

# William Wolfskill

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**William Wolfskill** (1798–1866)<sup>[1]</sup> was a cowboy and agronomist from Los Angeles, California, who was highly influential in the development of California's agricultural industry in the 19th century.

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## Valencia orange

Arguably his greatest contribution to agriculture was the Valencia orange,<sup>[2]</sup> which quickly became the most popular juice orange in America and led to the naming of Valencia, California.

## History

Wolfskill and his party left Taos, New Mexico, in September 1830. The party was a “dream team” of mountain men that included Jedediah Smith, the first American to cross the Sierra into California in the 1820s, Kit Carson and George C. Yount. When they arrived in Southern California in early 1831, Wolfskill and Yount went on to the coast to hunt sea otter. Wolfskill eventually returned to Southern California, and Yount decided to go north, and the two parted company.

Wolfskill took advantage of the Mexican land ownership laws and became a pioneer of viticulture in Southern California. After acquiring land from the Mexican government where downtown Los Angeles now stands, he began growing grapevines. He eventually planted 32,000 vines on a 48 acre vineyard. Initially, he planted mission vines, but he experimented with other varieties later. At his death in 1866, he was producing 50,000 gallons of wine a year. He was, by far, the greatest producer of table grapes in California during the Mexican era and has been named by historians as one of the three most important men in the history of California viticulture. Wolfskill's neighbor, friend and business rival in the tiny pueblo of Los Angeles, was the French immigrant Jean-Louis Vignes.<sup>[3]</sup>

He was one of the wealthiest men in Southern California for his time, and owned large tracts of land throughout Southern California which were used for everything from sheep grazing to orange groves.

Wolfskill is credited with starting the commercial citrus industry by selling a shipload of lemons to the gold miners for up to \$1 apiece and shipping oranges the following year. He is also credited with building the first schooner in California.

Early California settler John Bidwell includes him in his recollection of people he knew in early Mexican Los Angeles: "Los Angeles I first saw in March, 1845. It then had probably two hundred and fifty people, of whom I recall Don Abel Stearns, John Temple, Captain Alexander Bell, **William Wolfskill**, Lemuel Carpenter, David W. Alexander; also of Mexicans, Pio Pico (governor), Don Juan Bandini, and others".<sup>[4]</sup>

## External links

- William Wolfskill - biography website (<http://mojavedesert.net/people/william-wolfskill.html>)

## References

- ↑ Iris Wilson Engstrand (1965). *William Wolfskill, 1798-1866: Frontier Trapper to California Ranchero* (<http://books.google.com/books?id=7fM8AAAAIAAJ>). A. H. Clark Co.
- ↑ "Valencia Sweet Oranges" (<http://www.citrustreesonline.com/valencia-sweet-oranges.asp>). Citrus Trees Online. Retrieved 2008-02-22.
- ↑ Gaughan, Tim (June 19, 2009). "Where the valley met the vine: The Mexican period" ([http://napavalleyregister.com/lifestyles/food-and-cooking/wine/where-the-valley-met-the-vine-the-mexican-period/article\\_2ae8cae7-9655-5f01-9391-9278fed3b9b3.html](http://napavalleyregister.com/lifestyles/food-and-cooking/wine/where-the-valley-met-the-vine-the-mexican-period/article_2ae8cae7-9655-5f01-9391-9278fed3b9b3.html)). *Napa Valley Register* (Napa, CA: Lee Enterprises, Inc.). Retrieved September 30, 2011.
- ↑ John Bidwell: "First-Person Narratives of California's Early Years, 1849-1900," Library of Congress Historical Collections, "American Memory": John Bidwell (Pioneer of '41): *Life in California Before the Gold Discovery*, from the collection "California As I Saw It."

