Portsmouth 25 September 1803

My Lord,

I wish I had the power of writing any thing satisfactory upon the subject of Volunteers, but I am sorry to say that the delay has done infinite mischief here and if the Officers are not sooon gazetted and Arms put into the hands of the Men the undertaking which a short time since looked so promising will prove precisely the reverse. Sir John Carter and Fitzherbert are collecting the Returns your Lordship requires, that from the Victualling Office will accompany them. Mr Arnaud has had it hinted to him that a person holding a considerable situation under the Government should not be the first to oppose its measures, I believe your Lordship will not be troubled further with it.

I hope your Lordship will be enabled to keep the numbers of Officers as they were first proposed, as it will certainly not be desirable that any of the Volunteers should take offence just now, and I should imagines that it cannot be a great object whether the Companies have one or two Lieutenants. I shall have the honor of writing again to your Lordship on Tuesday before which time I hope orders will arrive for the issue of Arms.

I am my Lord

With great respect

Your very obedient servant

John Whitelocke, Major General

The Right Honorable Lord Bolton