

## BEHIND THE NAME

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While there is a story behind names given to plants, there is also a story about the author of those names. Curiosity about the nationality of Ker-Gawl. caused me to check authorities for binomials in Bailey's "Manual of cultivated plants". This list gives the barest details such as "Ait. William Aiton, 1731-1793, England." Not so Ker-Gawl. His entry is much more lengthy, and increased my curiosity further.

"Ker (Ker-Gawl.). John Bellenden Ker, 1765-1842, botanist, wit, and man of fashion. First known as John Gawler. In 1793 was compelled to leave army because of sympathy with French Revolution. His name was changed in 1804 to John Ker Bellenden, but he was known to his friends as Bellenden Ker. First editor of Edward's Botanical Register."

His name is associated with many African plants, and there is a Mt Bellenden Ker in Queensland. Surely, he did not spend his life in a stark herbarium poring over dried specimens. There must be good story to be told about him.

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