

19005 Coast Highway One, Jenner, CA 95450 • 707.847.3437 • info@fortross.org • www.fortross.org

### Title: Eschscholtz and Von Chamisso Spend a Month at the Bay of San Francisco

## Author(s): Susan Delano McKelvey

Published by: Fremontia i Source: Fort Ross Conservancy Library

URL: <u>www.fortross.org</u>

Fort Ross Conservancy (FRC) asks that you acknowledge FRC as the source of the content; if you use material from FRC online, we request that you link directly to the URL provided. If you use the content offline, we ask that you credit the source as follows: "Courtesy of Fort Ross Conservancy, <u>www.fortross.org</u>."

Fort Ross Conservancy, a 501(c)(3) and California State Park cooperating association, connects people to the history and beauty of Fort Ross and Salt Point State Parks.

© Fort Ross Conservancy, 19005 Coast Highway One, Jenner, CA 95450, 707-847-3437

# ESCHSCHOLTZ AND VON CHAMISSO SPEND A MONTH AT THE BAY OF SAN FRANCISCO

[Three previous excerpts taken from Botanical Exploration of the Trans-Mississippi West, 1790-1850, by Susan Delano McKelvey have appeared in Fremontia (July '94, January '95, and July '95). The period covered in these issues included the Laperouse expedition in 1786, the decade from 1790 to 1800 when Malaspina, Hoenke, and Nee visited California, and later when Menzies, traveling with Vancouver, came to California. In the decade from 1800 to 1810, while Lewis and Clark made their way to the Pacific coast further to the north, little botanical exploration occurred in California. The excerpt that follows covers the only explorations in the decade from 1810-1820, those of two naturalists on board von Kotzebue's ship, the Rurik.]

There ARE A NUMBER of published accounts of the Kotzebue expedition. This account follows Otto von Kotzebue's own story, published in London in 1821, and translated from the German edition (Weimar, 1821) by Hannibal Evans Lloyd: A voyage of discovery into the South Sea and Beering's Straits, for the purpose of exploring a north-east passage, undertaken in the years 1815-1818 in the ship Rurick, under the command of the Lieutenant in the Russian Navy, Otto von Kotzebue...

Lloyd's preface explains that "The expedition was known to have originated in the enlarged views of that

Johann Friedrich Eschscholtz. The original of this portrait is probably in the Komarov Botanical Institute, Leningrad. Print from Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, Pittsburg, PA.





Adelbert von Chamisso, a portrait by Ernest Hoffman, courtesy of Botanical Museum and Garden, Berlin-Dahlem. Print from Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, Pittsburg, PA.

great patron of the sciences, His Highness Count Romanzoff, Grand Chancellor of the Russian empire, and to have been fitted out with princely munificence at his sole expense."

The introduction explains that it had been Count Romanzoff's original plan to send two ships in search of a northern passage between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, one from east to west, another from west to east, but this had been abandoned in favor of a single vessel and an exploration eastward. Other objectives were an examination of the coast of North America northward from Bering Strait and, by twice crossing the Pacific, the acquisition of greater knowledge of that ocean and its many islands: "a rich harvest of objects of natural history was to be expected, as the Count had appointed, besides the ship's surgeon, an able naturalist to accompany the expedition." Von Krusenstern had superintended the building of the ship at Abo (then capital of Finland and some two days' march from St. Petersburg); its name, Rurick, was chosen by Count Romanzoff.

In addition to "astronomical and physical instruments" and so on, the ship had three noteworthy innovations. One was a "life, or safety-boat," provided with "airchests," the invention of "Mr. Fincham, a master ship-builder"; this proved to be so heavy that it was finally abandoned in Kamtchatka. A second innovation was "A discovery lately made in England . . . [which] consists in preserving fresh meat, vegetables, soup, milk, in short eatables of every

VOLUME 26:3, JULY 1998

kind, for years together, in a perfectly fresh state. This was not always satisfactory but must have been of some value since, back from the voyage, von Kotzebue visited London and "left with the inventor several boxes of patent meat, as proof how well it had kept . . ." The third innovation was "the fine discovery of the eminent natural philosopher, Mr. Leslie, to produce ice by means of evaporation, even in the hottest room; by which it is possible to have, even under the equator, the luxury of a cool beverage . . ."

