

Isaac Petrus Thunell 2 May 1886

By Aliana Thunell

— My Great, Great, Grandfather

This is a story about my great, great grandfather, his name is Isaac Petrus Thunell. He was born On May 2, 1886 in Stockholm, Sweden and died December of 1970 in Salt Lake City, Utah. He was married to Hildegard Olson and together they had seven children. My great great grandfather was a very talented man. He was an inventor, woodworker, salesman, and translator. He served as a missionary, a bishop, and a mission president for the LDS Church. When my great, great grandfather was a baby his father and mother, Johan and Aricka Andersson, moved him to the United States because they knew my great, great grandfather would grow up to become a member of the Swedish Royal Guard. He would be responsible for protecting the royal family like his father Johan did. His father did not want him to be forced to serve the royal family, so he left Sweden with his family and came to the United States. It was not good to leave the royal guard and they could be punished for leaving, so when they left Sweden they changed their last name from Andersson to Thunell.

When my great, great grandfather got older he became a piano salesman and tuner and would travel many days by horse and buggy to deliver and tune pianos. He would put a piano on the back of the wagon and travel from Salt Lake City to other cities in Utah. On his long trips he would think about inventions and then go home and create those inventions. Some of his inventions include a children's toy, a fishing tool box, and a hanger and hat closet. He has many patents for the things he invented.

My great, great grandfather also did woodworking as a hobby, and became a very skilled woodworker. He was so good that he was invited to help build the wooden doors on the Salt Lake City LDS Temple. He also made furniture for other LDS Temples and has some of his woodwork all over the country. When he was doing woodworking if he needed a woodworking tool most of the time he would make it himself. He had hundreds of handmade tools when he died. Many of those tools now are in pioneer museums in Utah.

Isaac Thunell also served as a missionary three different times in Sweden for the LDS church. He spoke Swedish so well that he translated books and papers for different people. My great, great grandfather met his wife on his first mission to Sweden. He stayed in Sweden during his first mission to become a mission president and came back home with his wife after a few years. He was a great example, a smart man, and a good leader.

I am glad I got to learn more about my great, great grandfather