

FINZI SCHOLARSHIP AWARD 2008

REPORT FOR THE FINZI TRUST

*A Portrait of James Campbell McInnes*

ROLF JORDAN

Prior to starting the travel aspect of the scholarship, I gathered as much available material on James Campbell McInnes as possible. This was limited to the published memoirs of his eldest son, and biographies of his wife and youngest son, with passing references in books on English music of the early twentieth century. Small pieces in music encyclopaedias (in print and online) were also sought, and a copy of McInnes's book *The Music of Language*. The information gave pointers to his life and career, but much of it, when cross-referenced, was misleading or inaccurate. He lived between 1874 (born in Ramsbottom) and 1945, and despite a prestigious career is now inexplicably forgotten, his voice beyond memory of any British concert-goer.

To begin tracing the post-WWI North American career of McInnes, I travelled to Toronto on 12 June. Accommodation was at one of the University of Toronto's halls at Charles Street West, in the Midtown area of Yonge Street. After unpacking, I went for a walk around the area, and found an internet café that would prove to be a kind of second base during the coming thirty-five days. It was dark by the time I left: the scale of the lit skyscraper buildings in Downtown now impressive—upon arrival I had found it disappointingly like Manchester.

On the first morning, I had to ask someone the correct route into breakfast, and we got into conversation about our respective visits—he was down from Vancouver to take part in choral workshops on Byrd, and knew all about English composers: an auspicious start.

The day's goal was to visit Toronto Reference Library, a three-minute walk from the accommodation. I was astonished by the interior of this building, and eventually utilised every one of its five floors. The first archival document I called for was catalogued 'James Campbell McInnes in concert', a document held separately from the library's James Campbell McInnes Collection. It was a bound volume (missing its spine) from McInnes's own library, complete with his bookplate, which I immediately ordered a scan from. The volume consisted of English concert programmes circa 1902-7. The rest of the first day was spent transcribing the content, and making photocopies where relevant—words, performance notes and biographical details.

The Library is open until 8.30pm most days, so after an evening meal I went for a look at the Performing Arts Library on the top floor. They have an extensive card index of the concert programmes held in their archive, and this proved to be amazingly useful as a guide to the unknown territory ahead. Not only was the index by venue, but also by performer and date. McInnes appeared dozens of times, and this list of dates became an invaluable—though not exhaustive—checklist.

I made a good contact at this time: Barry Edwards, the Performing Arts librarian. After a short chat about the nature of my research, he produced the index for a musical scrapbook containing material from 1922-34, with many McInnes references, including press photographs. Barry found my work intriguing, and read *Finding a Father*, the Canadian memoir of Graham McInnes, James Campbell

McInnes's eldest son, while I was visiting: though I had brought *Finding a Father* as a unique guide, the library had a loan copy. He was able to provide useful information about locations of venues, and knew exactly where to find books in the Library's gigantic music book collection. In his words, I had 'brought some excitement into the department's day, which usually consists of people wanting me to find *Cats* for them.'

There was a gigantic thunderstorm in the evening, which meant that my already confused body clock had further disruption. I had never experienced jetlag, or such a storm before. Next day, the tiredness took over and I found reading the musical scrapbook hard work. This was on a microfiche reader, and I was forced to take many copies of the very dark original in order to decipher the indexed references. Fortified with caffeine, the rest of the day was spent calling up concert programmes from the archive. The online catalogue makes no reference to them, and it seems that they are only stored by date.

Just two days in, and I felt McInnes 'the man' emerging already. His earliest apparent singing successes in Canada were at the 'Nine o' clocks': chamber concerts he organised at the Jenkins Galleries, Toronto, during the early 1920s. The printed programmes were entirely his work—opulent documents, complete with tassel and a cover design adapted from his bookplate. I made photocopies of many of these programmes, noting the crossover of material from his English programme book. He had a willingness to promote friends from his English career, such as Vaughan Williams and Graham Peel, and not only with himself as performer.

The next day, Sunday, I walked the short distance to Wycliffe College. I knew from an obituary that McInnes taught there in the 1930s and 40s, and that the chapel organ was installed in his memory.

The receptionist, Pamela Fitkin, was very helpful, and produced a recently published book on the College. I sat in a reading room and transcribed the anecdotal information, which was scant but characteristic. I was then shown the Founder's Chapel, which contains the organ, along with its memorial plaque. I took the archivist's contact details, as he was on holiday. When I returned much later in the month he was still away (further consultation of Wycliffe's archive remains to be conducted by email.)

