Portsmouth, 10 February 1804

My Lord,

I have been so long, in the habit of enjoying, the confidence of those with whom my profession has place me in the way of acting, as to have felt, extreme mortification, when I plainly discovered by your Lordship’s two or three last letters, that you had opposed the opinions of Persons, of whose zeal and public spirit, I entertain, the most contemptible opinions, to my public conduct in which however, I am satisfied, your Lordship, neither has or will find a flaw.

With respect to the Volunteers of Portsmouth and it dependencies, I think, I may safely say, that if I had not exerted myself precisely in the way I did, there would have been fewer by some hundreds to occasion your Lordship trouble.

Your Lordship must excuse me, if I still persist, in my notion of the opinion of very nearly the whole body of the Inhabitants respecting the appointment of Field Officers of the Line. Those who were disappointed, at not raising superior in Rank, to their Neighbours, with whom they differed in political and other considerations may in their hearts, have been dissenters from this best of Systems, but I have only to lament, that their motive, does not appear to have been evident to your Lordship as it was to me. If you have permitted Captain’s G. Garrett, Hickley, and Greetham to retire quietly, placing the confidence which I think your Lordship might have done, in my arrangements, who am the most interested in well doing of the Volunteers of Portsmouth, I should not have felt it necessary to decline a correspondence with your Lordship, upon the score, of my having improper competitors for your Lordship’s good opinion and to confine myself to the strict line of my duty as to Discipline etc.

I did write a Letter to His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland of which I enclose you an extract, the consequence was, that the Commanding in Chief, seconded the measure, which was approved by Government.

Besides the perfect knowledge I had of the disposition of the Volunteers, the letter herewith enclosed will convince your Lordship that you did not quite do me justice in attributing to me the Act of having recommended an Offensive, ill judged and illegal measure.

I know not, if the measure was precisely sanctioned by Law, but there can be no doubt of its having been so by Public opinion undeniably by good policy; and not contemptible as a Military arrangement.

I must observe here that a Field Officer of the Line, unless tenor it attached to the rank, could not exercise more rigour than an Officer of any other description being of course bound to an adherence of the Volunteer Laws.

As it appears to me, probably that Captains Garrett, Greetham and Hickley may when called upon by your Lordship, have given reasons for their respective Resignations differing from their solemn declarations when they prevailed on me to forward them, to your Lordship, I send with this a Memorandum of what passed, attested by Captain Brown my Aide de Camp.

It is rumour’d here, that the Companies lately commanded by these Gentlemen are intended to be formed into a separate Corps, I hope my Lord, that I may be misinformed as nothing short of the King’s Command should induce me to permit them to act as a part of the Military force of this Garrison.

The letter I have also the honor to enclose from the Magistrates of this place may perhaps in addition to the other papers, serve to convince your Lordship that I did not overate what I was capable of doing, when you first felt disposed to place a confidence in one of His Majesty’s General Officers, and as far as regard the Volunteers in Portsmouth and its dependencies the whole may enable your Lordship to Decide, who has most injured the Public Service. Before I conclude this letter I beg to remark, that from the variety of Public Duty which engages my whole attention, and feeling that I acted equally in the Views, and in the confidence of your Lordship I may have omitted many trifling communications that I should otherwise from time to time have made to your Lordship.

I have the honor to be

My Lord, your Lordship’s

Most obedient humble servant

John WHitelocke

Major General and Lieutenant Governor of Portsmouth

Enclosures:

No. 1: from the officer of the Portsea Volunteers, 8 September 1803

No. 2: Extract of a letter from Major General Whitelocke to His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland

No. 3: letter from Captains of the Portsea Volunteers, 9 February 1804

No. 4: Copy of Captain Brown's letter to Lieutenant Colonel Mannoch

No. 5: Lieutenant Colonel Mannock's answer

No. 6: Memorandum made by Captain Brown

No. 7: Letter from the Magistrates to Major General Whitelocke

No. 8: Proceedings of a Meeting held at Portsmouth and Portsea enclosed in the forgoing.

