The book cover features a light green background with a complex, ornate border in a dark brown or gold color. The border is composed of repeating floral and scrollwork motifs. In the center, a large, stylized, pointed oval frame, also in the same dark color, encloses the title text. The title is written in a classic serif font, with 'A True Tale' on the first line, 'of' on the second line, and 'Robin Hood.' on the third line.

A True Tale  
of  
Robin Hood.

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# Sammer Gurton's Story Books.

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## A TRUE TALE OF ROBIN HOOD.




OTH gentlemen and yeomen bold,  
Or whatsoe'er you are,  
To have a stately story told,  
Attention now prepare :

It is a tale of Robin Hood,  
Which I to you will tell ;  
Which being rightly understood,  
I know will please you well.

This Robin (so much talked on)  
Was once a man of fame,  
And styled Earl of Huntingdon,  
Lord Robin Hood by name.

In courtship and magnificence  
His carriage won him praise ;  
And greater favour with his prince  
Than any in our days.





## *A true Tale of Robin Hood.*

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In bounteous liberality  
He too much did excel ;  
And loved men of quality  
More than exceeding well.

His great revenues all he sold,  
For wine and costly cheer ;  
He kept three hundred bowmen bold,  
He shooting loved so dear.

At last, by his profuse expense,  
He had consumed his wealth ;  
And, being outlaw'd by his prince,  
In woods he lived by stealth.

So being outlaw'd (as 'tis told)  
He with a crew went forth  
Of lusty cutters stout and bold,  
And robbed in the North.

Among the rest, one little John,  
A yeoman bold and free ;  
Who could (if it stood him upon)  
With ease encounter three.

One hundred men in all he got,  
With whom (the story says)  
Three hundred common men durst not  
Hold combat any ways.

## *A true Tale of Robin Hood.*

---

They Yorkshire woods frequented much,  
And Lancashire also ;  
Wherein their practices were such  
That they wrought muckle woe.

None rich durst travel to and fro,  
Though ne'er so strongly arm'd ;  
But by these thieves (so strong in show)  
They still were robb'd and harm'd.

But Robin Hood so gentle was,  
And bore so brave a mind ;  
If any in distress did pass,  
To them he was so kind,

That he would give and lend to them,  
To help them in their need ;  
This made all poor men pray for him,  
And wish he well might speed.

The widow and the fatherless  
He would send means unto ;  
And those whom famine did oppress  
Found him a friendly foe.

Nor would he do a woman wrong,  
But see her safe conveyed ;  
He would protect with power strong  
All those who craved his aid.





*A true Tale of Robin Hood.*

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The Abbot of Saint Mary's then,  
Who him once harmed before,  
Was riding with two hundred men,  
With gold and silver store.

But Robin Hood upon him set  
With his courageous sparks,  
And all his coin, perforce, did get,  
Which was twelve thousand marks.

He bound the Abbot to a tree,  
And would not let him pass,  
Before that to his men and he,  
His Lordship had said Mass.

Which being done, upon his horse  
He set him fast astride ;  
And with his face towards his tail,  
He forced him to ride.

Thus Robin Hood did vindicate  
His former wrongs received ;  
For 'twas this covetous prelate  
Him of his land bereaved.

The Abbot he rode to the King,  
With all the haste he could ;  
And to his grace he every thing  
Exactly did unfold.

## *A true Tale of Robin Hood.*

He said, that if no course were ta'en,  
By force or stratagem,  
To take this rebel and his train,  
No man should pass for them.

The King protested, by and by,  
Unto the Abbot then,  
That Robin Hood with speed should die,  
With all his merry men.

And promised, who, alive or dead,  
Could bring bold Robin Hood,  
Should have one thousand marks well paid,  
In gold and silver good.

This promise of the King did make  
Full many a yeoman bold  
Attempt stout Robin Hood to take,  
With all the force they could.

But still when any came to him,  
Within the gay green wood ;  
He entertainment gave to them,  
With venison fat and good.

And showed to them such martial sport  
With his long bow and arrow,  
That they of him did give report,  
How that it was great sorrow,





*A true Tale of Robin Hood.*

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That such a worthy man as he  
Should thus be put to shift ;  
Being late a lord of high degree,  
Of living quite bereft.

