

# THE STORY OF





# CANADA

JANET LUNN • CHRISTOPHER MOORE  
Illustrated by ALAN DANIEL

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## The Buffalo Hunt, Four Hundred Years Ago

At dawn, on a clear fall day, the Blackfoot people prayed to the spirit of the buffalo. If you had been there, you would have been shivering even in your warm deerskin shirt or shift and leggings.

Imagine you are there . . .

Two days ago the scouts went out. Last night they came back to report that the herd was near. The best poundmakers in the band have done their work. They have chosen the strongest willow stakes and driven them into the hard ground

to form the V-shaped fence of the jumping pound. At the narrow end of the pound is a small opening, right at the edge of the cliff.

Your feet in their moccasins are cold as you creep through the tall, frost-tipped grass. You have learned to read the land so well that you know the signs of prairie-dog holes, ant hills, and gullies. You go silently, as though you knew every stalk of grass.

You hear the geese honking overhead, the killdeer's shrill cry nearby. The scent of sagebrush is in your nostrils. Then you sniff buffalo.

The buffalo are coming!

Out behind the herd, three young men have wrapped themselves in grey wolf pelts. They move towards the herd, and the wolf smell makes the buffalo move away, bellowing nervously. The herd begins to flow towards you. You can feel the earth drumming under the thunder of their hoofs.

You are lying in the tall, cold grass with the women and the other children, forming two lines like beads on two strings. The beasts draw near, and one by one you stand. The buffalo move between the lines. How hot and stinking they are! The next person stands, and the

next. Now it's your turn. You stand. Everyone is up. You all walk forward, closing in on the herd. Behind the herd, hunters flap pelts and fire arrows. Terror is in the buffalo, in the people, in the air itself, as the herd sweeps into the pound. Will the wooden stakes hold?

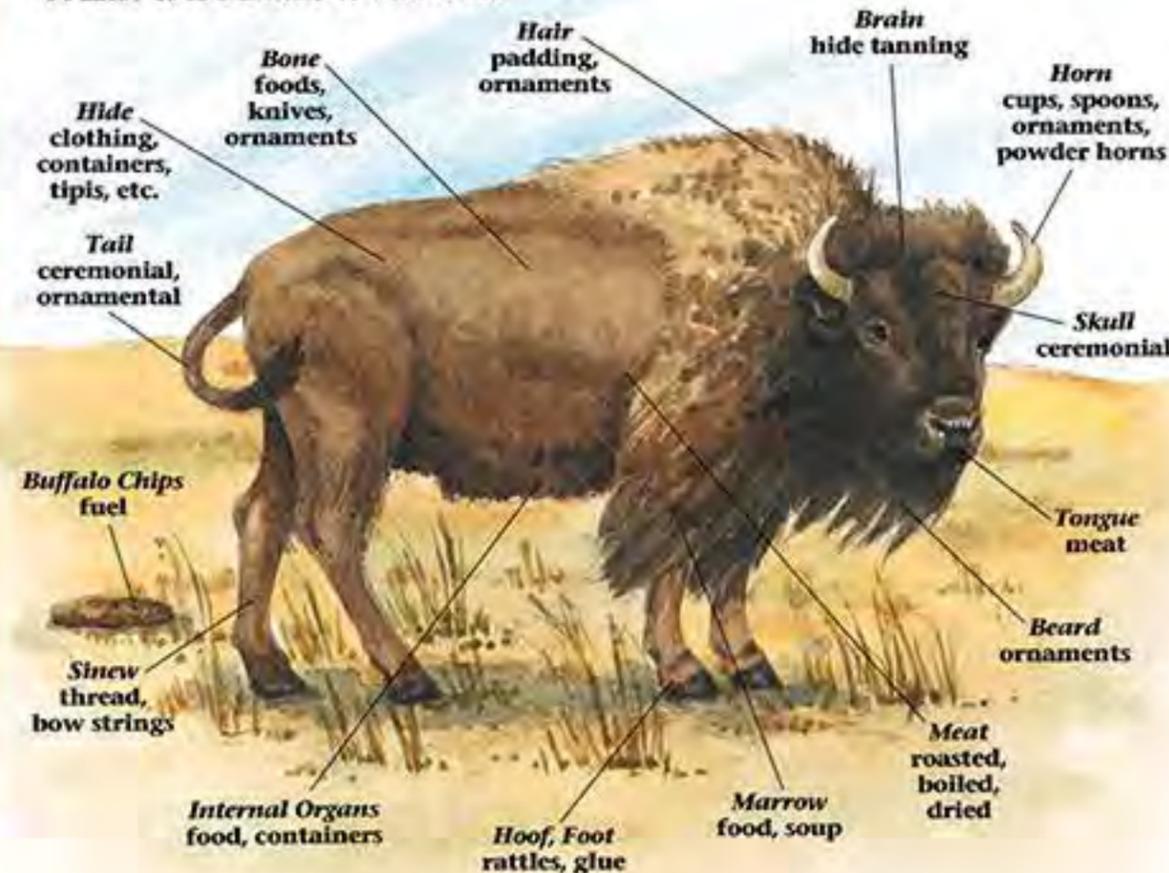
The stakes do hold and the herd is jammed together. Surging ahead, the herd drives its leaders through the opening at the narrow end of the pound. Over the

cliff they go to their deaths, and the rest follow.

