



The Lives and Times of Bonnie & Clyde

E. R. Milner

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Relying on primary sources—oral history interviews, personal memoirs, newspaper articles, official records, diaries, and letters—E. R. Milner cuts through myth and legend to create this startling portrait of the real Bonnie and Clyde.

In his prologue, Milner introduces Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow, showing them as they drive along a rural Louisiana lane toward the ambush that would put a dramatic end to their turbulent lives of crime. Milner then traces their backgrounds, noting the events that bring the two outlaws together. The ensuing adventures of Bonnie and Clyde featured gun battles, narrow escapes and captures, frequent moves, and, of necessity, several shifts in personnel over a short period of time. It was a life of wild action, betrayal, and sometimes even gallantry. In the abstract, an aura of romance surrounded this violent pair.

Although the mythology surrounding Bonnie and Clyde is charged with drama and fascination, Milner reveals the truth behind the bloody legend, carefully gleaning materials from obscure locally published accounts, previously untapped court records, and archived but unpublished oral history accounts from some sixty victims, neighbors, relatives, and police who were involved in the exploits of the infamous duo. And the truth proves to be sufficiently exciting. Romance aside, the Barrow gang carved a grisly swath through Texas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Missouri. The string of deaths was long—and real: Akota, Oklahoma, sheriff severely wounded, deputy killed; Sherman, Texas, grocery clerk killed; Temple, Texas, man killed as gang attempts to steal his car; Joplin, Missouri, two officers killed; Alma, Arkansas, police officer killed; Crockette, Texas, prison guard killed; Miami, Oklahoma, police officer killed.

Milner traces this violent path until 23 May 1934, when Bonnie and Clyde die in an ambush. Even dead, they draw crowds and are buried in a circus-like atmosphere. In death they continue to intrigue us in ways few criminals had before or have since.



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