

George Alexander Kennedy

Born: 1794
President: 1838-1841
Died: 1865

George Alexander Kennedy was born in the West Indies in 1794, the eldest son of James Thomas Kennedy. The family settled in Dublin in 1800. Kennedy graduated BA from Trinity College in 1812, and then studied medicine in Dublin and Edinburgh. He was granted the Licence of the College of Physicians in 1824, and elected a Fellow in 1827. He subsequently became an Honorary Fellow in 1846, on his appointment as a Professor in the School of Physic.

Kennedy was Physician to the Sick Poor Dispensary on Meath Street, and to the Fever Hospital on Cork Street in Dublin. He lectured in medicine in the Peter Street School of Medicine and published several medical reports on the cases from the Fever Hospital.

Kennedy was College Registrar for many years, during which period he undertook the Herculean and invaluable task of compiling an index of the proceedings of the College from 1692. During his presidency, he persuaded Trinity to grant honorary MDs to six distinguished Licentiates of the College of Physicians. At that time Candidates for the Fellowship of the College of Physicians were required to hold a degree from Oxford, Cambridge or Trinity. The choice of recipients of the honorary degrees was left to the College of Physicians; among the distinguished doctors benefiting from this generous arrangement was William Stokes (qv). The College possesses a silver flagon commemorating this event, presented to Kennedy:

‘by those Honorary Fellows & Licentiates of the College who had not graduated in Arts from Oxford, Cambridge or Dublin, in testimony of esteem for his zealous cooperation towards effecting the admission of their eminent and experienced members to the Fellowship of the College’.

Kennedy was College Librarian from 1849 to his death in 1865. Several books presented by him are in Dun’s Library, and bear his distinctive bookplate with the motto *Avise La Fin* (Look to the end). George Alexander Kennedy never married. He died in 1865 and was interred in Mount Jerome Cemetery.

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