No. 1

Portsea 8 September 1803

Sir

Presuming on your readiness to further whatever measure may tend to promote the Establishment of the Portsea Island Volunteers, we take the liberty of laying before you our sentiments on a subject intimately connected with their interests.

In engaging to serve as Volunteers, under the circumstances that have called us forth, we ever have been and still are anxiously desirous of rendering ourselves, and the Companies with which we are connected, an effective Military Force capable of acting wherever it may be requisite in Defence of our King and Country. We presume that this cannot be accomplished unless the Principle expected to have been observed in the choice of Field Officers is to regulate such appointments: unless such Officers are taken from the Line, to whom we may at all time look with Confidence and respect. From communications that have occurred, we are however apprehensive that the appointments of such Officers may not now proceed on this Principle. We are doubtful whether with a view of its consisting with the wishes of the Corps it may not be proposed to appoint Field Officers from Civilians, we have there considered it necessary to make this representation to you on the subject; which we request you will take the earliest opportunity of communicating to the Lord Lieutenant, from whom we doubt not it will receive that attention which is desirable, and the occasion may require.

We have the honor to be

Sir

Your most obedient very humble servants

William Baker Captain

Nathaniel Bake Lieutenant

William Woodward Ensign

John White Captain

Thomas Pratt Lieutenant

Matthew Snook

William Friend Captain

Matthew Napper Lieutenant

Henry Houghman Ensign

Franics Woodman Captain

Edward Fowles Lieutenant

William Glendering

Thomas Walcott Captain

James Penhorn

John Michal Ghenston

A Poulden Captain

D. Howard Lieutenant

Henry Hill junior Ensign

Samuel Spier Captain

Kim J. Lipscomb

D. Spier

Charles Taber Captain

William Ellis Lieutenant

James Grovenor

J. Buckland Captain

John Holland Lieutenant

John Whirlong

No. 2

Extract of a letter from Major General Whitelocke to Lieutenant General His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, dated 5th November 1803

I have further to state to your Royal Highness that there are at present ten companies of Volunteer Infantry at Portsmouth, Nine Companies at Portsea, and Six Companies at Gosport, it has not been thought advisable to Name Field Officers to them from their own body, and I therefore beg to suggest that a least one Field Officer of the Line should be named to each of these Bodies, with and Adjutant also to each, there being at present only one for all the Companies.

I think when placed on this footing, great good may be expected from the Volunteers in the event of Danger.

The several Companies of Volunteer Artillery receive sufficient instruction from the Officers of the Royal Artillery in the Garrison

No. 3

Island of Portsea, 9 February 1804

Sir

In consequence of the communications you have been pleased to make to us this day on the subject of a letter you have received from Lord Bolton the Lord Lieutenant of this County; wherein his states “He is of the opinion that the appointment of Field Officers from the Line over the Volunteers of this Island is contrary to the general wishes and the original intention of the Volunteers” We feel it a Duty incumbent on us to declare to you, that at the different Meetings which took place in these Towns, on the subject of enrolling Volunteers, it was fully understood that the Field Officers were to be from the Line and we further beg leave to assure you, we are fully of opinion that such appointments have to the best of our knowledge and belief given very great satisfaction and have been attended with the most beneficial effects to the Establishment.

We have the honor to be

Sir

Your most obedient humble servants

James Deacon Captain

William Deacon Captain

William Bake

R. Callaway

F. Woodman Captain

A. Poulden Captain

James White Captain

J. Buckland Captain

For Matthew Napper and for Captain Friend

Thomas Walcot Captain

J. Carter Captain

Samuel Spicer Captain

John Adam Carter Captain

George Grant Captain

Charles Taber Captain

Major General Whitelocke

No. 4

Copy

9 February 1804

Sir

I am directed by Major General Whitelocke to request that you will state to Him the nature of the opposition and discontent you have met with, in the officers commanding the Companies of Volunteers of this Place, particularly the persons on whom you have formed it, and that you will inform the General whether you have reason to think that there is any general dislike to measure, appointing Field Officers of the Line to Command them.

