

**James Madison to Henry Dearborn, March 4, 1815.  
Transcription: The Writings of James Madison,  
ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons,  
1900-1910.**

**TO HENRY DEARBORN. MAD. MSS.**

Washington March 4th 1815

Dear Sir Being desirous of obtaining for the Department of War,<sup>1</sup> services which I thought you could render with peculiar advantage, and hoping that for a time at least you might consent to step into that Department, I took the liberty, without a previous communication, for which there was not time, to nominate you as successor to Mr. Monroe, who was called back to the Department of State. I had not a doubt from all the calculations I could make, that the Senate would readily concur in my views; and if a doubt had arisen, it would have been banished by the confidence of the best informed and best disposed with whom I conferred, that the nomination would be welcomed where it was to be decided on. Contrary to these confident expectations, an opposition was disclosed in an extent, which determined me to withdraw the nomination. But before the Message arrived, the Senate very unexpectedly had taken up the subject and proceeded to a decision. They promptly however relaxed so far as to erase the proceeding from their Journal, and in that mode to give effect to the withdrawal.

<sup>1</sup> Dearborn was nominated March 1st and the nomination withdrawn March 2d. On the same day William H. Crawford, of Georgia, was nominated and confirmed the next day.—*Ex. Reg. U. S.*, 84.

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I have thought this explanation due both to me and to yourself. I sincerely regret the occasion for it. But to whatever blame I may have subjected myself, I trust you will see in the course taken by me, a proof of the high value I place on your public, and of the esteem I feel for your personal character. Permit me to add that I have been not a little consoled for the occurrence to which I have been accessory, by the diffusive expression to which it has led, of sentiments such as your best friends have heard with most pleasure.

Accept assurances of my great respect and sincere regard