Two naturalists were of the party, also a physician and an artist. As first planned these were to have been "Dr. Ledebour, professor of natural history in the university of Dorpat... he had proposed for his assistant Dr. Escholz, who was to be also the ship's physician... Dr. Ledebour's health did not allow him to realise his wish, and M. A. Von Chamisso, of Berlin, accompanied the expedition as naturalist in his stead. He was recommended ... by Professors Rudolph and Lichtenstein, as a thoroughly well-informed man, passionately devoted to his department of science ..."

The painter was "A young man, of the name of Choris ... The richness of the portfolio ... brought home ... and the praise ... bestowed upon him by the most celebrated artists of St. Petersburg ... justify the choice of this young and deserving artist."

Von Kotzebue's journal fills an approximate half of the three volumes of the Lloyd translation of his *Voyage*.

The Rurick was launched at Abo on May 11, 1815, and on June 18 was anchored "in the road of Cronstadt." By July 27 she was "furnished with provisions for two years," and on July 30 left Cronstadt for Copenhagen. On August 27 she set sail, crossed to Plymouth, England (where the "safety-boat" was taken aboard, "our whole crew being scarcely able to lift it into the Rurick . . ."), and in late September left for Tenerife and the Canary Islands. From there she sailed to "St. Catherine's," Brazil, arriving in mid-December. Cape Horn was rounded on January 22, 1816, and Avatscha Bay, the Harbor of St. Peter and St. Paul [or Petropavlosk], Kamtchatka, reached in mid-July. Thence the expedition went to Kotzebue Sound' beyond Bering Strait and then to Unalaska. From there, on September 14, the Rurick sailed for California, for us its important destination. It is not unusual to hear of botanists being late; on the departure for California Dr. Eschscholtz was not on hand when the party was ready to leave at daybreak: he had gone out the night before to botanize, had reached "an elevated spot," and had been afraid to descend in the dark!

### 1816

At midnight of October 1 they saw "by moonlight the Cap de los Reyes..." and the next day "at four o'clock in the afternoon dropped anchor in Port St. Francisco, oppo-

VOLUME 26:3, JULY 1998

site the Presidio. Our little Rurick seemed to throw the Presidio into no small alarm . . . we saw many soldiers on foot and on horseback, and in the fortress itself they were employed in loading the cannon . . . they enquired through a speaking trumpet, to what nation we belonged, the Russian Imperial flag not being known here."

The answer that "we were Russians, and friends . . ." allayed fears and the party was hospitably welcomed by the Commandant, Don Luis Arguello, who had received orders from his government about the party and sent "a courier to Monterey to acquaint the Governor of California of our arrival."

For one month the *Rurick* remained in the Bay of San Francisco for reconditioning and provisioning. While this was going on "Our naturalists were also employed, as there was much room for new discoveries in this country, so seldom visited by learned men. M. Choris was busily occupied in painting . . ."

The only trip inland from the bay mentioned by von Kotzebue was to the Mission of San Francisco on October 4: "The weather was extremely fine, and an hour's ride brought us to our journey's end, though above half the road was sandy and mountainous. Only a few small shrubs here and there diversified the barren hills; and it was not till we arrived in the neighbourhood of the Mission, that we met with a pleasant country and recognized the luxuriant scenery of Califomia."

Von Kotzebue thought unfavorably of the Spanish regime in California—the missions exploited the natives who, once baptized, were virtually slaves: "The rage for converting savage nations is now spreading over the whole South Sea, and causes much mischief, because the missionaries do not take pains to make men of them before

The California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*) was collected by Chamisso and named for Eschscholtz. Drawing courtesy of the Jepson Herbarium.







