

**Title:** *Illustrated World Atlas*

**Author:** John Tallis/John Rapkin

**Date:** 1851

**Description:** John Tallis is considered to be one of the most renowned cartographers and publisher of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. His work is considered to be the last of the lavishly decorated and ornamental maps. They are works of art as much of geography. This atlas is one of my favorites mostly because of the non-cartographic features. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century the world had been scientifically surveyed and the general outline pretty accurate. Most of the maps that have intrigued me were produced before the invention of the printing press and displayed the naivety and innocence that was lost at the end of the Renaissance.

John was born in Stourbridge in Worcestershire, England about 1818 and it is possible he stayed working in the Midlands as a publisher in Birmingham, until he moved to London in the early 1840's. He set up the first of his publishing businesses in Cripplegate, with Frederick Tallis, who was quite possibly his brother. This business lasted from 1842 to 1849 when it was dissolved. By 1846 the business had moved to Smithfield.

From 1851 - 54, John set up another business, operating as John Tallis and Company and it was during this period that he produced the *Illustrated World Atlas*, produced for the 1851 Great Exhibition.

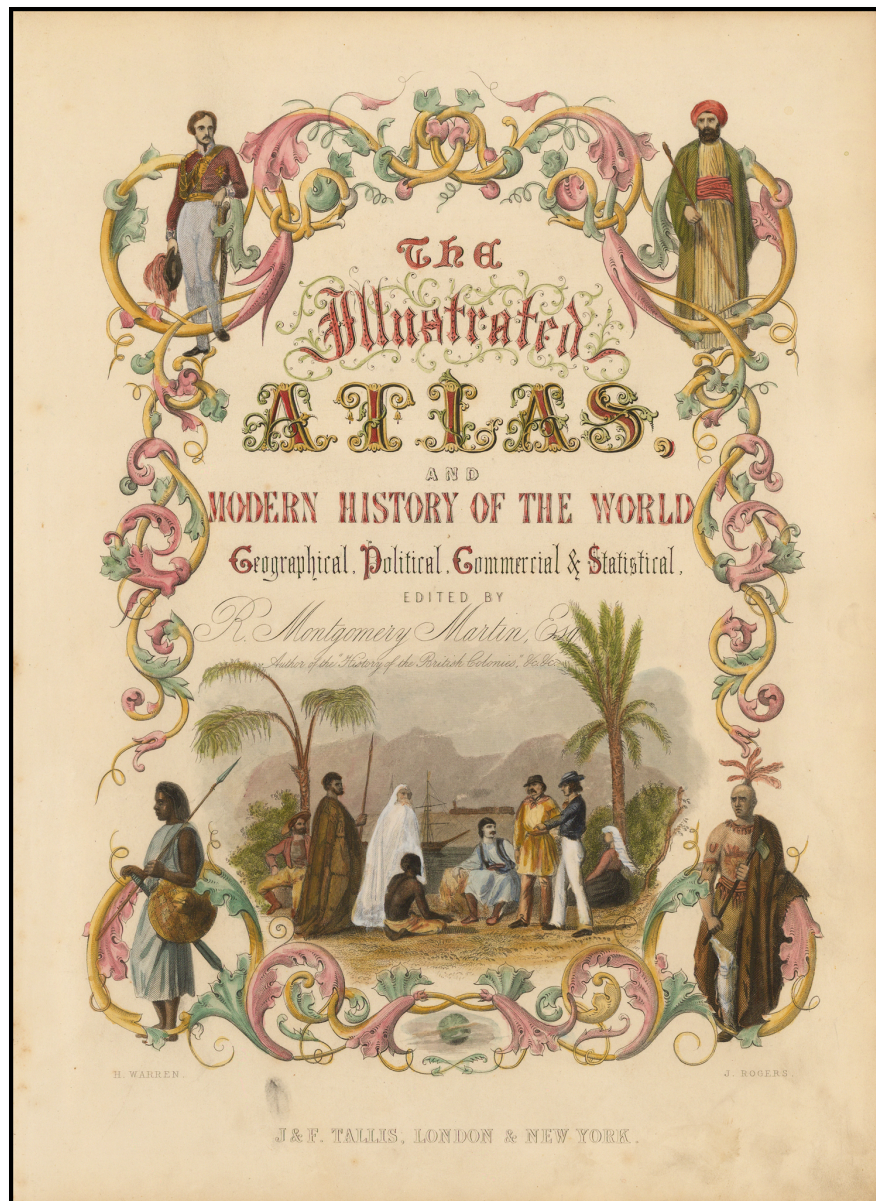
The intriguing thing is, that at some point, John Tallis made the acquaintance of an engraver named John Rapkin who was an inspiration to Tallis. His stunning illustrations enabled the maps they produced to be beautiful illuminative works of art. John Rapkin's work inspired John Tallis and they used travelogues extensively to guide John Rapkin as he produced vignettes and ornamental engravings to embellish the Tallis maps. The maps were originally uncolored, although when sold colorists were frequently employed to add tints to them.

Tallis' maps represent the end of an era in the production of grand decorative atlases. Tallis is known for his series of small illustrations or vignettes, depicting foreign scenes which are sensitively arranged around the map itself. Tallis maps supplied the great desire for foreign exotica that was in demand in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. With his brother Frederick, the *Illustrated Atlas of the World* was published in about seventy parts between 1849 and 1853. Each part sold for one shilling or twenty-five cents in America, and was made available in Australia and other British Colonies almost immediately, in 1854. The maps were released one at a time enabling purchasers to make regular small payments.

