

A VISUAL VERSION of



My Days Have Been So Wondrous Free

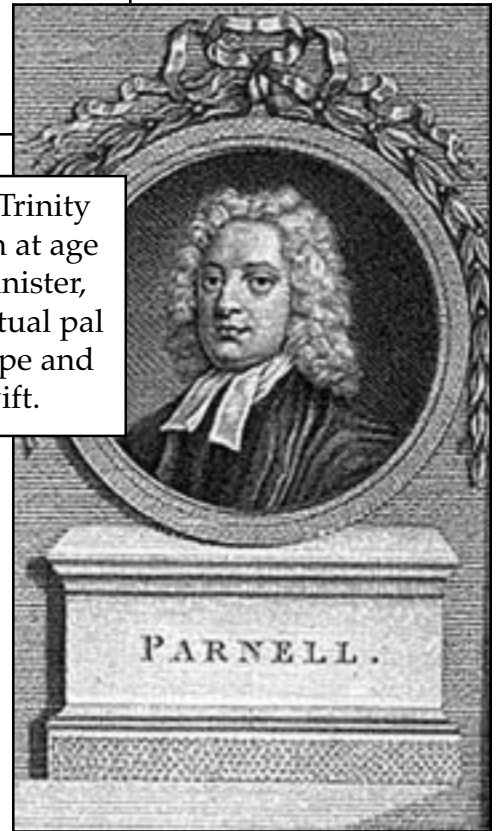
*My days have been so wondrous free,
The little birds that fly
With careless ease from tree to tree,
Were but as blest as I,
Were but as blest as I,
Ask the gliding waters,
If a tear of mine
Increased their stream,
And ask the breathing gales
If ever I lent a sigh to them,
If I lent a sigh to them.*

Parnell was a depressive, alcoholic minister. His freaky poem "Night Piece on Death", appropriately published posthumously, is considered the first work of the Graveyard School of poetry. In it, King Death observes:

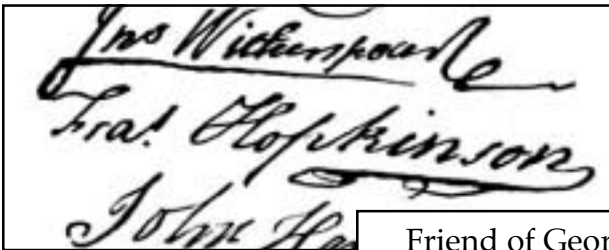
*When men my
scythe and darts supply
How great a
King of Fears am I!*

Lyrics by Thom. P., Music by Fran. H.

In the style of the few remaining newspapers, I thought I'd try a more visual Whither Zither. This one's about a 1759 song that some call the "Earliest surviving American secular composition," **My Days Have Been So Wondrous Free.** Many sites attribute the whole works to Francis Hopkinson (1737-1791) but it seems he really only wrote the melody. The lyrics were written years earlier by Thomas Parnell (1679-1718) who I don't believe ever set foot in America.

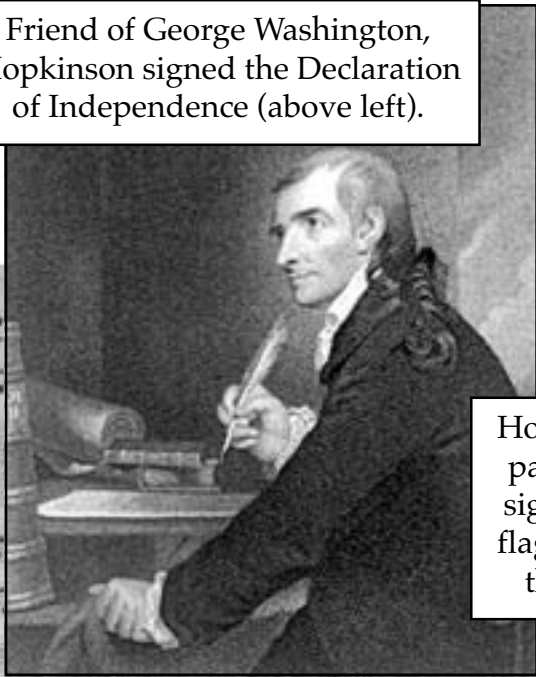


Parnell entered Trinity college in Dublin at age 13, became a minister, and was an eventual pal of Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift.



Friend of George Washington, Hopkinson signed the Declaration of Independence (above left).

Sources:
www.findagrave.com/
www.wikipedia.org/
www.contemplator.com/
www.recmusic.org/



Hopkinson was a lawyer, poet, painter, and inventor. He designed various versions of the flag, one of which was used on this postage stamp in 2000.



Above is the ancient notation manuscript. You can hear a MIDI version of the melody at:
www.contemplator.com/midimusic/daysbeen.mid

