Sydney Cove  
Port Jackson  
May 16th, 1788

My Lord,

I have in my first letter had the honour of observing to your Lordship the great want of proper persons for to superintend the convicts. The officers who compose the detachment are not only few in number, but most of them have declined any interference with the convicts, except when they are employed for their own particular service. I requested soon after we landed that officers would occasionally encourage such as they observed diligent, and point out for punishment such as they saw idle or straggling in the woods. This was all I desired, but the officers did not understand that any interference with the convicts was expected, and that they were not sent out to do more than the duty of soldiers. The consequence must be obvious to your Lordship. Here are only convicts to attend to the convicts, and who in general fear to exert any authority, and very little labour is drawn from them in a country which requires the greatest exertions. In this declaration I do not mean to include the Lieutenant Governor, who has shewn every attention that could be expected from him, and the Judge-Advocate, acting as a Justice of the Peace with a diligence that does him the greatest credit, they are under as good order as our present situation permits.

The sitting as members of the Criminal Court is thought a hardship by the officers, and of which they say they were not informed before they left England. It is necessary to mention this circumstance to your Lordship, that officers coming out may know that a young colony requires something more from officers than garrison duty.

The not having the power of immediately granting lands the officers likewise feel as a hardship. They say that they shall be obliged to make their minds up as to the staying in the country or returning before they can know what the bounty of Government intends them.

As it is, my Lord, impossible for the Commissary to attend to the issuing of provisions without some person of confidence to assist and to be charged with the details, I have appointed the person who was charged with the victualling the convicts from England.

There is likewise a very useful person who acts as Provost-Martial (the one appointed in England not having come out), and who likewise superintends the different works going on.

Two people, who are farmers, and the clerk of the Sirius are employed in cultivating ground, and in the store, as likewise a smith that superintends the convict smiths. As the granting these people any land would at present draw their attention from the public service, I have promised that their situation should be represented to your Lordship.

I have the honour to be with the greatest respect, my Lord, Your Lordship's most obedient Humble servant

A. Phillip.