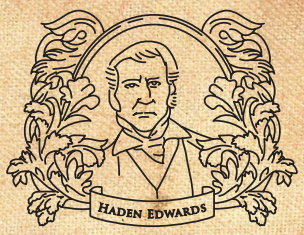
Haden Edwards
and the Seeds of Conflict



Part One

Learning about Moses Austin's land activities in Texas, Virginian Haden Edwards shifted his interest to Texas. He traveled to Mexico City early in the 1820s to join Stephen F. Austin, Robert Leftwich, and others in lobbying successive Mexican governments for permission to colonize Texas. Because of Edwards' wealth, he supported Austin financially since Austin had already established a relationship with authorities. Edwards received permission to settle up to 800 families around Nacogdoches in East Texas.

Like all empresarios, Edwards had to honor previous grants in the area from Spanish or Mexican governments. Unfortunately for Edwards, only his area had a significant number of such grants and the grantees had no way to prove their claims because all records were in Mexico. Because many of the previous settlers in the area could not produce a title to their lands, Edwards ordered that he would regard all the land grants null and void. His actions caused heated protests and resulted in conflict with the Mexican government. In late in 1825, the Mexican government forced Edwards to forfeit his lands. By his testimony, Edwards had invested $50,000 in his Texas venture and did not want to lose it.

Think-Pair-Share: Predict what Haden Edwards is going to do after forfeiting his land grant to the Mexican government.