

Irish Gun Money and Massachusetts coinage

King Charles I (1600 - 1649)

Charles became king of England, Scotland and Ireland in 1625. His reign was a contentious period as he believed in an "absolute monarchy" and excluded the English Parliament in making most decisions. Following many confrontations, Parliament, led by Oliver Cromwell, brought King Charles I to trial on Jan 20, 1649. Charles was found guilty on Jan 27 and was beheaded on Jan 30 at Whitehall.

King Charles II (1630 - 1685)

Although Charles II became the new king upon his father's death, he had no power as this period was known as "English Interregnum" or "English Commonwealth" led by Oliver Cromwell. Charles II attempted to over-throw the Commonwealth in a battle against forces led by Cromwell, but was defeated at the Battle of Worcester on Sep 3, 1651. Charles fled to mainland Europe (probably France) where he spent the next 9 years in exile. Following the death of Cromwell in 1658, Charles II was invited to return to Britain. On May 29, 1660, Charles II was returned to power as the monarch. After reigning for nearly 25 years, he died on Feb 6, 1685.

James II (1633 - 1701)

brother of Charles II, was born Oct 14, 1633 (was known as James VII of Scotland and James II of Ireland and England) became the new king upon Charles II death.

James' belief in "absolute monarchy" and "religious freedom was very upsetting to Britain's political and religious leaders who opposed him as "Too French", "Too pro-Catholic" and too much of an "absolute monarch".

The political and religious leaders called on William III of Orange (son-in-law and nephew of James) to land an invasion army from Netherlands. James fled to Ireland with a few loyal followers and tried to build an army in Ireland. Lacking funds to pay for an army, James melted canons, church bells and anything else made of brass or bronze to make coins.

Since silver was the respected metal for coins such as the six-pence, shilling, half-crown and crown, James promised to redeem the bronze coins with silver plus interest from the date of minting to the date when he regained the Throne of England. To be able to determine these dates, both the month and year was on all "Irish Gun Money" except the crown.

James II died of a brain hemorrhage on Sep 16, 1701 and having never regained the monarchy of England, none of the "Irish Gun Money" was ever redeemed with interest.

1625	1649	1660	1685	1688
Charles I	English Commonwealth	Charles II	James II	

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1652

Massachusetts Bay Colony
began striking coins (oak, willow
& pine tree shillings were struck for
20 years all bearing the date of 1652