

## William Fetherston-Haugh Montgomery

**Born:** c. 1797  
**President:** 1851-1853  
**Died:** 1859

William Fetherston-Haugh Montgomery was born in Dublin. Family details are unknown. He entered Trinity College in 1817 and was elected a classical Scholar in 1820, and then in 1822 graduated BA. In 1825, he proceeded to MB and was admitted as a Licentiate of the College of Physicians of Ireland in November of that year. He was elected Fellow in 1829 and then President in 1851.

Shortly after he qualified, he began to lecture on midwifery and diseases of women and children, with a large class attending his house in Cuffe Street. He was very insistent that the College should undertake teaching in this subject and make it part of the curriculum of the School of Physic. In 1827, the Chair of Midwifery was founded and Montgomery was appointed Professor on St Luke's Day. He held this professorship for 29 years.

In 1827, he became Physician-Accoucheur to Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital and contributed to the high esteem held for the Dublin School of Midwifery. His reputation rests on his classic work '*An exposition of the signs and symptoms of pregnancy, the period of human gestation and the signs of delivery*' (1837). There is a description of 'Montgomery follicles' – glands in the breast areola which enlarge in pregnancy. He contributed numerous articles and papers to professional journals and of signal merit and originality were his *Observations on the Spontaneous Amputation of the Fetal Limbs in Pregnancy*. During this time, he represented Trinity College before Parliament in medical matters.

Montgomery was a founding Vice-President of the pioneering Pathological Society of Dublin. A Viennese publication in 1853, comparing obstetric practice in different countries, said of Montgomery that his is a 'name which is known and honored wherever midwifery is practiced'.<sup>1</sup> He amassed an extensive museum of obstetric, gynaecology and embryology specimens which he sold to Queens College Galway, now the National University of Ireland, Galway. The

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<sup>1</sup> Coakley, *The Irish school of medicine* (Dublin; Town House, 1988) 117



# LIVES OF THE PRESIDENTS

Montgomery lecture theatre in the Trinity Health Sciences Centre at St James's Hospital is named after him.

He appears to have never married. His death in 1859, whilst sudden, was not unexpected as he had experienced chest pain and other symptoms of cardiac disease for some time.

He was noted to be an eloquent speaker and to take great care of his appearance, always wearing a white tie and a diamond stud in his shirt.

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