The King, to take him, more and more,  
Sent men of mickle might ;  
But he and his still beat them sore,  
And conquer'd them in fight.

Or else, with love and courtesy,  
To him he won their hearts ;  
Thus still he lived by robbery,  
Throughout the northern parts.

And all the country stood in dread  
Of Robin and his men ;  
For stouter lads ne'er lived by bread,  
In those days, nor since then.

The Abbot which before I named  
Sought all the means he could,  
To have, by force, this rebel ta'en,  
And his adherents bold.

Therefore, he arm'd five hundred men,  
With furniture complete ;  
But the outlaws slew one half of them,  
And made the rest retreat.

## *A true Tale of Robin Hood.*

---

The long bow and the arrow keen,  
They were so used unto ;  
That still he kept the forest green,  
In spite o' th' proudest foe.

Twelve of the Abbot's men he took,  
Who came him to have ta'en :  
When all the rest the field forsook,  
These he did entertain,

With banqueting and merriment,  
And having used them well,  
He to their lord them safely sent,  
And will'd them him to tell :

That if he would be pleased at last,  
To beg of our good King,  
That he might pardon what was past,  
And him to favour bring,

He would surrender back again,  
The money which before  
Was taken by him and his men,  
From him and many more.

King Richard, of that name the First,  
Surnamed Cœur de Lion ;  
Went to defeat the Pagans curst,  
Who kept the coasts of Sion.





*A true Tale of Robin Hood.*

---

The Bishop of Ely, chancellor,  
Was left a viceroy here ;  
Who like a potent emperor  
Did proudly domineer.

Our chronicles of him report,  
That commonly he rode  
With a thousand horse from court to court,  
Where he would make abode.

He, riding down towards the North,  
With his aforesaid train ;  
Robin and his men did issue forth,  
Them all to entertain ;

And with the gallant gray-goose wing  
They show'd to them such play,  
That made their horses kick and fling,  
And down their riders lay.

Full glad and fain the Bishop was,  
For all his thousand men,  
To seek what means he could to pass  
From out of Robin's ken.

Two hundred of his men were kill'd  
And fourscore horses good,  
Thirty, who did as captives yield,  
Carried to the green wood ;

## *A true Tale of Robin Hood.*

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Which afterwards were ransomed,  
For twenty marks a man ;  
The rest set spurs to horse and fled  
To the town of Warrington.

The Bishop, sore enraged, then  
Did, in King Richard's name,  
Muster a power of northern men,  
These outlaws bold to tame.

But Robin, with his courtesy,  
So won the meaner sort,  
That they were loath on him to try  
What rigour did import.

So that bold Robin and his train  
Did live unhurt of them,  
Until King Richard came again  
From fair Jerusalem.

And then the talk of Robin Hood  
His royal ears did fill,  
His grace admired that i' th' greenwood  
He was continued still.

So that the country far and near  
Did give him great applause ;  
For none of them need stand in fear,  
But such as broke the laws.





*A true Tale of Robin Hood.*

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He wished well unto the King,  
And prayed still for his health,  
And never practised any thing  
Against the commonwealth.

With wealth that he by roguery got,  
Eight alms-houses he built ;  
Thinking thereby to purge the blot,  
Of blood which he had spilt.

Such was their blind devotion then,  
Depending on their works ;  
Which if 'twere true, we Christian men,  
Inferior were to Turks.

The King in person, with some Lords,  
To Nottingham did ride,  
To try what strength and skill affords,  
To crush this outlaw's pride.

And as he once before had done,  
He did again proclaim,  
That whosoever would take upon  
To bring to Nottingham,

Or any place within the land  
Rebellious Robin Hood,  
Should be preferr'd in place to stand  
With those of noble blood.

## *A true Tale of Robin Hood.*

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When Robin Hood heard of the same,  
Within a little space,  
Into the town of Nottingham  
A letter to his grace,

He shot upon an arrow head,  
One evening cunningly,  
Which was brought to the King and read  
Before his majesty.