Over the road from Wycliffe is Trinity College, another place McInnes taught. In common with many of the older University of Toronto colleges, it is built to resemble an English seat of learning: the founding fathers had often attended Oxbridge, and designed their buildings in conscious emulation.

I had a few hours in the Library after lunch, to consult concert programmes from Hart House, a university venue opened in 1919 for student recreation. McInnes performed there frequently, and I located a book on it in order to understand McInnes's connection.

On Monday 16, I resumed making notes from the Hart House book, and found a picture library on the second floor. This was an interesting resource, consisting of filing cabinets indexed by subject and personality. Library users can

borrow up to ten images, which are often vintage magazine cuttings. I found two of McInnes, and several of collaborating musicians such as Healey Willan and Ernest MacMillan. Work continued on transcribing concert programmes until the next day.

Armed with dates from the programmes, I visited the Library basement, which contains the newspaper archive. This resource proved invaluable, as it contains not only microfilm of all the historical Toronto newspapers, but several from neighbouring cities and American states. There was also online access to *The Times*, which was an added bonus.

The remainder of the day was spent examining the James Campbell McInnes Collection for the first time. As this was one of the primary objectives of spending a month in Canada, I was a little disarmed to see it fill just two grey archival boxes. One box contained written documents, the other music manuscripts. Using the downloaded catalogue I had brought, I checked the content for any biographical material that might prove useful in tracking down McInnes during the coming days. Of the written documents, I copied all of the occasional pieces, and the staff were very helpful in this respect, as they allowed 'no restrictions' since I had come so far. Longer typescripts were apparently lectures, undated and difficult to place in any kind of context, so I decided that I would leave them until the final week's research.

The music manuscripts comprise many songs by McInnes's close friend Graham Peel, all of which are signed and dated. Other minor composers are represented: Willie B. Manson, Janet Hamilton, Norman O'Neill, Dolores Grenfell and others. I decided to have photocopies made of several of these, including all the Peel and Manson songs, which are mainly Housman settings. One file was particularly interesting: an arrangement for small orchestra of two Peel songs, in the composer's hand. Peel's recognised output consists of song and piano pieces alone, so this 'discovery' alters the accepted biographical details of him. The potential to revive these pieces was a major factor in the decision to photocopy them.

The following morning was spent in the newspaper archive, learning how to use microfilm readers and copiers. After some rewarding random searches, it seemed clear that the best way to find concert reviews—and locate crucial early performances—was to search through every edition of the individual newspapers, starting in 1919, the year McInnes moved to Toronto. Individual newspapers carried reviews on certain days, with reports on certain others, so this became easier before long. Each day's stack of photocopies have to be carefully filed every evening.

I learned via email that Margot Strickland, biographer of McInnes's wife Angela Thirkell, had just died. She had been a potential English contact. Her book was an important, if deeply inaccurate, source of information on the divorce that brought McInnes to Canada. Tony Gould, biographer of McInnes's second son, Colin MacInnes (who altered to 'Mac' supposedly to help overseas readers), subsequently perpetuated the same errors in his book, despite it being a finer work.

On 19 June, I returned to Trinity College, and was directed to the archive. This was a basement room, cluttered to the ceiling. I was very fortunate in visiting the

day I did, because it was the last day before retirement of the venerable archivist, Henri Pilon. He was training his successor, who clearly would not have uncovered the documents asked for in the vigorous way Henri did: it was entirely his domain, and had been for several decades. Everything was reached from an extended arm—‘you may need a ladder, I don’t’.

Material retrieved included minutes regarding McInnes’s employment at Trinity, and information from College Calendars regarding the nature of his position. I was advised to visit the University of Toronto archive, part of the Robarts Library. Robarts is a bewilderingly unhelpful building to newcomers, triangular in shape, with separate north and south annexes, also triangular. The only way of orienteering is by reading the direction above the exit doors.

Harold Averill, the archivist, who provided a mine of information a terser librarian would not have revealed, first located McInnes among the University staff files. The file contained several obituaries, including one I had not seen before, containing crucial information on McInnes’s WWI RAF career in Canada. There were also several Calendars for Wycliffe, and information from these immediately altered the assumed time of his employment there. By far the best new source of information was a complete run of the *Varsity* newspaper. This is held on microfilm, and partially indexed (‘partial because all our volunteers died at the same time’). *Varsity* was, and still is, informally edited by students during term time, and contains many notices and reviews of music in the University. I spent much time over the coming weeks collecting information from the microfilms: this involved spooling through every edition from 1919 to 1945, initially guided by the index.

