SOFTWARE & TECH

Words Of The Welsh National Anthem

PUBLISHED
November 25, 2026

REFERENCE
#1795584311101412

Introduction: The Heartbeat of a Nation

Few anthems in the world capture the soul of a people quite like "Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau," the Welsh national anthem. For generations, the **words of the Welsh national anthem** have stirred deep emotions, ignited fierce pride, and united Welsh speakers and learners alike in a shared cultural identity. Whether sung in the stands of the Principality Stadium before a rugby match, in a chapel in the valleys, or at a school eisteddfod, the anthem is a powerful declaration of resilience, heritage, and love for the land of Wales. This article delves into the full lyrics, the rich history behind them, and the profound meaning carried by every line.

A Brief History: How the Anthem Was Born

To truly appreciate the **words of the Welsh national anthem**, one must first understand the context in which they were written. "Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau" (Land of My Fathers) was composed in 1856 by father and son: Evan James, a weaver and poet, and James James, a harpist. The pair lived in Pontypridd, a town in the South Wales Valleys that was, at that time, a hub of industrial growth and cultural revival.

The melody came first, written by James James. He originally called it "Glan Rhondda" (Banks of the Rhondda), and it was a simple, plaintive tune that seemed to capture the quiet determination of the Welsh spirit. Evan James then wrote the lyrics, crafting verses that spoke of bards, warriors, and a deep, abiding connection to the Welsh landscape. The song quickly gained popularity at local eisteddfodau and patriotic gatherings. By the late 19th century, it had become the unofficial anthem of Wales, and it was officially adopted as the national anthem of Wales in the early 20th century, long before similar formal adoptions by other countries.

The Words of the Welsh National Anthem: Full Lyrics in Welsh

Here are the official **words of the Welsh national anthem** in their original Welsh language. The anthem consists of three verses, though typically only the first verse and chorus are sung at public events.

Verse 1

Mae hen wlad fy nhadau yn annwyl i mi,
Gwlad beirdd a chantorion, enwogion o fri;
Ei gwrol ryfelwyr, gwladgarwyr tra mâd,
Tros ryddid collasant eu gwaed.

Chorus

Gwlad, gwlad, pleidiol wyf i'm gwlad.
Tra môr yn fur i'r bur hoff bau,
O bydded i'r hen iaith barhau.

Verse 2

Hen Gymru fynyddig, paradwys y bardd,
Pob dyffryn, pob clogwyn, i'm golwg sydd hardd;
Trwy deimlad gwladgarol, mor swynol yw si
Ei nentydd, afonydd, i mi.

Verse 3

Os treisiodd y gelyn fy ngwlad dan ei droed,
Mae hen iaith y Cymry mor fyw ag erioed,
Ni luddiwyd yr awen gan erchyll law brad,
Na thelyn berseiniol fy ngwlad.

Understanding the Meaning: A Verse-by-Verse Analysis

The **words of the Welsh national anthem** are rich with imagery and emotion. Each line carries historical weight and cultural significance. Let us explore the meaning of each verse in detail.

Verse 1: A Land of Bards and Warriors

The opening line, "Mae hen wlad fy nhadau yn annwyl i mi" (The land of my fathers is dear to me), immediately establishes a personal, ancestral connection. This is not just any land; it is the land of the speaker's forefathers. The next line, "Gwlad beirdd a chantorion, enwogion o fri" (A land of bards and singers, famous men of renown), celebrates Wales's rich literary and musical tradition. The reference to bards is significant, as bards were the keepers of Welsh history, genealogy, and culture. The verse then speaks of "gwrol ryfelwyr" (brave warriors) and "gwladgarwyr" (patriots) who shed their blood for "rhyddid" (freedom). This acknowledges the many struggles for Welsh independence and the sacrifices made throughout history.

Chorus: A Vow of Loyalty to the Language

The chorus is the most famous part of the anthem. "Gwlad, gwlad, pleidiol wyf i'm gwlad" (Land, land, faithful I am to my land) is a simple, powerful declaration of allegiance. The next lines, "Tra môr yn fur i'r bur hoff bau, O bydded i'r hen iaith barhau" (As long as the sea is a wall to this pure, beloved land, may the old language endure), are particularly poignant. The "hen iaith" (old language) is the Welsh language itself. The chorus is a prayer that the Welsh language will survive for as long as the sea surrounds Wales. This reflects the deep link between language, identity, and the land itself.

Verse 2: The Beauty of the Welsh Landscape

The second verse paints a vivid picture of Wales's natural beauty. "Hen Gymru fynyddig, paradwys y bardd" (Old mountainous Wales, paradise of the bard) celebrates the rugged landscapes that have inspired poets for centuries. The verse mentions "dyffryn" (valleys), "clogwyn" (cliffs), "nentydd" (streams), and "afonydd" (rivers). This is a love letter to the physical geography of Wales, which is seen as a paradise. The line "Trwy deimlad gwladgarol, mor swynol yw si" (Through patriotic feeling, so charming is the murmur) highlights the emotional resonance of these natural features. The beauty of the land is not just visual; it is deeply tied to patriotic sentiment.

