Whitehall 15th February 1804

Confidential

My Lord

I am at length enabled to inform your Lordship that the appointment of Field Officers to command the Volunteers at Portsmouth and Portsea has arisen from a misconstruction of a letter written by my direction to express my concurrence in the Propriety of such an Appointment as proposed by General Whitelocke and His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland.

Your Lordship has I believe made me acquainted with your having formed the Volunteer Force at Portsmouth into separate companies, with the view of obtaining a Field Officer from the Line to command then, assigning what appeared to me to be very judicious reasons for this Arrangement.

I had therefore no difficulty in assenting to the Expediency of this measure when still further recommended by Military Authority. But in approving the Arrangement I certainly expected that the Recommendation of the Persons to be appointed to these situations would be made by your Lordship to the Secretary of State, to be by him transmitted in the usual way through the Commander in Chief for His Majesty’s approbation.

It was somehow or other conceived at the Horse Guards that the Appointment of an Officer of the Line to Command these Corps was to submitted to His Majesty simply by the Commander in Chief without the Intervention of any other Authority and it has been done without apprizing me or your Lordship of the Intention of acting upon this approval, and without any communication of the Names of the Persons intended to be appointed.

I understand that of the two Persons names for this situations, one only remains, Major Carter, and that there would be at this time considerable difficulty in finding another adequate situation for Him if it should become necessary to remove him.

It will therefore be for your Lordship to judge whether this Officer is such as your Lordship can think proper to recommend for the Command of either of the Battalions proposed to be formed. I shall learn with pleasure that the Error which has been committed can be so corrected, and from what has passed there is no danger of a similar occurrence again taking place.

I have the honor to return the original letters with a perusal of which your Lordship has honoured me and to have the honor to be

My Lord, your Lordship’s

Most obedient humble servant

C. Yorke

Right Honorable Lord Bolton