

# Great Britain: Great Exhibition: Crystal Palace / Building Dimensions

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**Form:** Circular

**By:** Allen & Moore

**Date:** 1851

**Ref:** BHM: 2426; Laidlaw: 0323;

**Variations:**

Size	Metal	Mass	Value
38.7 mm	White Metal	13.8 gm	\$20

**Edge:** Plain.

**Obverse:** Distant view of the Exhibition building. Legend above: "THE BUILDING AT LONDON, FOR THE / INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION / 1851". In the large exergue, conjoined bare heads of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert on an upright cross, an oval medallion supported by two cherubs representing prosperity (left) and industry (right).

**Reverse:** Across: "THE MATERIALS ARE (in an arc) / IRON AND GLASS, (in an arc) / IN SHAPE / A PARALLELOGRAM, / 1842 FT LONG BY 408 FT. BROAD, / AND 66 FT. HIGH, / IT IS CROSSED MIDWAY BY / A TRANSEPT 108 FT. HIGH, / ON THE NORTH SIDE IS AN / ADDITIONAL 936 FT. IN LENGTH / BY 48 FT. IN BREADTH; / TOTAL AREA OF SPACE / 855,300 CUBIC FT; / OR NEARLY 21 ACRES; / ESTIMATED VALUE / ?150,000. (in an arc)".

**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.