

Queens has the unique distinction of being the foundation of two queens. The development of the college in its early years took place in a political climate unsettled by the Wars of the Roses; the religious changes of the following century saw the college become a centre of humanist learning. Two of the great humanists of the age were both members of the college, and Queens theatre was noted for its plays, always a part of humanist education. The consolidation of the colleges fortunes took place against the more stable climate of the late 16th-early 17th century, reflected in the growing grandeur of presidential lifestyles and the temptations of monarchs to interfere in college elections. The interruption of civil war and revolution was succeeded by a period of Whig liberalism, itself brought to an abrupt end by the arch-evangelical president Isaac Milner. The Victorians shaped the modern university: reforming fellows devoted themselves to their colleges and their students, and for the first time an academic profession arose. To bring the story up to date, John Twigg charts the changes of the 20th century: the new political awareness and the pressures it has brought with it, and the continuing complexity of running the college. The history of any college is essentially made by its fellows and students, and they are not neglected: John Twigg draws revealing portraits and relates the anecdotes that are the stuff of college life while unfolding the absorbing history of Queens.

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