

Douglas Alexander Murray

Letters written in 1840 and 1841
between

Douglas Alexander Murray, his
mother Elizabeth Murray

and

the Right Honourable General
Lord Hill, the Right Honourable
Lord Fitzroy Somerset and George
D'Aguilar

concerning

the admission of Douglas Alexander
Murray into the army, aged 16, and the
problems the family had in trying to gain
for him an Ensigncy without purchase

81st Foot.

Ensign Torell
W. D. A. Murray



Memo papers
Belle 820

Mem: 22 Feb. 1841.

2nd January
1840
Dublin.
Ireland.

My Lord I hope your Lordship will excuse the liberty I take in addressing you to solicit your kind Offices for my Son Douglas Alexander Murray who this day is 16 years of age and most anxious to enter Her Majesty's Service. I flatter myself that when the merits of his father the late Maj^r General James Patrick Murray C.B. & those of his Grandfather The Hon^{ble} General James Murray formerly distinguished as Governor of Incher & Minorca are taken into consideration & also the various other members of his family who have most faithfully served their Country, Y^r Lordship will think him a proper person to hold a commission in Her Majesty's Service. Should it be necessary Generals Sir John Burchard & Sir Parker Carroll can certify that he has been well brought up and educated with ease, & that he possesses the manners and principles of a Man of Honor & of a Gentleman with a most pleasing exterior.

Five years ago he was deprived by death of his father who lost his life in consequence of a cold taken in the vain attempt to save the lives of two Officers of the Royal Regt who were upset in a boat near his house leaving me with 12 children most of whom are still unprovided for. I have a Son now a Lieutenant in the 76th Regt who for the last four years has served in the West Indies & I am particularly anxious that my Son Douglas on whose behalf I now address Y^r Lordship should if possible be appointed an Ensign in the same Regt being young that he may have the comfort of his Brothers friendship.

In addition my Lord to my own large family I have three little Grandchildren entirely dependant on me my eldest Son having General Lord Rill
an an a from



The age of 13 years had been constantly on active Service in the Royal Navy having lately died (after 20 years employment) suddenly leaving them totally friendless (their Mother being also dead).

Y^r kind attention to my wishes my Lord will be ever gratefully remembered by a family who with never I trust disgrace of recommendation and whose connections are of birth & distinction.

I have the honor
to be My Lord

Y^r very obedient

Humble Servant

J. Murray



Mr Douglas Alexander Murray, son of the late Major General Murray, being desirous to enter the army, has solicited me to state my opinion of his fitness for the service, and having seen the young gentleman, I consider that from his age (being about 17) his Education - gentlemanly manners, and the respectability of his family and connections, he is perfectly eligible to the honor to which he aspires - of entering into Her Majesty's Service -

Wm. B. Carr
Major General

Albany January 2nd 1840

and
 I had told with
 the information given in
 the letter. It was the
 duty not to let
 kindness who give the
 hand to the eldest son. Gen
 Murray commanded the
 2^d Battalion of the
 Buffs of the Queen's
 Own Light Infantry
 and was a very
 successful man.

may be
 noted I S
 20th Jan 1840
 21st Jan 1840

New Year 5 1840
 W. E. Murray

2^d January 1840

I am induced to
 trouble of Lordships to present
 the enclosed to Lord Will in the
 hope that from your known
 kindness of heart you will be
 glad to defend the family of
 a General Officer, so many of
 whose family have served their
 country with distinction & honor
 to themselves. I am most anxious
 that my son Douglas Alexander
 Murray should be appointed
 when a vacancy occurs to an
 Ensign in the 6th Regt. of the
 Buffs. I have stated in the
 accompanying letter to Lord Will
 the claim he has on the service
 of the 6th Regt. of the Buffs
 Lord Fitzroy Somerset

which I shall be extremely
 glad to of Lordships if you
 ask present & if you will give
 it your assistance I shall be
 very grateful. but should no
 vacancy occur in the 6th Regt.
 I hope of Lordships will be
 pleased to recommend him
 to an Ensigny in any other
 Regiment of the line.

