Daniel Boone
American Pioneer and Trailblazer

1734 - 1820

“I have never been lost, but I will admit to being confused for several weeks.”
—Daniel Boone

Daniel Boone was born November 2, 1734 in a log cabin in Berks County, near present-day Reading, Pennsylvania. Boone is one of the most famous pioneers in United States history. He spent most of his life exploring and settling the American frontier.

Boone had little formal education, but he did learn the skills of a woodsmen early in life. By age 12 his sharp hunter's eye and skill with a rifle helped keep his family well provided with wild game. In 1756 Boone married Rebecca Bryan, a pioneer woman with great courage and patience. He spent most of the next ten years hunting and farming to feed his family. In 1769 a trader and old friend, John Findley, visited Boone's cabin. Findley was looking for an overland route to Kentucky and needed a skilled woodsman to guide him. In 1769 Boone, Findley and five men traveled along wilderness trails and through the Cumberland gap in the Appalachian mountains into Kentucky. They found a "hunter's paradise" filled with buffalo, deer, wild turkey and meadows ideal for farming. Boone vowed to return with his family one day.

In 1775 Boone and 30 other woodsmen were hired to improve the trails between the Carolinas and the west. The resulting route reached into the heart of Kentucky and became known as the "Wilderness Road." That same year Boone built a fort and village called Boonesborough in Kentucky, and moved his family over the Wilderness Trail to their new home.

Boone had numerous encounters with the native people of Kentucky during the Revolutionary War. In 1776, Shawnee warriors kidnapped his daughter and two other girls. Two days later Boone caught up with the Indians and through surprise attack rescued the girls. In 1778, he was captured by another band of Shawnee. Boone learned that the tribe was planning an attack on Boonesborough. He negotiated a settlement with Chief Blackfish of the
Shawnee, preventing the attack. The Indians admired their captive for his skill as a hunter and woodsman and adopted him into their tribe as a son of Blackfish. He escaped when he learned the Shawnee, at the instigation of the British, were planning another attack on Boonesborough. The settlement was reinforced and provisioned in preparation for the assault. When British soldiers and the Indians attacked, Boonesborough withstood a ten-day siege and Chief Blackfish and the British finally withdrew.

After the Revolutionary War, Boone worked as a surveyor along the Ohio River and settled for a time in Kanawha County, Virginia (now West Virginia). In 1792, Kentucky was admitted into the Union as the 15th state. Litigation arose that questioned many settlers’ title to their lands. Boone lost all his property due to lack of clear title. In 1799, he followed his son, Daniel Morgan Boone, to Missouri which was then under the dominion of Spain. Traveling by canoe, he and his family paddled down the Ohio River to St. Louis.

In 1800, Boone was appointed magistrate of the Femme Osage District in St. Charles County, Missouri. He received a large tract of land for his services. When Missouri was transferred to the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase, Boone once again lost all his land, most of which was sold to satisfy creditors in Kentucky. Boone's wife Rebecca died on March 18, 1813. He spent his remaining years living in his son Nathan’s home in the St. Charles area. He went on his final hunting trip at the age of 83.

Daniel Boone died on September 26, 1820 at the age of 85. In 1845 the remains of Boone and his wife were moved to Kentucky to rest in the great pioneer's "hunter's paradise."

If you are aware of books, movies, databases, web sites or other information sources about Daniel Boone or related subjects, or if you would like to submit comments please send us email.

Back to Top

Resources

- Other Frontiersmen in the Lucidcafé Library
- Books About Daniel Boone
- Videos About Daniel Boone
- Related Internet Resources

Other Frontiersmen in the Lucidcafé Library

- William Clark
- Meriwether Lewis

Back to Resources Menu

Books About Daniel Boone

- The Life of Daniel Boone - Author: Lyman Copeland Draper, Ted Franklin Belue (Editor)