

**BLANCHE
CALDWELL
BARROW
1911-1988**



**MY LIFE
ON THE
RUN WITH
BARROW GANG**

In 1930s Texas, 18-year-old Blanche and 26-year-old Buck fell in love. She thought they would have a good life together, until she met his brother and his girlfriend. Before long, Blanche was swept up in the world of Bonnie and Clyde.

Blanche Caldwell was born on New Year's Day 1911 in Garvin, Oklahoma. After her parents' divorce, she was raised by her father. Her estranged mother arranged her first marriage at seventeen. His physical and mental abuse left Blanche unable to bear children.

In November 1929, while hiding in Dallas from her husband, Blanche met Buck Barrow, a twice-divorced criminal. During a Denton burglary, Buck was arrested and sentenced to five years in prison. Two months later, he escaped from a prison farm, picked up Blanche in Dallas, and hid out at his uncle's farm near Martinsville.

In June 1931, Blanche married Buck in America, Oklahoma. She talked Buck into turning himself in. He served his time and was paroled in March 1933. She was ecstatic to start their new life. While visiting Clyde and Bonnie in Checotah, they persuaded Buck to vacation with them in Joplin. Blanche didn't like the outlaw couple.

In April the gang battled police in Joplin. Clyde killed two policemen before they fled. Left behind were provocative poses of Bonnie with Clyde, which made them national celebrities. In July in Platte County, Missouri, the manager of their rented cabins became suspicious. When confronted by Sheriff Coffey, Blanche's response "just a minute" was code to Clyde, who began firing. While fleeing, Buck received a head wound and Blanche's left eye was blinded by glass fragments.

They stopped in Dexter, Iowa due to Buck's severe injuries. Several days later, Clyde opened fire on town posse, but was quickly outgunned. Blanche stayed with Buck and was arrested, allowing the others to escape. Bonnie and Clyde would later die in a 1934 shootout.

Blanche was taken to the Platte City Jail, charged with Sheriff Coffey's attempted murder. She learned Buck died four days later. She was sentenced to ten years in the Missouri Female State Penitentiary. After her 1939 release, Blanche met Eddie Frasure in Dallas. If Eddie knew of Blanche's past, he didn't say anything. In April 1940, they were married. He served in the Navy Seabees from 1942 to 1946, while Blanche took care of her father, until he died in September 1947.

When the film "Bonnie and Clyde" premiered in 1967, the notoriety caused tension between Blanche and Eddie. After he died of cancer at age 57 in November 1969, Blanche renewed her friendship with the Barrow family and Bonnie's sister – which attracted the attention of law enforcement.

A lifelong smoker, Blanche died of cancer on Christmas Eve 1988 at age 77. In 2000, her friend Esther Weiser found a narrative Blanche wrote in prison in 1935 about her time with the Barrow Gang. The 2004 book "My Life with Bonnie and Clyde" chronicled America's most talked-about crime spree.