Since his father's death I
 have purchased a Lieutenancy
 for one son whose Ensigny was
 also purchased & now being
 a widower & having so large
 a family to provide for I
 hope Lord Will will consider
 for his family's sake my son
 Douglas a fit subject for one
 without it. his father Maj. General
 Murray was well known to
 Lord Will when he commanded

the 2^d Battalion of the
 66th Regt & when he lost the
 use of his right arm in
 the Battle of the Marston of
 the Tower.

Request of Lordships with
 pardon the liberty I take
 in writing thus.

I have the honor
 to be

of Lordships
 Very humbly & obediently
 Yours

W. E. Murray

W. E. Murray

2^d January 1840

possess of private sympathy as on
her beautiful claim to public
gratitude -

Thank the most Dear
my dear Lord

most faithfully yours

George Thompson

Wm. A. R. M. S.

APR 6
1840

Dublin 26 April 1840

My dear Lord Fitzroy

Mrs Manning the widow of
the late Major General James P.
Manning CB - applied some time
since to Lord B. for an allowance
without purchase for her son
Douglas Alexander - aged now
fifteen -

The case of this poor Lady is
a most distressing one - left with
six sons and six daughters in
a state bordering on destitution -

Yours faithfully
Lord Fitzroy

Is it impossible to do something
now or hereafter in such a case?
If you can, I thank you much -

The services of Major General
Manning - (who was desperately
wounded at the passage of the Douro -
and who - after all the eventful
hazards of the Peninsula War
lost his life about in the great
crisis of our Red of Humanity) are
too well known to you to require
any eulogy from me - But
this is all - He was the son
of that Manning who sealed the

Knight of Abraham by the Side
of Wolfe - and defended Minorca
against the Duke de Crillon -

The united Services of the Father
and the son Father of the young
man for whom I plead extend
over a series of the War of 1794 -

Embracing the most distinguished
period of our military annals,
and I make it my humble
prayer Lord B. that He
will graciously grant this
 boon if possible to the widow
of a Veteran Officer as well as
the



W. Gos.

9 Apr 1860

You may rest assured
that Lord Thos will have
great satisfaction in
providing for the late
Gen. Murray's son when
his other engagements may
permit. He is afraid
however that he may
not be able to recommend
him for a Commission as
soon as would be agreeable
to Mr. Murray.

The young Gent's name was
only added to the List in January
last, & he is now only 16.
He is therefore still very young, &
his case is less advanced than most

Wiltshire. January 2nd 1841

My Lord



This time twelvemonth

mother the widow of the Major General J. P. Murray Esq. had the Honour of receiving a letter from your Lordship saying you had said her letter before Lord Will requesting that I may be appointed to an Ensigny without purchase in the 76th Regiment or in any other Regiment of the Line. Your Lordship in reply gave her great hopes of my success. I hope you will not think me importunate in again soliciting your kind offices: I am one of a very large family and anxious to gain an honourable Independence for myself & trust that the services of my father & long acknowledged ones of my grandfathers the Honourable General Murray when Governor of Quebec & Minorca &c. & various others of my family will make me be considered as a person fit to be recommended to Her Majesty for an appointment in the Army. My bearing of the frequent kindnesses of your Lordship & your exertions to befriend the sons of officers of merit induces me to trouble you now and to request that you will have the kindness to

The Right Hon^{ble} Lieut General
Lord Fitzroy Somerset

to present the accompanying letter to Lord Will and to favour it with your recommendation. I hope you will pardon me for the liberty I take in thus troubling you.