I returned to *Varsity* the following day, and Harold brought through several boxes of material relating to Hart House. These contained many items of interest, including letters from McInnes and his secretary Constance Hamilton, and his partner Tom Jackson, with useful material on the musical life of the House itself. Other files had to wait until after the forthcoming week in Rochester, such as the ‘voluminous’ correspondence of Burgon Bickersteth, the Warden of Hart House.

On Saturday, I went to the Reference Library and completed work on the music manuscripts in the McInnes Collection. I also spent time copying many references to performances in the newspaper archive, and exploring the Toronto city directories on the fourth floor. These proved to be a fascinating resource, as the directories enabled a yearly search of the whereabouts of McInnes and other ‘players’ such as Tom Jackson and Graham McInnes. In the evening I walked to Constance Hamilton’s address at thirty St Joseph Street, only to find a modern high-rise. This was likely to have been McInnes’s lodging during the 1920s. Next door, I saw the Canadian Music Centre, which turned out to be an interesting resource when I visited later in the month. It promotes native composers worldwide, and I was able to find details and recordings of the earliest composers in Toronto, all of whom were associated with McInnes—Leo Smith, Healey Willan and Ernest MacMillan.

On Sunday, I walked up to the north of the city in order to visit the address

McInnes took in his last two decades. This was at ninety-one Dupont Street. I found it quickly, however it has been replaced by a modern building. Graham McInnes left several clues about the previous 'duplex' property in his *Finding a Father*. I knew that ninety-one had faced an ice factory, but that had vanished too. New houses have been built on the factory land, with only an original concrete wall remaining to serve as a barrier between the new housing and the railway line. I lingered until a likely-looking older resident appeared, and asked him about the area. He was only able to reveal that his house stood on the site of a 'dairy or something'. He was right: when I consulted the city directories and fire department plans during that afternoon's library visit, they showed that the last use of the ice factory site had been for a dairy: it and the original ninety-one were demolished in the 1970s.

I also used the directories to trace Tom Jackson's path after McInnes died in 1945. Jackson worked for the major Toronto department store Eaton's all his working life, and vacated ninety-one Dupont in the mid 1950s. I was then able to trace him to two potential addresses, up until the early 1970s. I found this important to follow up, hoping it would lead to relatives or friends who knew what happened to McInnes's possessions, or could say more about Jackson himself.

I finished the day with a scrapbook microfiche from the genealogy desk. This contained newspaper clippings of Toronto citizens of note, and was thankfully indexed. I was able to copy several important articles about Constance Hamilton, who as well as being a great supporter of the arts, was also a pioneering feminist and city councillor.

Crossing into the hands of US border customs from Niagara Falls, Ontario, into Niagara Falls, New York, was interminable and unduly hostile—a common enough complaint. In Rochester, the hotel was close to the station, and I immediately set out to find the best way to the University.

Walking distance from the hotel to the University was about two miles, and much of that spent on a pleasant path alongside the Genesee River. I came to enjoy this daily commute over the week, as there was a varied amount of North American wildlife to be seen: a pleasant distraction from a heavy cold I had picked up in Toronto.

The papers accessed were part of the Colin MacInnes Collection held at the Department of Rare Books, Riverside Campus Library. MacInnes was an author and journalist, his manuscripts and many personal papers forming a large archive. Papers relating to his father had been added gradually, and turned out to contain far more material than catalogued. There was an entire file of Toronto-related paraphernalia from the 1930s and 40s. This was clearly collected by Graham McInnes, who had settled in Canada, and then sent to Colin in Europe. It contained notices, obituaries and pamphlets, plus an intriguing letter to subscribers detailing a potential set of recordings (that do not seem to have been made).

A file of letters included those from many Canadian friends, including a very

touching one sent from Tom Jackson to Colin, shortly after McInnes's death.

There were two folders of letters from McInnes, and these were exciting, as it appears they have not previously been used in research. They were donated to Rochester long after Tony Gould wrote his MacInnes biography, and some of the material is extraordinary, bordering on the sensational. The letters were written in the last fifteen years of McInnes's life, and include many private thoughts and reminiscences. The recipients were Colin MacInnes and Mary Fletcher, who had (I found out later) been an admirer during McInnes's years in London. The letters were written either from Toronto on white headed paper, or from McInnes's cottage at Bala, Muskoka, on blue paper. His writing was not easy to read, and many of the letters ran to several pages.

