

Tenniel's Depictions of Germany in the 19th Century

"The Greedy Boy" (Jan. 10, 1885) by John Tenniel

(Bismarckian Germany: 1866-1890)

"The Greedy Boy' (January 10, 1885)." *GHDI - Image*,
germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_image.cfm?image_id=1429.



Narrative

The Greedy Boy

The political cartoon of 'The Greedy Boy' was published on January 10, 1885 by the British weekly magazine *Punch*, a periodical that served as a source of satirical news and insight for the British people from 1841 until it closed in 1992. I found this

image originally on GHDI (German History in Documents and Images) and traced it back to the Prussian Heritage Image Archive which makes it available. *Punch* has a functioning website that allows users to search for images in their catalogue yet I could not find this specific image on the site.¹ The creator of this image was John Tenniel, a British political satirist who served as a cartoonist for *Punch* for nearly sixty years, filling the role of principal cartoonist for almost five decades. Tenniel was born on February 28, 1820 in London and died on February 25, 1914. He was a prominent figure in the British publishing sector, known for his impressive illustrations and for his satirization of political events, harnessed by the magazine *Punch*, and for his illustrations in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*.² As Tenniel worked for *Punch* while drawing this political cartoon and literally thousands of others, the rights to the cartoons were held by the magazine. In later time many of the pieces published by the company were featured in other collections, illustrating opinions on various social and political topics within the pieces and serving as compendiums of the artist's/magazine's works.

'The Greedy Boy' is a political comic that serves as a narrative on the recently unified Germany's colonial interests. The image shows Otto von Bismarck, the German statesman, carving slices of cake out of the globe and placing them on his plate, not sharing with a caricature of John Bull, an allegorical figure that represents England. The slices of the world that Bismarck is taking include both New Guinea and Angra Pequena, colonial locations of interest to Great Britain. This piece by Tenniel reveals how Britain felt about Germany's goals by the shocked expression of Bull's face, a character who is accustomed to taking as much cake as he pleases.

While searching for articles that addressed this source I ran into troves of Tenniel's images. Many were from his time at *Punch* while others were from his

¹ PUNCH Magazine Cartoon Archive, www.punch.co.uk/index.

² Kosik, Corryn. "Sir John Tenniel." *Illustration History*, Mar. 2018, www.illustrationhistory.org/artists/sir-john-tenniel.

illustrations for Lewis Carroll.³ As this source exploration is based around a publication that focuses on a British view of Germany the **focus will be on the collections of Tenniel that reflect political attitudes towards Germany** more than anything else. John Tenniel's picture of "The Greedy Boy" had next to no references that I could find yet I did find collections of Tenniel's works that compounded dozens of his most popular pieces, an article from the New York Times that referred to him, and a modern book that frequently utilized images created by him to serve as context for their historical interpretations of Britain's view towards Germany. Searching on Melvyl/Worldcat revealed a number of books dedicated to Tenniel's illustrations in the *Alice in Wonderland* series as well as an illustrated collection of Tenniel's work for *Punch*.

While 'The Greedy Boy' may not have garnered much attention, Tenniel himself did. Upon examining sources that refer to Tenniel or highlight his works it is evident that he had a critical mind that was able to look at a situation and spin it in a way that would be a caricature that would reflect the feelings of Britain towards the subject. His works addressed issues including the Irish republican Fenian Movement in the 1860s, crownings of kings and queens, military movements in Europe and the United States, and the events leading up to, including, and after German unification.

Annotated Bibliography

Tenniel, John. *CARTOONS (FROM PUNCH) : 1st Series 1853-1862, 2nd Series 1862-1870. ser. 2, Bradbury, Agnew, & Co., London, 1870.*

This book contains a number of images that address events both in England and across the world. The first cartoon within this was from August 1862 and the last from September 1870. Many of the images within pertained to matters of German unification as the events leading up to the actual unification were occurring during this time. The comic 'Two Frightful Examples' (Nov. 1862), found on page 5, serves as an example of an event leading up to German unification, showing what Tenniel perceived to be

³ Lenny. "Pictures from Alice's Adventures in Wonderland." *Alice-in-Wonderland.net*, www.alice-in-wonderland.net/resources/pictures/alices-adventures-in-wonderland/.