I have the Honour to be

My Lord

Your Lordships obedient humble Servant
Douglas Alex^r Moncrieff

Athlone January 2nd 1841

My Lord,



This time twelve months your Lordship kindly promised to recommend me for an Ensigncy without purchase & I hope you will not think me presuming in again soliciting your attention to my claims for such an appointment; my father the late Major General Murray was well known to your Lordship when under your command in Portugal & when he commanded the 2nd Battalion of the 66th Regt at the Passage of the Douro, and where he lost the use of his right arm. my three elder Brothers were all in Her Majesty's Service; my eldest died a Lieutenant in the Royal Navy leaving 3 children totally dependent on my Mother my two other Brothers had their commissions by Purchase, the youngest now Lieutenant in the 7th Regiment just returned to Europe after serving 6 years in the West Indies. I am just now 17 years of age one of a very large family & desirous to gain an Honourable independence for myself and

Yours

To Right Hon^{ble} General Lord Hill.

I hope therefore your Lordship will have the goodness to recommend me to Her Majesty for an Ensigncy without purchase in any Regiment of the Line on an early opportunity offering.

I have the Honour

to be, My Lord

your Lordships obedient humble servant

Douglas Alex^r Murray

Noted for Emergency without purchase,
January 1840 (then aged 16.)

John Murray
Col. D'Aguiar

Inform him that his
wishes will not be
lost sight of but find
to him the cause
get long & learn it may
be in his power to
recommend him for an
Emergency without
purchase

Ans'd 11th Jan 1841
Ireland Book

General Murray

John Murray
11th Jan 1841



Whitton
13th Feb. 1841

My Lord

Allow me to return
you my grateful thanks for
the kind interest you have expressed
to Sir Frederick Adam for my
son Douglas M. Murray. - presuming
on your wishes that he should
succeed in obtaining an Ensigny
without purchase I take the liberty
of stating - that I have just been
informed by my son Lieut Charles
Murray 76th Regt that a Capt. of
that Regt has sent in his request
to sell out of the service - as there
are now many vacant Ensignys without
purchase. If your Lordship would
ask Lord Will to let one of these
Lord Somerset

Yours truly

get one of them by purchase
& my son Douglas get the one
in the 76th Regt. without purchase
I hope my Lord you will excuse
the great anxiety of a Parent
the comfort of having my son
pass a entering life with his Brother
whose steady character would help
to supply the loss of a Father
with those ahead my excuse for
again writing -

I have the honor
to be My Lord

Your Lordship's obedient
servant

D. Murray



Ashdown 1st March
1841.



Allow me to
return you my most
grateful thanks for your
kind attention to my
wishes - may I trouble
your Lordship also to express
for me to Lord Will the
gratitude I feel for his
having recommended my
son Douglas Alex. Murray
to the Ensigny in the 81st
Lord Somerset.

Yrs^g

Pl. Foot. Lieutenantcy without
purchase, vice Horv, who
Died in Jamaica, 31. Dec 1840.

The senior Ensign is,
"Lorell" of August 1837.



Pl. Foot. Ensigncy without
purchase.

Douglas A Murray

Dated 15 June 41.

Rec 17.



My dear Lord FitzRoy

Let me ask you and with
Lord Rill forgive me
for the numerous interruptions
I make in favor of the
Son of the late Major General
P. Murray? -

He is now past seventeen
and Mrs Murray's anxiety
and distress have become
so great for her very
large

My dear Lord FitzRoy
I am very sorry to hear
of the illness of the
young man

fervently and its increasing
demands upon her - that
I venture to supplicate
Lord Rill's kind inter-
cession in her favor from

I am fully aware how
difficult this is - and that
I incur the risk of even
disturbance and to my regret
- of presumption - but

I have really no personal
interest in this request - beyond

what you as a Soldier
naturally share with me
and I bring it therefore
trustfully before you both
with much reluctance
and hesitation -