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Categories: 1798 births | 1866 deaths | People from California | American agronomists  
| Land owners from California | People of Mexican California | History of Los Angeles, California  
| History of Los Angeles County, California | History of Orange County, California | Oranges  
| Orange production | American winemakers | Vintners | Viticulturists | American scientist stubs

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# Joseph W. Wolfskill and Louis Wolfskill

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**Joseph W. Wolfskill** (b. 1844) and **Louis Wolfskill** (died 1884) were brothers who were members of the Los Angeles, California, Common Council, the legislative arm of that city's government, between 1874 and 1884. They were landowner successors to their pioneer Southern California father, William Wolfskill.

## Personal

The brothers were the sons of William Wolfskill of Richmond, Kentucky, and Magadalena Lugo or Rafaela Romero Lugo of Santa Barbara, California, Joseph being born on September 14, 1844, in Los Angeles. They were educated in the family home at Fourth and Alameda streets<sup>[1]</sup> under the tutelage of H.B. Barrows. Their sisters were Mrs. Charles J. Shepherd, Mrs. Frank Sabichi, Alice (Mrs. H.D. Barrows, died 1863) and Rafaelita, who died as a child in 1855.<sup>[2][3][4]</sup>

Joseph was married in San Francisco, California, to Ellen or Elena de Pedorena of San Diego, California, and they had ten or eleven children, including Joseph W. Jr. (died June 1944), William F., David and John, who were educated at home. An infant son, Christian Reid, died on October 29, 1892, and a grown daughter, Francisco M., died in Redondo on January 8, 1894. The couple had houses and property in Riverside, Redondo and Los Angeles.<sup>[2][3][5][6][7]</sup> Mrs. Wolfskill died four years before Joseph.<sup>[3]</sup>

Louis was married in 1873 to Louisa Dalton of Azusa, California, or of Los Angeles. He died in 1884, and his wife died on May 29, 1887, leaving two daughters and four sons.<sup>[3][8]</sup>

## Vocations

### Joseph Wolfskill

Joseph Wolfskill was associated with his father in stock raising and citriculture, and on the death of his father in 1866, he took over the businesses. He "introduced scientific methods into the culture of oranges and extended the original Wolfskill grove until it was made to yield . . . the largest commercial crops in the Southland." The Wolfskill property in Los Angeles proper occupied the land later given over to the Arcade Depot. He had a nursery at the corner of Wabash and Zonal streets in Brooklyn Heights, Los Angeles, along with a retail store at 218 West Fourth Street in downtown L.A.<sup>[2][3][4]</sup> <sup>[9]</sup> An influx of white-scale insects from Australia devastated the orchards, and so Joseph Wolfskill divided the acreage and sold it piecemeal, in the meantime establishing an experimental station to devise a method of fighting the disease, including the use of "washes, sprays, gases, and latterly the parasites of the white scale[,] which have been brought from Australia."<sup>[4]</sup>

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# Sharps Rifle Manufacturing Company

Name	Street	Town	State	From	To
Sharps Rifle Manufacturing Company		Hartford	Connecticut	1851	1874

Patent	Date	Remarks

Contract	for

Product
See Sharps  In 1851, a new breechloader was being made in Windsor, Vermont by the firm of Robbins & Lawrence. Rifle production continued in Vermont while a new Sharps Rifle Manufacturing Company was formed in Hartford,

## Longarms

### Sharps Models, Production years, Calibers, Serial Numbers

Model	Production from	Production until	Caliber	Serial Number from	Serial Number to	estimated production
1949 Sporting Rifle <a href="#">right side</a>	1849	1850	.36 and .44 Percussion	1	150	50 - 75
1850 Sporting Rifle	1850	1851	.36 and .44	1	200	150
1850 Carbine	1850	1850	.52	1	200	6

