

George Bentham (1800 to 1884) Botanist by Jean O'Donnell



In the minds of British botanists the names of Bentham and Hooker are linked as authors of Handbook of the British Flora, undertaken by Bentham as a leisure pursuit and edited by Hooker after Bentham's death.

George Bentham was a nephew of the great Jeremy Bentham, was second only to Hooker. All his life he remained an amateur, though, after presenting his herbarium to Kew in 1854 he worked there virtually as one of the staff until his death. In addition to his part in the General Plantarium, he produced a vast quantity of systematic work, including volumes on Hong Kong and Australia. He was President of the Linnaean Society. He was an honorary member of the Club from the first days in 1851 when he lived at Pontrilas, until his death.