

John Blackstone (1713–1753); a London apothecary and botanist of his time

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ABSTRACT

John Blackstone was born, educated, apprenticed and practised as an apothecary in London during the first half of the 18th century. He made early contact with several distinguished persons, notably Sir Hans Sloane, to further his botanical interests. His passion for plants resulted in two small Floras at a time when few were published. One dealt with the plants around Harefield, Middlesex, in which he recorded 464 currently acceptable flowering plant species. Comparison with the plants recorded in that area during 1965–76 indicates that 26% of plants had become extinct in the intervening 240 years (18% if the additional surrounding 2 km is included) in contrast to an estimated 1% for Britain as a whole in the last 300 years. He is commemorated in having a plant and genus (*Blackstonia perfoliata*) named after him.

KEYWORDS: early Floras, extinctions.

INTRODUCTION

“The period from Ray’s death in 1704 until the introduction of the Linnean system into Britain about 1760 was a lean one for the study of British plants” (Gilmour & Walters 1973). Interest in the subject was kept alive by a few, some only minor figures in the history of botany, who in their time made small but significant contributions to its study. Such a person was John Blackstone, who developed a tremendous enthusiasm for plants and whose two small Floras, *Fasciculus Plantarum circa Harefield sponte nascentium* (1737) and *Specimen Botanicum quo Plantarum plurimum rariorum Angliae indigenarum loci natales* (1746), were among the few published during the period. Harefield, Middlesex, is remarkable in having had one of the earliest censuses of a human population in Britain in 1699 (Cuthbertson 1992) and one of the earliest catalogues of plants (John Blackstone 1737).

Blackstone was a predecessor in the study of plants in Middlesex in whom Douglas Kent took a special interest. Kent’s (1949) paper stimulated our investigations into Blackstone’s life and work. Inevitably there is much common ground between the papers of Kent and ourselves, but corrections and new material are included here. In addition we have analysed Blackstone’s (1737) plant records for Harefield deriving statistically meaningful numbers for extinctions during the following years, and illustrating the continuing relevance of the work of early botanists such as Blackstone.

EARLY LIFE

John Blackstone was born in 1713. His birth on 22 September and baptism on the 25th, are recorded in the registers¹ of the parish of St Leonard Eastcheap on the east side of the City of London. The church of St Leonard had been destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666 and not rebuilt and the parish joined with its neighbour St Benet Gracechurch, where he must actually have been christened.

Blackstone was not born in humble circumstances. His family background, on both sides, whilst not providing great wealth, gave him education and opportunity to enter a profession which seems eventually to have provided sufficient income for him to pursue his passion for botany. It also seems to have given him influential contacts, which he early exploited to further his interest in plants.

APOTHECARIES IN THE FAMILY

His father was Edward Blackstone, citizen and ironmonger² of London, but his grandfather, another John Blackstone, was a successful apothecary living within the precinct of Pater Noster Row in St Faith's parish in 1690³. Indeed the *Gentleman's Magazine*⁴ described him as an eminent apothecary of Newgate Street, a friend and associate of Sir Hans Sloane and a liberal benefactor of St Bartholomew's Hospital. He was Warden of the Apothecaries' Company 1712–13. He had three sons as well as Edward: William, who became Keeper of Wychwood Forest, Oxfordshire; Charles, a silk mercer, citizen and bowyer of London; and Richard of whom nothing is known. The elder John Blackstone apparently retired from business in 1713 "to enjoy the fruits of a competent fortune"⁵ and was living as a gentleman in Wandsworth, Surrey, at the time of his death in 1715. He left £1200 to Edward to set up in business as an ironmonger. Just what Edward had been doing until then (he was already married with a child) is unclear. His name appears neither in the list of freemen of the Ironmongers' Company⁶ nor in the lists of apprentices. However, an Edward Blackstone, son of John Blackstone, pharmacist, was apprenticed to Ambrose Crowley, a draper, in 1703, freed in 1711 and a member of the Livery of the Drapers' Company 1719–27⁷. From these dates this could be Edward, the father of John Blackstone. If so, in preferring ironmongery to drapery, he would have been able to set up in business easily enough, if he had capital, at a period when the companies were not exercising so strict a control over the traders in the city as they had in earlier years.

