

# AUGUST SODERLING

August Soderling was a well known assayer in Bodie. He was born in Sweden in August, 1841. On October, 19<sup>th</sup>, 1860, he immigrated to the United States. He arrived in New York on the ship Guttenberg, from Hamburg, Germany, with Chicago as his destination. His occupation was listed as a clerk. August worked in Nevada mining camps such as Treasure Hill, and managed the The Theall Co. assay office in Austin, Nevada. By 1878, he was in Bodie, working as an assayer. He never married.



*Assay Equipment*

The Soderling assay office was located next to the Sam Leon Bar. It burned down in the 1932 fire. Prior to that, it was located across the street and burned down in the 1892 fire. In 1885, August paid Mono County taxes for a frame house used as an assay office, a musical instrument \$30, furniture \$25, library \$30, and bar steel \$30. In later years he paid taxes on various mining claims, assay equipment, machinery, scales, and a bicycle.

A. Soderling held a number patents including U.S. patent 375212 issued on December 20<sup>th</sup>, 1887, for an *amalgamating-pan*, and U.S. patent 636114, together with J. S. Cain and S. M. MacKnight issued on October 31<sup>st</sup>, 1899, for *preliminary treatments of ores or tailings before cyaniding*.

August Soderling was active in the I.O.O.F. He joined the Wildey Lodge number 1 of Gold Hill, Nevada in 1866, and joined the Bodie Lodge number 279 in 1890, where he served as Vice Grand and trustee. August was a partner in a number of rich strikes, including the California Comstock of the Paterson District near Sweetwater.

The Mono County Index to Insane, lists August Soderling, age 60, as being committed to the Napa State Asylum on October, 15<sup>th</sup>, 1901. Presumably, he was a victim of mercury poisoning from the various experiments he performed in his research. The *Chronicle-Union* reported:

“SENT TO NAPA—On Tuesday Judge Virden, on certificates of Dr. Davison of this town, and Dr. Robinson, of Bodie, judged A. Soderling insane and ordered him sent to the Napa Asylum. He was taken to Napa on Thursday by Sheriff Kirkwood and Elmer Kirkwood. Mr. Soderling has been a resident of Bodie for nearly 25 years, and highly respected by all who knew him, and it is to be hoped he will recover from the misfortune that has overtaken him.”

Apparently, he recovered because the May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1903, *Chronicle-Union* reported :

“A. Soderling, the well known assayer, returned home, Thursday. Mr. Soderling, we are pleased to state, has entirely recovered his health.”

After his return, he was given a curious award of the barrel of W. S. Bodey's gun barrel, which was never previously reported as being found. On January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1908, the *Bridgeport Chronicle-Union* reported that A. Soderling was sick for some time, went to Hawthorne, and that Lester Bell would act in his place.



*Clouds - I.O.O.F. Building and Dechambeau Hotel*