Verse 3: The Indomitable Spirit of the Cymry

The third verse is perhaps the most defiant. "Os treisiodd y gelyn fy ngwlad dan ei droed" (If the enemy has trodden my land underfoot) acknowledges past invasions and oppressions. However, the next line immediately counters this with resilience: "Mae hen iaith y Cymry mor fyw ag erioed" (The old language of the Welsh is as alive as ever). The verse goes on to say that the "awen" (muse or poetic inspiration) has not been hindered by "erchyll law brad" (the terrible hand of betrayal), and neither has the "thelyn berseiniol" (sweet-sounding harp)

of the nation. This is a triumphant assertion that despite all attempts to suppress the Welsh language and culture, they persist and flourish.

The Cultural Significance of the Words

The **words of the Welsh national anthem** are far more than a static set of lyrics. They are a living part of Welsh culture, performed with passion and reverence at a wide range of occasions. Understanding the cultural context in which these words are used adds another layer of appreciation.

Sporting Events: Where Passion Ignites

Perhaps the most globally recognized context for the anthem is at sporting events, particularly rugby union. When the Wales national rugby team plays at the Principality Stadium in Cardiff, the singing of "Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau" is a spine-tingling experience. The crowd of over 70,000 voices, often singing unaccompanied, creates a wall of sound that is both intimidating to opponents and deeply moving for participants. The **words of the Welsh national anthem** are sung with such ferocity and emotion that they often reduce players and fans to tears. This tradition has spread to football, boxing, and other sports, where the anthem serves as a unifying force that transcends club rivalries.

Eisteddfodau and Cultural Festivals

The National Eisteddfod, the largest cultural festival in Wales, is another important venue for the anthem. At the Eisteddfod, the **words of the Welsh national anthem** are sung at the opening and closing ceremonies, often in elaborate choral arrangements. The Eisteddfod is fundamentally about celebrating the Welsh language and its cultural expressions, so the anthem, with its focus on "yr hen iaith" (the old language), is a perfect fit. It serves as a reminder of the festival's mission to promote the language and the arts.

In Schools and Everyday Life

For many Welsh people, the anthem is a fixture of their childhood. It is taught in schools, sung at school assemblies, and performed at local events. Learning the **words of the Welsh national anthem** is often one of the first tasks for children learning the Welsh language, whether they are native speakers or learners in Welsh-medium or bilingual schools. This early exposure ensures that the anthem is passed from generation to generation, keeping both the language and the tradition alive.

The English Translation: A Poetic Interpretation

While the Welsh words carry a unique rhythm and rhyme scheme, many people appreciate a poetic English translation to understand the full meaning. It is important to note that a literal translation can be awkward, so several poetic versions exist. One of the most widely accepted English translations of the **words of the Welsh national anthem** is as follows:

Verse 1 (English)

The land of my fathers is dear unto me,
Old land where the minstrels are honoured and free;
Its warring defenders so gallant and brave,
For freedom their life's blood they gave.

Chorus (English)

Land, land, true I am to my land!
While seas secure this land so pure,
O may the old language endure.

Verse 2 (English)

Old Wales of the mountains, the bard's paradise,
Each valley, each cliff, to my eyes is fair;
Through patriotic feeling, so charming is the sound
Of its streams, its rivers, to me.

Verse 3 (English)

Though the enemy has trodden my land underfoot,
The old language of the Welsh is as alive as ever;
The muse has not been hindered by the terrible hand of betrayal,
Nor the sweet-sounding harp of my land.

Common Misconceptions and Interesting Facts

There are several interesting details and common misconceptions surrounding the **words of the Welsh national anthem** that are worth noting.

- Misconception: "Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau" is the title, but the anthem is often called "Mae Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau" after the first line. Both are used interchangeably, though "Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau" is the official title.
- Fact: The tune is also used for the Breton national anthem, "Bro Gozh ma Zadoù." This is a testament to the shared Celtic heritage between Wales and Brittany.
- Misconception: The anthem is always sung in Welsh. While this is overwhelmingly true, there are English versions that have been used historically, particularly in the 19th and early 20th centuries when English was more dominant. However, the Welsh version is now universally preferred and recognized.
- Fact: The original manuscript is held at the National Library of Wales. The handwritten score by James James is a treasured artifact and is occasionally put on public display.
- Misconception: The third verse is rarely sung because it is too difficult or militant. In reality, the third verse is simply less well-known because tradition has settled on the first verse and chorus as the standard rendition. It is still sung in full at many formal occasions.

Why the Words Continue to Resonate

In an era of globalization and cultural homogenization, the words of

Related Articles

- **Are James Blunt And Emily Blunt Related**
  URL: https://signage.openstack.org/are-james-blunt-and-emily-blunt-related.pdf
- **Was Remember Me Based On A True Story**
  URL: https://signage.openstack.org/was-remember-me-based-on-a-true-story.pdf
- **Ess Employee Self Service Costco**
  URL: https://signage.openstack.org/ess-employee-self-service-costco.pdf
- **The Case For Christianity By Cs Lewis**
  URL: https://signage.openstack.org/the-case-for-christianity-by-cs-lewis.pdf

TOPIC INDEX

#words • #welsh • #national • #anthem

DIGITAL EDITION

words-of-the-welsh-national-anthem

DIGITAL EDITION

words-of-the-welsh-national-anthem

DIGITAL EDITION

words-of-the-welsh-national-anthem

DIGITAL EDITION

words-of-the-welsh-national-anthem