

# Bernard Wiederhold, 1757-1810

## and descendants to Portugal, Scotland, Canada, Oregon, and California

Bernard Wilhelm Wiederhold became a mercenary in 1776 when his parents could no longer afford to pay for his studies at Kollegium Kassel of the University of Göttingen.

### Fighting the American rebels

Bernard joined as a colonel the von Knyphausen regiment, which was hired by King George III. Shipped to Long Island, he fought for the British in the U.S. war for independence. Records show him in 1776 in White Plains, Rhode Island and wounded during the taking of Fort Washington, which they renamed Fort Mifflin. Being wounded caused him to be absent from the prisoners captured in Trenton [Heckert:80, p.221,245], as [Andreas Wiederhold](#) was. Bernard continued to participate in the battles at Brandywine and Germantown in the spring of 1777. Later he participated in Sullivan's February 1779 expedition to Horse Neck, Connecticut, where they were able to destroy much of the American rebels' military materiel. In June 1780 Bernard was wounded during the failed attack at Connecticut Farms (now Union township in New Jersey), one of the last major battles of the war.

### Fighting Napoleon



Bernard Wiederhold returned to Europe around 1782. In 1792 he participated in the War of the Coalition (Prussia, Austria, Spain, Portugal, and the kingdom of Naples) against the Napoleonic forces. Bernard and his troops marched West from Prussia, via Maastricht, apparently planning to attack Brussels from the South East. However, in May 1795 a truce was negotiated, the Netherlands became the Batavian Republic and the land south of the Meuse river was ceded to the French. Maastricht itself became part of the Batavian Republic, as still seen in the map of the Netherlands as an illogical southern extension. In 1814 the French were finally defeated.

In 1930, the Belgian revolution, following riots in Brussels, triggered by the nationalistic opera *The Dumb Girl of Portici*, caused the lands to the North-West to become Belgium.

### Moving to Portugal

Being out of a job, Bernard joined in 1797 Portuguese army he had worked with during the War of the Coalition. He soon became a general in Portugal, fighting the Spanish. He was rewarded for his services by being elevated to Baron de Wiederhold. He died and was buried in Lisbon in 1810, where 6 of his 8 children were born.

Portugal was allied with England at the time, and Bernard maintained relationship with his colleagues there. One his daughters, Karoline Wiederhold, married a Scottish colonel named John Patrick Carruthers. His son John Thomas used the name John Harvey de Wiederhold Carruthers. He retired in 1893 <check> from the Indian Army, after receiving the Order of the Crown of Siam, 3rd Class.

## Amalie von Wiederhold

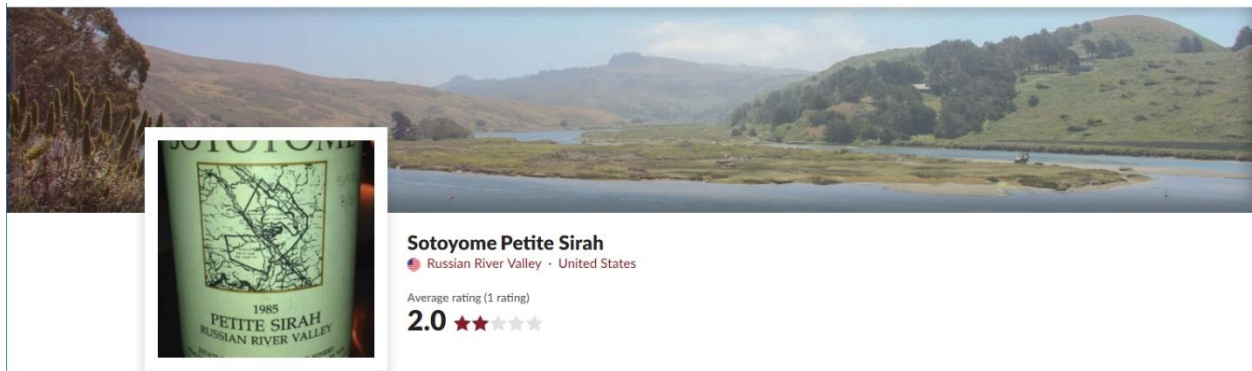
Karoline's older sister, Amalie Wiederhold, married in Lisbon a Scottish merchant and stockbroker named Henry Jakob Siffken. They had 11 children. A son, August Ernest Siffken, emigrated to Victoria in 1862, which was then the capital of the Colony of Vancouver Island (This story is presented in detail by John Adams: *Old Square-Toes (James Douglas) and his Lady*; Horsdale&Schubert, 2001). In 1869 August inherited title Baron from his uncle-in-law Bernard Wiederhold and subsequently used the name August Ernest Siffken de Wiederhold.

August de Wiederhold married twice, the second time to Alice Douglas, who was a daughter of James Douglas, the principal trader and factor for the Hudson Bay Company within the British Oregon Territory. The capital of that area, Fort Vancouver, is now a U.S. National Park on the banks of the Columbia River, just North of Portland, Oregon. The father-in-law, James Douglas, in order to promote trade with the Mexican Spanish in California had sailed to their capital, Monterey in 1841. Later that year he had the Hudson Bay Company set up a trading post in San Francisco, naming it Yerba Buena.

After Britain, in the 1846 Oregon treaty, ceded the lands below the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel to the United States, a disappointed James Douglas moved north to Fort Victoria and became the governor of the Colony of Vancouver Island. In 1866 that Colony was merged with British Columbia, although the town of Victoria became the capital. Soon after, in 1871, British Columbia joined Canada.

## Alice de Wiederhold

James Douglas died in 1877. His daughter, Alice, used her inheritance to purchase the Sotoyome winery on the Russian River in Sonoma county, California. The winery buildings burned down in 1890. The winery still existed in 1985, but its Petite Sirah was not highly rated. It now may be part of the Christopher Creek



Winery in Healdsburg. Alice's husband, the Baron de Wiederhold is shown as a farmer near Hopland, Mendocino county in an 1895 voter's census. He died in 1907 and Alice died in 1913, both in California. Their daughter, Amelia Siffken de Wiederhold was born sometime after 1878 in Healdsburg, California. Census records show that she married William J. Ross in 1900, and that they lived in 1910 in Los Angeles. In 1912 she married an Ernest Dempsey in Riverside, California. Her name does not show in 1920 census records. August and Alice de Wiederhold were likely the earliest Wiederholds that settled in California



Back to the [Wiederhold](#) [↑ Ancestor Stories](#) page.



Back [to the Wiederhold](#) [T Family Main](#) page.