YE BERLYN
When Germany invaded Belgium
TAPESTRIE

Panorama-style fold-out measures over fifteen feet!

John Hassall’s satirical First World War panorama
Ye Berlyn Tapestrie
John Hassall’s Satirical First World War Panorama

JOHN HASSALL
With an Introduction by Mike Webb

As the devastation of German-occupied Belgium awakened Britain to the horrors of the Great War, a group of English cartoonists responded to these events with characteristic black humor. Among the most inventive responses was artist John Hassall’s *Ye Berlyn Tapestrie*, an ambitious red-and-black panorama in thirty panels, measuring more than fifteen feet and modeled after the famous Bayeux Tapestry, which recorded William the Conqueror’s invasion of England and the Battle of Hastings.

*Ye Berlyn Tapestrie* adapts the format of the *Bayeux Tapestry* to depict Kaiser Wilhelm II’s invasion of Luxembourg and Belgium. Hassall takes every opportunity to lampoon the German army, which is seen looting homes, marching shamefully through the streets behind women and children, drinking copious amounts of wine, and producing gas with sauerkraut and Limburger cheese. With comic inventiveness, Hassall has appended to the borders of the original Bayeux Tapestry stereotypical objects which the British public would have associated with its enemy, from schnitzel to sausages, pilsners, and wild boar.

A fascinating example of war-induced farce, *Ye Berlyn Tapestrie* became itself a source of inspiration for later works, including wildly popular parodies during World War II in the *Daily Mail* and *New Yorker*. More recently, award-winning cartoonist and journalist Joe Sacco has adapted the format for his *The Great War*, which chronicles the first day of the Battle of the Somme. The *Tapestrie* is here presented in its entirety along with an introduction that sets out the historical conditions of its creation.

**John Hassall** (1868–1948) was a celebrated British advertising artist, as well as an illustrator of children’s books.

---

64/5 x 53/4
64 pages, 30 color plates
Publication date: September 2014
Cloth $20.00

For a review copy or other publicity inquiries, please contact:
Melinda Kennedy
Promotions Manager
University of Chicago Press
1427 East 60th St.
Chicago, IL 60637
mkennedy1@press.uchicago.edu
773-702-2945

To place an order in the United States or Canada, please contact your local University of Chicago Press sales representative or contact the University of Chicago Press by phone at 1-800-621-2736 or by fax at 1-800-621-8476.
Introduction

Germany’s invasion of neutral Belgium on 2 August 1914 was followed fairly swiftly by stories of atrocities committed by the German army. There were stories of truth, exaggeration and downright fiction, but since the ostensible reason for British intervention was this act of war on a non-belligerent nation, Asquith’s Liberal government decided to commission an investigation and set up the ‘Committee on Alleged German Outrages’. This was set up on 27-28 November 1914, and was chaired by Viscount James Bryce (1838-1927), the former British Ambassador to the United States. The ‘Bryce Report’ was published on 30 November 1915, published nine days ahead of the German ‘Bryce’s report concluded that the German officers had deliberately introduced a system of terror in the opening months of the war through incendiarism, use of civilians as screens and military execution of non-combatants. The German army was one response to the German ‘frightfulness’. Taking the most well-known pictorial representation of the German ‘frightfulness’, the eleventh-century ‘human shields’ as they would now be termed), and firing on hospitals. By drawing attention to the alleged atrocities committed by the Kaiser and his generals, the report was intended to place the Allies on the moral high ground in the eyes of critics at home and in neutral countries, especially the United States. The ‘Bryce Report’ was published on 30 November 1915, published nine days after the German invasion of neutral Belgium on 2 August. The report was one response to the German ‘frightfulness’. The Bryce Report was published on 30 November 1915, published nine days after the German ‘frightfulness’. The Bryce Report was published on 30 November 1915, published nine days after the German ‘frightfulness’. The Bryce Report was published on 30 November 1915, published nine days after the German ‘frightfulness’. The Bryce Report was published on 30 November 1915, published nine days after the German ‘frightfulness’. The Bryce Report was published on 30 November 1915, published nine days after the German ‘frightfulness’. The Bryce Report was published on 30 November 1915, published nine days after the German ‘frightfulness’. The Bryce Report was published on 30 November 1915, published nine days after the German ‘frightfulness'.
Belgium, here was also a propaganda outrage at the stories emerging from while there was undoubtedly a sense of from the Government’s point of view: 

**propaganda**

by claiming that they were simply the drawing attention to the alleged atrocities of the invaders of Belgium and France, but with a great deal more humour. Beer-

slogan ‘Skegness is so bracing’, published depicting a skipping fisherman with the designs for posters, particularly the one super-belligerent nation, Asquith’s Liberal intervention was this act of war on a non-belligerent nation, Asquith’s Liberal

organized massacres of civilians, moral high ground in the eyes of critics at

the Bayeux Tapestry, Hassall used the cartoon format to poke fun at the pretensions as in the Bayeux Tapestry, but these ones top and bottom of the cartoon-strip, just as in the Bayeux Tapestry, Hassall has used the strategies as in the Bayeux Tapestry, but these ones top and bottom of the cartoon-strip, just as in the Bayeux Tapestry, Hassall has used the strategies

of barbarism. Hassall uses the stereotypes as in the Bayeux Tapestry, but these ones top and bottom of the cartoon-strip, just as in the Bayeux Tapestry, Hassall has used the strategies

in striking brick-red and black, and

including unsubstantiated and extremely

with a great deal more humour. Beer-

slogan ‘Skegness is so bracing’, published depicting a skipping fisherman with the designs for posters, particularly the one super-belligerent nation, Asquith’s Liberal intervention was this act of war on a non-belligerent nation, Asquith’s Liberal
advocacy at the stories emerging from the German invasion of neutral Belgium on 23rd August 1914. Brye's report was published in November 1914 by Viscount James Bryce (1838–1922), the former British Ambassador to the United States. The Bryce Report was published under the title 'Report of the Government's Friend and Neighbour, and was chaired by John Hassall (1852–1926) was an illustrator, and as a propaganda poster for the German government’s Great Northern Railway. This satirical London Underground leaflet, was one response to the war weary world, and the sense of outrage that gripped Britain at the sinking of the RMS Lusitania, which was torpedoed by a German submarine on 7th May 1915. The depiction of the sinking of a "light-hearted one, playing with aspects of the British bulldog and the Kaiser ‘giveth orders for frightfulness’. While German life and culture such as beer and sausages. The German submarine on /seven.oldstyle May /one.oldstyle/nine.oldstyle/one.oldstyle/five.oldstyle. The Lusitania merchant ship may refer to the cartoon panels, folded concertina-style between its covers. When it is fully open it measures /five.oldstyle/two.oldstyle/five.oldstyle cm. Nearly one hundred years on, this highly unusual publication provides a fascinating insight into the culture of the times. Although it perhaps makes for uncomfortable reading in parts, it is nevertheless an authentic contemporary response to the war. From today’s perspective, we recognise ourselves as in spiked helmets march into Belgium drinking, gluttonous German soldiers found in rather more vicious publications associated in the popular mind with 'kultur') from the air, with equally hapless shipping, and dropping bombs (marked 'kultur') from the air, with equally hapless shipping, and dropping bombs (marked