

SQUIRE BOONE

Younger brother of Daniel Boone. He and his older brother, Daniel, found a cave in southern Indiana one time in 1787. One day three years later while Squire was running from Indians, he jumped for a vine and landed in the opening of the secret cave that the Indians did not know about. Since they did not find Squire, he believed the cave was holy and expressed his wish to be buried in the cave one day. Daniel and Squire were the frontiersmen who opened up what is now known as Kentucky. Of the first eight white men who dared to enter "the dark and bloody ground," as Kentucky was known in the early 1770s, only two returned alive: Daniel and Squire Boone. After his close encounter with the Indians in 1790, Squire would often return to the cave to pray, meditate and carve designs and verses of gratitude. In 1804, Squire moved his wife, Jane Van Cleve, and his daughter and four sons to the area and built a village and a gristmill. Squire spent the last 11 years of his life there - the longest he had stayed in one place.

As his death neared - Squire suffered from heart failure - he built his own coffin from walnut trees growing near the cave. On his deathbed, he asked his sons to bury him in the cave where his life had been spared. On Aug. 15, 1815, Squire's four sons fulfilled their father's request. Squire was buried in his beloved cave, and a boulder sealed the entrance.

More than 150 years passed while the walnut coffin decomposed in a hidden section of the cave. Squire's bones rested on the cave's floor and were gradually covered by silt. The exact whereabouts of his remains would not be known until 1973 when two guides of the cave decided to dig out the section of the cave that was filled with silt and debris and find the carvings. Instead, they found Squire himself. A new walnut coffin was crafted, and a Boone descendant knitted a shroud for the bones. Squire Boone's remains were placed in the coffin, the lid was sealed with wax and the casket was carried deep into Squire Boone Caverns. Today, the casket is on view at the end of the tour through the Squire Boone Caverns in Mauckport, Indiana and a headstone has been erected at the foot of the casket inside the cave at the end of the tour given by the cave guides. This monument is placed in Old Mulkey Cemetery in honor of Hanah Boone's brother, Squire. Hannah's grave is adjacent.

Squire Boone was born in Exeter Township, Pennsylvania and died in Boone Township, Indiana. At his request, he was buried in a cave near Boone Township. Later, his son, Enoch, returned to the cave and saw that animals had disturbed the grave.

Enoch took his father's remains and reburied them on his farm, near his mother's grave. The exact location of Squire's grave is unknown. But, Enoch's farm is in Kentucky where Fort Know is now.

Like his more famous brother, Daniel, Squire Boone was a brave defender of Kentucky's pioneers.