Most faithfully yours
John Ashurst



My dear Lord FitzRoy

Chronology: DAM's 16th birthday (2/1/1840) Betty writes to General Lord Hill and to Lord Fitzroy Somerset. She also arranges for General Parker Carroll (or is it his widow) to write a testimonial. She wishes DAM to be given an ensigncy without purchase in the 76th Regiment, where DAM's elder brother is a lieutenant.. Four months later (2/4/1840), Colonel George A'Guilar also writes, from Dublin, to Lord Fitzroy Somerset recommending DAM and praising his family. On the 9th April there is a note from someone who appears to be Lord Hill's representative, writing to an unknown person, in which he states that things might not be able to move quite as quickly as Mrs. Murray would like. On 2nd January 1841 (exactly a year after the original letters, and therefore DAM's 17th birthday) Douglas Alexander Murray himself writes at length to General Lord Hill and Lord Fitzroy Somerest, reminding them of his case and reiterating what his mother had asked one year previously. There is then a regimental note dated just over a week later (9/1/41) in which someone is told to inform DAM that his case has not been "lost sight of". On the 9th February, more than a month later, Betty Murray yet again writes to Lord Fitzroy Somerset, giving details, gathered from her other son who is a lieutenant in the 76th, that an officer is leaving the regiment and that there is therefore a vacancy I that regiment. On 1st March, DAM writes to Lord Fitzroy Somerset thanking him for recommending him for an Ensigncy in the 81st Regiment (which Regiment DAM served with for several years before emmigrating to the States). However, the final letter in this series, dated 15th June, is another from George D'Aguilar, to Lord Fitzroy Somerset, yet again, this time with considerable passion, putting the case for Douglas on the strength of his family background. According to the records, DAM started with the 81st on 26th February 1841: either D'Aguilar did not know that DAM had been given a commission in another Regiment, or the date on his letter is in fact January rather than June.

Athlone: 2nd January 1840

To: *General Lord Hill*

From: *E. Murray*

My Lord

I hope your Lordship will excuse the liberty I take in addressing you to solicit your kind offices for my son Douglas Alexander Murray who this day is 16 years of age and most anxious to enter Her Majesty's Service. I flatter myself that when the Services of his father the late Major General James Patrick Murray C.B. and those of his Grandfather the Honourable General James Murray formerly distinguished as Governor of Quebec and Minorca are taken into consideration and also the various other members of his family who have most faithfully served their country your Lordship will think him a proper person to hold a commission in Her Majesty's Service – should it be necessary Generals Sir John Buchan and Sir Parker Carrol can certify that he has been well brought up and educated with care and that he possesses the manners and principles of a Man of Honour and of a Gentleman with a most pleasing exterior.

Five years ago he was deprived by death of his father who lost his life in consequence of a cold taken in the vain attempt to save the lives of two Officers of the Royal Navy who were upset in a boat near his house, leaving me with 12 children most of whom are still unprovided for – I have a son now a Lieutenant in the 76th Regiment who for the last four years has served in the West Indies and I am fortunately anxious that my son Douglas on whose behalf I now address your Lordship should if possible be appointed an Ensign in the same Regiment being young that he may have the comfort of his Brother's friendship.

In addition my Lord to my own large family, I have three little Grandchildren entirely dependant on me, my eldest son having from the age of 13 years been constantly on active service in the Roayl Navy having lately died (after 20 years employment) suddenly leaving them totally friendless, their mother being also dead.

Your kind attention to my wishes my Lord will be ever gratefully remembered by a family who with will never I trust disgrace your recommendation and whose connexions are of birth and distinction.

I have the honor
To be My Lord
Your very obedient
Humble Servant
E. Murray

Athlone January 2nd 1840

From: Parker Carrol Major General

Mr. Douglas Alexander Murray, son of the late Major General Murray, being desirous to enter the army, has solicited me to state my opinion of his fitness for the Service, and having seen the young Gentleman, I consider that from his age (being about 17) his Education, Gentlemanly manners, and the respectability of his Family and connexions, he is perfectly eligible to the honor to which he aspires – of entering into Her Majesty's Service -

Athlone: Jan 2nd 1840

To: *Lord Fitzroy Somerset*

From: *E. Murray*

My Lord

I am induced to trouble your Lordship to present the enclosed To Lord Hill in the hope that from your known kindness of heart you will be glad to befriend the family of a General Officer, so many of whose family have served their country with distinction and honor to themselves – I am most anxious that my son Douglas Alexander Murray should be appointed when a vacancy occur to an Ensigncy in the 76th Regiment with his Brother – I have stated in the accompanying letter to Lord Hill the claims he has on the Service [One enclosure written over the letter in a different hand] which I shall be extremely obliged to your Lordship if you will present and if you will give it your assistance I shall be very grateful – but should no vacancy occur in the 76th Regiment I hope Your Lordship will be pleased to recommend him for an Ensigncy in any other Regiment of the line.