The sheer volume of letters and the disruptive cold meant an urgent plan was needed in order to complete transcribing the material on time. I had also been told that I was limited to 100 document photocopies, so resolved to ask that every letter on white notepaper be copied, and to transcribe the blue notepaper—with a hope that the librarians were not counting. The Rochester time had to be spent entirely absorbed at the desk. I was helped in this resolve by a fellow researcher from Japan, who never once moved from his papers in three days, not even for a necessary meal break. Happily, the focus meant I suddenly was able to read McInnes's handwriting, and was therefore able spend the last few remaining hours almost at leisure to study the manuscript of *Angus Bard*, the unfinished and unpublished novel Colin MacInnes was writing when he died. This was said by Tony Gould to be a loosely biographical study of McInnes. I was able to understand that it was actually far more about Colin himself. I had initially wondered about the folly of bringing the novel to completion, but this soon evaporated.

It became clear that the survival of McInnes memorabilia and letters was down to the fact that Colin was using them as source material, and it is strange to reflect that I now know more about James Campbell McInnes than his sons ever did. One or two documents shared between the McInnes sons show that they knew little about their father's background, for their mother never talked about him, and had Graham not actively sought to find him fifteen years after his departure (using a cashed-in insurance policy that was a birthday gift from his godfather, Graham Peel), they probably would have not seen him again.

I was glad to see the red maple leaf flag on the Ontario border once again. Saturday 28 June was spent in Toronto Reference Library, taking information from the comprehensive music book collection on the fifth floor, along with photocopies of McInnes-related songs by Charles Lidgey and Graham Peel. The music books were an ideal resource, as the books I had at home (such as Kennedy's *Catalogue of the Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*) were there to consult, alongside volumes I would have actively sought in English libraries. Another part of the day was spent in the newspaper archive, resuming the systematic search of the music columns. During the

evening, I retrieved my emails, and found Hugh Cobbe had sent me five letters by Vaughan Williams directly referring to McInnes. Two of these are not used in his (then forthcoming) *Letters of Ralph Vaughan Williams*.

Returning to the Robarts Library on Monday, I resumed work in the University of Toronto archive. Burgon Bickersteth's correspondence files were asked for, and these turned out to be as numerous as Harold Averill had threatened. There were hundreds of his own letters—mainly to his mother in England—plus those from such notable intimates as General Montgomery and John Buchan. Bickersteth's writing was clear, though the sheer amount of words intimidating: every available space, on both sides of a large airmail sheet, was filled. The only reasonable way to use the time constructively was to select known McInnes dates (with *Varsity* references proving useful).

Scrapbooks for the Hart House String Quartet, also stored at the archive, turned up some fascinating programmes. The Quartet toured the world during the 1930s and 40s, and accompanied McInnes in what I presently believe to be his last singing engagement, just six months before his death. A useful find was a photograph of the Canadian Singers, a madrigal group trained by McInnes. One of the group was Betty Gemmil, who became his last secretary.

On 3 July, I went for the first time to the University's Faculty of Music, and found the Edward Johnson Music Library. This has a huge collection of scores and books, some on British music being very rare. I had started to wonder where the remainder of McInnes's library was, and first examined the Graham Peel holdings, but found them not of the right vintage.

I then made a first visit to Hart House, a place that became a regular lunch venue. Parts of the building are open to the public, so I explored and found the library. This was more a place to relax (lots of sleeping bodies), but it held a crucial book on the history of the house—not held in the Reference Library—*An Uncommon Fellowship*. Some important facts jumped out of the book: part of McInnes's library was posthumously given to the House, and he had also presented it with the manuscript of Vaughan Williams's 'Linden Lea' during WWII.

I was put in touch with Zoe Dille, who is Hart House programme advisor. She showed me the music room—and thanks to a detailed description from Bickersteth, I was able to see the place where McInnes conducted his 'Songsters', which were a successful and long-running initiative to encourage singing in the University. Zoe was not aware of any music collection, other than the choral scores held by the music society. The location of 'Linden Lea' was also unknown.

The next day, I went to the Edward Johnson Library. Two librarians were very helpful in trying to find 'Linden Lea' within their catalogue, but were completely baffled. They had more luck in locating the McInnes library from Hart House. It had been put on permanent loan some years earlier, complete with an inscribed cabinet, and was now sitting in a committee room adjacent to the library. Kathleen McMorro, the music librarian who had the key to the cabinet, was not in the

building, however when she arrived, 'Linden Lea' was found immediately. I was allowed to examine it, and saw that it was filed with a sheaf of letters from Ursula Vaughan Williams and Michael Kennedy, verifying its authenticity. Kathleen also let me photocopy her catalogue of the contents of the McInnes cabinet, with an implication that I needed not see the contents.

