

Findings on Oliver's Ancestors

A. Sources of Information

1. Federal Census Index Books, Soundex Index, and actual Census Rolls
 - The Index Books cover the 1790 to 1870 time period (at 10 year intervals) and only lists the head of house, county where living and page number in actual census. There is essentially one book per state per census year.
 - The soundex index covers 1880 to 1930 and list all members of family, age and where born, where living, and location in census rolls. Again, these indexes are by state and per year of census.
 - The actual census rolls provide more info than in index books. The type of info changed with the times. Some key changes are as follows. Up to 1840 the other family members were indicated only by male and female and by age brackets. Beginning in 1850, all members were listed and where born. From 1880 on, there was an additional column for indicating where father and mother were born. In 1900, the date of immigration was added.
2. The National Archives for the Pacific Northwest Region is located in Seattle about 25 miles from where I live. The facility contains the census index books and actual census rolls, immigration film and much more.
3. Ancestry.com – a pay for service which we have at the Genealogy Library I belong to and also at the National Archives. Contains all the census but is much more cumbersome to use than the actual census indexes and rolls. They do however have a by name index of the 1930 census which eliminates having to know the state where the person is living at the time of the census.
4. LDS (Mormon) database on their internet web site called FamilySearch. Of particular use is their version of the 1880 census where they expended about 20 million person hours to compile a by name (meaning everyone listed) census. With this you can even put in a child's name and it will tell you in which household the person is living. So again, a by name census eliminates the need to know where living.
5. Heritage Qwest is another pay web that list several census'. Their 1920 census is a by name census.

B. Anna Soddemann (or Sodeman)

1. Info used provided by you was born in 1872 and immigrated to America in August 1900 to New York City.
2. By Name Census

Without knowing where she went after NY, the best plan was to use a by name index and hope that she had not married and changed her surname. Presently for the period after 1900, only the 1930 is available from Ancestry.com. Two Anna's were listed but in both cases that was their married name.

 - a. Anna M. Sodeman, widow, 71 yrs old, b. Germ, living in Lake Co IN
 - b. Anna Sodeman, wife, 46 yrs old, b. no location indic, liv in Lucas Co OH
3. Marriage database of Ancestry

I should mention at this point Ancestry's marriage database does not include all marriages – only those which people have submitted. Putting in Anna Soddemann indicated a marriage to Albert Flitter but this was shown as part of

- a Templin Family database. Unfortunately no marriage date or location, but there was a listing of a daughter Tillie born in 1911.
- 4. Head of Household census
 - a. Tried the 1920 census for Albert Flitter when Tillie would be about 9 yrs but there was only an Albert 3 yrs old and was living in a family without Anna or Tillie. This indicated Albert the husband must have died or moved away.
 - b. Tried Anna Flitter and there she was in Blue Earth Co. MN. She was head of house with 3 daughters including Tillie and one son. Unfortunately, this Anna was shown as age 42 so born in 1878 and born in Wisconsin.
 - c. So at this point, it doesn't look like this is the correct Anna.
 - d. Finally I might say that from what I've learned in genealogy research, finding info on a female ancestor without knowing her married name is one of the hardest tasks. With her arriving in NYC in Aug 1900 she would miss the census. There is the long shot possibility she would still be unmarried for the 1910 census but without a by name census index for that year, it would be very difficult to find her not knowing where she was living. So without any other clues, this is a tough one to find answers.
 - e. One final thought relative to a source would be the city Directories for New York. These are similar to present day phone books but because of no phones, only list the name and address. However, these would only be useful if Anna stayed in NYC and did not marry for awhile.
- C. Bernhard Heinrich Soddemann Keute
 - 1. Census Info assuming surname Keute
 - a. In the census index books for 1850, 1860, and 1870 I found no Keute in the states of MS, PA, OH, MO, or NY.
 - b. And in the 1880 census there was only one - Franz Keute. He was single, living in Brown Co MN, 27 yrs old, a brick mason, and in the household of John Faas. Obviously, this is not your ancestor but may be related in some fashion.
 - c. 1900 census
 - Franz still in Brown Co MN
 - d. 1920 by name census thru Heitage Quest
 - no Bernhard, Heinrich, or Henry
 - e. 1930 by name census of Ancestry.com
 - no Bernhard, Heinrich, or Henry
 - f. I wonder if after he came to America, he resorted to his original surname of Soddemann?
 - 2. Census info assuming surname Soddemann
 - a. 1920 by name census thru Heitage Quest
 - no Bernhard, Heinrich, or Henry
 - b. 1930 by name census of Ancestry.com
 - no Bernhard, Heinrich, or Henry
 - c. 1880 by name of LDS
 - For this census, I'm going to go to my general search for Soddemann's in Section D and particularly for Wilhelm, which was your 3rd name.
 - d. In summary, no luck on Bernhard.