William, a brother of John Blackstone the elder, was also an apothecary in London and his name appeared among those who subscribed towards the revival and improvement of the Chelsea Physic Garden about 1700. This side of the family had property at Chipping Walden, Essex⁸. A William Blackstone (apprenticed as an apothecary to a John Blackstone in 1696⁹) may be Edward's elder brother, who later became keeper of Wychwood Forest.

THE HAREFIELD CONNECTION

Edward Blackstone married Sarah, the fifth child of Francis Ashby Esq. (1671–1743) of Breakspears, Harefield, in Middlesex, one of the lesser landed gentry with a family coat of arms. Harefield played a large part in the life of John Blackstone. He obviously got to know it well and had a great affection for the area. His parents were married at Harefield church on 28 February 1712¹⁰. After John's birth in September 1713 two brothers followed: Edward, born and baptized (perhaps he was delicate) on the 29 December 1717, and Francis on 27 March 1723¹¹. All the children's baptisms were at St Leonard's Eastcheap. However, when the father died, in 1730, he was buried at Harefield, and John's mother and younger brothers moved to Breakspears to live with her parents. John, by then apprenticed¹² to Thomas Bearcroft, apothecary, was a frequent visitor to that new home. It is possible that the family had moved to Harefield before Edward Blackstone's death, as the record of John's apprenticeship¹³, dating from 5th August 1729, refers to him as the son of Edward Blackstone, "late of London, ironmonger".

EDUCATION

Whether John Blackstone spent most of his childhood in the city or stayed with relatives elsewhere for long periods, perhaps with his grandparents at Harefield or with his paternal uncle, the Keeper of Wychwood Forest in Oxfordshire, one can only guess. His early education is also unknown, but it was sufficiently good for him to enter Merchant Taylors' School, then situated in Suffolk Lane not far from London Bridge, in 1727, at the age of 14¹⁴. He must already have been reasonably proficient in Latin, for when he left only two years later¹⁵ he knew sufficient, not only for his subsequent profession as an apothecary, but also to write his subsequent Floras in that language.

A contemporary at Merchant Taylors' School was William Watson who also became an apothecary, and ultimately a physician, with a strong interest in plants. Watson similarly entered the school in 1727, but remained a year longer. If the two were not friends at school, they certainly were afterwards, for Watson supplied Blackstone with herbarium material and records for his *Specimen Botanicum*. He was a man of wide scientific interests, conducting electrical experiments

and contributing to the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, becoming an F.R.S. in 1741, and eventually being knighted in 1786, the year before he died.

APPRENTICESHIP

On leaving Merchant Taylors' John was "apprenticed and bound to Mr. Thomas Bearcroft for eight years from this day (5 August 1729) in the sum of £100"¹⁶. That Bearcroft was an apothecary was probably significant in introducing him to the serious study of plants, herbs having long played a major part in an apothecary's pharmacopoeia. It seems that not many grew or gathered herbs by this period (as Gerard had done in his gardens at Holborn, for instance), but they were certainly expected to be able to identify species.

HERBARIZINGS

Simpling expeditions for apothecaries are recorded from 1620. Led by such eminent persons as Thomas Johnson, the parties met early in the morning at St Paul's and visited rural areas like Hampstead Heath or Greenwich and occasionally, as in 1634, went as far afield as Bath, Bristol and the Isle of Wight. (Hunting 1998). After the founding of the Chelsea Botanic Garden in 1675, the Society of Apothecaries, "to excite a taste for botany among apprentices" according to Pulteney (Pulteney 1790), encouraged private herbarizings beginning on the second Tuesday in April, and held monthly on the same day until September, in the countryside in the immediate neighbourhood of London, to which Apothecaries could send their apprentices. These seem to have been in the nature of botanical field meetings with a leader from the Society until 1724 when a Botanical Demonstrator took over the job (Hunting 1998). Isaac Rand, an apothecary and botanist, filled that post 1724–43¹⁷.

