

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

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

**Part 18: And There Was War**

by Bob Heinonen

After returning to Texas in September, 1835, Stephen F. Austin's attitude toward Texas declaring its independence from Mexico had changed, and those about him encouraged his leadership in making it happen. As the events unfolded, there was only one thing that seemed certain...there would be war.

The Mexican Army announced it was going to take the cannon away from the people of Gonzales that had been given to them to defend themselves against the Indians. The people of Gonzales weren't about to give up their cannon, and when the Mexican Army came to take it away from them, the people of Gonzales dared them to "come and take it!" A fight started on October 2, 1835, and the people of Gonzales ran the Mexican Army off. They had won the first battle of the Texas Revolution.

The decision was made immediately to run the Mexican Army out of Texas. One hundred twenty men went to Goliad and made the Mexican Army garrison surrender the town and the fort. Goliad now belonged to the Texans.

Next, the decision was made to go to San Antonio de Bexar where the Mexican Army was headquartered; Stephen F. Austin was asked to command the Texian army. Austin was hesitant about accepting command. He had never commanded an army before. True, he had been the quartermaster in the militia back in Missouri, but the only time he had lead men in battle was against the Indians. But his friends said, "Stephen, you are the only man the men of Texas will follow." How could Austin say "no" to his Texas.

The Texans formed an army of four hundred men and went to San Antonio de Bexar where they began the siege of the town and the Alamo. But before siege was complete, Austin received a letter from the new interim Texian government asking him to change his assignment. They asked him to go to the United States with Dr. Archer and Mr. Wharton to raise money for the revolution, to find men to help fight the revolution. Austin was not well, but how could he say "no" to his Texas.

Before he left for the United States, Austin heard of the Texian's capture of San Antonio de Bexar and the Alamo. General Cos had surrendered his army and promise to take them out of Texas and to never come back. Then Austin was off to the United States, New Orleans, where the Americans warmly received them and began promising money for the revolution and men to help fight the revolution.

But then, while Austin was in New York, he heard of the fall of the Alamo; the loss of Travis and almost 200 men. And the massacre at Goliad where the Mexican Army executed over 300 Texans after they had laid down their arms and surrendered! He redoubled his efforts.

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In May, 1836, Austin was returning home on a boat coming down the Ohio River when he heard of the glorious victory at San Jacinto. Sam Houston's army had beat Santa Anna and Austin's Texas was now a nation.

**Next Month – Part 19: *The Republic of Texas***

*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 2009.*