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Neurological stamp

Karl Friedrich Hieronymus von Munchausen (1720-97)

Baron Munchausen served in the Russian army in the war against the Turks from 1763-72. After a distinguished military career he retired from the army to manage the family estate near Hanover where he amused and sometimes astounded his friends and relations with recollections of his adventures during the war. The tales were collected together by R E Raspe and first published in England in 1785 in the book *Baron Munchausen's narratives of his marvellous travels and campaigns in Russia*. These were subsequently published in many languages and new editions appeared with more stories based on contemporary events. The name of Munchausen came to symbolise the preposterous and amusing stories containing grandiose but engaging lies.

In 1951 Richard Asher coined the term "Munchausen syndrome" to describe a syndrome of addiction to hospital in which adults invented false symptoms and signs. Professor Roy Meadows has used the term "Munchausen by Proxy" to describe the fabrication of an illness on behalf of someone else—usually a mother on behalf of her child.

This stamp was issued in 1970 by Germany on the 250th anniversary of the Baron's birth (Stanley Gibbons 1522; Scott 1020).

L F HAAS