The ballad "Robin Hood and Guy of Gisbourne" in which Guy lost his head is set locally in Barnsdale. Robin received the Freedom of the City of York a year after Gisbourne died. Robin's Location In Rivelin Firth just over the hill from Loxley were deer belonging to Beauchief Abbey making it easy for young Robin to poach the abbot's deer.

Georgia 12

Fitz Ranulf who was a sheriff of Nottingham. When Robin was outlawed for the first time as a young boy he fled north to the Calder Valley perhaps to Kirklees Priory where his cousin was the Prioress. Here he met Little John who was looking after the cattle and this is where the legend began and ended with the well known grave of Robin Hood on the hillside overlooking

Treboucht 8

ry him across the stream. Looking at the map is Peveril Castle near Beauchief Abbey and Hathersage where Little John is buried. Peveril Castle was a Royal Castle equal in importance to Nottingham Castle and it came into the possession of King John while he was still the Earl of Mortain. It was favoured by him for the hunting and horses were kept in the booths around Edale specifically for that purpose. Those taking advantage of the hunting were such notables as King Henry II and

Treboucht 10

his daughter Matilda; King Malcolm IV of Scotland; the Earl of Arundel; William de Ferrers, Earl of Derby; Edward III; Piers Gaveston and Simon de Montfort. The wife of William Peveril founded a hospital there, now long gone, which she gave to the Knights Hospitallers who were also settled in Bradfield. While the activities of Robin Hood were still being talked about by later generations John Harrison wrote in his "Exact and Perfect Survey and View of the Manor of Sheffield"

Treboucht 12

this account. "William Green who was one of my Lord's keepers did hold in regard of his office these parcels of land following - "No. 352. Imprimis (to begin) Great Haggis Croft (pasture) near Robin Hood's Bower is environed with Loxley Firth (Chase) contains 1 acre, 2 Roods, and 27 square perche. Item, Little Haggis croft wherein is ye foundation of a house or cottage where Robin Hood was born" Little Haggis Croft is just across the road from Loxley and Wadsley Commons."

Roger Dodsworth who was a distinguished antiquarian tells us several things about Robin Hood, "Robert Locksley, born in the Bradfield Parish of Hallamshire wounded his stepfather to death at plough, fled into the woods and was relieved by his mother till he was discovered. Then he came to Clifton upon Calder, and became acquainted with Little John, that kept the kine. Which said John is buried at Hathersage in Derbyshire where he hath a fair tombstone with an inscription. Mr Long saith that Fabyan saith, Little John was Earl Huntley's son. After, he joined with Much the Miller's's son." (Bodleian Library MS. Dodsw.160, fol. 64r)

Sir Walter Scot in his book Ivanhoe wrote: "The remains of this extensive wood are still to be seen at the noble seats of Wentworth, of Warncliffe Park, and around Rotherham (they married into the Wadsley family)and here also flourished in ancient times those bands of gallant outlaws whose deeds have been rendered so popular in English song."

Historical setting

Platts Farm near Loxley belonged to the Knights Hospitallers who were a religious and military order of Benedictine monks. They had fought in the Crusades and were trained to protect pilgrims to the Holy Land, they specialised in eye injuries and the treatment of leprosy which was brought to England by the Crusaders. They had privileges granted by the Papacy, for example they were exempt from all authority including the king of England and were only answerable to the Pope, they paid no tithes and were allowed their own religious buildings.

They were joined by the Templars after they were disbanded in 1312 and both orders appear to have been motivated by the

high ideals of Saint Francis of Assisi. They had all taken Holy orders, they were battle trained. Their vow of celibacy included a pledge not to harm women. The Franciscan lay brothers worked in the Cistercian houses of which Kirkstall was one and Fountains Abbey where Robin met Friar Tuck was another.

After the order had been broken up most members became mendicant friars and like all mendicants they needed to live on their wits at the expense of others. John Wycliffe who lived at the same time as Robin Hood was strongly opposed to the Mendicant Friars and beginning at Oxford he gave a series of public lectures to correct the abuses of the clergy and their open wickedness. He was supported by Edward III who remained "a most valiant champion of the truth among the tyrants of Sodom."

The Cistercians main source of income was the wool trade and a careful reading of the Gest of Robin Hood informs us that Robin was in the lucrative wool and cloth trade which is confirmed in his pardon that says he was a litster who is a dyer of cloth.

