

Lansingburgh *Northern Centinel*, 18 December 1787

The SYREN's SONGS,
As sung by the celebrated modern CATO,
and set to music by his X—L—N—C.
To the tune of the Hypocrite: a new tune very much in vogue.
song second.

View, O! my friends, the laws the rights, the plan
Of gen'rous pow'r, prepar'd for ev'ry man;
By our grandfathers, in the days of yore,
The price of toil, of wounds, and clotted gore;
Ere fancy form'd us, ev'n in embryo,
They gain'd our freedom from the British foe:
Then be't not said, that in your hands decay'd
What to your offspring should have been convey'd.

In the last sound that stun'd your aking ears,
I bawl'd to fill each doubtful soul with fears;
To make you loiter on the brink of fate,
And while a sinking leisurely debate:
To hint how yon new ship, with as much ease,
Can steer on rocks, as sail upon the seas;
To warn you all that no one take a part,
Or *pro* or *con*, till I beguile his heart;
I promis'd to convince, in future howls,
The screaming night-birds and the greater owls,
Here had I stay'd, and rested on my mud,
An introduction fraudulent but good;
Had Cæsar² slept—who treats you all—or me,
With ev'ry insult, short of calumny;
All I would say, unluckily he prates,
And what I fain would hide, anticipates.
And since, my friends, you cannot hear nor see,
Nor think aright without the help of me:
In me 'tis criminal to hesitate
A moment to appear your advocate;
You've none so fitting for a chief as I,
Therefore, unask'd, your combat mean to try;
For if I keep you in your present line,
Altho' you drown, your property is mine:
I mind not Caesar (tho' I grope in dust)

Who knows my actions always gave distrust;
And tho' he threats—he jeers—he ridicules,
Yet I'll with bluntness try to make ye fools:
I'm slow of foot, but let me mount your backs,
I'd fight his shadow and destroy his tracks;
I'd chase him through the fields from side to side
And for my service ever after ride:—
Yon group of builders sent to overhaul,
Have built a new ship, rudder, keel and all,
With the same cost, and of a better mould,
But I am still for patching up the old.
To build a new was more than they'd a right,
Therefore I'd even burn her in their sight:
Then think my friends deliberate and free,
And censure Caesar while you honor me;
None shall henceforth make me my plan give o'er
While I've a cave along the dreary shore:
I mean to view, and view her o'er again,
And find some fault about her if I can:
Then be prepar'd ye senseless drowning throng,
And you shall hear a lamentable song.

Cite as: *The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution Digital Edition*, ed. John P. Kaminski, Gaspare J. Saladino, Richard Leffler, Charles H. Schoenleber and Margaret A. Hogan. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009.

Canonic URL: <http://rotunda.upress.virginia.edu/founders/RNCN-02-19-02-0002-0161>
[accessed 28 Jan 2011]

Original source: Ratification by the States, Volume XIX: New York, No. 1