

**STEPHEN F. AUSTIN**  
**Composed and dramatized by BOB HEINONEN**

**THE LIFE AND TIMES OF STEPHEN F. AUSTIN**

**Part 13: A Change of Goals**

by Bob Heinonen

By late summer of 1823, per the terms of his empresario contract, Stephen F. Austin had selected a site for the capitol of his colony and Governor Garcia ordered that it be named San Felipe de Austin. Within a year, San Felipe was occupied and Austin's commitment to fulfilling his contract's terms had been fulfilled. Almost three hundred families had arrived and selected land. Then, Austin decided to add an additional colony to his first...and then another...and then another. By the time Austin was finished adding land, he had been granted five colonies and 1700 families to settle them.

Austin's First Colony was established in 1821 for 300 families. It consisted of land from the Lavaca River (Matagorda Bay) up to the San Jacinto River (Galveston Bay) then inland to a point north of where Huntsville is today and then to a point about 50 miles east of where Austin is today.

His Second Colony was established in 1825 for 500 families; this colony was actually within the First Colony but the contract allowed for settling 500 more families in that area. Austin's Little Colony was established in 1827 for 100 families in parts of what are Bastrop and Williams counties today. The Coast Colony allowed Austin to settle 300 families within 25 miles of the Gulf Coast which had previously been forbidden by Mexican law. The final Upper Colony in 1831 was for 800 Mexican and European families (the Mexican government had become concerned with the growing number of American settlers) and it extended from Austin's First Colony northwest almost to where Brownwood is today.

While Austin was establishing his First Colony, his partner, Joseph Hawkins died (October, 1823). Hawkins had invested \$7,000 in Austin's colony for a 50% interest in the profits. Because of legal complications surrounding Hawkins death, it wasn't until 1833 that the Hawkins children were finally able to claim their half of the 22.5 leagues (almost 100,000 acres) Austin had received. Austin retained ownership of the land and just waited for American law to run its course before releasing it to the children.

In 1824, Austin met Samuel May Williams. Sam, who had arrived in Texas under an alias (probably because he owed a previous employer \$700), became Austin's secretary, translator and confidant for over ten years. Sam Williams had been educated in New England, had worked in Buenos Aires where he learned Spanish, and had been a clerk in New Orleans. "The new secretary was smart, loyal and tremendously hard working."

1824 is the same year that Stephen F. Austin sent his younger brother Brown back to Missouri to retrieve his Mother and sister; Stephen wanted then to settle in Texas with him. Unfortunately, their Mother, Maria Austin, died before Brown got there. Their sister, Emily, had lost her first husband, James Bryan, two years earlier and decided to marry and settle with a local merchant, James Perry, before Brown could retrieve her to Texas.

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As you may recall, when Stephen F. Austin arrived in New Orleans in 1820, he decided his number one goal in life was to rebuild the family fortune. In fact, he had written to his brother, Brown, he would not marry until he had done so. But, by 1830, Stephen found that his goal in life had changed. Stephen determined that the prosperity of his colonists had become as important to him as the prosperity of his own family. He realized his colonists had become his children; Texas had become his wife.

**Next Month – Part 14: Mexico Doesn't Change But It Does**

*Quotes in this newsletter come from **Stephen F. Austin – Empresario of Texas** by Gregg Cantrell.*

*Bob Heinonen is the founder of **Texas Heroes** and has been portraying Stephen F. Austin since 1993. See [www.TexasHeroes.net/StephenFAustin.html](http://www.TexasHeroes.net/StephenFAustin.html) . Copyright© by Bob Heinonen 2008.*