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

81 Foot. Ensiet Sorell M. D. a: Murray Belle 820 Mem. 22. Febr. 1841.

Juland 1040 My Lad The therety of take in addressed from to whente your know the street of my Son Droples thesaude Manager that the day is to years of ye and most myself that to the the the there is to years of ye and most myself that When the Swores of his father the late though general Sames Patrick Mouray & Bo a More of his granfather Who though General James Monorce are taken unto insorbe as forware of Inches a Monorce are taken unto insorbe - ation & after the various she members of his family of the have most faithfully served their loundry Mit South with the Loudenty the with the him a proper person to work a somewhole with the Month the Month the server to work a somewhole with the Month the server to work to be the south of the server to work to be some the south of the server to the server in the Majestin Survive Should it be winnession in Her Majesty's Swice - Should it be neighborg Generals Sie John Buchand du Barker laroll can certify that he has been well brought up and command with case - & that he property the mennest and principles of a Man of honored of a Gentleman with a most pleasing afterior deprived by death of his father who that his life in imorphise of a wild laken in the wain allempt to save the lives of two officers of the Royal Ply me with the Mildren most of whom are while unpor orited for There a son now a Lientenant in the 16 the Shor for the last four years has served in the West Sides a law particularly anxions that Iny An Jorglas on whose behalf I now address of Lordo hije should if possible be appointed an losing in the same half heing young that he may have in the comfort of his Brothers friendshipe. longe family I have three little franchibben entirely dependant on me my closest In having General Lord Mill The age of 13 years had been instantly on se hore Surie in the Rogal Navy having talky died after 20 years complyment | suddenly leaved them totally friendless their mother being also dead -I kind attention to my worker my Lord with he were gratifully remembered by a family of recommendation and whom connections are of with a distriction -I have the honor to be my Lord Mr very obeshent Humble Swant Munay)

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(WAR CAPICE) 7) gaper 1840 that loss this will have great Actiofaction wi providing for the late Jon. Thurrays down When his other wagements may permit ! He is afrais however that He many not be able to recommend hom for a formings as Joon as would be agreated h me musson The four fent's acome son onthe about the dist in James last & her now only 16 -He is thought state lower or lus aser's less advanced Mair sure

Farmary & " 1841 My Sord This time tollormouth any mother the widow of the Major General J. O. Morning to B had the Benour of receiving a letter from your Lording surjung your had laid her letter before Lord Will requisiting that I may be appointed to an trisigney without purchase in the ye regiment or in any other Arginant of the Line your Sortship in reply grant Ther great thepes of my success. I hope you will not think me importande in again sticiting your land offices: Iam one of a very Surge family and anxious to gain an honourable Independine for myself & trust that the Services of my peter I long acknowledged ones of my Grandfather The Honowable General Murray when Governor of Luber & Minester La . and various the of my family will make me be considered as a fursion fit to be recommended to ther Males by for an appointment in the thing My hearing of the frequent hindreps of your Lord - strip & your exertions to befried the Sons of officers of ment induces me to trouble you now and to request that you well have the knowing The Night House Sunt general Lord Titylog Somerset to present the accompanying letter to Lord Hell and to favour it with your steamen - lation - These you will pardon me for the liberty of take in this houlding you I have the Honour to be My Lord your Lordships obedient huntle Some Soughes Mex' Moray

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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 -

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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 occurse 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 Regient 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

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 agreable 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

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Regimental Notes: January 11th 1841

Mr. Murray Col. D'Aquilar

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

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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