In this first authorized biography of former Alabama governor John Patterson, historian Warren Trest offers new insights and rich details into the life of a significant Southern politician whose career touched some of the key struggles of the twentieth-century civil-rights movement. Patterson is revealed as a complex and likable politician and jurist whose career was unfortunately blighted by decisions he later regretted on racial issues.

My Personal Review:
Award-nominated historian Warren Trest presents Nobody But the People: The Life and Times of Alabama’s Youngest Governor, the first authorized biography of former Alabama Governor John Patterson. A crime-fighting attorney general propelled into the governor’s office following the brutal murder of his father, John Patterson dedicated himself to keeping Phenix City cleaned up. He led the state’s resistance to federally ordered desegregation; later, he admitted to regret that he had neglected to do more to help Alabama’s black citizens achieve equal rights. His administration improved public education, highway construction, law enforcement, old-age benefits, and brought about the state’s first program of medical care for the elderly, among other accomplishments. He put loan sharks out of business and changed Alabama law so that low-income and middle-income families could borrow money without paying debilitating interest rates. A handful of black-and-white photographs illustrate this compelling, true-life story of Patterson and the many achievements he made during his four-year administration – achievements that are all too often overlooked when examining his stance on civil rights. Highly recommended, and a welcome addition to American biography and Alabama state history collections.

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