

**Andrew Jackson to Bailey Peyton, February 24, 1837,  
from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by  
John Spencer Bassett.**

**TO BAILEY PEYTON.**

Washington, February 24, 1837.

*Sir*, Your letter of the 23d inst., was handed to me late Last night, in which you say, “I (you) had the honor to submit a communication to (you) me, a few days ago, respectfully soliciting a communication to Congress in behalf of the *old volunteers* etc. etc. etc.”

I did receive an anonymous communication a few days ago, on the 20th inst. on the subject of the *old volunteers*, and of your letter of the 23d now before me. it does not appear to be in your hand writing, nor could I find from enquiry in whose hand writing it was, and altho purporting to be from a member of congress, from its inclosure, I was induced to believe it must be an imposition. all members of congress ought to know that the proper mode to obtain the information on the subject of your inquiry is, by a proper resolution calling for the information you seek, and by which you would have obtained, the tender of service under the Law of 1812, the time for which these volunteers were engaged, the time they were first called into service, and mustered, the time for which they were bound to serve under their engagements agreeable to the act of 1812—all this would have been furnished and have been before the House. I have not seen, from the proceedings before Congress, any movement in behalf of these *old volunteers*, your letter now *before* me, being the only intimation of the kind.

I will be happy at all times to render my aid to procure full justice to those brave men, but as you want the information to day and not having my military books to refer to, I can only

## Library of Congress

give from memory, the information you ask me for. you will find the facts to be as follows, and you will find them, altho from memory, correct.

The tender of voluntary service under the act of 1812 was made in that year and accepted by Mr. Madison then President of the U States, as tendered by me. We were organized at Nashville in the month of December 1812 and ordered for the defence of the Lower Mississipi, halted, by the request of Genl Wilk[in]son, in the neighborhood of Natchez, for further orders, remained incamped for some time, when we were dismissed without much ceremony, and by the order, depriven of all necessaries to carry us home. I determined to march them back to their country, and friends, and did so. at Columbia Tennessee, they were mustered, and to secure to those brave men all the benefits under the act of 1812, under which they were engaged, I gave them a written discharge under a pledge if calld on for service again they would comply with the call and serve out their engagement. a call was made by the Legislature of Tennessee, and a committee of that body waited upon me to know if I would call out the volunteers for the campaign against the Creek Indians, the Legislature pledging the faith of the state for the payment of these troops. Under these circumstances, I issued my order. the volunteers obeyed agreeable to their pledge made, and entered upon military duty against the Indians, and remained some time in the field until after the Battle at Talladega with the Creek Indians. Provisions being very scarce, a few of the Officers became uneasy and urged for their discharge. This was a power I did not possess. dissatisfaction increasing I wrote to the Secretary of War, and he replied, he had no power until the expiration of their time under the tender of service. I at length ordered them to Nashville requesting the Governor to discharge them. he dismissed them to their homes, wrote Mr. Madison then President, who ordered them mustered out of service and paid. The greater part of those brave men under different officers, again volunteered, and remained with me, not only thro the Creek, but British War, and thro the Siminole war. Equity would say, that these brave men, should be paid from the 24th of April 1813 the time they were dismissed at Columbia Tenn, under the pledge, if called on to fulfil their engagement under the Law, to the 24 of September 1813. There never

## Library of Congress

were a braver or finer set of men than these Volunteers, and never were better service performed throughout the whole war, except for a short space, when provisions were scarce, and a few officers seized that occasion to poison their minds with the service. They soon returned under other Leaders, and deserve every thing that justice and equity will entitle them to.

In great haste yours etc. etc.