There had been complaints about disorderly behaviour among the apprentices at the herbarizings and henceforth they had to enter their own and their master's names on a list kept by the leader and bring a letter from their masters permitting their attendance. There was to be no question of the apprentices treating the herbarizings as holidays. All had to wait to the end to attend the showing of the plants and from thence return directly home without loss of time¹⁸. There is no actual record of John Blackstone having attended, but it seems highly likely that he did so. William Watson is known to have done so because "during his apprenticeship he gained the honorary premium (a bound copy of Ray's *Synopsis*) given annually by the Apothecaries' Company, to such young men as exhibit a superiority in the knowledge of plants in these excursions made by the Demonstrator of the Chelsea Garden" (Pulteney 1790). There is in the British Library a copy of Ray's *Synopsis*¹⁹ (bound in with other of Ray's works) with Blackstone's autograph and the date 1736. In 1735 Blackstone's master died and he was 'turned over' to Mr Richard Stevenson for the remainder of his apprenticeship. This concluded on 7th March 1737 "when having served his full term he was sworn and made free"²⁰.

INFLUENTIAL CONTACTS

Before he was out of his apprenticeship the young Blackstone had already been writing to several eminent persons, including his grandfather's friend Sir Hans Sloane, about his botanising and had already written a book on the plants of Harefield. His grandfather, Francis Ashby, apparently took an interest in plants and where they grew²¹, and may well have influenced the young Blackstone's burgeoning interest in botany and the local flora. By the end of 1736 Blackstone had been commissioned to collect plants for the Apothecaries' garden at Chelsea as well as the Oxford Physic garden. He mentions this in a letter written on 11 December 1736 to Dr Richard Richardson, a well-to-do physician and well-known botanist of Bierley, Yorkshire.

"By good fortune I have discovered the *Dentaria baccifera* (*Cardamine bulbifera*) to be a native of this island. The place where it grows is in a large wood near a village call'd Harefield, about eighteen miles from London, where it grows in such plenty, that some acres of ground are cover'd with it. [Old Park Wood, where it still grows]. There are several other rare plants to be found thereabouts, of which a catalogue is now ready for the press... I have communicated this plant and my intentions, to Sir Hans Sloane, Dr. Dillenius (from whom I had a most obliging letter) Mr Rand, and some others... I have orders to get specimens for Chelsea and Oxford Gardens; and wou'd you give me directions, I shu'd be very glad to send some for your garden, if 'tis not there already"²².

A week later he had already received a reply and wrote back with some confidence, giving his book a puff at the same time:

“Strand, Dec. 18th 1736

I beg leave to return you my humble and hearty thanks for the favour of your obliging letter... I have for these last three years been employ'd in making a collection of the native plants; and having an opportunity of going to see my friends pretty often, I made it my business to see as many of the adjacent places my time would permit, and to collect such plants as offer'd themselves in the course of my walks, without ever intending to publish anything on this subject. But, being detained last Summer by a long illness, near four months on the spot, I found so many rare plants that I thought it worthwhile to make a catalogue of them, and show it to some skillful persons in that science for their approbation, which succeeded to my desire; and I only beg leave to let you know, that the plants there mentioned were gathered almost solely by myself, as also that the catalogue is not general; being only intended as an essay for a more particular search thereabouts. ... I purpose to print my work by subscription, tho' the price of it cannot exceed five shillings; and I desire no money till the book is deliver'd. I should take it as a great favour if you cou'd procure me a specimen of *Epimedium* and the *Christophoriana*, which would be highly acceptable. ... I expect to go to Harefield next week, and will search for some roots of *Dentaria*, if you please to order it, and will (with God's leave) send you some in perfection about the latter end of April, when the bulbs will be ready to plant. Be pleased to accept of the compliments due to the ensuing season"²³.

The catalogue referred to was published in 1737 as *Fasciculus Plantarum circa Harefield sponte nascentium* (A Little Bundle of Plants freely growing around Harefield).