The cartography was both drawn and engraved by John Rapkin. The initial drawing was a collation of information from two sources. Map publishers paid for access to information concerning newly charted coastlines. They also used maps published previously by others. Tallis maps used the print medium of steel engraving. For the maps in the *Atlas* Rapkin would have carved the outline and text in a mirror image to his preliminary drawing on a sheet of hard steel. The plate would have been spread with ink and the excess wiped off leaving ink only in the grooves. A piece of paper was then soaked in water so as to become stretched and capable of squeezing into the grooves of the plate. It was then laid over the steel plate and rolled through a press leaving the ink in a reverse image to the steel plate.

Tallis & Co employed various artists throughout the years to execute their trademark vignettes. They were generally artists trained in topographical tradition from provincial areas and, as was the trend in the 1820s and 1830s, came to London to apprentice themselves to a master engraver. At any one time two hundred or so were employed by the Tallis company.

The *Atlas* contains 82 maps, each with an opposing page that describes the region covered in terms of climate, cities, history, population, physical aspects, trade and industry. These maps show a modern cartographic display of continents and countries that are very detailed and accurate for the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. But it is the integration of the beautiful vignettes that represent the European perspective of cultural and natural features found throughout the world that are the real attraction and interest.







The United States map shows an oddly configured Texas and New Mexico, pre-Indian Territory region called Western Territory, massive Missouri Territory, odd elongated Nebraska Territory extending to Canada and other odd borders. Vignettes of Washington, Franklin, the Washington Monument, a Buffalo Hunt, Indians trading with settlers and two other vignettes.







The British Isles map showing vignettes of London, Edinburgh, Dublin and inset of Shetland Islands.





The Europe map with vignettes showing Slave Market, Seal Hunting, Lapland Travelers, Arabs and Camels.

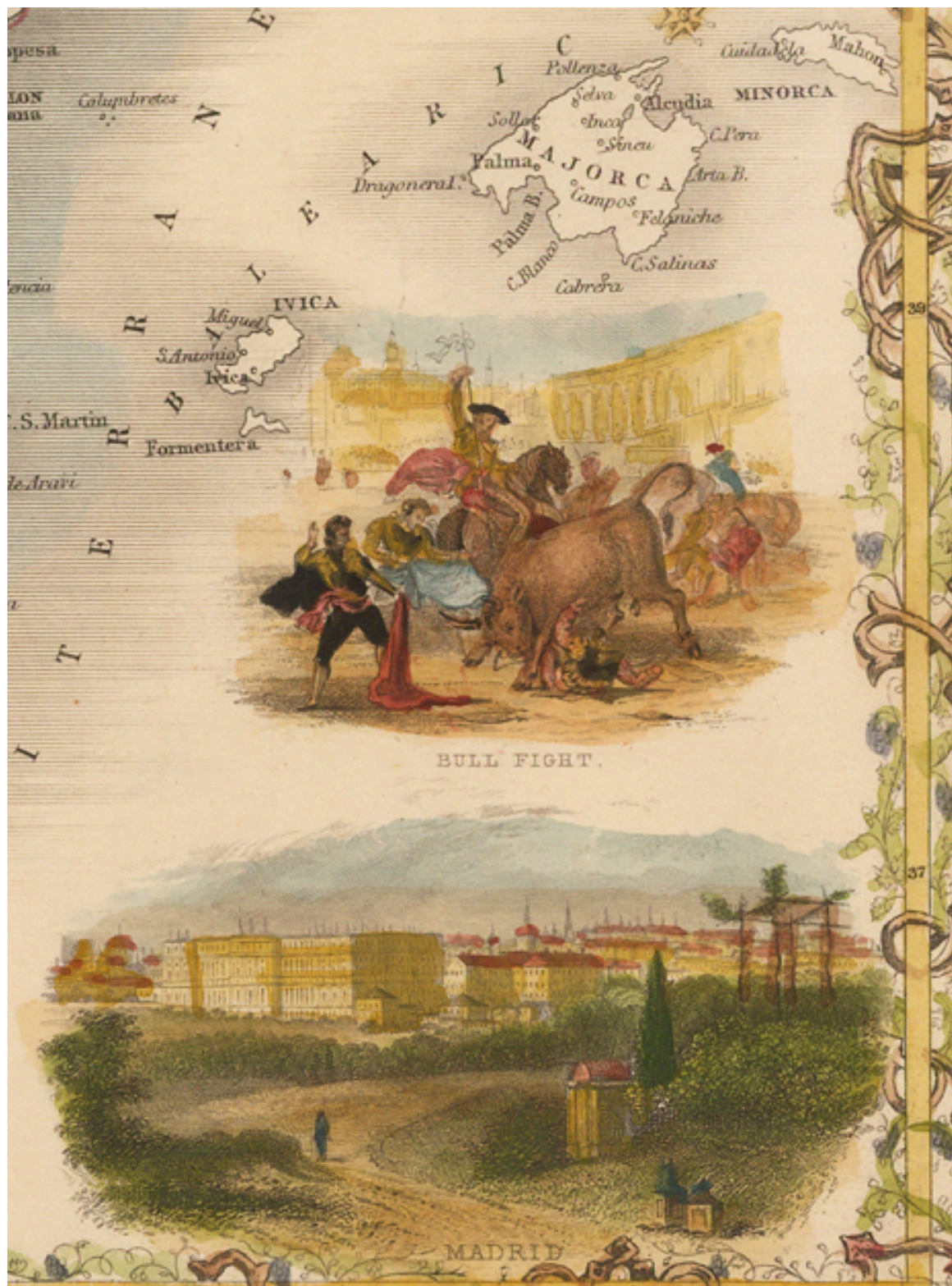






*Spain and Portugal map with vignettes showing bull fighting, Madrid, Lisbon, Belem Castle, Gibraltar, and two coats of arms.*