		Production year				
1851 Sporting Rifle	1852	1855	32, 60 and 90 bore	1	2050	193
1851 Carbine	1852	1855	32, 60 and 90 bore	1	2050	1837
1852 Sporting Rifle	1853	1855	32, 60 and 90 bore	2051	7226	606
1852 Carbine	1853	1855	32, 60 and 90 bore	2041	7500	4997
1852 Shotgun	1854	1855	26 bore	2050	7250	73
1853 Sporting Rifle	1854	1859	32, 60 and 90 bore	8000	27500	2970
1853 Carbine	1854	1857	26, 32, 60 and 90 bore	8000	26000	10519
1853 Military Rifle	1854	1856	32 bore	15200	222	
1853 Shotgun	1854	1856	24, 26, 28, 32 and 90 bore	8300	22000	320
1855 Carbine	1856	1857	.54	17000	25000	6796
1855 Military Rifle	1856	1858	.54	19600	20750	263
1855 Sporting Rifle	1856	1857	.44	over 20000		12
1855 New Model Carbine <u>Carbine left side</u> <u>Carbine right side</u>	1858	1863	.52, .54 and .56	30000	80000	27000
1859 New Model Military Rifle	1859	1862	.52 and .56	36000	60000	6989
1859 New Model Sporting Rifle	1859	1861	.44 and .52	35000	36000	32
Pistol Rifle	1857	1860	.31, .36, .38, .44	1	1062	550
1863 New Model Carbine <u>Carbine right side</u>	1863	1865	.52	71235 C1	99999 C49528	60000
1863 New						

Model Military Rifle	1865	1865	.52	C30000	C40000	7000
1863 New Model Sporting Rifle	1864	1865	.44 and .52	unknown	unknown	16
1865 New Model Carbine	1865	1866	.52	C40000	C50000	5000
1865 New Model Military Rifle	1865	1866	.52	C40000	C50000	1000
Confederate Carbine, Richmond	1862	1864	.54	1	5200	5200 (1900 made by Robinson and 3300 by the Confederate government)
Confederate Carbine, Huntersville	1862	?	.52 and .58	none	none	unknown
1866 New Model Military Rifle	1866	1866	.50 r.f.			unknown
1869 New Model Carbine	1869	1872	.40-70, .45-70, .50-70	C48000	C51000	500
1869 New Model Military Rifle	1869	1872	.50-70	C48000	C51000	about 100
1869 New Model Sporting Rifle	1869	1872	.40-50, .40-70, .44-70, .44-77, .50-70	C48000	C51000	50
1874 Sporting Rifle <u>Target gun with scope, left side</u> <u>Target gun with scope, right side</u>	1871	1880	Various	C50000	163000	Hartford production was 2341 and Bridgeport production 4400
1874 Creedmoor	1874	1875	.44-90			4 variations 1st = pistol grip, checkered = 134 made 2nd = pistol grip, plain = 12 made

Rifle						3rd = straight = 3 made 4th = straight, rifle butplate = 2 made
1874 Long-Range Rifle	1875	1879				4 variations and produced at Hartford and bridgeport Hartford = 61 in 4 variations Bridgeport = 368 in 4 variations
1874 Mid-Range Rifle	1876	1879				4 variations and produced at Hartford and bridgeport Hartford = 54 in 3 variations Bridgeport = 123 in 3 variations
1874 Schuetzen Rifle	1877	1878	.40-50			69 made at Bridgeport
1874 Military Rifle	1871	1877				441 made at Bridgeport 1328 made at Hartford
1874 Express Rifle	1879	1879	.45			30
1874 Business Rifle	1876	1880				1604 made at Bridgeport
1874 Hunter Rifle	1875	1880				451 made at Bridgeport 141 made at Hartford
1874 Springfield Sharps	1871	1871	.50-70			300 made at Springfield with standard Springfield butt and a two band musket forearm with ramrod
1874 Carbine	1872	1878				398 made at Bridgeport 58 made at Hartford
						700 made at