Now the skinning and butchering begin. Shoving frantic, barking dogs from underfoot, you work all day with your stone knives. You can feel the eyes of the hungry coyotes watching from the edge of the pound. Tonight there will be a feast. Every tipi will have a pot full of meat and wild onion. There will be singing and dancing to the music of the drum and the eagle-bone flute. There will be dice-

playing and storytelling. And you will honour the spirit of the buffalo, who gave you this herd. This meat and hide and sinew and bone will keep your people strong. There will be food in the winter camp, down in a sheltered valley with a stream and a grove of trees. This year, all but the oldest and most feeble will live through to spring.

## What a Buffalo Provides





## David Thompson: Mapmaker of the West

Because British Columbia's rugged mountains block the horizon, David Thompson sights his sextant on an "artificial horizon" to measure his position. Pouring liquid mercury from an iron bottle into a flat tray, he produces an absolutely level surface, and sights on it.

"I have fully completed the survey of this part of North America from sea to sea," he wrote later, "and by almost innumerable astronomical observations have determined the positions of the mountains, lakes and rivers, and other remarkable places on the northern part of this continent."

Thompson never performed one single great feat of exploration like those of Alexander Mackenzie or Simon Fraser. Instead, he explored the mountain labyrinths of British Columbia for years, and while others simply travelled through the mountain passes,

Thompson made sense of them.

Thompson began as a poor boy from England, apprenticed to the Hudson's Bay Company at the age of fourteen. He roamed the Prairies and learned Cree and Peigan. He admired the Native people, and he lived happily with his Métis wife, Charlotte, for sixty years. But he was an unusual fur trader, because he was devoutly religious and he wouldn't drink alcohol.

In 1790, laid up at the Hudson's Bay post of Cumberland House with a broken leg (and going blind in one eye), the twenty-year-old Thompson learned both mapmaking and geographical surveying. After doing surveys for the Hudson's Bay Company, he joined the Nor'Westers, who set him to exploring

and mapping the vast territory from Lake Superior to the Pacific. He would be a mapmaker for the rest of his working life.

Thompson died in 1857, old, blind, and forgotten. In his later years he had laboured over a narrative of his western journeys, based on the careful journals he had kept wherever he travelled. This is his description of how his expedition got caught in a blizzard in what is now southwestern Manitoba, in December 1797.

At 7½ AM our bit of a caravan set off; as the Dogs were fresh, we walked at a good pace for some time; a gentle south wind arose; and kept increasing; by 10 AM it was a heavy Gale, with high drift and dark weather, so much so that I had to keep the Compass in my hand, for I could not trust to the Wind. By Noon, it was a perfect Storm, we had no alternative but to proceed, which we did slowly and with great

labour, for the Storm was ahead, and the snow drift in our faces. Night came on, I could no longer see the Compass, and had to trust to the Wind; the weather became mild with small rain, but the Storm continued with darkness; some of the foremost called to lie down where we were, but as it was evident we were ascending a gentle rising ground, we continued and soon, thank good Providence, my face struck against some Oak saplings, and I passed the word that we were in the Woods, a fire was quickly made, and as it was on an elevated place it was seen afar off. As yet the only one with me, was my servant who led the Horse and we anxiously awaited the others; they came hardly able to move, one, and then another, and in something more than half an hour, nine had arrived; each with Dogs, and Sleds, but one Man, and a Sled with the Dogs were missing; to search for the latter was useless; but how to find the former, we were at a loss: and remained so for another half an hour, when we thought we heard his voice, the Storm was still raging, we extended ourselves within call of each other, the most distant man heard him plainly, went to him, raised him up, and with assistance brought him to the fire, and we all thanked the Almighty for our preservation. He told us he became weak, fell several times, and at length he could not get up, and resigned himself to perish in the storm, when by chance lifting up his head he saw the fire, this gave him courage; stand he could not but [he] shuffled away on hands and knees through the snow, bawling with all his might until we fortunately heard him. We threw the Tent over some Oak sapplings and got under shelter from showers of rain, hail and sleet: at 7½ PM Ther 36 being four degrees above the freezing point; by a south wind making in little more than twelve hours a difference of temperature of fifty six degrees. I had weathered many a hard gale, but this was the most distressing day I had ever seen.

