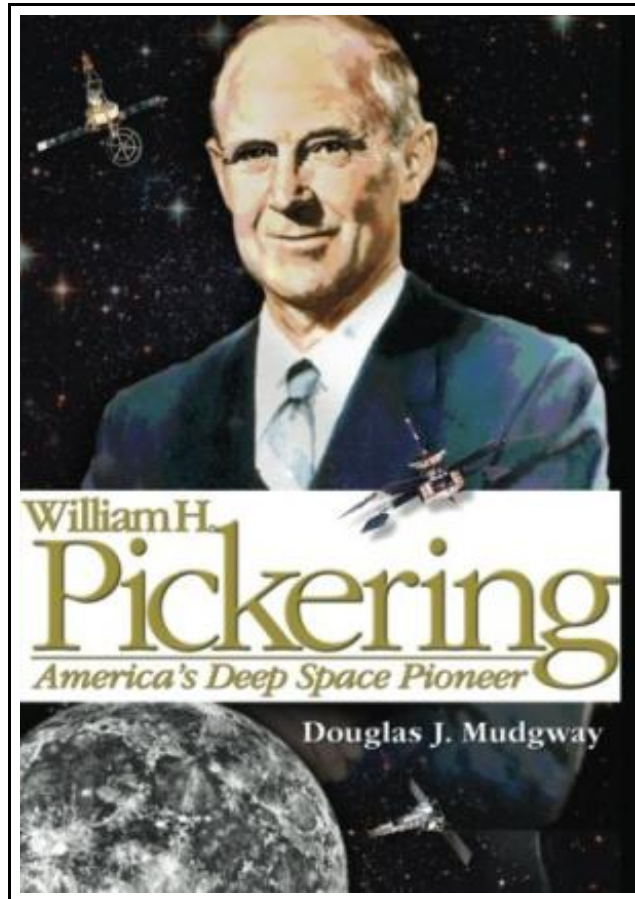


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WILLIAM H. PICKERING: AMERICA S DEEP SPACE PIONEER



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Createspace, United States, 2013. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 254 x 178 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.On the first day of February 1958, three men held aloft a model of Explorer 1, America s first Earth satellite, for the press photographers. That image of William Pickering, Wernher von Braun, and James Van Allen became an icon for America s response to the Sputnik challenge. Von Braun and Van Allen were well known, but who was Pickering? From humble beginnings in a remote country town in New Zealand, Pickering came to California in 1928 and quickly established himself as an outstanding student at the then-new California Institute of Technology (Caltech). At Caltech, Pickering worked under the famous physicist Robert Millikan on cosmic-ray experiments, at that time a relatively new field of physics. In 1944, when Caltech s Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) was developing rocket propulsion systems for the U.S. Army, Pickering joined the work-force as a technical manager. He quickly established himself as an outstanding leader, and 10 years later, Caltech named him Director of JPL. And then, suddenly, the world changed. In October 1957, the Sputnik satellite startled the world with its spec-tacular demonstration of Soviet supremacy in space. Pickering led an intense JPL effort that joined with the von Braun and Van Allen teams to answer the Soviet challenge. Eighty-three days later, on 31 January 1958, America s first satellite roared into Earth orbit. A few months after that, Pickering s decision to affiliate JPL with the newly formed National Aeronautics and Space Administration set the basis for his subsequent career and the future of NASA s ambitious program for the exploration of the solar system. In the early days of the space program, failure followed failure as Pickering and his JPL team...



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