



The Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876: The Centennial Commission's Final Report

The International Exhibition of Arts, Manufactures, and Products of the Soil and Mine opened in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on May 10, 1876, and ran through November 10 of that year. More commonly known as the Centennial Exhibition, it celebrated 100 years of American independence. Visitors could see thousands of exhibits from across the nation and abroad. There were seven categories of exhibits—Mining and Metallurgy; Manufactures; Education and Science; Machinery; Agriculture; Art; and Horticulture—with 36 awards groups to recognize outstanding exhibits.

The Centennial Commission's Report

Several years after the Exhibition's conclusion, the Government Printing Office published the Centennial Commission's multivolume final report. The report includes, among other things, lists of the award-winning people and companies, and names of Commission employees and exhibitors. Except for the awards categories, there is no name index.

Volumes 3 through 8 contain the reports of the awards groups. There were 36 awards categories that included: minerals, mining and mineralogy (Awards Group I); pottery and porcelains (Awards Group II); and wool, silk, and fabrics, including the materials and the machinery (Awards Group IX). Each award entry includes the exhibitor's name and residence, a synopsis of the exhibit, and a very brief report characterizing the exhibit's qualities. **Volume 8 has an alphabetical index to the awards reports.** Volume 9 consists of reports relating to the Exhibition's buildings and grounds, including drawings of the buildings and the layout of exhibits. Volumes 10 and 11 contain information pertaining to exhibits of U.S. executive agencies.

How to Locate the Commission's Reports

The National Archives has copies of the Commission's report. Direct inquires concerning the report to the Archives Library Information Center (ALIC), National Archives at College Park, 8601 Adelphi Rd., College Park, MD 20740-6001, or by e-mail to inquire@nara.gov. The Superintendent of Documents (SuDoc) number for the Commission's final report is S6.13: R29.

The Library of Congress also has a complete set of the report. For more information, see the Library's website at www.loc.gov.

The Commission's final report may also be available at large university or public libraries, and at U.S. Government Depository Libraries. To identify a local depository library, go to the Government Printing Office web site at <http://catalog.gpo.gov/fdlpdir/FDLPdir.jsp> and select the link to "FDLP Public Page."

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