



My Father, Daniel Boone: The Draper Interviews with Nathan Boone

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One of the most famous figures of the American frontier, Daniel Boone clashed with the Shawnee and sought to exploit the riches of a newly settled region. Despite Boone's fame, his life remains wrapped in mystery. The Boone legend, which began with the publication of John Filson's *The Adventures of Col. Daniel Boone* and continued through modern times with Fess Parker's *Daniel Boone* television series, has become a hopeless mix of fact and fiction. Born in 1819, archivist Lyman Draper was a tireless collector of oral history and is responsible for much of what we do know about Boone. Particularly interested in frontier history, Draper conducted interviews with the famous and the obscure and collected thousands of manuscripts (he walked hundreds of miles through the South to save historical materials during the Civil War). In an 1851 visit with Boone's youngest son, Nathan, and Nathan's wife, Olive, Draper produced over three hundred pages of notes that became the most important source of information about Daniel. The interviews provide a wealth of accurate, first-hand information about Boone's years in Kentucky, his capture by Indians, his defense of Fort Boonesboro, his lengthy hunting expeditions, and his final years in Missouri. *My Father, Daniel Boone* is an engaging account of one of America's great pioneers, in which Nathan makes a point of separating fact from fiction. From explaining the methods his father used to track game to detailing how land speculation and legal problems from title claims caused Boone to leave Kentucky and take up residence farther west, Nathan Boone's portrait of his father brings a crucial period in frontier history to life.

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