

Great Britain: Great Exhibition: Prince Albert / Crystal Palace

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Form: Circular

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Date: 1851

Ref: BHM: 2462; Eimer: 1461; Laidlaw: 0954;

Variations:

| Size | Metal | Mass | Value |
|---------|-------------|--------|-------|
| 73.8 mm | White Metal | 132 gm | \$110 |

Edge: Plain.

Obverse: Within a wreath of laurel (left) and oak (right), bare head of Prince Albert, left. Signed: "OTTLEY BIRMN." at the foot. Legend: "HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE ALBERT".

Reverse: View of the exhibition building. Legend above: "THE BUILDING FOR THE GREAT EXHIBITION IN LONDON 1851". In exergue: "PROPOSED BY H.R.H. PRINCE ALBERT. / DESIGNED BY JOSEPH PAXTON ESQ. F.L.S. / ERRECTED BY HENDERSON, & CO. / (line) DIMENSIONS (line) / LENGTH 1848 FEET, WIDTH 456 FEET, / HEIGHT OF PRINCIPAL TRANSEPT 66 FEET, / HEIGHT OF TRANSCEPT 108 FEET, / GLAZEL SURFACE 900 000 FEET, / OCCUPIES 18 ACRES / OF GROUND".

Notes: The Great Exhibition of 1851 was held inside an enormous structure of iron and glass known as the Crystal Palace specifically built for the event in Hyde Park, London. The exhibition ran for five months, from May to October 1851, during which six million visitors attended the gigantic trade show where the latest technology and displays of artefacts from around the world were on display.

The idea of the Great Exhibition originated with Henry Cole, an artist and inventor. He obtained the support of Prince Albert, the husband of Queen Victoria, and the two of them organised the event which, because of its huge success, became the forerunner of many such exhibitions in the second half of the 19th century.

South Africa was represented by sixty exhibitors from the colonies of the Cape and Natal. Agricultural products, fruit, wool, minerals, animal skins, elephant tusks, ostrich plumes and eggs, and sea elephant oil were on display. There were also displays of native culture.