

THE LYMAN C. DRAPER COLLECTION FOR FRONTIER RESEARCH IN THE EARLY SOUTH

By Robert Scott Davis

The lives of thousands and thousands of southerners and Midwesterners from the colonial and Revolutionary War periods are found in original documents, interviews, and memoirs that survive only in the Lyman C. Draper Collection of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin; see William B. Haseltine, "Lyman Draper and the South," *Journal of Southern History* 19 (February 1953), available on line from JSTOR. This material even includes Revolutionary War pension depositions copied from old court minutes where no copy has survived in the National Archives and Records Administration.

Lyman Copeland Draper (1815-1891) was born in Lockport, New York state; spent much of his adult life in Granville College, Ohio; Pontotoc, Mississippi; and Buffalo, New York; and came to permanently reside in Madison, Wisconsin. For more than fifty years, he gathered, copied, or compiled hundreds of thousands of pages of unique and extensive historical and genealogical material on the frontier colonial and Revolutionary War history of Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. From his over 500 volumes of material, however, he completed only one book, *King's Mountain and Its Heroes* (1881) although his unfinished biography of Daniel Boone has recently been published. For more on his life see William B. Haseltine, *Pioneer's Mission: The Story of Lyman Copeland Draper* (1954).

The Lyman C. Draper Collection is today in the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, where Draper had served as the first director. The collection is divided into papers by subject with each set of papers given an alphabetical letter or double letters to represent it as a series, such as "The Thomas Sumter Papers" that deal with Georgia and South Carolina frontier soldiers, "The Daniel Boone Papers," or the "King's Mountain [Battle] Papers" that deal with the frontiersmen of Georgia, the Carolinas, Tennessee, and Virginia:

- A. Bedinger MSS, 1 volume
- B. Draper's Life of Boone, 5 volumes
- C. Daniel Boone MSS, 32 volumes
- D. Border Forays, 5 volumes
- E. Brady and Wetzel MSS, 16 volumes
- F. Brant MSS, 22 volumes
- G. Brant Miscellanies, 3 volumes
- H. Broadhead Papers, 3 volumes
- J. George Rogers Clark MSS, 65 volumes
- K. George Rogers Clark Miscellanies, 5 volumes
- L. Jonathan Clark Papers, 2 volumes
- M. William Clark Papers, 6 volumes
- N. Croghan Papers, 3 volumes
- O. Drake Papers, 2 volumes
- P. Draper's Biographical Sketches, 3 volumes
- Q. Draper's Historical Miscellanies, 8 volumes
- R. Draper's Memoranda Books, 3 volumes

S. Draper's Notes, 33 volumes
 T. Forsyth Papers, 9 volumes C2964 Draper, Lyman Copeland, Collection, 1735-1815 Page 3 U.
 Frontier Wars, 23 volumes
 V. Georgia, Alabama, and South Carolina Papers, 1 volume.
 W. Harmar Papers, 2 volumes
 X. Harrison Papers, 5 volumes
 Y. Hinde Papers, 34 volumes
 Z. Illinois MSS, 1 volume
 AA. Irvine Papers, 2 volumes
 BB. Kenton MSS, 13 volumes
 CC. Kentucky MSS, 30 volumes, see calendar
 DD. Kings Mountain MSS, 18 volumes, see calendar
 EE. London Documents at Albany, 1 volume
 FF. Mecklenburg Declaration, by Draper, 3 volumes
 GG. Mecklenburg Declaration MSS, 3 volumes
 HH. Mecklenburg Declaration Miscellanies, 2 volumes
 JJ. Newspaper Extracts, 4 volumes
 KK. North Carolina MSS, 1 volume
 LL Paris Documents at Albany, 1 volume
 MM. Patterson Papers, 3 volumes
 NN. Pittsburg and Northwest Virginia MSS, 10 volumes
 OO. Pension Statements, 1 volume
 PP. Potter Papers, 1 volume
 QQ. Preston Papers, 6 volumes, see calendar
 RR Rudolph-Ney MSS, 10 volumes
 SS. Shepherd Papers, 5 volumes
 TT. South Carolina MSS, 1 volume
 UU. South Carolina in the Revolution Miscellanies, 2 volumes
 VV. Sumter MSS, 23 volumes
 WW. John Cleves Symmes Papers, 3 volumes
 XX. Tennessee MSS, 7 volumes, see calendar
 YY. Tecumseh MSS, 13 volumes
 ZZ. Virginia MSS, 14 volumes, see calendar

Each document within a series of papers is numbered consecutively, for example, 1V16 refers to document number 16 in volume 1 of series *V. Georgia, Alabama, and South Carolina Papers*. A citation such as "3TT45" means that the document referred to is document 45 in volume 45 of series *TT. The South Carolina Papers*. Within a long document, each page will also have a second set of page numbers that refers to the pages with the document.

The Draper Collection has several finding aids. The standard general guide is Josephine L. Harper, *Guide to the Draper Manuscripts* (1983). Some researchers still find Reuben G. Thwaites, *Descriptive List of Manuscript Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin* (1906) useful. The papers/series of greatest interest to genealogists have published, indexed calendars including the Kentucky Papers; Tennessee and King's Mountain Papers; George Rogers Clark Papers; Thomas Sumter Papers; and Frontier Wars Papers. These calendars have been published and are available at major libraries such as Southern History of the Birmingham Public Library. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin also has a collection of Draper's

historical correspondence that has never been microfilmed but which sometimes includes his answers to letters he received that he filed in his collection.

A complete set of the Draper Collection on microfilm is at the Woodruff Library of Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, and at the McClung Collection in Knoxville, Tennessee. Individual rolls can also be ordered for use at your local LDS Family History Center through the website Familysearch.org. Selected microfilm of the Draper Collection is available at the Birmingham Public Library, the Huntsville-Madison County Public Library, and the Houston Cole Library of Jacksonville State University.