(Signes)

S. Brown, A. D. C.

Lieutenant Colonel Mannoch

No. 5

Portsmouth, 9 February 1804

Sir,

In answer to your letter of this date, I have not only the honor but the very great satisfaction to state, that I have met with the highest respect and attention from all the officers commanding Volunteer Companies, here, with the exception of one who, in several instances, seemed to treat, with much indifference, and in a very sneering manner, every official representation or other matter, which for the good of the service, I might have been led to make, or have recommended to be done.

The Person I allude to, is, Captain Greetham, who, once, told me, that he thought I was taking much unnecessary trouble on myself, meaning, no doubt, my interference with the Volunteers.

In reply to that part of your letter which refers to a Field Officer from the line being appointed to Command the Volunteers of this place, I have to acquaint you, that I do not, in any instance, recollect to have heard the smallest dislike expressed to such a measure, by any individual, and I have to request you will communicate the contents of this letter to Major General Whitelocke.

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your most obedient humble servant

F. F. Mannooch, Lieutenant Colonel and Inspecting Field Officer

Captain Brown, A. D. C. to Major General Whitelocke

­­­­­­­­­­­­­No. 6

Memorandum

Being present when Captains Garrett, Greetham, and Hickley waited upon Major General Whitelocke, requesting that he would be pleased to recommend to the Lord Lieutenant, their being permitted to resign their Commissions, those Gentleman expressly declared that their motives for retiring were of a Private nature, and from a consideration that the harmony and Interest of the Volunteers would be benefitted by their being permitted to retire quietly, on which occasion they pledged themselves to Major General Whitelocke that they would to their utmost endeavour, keep the Men of their Companies together, under the Officers who should be appointed to succeed them, and that they would not by any interference create Party Spirit or animosity, but that on any alarm they would be found in the Ranks.

S. Brown, Captain, A. D. C.

No. 7

Portsmouth, 10 February 1804

Sir

We are very much concerned, to find that your conduct in respect to the Appointments of Field Officers of the Line over the several companies of Volunteers of the Island of Portsea, has been questioned by Lord Bolton, the Lord Lieutenant of the County. We consider ourselves not only bound in Honor, but in Justice to you on that occasion, to declare that, it was the unanimous Wish of the Inhabitant and that, under such arrangements, their Names enrolled: as will appear by the enclosed Minutes of the respective Meetings held, at that time, in Portsmouth and Portsea; and We do not scruple to assure you, we are perfectly satisfied, from our own Knowledge and Experience, that if your conduct has been different, and such arrangement had not been adopted, a very considerable part of the present Force would not have been embodied.

We have the honor to be

With great respect

Your most obedient and very humble servant

George Cuthbert, Mayor

John Goodwin

John Carter

S. Gaselee

William Goldson Magistrates

Major General Whitelocke

No. 8

At a meeting at the Beneficial Society Hall, holden July 18th 1803 in consequence of Resolutions entered into at the Vestries called the preceeding Day in the Parish Churches of Portsmouth and Portsea.

It was resolved unanimously.

That an address from the whole of Island of Portsea should be presented to His Majesty expressing the loyalty and attachment of the Inhabitants and their firm Resolution to Defend the Country at the Risque of their Lives and Fortunes.

It was likewise Resolved unanimously.

That a General Enrolment of the Inhabitants of the whole Island should take place that no Officers should be appointed from amoung them higher than Captains but that they should be Commanded by such Officers of the Line as His Majesty and the Lord Lieutenant should appoint.

Extract from the Minutes

R. Calloway, Clerk of the Peace

At a meeting of the Inhabitants of the Island of Portsea, convened by the Mayor to meet Lord Bolton on the 27th July 1803.

The Mayor opened the Meeting by reading the preceeding Resolutions,

Had Lord Bolton in a speech of considerable length commended their Public Spirit and advised an Enrolment with the utmost Dispatch, and the former Resolutions were adopted without a dissenting Voice.

Extract from the Minute

R. Calloway

Clerk of the Peace