California bee-plant (*Scrophularia* californica) was collected and named by Chamisso. Drawing by Margaret Warriner Buck.

they make them Christians . . ." The soldiers were in little better plight than the natives; they were destitute of clothing and had not been paid for seven years.

Nothing is said of any visit to the Russian settlement at Bodega which lay "half a day's journey by water to the north of San Francisco, and is called by the Spaniards Port Bodega. The harbour is only for small ships."

On November 1, a month after arrival, "The Rurick was now again quite in order." The party "had been abundantly supplied with provisions by the inhabitants . . ." and the "crew were all in good health . . ." At

nine in the morning the ship set sail and in an hour was out of the bay, bound for the Sandwich Islands; even when two miles out to sea they could still "hear the loud howlings of the sea-lions, which were lying on the shore on the stones . . ."

The expedition remained in the Hawaiian Islands until mid-December.

#### 1817 - 1818

In 1817 it visited Radack in the Polynesian group and then returned to the Arctic regions, still searching for the northeast passage; in mid-July von Kotzebue gave up this quest because of ill-health and the *Rurick* started homeward, stopping at the Hawaiian and other islands of the Pacific and reaching the Philippines in mid-December.

In late July, 1818, the *Rurick* resumed its way, doubled the Cape of Good Hope on February 30 and reached Portsmouth, England, in mid-June. From there it crossed to Copenhagen; "with an indiscribable emotion" von Kotzebue saw again on July 23 his native town of Reval left three years before, and on August 3 the ship "cast anchor in the Newa [Neva], opposite to the palace of Count Romanzoff."

The itinerary is not difficult to follow in von Kotzebue's story. It is given in simplified form by August C. Mahr, to whose publication I refer later.

Most of the last half of volume two and the greater part of volume three of von Kotzebue's *Voyage is* devoted to the "Remarks and opinions of the naturalist of the expedition, Adelbert von Chamisso," some fourteen pages of which describe the visit to California. The "Appendix by other authors" completes the third volume; its articles were for the most part written by Dr. Eschscholtz, although von Chamisso contributed a "Postscript and corrections and remarks." Neither the plates nor the "charts" included in the three volumes relate to California.

I quote from von Chamisso's "Remarks and opinions" (his chapter on California): "A low ridge of mountains borders the coast of California, where we saw it, and intercepts the prospect into the interior of the country. It has not a volcanic appearance. The harbour of San Francisco . . . enters through a narrow passage, receives some rivers from the interior, branches out behind the eminences, and forms into a peninsula, the country lying south of the entrance. The Presidio and Mission of San Francisco lie on this tongue of land, which, with its hills and downs, was the narrow field which lay immediately open to our researches . . .

"The environs of San Francisco, in the northern hemisphere, are much poorer in natural productions than the coast of Chili, under the same latitude, in the southern. In the spring, when winter has afforded the earth some moisture, the hills and valleys are indeed adorned with brilliant iris and other flowers; but the drought soon destroys them.

"The fogs, which the prevailing sea-winds blow over the coast, dissolve in summer over a heated and parched soil, and the country exhibits in autumn only the prospect of bare scorched tracts, alternating with poor stunted bushes, and in places, with dazzling wastes of drift sand. Dark pine forests appear here and there on the ridge of the mountains, between the Punta de los Reyes and the harbour of San Francisco. The prickly-leaved oak, Quercus agrifolia, is the most common and largest tree. With crooked boughs and entangled branches, it lies, like the other bushes, bent towards the land; and the flattened tops, swept by the seawind, seem to have been clipped by the gardener's shears. The Flora of this country is poor, and is not adorned by one of those species of plants which are produced by a warmer sun. It however offers much novelty to the botanist. Wellknown North American species are found mixed with others belonging to the country; and most of the kinds are yet undescribed. Only . . . Menzies and Langsdortf have made collections here; and the fruits of their industry are not yet made known to the world. The season was not very favourable for us. We, however, gathered the seeds of several plants, and have reason to hope that we shall be able to enrich our gardens with them." References to the flora of California end at this point.

