



Noble Powell and the Episcopal Establishment in the Twentieth Century:

David Hein

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The quintessential man for his own season, Noble Powell (1891-1968) was an episcopal priest and then bishop who epitomized the cultural and ecclesiastical epoch before the tumultuous sixties. This volume, the first biography devoted to a dynamic churchman often referred to as the last bishop of the old church, fills a major gap in American religious historiography while illuminating the strengths, flaws, and eventual decline of the Protestant establishment in the United States. Deeply influenced by the beliefs and practices of a mix of southern denominations, Powell was raised a Baptist and confirmed (to his family's chagrin) in the Episcopal Church. As parson at the University of Virginia, Powell led a flourishing student ministry before serving successively as rector of Emmanuel Church in Baltimore, dean of the National Cathedral, and bishop of the Diocese of Maryland. Hein sketches the spiritual depth, self-discipline, sense of humor, and personal magnetism that anchored Powell's unwavering commitment to the human side of the church. He shows how Powell's outlook as bishop dovetailed with the prevailing temper of his time and also discusses how Powell's leadership style, marked by patience and an aristocratic civility, diminished in effectiveness amid the upheaval of the 1960s.



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