

JAMES KERR



(1790-1850) Kentucky native James Kerr, the son of a Baptist minister, was reared in Missouri. Kerr fought in the War of 1812 and was later sheriff of St. Charles County, Missouri. He married Angeline Caldwell in 1818 and served in the Missouri Senate and House of Representatives. Kerr was appointed Surveyor General of the Texas colony of Green DeWitt in 1825. With his wife, three children and several slaves, he joined Stephen F. Austin's "Old Three Hundred" colony in Brazoria. In August 1825 he set out to select a site for the DeWitt colony. Kerr named the community Gonzales in honor of the governor of Coahuila, Mexico. By this time, Angeline Kerr and two of the children had passed away. Kerr was active in area politics and law enforcement during the formative years of the Republic of Texas. He acted as attorney and surveyor for Benjamin Rush Milam in 1827. He negotiated for peace before the Fredonian Rebellion, signed a treaty with the Karankawa Indians and fought other tribes. He was the Lavaca delegate at the Convention at San Felipe de Austin in 1832 and served as a member of the Second and Third Conventions. Two years later, he married Sarah Fulton. He became a major in the Texas Rangers in 1835 and in the Republic of Texas army in 1836. He was elected to the Third Texas Congress in 1838. Kerr's later years were spent practicing medicine in Jackson County. In 1856, pioneer Joshua Brown gave the land around this site in order that Kerr County be named for his longtime friend, Texas frontiersman and patriot James Kerr. (2000)

Location: Courthouse Square at TX 16 & 27 (Sidney Baker & Main St) at south entrance of Courthouse, Kerrville

GPS Coordinates: 30°02.831N & 99°08.387W

UTM Easting: 486501 / UTM Northing: 3324067