

Halifax in 1774 and entitled *Acadius or Love in a Calm* is considered perhaps the first original work by an English-speaking playwright. By the latter years of the century, dramatic performances by both professional and amateur groups had become fairly frequent. During the nineteenth century, performances in English, both professional and amateur, continued to increase, while dramatic performances in French remained relatively infrequent.

The first real theatre in Montreal, the Theatre Royal, opened in 1825. There was a theatre of sorts in Toronto before 1830; and gradually theatres came into being in cities and towns where there was adequate support. In some areas these theatres endured for many years, while in others there was a succession of houses or several changes in name and management. In 1862, British Columbia's first theatre was opened. The same year also saw the formation of the Garrick Club in Hamilton, Ontario, out of which the still active Players Guild was developed. By 1870, soldiers stationed in Winnipeg were staging dramatic performances and French groups had become established in the West, especially in St. Boniface, Manitoba, and Edmonton, Alberta.

During the latter years of the nineteenth century, and well into the present century, a system of touring companies, known as the *Road*, flourished and brought to Canada many eminent British and United States performers. For a number of reasons, the *Road* came to an end between the two world wars. Competition from the cinema and radio, the increased expense of production and travel, the loss of audience support because of a deterioration in the standard of touring companies, the long-run system in London and New York, the Depression and, especially, the growing decline in the number of suitable theatres, all contributed to its eventual disappearance. Control of most of the theatres was acquired by the moving-picture chains, thus making them unavailable for legitimate stage productions. Valiant attempts at establishing native repertory companies achieved no permanent success.

In the 1930s, while the professional theatre languished, radio began to provide Canadians with their national theatre and remained the principal vehicle for artistic expression until the advent of television in the early 1950s. A wide spectrum of classical and contemporary plays was presented on radio by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation during the period and radio became the showcase for Canadian writers and actors, both English-speaking and French-speaking.

### The Musical Heritage

For many years, church music and folk-songs were the chief types of music in Canada. Cantatas were written for national events and concerts given by the local choir, aided perhaps by a visiting celebrity, were among the great occasions of the year. Confederation brought the demand for a national song and, of the many written, two have won lasting popularity: "The Maple Leaf Forever" (1867) by Alexander Muir and "O Canada" (1880) by Calixa Lavallée. Popular music was provided by the *coureurs des bois* and the *habitants*. The outstanding creators of authentic Canadian folk-songs were the *voyageurs*, whose creative spirit was evident in the adaptation of some of the old-country songs to the new environment and in the invention of new songs. Canada has