Von Chamisso, like von Kotzebue, was not impressed regarding Spanish rule in California. His opinion of the missions was unfavorable: "The contempt which the missionaries have for the people, to whom they are sent, seems to us, considering their pious occupation, a very



unfortunate circumstance." Like other visitors to the region he refers to a windmill, undoubtedly the one left by De Langle of the Laperouse expedition: it "creates astonishment, but does not find imitators." He found the political situation unstable.

"Spain has given way in the affair of Nootka [coveted by two nations]. England and the United States, without regarding its vain territorial possessions, are negotiating about the colony [the post of Astoria] at the mouth of the Columbia; and the Russian American Company have still a settlement [Fort Ross] a few leagues north of San Francisco."

Von Chamisso's *Tagebuch* (diary), included in his collected works, is more interesting reading than his "Remarks and opinions." The portion telling of the visit to San Francisco has been twice published in English translation: first by G. D. McElroy in 1873; again by A. C. Mahr in 1932, who reprints the McElroy translation with a few minor changes. I shall quote from the Mahr transcript and insertions between brackets are his.

At the time of the *Rurick's* visit, Spanish-Russian relations were none too good. Alexander von Baranoff had placed Ivan A. Kuskoff in charge of Fort Ross. The Spanish resented the presence of the Russians.

"Bodaga lying about thirty miles north of San Francisco, a half-day's journey, was considered by Spain, and not without some show of justice [justification], as her own soil and territory... Kosoff, on Spanish soil and territory, had... built a handsome fort, defended by a dozen cannon, and there carried on farming.... There he has his storehouses, for the smuggling trade with the Spanish forts [posts]; and there he captured by means of his Kodiakers, about 2,000 [several thousand] sea otters... yearly, on the California coast....

It did [does] not seem to me incomprehensible that the Governor of California should have been very angry when he received a late notice of this settlement. Various measures were [had been] taken to induce Herr Kuskoff to evacuate the place but he referred all the Spanish emissaries to Herr Baranoff, who had ordered him here [there], and at whose command he would willingly leave the place, in case the order was given. So stood matters when we came to San Francisco...."

Russia was not the only nation causing anxiety to Spain. "The claims of Spain to the territories on this coast were not more highly respected by the Americans and English than by the Russians....

Von Chamisso, botanist though he was, makes but two references to plants, both semi-jocose: "The year was already old, and the country, which in the spring months . . . blooms like a flower-garden, presented now to the botanists only a dry, arid field. In a swamp, near by our tent, a water-plant had [is supposed to have] grown, which Eschscholtz asked me about after our departure. I had not observed it; he, however, had reckoned that a water-plant, my especial love, would not have escaped me, and did not wish to get his feet wet. So much may one expect by relying on one's friends!"

"Don Pablo Vincenti, as he came to our tent from the Presidio . . . brought a present su amigo Don Alberto, a flower which he had picked on the way, and which he gave me ceremoniously. It happened to be our wild tansy, or silver leaf (Potentilla anserina), and could not bloom more beautifully, even in Berlin [and it could not have bloomed more perfectly near Berlin.]"

Louis Choris' Voyage pittoresque autour du monde, published in Paris in 1822, supplies some general informa-

Sticky monkey-flower (*Mimulus aurantiacus*) still grows in the Presidio where Chamisso first collected it. Drawing by Margaret Warriner Buck.

tion regarding the California visit but, although thirteen pages of text and ten colored plates are devoted to the region, no plants are mentioned save those growing at the Mission of San Francisco. The frontispiece is a portrait of "Le Comte N. Romanzoff, Chancelier de ['Empire, etc. etc." One plate includes two pleasing sketches: one of the "Cap de los Reyes à 6 miles de distance," the other "L'entree du Port de San Francisco à 7 miles de distance."

