

No Hope for Heaven, No Fear of Hell: The Stafford-Townsend Feud of Colorado County, Texas, 1871-1911 (Texas Local Series)

James C. Kearney, Bill Stein, James Smallwood

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Two family names have come to be associated with the violence that plagued Colorado County, Texas, for decades after the end of the Civil War: the Townsends and the Staffords. Both prominent families amassed wealth and achieved status, but it was their resolve to hold on to both, by whatever means necessary, including extra-legal means, that sparked the feud. Elected office was one of the paths to success, but more important was control of the sheriff's office, which gave one a decided advantage should the threat of gun violence arise. No Hope for Heaven, No Fear of Hell concentrates on those individual acts of private justice associated with the Stafford and Townsend families. It began with an 1871 shootout in Columbus, followed by the deaths of the Stafford brothers in 1890. The second phase blossomed after 1898 with the assassination of Larkin Hope, and concluded in 1911 with the violent deaths of Marion Hope, Jim Townsend, and Will Clements, all in the space of one month.



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