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Goodyera

Orchidaceae

Goodyera commemorates an English estate manager, botanist and plantsman, John Goodyer (1592-1664) who made English translations of various important European works including *De materia medica* (written by the celebrated 1st Century Greek physician Dioscorides) and assisted in preparing an edition of John Gerard's (1545-1612) herbal. He identified several new plant species, cultivated seeds and plants received from friends and wrote botanical descriptions of them, prepared herbal prescriptions for friends and neighbours, is remembered by many for introducing the artichoke (*Cynara scolymus*) to the English gardening fraternity and to cooks, and corresponded with leading botanists and gardeners including John Tradescant (either father or son). His considerable good name stood him in good stead during the English Civil War (1642-1651) when a royalist general (it is not known whether Goodyer was a royalist) is said to have ordered his men '... on all occasions to defend and protect John Goodyer, his house, servants, family, goods, chattels and estates of all sorts from all damages, disturbances and oppressions whatever'. At Goodyer's death his books, manuscripts and notes were left to Magdalen College, Oxford. Although his remains lie in an unmarked grave in a Hampshire village his name lives on as, apart from any botanical legacy, he also left instruction that part of his property be rented out and the income used to help poor people locally – and his wishes are still observed today in spirit through the John Goodyer Charity.