

## Andrew Jackson to William W. Morris, February 9, 1816, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

### TO WILLIAM W. MORRIS.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Morris was addressed at Ballston, Saratoga Co., N. Y. The letter is in Jackson's handwriting.

Nashville, February 9, 1816.

*Sir:* your letter of the 13th of Decbr last came to hand since my return from the city, requesting my interception for the reappointment of your Nephew Lt. Charles Henry Roberts, Late of the 15th u States Infantry

From the statement of his case in your letter there does appear much severity to have been excercised in his case. an order may be disobayed, and still such deviating circumstances attending it, that if it cannot be Justified may form solid grounds of excuse, and mitigate the sentence of a court martial from the severity of the highest penalty annexed, to that of the lowest. I have always thought it very harsh and severe conduct in a superior, to strike from the Rolls an officer without an investigation of his conduct before a court. There are some cases, that this power ought to be exercised, but it is in extreme cases, where this act done is in view of the superior invested with that power; and the conduct highly disreputable and injurious to the service. In the present case so long as men possess honourable feelings, cases may and will arise, where honourable redress must be called for or the officer submitting quietly to the insult is damd. to everlasting infamy, and notwithstanding the practice of duelling ought to be discountenanced, still with military men it will and must be resorted to in extreme cases,

## Library of Congress

The brave and honourable soldier fights in all cases under this motto— '*death before dishonor*' , and he will resign life before he will submit to disgrace. Disgraced he must and will be if he receives an Insult and quietly submits to it, or if he appeals to a court martial he is branded with the Epithet coward, and as evidence of the fact, the appeal he has made is adverted to as conclusive proof. I have lost no time in referring your letter to the Honble. sec of war, with such remarks as the case presented to my mind. I am respectfully  
yr mo. ob. serv.