Portsmouth, 13 February 1804

My Lord

Captain Brown my Aid de Camp will have the honor of delivering this letter, and from the knowledge he has of my motives and conduct from the commencement of the Volunteer system, your Lordship will learn from him, that, which if you had known before, might have saved you much trouble, and have rendered quite unnecessary, nearly the whole contents of your two last letters.

In one part of the letter which I had the honor to receive last night, I was sorry to find your Lordship departing from that line of Conduct which I have heretofore been disposed to admire, that is, when you almost impute unworthy motive to my conduct with respect to the nomination of Field Officers. Believe me my Lord, I am a plain Soldier. I am no Politician or Friend to jokes of any sort.

I can now assure you upon my word and honor that I never intended to show your Lordship any disrespect or in any shape to interfere with what did not belong to me.

On the Contrary, I found myself early in the Volunteer business, too deeply concerned in the detail, for an Officer occupied as I am, and upon the arrival of Lieutenant Colonel Mannooch I actually desired him, not to report any thing whatever to me, but to communicate the wishes etc of the Volunteers to your Lordships.

As to your Lordship, not being consulted relative to the Field Officers that I really have nothing whatever to do with. Upon the arrival of the Duke of Cumberland, I suggested the idea to His Royal Highness, and till I saw a letter from your Lordship the other day to Colonel Mannoch, I really never knew that the Duke of Cumberland had not communicated with you.

I am sure that your Lordship after talking with Captain Brown will do me the justice to believe my incapable intentionally of giving your Lordship offence.

With respect to the faction that has so long existed, that your Lordship may also gain some information upon Mr Greethem is not a proper person to hold the situation of a Captain, from the violence of his temper, and excessive hatred to various individuals of the same rank.

If your Lordship should persevere in not accepting the Resignations some time since sent, consequences I fear will ensue, not in these days calculated to aid the Public good. I know the locality of this Place, and your Lordship will recollect, have considerable responsibility upon my shoulders, the idea therefore of having an insubordinate troublesome attorney forced upon me, your Lordship must upon reflection feel to be a measure not easily made palatable when your Lordship is convinced, which I am sure you must be, by the bearer of all my motives.

I make no doubt that matter will go on smooth. And that in future I shall have to exert myself to keep peace with your Lordship in zeal for the Service and our King and of our Country.

I am My Lord

With Great respect

Your very obedient servant

John Whitelocke, Major General

Right Honorable Lord Bolton