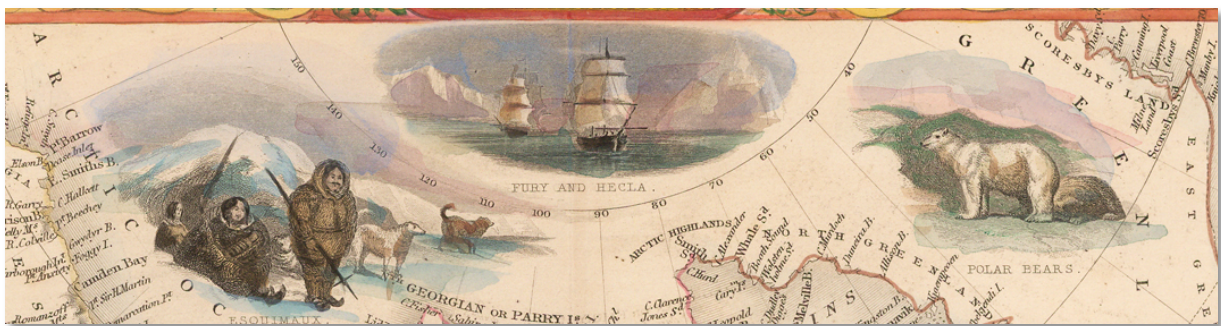




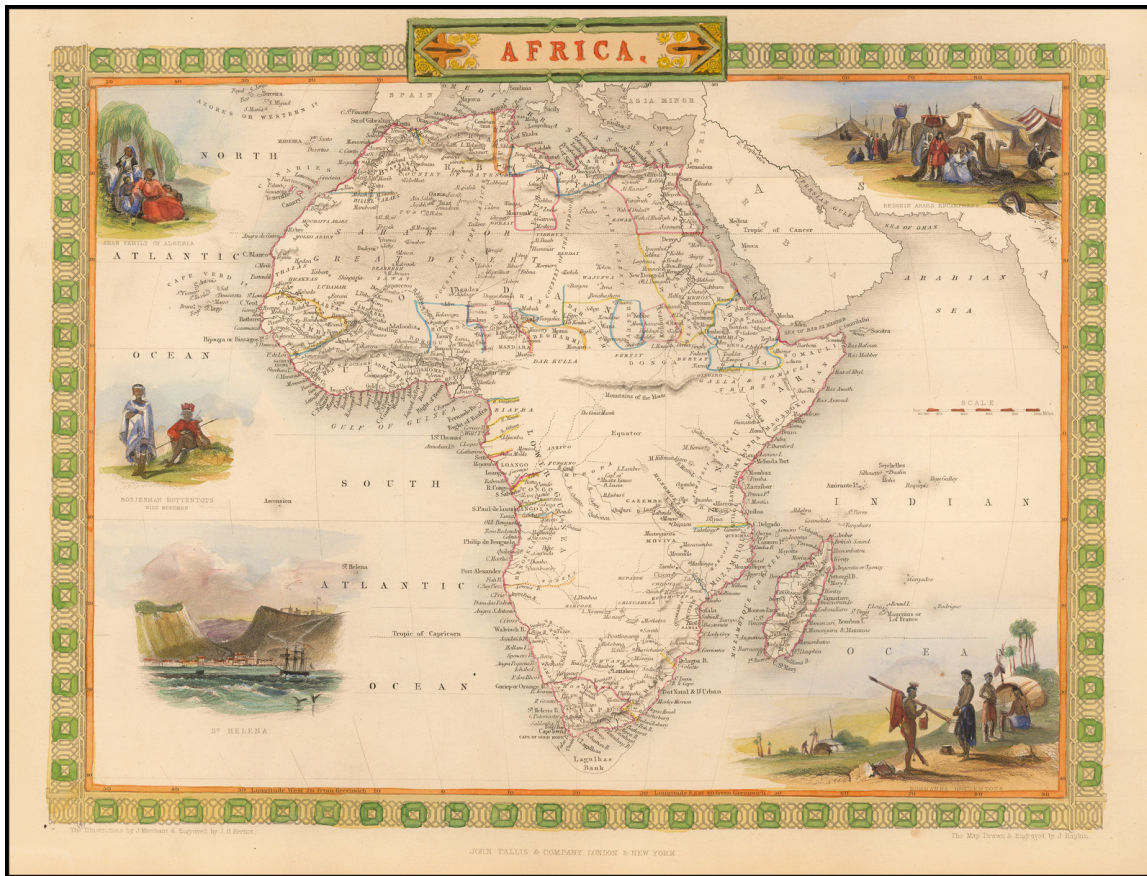




*British America map with vignettes showing Whale Fishing, polar bears, Montreal, Fury and Hecla ships at sail.*







*Africa map with vignettes showing a Bedouin Arab Encampment, Korranna Hottentots, St. Helena, Bosjesman Hottentots Wild Bushmen, and an Arab Family of Algeria.*







Scotland with vignettes of Edinburgh, Deer Stalking, Shinty, Holyrood House, Scott's Monument and Brig of Doon & Burns Monument.









