



# Colorful Characters

## Chapter 3 - by Kay Hively

**D**aniel Boone!

George could hardly believe what Mr. Harding said. The man in the unfinished drawing was Daniel Boone, the most famous frontiersman in America.

Mr. Harding picked up the drawing and turned it so it would capture the light from the fireplace. Then he told George about being with Daniel Boone in St. Louis. He said the old explorer was 85 years old, but he had agreed to sit a few minutes for a portrait.

The artist said he had come to the Square and Compass to finish the portrait, which he was doing with oil paint. With the cold and rainy weather, Mr. Harding said, he needed a place to be warm and dry, and also have a place to eat and sleep.

George sat completely in awe as he looked from the face of the artist to the drawing

of Daniel Boone. As he sat looking and listening, George thought he should pinch himself to be sure he was not asleep and everything was just a dream. But even in his best dreams, he never thought he would get to meet and watch a real artist at work.

Mr. Harding fell silent and laid the drawing of Daniel Boone on the table.

George's father brought a plate of food and set it on the table, but the artist just sipped his coffee.

George's mind was bouncing from thought to thought. Since his family moved to Franklin two years ago, he had heard tales about three famous men. Stories about the Lewis and Clark Expedition were told by everyone in the whole territory. Even though Lewis and Clark had ended their great journey 15 years ago, they



were still famous up and down the Missouri River.

Along with Lewis and Clark, George had heard about Daniel Boone. He was a famous explorer even before Lewis and Clark made their journey to the west. Everyone admired Daniel Boone.

As George looked at the drawing, he thought how wonderful it would be to paint pictures of great men like Lewis and Clark and Daniel Boone. But he didn't think there were any famous men in Franklin, and he didn't think he would ever get to travel very far from home.

Mr. Harding set down his coffee and chose a brush from the little pile on the table. George waited for

him to start working, but the artist just looked at the sketch. He seemed to be thinking. George was so excited, he didn't think the man would ever get to work.

Then Mr. Harding began working on the drawing. George held his breath as he watched the artist work.

Slowly and deliberately, the artist made small marks on the paper. With each little mark, the picture of the old frontiersman seemed to come more and more alive. Every line seemed to say something about the man in the sketch.

Bringing a face to life was art lesson number one for George Caleb Bingham, and it was one the boy never forgot.

## Next Chapter: Goodbye to a New Friend

### Things to Think About and Do

1. One of George's jobs was to keep Mr. Harding's pencils sharpened. Why did the artist use pencils, and how did George keep them sharp?
2. George had heard about Meriwether Lewis, William Clark and Daniel Boone. Name four more American explorers and write a paragraph about each, telling where they explored and when they explored.
3. Read your newspaper for stories and pictures of people important to your community. Pick a picture and redraw it. Ask your art teacher for suggestions on drawing faces. One tip is to start with a plus sign, putting the nose right at the middle.

#### Learn more about Daniel Boone by visiting the following Web sites:

- [www.americanwest.com/pages/boone.htm](http://www.americanwest.com/pages/boone.htm)
- [http://library.thinkquest.org/4034/daniel\\_boone.html](http://library.thinkquest.org/4034/daniel_boone.html)
- [www.fortboonesboroughlivinghistory.org/html/daniel\\_boone.html](http://www.fortboonesboroughlivinghistory.org/html/daniel_boone.html)
- [www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Daniel\\_Boone](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Daniel_Boone)

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