When Robin came to the aid of the impoverished knight Little John informs us that Robin was one of the wealthiest merchants in England with a rich array of scarlet and green cloth. Little Much describes Little John as the devils draper and Scarlet laughingly says "By God almighty, John may give the impoverished knight good measure for it costs him but lightly" meaning it was his masters cloth that was being measured out and not his own. Before the impoverished knight went on his way he was given a grey packhorse which as merchants they would have several to carry goods and to top it off they also gave the knight a horse and a pair of boots which obviously Robin could afford to do.

The name Will Scarlet indicates someone who traded in scarlet cloth and the Germanic word "will" means wool. Another of Robin's men who was familiar with the wool trade was Friar Tuck from Fountains Abbey that belonged to the Cistercians. The Abbey possessed many thousand of acres of rich pasture-land stretching across the North East of England into the Lake District and the Yorkshire Dales.

The abbey's success was due in no small measure to the lay-brothers who worked as manual labourers on the monastery's estates in the granges, their numbers peaking at the height of its prosperity between 500-600 people.

The rhymes continue with the adventures of Robin as he and his men travelled between Nottingham, Barnsdale, York and Wakefield in the course of their business and the extract below tells of Robin's part in the wool and cloth trade, his association with Lincoln Green and why in some pictures he is shown as wearing red or scarlet, not forgetting of course that Robin was a yeoman and they also wore Lincoln Green.

Here are the relevant verses in the "Gest of Robin Hood" translated into modern English by Robert Landis Frank. Friars Friar Tuck appears in an early fragment called "Robin Hood and the Sheriff" printed before the "Gest of Robin Hood" sometime around AD 1472. The first friars arrived in England c. 1221, five years after the death of King John which rules him out as the monarch of the rhymes who was King Edward III. Two examples of robinhood type figures are the de Eyville brothers who in 1317 "Sir Gosceline D'Eivill and his brother Robert, with two hundred men in the habit of friars, did many notable robberies; they spoiled the Bishop of Durham's palaces, leaving nothing in them but bare walls, for the which they were hanged at York." Then there was the Earl of Essex who plundered the abbeys of St. Alban's and Ramsay assisted by his brother-in-law, William de Say and one Daniel, who was a counterfeit monk or robinhode.

The custom of wearing a monks habit may explain the 'name' 'Robehod' with spelling variants and this may be why the clerk of the court made the note "robehod" against the name of William-le-Fevere that became a legal term used by the courts to identify robbers like Piers Venables who in 1437 "gadered and assembled unto hym many misdoers beyng of his clothinge and, in manere of insurrection, wente into the wodes in that contre, like as it hadde be Robyn Hode and his meyne." The situation finally resolved itself when King Henry VIII closed the monasteries and we hear no more of the Robin Hoods after that. Other well known outlaw gangs, the Cotterel and Folville families associated with members of the clergy, for example the priest Robert Bernard was the vicar of Bakewell and Richard Folville was the rector of Teigh. Most members of the nobility were connected with the church in one way or another including John Twenge (1319-1379) who was the Prior of Bridlington although it is not suggested that John himself was anything other than a saintly man.

Friars were known as "preaching friars," "brothers of St. Mary" or Black Friars, Grey Friars and White Friars depending on the colour of their habit that identified the order to which they belonged. They wore their habits long the same as monks but Saint Francis of Assisi instructed his friars to wear them short thereby becoming known as Curtailed Friars which means to cut short. As preaching friars they travelled the countryside proclaiming the gospel much like Jesus and as wearing a habit or cassock was tricky when walking over rough ground or riding a horse they pulled their habit between their legs and TUCKED it into their cincture (belt) at the back, hence the name "FRIAR TUCK" which gives us Friar Tuck the Curtal Friar.

It wasn't long before there were many mendicant (begging) Friars roaming around England in disorderly fashion, "brazen and shameless beggars of scandalous fame." The monks were frequently guilty of forgery and violence, they were guilty of brawling, frequenting taverns, indulging in licentious pleasures and upholding unlawful games. They soon became powerful and began to attack the constitutions of Oxford University, claiming independence from its jurisdiction through the Pope. The first person to challenge this "pestiferous canker" of mendicancy was the Chancellor of Oxford University, Archbishop of Armagh Fitzralph (Armachanus). He warned that everything good and fair - letters, industry, obedience and morals were being blighted. There was unrest, disturbances and lawlessness caused by the begging friars due to the privileges granted them by the Pope who remained unmoved for they were indispensable to him. They had been created by him, they were de