1874 Rifle	1879	1882	.40, .45			Bridgeport
1877 Long-Range	1877	1879	.45	160000	161000	proposed in 3 variations variation 1 = 46 made variation 2 = 2 made variation 3 = 0 made ?
1877 Overbaugh Schuetzen	1876	1880	.45	C54000	162000	73
1877 Lower	1880	1880	.40-70, 45-70	D1	D75	75
1878 Sporting Rifle	1877	1881	.40-65, .40-90, .45-75, .45-100	1	23000	1610 made
1878 Military Rifle	1877	1881	.40-70, .44-77, .45-70			11859
1878 Business Rifle	1878	1881	.40-65, .40-90, .45-75			89
1878 Carbine	1878	1880	.45-70			384
1878 Officers Rifle	1878	1879	.45-70			48
1878 Schuetzen Rifle	1878	1880	.40-45			31
1878 Short-Range Rifle	1878	1880	.40-45, 40-50			153
1878 Mid-Range Rifle	1877	1880	.40-65, .40-70, .40-90, .45-70, .45-100			246
1878 Long-Range Rifle	1877	1880	.45			230
1878 Hunter Rifle	1878	1881	.40-45			62
1878 Express Rifle	1879	1880	.45			31
Double Barrel Shotgun	1879	1880	10 and 12 gauge			230
Tipping & Lawden marked Single Shot Rifle	?	?	.44	1	140	140

## Pistols and Revolvers

### Sharps Models, Production years, Calibers, Serial Numbers

Model	Production from	Production until	Caliber	Serial Number from	Serial Number to	estimated production
Hartford Single Shot Pistol	1853	1853	.52	none	none	20
Single Shot Pistol, Small Frame	1855	1856	.31	1	519	500
Single Shot Pistol, Large Frame	1857	1858	.36 (.34 and .41 seems being found)	473	932	350
Percussion Revolver	1857	1858	.25	1	2000	2000
Model 1A, four barrel pistol <a href="#">1A left side</a> <a href="#">1A right side</a>	?	?	.22 r.f. short	1 and again 1	60000 1000	61000
Model 1B, four barrel pistol	?	?	.22 r.f. short	1	3200	3200
Model 1C, four barrel pistol <a href="#">1C left side</a> <a href="#">1C right side</a>	?	?	.22 r.f. short	1300	27000	26000
Model 1D, four barrel pistol <a href="#">1D left side</a> <a href="#">1D right side</a>	?	?	.22 r.f. short	22400	23500	1100
Model 1E, four barrel pistol	?	?	.22 r.f. short	2125	2170	40
Model 2A, four barrel pistol <a href="#">2A left side</a> <a href="#">2A right side</a>	?	?	.30 r.f.	1 and again 1 550	23000 2500 1100	26500
Model 2B, four barrel pistol	?	?	.30 r.f. long	1	3700	3700
Model 2C, four	?	?	.30 r.f.	3700	8400	4700

barrel pistol						
Model 2D, four barrel pistol	?	?	.30 r.f.	550	1100	500
Model 2E, four barrel pistol	?	?	.30 r.f.	1	750	750
Model 2F, four barrel pistol	?	?	.30 r.f.	none	none	25
Model 3A, four barrel pistol <a href="#">3A left side</a> <a href="#">3A right side</a>	?	?	.32 r.f. long	no special serial range, found between numbers 20	11000	2500
Model 3B, four barrel pistol	?	?	.32 r.f. long	no special serial range, found between numbers 1170	80000	2000
Model 3C, four barrel pistol	?	?	.32 r.f. long	no special serial range, found between numbers 60	16800	9000
Model 3D, four barrel pistol	?	?	.32 r.f. long	no special serial range, found between numbers 4130	87000	2500
Model 4A, four barrel pistol, birdhead grips <a href="#">4A left side</a> <a href="#">4A right side</a>	?	?	.32 r.f. short	1	3690	2000
Model 4B, four barrel pistol, birdhead grips <a href="#">4B left side</a> <a href="#">4B right side</a>	?	?	.32 r.f. short	1	10999	9000
Model 4C, four barrel pistol, birdhead grips	?	?	.32 r.f. short	11000	15000	4000
Model 4D, four barrel pistol, birdhead grips	?	?	.32 r.f. short	none	none	25

