

SANDFORD C. FAULKNER

Pulaski County Pioneer

by Margaret Smith Ross

The story of Sandford C. Faulkner is a piecemeal narrative, largely a matter of conjecture. Histories of Arkansas invariably mention him, yet the details of his life which have come down to us are scant, and many questions about him must go unanswered.

According to historian Dallas T. Herndon, Faulkner was born in Georgetown, Kentucky on March 3, 1803, but the 1850 census gives his age as 44. The meager biographical material available fails to yield the names of his parents, but the 1850 census lists one Sally Faulkner, age 70, born in Maryland, and living in Sandy Faulkner's home. It might be safely assumed that she was his mother.

The details of his marriage are similarly vague. His wife was ten years his junior, and is listed in the 1850 census as Eveline M. Faulkner. Her birthplace is also given as Kentucky and she may have married Faulkner before he came to Arkansas.

In 1829, Sandy Faulkner came to Arkansas and settled in Chicot county, between Llewellyn and Peak. Here he operated a large cotton plantation. One of the few things we know about his pre-Arkansas background is that his family was wealthy. Sandy inherited two or three moderate fortunes and we are told that he spent his money too freely for permanent solvency.

The life of a wealthy Southern planter was made to order for Sandy Faulkner. Confinement was not for him. He loved to hunt, and would wander through the woods for days and weeks, after which he would visit the public gathering places in the village. Here he was greeted with enthusiasm, for he was a natural-born entertainer, and must have been a bright spot in the usually drab life of the frontier. Endowed by nature with a keen sense of humor, originality, and a ready wit, he romped his way through life and was always right in the middle of whatever fun could be had. It goes without saying that he was tremendously popular.

Sandy and Eveline Faulkner had at least nine children. Sally A. was born in 1831, Elizabeth (called Bettie) was born in 1833, Mary Jane in 1836, William H. in 1837, Laura in 1838 or 1839, Sandford C., Jr. in 1839, and Matilda J. (called Mattie) in 1843. These dates are only approximate, and were figured from ages given for these children at various times. We find mention of two others, Philip and Minnie, as the "children of his old age."

Goodspeed says that Faulkner moved his family to Little Rock in 1844, but most other historians give the date 1839, and the facts seem to support the earlier date. At any rate, he kept the Chicot county plantation, and acquired another one near Little Rock. He spent the rest of his life in the capitol city.

It was about this time that Sandy Faulkner gained immort-