His correspondence with Dr Dillenius, Professor of Botany at Oxford, continued. A letter to him from Blackstone, dated 1744, is laid in with a specimen of *Epimedium* in the Sherard Herbarium (in the Dept of Plant Sciences, Oxford): "I could not fail sending you a quotation from a letter of that ornament to Botany, Dr Richardson...*Epimedium* is a native of England. It grows in the woods near Bingley...and not sparingly". (*Epimedium* is not now, of course, considered native, but these were the frontier days of botany with much still undiscovered.)

THE BOTANIST

With the large number of modern detailed books on plant identification available it is easy to forget the difficulties in identifying plants in the 18th century. The relatively few books that had been published, often long previously, seldom agreed on names and descriptions were not very distinctive. Blackstone included several author names for each plant but in his *Fasciculus* generally put the name given in Gerard's *Herbal* (as revised by Johnson in 1637) first. The *Herbal* is a hefty tome of more than 1600 pages and must have been difficult to procure and expensive to buy. It is not known whether he possessed a copy or used the Apothecaries' library at Chelsea. Gerard's book has woodcut illustrations to the species, which in most cases are recognisable and hugely bolster the rather inadequate descriptions in English. Building up a herbarium, as Blackstone did, would clearly have supplemented the rather limited Floras, and the exchange of specimens with other botanists must have been significant in getting general agreement on the identification of plants.

Blackstone's *Fasciculus* is an early example of a local Flora. It was a remarkable achievement at that period for a 24 year-old just out of his apprenticeship. It contains a list of 523 plants in alphabetical order of their pre-Linnean Latin names. This is followed by their English names and in many cases the locality (in English), with comments and time of flowering (in Latin). The book ends with an *Appendix containing some short notes relating to Harefield*. To put this into perspective, without entering into the question of species, it has been estimated that, at the time of Ray's death in 1704, the total number of plants recorded for the whole of Britain was about 970 (Gilmour & Walters 1954). For the whole of Middlesex, Trimen & Dyer (1869) recorded 859 species, and Kent (1975) recorded 1109 - this last including many recent aliens. A few of Blackstone's records are from places outside the immediate area of Harefield, such as Iver and Chorleywood, and even as far afield as Windsor and Hampton Court (i.e. up to 15 miles distant). It also includes a few fungi, liverwort and lichen records, but they are not always identifiable.

Omitting these, and also what now appear to have been varieties, Blackstone published a list of 464 vascular plants species growing in the parish of Harefield, an area of about 1870 hectares (4621 acres) in the north-west corner of Middlesex. There are, however, some curious apparent omissions of plants that surely must have been common and noticeable in his day. It is difficult to believe, for instance, that Gorse was not present in the 18th century. He does not seem to have deliberately omitted very common plants because he lists some, such as Daisy and Dandelion. In spite of this, including a few extra species included in his second book, the final total of 464 flowering plants recorded by Blackstone must have represented a majority of those growing around Harefield in 1737. It is, therefore, statistically meaningful to examine the extinctions that have occurred in this one small area since then, by comparison with the distribution maps based on the London Natural History Society's botanical survey 1965–1976, published in the *Flora of the London Area* (Burton 1983).

The parish of Harefield is contained within a block of seven 2×2 km squares of the *Flora* maps. This area has been assumed to be close to that used by Blackstone which was probably not too precise. By the time of the L.N.H.S. survey, 122 flowering plant species recorded by Blackstone were no longer present. That is, 26% of his plants had become extinct in about 240 years. If the area is expanded to include all 2×2 km squares immediately surrounding the block of seven (i.e. an additional 16 squares) the number of extinctions is reduced to 85 species, i.e. 18%. These must rank as some of the best estimates over one of the longest periods of time of extinctions from the flora of a relatively small area. For the British Isles as a whole it is estimated that about 15 species (i.e. about 1% of the total) of flowering plants and ferns have been lost in the last 300 years (Rackham 1986). The greater percentage loss in the smaller area of Harefield illustrates the vulnerability of small populations.

Inspection of the 85 lost species indicates that most were from wetlands (25%), followed by those from heathland (15%), corn/arable fields (13%) and woods and thickets (13%). These findings agree with those of Kent (1975) for the extinctions in the whole of Middlesex between 1863 and 1968 and confirms many general observations.

