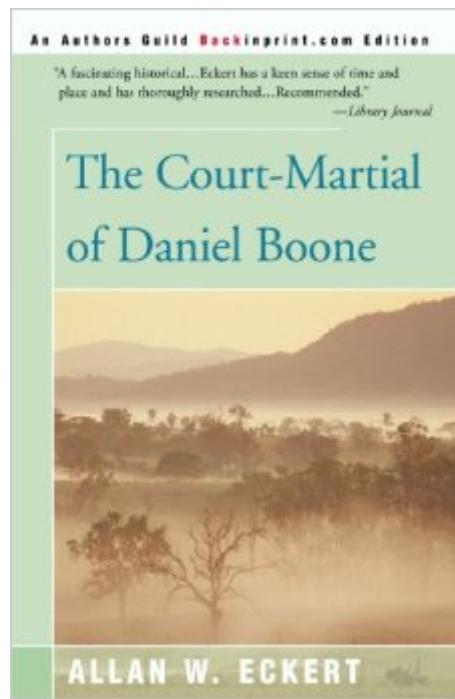


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# The Court-Martial Of Daniel Boone



## **Synopsis**

Based on a little-known incident in the life of Boone when, after being captured by Shawnees and subsequently escaping, he was charged with treason and court-martialed. In a brilliant display of ability, Boone defends himself at the trial and gradually the truth about what really happened emerges until he is at last exonerated.

## **Book Information**

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Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

## **Customer Reviews**

This is Allan Eckert's novelization of the little-known incident of the military court-martial of that famous Kentucky frontiersman, Daniel Boone. Boone was a legend in his own time, a well respected hunter and frontier soldier and was said to be as able in the woods as any Indian. In February 1778, Boone has been leading a party of 27 men from Fort Boonesboro who were captured by Shawnee Indians while making salt at the Blue Licks. Boone was adopted into the tribe and given the Shawnee name Sheltowee (Big Turtle) and spent several months living and hunting among the Indians before finally escaping back to Booneboro just in time to help fend off a siege of the isolated fort by the British and Indians. After the battle, Boone was accused of treason and complicity with the enemy by several of his enemies, especially Col. John Bowman, who served as prosecutor in the court martial proceedings against him. Boone shows that he can be as sly and sharp in the courtroom as he is in the wilderness. Most people know only the myths and legends

about Daniel Boone and this book does a great service by providing insight into the reality of the man, as well as presenting an interesting and riveting true story.

For most of us, our knowledge of Daniel Boone begins and ends with Fess Parker's t.v. shows in the 1960's. Allan Eckert's book, *The Court Martial of Daniel Boone*, is based on actual facts, but is written in a captivating novel style. I found the book to be fascinating. In modern times Daniel Boone is thought of as a frontier hero. In his day, however, there were many people who were suspicious and resentful of him. Boone's court martial is an example of how an honest man, doing the right thing, can be "bushwacked" by not-so-honest rivals. If you like true stories about American frontiersmen, this book is for you.

As a novel it was very entertaining, but it is just that: a novel. My gr-gr-gr-gr-gr grandfather (Richard Wade) and two of his wife's brothers (Stephen and William Hancock) were members of the salt-making party whose capture in early 1778 led to the treason charges placed against Boone. Many of the salt-makers felt that Boone was a traitor for surrendering them to the Shawnee without a fight. William Hancock testified against Boone at the court martial. In this novel Hancock is portrayed as a liar, a fool, and a wanted thief in NY and Boston. This does not set well with me, since William Hancock was actually from Goochland Co., Va. He was a volunteer in the Revolutionary Army, a husband and father, and a life-long friend of Boone's. Both Stephen and William Hancock forgave Boone and later followed him to Missouri. According to Jemima Boone, as old men the three often sat on the porch, smoking their pipes, and arguing over whether Daniel had done the right thing. The Hancocks reckoned that they might have done the same thing, but were still angry that they never had a chance to fight. Another salt-maker, Andrew Johnson, is similarly dealt with. Since Eckert invented other characters, I see no reason why he should assassinate the characters of actual men who endured great hardship in the defense of Boonesborough. A good read, but do not take this as history. It is based on the known facts, but 90% is pure fiction.

A very good book to read. I just camped at the ft. boonesboro campground and drove around KY to big bone lick and the blue licks battlefield park. Hiked some. Stopped by Boone's Station as well. I guess history talks about Boone leaving the fort to get away from the crowd when he and his brother went and made a life at Boone's station but it makes me wonder if the way he was treated by many of the folks that he helped to begin a life in KY and protected them in the meantime, had anything to

do with him wanting to get away from them all. Amazing how anyone could have accused him of being a traitor...which of any of those folks then as well as folks today could accuse him of such due to how he handled himself around the Shawnee tribes and the British. Who wouldn't try to save their own life as well as their men and do just about anything to deceive the enemy(at that time) as well as intermingle and spy/learn their ways. Hard to believe anyone could have treated Boone that way after all he did for them and went through in those hard times.

Nominated for seven Pulitzer Prizes in literature, Allan W. Eckert brings us the little-known true story of Daniel Boone's court martial in Kentucky during the American Revolution. The bare facts are that Boone and a great portion of the fighting men from Boonsborough were captured by Shawnee raiders who took all of them back into modern day Ohio and eventually some were taken to Detroit to meet with the British Lt. Governor Henry Hamilton, known as the "Hair Buyer" for his policy of buying scalps of settlers. Boone behaved so strangely during this entire episode that when he finally escaped the Shawnee he was brought up on charges and court martialed. The Court-Martial of Daniel Boone narrates the court martial and not the actual events. Eckert tells the story much like a modern courtroom drama. Boone had an unorthodox defense style that allows the prosecution to lay out their entire argument and puts Boone in the worst possible light. Of course, Boone would not be the celebrated figure he is today if here were found guilty so the outcome is never really in doubt. But, Eckert does allow a great deal of tension to build in the form of indignation on the part of the reader. An enjoyable piece of historical fiction

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