*Asia with vignettes of Tartars, Russian Peasants, Petra and the Sun Birds of India and the Philippines.*







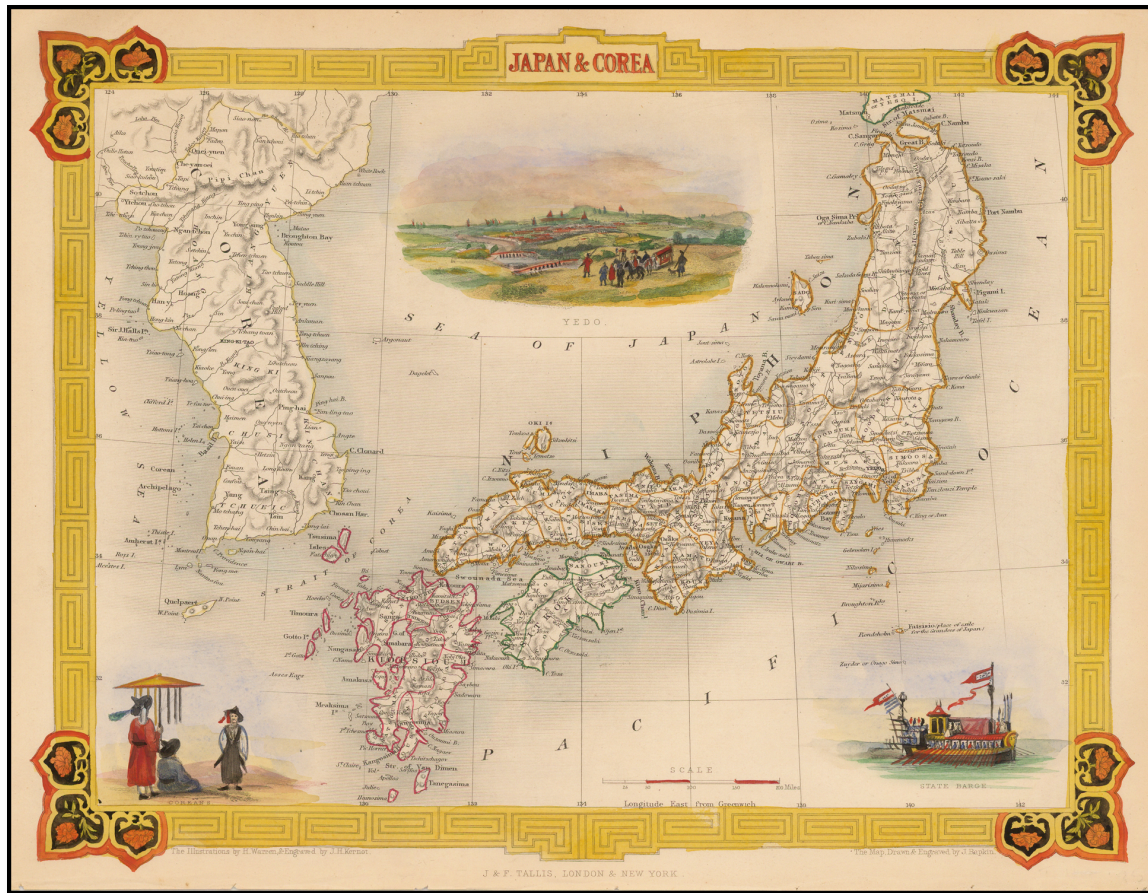
*Thibet, Mongolia and Mandchouria with vignettes, including Leh in Ladakh, a stretch of the Great Wall of China, the dwelling of Tessaling Lama, Shigatei, Mausoleum at Teshoo Loom Boo, a Mongol noble on a camel, the Fortress and Palace of the Dalai Lama and Little Thibet*



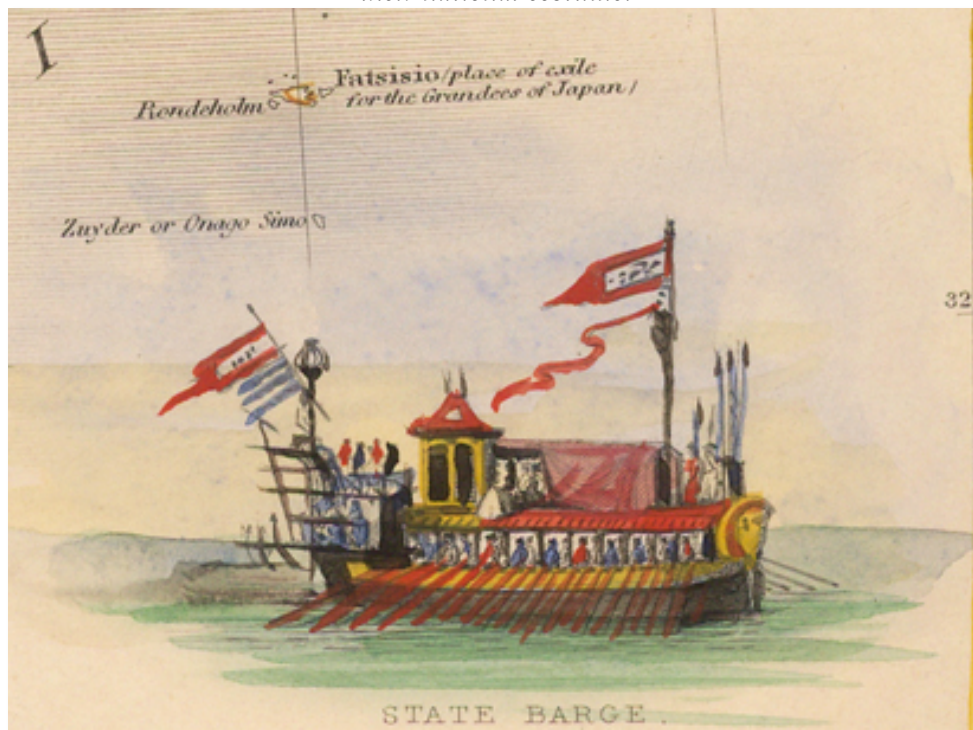








Japan and Corea with views of the City of Yedo (Tokyo), a Japanese state barge and Koreans in their national costume.