Tipping & Lawden marked Model A, four barrel pistol, birdhead grips	?	?	.22 r.f. short	mainly 1	6000	2000
Tipping & Lawden marked Model B, four barrel pistol, birdhead grips	?	?	.30 r.f. and .32 (7mm, 8mm)	mainly 1	6000	4000
Tipping & Lawden marked Model C, four barrel pistol, birdhead grips	?	?	.34 r.f. (9mm)	mainly 1	6000	250

## Sharps & Hankings

### Sharps Models, Production years, Calibers, Serial Numbers

Model	Production from	Production until	Caliber	Serial Number from	Serial Number to	estimated production
Military Rifle	1861	1862	.54 Sharps & Hankings	1	700	700
Navy Carbine	1862	1865	.54	1000	12000	8000
Cavalry Carbine	1862	1862	.54	3000	4000	500
Army Rifle	1863	1867	.54	6000	12000	500

[1871 - 1876 Army trial guns](#)

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**SLOTTERBEK, HENRY** – Born 1836 in Wurttemberg, Germany. Both his father and grandfather were gunsmiths. He was the brother of Charles Slotterbek who gained a high reputation as a gunmaker in California. At an early age, probably 10 or 11 years old, he came to the United States with his family, settling in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In 1855, he started working for Henry Deringer of Philadelphia, making the famous single-barreled percussion “Deringer” pistols. For the first two years he apprenticed under his brother, Charles, who operated Deringer’s shop and was paid by the piece. After this time, Henry Slotterbek worked directly for Deringer. In April 1859, he left Deringer’s employment along with Samuel Burch. 1859–1860, Henry Slotterbek, Samuel Burch, and Frederick Slotterbek worked together doing work for other gunsmiths and making some deringer pistols which were sold in the soft or unfinished condition. A. J. Plate, a San Francisco gun dealer, purchased some of these pistols in which he had his gunsmith and former employee of Henry Deringer, Charles Slotterbek, do the finishing and stamp them exactly the same as Henry Deringer’s pistols: “DERINGER PHILADELPHIA”. “MADE FOR A. J. PLATE, SAN FRANCISCO”. In 1860, Henry Slotterbek, Frederick Slotterbek, Samuel Burch, and William Carrigan formed the firm of “Slotter & Co.” They manufactured rifles, shotguns, and pistols; specializing in percussion deringer pistols. Between 1860 and 1863, they produced approximately 300 pairs of simulated Henry Deringer pistols which were stamped exactly as true Henry Deringer pistols: “DERINGER PHILADELPHIA” “MADE FOR A J. PLATE, SAN FRANCISCO”. They also produced some pistols under their name “Slotter & Co.” The sizes sold to A. J. Plate were 1½ inch, 2 inch, and 2½ inch barrels. Due to the lawsuit of Deringer vs. A. J. Plate for copyright infringements, Slotter & Co. did not make any pistols with Deringer’s name after November 1863. From November 1863 until January 1865, all their pistols were marked “SLOTTER & CO.” From January 1865 until 1868, they made some pistols marked “SLOTTER & CO.” Also some marked “J. DERINGER”. John Deringer, a tailor in Philadelphia, was hired by the firm in order to use his name. Henry Slotterbek did all the finishing of the pistols for the firm.

In 1869, Henry moved to Los Angeles, Los Angeles County, California, where he found employment with Henry Schaffer, the pioneer gunsmith of Los Angeles. In 1872, Henry Slotterbek purchased Schaffer’s business, known as “The Sportman’s Emporium” located on Los Angeles Street. In 1873, he relocated his shop to No. 1 Commercial Street. He continued making the well-known Slotter rifles and pistols. In his shop he also produced the drilling gun which was patented by his brother, Charles Slotterbek. Between 1875 and 1883, he again moved his shop, this time locating at 111 North Main Street. As a riflemaker, Henry Slotterbek had no peers. Many of the well-known Southern California Sportsmen and target shooters used his rifles. Fred Staples and Tom Burdick were two well-known sportsmen in the area that believed in his rifles.