The collections made in California by von Chamisso and Eschscholtz were published for the first time in three different periodicals: (1) In Horae physicae Berolinenses ... edited by C. G. Nees von Esenbeck. Here, in 1820, von Chamisso first described (in addition to the two genera Romanzoffia and Euxenia) the everywhere-admired California poppy, Eschscholtzia californica; here the generic name was spelled Eschscholzia. The description was accompanied by a beautiful colored plate on which the name was spelled Eschholzia. The genus was dedicated to von Chamisso's companion Dr. Eschscholtz: "Nomen in honorem dixi consortia omnium laborum in itinere soler-tissimi, doctissimi, amicissimi Eschscholzii, Medicinae Doctoris, Botanicae aeque ac Etomologiae pertissimi." The plant's habitat was described as "in arenis sterilibus siccis ad portum Sancti Francisci Californiae."

In order to secure wider circulation of the description of *Eschscholtzia*, von Chamisso republished it, with minor changes, in *Linnaea* in 1826. When first describing the California poppy in 1820 von Chamisso had noted that its seed had been planted. In republishing the descrip-



tion in 1826 he reported, however, that it had not grown satisfactorily.

(2) In the Memoires de l'Academie Imperiale des Sciences de St. Petersbourg, in 1826, Eschscholtz published his "Descriptiones plantarum novae californiae Following the title is the important notation: "Conventui exhibuit die 18. Junii 1823," indicating that this paper had been presented, or perhaps read, on June 18, 1823, or about one month before Eschscholtz started on his second voyage with von Kotzebue, a trip which took him to California for the second time in 1824. The plants described in his paper must, therefore, have been collected on Eschscholtz's first visit to California in 1816 although publication of his paper in the Memoires was delayed until 1826, some three years after the presentation (or perhaps reading). When it appeared (ser. 5, vol. 10) it was along with numerous other papers on a variety of subjects such as cockroaches, bats, longitudes of Astrakan, etc., etc., which had been presented from two to forty-six years before they finally appeared in print. No reference has been found which indicates that Eschscholtz revised his original paper after he had been in California in 1824.

Eschscholtz's "Descriptiones plantarum . . ." was reprinted (in abstract) in the *Lirteratur-Bericht zur Linnaea fur des Jahrl 828 (Linnaea* 3: 147-153, 1828). Butin the reprint the important statement that the paper had been presented in 1823 was omitted. This omission, plus the fact, perhaps, that no dates of collection are cited by Eschscholtz, may be responsible for the conclusion, reached by one author at least, that the plants described were collected on Eschscholtz's second visit to California in 1824, which does not seem to have been the case.

(3) In Linnaea. Ein Journal fur die Botanik... edited by Diedericus F. L. von Schlechtendal, von Chamisso's California collections were published from 1826 to 1836 inclusive. Included were not only his new discoveries but, as well, rediscovered plants previously described from the same region or from elsewhere by other botanists. California plants are not segregated from those from other regions.

California plants are to be found in volumes 1 (1826), 2 (1827), 3 (1828), 4 (1829), 6 (1831) and 10 (1836) of *Linnaea*. The first article (volume 1) of the series in which they appeared was entitled "De plantis in expeditione speculatoria Romanzoffiana observatis rationem dicunt Adelbertus de Chamisso et Diedericus de Schlechtendal"; this title varies slightly in later volumes (in 2, 3, 4, 6), the words "rationem dicunt", changed to "dissere pergunt." In volume 10 the title is "De plantis in expeditione speculatoria Romanzoffiana et in herbariis regiis Beroliensibus observatis dicere pergit Adelbertus de Chamisso."

