

A MEDAL CURRENCY

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A "British crown" is a coin minted in the United Kingdom. When England and Scotland in 1707 were unified, in what is now known as the United Kingdom, their currencies, the English crown and the Scottish dollar, were merged into a new currency called the "**British crown**"⁽¹⁾.

The Royal Mint in May 1965 authorized the issuance of a sterling currency series in 16 denominations. One of which was the "**British Crown**" coin in honor of Sir Winston Churchill who died on January 24, 1965.



Obverse.

Obverse: Queen Elizabeth II in profile, year of issue 1965 and Latin phrase "ELIZABETH II DEI GRATIA REGINA F.D. (fidei defensor)".

In the translation, the phrase proclaims: "Elizabeth II by the grace of God, queen and defender of the faith".



Photo. Mary Gillick⁽²⁾

The youthful portrait of Her Majesty without crown⁽³⁾, was made in 1952 by engraver Mary Gaskell Gillick⁽²⁾, this was selected among seventeen proposals, **is the first portrait that marked the coins of the reign of Queen Elizabeth II.**

Mary Gillick's design did not have sufficient relief in the facial features, and the folds of the dress on the shoulder were not noticeable. The problem was solved by highlighting the punches. This chiseling work was done by Cecil Thomas, an experienced medalist, who had initially been rejected for British currency in place of Mary Gillick⁽¹⁰⁾.

Characteristics:
"Medal currency"

Year: 1965

Face value: absent.

Assigned value: 5 shillings / 25 pence

Composition: Copper and Nickel (75% Cu and 25% Ni)

Weight: 28,28 g

Diameter: 38.7 mm

Thickness: 3 mm

Orientation: Medal Alignment ↑ ↑

KM # 910

En # 4144



Reverse.

Reverse: Portrait of Sir Winston Churchill. Taken from the bronze statue by his favorite sculptor, Oscar Nemon⁽⁴⁾.



Photo. Oscar Nemon⁽⁴⁾

Sir Winston Churchill was considered the greatest prime minister in British history. He is recognized: as a **statesman**, for leading his country through the tumultuous Second World War⁽¹⁾; as an **army officer**, and was **prime minister of the United Kingdom** twice, rebuilding the United Kingdom in the post war period. After

his political career, he was a writer and an eloquent speaker, nicknamed "The Bulldog" by the British press⁽⁵⁾.

He was a member of the British aristocracy. For the Spencer branch he was related to the Dukes of Marlborough, born in 1874 at Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire, and baptized **Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill**. His father, Lord Randolph Churchill, was also a politician and served as Chancellor of the Exchequer and his mother was Jennie Jerome, an American socialite.

He was awarded the 1953 Nobel Prize in Literature and was the first person to be made an honorary citizen of the United States of America⁽⁶⁾.

Public Law 88-6

AN ACT
To proclaim Sir Winston Churchill an honorary citizen of the United States of America.

April 9, 1963
[H. R. 4374]

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the President of the United States is hereby authorized and directed to declare by proclamation that Sir Winston Churchill shall be an honorary citizen of the United States of America.

Approved April 9, 1963, 2:45 p.m.

Sir Winston
Churchill,
Honorary citizen-
ship.

With such an impressive record, it is not surprising that Queen Elizabeth II decreed a great State funeral, which lasted 4 days. Because she believed that the funeral should be proportionate to her position in history.

In early September 1965, Sir Winston's widow, Lady Spencer-Churchill, visited the London Mint in Tower Hill, to witness the minting of the first coin in tribute to her husband, without imagining that it would start a very high coinage⁽⁷⁾.

In July 1966 the coinage was completed with a record of 19'640,000⁽⁸⁾ pieces, this was three times more than the 1953 coinage celebrating the coronation of Her Majesty Elizabeth II.

The coinage was very high due to the high demand that it had in the United States for having been an allied country in the Second World War, in addition Winston Churchill's mother was born in the United States of America⁽⁷⁾.

This currency was not included in the demonetization legislation when decimalization was introduced in 1971. Royal Mint has confirmed that the currency is still legal tender, having been remonetized with a value of 25 pence.

It is the first British coin to feature someone who is not a member of Her Majesty Elizabeth II's family.

It is basically the first coinage since 1902 of a **"British crown"**, which does not have a face value, showing itself as an unusual coin called **"medal currency"**.

The London mint assigned it the value of 5 shillings (crown), and an equivalent in decimalization to a quarter of a pound sterling (25 pence), so this **"medal currency"** met the requirements demanded by the monetary law for its circulation⁽⁹⁾.

In the **"medal currency"**, both characters Elizabeth II and Winston Churchill look in the same direction, as if it were a message from the constitutional monarchy to the British people.

On the obverse side, the feminine, graceful, classic and delicate design, on the one hand, and on the reverse side, the opposite, are details that rediscover it as an interesting piece for collectors and numismatists.

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