The Pied Piper of Hamelin

According to the legend, in the year 1284 Hamelin there lived a strange man. He had a robe made out of many colors, and designated himself as a rat catcher, as he promised to free the city of all mice and rats in change of some money.

Citizens pledged to pay him, and the Pied Piper pulled out his whistle and flute and began to whistle. Soon all the rats and mice came creeping out of the houses and gathered around him. When he thought it would not be any other rat in town, he walked out of the city into the Weser; the whole bunch of rats followed him, fell into the water and drowned. But when the citizens saw each other freed from the pest, they repented of the promised reward, and refused the man to pay him. So the Piped Piper walked away angry.

ChriLu
Bären

Chri Lu
Bären

June, he returned, this time dressed as a hunter with a terrible face and a wondrous red hat. While everyone was gathered in the church, he let sound his whistle again in the streets. Soon not rats but children, boys and girls from the fourth year up came running out in large numbers. The Piped Piper carried all the children away, passed the "Ostertor"-gate and led them into a mountain, where he disappeared with the children.

Only two children returned, just because they had been late. One of them was blind, so that he could not show the location. The other was dumb, so that he could not tell. A little boy came back to pick up his garment, and escaped the disaster. Some said that the children came out of the mountain-cave and were seen in Siebenbürgen. Finally there were lost 130 children.

Back

Back to top