Since his father's death I have purchased a Lieutenancy for one son whose Ensigncy was also purchased and now being a Widow and having so large a family to provide for I hope Lord Hill will consider for his family's sake my son Douglas a fit subject for one without it. His father Major General Murray was well known to Lord Hill when he commanded the 2nd Battalion of the 66th Regiment and when he lost the use of his right arm in the Battle of the passage of the Douro.

Hoping your Lordship will pardon the liberty I take in writing thus.

I have the honor
To be
Your Lordship's
Very Humble and obedient
Servant
E. Murray

Dublin 2nd April 1840

To: *Lord Fitzroy Somerset*

From: *George D'Aguilar*

My dear Lord Fitzroy

Mrs. Murray the widow of the late Major General James P. Murray CB – applied some time since to Lord Hills for an Ensigncy without purchase for her son Douglas Alexander – aged sixteen.

The case of this poor Lady is a most distressing one – left with six sons and six daughters in a state bordering on destitution.

Is it impossible to do something now as hereafter in such a Cause? If you can I know you will – the Services of Major General Murray (who was desperately wounded at the passage of the Douro and who – after all the Eventful hazards of the Peninsular War lost his life in the Execution Of an Act of Humanity) are too well known to you to require any Eulogy from me – But this is not all – He was the son of that “Murray” who scaled the Heights of Abraham by the side of Wolfe – and defended Minorca against the Duke de Crillon.

The united Services of the Father and the Grandfather of The young man for whom I plead ... run a service of near the Hundred Years Embracing the most distinguished periods of our military annals, and I make it my humble Lord Hill that He will graciously grant this Boon if possible and the widow of a Veteran Officer as well as the ground of private Sympathy as on her hereditary Claim to put his gratitude –

I have the Honor ...

My dear Lord

Most faithfully yours

George d'Aguilar

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M.Gos? 9th April 1840

To:

From:

You may rest assured that Lord Hill will have great satisfaction in providing for the late Gen. Murray's son when his other engagements may permit. He is afraid however that he may not be able to recommend him for a Commission as soon as would be agreeable to Mrs. Murray.

The Young Gent's name was only added to the List in January last, and he is now only 16 – he is therefore still ?? from/for? at his age is less advanced than most..... [letter incomplete]

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Athlone, January 2nd 1841

To: *the Right Honourable Lieutenant General Lord Fitzroy Somerset*

From: *Douglas Alexander Murray*

My Lord,

This time twelvemonth my mother the widow of the Major General J.P. Murray C. B. had the Honour of receiving a letter from your Lordship saying you had laid her letter before Lord Hill Requesting that I may be appointed to an Ensigncy without purchase in the 76th Regiment or in any other Regiment of the Line, Your Lordship in reply --- her great hopes of my success. I hope you will not think me importunate in again soliciting your kind offices: I am one of a very large family and anxious to gain an honourable Independence for myself and trust that the Services of my father – long acknowledged ones of my Grandfather the Honourable General Murray when Governor of Quebec and Minorca & -- and various others of my family will make me be considered as a person fit to be recommended to Her Majesty for an appointment in the Army. My hearing of the frequent kindnesses of your Lordship and your exertions to befriend the Sons of officers of merit induces me to trouble you now and to request that you will have the kindness to present the accompanying letter to Lord Hill and to favour it with your recommendation – I hope you will pardon me for the liberty I take in thus troubling you.