In the late fifties, when nine-year-old Abigail Hoffman wanted to play on a minor-league hockey team, she had to pretend to be a boy named "Ab" Hoffman. By the 1960s Abby Hoffman was a star athlete competing for Canada in the Olympics, but girls still could not play organized hockey. Things were starting to change, however – in sports, at work, everywhere. By 1967, the women's movement had pushed the government into studying the status of women in Canada. There would be great changes in the next few decades.

### Canada's Birthday Party

The year 1967 was Canada's one-hundredth birthday, and the nation threw itself an exuberant birthday party. Canadians surprised themselves with a sense of pride and a sense of fun.

Across the land, towns and communities started work on imaginative centennial projects. One Manitoba town put in a sewer system and made a July-first bonfire of its outhouses. An Alberta town produced a flying-saucer landing pad. Charlottetown, the "Cradle of Confederation," had led the way with its Confederation Centre, and hundreds of other towns opened centennial community centres, centennial libraries, or centennial arenas. The new maple leaf flag blossomed everywhere. It had been chosen as the national flag just two years earlier, after fierce debates about its design and colour, and now young Canadians travelling in Europe or India, or hitchhiking down the Trans-Canada Highway, carried the red and white emblem sewn on their backpacks.

The world's fair in Montreal, Expo 67, became the highlight of Centennial Year. A few months before the fair opened, the islands in the St. Lawrence where it would be held were a muddy, chaotic construction site, and many nervous Canadians predicted disaster. Instead, Expo blossomed into perhaps the most exciting world's fair ever. Its pavilions displayed the best of all nations, and its theme

### How Canada Got Its Flag

After Confederation in 1867, Canada remained part of the British empire, and the flag it flew was either Britain's Union Jack or the Red Ensign with the Canadian coat of arms. As the country slowly shed its colonial past, Canadians started to consider what a truly Canadian flag should look like.



In 1964, Parliament began to debate the design of a national flag, and hundreds of designs were presented. The Union Jack, the fleur-de-lis, and the beaver all had their supporters. Gradually the maple leaf won out. But would it be one maple



leaf or three? For months, legislators wrangled, editorials thundered, letter-writers argued, and protesters shouted over the look of the flag.

At first Parliament proposed three red maple leaves on a white background with blue bars on each side. But red soon replaced the blue, and a citizens' group named "The Committee for a Single Maple Leaf" fought for a simple, clear image at the

centre of the flag. At last the government closed off the debate. On February 15, 1965, Canada's new flag was officially unfurled – the bold, distinctive red maple leaf (see following page) that is now recognized around the world.





# Canada in Centennial Year, 1967

The provinces and territories, their coats of arms, and the capital cities



*Christine Sinclair's scoring ability and love of the game made her an international star and undisputed leader of Canada's national and Olympic women's soccer teams.*



International trade, multinational corporations, and the Internet all had their influence on multiculturalism. The clothes we were wearing and the toys kids were playing with might be produced a few kilometres from where we lived, or they might come from countries half a world away. Satellites beamed digital images of soccer matches, pop concerts, operas, or wars from anywhere in the world to a TV, a laptop, or a phone, in St. John's, Toronto, or Vancouver. Young Asians came to Canada seeking schooling and careers, while young Canadians were going to Asia to teach English. A Canadian from Ottawa, Mark Rowswell, took the name Dashan and became the most famous Western comic performer and TV host in China.

Multiculturalism and exciting new technology were not the only changes in Canada in the early years of the twenty-first century. Although Canadian women had been legally declared persons back in 1929, and some women had served in the Second World War or had filled the fighting men's jobs in Canada, equality with men had not been won straightaway. Women began to work towards

*Astronaut Roberta Bondar, a doctor and a pilot, trained for eight years for her flight into space in 1992.*



## A New Idea of Family

Canada was getting used to women as premiers. In 2013, when Kathleen Wynne became premier of Ontario, there were six women premiers across the country. Premier Wynne was the first openly gay woman to hold such an office. And she was married to another woman.

Early in the new century, a great change had come for gay men and lesbian women. Many had suffered

scorn and discrimination, and same-sex couples had never been allowed to marry legally. Then gay and lesbian couples in three provinces argued that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms guaranteed their right to marry, and in 2003 they won their court cases. In 2005, Parliament agreed that the change would apply across the country. Canada became one of the first countries in the world where men and women were free to marry and form families with their



same-sex partners, with all the rights and benefits other married couples enjoyed.

equal opportunity and pay, and access to jobs and professions that were closed to them. Women had worked zealously to improve family health and child care. They had demanded legislation in the fight against violence towards themselves and their children. When the constitution was patriated (brought home) in 1982, Canadian women's organizations had made sure that its opening section, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, included the guarantee that men and women were to be considered equal. By the year 2000, it was growing common for women to be doctors, police officers, bus drivers, politicians, and astronauts. More men were choosing to be nurses, primary-school teachers, and stay-at-home fathers. Working fathers as well as mothers could now have time off with pay, to care for their children.