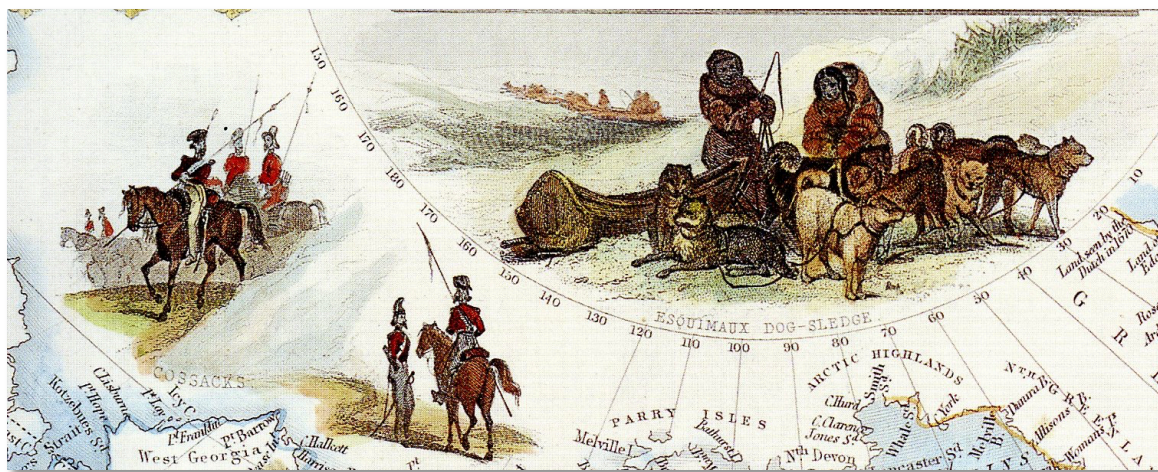






North America with illustrated views of Niagara Falls, Mount Hekla (Iceland), a 'Convoy of Diamonds', an ancient monument in Mexico, a wapiti deer, beavers, North American Indians, an Eskimo dog sledge and, interestingly, Cossacks in 'Russian America' (Alaska).