Von Chamisso turned over to other botanists certain families of plants which he had collected: we find plants of the *Labiatae* described by George Bentham (*Linnaea* 6,1831), of the "Synantherae" or Compositae by Christian Friedrich Lessing (*Linnaea* 6,1831) and of the Leguminosoe by Theodor Vogel (*Linnaea* 10, 1835-1836; issued in 1836). When, in 1932, August C. Mahr published "The visit of the 'Rurik' to San Francisco in 1816," he carefully segregated all the plants from California described in *Linnaea*, listing them in the order issued, with volume and page references and with various enlightening comments. Where new genera and species are described Mahr quotes the original descriptions in full; species collected in California but previously described by other botanists are also cited but without description. Included are "the modern names of all the plants mentioned, according to the nomenclature used by W. L. Jepson in his *Manual of the Flowering Plants of California* (Berkeley, California, 1923, 1925), or his descriptions."

Also inserted by Mahr "in the places where Chamisso mentions them in his taxonomy" are "Eschscholtz' descriptions of two species [out of his twelve novelties], published in *Memoires* de l'Academie des Sciences de St. Petersbourg, Vol. X, pp. 283-284..." These are *Lonicera Ledebourii* and *Ribes tubulosum* which had appeared in Eschscholtz's "Descriptiones plantarum," already mentioned under (2) above. Mahr states: "The descriptions of two new species of California plants and of a California butterfly, are the only contributions by J. F. Eschscholtz to this compilation of material concerning the visit of the 'Rurik' to San Francisco." A statement which can be true only if my supposition (that Eschscholtz's plants were all collected in 1816) is false.

In 1944 Miss Alice Eastwood published a short article entitled "The botanical collections of Chamisso and Eschscholtz in California." In this she lists the species collected by the two botanists, but omits the descriptions. The plants collected by von Chamisso and described in *Linnaea* are separated into two lists, the first including "new species," the second "Species also ... collected, not considered as new ..."

The author noted of von Chamisso's collections: "The locality cited was 'ad portum San Francisco' and all were collected, according to Chamisso, in the hills and downs about the Presidio. Very few if any are to be found there to-day." Further: "On the first expedition, during the month of October, sixty-nine species were collected. Among them were two new genera and thirty-three species. Three were synonyms having been previously described by other authors."

Further: "On the second expedition [1824], Eschscholtz named and described thirteen species, three among them previously described." As already noted, Eschscholtz's "Descriptiones plantarum"... published in the *Memoires* of the St. Petersburg Academy had been presented in 1823 or before he started on his second expedition—although this fact is not mentioned in the *Linnaea* abstract—and the plants must, therefore, have been collected on his visit of 1816. The error is understandable, since Miss Eastwood states that "Linnaea has been my source of information concerning these important collections."

0

24 FREMONTIA

Eastwood notes that "Eschscholtz does not give the

exact place where his collections were made, but from the plants collected all but one could have come from San Francisco."

2

Asa Gray—writing in 1840 of the collections in the "royal Prussian herbarium . . . deposited at Schoneberg (a little village in the environs of Berlin) opposite the royal botanic garden and in the garden of the Horticultural Society . . . . "reported that the general herbarium contained the "botanical collections made by Chamisso . . . many . . . from the coast of Russian America and from California . . . ."

In 1880 Alphonse de Candolle, in *La phytographie*, records the whereabouts of collections made on the voyage of the *Rurick* thus: "Chamisso (de). Herb de 10 a 12,000 esp., a l'Academie imp. des sci. de Saint Petersbourg. Des doubles dans les herb. de Berlin (destroyed in WW II) et de L'Univ. de Kiel.

"Chords. Herb. du Jardin imp. de Saint-Petersbourg.

"Eschscholtz. Plantes de l'exped. de Kotzebue, au jardin imp. de Saint-Petersbourg. (1,300 esp.)."

