

Edward Aston

Born: c.1705
President: 1746-1747
Died: 1747

Edward Aston entered Trinity College Dublin as a pensioner on 20 March 1721 at the age of 16 years. Most students entered as pensioners, the word originally referring to those who paid a fixed sum annually. According to *Alumni Dublinenses*, Pensioners ranked above sizars¹ who were allowed free education, and below fellow commoners who paid double fees for which they received certain privileges. So, it would seem that Aston came from a family of moderate income. Edward was born in Dublin, the son of Henry Aston, 'causidicus', a lawyer, most likely a barrister. He was educated at Mount Temple by Mr Jackson. He graduated with a BA in 1726 and an MB and MD in 1737.

On 24 January 1737, the College's minutes record that Edward Aston was examined and found qualified to hold a Bachelor's and Doctor's degree in Physick. On 21 March of the same year, Patrick Hewetson (qv) and Edward Aston were made Fellows of the College by unanimous consent. They took the requisite oath and paid the sum of 30 pounds apiece to the President and they also paid 5s 5d apiece for the Beadle.

Aston and Hewetson were destined to rise within the ranks of the College. In the Gentlemen and Citizen's Almanack of 1738, they are both listed as College Censor in 1737 with Hewetson listed as MD, Capel Street and Aston as MD, William Street. Aston was also Registrar that year, elected on 18 October. In the 1739 Almanack, Aston is listed as a censor, with a change of address to Big Ship-Street.

The following year, 1740, Aston's name is among the list of subscribers to the Dublin edition of the *Cyclopaedia or, an universal dictionary of the arts and sciences*. This ambitious work was compiled by the extraordinary Ephraim Chambers FRS, who described his endeavour as an attempt towards a survey of the Republic of Learning.

Aston was elected President of the College in 1746 but he died the following year. His name is listed in the *Index to the Prerogative Wills of Ireland*. These wills generally refer to the 'more important members of the community'.²

¹ Sizar: a student at University of Cambridge or Trinity College Dublin who receives an allowance toward college expenses and who originally acted as a servant to other students in return for this allowance.

² Sir Arthur Vicars (ed) *Index to the Prerogative Wills of Ireland, 1536-1810* (Dublin: Edward Ponsonby; 1897).



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