After lunch, during which I read the catalogue, I returned to the library, and one of the librarians assisted me in examining the cabinet, having retrieved the key. I examined two large piles of books and scores, including McInnes's heavily annotated Bach St Matthew Passion score. This contained his own list of performances of Christ, a role he took over fifty times. There was a bound printed score of *Five Mystical Songs*, with Vaughan Williams's own inscription (given as a gift to commemorate the first performance), and a Graham Peel manuscript, 'Loveliest of Trees'. Sadly, a catalogued score of the *Sea Symphony* was missing, as I had hoped to find an annotation relating to the first performance. One curiously personal artefact was inside a biography of Brahms—a matchstick used as a bookmark. Graham McInnes noted that his father was a perpetual smoker, and it brought the man closer in a peculiar way. The cabinet catalogue, compiled in 1983, mentioned an unused cover illustration of an oil painting of McInnes. To my surprise, it was still in the Reference Library, and the librarian in the archive was able to find it within minutes. It was stored just a few metres from where I'd been reading the McInnes Collection, in a sliding rack of archived paintings. It was a strange experience to be shown this: hung at head height, and life-sized, the effect was almost one of coming face to face with McInnes himself. This painting, made during his English career, though not distinguished, was duly scanned.

On Saturday's visit to the Reference Library, I discovered microfilms of the paper *Saturday Night*, which was a quality publication with strong arts coverage. It was referred to in the musical scrapbooks, but the newspaper archive had claimed it was not in their holdings, and so I had missed it. However, the Journals section on the fourth floor had a full set: I only discovered this after lamenting the poor quality of the scrapbook films to a librarian. All of that day was spent retrieving numerous McInnes references, some of which revealed the earliest Toronto performances. In the evening, I walked to the address of Jenkins Galleries, location of McInnes's studio and venue for his 'Nine o' clocks'. It appears to be the only building on the block to have gone. Just about every trace of McInnes's habitation is gone from Toronto, and I thought of the cottage in Lancashire where he was born: it predates most of the buildings in Canada, yet still houses a family today.

6 July was a Sunday, and being locked out of public collections meant I had no choice but to seek out Tom Jackson's last known Toronto address, at Hiawatha Road, in the east of the city. I engaged a couple of neighbours in conversation, who gave me the courage to knock on the door of number seventy-eight. The owner, Cathy, was fascinated by Tom's story, especially since she had bought the house from Thelma Jackson, whom she took to be his widow. She felt sure that the man next door would

remember something, and we called on him. He knew that Thelma's husband Tom had died in the mid 1970s 'right there on the front lawn', just before he moved in. There were children of the marriage, one of whom lives in an outskirt of Toronto called Ajax.

This was marvellous information, yet deeply frustrating. Nobody matching the name was listed in the Ajax phonebook, and it raised questions of how to proceed with the lead. Clearly, given these facts, Tom had entered into a heterosexual relationship after McInnes died, and his subsequent family may have been completely unaware of his past (Graham McInnes completely whitewashes his own father's sexuality in *Finding a Father*.) During the remaining time in Toronto, Tom Jackson's fate became a distraction, however I did manage to make online contact with a local historian in Jackson's hometown of Bala, Muskoka, who was able to provide significant pointers to the Jackson family, and the local cemetery where McInnes is buried. I felt that the information was clear enough not to warrant a journey two hundred miles north up to Muskoka to visit the grave.

On Monday, I returned to the Faculty of Music library to take many new photocopies from Canadian music magazines, and then explored the main library at Wycliffe College, and also found a small secondary library full of old books, but none appeared to be part of the donated McInnes collection. Since the Wycliffe Library largely contains books on divinity or standard reference works, further searches were abandoned as irrelevant.

Further work on *Saturday Night* revealed a considerable number of early reviews. A particular goal—achieved between the *Saturday Night* microfilms and newspaper archive—was to find reviews of all the annual Bach Passion performances. These became a major part of Toronto's musical year, and chart the lives of the various performers. When McInnes retired from the concert platform, several Passion reviewers noted it. Major parts of the remaining week in Toronto were spent in the newspaper archive, gleaning *Mail and Empire*, another Toronto newspaper, and checking subsequent discoveries against other papers.

A task I had left until the final days in Toronto was a return to the McInnes Collection lectures box. It was strange to read through McInnes's own words, and revisit the occasional pieces. When I first looked through them, a month earlier, I had found the content dull, and the documents themselves empty of character. But with new insight into the man himself, I was able to understand the purpose of many of the (undated) pieces, interpret pencilled notes, and knew the name of the person who had typed out his biggest essays. The longest work ran to well over 200 pages—a history of English literature. This had been assembled in such a way as to resemble a book, but it felt oddly disjointed. It became apparent that it was an unpublished book manuscript, with unrevised text taking up the last fifty pages. I took copious notes from the lectures, as retrieving the full text felt unnecessary.

