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**Matthew Jenkinson.** *Charles I's Killers in America: The Lives and Afterlives of Edward Whalley and William Goffe.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019. Illustrations, maps. 288 pp. $27.95, cloth, ISBN 978-0-19-882073-4.

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## King Killers in New England: The Strange Career of Anglo-American Republicanism

On February 3, 1660, the army of George Monck completed its protracted march from Scotland and arrived in London. Over the ensuing three months, Monck and his troops sounded the death knell of the English Republic while preparations were finalized to "restore" Charles Stuart as king of England, Scotland, and Ireland, an office that had been terminated by the proclamation of that republic followed by the execution of Charles II's father in January 1649. Two weeks before the triumphant return of the monarch to English soil, William Goffe and Goffe's father-in-law, Edward Whalley, two signatories of Charles I's death warrant, read the prevailing mood even before they were excepted from the general pardon granted by the king and parliament. The regicides took ship for New England where they lived sometimes openly and sometimes underground until their deaths in the 1670s.

With the United States having come into being as a republic having achieved independence from the British monarchy, the American experiences of these regicides gained some cultural cachet as elements of "'not only the history of New Haven, but of our country'—or, indeed, any country concerned with questions of monarchies and republics, tyranny and liberty"—as Matthew Jenkinson observes (referencing *The New Haven Journal Courier*) (p. 186). Accordingly, Jenkinson offers a lively cultural history of the "afterlives" of the king killers in America (their counterpart, John Dixwell, honored, as Goffe and Whalley have been, with a major street name in New Haven, receives much lower billing here).

The course of this usable past reflects the fundamental ambivalence of the republican challenge to monarchy. On the one hand, Americans, determined to demonstrate—often to the point of hagiography—both their affection for liberty and the preeminence of their version of liberty, employed the figures of Goffe and Whalley to signal the enduring and fierce defense of republican ideals against monarchical "tyranny," as well as hostile "Indians" as commemorated by Goffe's purported appearance as "The Angel of Hadley" who rallied his adopted community against a Native attack during King Philip's War. Yet, on the other hand, an over-celebration of regicide might be mistaken for an enduring call to overthrow duly established authority; thus, the employment of the pair has waxed and waned over the decades.

Jenkinson tracks this ambivalence as it manifested itself even in the run-up to the American War of Independence when the revolutionaries published accounts of the flight of the regicides and their escapes—with the assistance of their sympathetic neighbors—from periodic attempts to arrest them in order to justify resistance to imperial tyranny. On the other hand, the Loyalist Thomas Hutchinson acquired Goffe's diary for use in the first volume of his *History of Massachusetts Bay* (1765), which emphasized the colony's obedience—before most of it was lost when Stamp Act protesters ransacked the historian's Boston home. In 1793, Ezra Stiles, the president of Yale, lamenting the prospect that the tribulations they purportedly underwent because of their forthright opposition to Stuart tyranny might be forgotten due to the obscurity surrounded their exile, composed an encomium to the regicides in America followed by a history of their experiences that appeared the following year.

With an American national identity to form, Stiles did not have to tender further invitations to memorialize Goffe and Whalley as harbingers of virtuous republicanism—often twinned with their contempo-
rary, the Virginia rebel, Nathaniel Bacon—for a new, vigorous, and exceptional nation. While the assassination of Abraham Lincoln gave pause in the decade or so after 1865, nineteenth-century cheerleaders ranging from the literary giant Nathaniel Hawthorne to a parade of lesser lights, including H. W. Herbert, G. H. Hollister, J. K. Paulding, Edward Grimm, Frederick Hull Cogswell, and Margaret Sidney, continued to herald Goffe and Whalley as "embodiments of America's revolutionary spirit," customarily without bothering with the inconveniences presented by historical reality (p. 140). And more crudely but no less suggestively were the streams of visitors who tendered their respects at the "Judges Cave," the exiles' hideaway outside New Haven, leaving the views of less enthusiastic commentators, such as the historian George Bancroft, not to mention British authors, in the shade (pp. 125, 158). The regicides enjoyed another revival during the twentieth-century interwar years, especially as heroes in children's books. They returned to obscurity following the murder of John F. Kennedy in 1963 as the widening of American cultural norms in the 1960s largely relegated these figures to the shadows with a few exceptions of historical fiction.

