

Jack Collings

1896-1978

THE SINGER ON THE RADIO

Jack Collings lived on Church Hill with his wife and seven children. He was primarily a fisherman but also worked as a signwriter, a Western National bus conductor and a fishermen's barber. He also had a magnificent bass-baritone voice and was well known as 'the singer on the radio'. In 1946 he was made a Bard of Cornwall and given the name Pyscador a Gan (Fisherman Singer/Fisherman of Song).

He came from a long line of singers and fishermen and he loved to sing, ever since he was a youngster in the Chapel choir. When asked what kind of songs he liked to sing he always replied, "Sea songs. I've always been by the sea and can convey most easily and naturally just what they mean. I can see the picture that's there in the song and, I hope, I help the people who hear me to see the same picture when I'm singing the song."

He won every award going on the Devon & Cornwall music festival circuit and was hugely popular with concert audiences wherever he performed - he had a rich natural voice, an unforced style and fine sense of interpretation. His first BBC broadcast was from Plymouth in 1927.

After he sang at the annual meeting of the National Mission to the Deep Sea Fishermen in London's Westminster Hall he was inundated with invitations to sing at various places. In 1928 he returned to Westminster and entertained an audience of nearly 2000 west country people at the annual Devon & Cornish Festival in the Wesleyan Central Hall.

Said a reporter who heard him sing, "The clean sea breezes have tanned his frank and sunny face, and there is the blue of the sea in his eyes. His smile is one of the happiest things in the world. It is impossible, however, to convey any adequate impression of the man in this way. Jack Collings is the sort of man most people like to see. But to hear him, even in conversation, is sheer joy."

"His bass-baritone is of a particular pleasing quality. While all the artists were received with vociferous applause, the greatest enthusiasm was reserved for Mr Jack Collings of Port Isaac."



*Sworn in as a
Bard of Cornwall
May 1946.
Bardic name =
Pyscador Agan.
Fisherman of ()*

taken from THE REAL VOICES OF PORT ISAAC