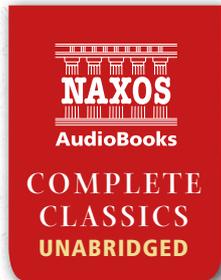


THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

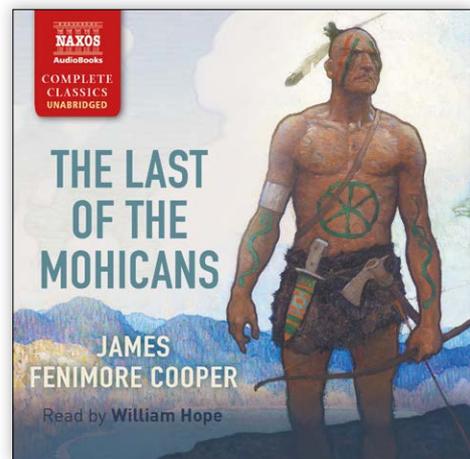
Read by **William Hope**



This famous novel deals with the early frontier period of American history and is set in 1757 during the Seven Years War between the French and the British. Intrepid frontiersman and scout Natty 'Hawkeye' Bumppo has lived among Indians for most of his life, respecting their customs and acquiring the skills of an experienced woodsman. His closest companion Chingachgook, the Mohican chief, and his son Uncas are the last surviving members of the Mohican tribe. When the evil Magua threatens the life of an innocent English woman, Hawkeye and the Mohicans find themselves at the centre of a battle for honour and vengeance.



Canadian by birth, **William Hope** grew up in Montreal before training at RADA as an actor. Despite prolific and diverse work in the UK as an 'English' stage actor, William is mostly known as an international 'American' screen actor seen in over 150 films and TV shows. As an ex-member of the BBC Radio Drama Company he has performed in hundreds of plays and readings for radio. He has recorded over 200 audiobooks and regularly appears in voiceovers, cartoons and video games. In film, he is best known as Lieutenant Gorman in James Cameron's iconic *Aliens*, a role that has led to his voice being sampled and imitated in diverse media.



Total running time: 16:51:29

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1	The Last of the Mohicans	10:00	26	Chapter 13	15:04
2	Chapter 1	12:41	27	For many minutes Duncan succeeded in keeping...	13:22
3	According to the orders of the preceding night...	13:26	28	Chapter 14	18:26
4	Chapter 2	11:08	29	When the travelers reached the verge of...	17:26
5	The stranger regarded his interrogator a moment...	10:27	30	Chapter 15	13:48
6	Chapter 3	11:39	31	Without waiting for an answer from either...	17:10
7	If unsatisfied by the philosophy of his companion...	10:44	32	Chapter 16	17:11
8	Chapter 4	12:42	33	The young man availed himself of this order...	14:40
9	The hunter, who had already abandoned his...	9:15	34	Chapter 17	18:57
10	Chapter 5	11:41	35	Gamut cheerfully assented, and together they...	17:58
11	So soon as Cora and Alice were seated, the scout...	11:48	36	Chapter 18	14:45
12	Chapter 6	13:45	37	Uncas, without making any reply, bounded away...	15:28
13	In the meanwhile, the gravity of Chingachgook...	15:58	38	Chapter 19	16:55
14	Chapter 7	16:42	39	Of these several movements Heyward was a deeply...	16:02
15	The sisters followed him into the outer cave...	12:25	40	Chapter 20	14:52
16	Chapter 8	12:15	41	Hawkeye was not mistaken; for when the Hurons...	14:51
17	At a short distance from the rock, their little bark...	14:35	42	Chapter 21	13:25
18	Chapter 9	11:07	43	The whole party now proceeded, following the...	14:10
19	Faint and almost despairing as was the prospect...	11:23	44	Chapter 22	15:55
20	Chapter 10	15:13	45	The scout nodded his head in assent, though he...	14:53
21	He had been fond of believing, from the...	15:14	46	Chapter 23	17:56
22	Chapter 11	17:31	47	It will easily be understood, that amid such...	17:53
23	The Indian answered this bold defiance by a...	17:40	48	Chapter 24	17:50
24	Chapter 12	18:04	49	Then Magua dropped his voice, which had hitherto...	16:00
25	The scout, who by this time was seated, examining...	20:21	50	Chapter 25	16:24

