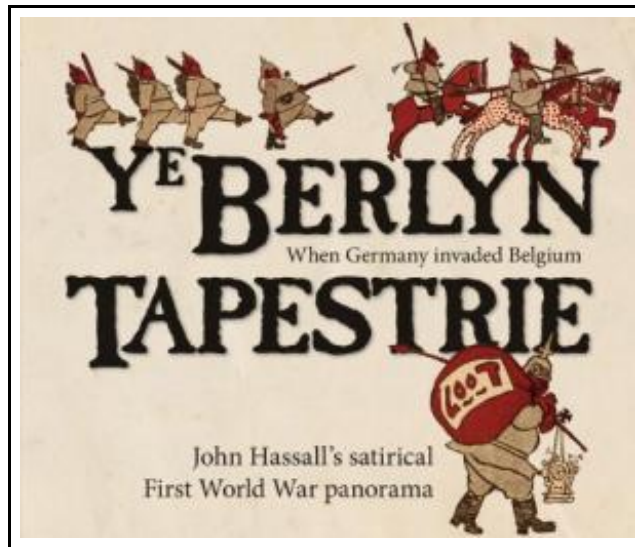


## Ye Berlyn Tapestry: John Hassall's Satirical First World War Panorama



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*(Claire Bartell)*

## YE BERLYN TAPESTRY: JOHN HASSALL'S SATIRICAL FIRST WORLD WAR PANORAMA



The Bodleian Library. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Ye Berlyn Tapestry: John Hassall's Satirical First World War Panorama, John Hassall, Mike Webb, The horror of the First World War brought out a characteristic response in a group of English artists, who resorted to black humour. Among these, John Hassall, a pioneering British illustrator and creator of the influential 'Skegness is so bracing' poster, holds a special place. Early in the war, he hit on the idea of drawing a parody of the Bayeux Tapestry to satirize German aggression and add to the growing genre of war propaganda. Taking the scheme of the famous tapestry which celebrates William the Conqueror's invasion of England, Hassall uses thirty pictorial panels to tell the story of Kaiser Wilhem II's invasion of Luxembourg and Belgium. In mock-archaic language he narrates the progress of the German army, never missing an opportunity to lampoon 'bad' behaviour: 'Wilhelm giveth orders for frightfulness.' The caricatured Germans loot homes, make gas from Limburg cheese and sauerkraut, drink copious amounts of wine and shamefully march through Luxembourg with 'women and children in front.' With comic inventiveness Hassall adapts the borders of the original to illustrate the stereotypical objects with which the English then associated their enemy: they are decorated with schnitzel, sausages, pilsner, wine corks and wild boar. Drawn with Hassall's distinctive flat colour and striking outlines, Ye Berlyn Tapestry is a fascinating historical example of war-induced farce, produced by a highly talented artist who could not then have known that the war was set to last for another two years. Together with an introduction which sets out the historical background of its creation, every page of this rarely seen publication is reproduced here in a fold-out concertina, just like the original, to resemble the style of the Bayeux Tapestry.



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