

FOSTER, IVOR LLEWELYN (1870 - 1959), singer

Name: Ivor Llewelyn Foster
Date of birth: 1870
Date of death: 1959
Spouse: Mary Ann Foster (née Jones)
Parent: Sarah Foster (née John)
Parent: Ebenezer Foster
Gender: Male
Occupation: singer
Area of activity: Eisteddfod; Music; Performing Arts
Author: Huw Williams

Born at Tramroad, Pontypridd, 1 March 1870, son of Ebenezer Foster and Sarah (née John) of Peny-graig, Rhondda, Glamorgan. He left school at the age of 12, and when he was 16 and working in a business with his uncle, William Richards, Dinas, Rhondda, he started to learn old notation in his spare time and competed in eisteddfodau. He won singing prizes at the Porth annual eisteddfod in 1892, 1893 and 1894, and twice on the baritone solo in the national eisteddfod (Caernarfon 1894 and Llanelli 1895). Following his success in Llanelli some of his friends in the Rhondda arranged concerts for him to help him to obtain tuition in music; he went to the Royal College of Music in London in May 1896 and he was there for four years studying voice with Henry Blower, harmony with James Higgs and opera with Villiers Stanford. He won a gold medal during his first year and before the end of the course Sir Hubert Parry said that he was one of the best baritones to have studied in the college. He portrayed the character Don Pedro in a performance of Stanford's Opera Much ado about nothing at Covent Garden in 1901. Later he sang in the promenade concerts and in Boosey's ballad concerts in London and he appeared over 27 consecutive seasons in the Royal Albert Hall. He also sang in musical festivals, including the Cardiff festivals on three occasions and he recorded Welsh songs on the Winner label. After retiring from public performances he set up as a music teacher.

He married, 29 May 1897, Mary Ann Jones, Tonypany (she died 1971). He died in his home at Porth-cawl 29 March 1959 and was cremated at Llanishen, Cardiff. In 1962 his family gave £300 to set up memorial prizes in his name in the open baritone and the baritone under 25 competitions in the National Eisteddfod.

Author

Huw Williams, (1922 - 2002)

Sources

Who was who?,

Y Cerddor, May 1902;

information from his son, Rupert Foster, Porth-cawl.

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