This history, as Jenkinson rightly frames it, presents the essential question for considering the character of republics generally and of the American incarnation, particularly where to draw the line between authority and anarchy in order to preserve liberty best. As he also points out, though, the joint case of Goffe and Whalley is grounded so firmly in New England (and New Haven, even more narrowly) that it may not shed helpful light on other republican scenarios. Despite his best efforts, then, Jenkinson's narrow focus in and of itself makes it difficult to leave this region to one side. Thus, the reader is left wondering, for instance, where the regicides fit into the sectional debate over the origins of the United States that employed such colonial events as the Salem Witch Trials as it aggravated the North-South division prior to the outbreak of the Civil War, as Gretchen Adams has discussed in *The Specter of Salem: Remembering the Witch Trials in Nineteenth-Century America* (2008).

Meanwhile, Jenkinson's treatment of the "lives" of his two subjects back on the other side of the Atlantic stresses the very limited enthusiasm of Charles II as well as the limited capacity of the restored monarchy for pursuing those regicides who fled abroad in accordance with the generally tolerant approach of the returned king at his Restoration. Thus, for all of the pains taken by American commentators to decry Stuart "tyranny"—and New England resistance to this—in accounts of Goffe and Whalley's exile, the only successful cases of retrieval of king killers occurred entirely through the machinations of the former New Englander and nephew of John Winthrop, Sir George

Downing, who was anxious to ingratiate himself with the monarch. Yet, ironically, he relies on the customary comprehension of Anglo-American imperial culture as one in which colonists, particularly "Puritans" (a term that Jenkinson employs repeatedly without defining it), resisted attempts by the Crown to infringe upon their liberties as purportedly in the case of the commissioners who arrived in 1664, although their brief did not include the apprehension of Goffe and Whalley.

In actuality, the idea for this commission in conjunction with advocating for the capture of the Dutch colony of New Netherland and a litany of other imperial concerns came from colonists, including the governor of Connecticut, John Winthrop Jr. Indeed, Winthrop went to London, while Goffe and Whalley were making their way around New England, to secure a royal charter for his colony. The governor's behavior, along with the presence of his relatives as officers in Monck's army, reflects the natural and ready integration of Anglo-America into seventeenth-century imperial politics and commerce for all of the ***ex post facto*** insistence that the liberty-loving English colonies in North America, especially in New England, were at fundamental odds with a tyrannical metropolitan society. And what better example could be cited
than the successful flight of the regicides thither.[1]

Accordingly, for all of the celebrations of their careers, the Atlantic crossing of Goffe and Whalley had nothing to do with some sort of peculiarly American affinity for liberty: these former major generals in the Cromwellian Protectorate—a monarchy in all but name, according to its opponents—had no alternative but to seek protection across the Atlantic if they were to avoid the gruesome fate of the former Massachusetts cleric, Hugh Peter. Certainly, the duo could not make a case for pardon (and royal favor) as another signer of the royal death warrant, Richard Ingoldsby, did. Nor could they have expected a warm welcome at the Swiss retreat of the staunch republican Edmund Ludlow, who, unlike his Cromwellian enemies, was a proper Crown bogeyman but whose career, like theirs, was molded to suit the predilections of modern followers. These historical complications make the enduring legacy of the regicides in New England all the more curious.

Note

[1]. L. H. Roper, "The Fall of New Netherland and Seventeenth-Century Anglo-American Imperial Formation, 1654-1676," ***The New England Quarterly*** 87, no. 4 (December 2014): 666-708.

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