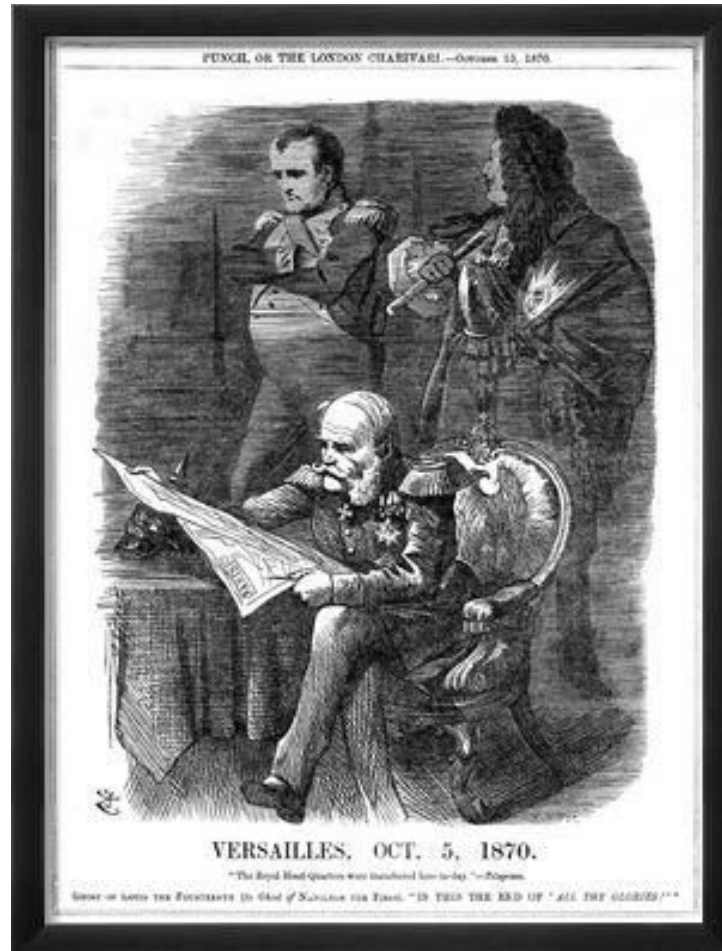
Europe's general reaction to news that William I was battling with the parliament in regards to his constitutional rights. This piece by Tenniel shows representative characters of Naples and Greece advising King William I of Prussia against holding contempt towards his parliament and, consequently the Prussian constitution, pleading "From our example warning take," a reference to their respective histories of invasion and civil war once their leaders attempted to subvert their legal checks and responsibilities. Tenniel also looked at Prussia with a keen eye during the era of German unification, as seen in his piece 'The Beadle and the Dane' (June 1864), which can be found on page 18. This cartoon depicts the British Earl Russell offering half of Schleswig to a wounded Christian IX, the king of Denmark. This offer, coupled with the image of the wounded king shows the precarious position that Denmark was in during the period of German unification and expansion. Tenniel creates this illustration to show the apparent friendliness of the English people and of their power in offering to protect Schleswig from Prussian invasion in return for half of the land that they shield. The best example of post unification within this text can be found on page 115 in the image of 'Treaty of Versailles' (Oct. 1870), which shows Bismarck calmly reading a paper while the ghost of Louis XIV asks the ghost of Napoleon I "Is this the end of 'All the Glories'?" This image shows the broad understanding that Europe held that peace would begin to descend upon Europe now that Bismarck had nearly accomplished his goal of German unification, including the defeat of France to Germanic forces.



'Two Frightful Examples' (Nov. 1862)



'The Beadle and the Dane' (June, 1864)



'Treaty of Versailles' (Oct. 1870)

Correspondent., From Our Own. "LONDON STAGE AND OTHER NOTES.; MAPLESON'S PATTI CONTRACT--OPERA IN NEW-YORK--TENNIEL'S LATEST CARTOON." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 27 July 1884, www.nytimes.com/1884/07/27/archives/london-stage-and-other-notes-maplesons-patti-contractopera-in.html.

This article features Tenniel within the New York Times on July 27, 1884, showing that while his comics were mainly popular within England they were in fact read and analyzed the United States and other neighboring countries. This specific comic

appears to serve as a critique of British politics, an example of the scope of Tenniel's opinions which included that of his own homeland.

**“‘The Greedy Boy’ (January 10, 1885).” *GHDI - Image*,
germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_image.cfm?image_id=1429.**

This image was found on GHDI and my searches were first built around this. This document was taken from the Bildarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz, a repository of information that pertains to German history. This image shows an image of Bismarck taking territory in the world without sharing with Great Britain, showing the actions being made by Germany and the general understanding that the English had towards this.

Tenniel, John. *Cartoons : Selected from the Pages of "Punch"*. London: "Punch" Office, 1901.

This source includes cartoons by John Tenniel from 1851-1901, highlighting what he believed to be his greatest works, one of which included 'Bismarck' (Aug. 1898), on pages 154-155 which shows a procession after his death, featuring individual states carrying his body while the feminine Germany led the procession in mourning colors, looking at the ground. This source is apt as it shows that while Britain often seemed unsure what to think of Britain, the author Tenniel viewed the death of Bismarck as one worthy of an honorable comic rather than one of mocking or concern unlike many of his others.

