

Patrick Hewetson

Born: 1699
President: 1745-1746, 1761-1762
Died: 1783

Patrick Hewetson belonged to a family that had settled in Ireland in the sixteenth century. Several of his forebears held positions in the Established Church. Patrick's great-grandfather, Christopher, was treasurer of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin, and vicar of Swords, while his grandfather, William, was rector of St Werburgh's (1660-1676). The wars of the mid-seventeenth century saw several Hewetsons pursue military careers and thereafter greatly enhance the family's land holdings.

Patrick was born in 1699, the eldest of four children of Moses Hewetson and Margery, the daughter of John Newcome. Moses and Margery (d.1724) resided at Betaghstown, County Kildare. Patrick and his brother William were educated by a Mr Jackson in Kildare and they subsequently entered Trinity College Dublin together on 6 April 1716. Patrick took his BA at Trinity in 1721. Moses evidently intended Patrick for a career in the professions as, prior to his death in 1721, he had stipulated that Patrick should not gain possession of the estate at Betaghstown until he had completed his MA degree.

It is not clear precisely when Patrick Hewetson left Trinity, but by August 1726 he was a medical student at Leiden. He was probably back in Ireland by 1729, when he mortgaged the house at Betaghstown to raise a sum of £150. A year later this mortgage was taken over by the physician Thomas Kingsbury (qv), a circumstance that points to Hewetson's developing medical connections in Dublin.

At Trinity in the years following, Hewetson completed his MB (1731) and MD (1734). On 21 March 1737 he was elected a Fellow of the College of Physicians. At that point, his address was listed as Capel Street where he would continue to live until the 1770s.

Patrick Hewetson was twice elected as President of the College, in 1745 and again in 1761. Amongst other College responsibilities, in 1750 he was one of the Fellows chosen to inspect the



premises of apothecaries, chemists and druggists in Dublin and its surrounds. On 18 October 1770 he was elected an Honorary Fellow.

Aside from his successful medical career, Hewetson also engaged in some property dealings alongside his youngest brother Moses. His wider intellectual interests are at least partly reflected in his appearing among the subscribers to Charles Smith's works on Waterford (1746) and Cork (1750), and to John Rutt's *Natural History of the County of Dublin* (1772).

In April 1783 his death at Betaghstown was noted in *The Hibernian Magazine*. Hewetson, who never married, had made his will some years earlier on 23 July 1770. Among the three executors appointed by him were Richard Robinson, Archbishop of Armagh, and Charles Jackson, Bishop of Kildare. Hewetson requested that following his death his body should be kept for five days, then cut open, coffined and buried at Clane.

Hewetson's will included bequests to the poor children of several Dublin parishes, as well as to various servants, relatives and friends. By far the largest sum of money, £500, was given to the daughter of Hewetson's late housekeeper, Molly Ennis, with the stipulation that she be raised as a Protestant and likewise married to one.

The will also set out Hewetson's intention that, after the deaths of his sister Grizzel Aylmer and his cousin Moses Cahill, his estate should be used to establish and maintain a charity school at Betaghstown. Following protracted legal proceedings and Cahill's eventual death in 1805, the school was established. In 1811 there were ten boys and six girls in attendance. After a difficult period and further legal wrangling, the school reopened in 1836. In 1882 Hewetson's School was relocated to its present site at Millicent on the outskirts of Clane.

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