After von Chamisso's death in 1837, his friend von Schlechtendal published a tribute to his memory in *Linnaea* (1839). I cite from the rather poor English translation published in the *London Journal of Botany* in 1843:

Von Chamisso-"very much a self-taught Botanist ...." -first began to study plants at Copet, near Lake Geneva, Switzerland: this was near the home of Madame de Stael, whose son, Baron Auguste von Stael Holstein, first interested him in botany and was his companion on collecting excursions. Von Schlechtendal first became acquainted with von Chamisso in 1813. He describes their botanical trips and "the many incidents of these herborizations . . . Chamisso was ever the foremost . . . An antique garb, once the state dress of a South Sea Chief, much worn, mended and stained, with a black cap of cloth or velvet, a large green box suspended by leather straps over his back, and a short pipe in his mouth, together with a rude tobacco pouch: such was the attire in which he sallied forth ..., when evening came ..., weary, travel-soiled, he did not make a very splendid appearance while bearing a pocket handkerchief crammed with plants, he met, on returning to Berlin, the beau monde ... all in their Sunday attire . . ."

When on the *Rurick*, "The only individual who entered at all into his tastes, though he possessed not the same energy in collecting, was Eschscholtz. He too, gathered some plants and profited by the liberality of Chamisso, who exchanged duplicates and gave him specimens . . . Eschscholtz himself described only a few of his specimens . . . Chamisso was obliged to publish his collections at his own cost. Returning to Prussia . . . he presented the zoological and mineralogical portion to the University Museum at Berlin . . ."

In 1819 von Chamisso was given the honorary degree of Doctor of Philosophy by the University of Berlin and was appointed "Assistant in the Berlin Botanical Institution," and directed to "... pay particular attention to the Botanical Garden." After fire had destroyed his home at Neu Schoneberg he moved to Berlin where he and von Schlechtendal worked together in the "Royal Herbarium which contained Willdenow's collections." When the latter began his "exclusively *Botanical Journal*, the *Linnaea*," von Chamisso started work on his own collections. Discussing his custom of sharing his collections with other botanists, the biographer comments:

"Happily this noble spirit of liberality is gaining ground among Botanists and superseding the narrow minded avarice with which naturalists were too apt to keep to themselves every thing but their opinions and dogmas on science . . ."

He states that "only an inconspicuous looking plant among the *Amaranthaceae*, described by his friend Kunth, bears his name..."

Mahr's introduction supplies an understanding picture of von Chamisso. He suggests that the romance, *Peter Schlemihl* (which "secured for its author a lasting place in German literature and became known all over the world in numerous translations ...") was in a sense symbolic of von Chamisso's own "tragic condition of disconnectedness, of being a man without a country." Born of noble parentage in Champagne, France, in 1781, he was, when nine years of age, exiled with his family during the French Revolution; they finally made their home in Berlin. As a boy von Chamisso served as a page in the household of the royal family of Prussia and then entered the army. But he was never happy in army life; nor, when he visited his family after their return to France, did he ever feel at home in the land of his birth.

"When in 1813 the War of liberation broke out, Chamisso again became painfully conscious of his ambiguous national position; although he fully approved of Prussia's strife for liberty from French oppression, yet he found it impossible to bear arms against his native country."

After Napoleon's return from Elba, von Chamisso "... found himself in similar patriotic difficulty." It was then that he received his appointment as naturalist with von Kotzebue's expedition. Aged fifty-six, he died on August 21,1837, at his home in Berlin.

According to Mahr, "Johann Friedrich (Ivan Ivanovitch) Eschscholtz was born at Dorpat, in the Baltic Province of Russia, on November 12,1793. He studied medicine and zoology and acquired the degree of *Medicinae Doctor*. He traveled on the 'Rurick' as ship's surgeon, and also accompanied Kotzebue on his second expedition, from 1823 to 1826. . . He became professor of zoology at Dorpat, where he died in 1831."

[Botanical Explorations of the Trans-Mississippi was originally published by the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University in 1956 and was reprinted by the Oregon State University Press, Corvallis, in 1991. This slightly edited version is reprinted with permission.]

