

= O Canada =

" O Canada " (French : Ô Canada) is the national anthem of Canada . The song was originally commissioned by Lieutenant Governor of Quebec Théodore Robitaille for the 1880 Saint @-@ Jean @-@ Baptiste Day ceremony ; Calixa Lavallée composed the music , after which words were written by the poet and judge Sir Adolphe @-@ Basile Routhier . The lyrics were originally in French and an English version was created in 1906 . Robert Stanley Weir wrote in 1908 another English version , which is the official and most popular version , one that is not a literal translation of the French . Weir 's lyrics have been revised twice , taking their present form in 1980 , but the French lyrics remain unaltered . " O Canada " had served as a de facto national anthem since 1939 , officially becoming Canada 's national anthem in 1980 when the Act of Parliament making it so received Royal Assent and became effective on July 1 as part of that year 's Dominion Day celebrations .

= = Official lyrics = =

The Crown @-@ in @-@ Council established set lyrics for " O Canada " in Canada 's two official languages , English and French . The lyrics are as follows :

Official bilingual version

O Canada !

Our home and native land !

True patriot love in all thy sons command .

Car ton bras sait porter l 'épée ,

Il sait porter la croix !

Ton histoire est une épopée

Des plus brillants exploits .

God keep our land glorious and free !

O Canada , we stand on guard for thee .

O Canada , we stand on guard for thee .

It has been noted that the opening theme of " O Canada " bears a strong resemblance to the " March of the Priests " from the opera The Magic Flute , composed in 1791 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart . The line " The True North strong and free " is based on the Lord Tennyson 's description of Canada as " that true North , whereof we lately heard / A strain to shame us " . In the context of Tennyson 's poem To the Queen , the word true means " loyal " or " faithful " .

The lyrics and melody of " O Canada " are both in the public domain , a status unaffected by the trademarking of the phrases " with glowing hearts " and " des plus brillants exploits " for the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver . Two provinces have adopted Latin translations of phrases from the English lyrics as their mottos : Manitoba ? Gloriosus et Liber (Glorious and Free) ? and Alberta ? Fortis et Liber (Strong and Free) . Similarly , the Canadian Army 's motto is Vigilamus pro te (we stand on guard for thee) .

= = = Lyric changes = = =

Weir 's original lyrics from 1908 contained no religious references and used the phrase " thou dost in us command " before they were changed by Weir in 1914 to read " in all thy sons command " . In 1926 , a fourth verse of a religious nature was added .

In June 1990 , Toronto City Council voted 12 to 7 in favour of recommending to the Canadian government that the phrase " our home and native land " be changed to " our home and cherished land " and that " in all thy sons command " be partly reverted to " in all of us command . " Councillor Howard Moscoe said that the words native land were not appropriate for the many Canadians who were not native @-@ born and that the word sons implied " that women can 't feel true patriotism or love for Canada . " Senator Vivienne Poy similarly criticized the English lyrics of the anthem as being sexist and she introduced a bill in 2002 proposing to change the phrase " in all thy sons command " to " in all of us command . " In the late 2000s , the anthem 's religious references (to

God in English and to the Christian cross in French) were criticized by secularists .

In the Throne Speech delivered by Governor General Michaëlle Jean on March 3 , 2010 , a plan to have parliament review the " original gender @-@ neutral wording of the national anthem " was announced . However , three @-@ quarters of Canadians polled after the speech objected to the proposal and , two days later , the prime minister 's office announced that the Cabinet had decided not to restore the original lyrics .

In May 2016 , Liberal MP Mauril Bélanger introduced a private member 's Bill C @-@ 210 to change two words in " O Canada " . These proposed changes are said to make the anthem more gender @-@ neutral by changing the words " thy sons " to " of us " . In June 2016 , the bill passed its third reading with a vote of 225 to 74 in the House of Commons .

= = History = =

The original French lyrics of " O Canada " were written by Sir Adolphe @-@ Basile Routhier , to music composed by Calixa Lavallée , as a French Canadian patriotic song for the Saint @-@ Jean @-@ Baptiste Society and first performed on June 24 , 1880 , at a Saint @-@ Jean @-@ Baptiste Day banquet in Quebec City . At that time , the " Chant National " , also by Routhier , was popular amongst Francophones as an anthem , while " God Save the Queen " and " The Maple Leaf Forever " had , since 1867 , been competing as unofficial national anthems in English Canada . " O Canada " joined that fray when a group of school children sang it for the 1901 tour of Canada by the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall (later King George V and Queen Mary) .

Five years later , the Whaley and Royce company in Toronto , Ontario , published the music with the French text and a first translation into English by Thomas Bedford Richardson and , in 1908 , Collier 's Weekly magazine held a competition to write new English lyrics for " O Canada " . The competition was won by Mercy E. Powell McCulloch , but her version never gained wide acceptance . In fact , many made English translations of Routhier 's words ; however , the most popular version was created in 1908 by Robert Stanley Weir , a lawyer and Recorder of the City of Montreal . A slightly modified version was officially published for the Diamond Jubilee of Confederation in 1927 , and gradually it became the most widely accepted and performed version of this song .

The tune was thought to have become the de facto national anthem after King George VI remained at attention during its playing at the dedication of the National War Memorial in Ottawa , Ontario , on May 21 , 1939 ; though George was actually following a precedent set by his brother , Edward , the previous king of Canada , when he dedicated the Canadian National Vimy Memorial in France in 1936 . Still , by @-@ laws and practices governing the use of song during public events in municipalities varied ; in Toronto , " God Save the Queen " was employed , while in Montreal it was " O Canada " .

Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson in 1964 said one song would have to be chosen as the country 's national anthem and the government resolved to form a joint committee to review the status of the two musical works . The next year , Pearson put to the House of Commons a motion that " the government be authorized to take such steps as may be necessary to provide that ' O Canada ' shall be the National Anthem of Canada while ' God Save the Queen ' shall be the Royal Anthem of Canada , " of which parliament approved . In 1967 , the Prime Minister advised Governor General Georges Vanier to appoint the Special Joint Committee of the Senate and House of Commons on the National and Royal Anthems ; the group first met in February and , within two months , on April 12 , 1967 , presented its conclusion that " O Canada " should be designated as the national anthem and " God Save the Queen " as the Royal Anthem of Canada , one verse from each , in both official languages , to be adopted by parliament . The group was then charged with establishing official lyrics for each song . For " O Canada " , the Robert Stanley Weir version of 1908 was recommended , with a few minor changes , for the English words ; two of the " stand on guard " phrases were replaced with " from far and wide " and " God keep our land . "

Still , it was not until 1970 that the Queen of Canada purchased the right to the lyrics and music of " O Canada " and 1980 before the song finally became the official national anthem via the National Anthem Act . The act established a religious reference to the English lyrics and the phrase " From

far and wide , O Canada " to replace one of the repetitions of the phrase " We stand on guard . " This change was controversial with traditionalists and , for several years afterwards , it was not uncommon to hear people still singing the old lyrics at public events . In contrast , the French version has never been changed from its original .

Gordon V. Thompson Music , Toronto , held the publishing copyright to the English words of the song " O Canada " . Thompson sold that copyright to the Government of Canada for \$ 1 , stating : " At a certain point , a song belongs to the people . "

= = = The second and third stanzas : Historical refrain = = =

Below are some slightly different versions of the second and third stanzas and the chorus , plus an additional fourth stanza , but these are rarely sung .

O Canada ! Where pines and maples grow .

Great prairies spread and lordly rivers flow .

How dear to us thy broad domain ,

From East to Western sea .

Thou land of hope for all who toil !

Thou True North , strong and free !

Chorus :

God keep our land glorious and free !

O Canada , we stand on guard for thee .

O Canada , we stand on guard for thee .

O Canada ! Beneath thy shining skies

May stalwart sons , and gentle maidens rise ,

To keep thee steadfast through the years

From East to Western sea .

Our own beloved native land !

Our True North , strong and free !

Chorus

Ruler supreme , who hearest humble prayer ,

Hold our Dominion in thy loving care ;

Help us to find , O God , in thee

A lasting , rich reward ,

As waiting for the better Day ,

We ever stand on guard .

Chorus

= = = Original French version = = =

The first verse is the same . The other verses follow .

= = Performances = =

" O Canada " is routinely played before sporting events involving Canadian teams . Singers at such public events often mix the English and French lyrics to represent Canada 's linguistic duality . Other linguistic variations have also been performed : During the opening ceremonies of the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary , " O Canada " was sung in the southern Tutchone language by Yukon native Daniel Tlen . At a National Hockey League (NHL) game in Calgary in February , 2007 , Cree singer Akina Shirt became the first person ever to perform " O Canada " in the Cree language at such an event .

Major League Baseball , Major League Soccer , the National Basketball Association , and the NHL all require venues to perform both the Canadian and American national anthems at games that involve teams from both countries , with the away team 's anthem being performed first , followed by

the host country . One American NHL team , the Buffalo Sabres , goes a step further and performs both anthems before every game as a nod to Buffalo 's location near the Canadian border and the team 's substantial number of Canadian fans . Major League Baseball teams have played the song at games involving the Toronto Blue Jays and the former Montreal Expos , and National Basketball Association teams do so for games involving the Toronto Raptors , and previously , the Vancouver Grizzlies . Major League Soccer has the anthem performed at league and Amway Canadian Championship matches involving Toronto FC , Montreal Impact , and Vancouver Whitecaps FC .

= = Laws and etiquette = =

The National Anthem Act specifies the lyrics and melody of " O Canada " , placing both of them in the public domain , allowing the anthem to be freely reproduced or used as a base for derived works , including musical arrangements . There are no regulations governing the performance of " O Canada " , leaving citizens to exercise their best judgment . When it is performed at an event , traditional etiquette is to either start or end the ceremonies with the anthem , including situations when other anthems are played , and for the audience to stand during the performance . Civilian men usually remove their hats , while women and children are not required to do so . Military men and women in uniform traditionally keep their hats on and offer the military salute during the performance of the anthem , with the salute offered in the direction of the Maple Leaf Flag if one is present , and if not present it is offered standing at attention .

= = Adaptations = =

" O Canada " ' s melody , in the 1950s , was adapted to serve as the school anthem for the Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines , titled " A Song for Mary " or simply " The Ateneo de Manila Graduation Hymn " . The lyrics were written by Rf . James B. Reuter , and the melody was adapted by Col. Jose Campaña .

At the 2016 Major League Baseball All @-@ Star Game , The Tenors performed " O Canada " , during which one of the group , Remigio Pereira , held up a sign reading " All Lives Matter " while singing " We 're all brothers and sisters , all lives matter to the great " in place of " With glowing hearts we see thee rise , the True North strong and free " .