

No place to hide

The trial and execution of Charles 1 and the pursuit and fate of his regicides

“I shall say but very short prayers, and then thrust out my hands”.



Charles 1

Early on the cold morning of 30 January 1649 after saying these words, the head of Charles I King of England was severed from his body by the executioner’s axe. Charles is the only English king to have been executed for treason in that he waged war on his own people. After Charles’s execution England was administered by a republican parliamentary government led by the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell.



Oliver Cromwell

Following the fall of the republic and the restoration of the monarchy, the greatest manhunt the world had ever seen up to that time had begun for those who had executed Charles I. When captured, regicides both in England and those who had fled overseas were either executed or assassinated; others were either imprisoned for life in royal dungeons or died before trial or of old age. However, three regicides escaped to New England in America and led extraordinary lives under Puritan-protected exile much to the chagrin of the pursuing “Royalist Bloodhounds”. This talk will examine why Charles I was executed, the vengeance exacted on those who were responsible and the intensive pursuit of those who escaped.