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and Songs

Francis Hopkinson: An Ode Philadelphia, 4 July 1788

Francis Hopkinson, the chairman of the arrangements committee for the Fourth of July celebration in Philadelphia, composed “An Ode” honoring independence. Copies of the ode were printed before the “Grand Federal Procession” began, but most appear to have been struck on a float carrying the printers, bookbinders, and stationers of Philadelphia.

Oh for a muse of fire! to mount the skies
And to a list'ning world proclaim—
Behold! behold! an empire rise!
An Æra new, Time, as he flies,
Hath enter'd in the book of fame.
On Alleghany's tow'ring head
Echo shall stand—the tidings spread,
And o'er the lakes, and misty floods around,
An ÆRA NEW resound.

See! where Columbia sits alone,
And from her star-bespangled throne,
Beholds the gay procession move along,
And hears the trumpet, and the choral song—
She hears her sons rejoice—
Looks into future times, and sees
The num'rous blessings Heav'n decrees,
And with HER plaudit joins the gen'ral voice.

“Tis done! tis done! my Sons,” she cries,
“In War are valiant, and in Council wise;
Wisdom and *Valour* shall my rights defend,
And o'er my vast domain those rights extend.
Science shall flourish—*Genius* stretch her wing,
In native Strains *Columbian Muses* sing;

Wealth crown the *Arts*, and *Justice* clean her scales;
Commerce her pond'rous anchor weigh,
Wide spread her sails,
And in far distant seas her flag display.

“My sons for *Freedom* fought, nor fought in vain;
But found a naked goddess was their gain:
Good government alone, can shew the Maid,
In robes of SOCIAL HAPPINESS array'd.”

Hail to this festival! all hail the day!
Columbia's standard on HER ROOF display:
And let the PEOPLE'S Motto ever be,
“UNITED THUS, and THUS UNITED—FREE.”

CITE AS: John P. Kaminski et al., eds., *The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution*, Vol. XVIII: Commentaries on the Constitution, Public and Private [6] (Madison, Wis.: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 1995), 246–47.