I have the Honour to be

My Lord

Your Lordships obedient humble Servant

Douglas Alexander Murray

Athlone, January 2nd 1841

To: the *Right Honourable General Lord Hill*

From: *Douglas Alexander Murray*

My Lord,

This time twelve month your Lordship kindly promised to recommend me for an Ensigncy without purchase and I hope you will not think me presuming in again soliciting your attention to my claims for such an appointment: my father the late Major General Murray was well known to your Lordship when under your command in Portugal and when he commanded the 2nd Battalion of the 66th Regiment at the Passage of the Douro, and where he lost the use of his right arm. My three elder Brothers were all in Her Majesty's Service, my eldest died a Lieutenant in the Royal Navy, leaving 3 children totally dependent on my Mother. My two other Brothers had their commissions by Purchase, the younger now Lieutenant in the 76th Regiment just returned to Europe after Serving 6 years in the West Indies. I am just now 17 years of age, one of a very large family and desirous to gain an Honourable independence for myself and hope therefore your Lordship will have the goodness to recommend me to Her Majesty for an Ensigncy without purchase in any Regiment of the Line on an early opportunity offering –

I have the Honour
To be, My Lord

Your Lordships obedient humble Servant
Douglas Alexander Murray

Regimental Notes: January 11th 1841

Mr. Murray

Col. D'Aguilar

Inform him that his wishes will not be lost sight of but not so can the can only get long when it may be in her power to recommend him for an Ensigncy without purchase.

[An arrow from the word "not?" above to the note, in a different hand:
Authorized 11th Jan 1841
Ireland Book]

Athlone: 19th February 1841

To: Lord F[itzroy] Somerset

From: E[lizabeth] Murray

My Lord

Allow me to return you my grateful thanks for the kind interest you have expressed To Sir Frederick Adam for my son Douglas A. Murray – presuming on your wishes that he should succeed in obtaining an Ensigncy without purchase I take the liberty of stating – that I have just been informed by my Son Lieutenant Charles Murray 76th Regt. That a Capt. Of that Regiment has sent in his papers to sell out of the Service – as there are now many vacant Ensigncys without purchase. If your Lordship would ask Lord Hill to let one of these Gentlemen get one of them by purchase and my son Douglas get the one in the 76th Regiment without purchase I hope my Lord you will ... The great Anxiety of a Parent the comfort of having my Son just entering life with his Brother whose steady character would help to supply the loss of a Father with Hope plead my excuse for again writing –

I have the honour
To be My Lord
Your Lordship's obedient
Humble servant
E Murray

Athlone: 1st March 1841 (parts of two letters, EM then DAM)

To: Lord F[itzroy] Somerset

From: Douglas Alexander Murray/Elizabeth Murray

My Lord

Allow me to return you my most grateful thanks for your kind attention to my wishes – may I trouble your Lordship also to express for me to Lord Hill the gratitude I feel for his having recommended my son Douglas Alexander Murray to the Ensigncy in the 81st Regiment...

... 81st Foot Lieutenancy without purchase, since? Kerr, who died in Jamaica, 31st December 1840 the senior Ensign is, "Sorell", ... August 1837

81. Foot Ensigncy without purchase ...
Douglas A Murray

Dublin 15 June 1841

To: *Lord Fitzroy Somerset*

From: *George D'Aguilar*

My dear Lord FitzRoy

I ask you and wish Lord Hill forgive me for the renewed Intercession I make in favour of the son of the late M. general J. Murray.

He is now past Seventeen and Mrs. Murray's Anxiety and distress have become so great from her very large family and its increasing demands upon her – that I venture to supplicate? Lord Hill's Kind in her Son's favor.

I am fully aware how Difficult this is – and that I incur the risk of And it maybe of presumption – but I have really a personal interest in this request – beyond what you as a Soldier yourself than with me and sharing it therefore trustfully before you but not without reluctance and hesitation –

Most faithfully yours
George D'Aguilar