

"Lord" is jailed for 12 months for £6.8m attempted fraud

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A self styled Lord, who tried to defraud the government by submitting fraudulent tax refund claims totalling 6.8m to HM Revenue and Customs was jailed for 12 months at the Old Bailey on 21 June 2011.

Gregory Roberts, 39, of London, sent fake repayment claims for VAT and income tax worth more than £1.6m each. He also tried to swindle almost £3.5m from HM Revenue & Customs by sending in a fraudulent corporation tax repayment claim for that amount.

When asked to back up his claims for money, the self-styled "Lord Roberts" provided fake invoices and bank statements. The frauds were easily spotted by HMRC investigators because of errors and spelling mistakes; in one invoice Roberts had misspelled Dumfries as "Bum Fries". Falsified bank statements also showed transactions occurring in the future.

The massive repayment claims were identified as fraudulent by HMRC officers, who refused to pay any of the money to Roberts.

The total attempted fraud was worth £6,813,126, broken down as follows:

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· £1,675,315 - false VAT claim

· £1,675,315 - false self assessment claim

· £3,462,496 - false company return