

KERR COUNTY, EARLY SETTLERS



The earliest permanent settler at this point on the Guadalupe was Joshua D. Brown (1816-74), a native of Kentucky who came to Texas in 1830 and settled at Gonzales near a fellow Kentuckian, James Kerr, surveyor and resident manager of Green DeWitt's Colony. Brown did military duty for the Republic of Texas. After marrying Sarah Jane Goss of Gonzales, he sought new opportunities on the frontier, learned the art of hand-riving cypress shingles, and found here on the Guadalupe's headwaters an abundance of giant cypress trees suitable for commercial use. In 1846, he led to this site ten shingle makers, and built a camp of picket houses in which to work. Despite Indian raids that sometimes drove the crew to Gonzales for safety, he made a success of the first industry operated at later site of Kerrville. Brown bought 2,640 acres of land with frontage on the river. When the county was organized in 1856, he insisted upon having it named for his friend, James Kerr. He donated the original townsite, including 4 acres of land for public buildings and streets in Kerrsville (as town was then called), the county seat. He lived out his lifetime on his ranch near town. A son, A. P. Brown, was county commissioner in 1935-36. (1971)

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