

# Tea Time On Talent Scouts Program

"Go get yourself some *Lipton Tea*,  
hang them on your underwear."

--- Arthur Godfrey

Lincoln, Me. (DG)--

After beginning as a sustaining program, **ARTHUR GODFREY & HIS TALENT SCOUTS** acquired *Lipton Tea* as its sponsor in 1947. This sponsorship began some lengthy and unusual commercials on how *Lipton Tea* was presented on the program. What makes these commercials unusual was Godfrey himself.

Since he began his career in radio, Godfrey had a unique way of selling a product. Much to the chagrin of the sponsor, he never used scripts. He hated scripts and the people who created them. Godfrey usually referred to these unfortunate people as "**vice presidents**" --- which wasn't exactly a flattering name in his personal

vocabulary. When a commercial script was one he didn't like, Godfrey took the script; put it in front of the microphone; and tore it. The listeners heard a loud rip in their radios--- and the vice presidents were muttering gutter language under their breaths. From there, Godfrey presented the commercial in his own words.

Both Godfrey's daytime program and **TALENT SCOUTS** began as sustaining programs, because of his reputation of giving the ad agencies a hard time--- despite the fact he was an effective commercial salesman. Before *Lipton Tea* began its sponsorship of **TALENT SCOUTS**, the product had to go through a major test--- it had to meet Godfrey's approval. As with all future products he sold on radio and TV, Godfrey would have to try it himself. If it met his approval, he sold it on the air. To make a long story short, he enjoyed *Lipton Tea's* famous brisk flavor.

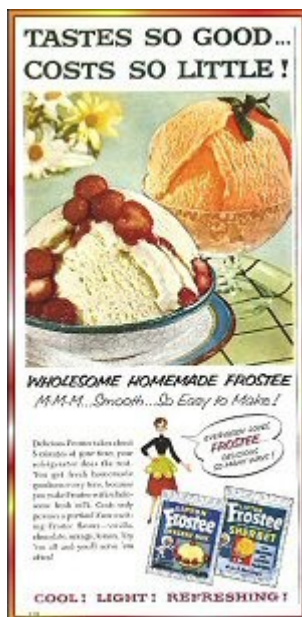
On each broadcast, there was a commercial script on top of his podium--- whether or not Godfrey would even look at it was another matter. Sometimes, Godfrey will read bits and pieces from the script, but the commercial was still ad-libbed. Other times, he ignored it completely. He put into his own words how brisk, flavorful, and refreshing *Lipton Tea* was. Godfrey also informed his listeners to try any kind of tea that was available on the market. This comment made anyone associated with *Lipton Tea* squirm, but it was Godfrey's belief the people discovered for themselves that *Lipton Tea* was the best.

While he praised *Lipton Tea*, Godfrey didn't have very nice things to say about the wet tea bags after the brewing was completed. He remarked how awful the wet tea bags looked after brewing. On one broadcast, Godfrey classified the wet gunk as a "**soggy mess**."



Props also played a key role in helping Godfrey sell **Lipton Tea Bags**. Since it was tea that was being sold on the air, one would think these props consisted of a cup and saucer, a spoon, a bowl full of sugar, a piece of lemon, and a teakettle full of boiling water. These items might have been used, but the props that appeared on the commercials were designed to tickle the funny bone of the studio audience and the radio listeners. One example was a pair of long red flannel underwear decorated from top to bottom with **Lipton Tea Bags**. This idea was to do 2 things at once--- to drink tea while taking a bath. First, the person puts on the underwear. Then he/she draws some hot water in the bathtub, and finally, that person got into the tub. The bath water was washing away the "B.O.", and in the process, the tea bags were brewing up some tea. While the person was soaking, he/she could have a hot cup of tea. In closing, Godfrey recommended to the listeners, "**Go get yourself some Lipton Tea, hang them on your underwear!**"

At times, Godfrey was known to poke fun at himself in order to sell **Lipton Tea**. For example, he read a letter from a person who had an idea on how to sell **Lipton Tea**. He suggested the creation of a tea cup with Godfrey's picture on the bottom. This unusual cup was more suited for people who hated his guts. All was required was to pour hot water into the cup and dunk a **Lipton Tea Bag** to their heart's content. More than likely, the tea in the cup will be on the strong side, but if the people enjoyed dunking the tea bag on Godfrey's face, more power to them. Godfrey thought this was a wonderful idea, because the people who didn't like him would buy the product he was selling on the air. In addition, those people were getting their kicks in dunking the tea bag on Godfrey's face. It was the best of all worlds!



**Lipton Tea** wasn't the only product Godfrey had fun with. He also have a field day with the commercials for **Lipton Noodle Soup Mix** which as you already know, is a dry soup mix packaged in envelopes. Godfrey was fascinated at the thought of chicken inside the envelope. He even went as far as to open a **Lipton Soup** envelope in his search for chicken pieces. Sadly he said, "**no chicken bits in here.**" What he did see in the envelope consisted of dried noodles, pieces of green, and other pleasant stuff that made up a delicious chicken noodle soup.

Another product was **Lipton Frostee**, a dessert mix that made homemade ice cream or sherbet. Like **Lipton Noodle Soup Mix**, **Frostee** was also packaged in a foil envelope. When it was made and cooled in the freezer, **Frostee** made homemade ice cream for less money than buying a pint of ice cream at the store. What sparked Godfrey's interest in **Frostee** was how easy and fast it was to make.

Since Godfrey was known to take considerably more time than the usual 1 minute to do a commercial, **TALENT SCOUTS** usually ran beyond the 30 minute time limit. On the other hand, his humorous and honest commercials

for **Lipton Tea**, **Lipton Noodle Soup**, and **Lipton Frostee** helped to boost sales, to which the people of the **Thomas Lipton Company** were very happy campers.