D. Wilhelm Soddemann (or Sodemann, Sodeman or Sodaman)

1. Census Index Books

- a. There were no Soddemann's in the 1850 or 1860 census in the states of MS, PA, OH, MO, IL, NY, MI, IA.
 - b. In 1870, there were none in MS, PA, OH, but there were 3 in MO and 1 in NY
 - 1) NY state
 - Sophia Sodeman, age 20 living in Wyoming Co – did not look further
 - 2) MO state
 - a) Charles T. Sodeman, 28 yrs, b in NY liv in Platte Co
 - b) John Sodeman, 34 yrs, b. in Germ, liv in St Louis
 - c) William Soddemann, 26, b. in Schleswig, Prussia, liv in Lafayette Co.
 - this person looked promising
2. 1880 By Name Census of LDS – provided 14 heads of households
Name, age, birth pl, parents bpl, liv location county and state for census
- a. John Sodeman, 46, b. Pruss, parents b. Pruss, liv Cook Co, IL
 - b. Henry Sodeman, 37, b. Pomm, Prus, parents b. Pomm, Liv in Cook Co IL
 - c. W.C. Sodeman, 31, b Pruss, parents b. Prus, liv in Crawford Co PA
 - d. Heinrich Sodemann, 25, b. IL, parents b. Mecklenburg, liv Will Co IL
 - e. Christopher Sodaman, 28, b. Ger, parents b. unk, liv Cass Co MI
 - f. John Sodaman, 55, b. Mecklenburg, parents b. Meck, liv in Cass Co MI
 - g. Charles Sodeman, 64, b. Prus, parents b. Prus, liv in Genesee Co NY
 - h. John Sodaman, 50, b. Prus, parents b. Prus, liv in Monroe Co NY
 - i. Joseph Sodemann, 35, b. Ger, parents b. Ger, liv in San Fran, CA
 - j. Heinrich Sodemann, 24, b Prus, parents b. Prus, liv in Will Co IL
 - k. Carl Sodeman, 38, b. Prus, parents b. Prus. Liv in Scott Co IA
 - l. John Sodaman, 52, b. Mecklenburg, parents b. Meck, liv in Will Co IL
 - m. William Sodemann, 36, b. Schles, parents b. Schles, liv in Lafayette Co MO
 - n. Fred Sodeman, 38, b. Prus, parents b. Prus, liv in Cook Co IL

So there are two Heinrich's and one Henry but all are older than your Bernhard Heinrich Soddemann. The one William matches the location of the one in the 1870 census.

This William is now married to wife Minna and they have 4 children and a sister of William's (Wilhelmine) living in the household. His occupation is a Tin Smith.

Since he is now married I looked up MO marriage Records on Ancestry and found a listing that says married to Crescens Neuner on 14 Feb 1871 in Lafayette Co MO. You'll note that name is different from the wife in the 1880 census. But occasionally, people used nicknames so one never knows if it is the same person or not.

3. 1900 Census – there is not a by name index so one must search each state. Consequently I've only done MO. This census was done in Jun and Jul of 1900.
 - a. William is again shown to be living in Lafayette Co MO. Still with wife Minna, his sister, and some new children. The interesting thing is it indicates the wife did not immigrate to America until 1880, (and the 1910 census says in 1879) so she was not the mother of the first 3 children in the 1880 census whose ages were 7, 5, and 4. The fourth child was 3 months old in 1880. This cross-examination tends to show Minna was the second wife of William. His first wife Crescens must have died between 1876 and 1879.
 - b. The other six Sodeman's in Mo were:
 - 1) Andrew, 18, b. Ger, liv in Linn Co
 - 2). Charles, 59, b. Ger, liv in St Louis Co
 - 3) Christian, 30, b. Ger, liv St bLouis Co
 - 4). Dorathea, 30, b. Ger, liv in St Louis
 - 5) John, 39, b. Ger, liv St Louid
 - 6) William C.B., 23, b.Ger, liv in St Louis
4. 1910 Census
Only looked for the William of above. He, wife, sister, and several children still in Lafayette Co MO
5. So that's it for William Sodeman. The first time I found him (1870) was later than your recollection of 1850. However, the state of MO was one of the two you thought to be his residence. Finally, his birth location of Schleswig is in the northern part of Germany and some distance from Westphalia.
Do you know if any of your ancestors lived in that region?

E. Concluding Remarks

It's difficult to know if any of this is on the right track. Perhaps you can review this package and if any name and location looks promising we may look further.

Or maybe you'll think of some new clues.

I almost forgot to mention I also checked with the Rootsweb gene website for surnames that are registered. These surnames sites allow one to write queries regarding his ancestor. Unfortunately there were none for Soddemann or variations or Keute.

So all for now. Look forward to your response.

Eldon