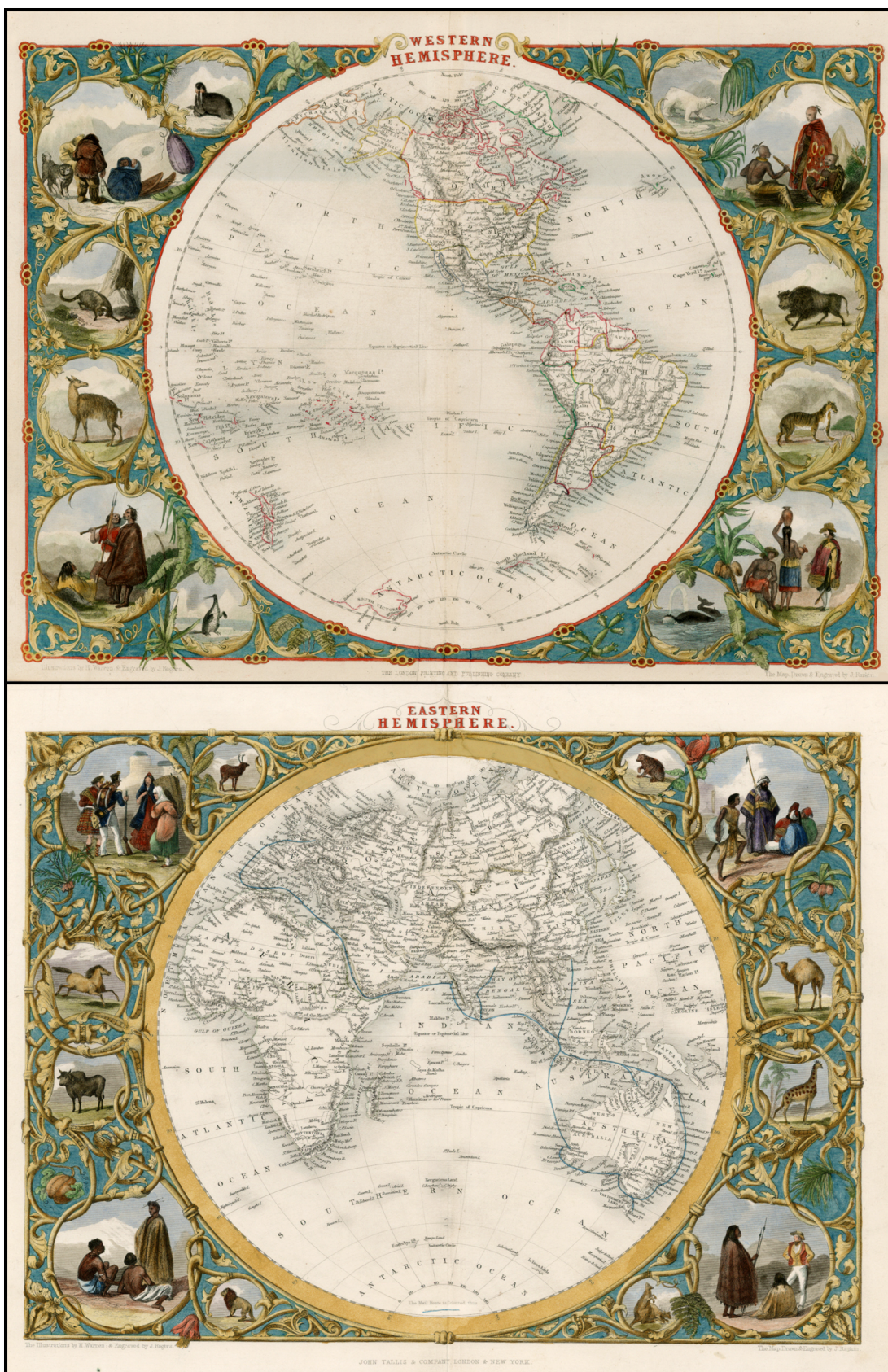


*South America with views of gold washing in Brazil, a Brazilian rope bridge, Rio De Janeiro, Natives of Chili [Chile], Valparaíso and a scene of Condors and Llamas in Peru.*





















*Russia in Asia with vignettes of a polar hunting scene, Skorskarskoi Pagost, Troitsk and Kamchatkan Dogs.*







Regional map of Mexico, California and Texas, featuring Texas in its Republic configuration, with stovepipe reaching to Wyoming and Colorado. This is the second edition of the map, which includes the Gold Washing vignette not included in the first edition. Upper California is shown with the Gold Regions highlighted in gold, a pre-Gadsden border with Mexico and a host of other contemporary details. Numerous Indian tribes named throughout the Southwest. Early routes through Texas and the West are shown. Includes a number of forts and outposts in Texas and Upper California. Two decorative vignettes.







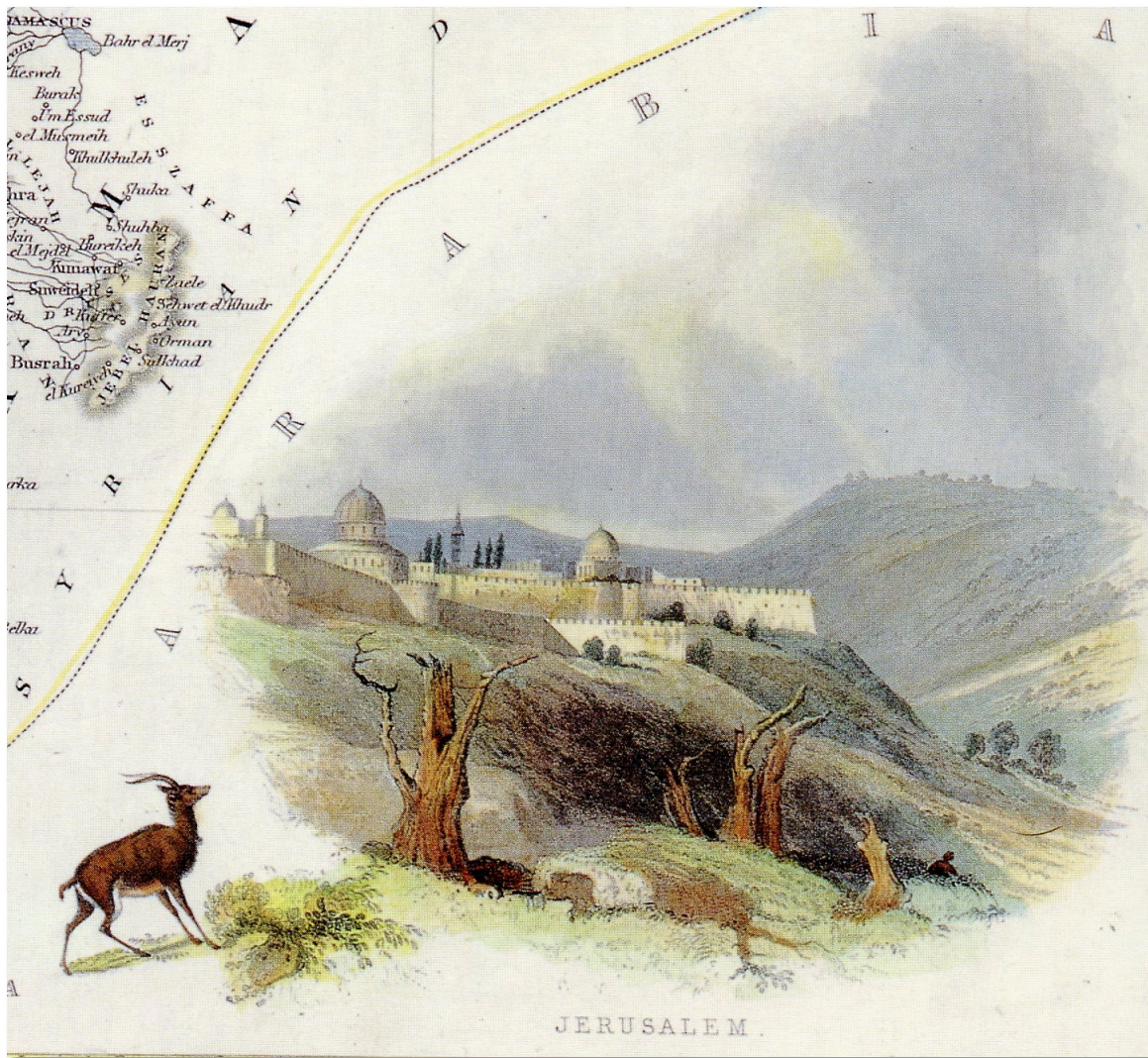
*China and Birmah with vignettes showing British Factories in Canton, Chinese soldiers, Hong Kong, Tower*



