

## Heroes and Outlaws Old West

### **JACK HELM**

Born Unknown

Died: Albuquerque, Texas, 1873

Jack Helm worked for the Sutton brothers on their ranch in Texas during the 1860s. When they began their feud with the neighboring Taylor brothers, Jack was asked to lead the Sutton Regulators, a gang of 200 men. He planned many of the bloodiest battles of that feud, and he personally killed several men with Taylor blood in their veins, or Taylor money in their pocket.

In 1869, Jack spotted several Taylor cowboys lurking about Sutton land. He opened fire on the two men, killing both of them instantly. A month later, he arranged an ambush on the Taylor ranch, pinning down several men inside. When the men finally ran out of ammunition the Sutton Regulators stormed in and killed them.

The following year, Jack became one of the four captains of the newly organized Texas State Police. When the Kelly brothers, who were related to the Taylors by marriage paraded drunk through the streets, Jack abused his power and had the men arrested. He then led the men off with a posse of Suttons and executed them. When word of this leaked to his superiors, he was suspended from the force. After a trial several months later, he was fired altogether.

A few years later he was elected sheriff of DeWitt County. He continued to abuse his powers as a lawman, killing more and more Taylors "in the line of duty." He was killed in 1873 by two Taylors; one blew a hole through his chest with a shotgun, and the other shot him in the head with a pistol.