

Who was known as "The Voice of Firestone"?

Answer: Thomas L. Thomas

Thomas L. Thomas turned down a seven-year contract with the New York Metropolitan Opera House and lucrative Hollywood offers, opting instead to sing on the radio and in live concerts. It turned out to be a good decision, as he went on to become one of the highest paid concert artists in the United States and renowned as "The Voice of Firestone," a classical music radio program.

Thomas's family immigrated to the United States from Wales in 1923, when Thomas was 12 years old. His father Josiah, a notable musician in his own right, arrived with the hope of a better life for his family. The Thomases settled in Scranton, Pennsylvania, which once had the largest concentration of Welsh outside of England and Wales. Thomas's father encouraged his son's musical talent, and Thomas was learning cantatas by the age of 5. Thomas graduated from school with the credentials to become an engineering draughtsman, but he decided to pursue music full time.

It was during the 1940s and 1950s that Thomas became a household name. The singer found tremendous success on the road performing regularly at concerts and on radio programs. In 1942 he made his debut on the radio program *The Voice of Firestone*, which was sponsored by Firestone Tire Company. He eventually became a regular performer on the show. When it began airing on television, Thomas's face became known to millions of viewers. Throughout his career, Thomas was devoted to and supported the music of Wales. He always included a number of Welsh songs in his performances. He died in Scottsdale, Arizona, in 1983 and was buried with his family in Scranton.

The [Thomas L. Thomas papers \(#3100\)](#) ^[1] at HSP consists of phonograph albums, correspondence, photographs, clippings, and audio- and videocassettes. There are also press kits and correspondence from professional acquaintances and fans that highlight Thomas's career.

Image: [Album cover of Welsh Traditional Songs by Thomas L. Thomas](#) ^[2], circa 1940

Links

[1] <http://discover.hsp.org/Record/hsp.ead.at01-3100/Description#tabnav>

[2] http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/object_id/10655