A slight diversion was the search for Vaughan Williams's orchestration of Purcell's 'Evening Hymn'. In *A Catalogue of the Works of Ralph Vaughan Williams*,

Michael Kennedy notes that the full score is lost. I knew that McInnes had performed it, and had a feeling he had brought it to Canada, where it was certainly performed. Searching carefully through the Special Collections catalogue, I found the Purcell piece in the Herbert Fricker Collection. Fricker was originally from Yorkshire: he was chorus master at Leeds, so will have known McInnes from the first performance of the *Sea Symphony*. The manuscript was in his hand. I took two copies, one of which is now with Michael Kennedy.

On Monday, I spent the morning in the music libraries, finding information on the Elgar-Atkins Bach St Matthew Passion, since McInnes was the first Christ in that version (performed at Worcester Three Choirs Festival). I made one last try at finding McInnes's song collection at the Faculty. Kathleen McMorrow was there, and offered no solution, so I went to Hart House and found an exceptionally helpful front desk. I was given a pile of music committee minutes from the Warden's office, bound into leather books. Since relevant information came from the entire first twenty-five years of the House's existence, it took me until late evening to complete making notes.

On Tuesday 15 July, the last few hours before flying home were spent at the University archive, following up final leads from the music committee minutes: a very satisfying conclusion. All my research papers flew back with me as hand luggage—a considerable weight, but too precious to lose sight of.

On 5 August, I went to the Surrey History Centre in Woking. This holds the Broadwood Collection, which contains the diaries of folk-song collector and musician Lucy Broadwood. Other documents I specifically wanted included concert programmes and photographs, all relating to McInnes's pre-WWI singing career.

Having read the *Times* archive online, I had built a comprehensive list of McInnes performances between 1898 and 1917. Armed with this list, my intention had been to check Lucy's diaries against the dates. What I found, however, was staggering: McInnes was an almost daily visitor from 1899 through to 1911, the year of his marriage. Lucy had noted everything, and attached many reviews. This practically amounted to McInnes's own engagement diary. Their relationship seems to have been almost certainly Romantic rather than romantic.

Crucial facts emerged about McInnes's study in Paris, about his family, friends and marriage. As I read the diaries chronologically (starting with 1897), Graham Peel also became a regular name, and significant facts about him emerged. Other information established 'new' facts about Vaughan Williams—'Linden Lea' was performed six months before the *Catalogue* first performance date, giving credence to McInnes's apparent claim to have been its first singer.

The first three days at the archive were spent entirely, and intensively, taking notes from the diaries, and the fourth was spent reading through everything else. Though Lucy's writing was mostly clear, McInnes's early writing, in his letters, is considerably looser than the older hand I learned to read in Rochester. I found the copy technicians to be most helpful, and they duplicated McInnes's letters carefully in

order to make them as legible as possible. I was fortunate that Hugh Cobbe had already transcribed the Vaughan Williams letters held in the same file.

The prize discoveries—‘light relief’ after the hard diary sessions—were in Lucy Broadwood’s photograph album. There were numerous excellent photographs of McInnes, and two of Graham Peel. I photographed these, plus several pages of newspaper scrapbooks. In conversation with the archivist Di Stiff, she talked about the importance of the Broadwood Collection (which has only been open ten years), and the value of identifying the people frequently mentioned in the documents, such as McInnes.

On 12 August, I travelled to Manchester’s Henry Watson Music Library, and copied concert programmes from early McInnes performances with the Halle Orchestra. An important part of this visit was also to photocopy several Graham Peel pieces held by the library: it had gradually become clear how closely tied the two men were. The songs Peel wrote were often performed or dedicated to McInnes, and to write about McInnes necessarily means researching Peel, of whom little is known—despite once having been a well-known song writer. At this time I wrote to Edward Grimsdale, a writer I found online (he signed the guestbook of an amateur singer from Bournemouth), claiming to be working on a biography of Peel. He has since said that his work is not progressing quickly, and has helpfully given me leads to Peel’s family.

I travelled to London at the end of August, primarily to explore the British Library newspaper archive at Colindale. The British library itself held items of interest: a letter from McInnes bound into a volume of letters to Sir Adrian Boult mentions George Butterworth’s *Shropshire Lad* songs several months before they were premiered. McInnes claimed (in a prospectus found in Canada) that the songs were ‘written for him’, and the Boult letter is an indication that this unrecognised fact is possibly true. I have come to gradually understand the most acclaimed qualities of McInnes’s voice during the research, and one outstanding strength seems to have been in his *mezzo voce*: Butterworth’s ‘Is my team ploughing?’ famously showcases that quality in a singer.