Some of the plant species no longer growing in Harefield are only local extinctions, but others are no longer to be found in the London area as a whole. For instance, *Arnoseris minima* has not been seen within two miles of St Paul's since 1910. *Anagallis tenella* was last recorded in 1951. *Parnassia palustris* and *Pedicularis palustris* are also now extinct in the London area. Among the orchids recorded by Blackstone at Harefield, *Orchis militaris* seemed to be extinct in Britain by about 1914. Since its rediscovery in the Chilterns in 1947 it remains one of Britain's rarest orchids.

As a Londoner botanising in Middlesex Blackstone was rather fortunate that his grandfather lived in the parish of Harefield. In the extreme north-western corner of the county, the topography and the outcropping geological strata gave rise to a wide range of soils and habitats within a comparatively small area. Blackstone was aware of this, for in an Appendix to his *Fasciculus* he wrote "The Soil, within this Compass, is various; that of the South and East Parts being a strong Clay, very productive of Elm and Oak, which thrive well here. The North and West Parts, bordering on Hertfordshire and Bucks, is generally a dry Chalk and stony Land, and The great Variety of the Soils here, produces all Sorts of Vegetables, which our Catalogue of such Plants as grow spontaneously in this Neighbourhood, sufficiently shews."

At Harefield the northern edge of the London Basin rises to the surface and is cut into by the River Colne, revealing, under the London Clay, the Reading Beds of clays and sands and the Upper Chalk. The Colne Valley was an area of black alluvium wetlands. Unfortunately, Harefield's varied geology led to its rape for raw materials. Chalk pits noted by Blackstone continue to the present day. Brickworks have used the clays, sandpits have been dug and, in this century, the vast gravel pits have destroyed the wetlands. To add insult to injury many of the diggings have been filled with rubbish and rubble giving the coup de grace to any plants with the temerity to try and hang on.

These activities, along with building, are the principal reasons for the disappearance of species, but there are others. Trimen & Dyer (1869) reproduce a quotation of Peter Collinson's (1694–1768) which they say helps to account for the extinction of orchids at Harefield: "There is one Miles, a parson of Cowley, near Uxbridge, who is orchis mad, takes all up, leaves none to seed so extirpates all wherever he comes which is cruel, and deserves chastisement." In connection with *Orchis militaris*, Kent (1975) said I "feel that unrestricted collecting by nineteenth-century botanists contributed to the extinction of this rare and beautiful species in the vice-county."

THE APOTHECARY

Having completed his apprenticeship in March 1737, John Blackstone seems to have been in no hurry to set up in business, perhaps because of the ill health frequently mentioned in his letters, or because the collecting and study of plants was proving more alluring. On 8 April 1737, he wrote to Sir Hans Sloane: "The air proves serviceable to me in general, tho' there are still some symptoms remaining which a perfect state of health ought to be without, particularly the swelling of my legs after walking, and the heat of my hands and feet towards night"²⁴.

His contemporaries, like Dr Richardson, having seen the *Fasciculus*, certainly encouraged him to pursue his natural history studies and he confessed to Sloane on 29 September 1737 that "the study grows more and more agreeable to me"²⁵. Sir Hans had probably been encouraging him to start in business, for Blackstone wrote to him on 26th October 1737, just as he was about to visit Pembroke College, Oxford and relatives at Charlbury: "I hope, Sir, this absence will be no prejudice to your esteem for me, but to engage in business without any foundation would not be deem'd a prudent action, therefore as I am obliged to be depending, I must wait till those I depend on, are pleased to make a beginning for me"²⁶. In December he said that if his relatives had been willing to fix him in business he would not have left London. In fact it was almost another year before he did set up in business at the sign of the Griffin, Salisbury Court, near St Bride's, just off Fleet Street, in September 1738. He was admitted to the Society of Apothecaries the same year, and married a widow, a Mrs Webb, in 1739, but she died, probably in 1740²⁷. A William Blackstone, an infant, was buried at St Bride's in April 1741 and an Elizabeth Blackstone on 11 April 1742, but they cannot be proved to be John Blackstone's wife and child.

