



# Illingworth's War in Cartoons: One Hundred of his Greatest Drawings 1939 - 1945

*Mark Bryant*

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LESLIE ILLINGWORTH was one of the most distinguished British political cartoonists of the 20th century and remains for many 'the cartoonists' cartoonist'. Yet though his career spanned more than 50 years – longer than either of his great contemporaries Sir David Low and Vicky – very little has been published about his life and works. Some of Illingworth's best cartoons were published for the Daily Mail during the Second World War (examples were even found in Hitler's bunker) and this book collects together for the first time 100 of his greatest to mark the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of the conflict. Illingworth joined the Daily Mail soon after the war started, and remained with the paper for 30 years. A superb draughtsman and an acute political commentator, he also drew weekly for Punch for two decades. The magazine's editor Malcolm Muggeridge even felt that his cartoons were better than Low's: 'Illingworth's go deeper, becoming, at their best, satire in the grand style rather than mischievous quips'. A student under Sir William Rothenstein at the Royal College of Art during one of its most brilliant periods – fellow students included Barbara Hepworth, Henry Moore and Eric Ravilious – he left to become full-time political cartoonist on Wales' national paper, the Western Mail, at the age of only 19. A founding member and the first President of the British Cartoonists' Association in 1966, he was made an Honorary Doctor of Literature by the University of Kent in 1975. In addition he drew for American publications – including a famous cover for Time magazine – and was officially presented to US President L.B. Johnson in 1968. This unique collection is divided into chapters covering the war year-by-year and the book draws extensively on archive material held at the National Library of Wales and only recently catalogued in association with the British Cartoon Archive at the University of Kent. It also contains the first biography of Illingworth based on unique access to hitherto unavailable family records.

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