The tenor of this letter was,  
That Robin would submit,  
And be true liegeman to his grace  
In any thing that's fit ;

So that his highness would forgive  
Him and his merry men all ;  
If not, he must i' th' greenwood live,  
And take what chance did fall.

The King would fain have pardon'd him,  
But that some lords did say,  
This precedent will much condemn  
Your grace another day.

While that the King and Lords did stay  
Debating on this thing,  
Some of these outlaws fled away  
Unto the Scottish King.





## *A true Tale of Robin Hood.*

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Of more than full a hundred men,  
But forty tarried still,  
Who were resolved to stick to him,  
Let Fortune work her will.

If none had fled, all for his sake,  
Had got their pardon free ;  
The King to favour meant to take  
His merry men and he.

But ere the pardon to him came,  
This famous archer died :  
His death and manner of the same  
I'll presently describe.

For being vexed to think upon  
His followers' revolt,  
In melancholy passion  
He did recount his faults.

Perfidious traitors ! said he then,  
In all our dangers past,  
Have I you guarded as my men,  
To leave me thus at last.

This sad perplexity did cause  
A fever as some say ;  
Which him unto confusion draws,  
Though by a stranger way.

## *A true Tale of Robin Hood.*

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This deadly danger to prevent,  
He hied with all speed  
Unto a nunnery, with intent  
For his health's sake to bleed.

A faithless friar did pretend  
In love to let him blood ;  
But he by falsehood wrought the end  
Of famous Robin Hood.

The friar, as some say, did this,  
To vindicate the wrong  
Which to the clergy he and his  
Had done by power strong.

Thus died he by treachery,  
That could not die by force ;  
Had he lived longer, certainly  
King Richard in remorse

Had unto favour him received,  
His brave men elevated ;  
Pity he was of life bereaved  
By one which he so hated !

His corpse, the prioress of the place  
The next day that he died,  
Caused to be buried in mean case,  
Close by the highway side ;





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And over him she caused a stone  
To be fixt on the ground ;  
An epitaph was set thereon,  
Wherein his name was found.

The date o' th' year and day also,  
She made to be set there ;  
That all who by the way did go,  
Might see it plain appear,

That such a man as Robin Hood  
Was buried in that place ;  
And how he lived in the green wood  
And robbed for a space.

This woman, though she did him hate,  
Yet loved his memory,  
And thought it wondrous pity that  
His fame should with him die.

This Epitaph, as records tell,  
Within this hundred years,  
By many was discerned well ;  
But time all things out-wears.

His followers, when he was dead,  
Were some reprieved to grace ;  
The rest to foreign countries fled,  
And left their native place.

## *A true Tale of Robin Hood.*

---

Although his funeral was but mean,  
This woman had in mind,  
Lest his fame should be buried clean  
From those that came behind.

For certainly, before nor since,  
No man e'er understood,  
Under the reign of any Prince  
Of one like Robin Hood.

No warring guns were then in use,  
They dreamt of no such thing ;  
Our Englishmen in fight did use  
The gallant gray goose wing ;

In which activity these men  
Through practice were so good ;  
That in those days none equall'd them,  
Especially Robin Hood.

So that it seems keeping in caves,  
In woods and forests thick,  
They'd beat a multitude with staves,  
Their arrows did so prick.

And none durst near unto them come,  
Unless in courtesy ;  
All such he bravely would send home  
With mirth and jollity.



## *A true Tale of Robin Hood.*

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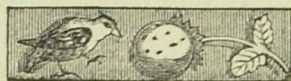
Which courtesy won him such love,  
As I before have told,  
It was the chief cause that he did prove  
More prosperous than he could.

Let us be thankful for these times  
Of plenty, truth, and peace ;  
And leave out great and horrid crimes,  
Lest they cause this to cease.