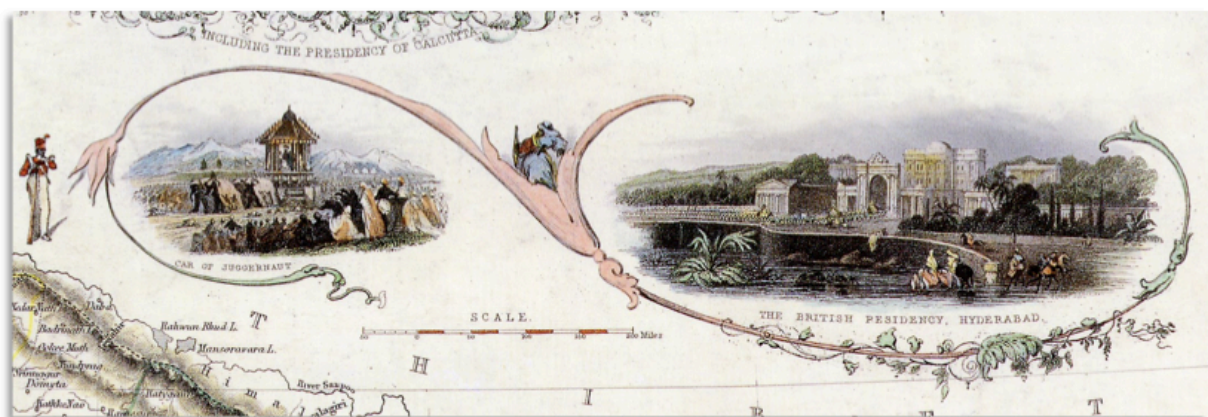








*Vignette from the map of Syria*

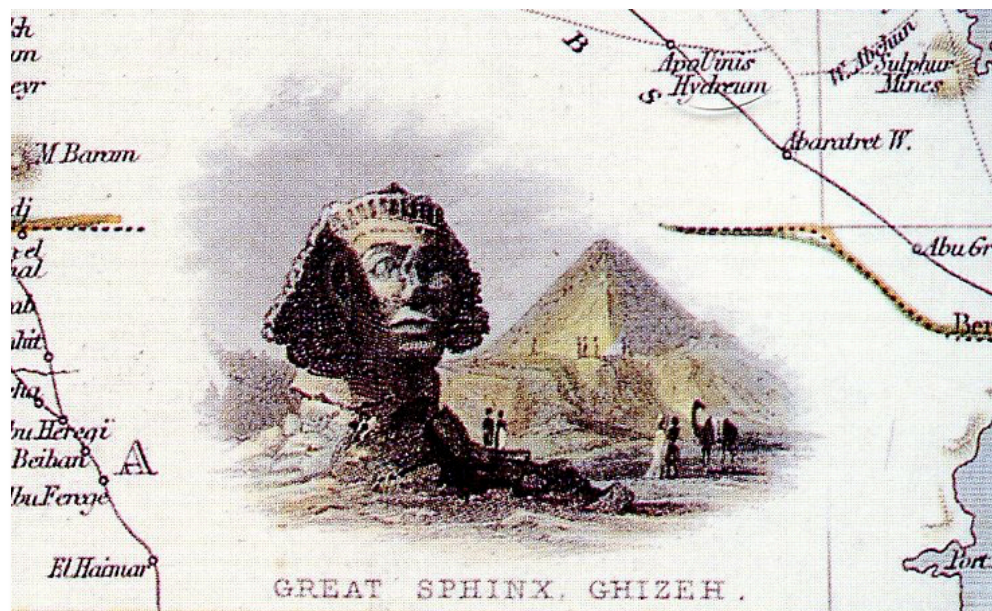


*Vignette from the map of Northern India*



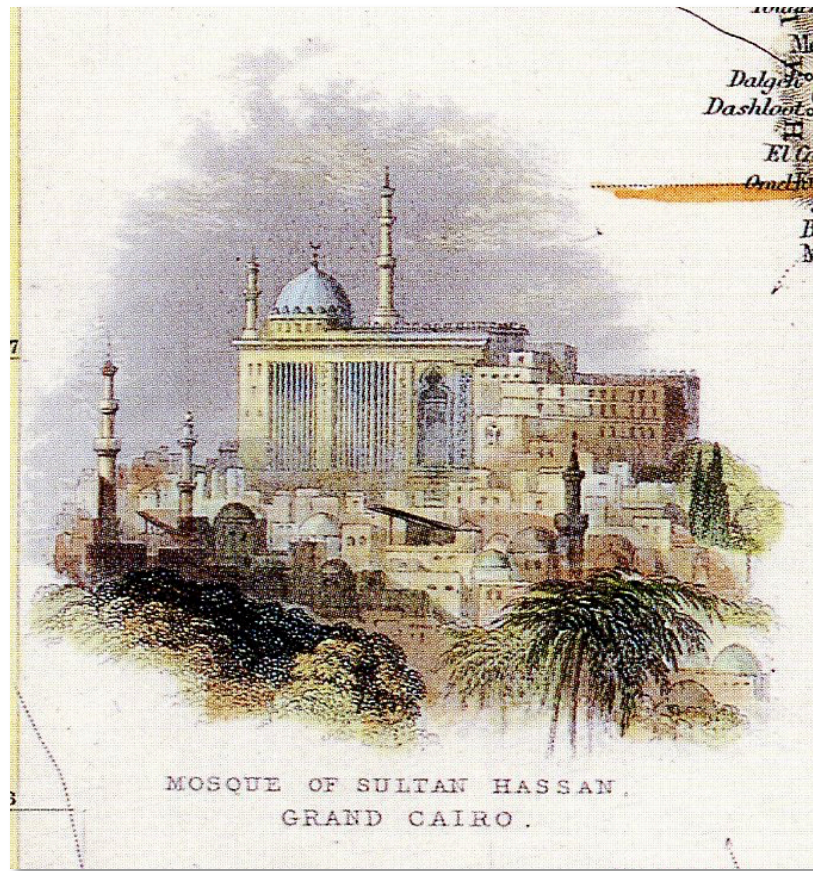


