

17 Feb 1931 Reno Evening Gazette
Related To Peer; Musician Dies In Tonopah

"Tonopah - Fred Thomas, member of Tonopah Musicians Union, died Sunday night after having been under treatment for several months. He was forty-six years of age and one of the most popular men of his class on the desert, where he had made his home for nearly twenty years after arriving with his wife from Denver.

It developed after his death that Thomas was a younger brother of an English Catholic peer with a brother holding the position of chief of the royal engineers at Singapore, and several sisters all married in the peerage. After maintaining silence for twenty years, about a year ago he communicated with his family. In reply he received a questionnaire from the Singapore brother who thought some impostor had taken the mining man's place for mercenary purposes.

Among the questions were those asking for names of parents and details of home and the name of the Catholic Priest who confirmed him. Thomas replied to the satisfaction of the home people and correspondence began that was found in the effects of the deceased. He refused to return to England, preferring the desert, as he knew he could not withstand the ravages of tuberculosis much longer."

Birth year based on age at time of death.