

Lithograph with original hand colour, small tear to

THE GREAT EXHIBITION AND THE CAVENDISH BANANA

Building for the Great Exhibition in London The Building was Designed by Joseph Paxton, Esq. Of Chatsworth, and the Details of Construction were arranged by Messrs. Fox Henderson and Co. who are the contractors for executing the work.

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Notes
The Great Exhibition was most probably a reaction to the French Industrial Exposition in 1844: Prince Albert led the demand for a similar show of British industrial and imperial strength. Although other countries also exhibited, it was mainly designed to show off British achievements: colonial goods like Indian jewellery and cotton; technological advancements like an early fax machine and Jacquard looms; and art including Wedgwood porcelain and statues by Hiram Power.

The Crystal Palace was designed by Joseph Paxton and built in record time, taking only nine months to complete, using British glass and iron. Paxton drew on his experience designing greenhouses for the Duke of Devonshire, his patron. It was his greenhouses that enabled the cultivation of the Cavendish banana, which is now one of the most common banana species in the world.

Bibliography
BM 1871,0812.5375 (uncoloured version, 1850); RCIN 703141.

Provenance

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