We know little about Blackstone's professional life. He became a subscriber to the Laboratory Stock of the Society of Apothecaries in January 1740, investing £10²⁸, but seems to have found difficulty in establishing his business. He complained of trade being very dull and money very hard to get and seemed to be asking Sir Hans Sloane for a loan in September 1740, when he dispatched a note with a postscript saying that his man would wait on him about noon to know his pleasure²⁹. The result is unknown, but he felt himself in a position to take on an apprentice, John Thomas Vernon of Malpas, Cheshire, in 1741³⁰.

He married again in October 1742. His second wife was Mary Abbot, the daughter of Richard Abbot, painter-stainer, and the wedding took place at St Sepulchre's, Newgate Street on 23 October³¹.

LATER YEARS

The next few years were clouded with tragedy, for his mother and his grandfather both died in April 1743, being buried at Harefield on the same day. The following year his wife gave birth to a daughter, Maria, only for her to die in infancy. On a happier note a second daughter, Sophia, was born in 1748 (and lived until 1827) and his second book, *Specimen Botanicum*, had been published in 1746.

SPECIMEN BOTANICUM

The layout of this small 106-page book is the same as for the *Fasciculus*, but it lists only 367 plants, including 19 non-vascular cryptogams, and their sites in various places in England. A number of records were supplied by other botanists, which he acknowledges - sometimes in a quaint manner, such as, "found by that accurate Botanist, Dr Richardson", and "with Dr Jarvis, an eminent surgeon and curious Botanist". The catalogue includes 99 vascular plants from Harefield. All but nine of these had appeared in his earlier *Fasciculus*.

As in his earlier work, most of the non-vascular cryptogam identifications are dubious, presumably a reflection of the state of their taxonomy at that period. The list is of what were considered some of the more interesting plants growing in England. It is in no sense comprehensive in its geographical cover, but was thought worth publishing at a time when few botanical books were being produced. It is interesting that even in Blackstone's time the loss of certain species from some sites was being noted. He records that *Galium cruciata*, Crosswort "is

lately lost in Hampstead Church-Yard, where it grew in Johnson and Parkinson's time". Again of *Cypripedium calceolus*, Lady's Slipper, "found by Mr Thornbeck, Surgeon, at Ingleton, who likewise informs me that it has been lost in Helk's Wood for some years."

Financially, life was probably easier for Blackstone in the 1740s. His wife may have had some money to begin with and she certainly inherited £500 from her father, Richard Abbot, who died in 1746. John inherited £30 from his mother³², as well as a three-acre field called Maudemeade and the four-acre Further Maudfield, running along the side of Bayhurst Wood, Harefield. He was able to mortgage the mead in 1746 to raise £105 from Pierce Dodd of Red Lyon Square, a doctor of physic³³. Did he need the money to publish his book, the *Specimen Botanicum*? He sold both fields to Anne Cane of Shiplake in 1751³⁴. The fields are famous in botanical history, because it was here that he noted in the *Fasciculus* the Snake's Head Fritillary growing "...in Maud Fields observed above forty years ago by Mr Ashby of Breakspears." This was its first record as a British plant. In addition, overall Blackstone provided at least 103 first records for Middlesex (v.c. 21).

At this same period he was playing a role in the affairs of the Society of Apothecaries, being on the Garden Committee of the Chelsea Physic Garden from 1746 until 1752³⁵, when his health began to fail. It is notable that it was to the botanical activities of the Society, rather than the trading side, that he devoted his time and interest.

John Blackstone died on 11 March 1753, not yet 40 years old. He was buried at Harefield a week later on the 18th March³⁶. He left directions in his will dated 1 February 1753 "to be buried in the cheapest and most private manner possible..." To his brother, Francis he bequeathed his cornelian seal with two heads engraved on it, the silver can with his grandfather's coat-of-arms and his mortuary knife. He left his largest punch bowl with a silver ladle and his seal engraved with a man at work to Mr John Abbot, his brother-in-law, "as a mark of my gratitude for many favours". Everything else was left to his dear wife, Mary³⁷.

