

CALIXA LAVALLEE

C 208260

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Men and women who love freedom and cherish free institutions are fighting to prevent the imposition of a system of brutal tyranny upon all the countries of the world. In these days, Canada is fortunate to be able to pay tribute to a composer who had such a true understanding of freedom, and who was filled with such a deep, abiding love of our homeland, that "O Canada!", the musical legacy which he left us, moves, inspires and unites Canadians from coast to coast. Nay more, it moves, inspires and unites Canadians wherever they may be on any of the fighting fronts of this global war.

Better than any other composition, the music of Calixa Lavallee expresses for us the breadth, serenity and aspiration of our country. For all Canadians, it sings of our native land. For every Canadian, it sings also of his own immediate home.

For Canadians of the Maritimes, the music of "O Canada!" envisions the mists that roll in from the Atlantic, the great forests, the fishing villages, the cities and ports that stand on guard for us in the East. For Canadians in the Province of Quebec, the music of "O Canada!" brings up a picture of the mighty river, a storied past, gigantic power developments, the purple shadows of the Laurentians and the happy life of hearth and home. As they hear the music, the people of Ontario feel that it describes their lakes and streams, their teeming industrial cities and the mellow countryside. But this stirring music just as well expresses the vast expanse of the Prairie Provinces, the waving fields of grain and the wide rangelands under the blue dome of Heaven. And in British Columbia, Lavallee's music rises to the majesty of the mountains and breathes through the billows that roll in from the Pacific to embrace another great port that stands on guard for Canada.

The music which Calixa Lavallee left to Canada has steadily grown upon us until we,-- Canadians from coast to coast, -- have taken it to our hearts without formal regulation. We are paying our tribute to Lavallee on this hundredth anniversary of his birth; but a greater tribute has already been paid. When our men came back across the Channel from Dieppe,-- English-speaking boys and French-speaking boys,-- tired, wounded, glorious, they were saluted as they stepped ashore in Britain by military bands playing "O Canada!"

From his gallant service in another fight for liberty -- he was a Canadian who fought in the American Civil War -- Lavallee knew what it was to bleed in freedom's cause. And he knew what it was to be away from Canada and love her the