Like his brother, Charles, his life ended with a freak accident. On June 21, 1888, Henry Slotterbek and Ludwig Wadhammer, who was a gunsmith employed by Slotterbek, went out to the rifle range for the purpose of testing three rifles they had repaired. Upon arriving at the range, Wadhammer marked the target at a distance of 250 yards. Slotterbek placed the first rifle on the shooting bench. He first tested a gun belonging to Judge Brunson but after firing two shots, found that the front sight was not true. While installing a new front sight he evidently stood directly in front of the loaded rifle, while it was in a horizontal position on the shooting bench. The rifle accidentally went off, striking him squarely in the chest.

Advertisement in the *Los Angeles Weekly News* newspaper, 1872:

HENRY SLOTTERBEK  
(Successor to Henry Schaeffer)  
GUNSMITH  
Dealer and Manufacturer of GUNS, RIFLES, PISTOLS,  
and all kinds of Sporting Material

The Schlotterbeck (or, alternatively in some records, Slotterback) brothers, Charles (b. ca 1832), Frederick (b. ca. 1834) and Henry (b. ca. 1837), were apparently natives of Wurttemberg, Germany and had immigrated about 1855.

It is unclear if Charles ever worked for Henry Deringer but he is known to be working for A. J. Plate in San Francisco in 1860. After working for Henry Deringer, Henry and Frederick Schlotterbeck opened their own shop/factory in 1860 which operated at 400 Lynd Street, Philadelphia until about 1869. These former Deringer employees were involved in a patent infringement suit in 1863, due to Henry Deringer's statement that the brothers falsely interpreted authorization to use Deringer's name on their arms. They were, in fact, marking their guns "H. Deringer" and shipping them to A. J. Plate who was apparently desperate for the pistols to sell. Shortly after the court ruled in Deringer's favor, the brothers began putting out arms under their own company name, Slotter & Company, or marking guns "J. Deringer" for a partner who was reputedly a butcher or tailor who never set foot in the shop. There **was** a John Deringer, tailor, in Philadelphia (who was drafted to serve in the Civil War). Did he accept the deal in order to get the money to buy a substitute? That last is pure speculation. To continue, Slotter & Co. not only made Deringer type pistols but also muzzleloading percussion rifles and at least one breechloading rifle (shown here). The company ceased all activities about 1869 and the brothers moved to the west coast.



*Slotter/ & Co. Phila marked rifle*

Charles lived in San Francisco (on 1870 census) where he made rifles and later moved to Lakeport, CA with his wife Poline (Pauline, who also immigrated in 1855) and children including Henry (or Charles Henry) who was also a gunsmith. Charles was known for his quality firearms and held several patents on firearms (84224, 208765, and 233034). He was apparently in business in 1867 as this ad from 16 August 1867 attests.

*VILLEGIA & SLOTTERBEK, GUN, RIFLE AND PISTOL makers, 730 Washington street, opposite the Plata, Messrs. JOSEPH VILLEGIA and CHARLES SLOTTERBEK beg to call the attention of their friends and the sportsmen of California to the fact that they have taken the above store, and purpose conducting it as a first- class establishment, where the entire wants of the Sportsmen can be accommodated. Messrs. V & S would call special attention to tho superiority of the Guns, Rifles and Pistols made under their supervision, and challenge competition in this particular; and are now making guns to order with the elaborate cold drawn steel barrels, which are so favorably known for their great strength and superior shooting powers. Repair of Firearms done at the shortest notice, and satisfaction guaranteed in all cases. Ammunition of all kinds constantly on hand.*

Charles was also apparently well known as a Schutzen shooter (and we see yet another spelling of the family name).

*During 1872 the National Rifle Club was organized by the members of the old "Deutsche Schuetzen Club" which had ceased to exist, Joseph Hug, Alois Schneider, Wm. Ehrenpfort, John Bach, George Schmidt, **Chas. Slotterbek**, Philo Jacoby and others were original members. Their shooting range was at Harbor View where they practiced every Sunday and held several public prize shootings.*