

Great Britain: Great Exhibition: Queen Victoria & Prince Albert / Prize Medal

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Form: Circular

By: W. Wyon (obv) & Leonard C. Wyon (rev) / Royal Mint

Date: 1851

Ref: BHM: 2462; Eimer: 1456; Fearon: 302.5; Laidlaw: 0493;

Variations:

Size	Metal	Mass	Value
76.6 mm	Copper-Bronze	274 gm	\$380

Edge: Plain. Impressed at the bottom: "PRIZE MEDAL OF THE EXHIBITION". Impressed at the top and inverted with the name of the recipient and the class of exhibit for which the award was made. This medal: "BILLSON & HAMES. CLASS XX."

Obverse: Within a beaded border round the rim, conjoined bare heads of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, left, she laureate. Pair of Dolphins below, trident on right. Legend above: "VICTORIA D:G: BRIT: REG: F:D: (rose) ALBERTUS PRINCEPS CON: S: R: B: M: D: C: C: C: L: I:." Signed, divided by the date: "W.WYON RA. (left) ROYAL MINT (right).

Reverse: Britannia, seated on left, crowning Industria, kneeling on right, with a laurel wreath. Britannia named on the hem of her dress. Industria named on her head scarf. Attended by four figures standing on the right behind Industria, Europa, India, Africa, and America. Below Britannia, helmet, British Union shield and trident. On the far right symbols of art, industry, agriculture and commerce with a bust of Joseph Paxton, the designer of the exhibition building.

Notes: A total of 2,876 exhibition prize medals were awarded by the jurors in 30 various class of exhibit. This medal was awarded in class 20 (Articles of Clothing) to Bilson & Hames of Leicester, manufacturer of children's socks and 3/4 hose.

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 exhibits of native culture.