
NEW TITLES

History

**MY DEAR PARENTS:
The Civil War Seen by an
English Union Soldier**
by James Horrocks
Harcourt, 1983
188 pp. \$13.95



Named in a paternity suit over a child he claimed was not his own, Horrocks, the author of these entertaining letters, fled his hometown of Farnworth, England, in 1863, hoping for a kinder fate in America, then torn by the Civil War. Enticed by a \$288 bounty, he enlisted, at age 19, as a private in the New Jersey Volunteers under the Scottish pseudonym Andrew Ross. ("The English are very unpopular here, but the Scotch are a sort of go-between.") From 1863 to 1865, Horrocks sent regular bulletins home from Virginia, relating personal anecdotes about his fellow soldiers, describing battles and skirmishes around such places as Fortress Monroe and Richmond, and remarking upon the peculiar etiquette of war: "These pickets do not fire at each other. . . . It could not advance the cause or strategy of either side and consequently a kind of friendship is established. . . ." Complaining of the private's lot, and always scheming for promotion, Horrocks still found camp life generally comfortable. Like most of his fellow volunteers, Horrocks was indifferent to the Union cause and gave little thought to the issues of slavery and secession. (In fact, he wrote rather snidely about a black candidate for the "colored troops" who could not name the principal Russian seaport or distinguish between a right and obtuse angle.) But his constant optimism—possibly feigned to comfort his parents—and his foreigner's eye put the soldier's life during the Civil War in a distinctively fresh perspective.

**CLARENDON AND
THE ENGLISH
REVOLUTION**
by R. W. Harris
Stanford, 1983
456 pp. \$39.50

According to T. S. Eliot, writing in 1947, "The [English] civil war of the 17th century . . . has never been concluded." Apparently, it still has not. *Clarendon and the English Revolution* is of particular value to American partisans in the hostilities. England's bitter revolution was in so many ways a prelude to America's that Yankees have long been disposed to take the side of the Englishmen who not only rebelled against but beheaded King Charles I.