



On 8 July 2010, I had the honour of attending a reception at the residence of Mr. James R. Wright, High Commissioner for Canada, in the presence of Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness Prince Philip. As a postgraduate studying at the Univ of Oxford and one of the recipients of the 2009 Canadian Centennial Scholarships, I was grateful for the opportunity to represent the community of Canadians pursuing higher education in the United Kingdom. I couldn't quite believe it when I received the invitation... in fact, I think I only really believed it when I entered the High Commissioner's residence and walked into its softly lit foyer.

At the start of the evening, we assembled in groups so that The Queen and Prince Philip might be able to meet everyone present. I was placed in the company of other Canadian academics plying their craft in Britain, and we all shared some friendly chatter about what it was like to work in the UK. I vividly remember the moment when The Queen entered our room: everyone

took their places and a hush came over as she walked through the doors and into the warm sunlight filtering through the skylit roof.

I was among the first group to meet The Queen, and I watched intently as she shook the hands of the others in our group, greeting and talking to each person in turn. As The Queen addressed the person just next to me, I suddenly worried about tripping over my words, or perhaps having my tongue stolen by some proverbial cat. Yet I needn't have been concerned: as The Queen shook my hand and asked about what I was doing in the UK, I could sense her full attention as well as a genuine curiosity on her part. The Queen carries herself with an aura of dignity and grace, and yet on speaking with her, one feels as though she could be anyone's grandmother. What struck me the most was that even though she and Prince Philip could only spend a brief time with each of us, I sensed a genuine desire from each of them to find out a bit more about us in those few moments.

After meeting The Queen and Prince Philip, I had an enjoyable time mingling and chatting away with many of the illustrious Canadians in attendance. Some members from the Canadian Centennial Scholarship Fund selection committee were present, and I was happy to meet them again. I also spoke to talented artists, businesspeople at the top of their fields, as well as veterans with a lifetime of stories to tell, and it was clear that a fine cross-section of Canadian society was being represented that night. I feel honoured to have been part of this group, and it was a wonderful experience to have participated in such a memorable evening. *Sacha Nandlall*

Sacha progressed to being a DPhil candidate in the minimum time allowed under Oxford University regulations. With an outstanding academic record, Sacha's work has involved designing, building and testing a way to assess and quantify tissue and protein denaturation when exposed to heating. In effect, he is testing the ability to use ultrasound as a non-invasive cancer therapy and examining techniques that will allow improved ways of measuring damage to tissue during ultrasound.

He tells us that the technique he is investigating, High-Intensity Focussed Ultrasound (HIFU), "may be exploited to treat cancer by using heat to destroy deep-seated, solid tumours in areas such as the pancreas, liver, and kidneys, all while leaving the surrounding non-cancerous cells unharmed.... Given that it is crucial to kill all of the cells in a cancer tumour when treating it, the current practice requires over-treating the tumour and checking that it has been sufficiently treated after the fact, which significantly lengthens the time needed to perform the operation. It is this problem that my research project seeks to address: by applying techniques... I aim to devise a new method of monitoring tissue damage noninvasively. Such a method could be used during a HIFU operation to provide real time feedback to the person administering the treatment, thereby making HIFU a more effective cancer therapy."

Sacha has received praised for his natural abilities as a leader and teacher. He is President of the Oxford University branch of Engineers Without Borders UK, a global non-profit organization promoting sustainable development and poverty alleviation through access to appropriate technology. Throughout his time at university, Sacha has done voluntary and tutorial work. Prior to joining the University of Oxford he spent six months as a full-time volunteer through Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) in Sierra Leone where he worked as a data analyst for the Government of Sierra Leone. Sacha is regularly chosen for giving laboratory presentations for open days and laboratory visits because of his strong communication skills and enthusiasm.

He would like to become a university professor doing research in biomedical engineering with direct applications to improving the quality of health care. He intends to seek tenure-track employment in Canada. His Oxford project provides an opportunity to acquire unique experience at a world-class laboratory so that he can feed this experience back into the Canadian research system.