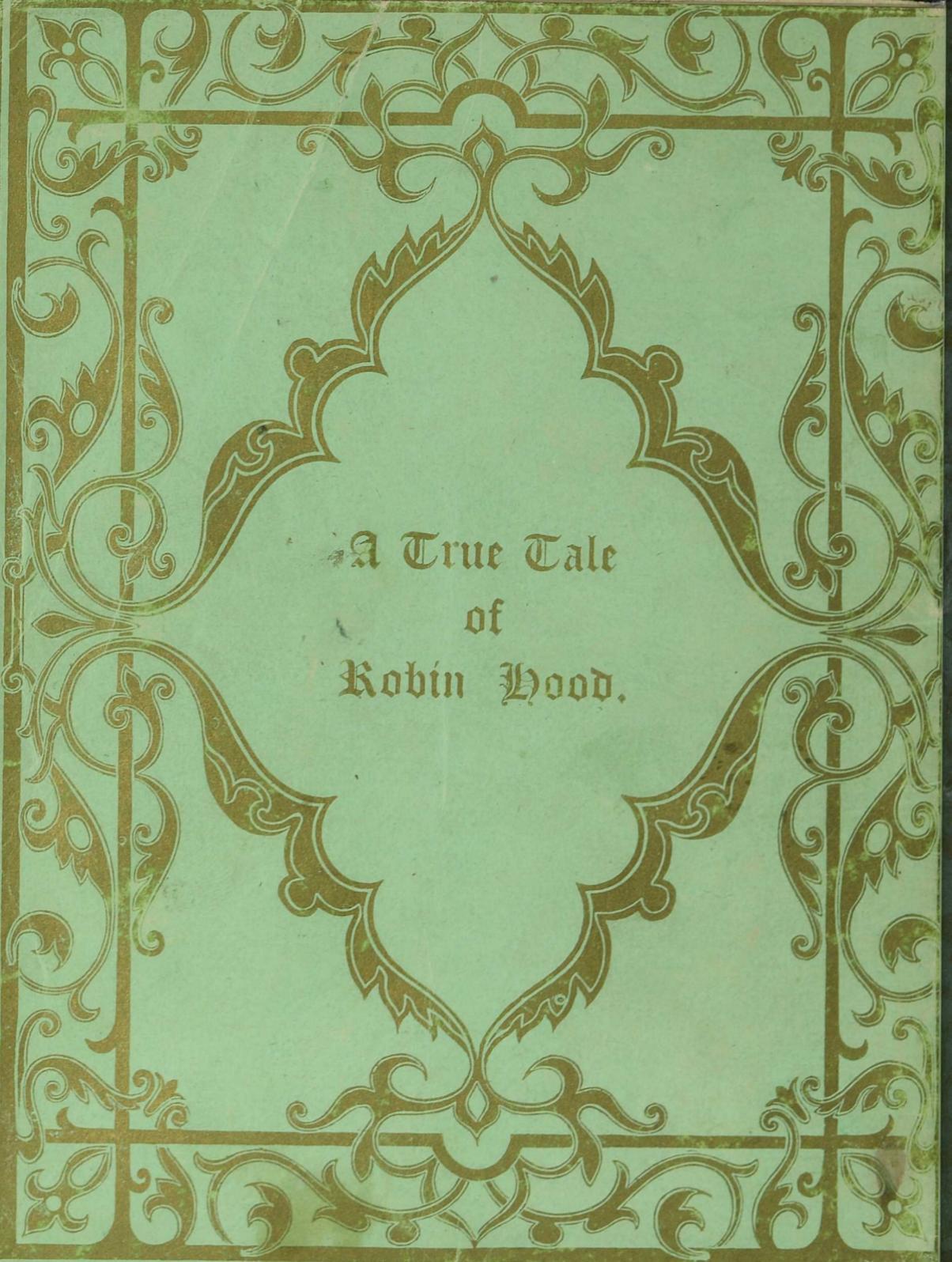
I know there's many feigned tales  
Of Robin Hood and's crew ;  
But chronicle, which seldom fails,  
Reports this to be true.

If any reader please to try,  
As I direction show,  
The truth of this brave history,  
He'll find it true I know.

And I shall think my labour well  
Bestow'd to purpose good  
When 't shall be said, that I did tell  
True tales of Robin Hood.





The page features a highly decorative border and a central frame, both rendered in a dark brown or gold color. The border is composed of repeating floral and foliate motifs, including stylized leaves and scrolls. The central frame is a large, ornate archway with a pointed top and a wide, flared base, resembling a stylized gothic arch or a large letter 'A'. The text is centered within this archway.

A True Tale  
of  
Robin Hood.