There was also a folder of letters to Margot Strickland, written during the 1970s, at the time of work on her *Angela Thirkell: Portrait of a Lady Novelist* biography. These letters, written by Lance Thirkell, half-brother of Graham and Colin McInnes, revealed an entertaining McInnes/Thirkell family animosity.

At Colindale, I went through all the national newspapers from the time of McInnes’s divorce, November 1917. This was a fairly disturbing task, as the unpleasantness of the case as reported was unflinchingly detailed. Material of a more positive kind was gained by reading microfilms of the *Manchester Guardian* and *Telegraph* from the early part of his career. I was able to make numerous copies from these papers.

Original regional newspapers were consulted in order to retrieve Three

Choirs Festival material. I was surprised to read several pieces that had not been quoted in existing books on Vaughan Williams, specifically in relation to premiers of *Five Mystical Songs* and *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*. Reviews of the premier of the *Sea Symphony* and the Elgar/Atkins Bach St Matthew Passion were also sought.

Lucy Broadwood's diary noted that an article had appeared on McInnes in *The Musical Standard* during 1915, so I spent time reading through microfilms of that publication in the British Library, and gaining much new information on other subjects, as well as locating the article.

Many of Graham Peel's songs were also photocopied: this was necessary as copies are increasingly hard to find. During the period of the scholarship, I was able to buy many songs from dealers at a reasonable price, but soon the British Library became the only remaining source. I was fortunate that Peel's copyright ran out eight months before my work started.

In order to find a known McInnes obituary in the *Folk Song Society Journal*, I went to the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library at Cecil Sharp House on 28 August. I was dismayed to find the building entirely empty and full of decorators, but when the library was located it turned out to be open. Despite appearing chaotic, the library was a mine of information. I copied material on Lucy Broadwood, and was delighted to find a copy of the George Butterworth memorial volume, which is so rare that the British Library is without one.

I had been able to access much of McInnes's family history online through Ancestry.co.uk, but visited the National Archives at Kew in order to consult their only other records in the public domain: his divorce papers, and RFC/RAF record.

After registering with the archive, I made a full copy of the divorce document, and the RFC papers were consulted without difficulty. I found that the archive had made many fact sheets available to make a search easy: an airman's name is found via a microfilm reference, and that in turn shows a document number.

The RFC document proved frustrating, as McInnes's file stopped at the formation of the RAF in 1918. At the time of writing I have not located the RAF file—possibly it has not survived—it would reveal concrete details of his rank and transfer to Canada.

Though the scholarship ends with the writing of this report, information from leads made is still emerging. Correspondence with Ruth Farnworth, who is McInnes's great-niece, has revealed many family history details, and a visit to her in Bury on 8 September has provided me with the only known commercial recording of McInnes, that I had despaired of finding. This was made in 1915, and is fairly poor: it is of two folk-songs, 'Jenny Nettles' and 'Duncan Grey', possibly with Peel as accompanist. I have taken steps to have it transferred to CD format. Ruth also supplied several leads from Ramsbottom newspapers, and these will have to be taken from microfilms in Bury library, which I visited on the week I met Ruth. One important document I need is the diary of Angela Thirkell from the time of her marriage to McInnes: Tony Gould

read it at the time of his work on Colin MacInnes (and made a highly selective transcription), but it has since disappeared—Ruth has given me an important lead in the search.

Enquiries to the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto have shown that a small file exists, and a duplicate of this is being sent.