There is a collection of 44 plants (including 14 mosses and lichens) in the Sloane Herbarium, but in 1947 three volumes of Blackstone's plants, labelled by him, were discovered at Ripon Museum, Yorkshire. Not all of the plants were localised and only a few were from Harefield. The collection was transferred to the Natural History Museum, where approximately 360 specimens were laid into the general herbarium.

BLACKSTONIA

Curiously, Blackstone did not record the plant named after him closer to Harefield than Gerrards Cross, although we have photographed it at Harefield on some of the remaining chalkland. Pulteney (1790) noted that when Hudson published his *Flora Anglica* (1762) and introduced the Linnaean system into English botany, "he separated the Yellow Centaury from the Gentians and gave it the name Blackstonia; which distinction Linnaeus confirmed in the *Systema* of 1767, but then changed the name to Chlora, an appellation it had received from Rencaulme, in his *Specimen Historias Plantarum*, published in 1611. It should seem that the discovery of the true place of this plant in the system entitled Hudson to the dispensation of the name, or at least that Blackstone should have been perpetuated in the trivial epithet".

Hudson and Pulteney would be pleased to know that the plant is once more called *Blackstonia perfoliata*, and it seems a fitting tribute to John Blackstone's botanical studies, which clearly gained the approval of his contemporaries.

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NOTES

- 1 Guildhall MS 17607: parish registers St Leonard's East Cheap
- 2 Edward Blackstone is described as an ironmonger in the baptismal register of St Leonard's, East Cheap - Guildhall MS 17607 and in Chancery Proceedings - PRO C 11 1976 3, but does not appear in lists of apprentices or freemen of the Ironmongers' Company.
- 3 D. Kent's Papers: Poll Tax Assessments 1678 and 1690 exciii. 390
- 4 *Gentleman's Magazine*: 1827 ii Vol 97
- 5 *Ibid*
- 6 Guildhall MS 16978
- 7 D. Kent's Notes
- 8 PRO C11 1584. 7
- 9 Guildhall MS 8207: Society of Apothecaries Bindings Book 1694–1836
- 10 Harefield Parish Registers transcript: private collection.
- 11 Guildhall MS 1760718/02/93: parish registers St Leonard's East Cheap.
- 12 Guildhall MS 8207: Society of Apothecaries Bindings Book 1694–1836.
- 13 Guildhall MS 8207: Society of Apothecaries Bindings Book 1694–1836
- 14 Guildhall Library: Merchant Taylors School Registers 1561–1934.
- 15 Guildhall Library: *Ibid*.
- 16 Guildhall MS 8207: Society of Apothecaries Bindings Book 1694–1836.
- 17 Guildhall MS 8228: Garden Committee Minutes 1731–70.
- 18 *Ibid*.
- 19 Brit Lib: 969 f 18 (2).
- 20 Guildhall MS 8206/2: Society of Apothecaries Freedom and Admissions Book.
- 21 John Blackstone: *Fasciculus plantarum circa Harefield sponte nascentium 1737*
- 22 Dawson Turner ed: *Literary and Scientific Correspondence of Richard Richardson, MD, FRS of Bierley, Yorkshire*, pp 351–5
- 23 *Ibid*
- 24 Brit Lib: Sloane MS 4055 f89
- 25 *Ibid* 4055 ff203–4
- 26 *Ibid* 4055 ff223–4
- 27 *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica* Vol 5, 1838.
- 28 Guildhall MS 8226: Society of Apothecaries List of subscribers to Laboratory Stock.
- 29 Brit Lib: Sloane MS 4056 f305
- 30 Guildhall MS 8207: Bindings Book 1694–1836.
- 31 Guildhall MS 7220/1: parish registers St Sepulchre's.
- 32 PRO: PCC Prob 11 727
- 33 London Metropolitan Archive: Acc 1085/M41
- 34 LMA: Acc 1085/M42
- 35 Guildhall MS 8228/1: Society of Apothecaries Garden Committee Minutes 1731–70.
- 36 Harefield Parish Registers transcript: private collection.
- 37 PRO Prob 11 800 71

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