



Edge of the Sword: The Ordeal of Marshall H. Twitchell in the Civil War and Reconstruction

Ted Tunnell

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New England native, Union soldier, Freedmen's Bureau agent, and Louisiana planter, Marshall H. Twitchell became the radical political boss of Red River Parish in the 1870s. He forged an economic alliance with entrepreneurial Jewish merchants and rose to power during the first upswing of the southern economy after the war. The Panic of 1873, however, undermined his regime and virtually overnight he went from financial benefactor to scapegoat for northwest Louisiana's failed dreams of prosperity. His life-and-death struggle with the notorious White League has more gut-wrenching suspense than most novels. The first full-length study of Twitchell, *Edge of the Sword* is edifying, entertaining, and cutting-edge scholarship.

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