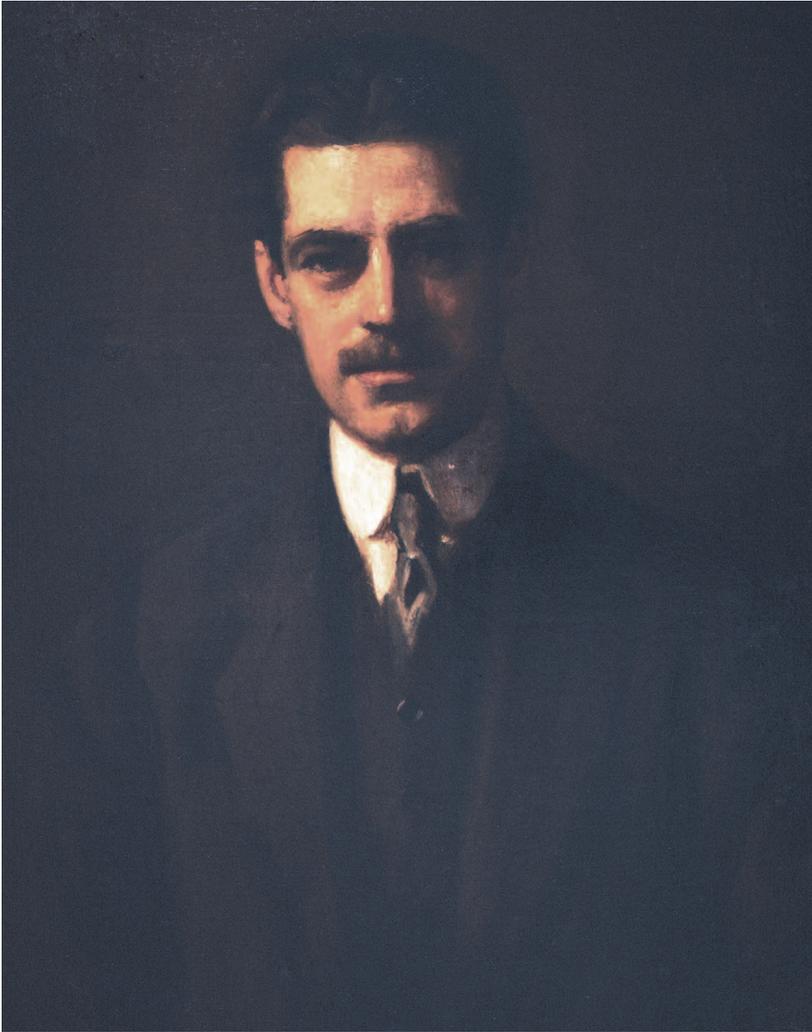
The search for Tom Jackson has had a satisfying outcome. I contacted the local museum at Bala, and the owners Jack and Linda Hutton replied with a document written by Tom: a memoir of his family, who had been founders of the town. The Huttons had known ‘Tommy’, as he had retired to the cottage MacInnes left him in Bala, and shared it with another man. I was amused by this: he had not married and died on the lawn at Hiawatha Road in Toronto, but had lived another ten years into respectable old age. The Huttons went to find his grave, and sent photographs. He was buried alongside MacInnes.

The scholarship research has provided practically all the raw material, most of it completely unique, for a full-length book on James Campbell MacInnes’s life and times. The original intention to produce an article-length study has developed into a more considered, wide-ranging work. I believe that the material on this little-known musician will be of interest to many readers beyond English music specialists.

*Rolf Jordan*  
*12 October 2008*

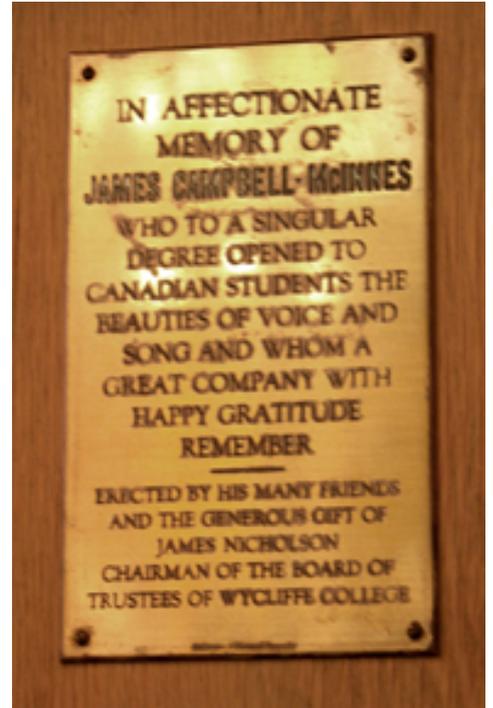
## BIOGRAPHY

Rolf Jordan (b. 1969) is an artist and designer currently living in Wirral. He studied at Wirral Metropolitan College, and Blackpool and The Fylde College from 1985–91, becoming a stonemason and then a play equipment designer. His first solo painting exhibition was a Ludlow in 2007. He has written several articles for the *RVW Society Journal*, was editor of the *Ivor Gurney Society Newsletter* from 2002–7, and is editor and designer of the 2007 anthology volume *The Clock of the Years*.



1911 Portrait of James Campbell McInnes, Toronto Reference Library.

McInnes's birthplace, Holcombe Brooke, Ramsbottom.



Memorial plaque, Founder's Chapel, Wycliffe College, Toronto.

Graham Peel and James Campbell McInnes, Lucy Broadwood collection, Surrey History Centre.





Toronto Reference Library.

Part of the research papers.

