

## Cultivating Commerce

Sarah Easterby-Smith rewrites the histories of botany and horticulture from the perspectives of plant merchants who sold botanical specimens in the decades around 1800. These merchants were not professional botanists, nor were they the social equals of refined amateurs of botany. Nevertheless, they participated in Enlightenment scholarly networks, acting as intermediaries who communicated information and specimens. Thanks to their practical expertise, they also became sources of new knowledge in their own right. *Cultivating Commerce* argues that these merchants made essential contributions to botanical history, although their relatively humble status means that their contributions have received little sustained attention to date. Exploring how the expert nurseryman emerged as a new social figure in Britain and France, and examining what happened to the elitist, masculine culture of amateur botany when confronted by expanding public participation, Easterby-Smith sheds fresh light on the evolution of transnational Enlightenment networks during the Age of Revolutions.

SARAH EASTERBY-SMITH is Lecturer in Modern History and Director of the Centre for French History and Culture at the University of St Andrews. She has a PhD in History from the University of Warwick and has held postdoctoral fellowships at the Institute of Advanced Study, University of Warwick, the European University Institute and the Henry E. Huntington Library, California. She has served on the Executive Committee of the Social History Society (UK) and is a member of the British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, the British Society for the History of Science and the Society for the Study of French History.

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# Cultivating Commerce

*Cultures of Botany in Britain and France,  
1760–1815*

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Sarah Easterby-Smith

*University of St Andrews, Scotland*



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To the memory of  
Aline Torday, Jacqueline Fulton  
and Marjorie Easterby-Smith.  
Scholars, gardeners and inspirations.

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## Note on the Text

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Unless otherwise stated, all translations from French are my own.

### **Currency**

25 French *livres* = approx. £1 sterling (until 1789).

### **Measures of Distance**

1 French *league* = 2400 *toises*    Approx. 3 miles.

25 *leagues* = 1 *degré*    Approx. 60 miles.

## Abbreviations

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AD	Archives départementales, Loire-Atlantique
AN	Archives Nationales de France
AP	Archives de Paris
BL	British Library
BM	British Museum
BNF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France
Bodleian	Bodleian Library, Oxford
CRO	Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle
DTC	Dawson Turner Copies, Natural History Museum, London
JJ	John Johnson Catalogue of Printed Ephemera, Bodelian Library, Oxford
LC	Library of Congress
LRO	Lancashire Record Office
LS	Linnaean Society of London, Linnaean Correspondence Collection
MNHN	Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris
NHM	Natural History Museum, London
OBP	Old Bailey Proceedings Online
PSJB	The Papers of Sir Joseph Banks Online, State Library of New South Wales
RBG	Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
SV	Société Vilmorin, La Menitré, France
SVEC	Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century
TNA	The National Archives, London
WCRO	Warwickshire County Record Office
WLA	Warrington Library Archives