

Berlin Irving

"That Opera Rag"

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[1st verse:]

Sam Johnson as op'ra mad
He sho' had the fever bad
He said, "Those ordinary ragtime tunes are mild
Some music from Verdi's hand
Or any old op'ra grand
Would never fail to set this op'ra darkie wild"
One evening at a ball
They heard Sam Johnson call
Unto the leaderman to play some "William Tell"
The leader swelled his chest and said, "I'll do my best"
So when he played they heard Sam Johnson yell

[chorus:]

Hear dat strain
Mister Verdi come to life again
Oh that operatic sweet refrain
Sho' would drive a crazy man insane
Just let me die and meet those brainy men
Who manufactured notes of opera grand
Oh! Verdi where, where oh art thou?
Let me shake you by the hand, man, you know what's
grand
Good Lord, it's over, they're playin' "Home Sweet
Home"

[2nd verse:]

Old Sam was a painter man
One day with a brush in hand
He stood upon a scaffold 'way up in the air
A German band below
Was playin' some "Rig'letto"
Sam said, "I know that's op'ra, be it here or there"
While he daubed up the wall
He tried hard not to fall
But in the street the band kept right on playin' fair
They played some "Faust" below, just then old Sam let
go
He tumbled down below a-shouting in the air

