The great western land pirate : John A. Murrell in legend and history

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Abstract
John A. Murrell lived in Tennessee when Andrew Jackson was president. According to legend, he was an able man who had been raised to be a rascal by his unscrupulous mother. Flogged and imprisoned as a youth, he swore eternal vengeance against the society that had punished him. He became a highwayman and merciless killer, a horse thief, counterfeiter, and slave stealer. He often disguised himself as a clergyman and preached to congregations while confederates stole their horses. He scattered counterfeit money like confetti. This research was undertaken in a skeptical spirit akin to that of Marshall many years ago. This book is about the legend and about what really happened, but only in a secondary sense is its purpose to set the record straight. How was an indifferent thief transformed into a master criminal?

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