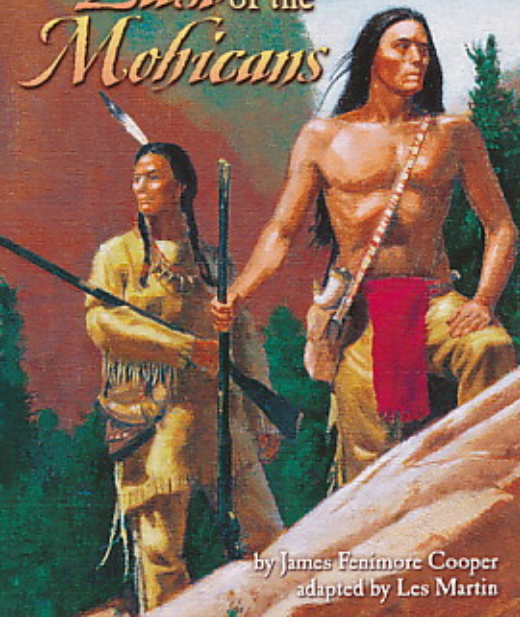


STEPPING STONES™

a chapter book

CLASSIC

# The *Last* of the *Mohicans*



by James Fenimore Cooper  
adapted by Les Martin

## Chapter 1

Major Duncan Heyward was a brave young British officer. He had fought well for his country in Europe.

Now he was far from Europe. But he was still serving his country. He was in North America, where the forces of England fought those of France.

Each side had settlements there. The French controlled the eastern part of Canada. They called it New France. Below New France, England had colonies down the Atlantic coast to Georgia. Both countries claimed

the vast territory to the west. That was what they were fighting for.

This was a new kind of war for Major Heyward. There were no open battlefields. There were no great armies facing each other. The two sides fought in a wilderness of forests, rivers, and lakes. Each side used native American Indians as well as its own troops.

So far, the French were better than the English at this warfare. Their leader, General Montcalm, had fewer soldiers than the English. But he knew how to fight in the wilderness. He moved swiftly on the lakes and rivers. He fought from the cover of the forests. And he had many more Indians on his side. Now, in 1757, he was on the attack. He wanted to destroy the forts that the English had built.

Major Heyward was on his way to one of those forts. Fort William Henry, on the shore of Lake George, was under threat of attack. But Heyward had no soldiers with him. He was with two young women. They rode on horseback along a twisting forest path. Ahead of them an Indian guide moved on foot.

The young women were sisters, but they looked as different as night and day.

One had dark hair and dark eyes. Her name was Cora. The other was blond and blue-eyed. Her name was Alice.

They were different in other ways, too. Cora was bold and spirited. She said what she thought and did what she thought was best. Alice was gentle and sweet tempered. She put her trust in the goodness of others. She

*A* bloody war between Great Britain and France is being waged on the American frontier. Two sisters, Cora and Alice Munro, must cross hostile territory to join their father at the fort where he is fighting. They have an Indian guide, a Huron, but he is a false ally. Their true friends turn out to be a renegade scout named Hawkeye and a brave pair of Indians—the last of the Mohicans!

