

Again the year has come to spring

Art song version of an aria from Scene II of
Daughter of the South (opera in one act and two scenes) [1939]

Edward Joseph Collins, composer

Notes by Jon Becker, editor for the Collins project

Daughter of the South, Collins's only opera, is set on a Southern plantation during the USA's Civil War (literally: dramatic action commences on the day the war begins and ends on the day when peace is declared). *Again the Year Has Come to the Spring* is an aria from this "opera in one act and two scenes."

Collins had an unusual passion for the Civil War, noting in his journal that just hearing the name "Stonewall Jackson" had had a strong effect on him since boyhood. Elsewhere in his journals, he took time to write of seeing Civil War veterans in Joliet parades, and of reading books about the war or novels set during it, including *Gone with the Wind*.

In Scene I of *Daughter*, plantation owner Col. Edmond Randolph celebrates in song that his daughter Mary Lou, the "Daughter of the South," plans to marry a Northerner named Robert. The start of the Civil War forces Robert to flee to the North, where he enlists in the Union's forces. At the opening of Scene II, four years later in the drama, Mary Lou sings "Again the Year," bemoaning Robert's absence and his unknown fate, as well as the profound effects of the war on her home.

The "art song" version of *Again the Year* was likely created by Collins for recital performances of the opera in Chicago.