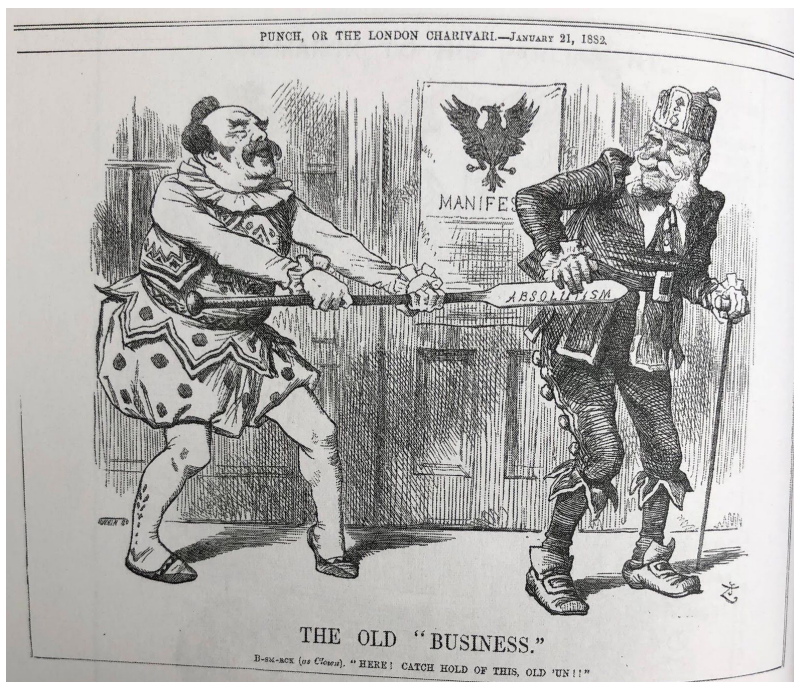


'Bismarck' (Aug. 1898)

Scully, R. *British Images of Germany: Admiration, Antagonism & Ambivalence 1860-1914*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

This book has the express purpose of providing a narrative of how Britain viewed Germany from the time period of 1860-1914. Within this text there are literally dozens of images by Tenniel, and there is even a reference to 'The Greedy Boy' on page 201, with the narration that the image portrayed Bismarck (Germany) "taking Johnnie Bull's slice of plum pudding (New Guinea) as well as his own (Angra Pequena)..." This reference to 'The Greedy Boy' mainly serves as an example of "the sheer novelty (and even absurdity) of Germany's becoming a colonial power," something that helps reflect the everyday Englishman's view towards Germany from the secure and powerful position that Britain enjoyed. Many other comics within this book poke fun at the German states and frequently alternate showing Bismarck in a comical role or one of manipulative power. The best example that shows the comical role that Tenniel portrays Bismarck can be found on page 194 in the image of 'The Old

“Business” (Jan. 1882), as seen with Bismarck dressed in the guise of Pantaloon, “the greedy and amoral clown’ of pantomime fame.”⁴ This dressing up of Bismarck shows the comical view that people of the time could hold towards Bismarck, despite his manipulation and power over the King of Prussia at the same time, as seen with his prodding of the Kaiser with a stick of absolutism. This comical appearance of Bismarck can also be seen as Tenniel’s view that if one of Bismarck’s plans went wrong that the Kaiser would be blamed instead of the manipulative Bismarck due to his portraying of him in a dopey manner. In contrast to an image of humor, a portrayal of Bismarck in a role of ultimate manipulation and power can be seen on page 196 in Tenniel’s 1884 work of ‘The Three Emperors’. This caricature paints a picture of Bismarck as an all powerful puppet master, pulling the strings of the emperors of Russia, Germany, and Austria-Hungary in the direction of his insinuated goals of controlling Europe. This book provides a wealth of images that show the views that England held towards Germany and the prevalent role that John Tenniel had in both voicing and shaping the opinions of Britain in regards to Germany.



‘The Old “Business”’ (Jan. 1882)

⁴ Scully, p. 191



'The Three Emperors' (Sep. 1884)

Kosik, Corryn. "Sir John Tenniel." *Illustration History*, Mar. 2018, www.illustrationhistory.org/artists/sir-john-tenniel.

This website served as the primary source of my knowledge of John Tenniel as it outlines the major dates of his life, his major works, and provides a summary of his life including jobs, titles, and activities. The main message from this source is that Tenniel was a popular political satirist who created literally thousands of cartoons that addressed political and social issues of his day, as well as a man who found creative outlets in other subjects such as illustrations for authors that would go on to become world famous (Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*).