*Vignette from the map "Turkey in Europe"*

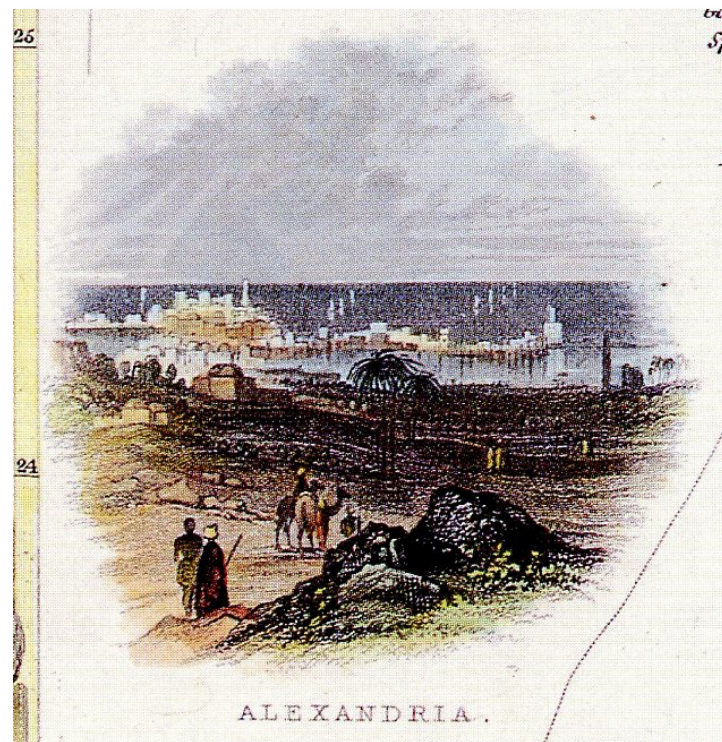


*Vignette from the map of Egypt*

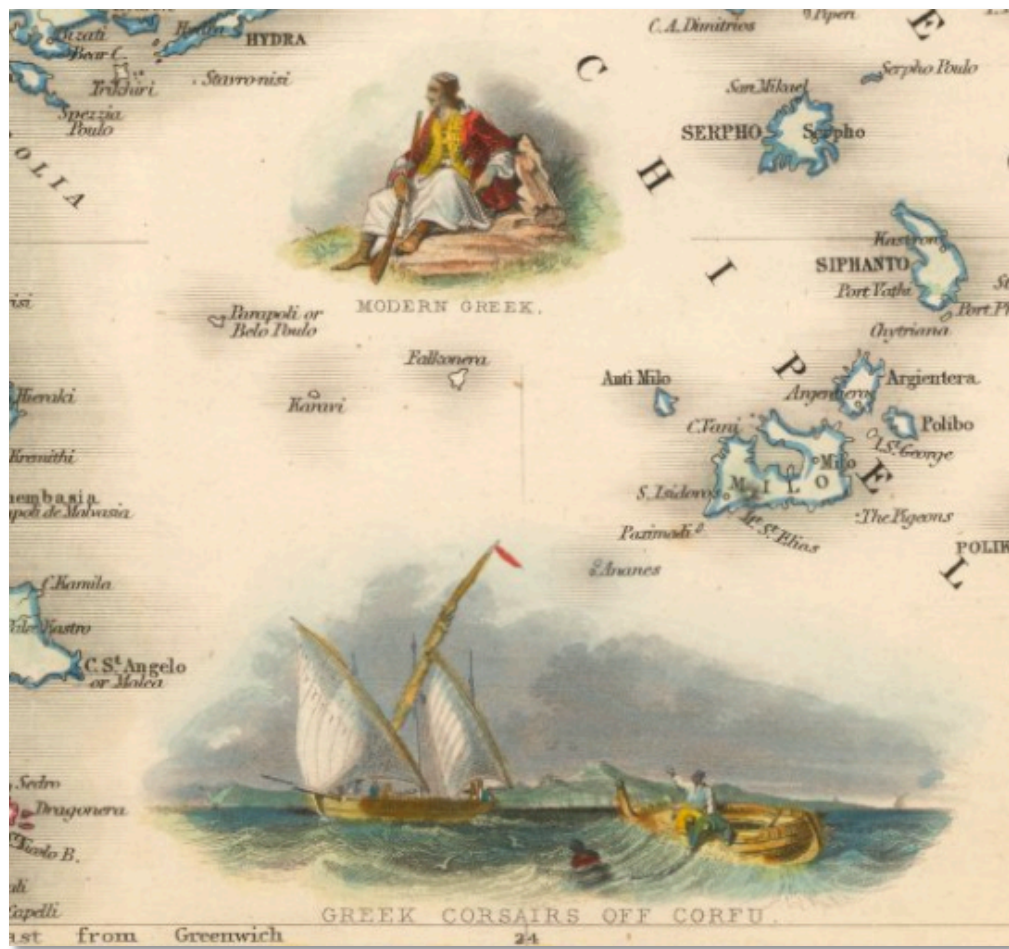




*Vignettes from the map of Egypt*







Vignettes from the map of Greece