51	'Though more I should not, less I could not say,' ...	17:11	59	Thus singled, and directly called on to declare his...	20:00
52	Chapter 26	13:40	60	Chapter 30	18:58
53	Uncas had cast his body back against the wall...	14:06	61	Magua, whose feelings during that scene in which...	16:53
54	Chapter 27	13:04	62	Chapter 31	21:53
55	It has already been stated that, in obedience to...	13:33	63	Chapter 32	19:45
56	Chapter 28	13:13	64	We shall not pause to detail the meeting between...	20:19
57	This insinuation was a home thrust, and one that...	14:13	65	Chapter 33	19:45
58	Chapter 29	17:22	66	Then a low, deep sound was heard, like the...	18:25

THE LAST OF THE MOHICANS

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER

James Fenimore Cooper, considered to be the first important American novelist, was born in Burlington, New Jersey on 15 September, 1789. His father, Judge William Cooper, founded the frontier village of Cooperstown in the lake region of New York State, to which the family moved when James was a year old. He attended school at Albany, and at thirteen was sent to Yale, where he was the youngest member of his class. He was expelled in 1805 for his part in some prank, and joined the navy, in which he served as a midshipman. After the assassination of his father in 1809 by a political opponent, he resigned from the navy. In 1811 he married Susan Delancy, a descendant of one of the early governors of New York colony, and settled down in Scarsdale, where for a time he led the life of a country gentleman. An apocryphal story has it that Cooper, after throwing aside a novel his wife had been reading, said to her, 'I could write you a better book than that myself'. She challenged him to make good his boast, thus setting him on his career as an author.

Cooper's first novel was *Precaution* (1820), which had little success, but his next book, *The Spy*, published the following year, established his reputation. He went on to produce a total of fifty works during his lifetime. But it was with *The Leatherstocking Tales* that he consolidated his popularity, and it is chiefly for these stories that he is remembered today. They consist of *The Pioneers* (1823), *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), *The Prairie* (1827), *The Pathfinder* (1840) and *The Deerslayer* (1841).

In 1826 Cooper and his family travelled to Europe where he spent the next seven years. Despite his duties as US Consul in Lyons, he continued to write, and in addition to novels, produced political works and books on travel. In 1833 he returned to America, and settled back in Cooperstown where he spent the remainder of his life.

The Last of the Mohicans was written during the author's European stay, but the order in which the books appeared differs from the sequence of events related in the story. It starts with *The Deerslayer* (the last to be written), is taken up in *The Last of the Mohicans*, continues in *The Pathfinder* and *The Pioneer*, and reaches its conclusion in *The Prairie*. The narrative concerns the French, British and Indian battles for territorial supremacy in the early days of the new nation, and is filled with exciting adventures – skirmishes, attacks, ambushes, flights, pursuits and rescues.

In *The Leatherstocking Tales* Cooper created characters who have achieved the status of mythic heroes in the popular imagination. First among these is the intrepid frontiersman and scout, Natty Bumppo, known as Hawkeye in *The Last of the Mohicans*. Although a European, Hawkeye has learned from the Indians all the woodsman's skills. Cooper's respect for the Indian way of life and for the dignity and wisdom of the native tribes set him apart from many of his European and Colonial contemporaries who had nothing but contempt for the American 'savages'.

Hawkeye's closest companion is the Mohican chief Chingachgook, and it is Chingachgook's son Uncas who is the subject of the book's title, the last surviving member of the Mohican tribe. Cooper sees them as children of nature skilled in the ways of the forest, and invests them with such noble characteristics as bravery, honour and loyalty. But not all Cooper's Indians are heroes. In Magua he has created a cunning and sinister villain, a worthy opponent for Hawkeye, and the narrative contains incidents of Indian treachery and cowardice. Neither is betrayal confined to the Indian tribes – Montcalm, the commander of the French forces, fails to keep his word, as does the English General Webb, leaving Munro and his troops to take the consequences.

The European characters are helpless in the face of the wild terrain and native enemies. In the unfamiliar new world their European sophistication and learning is useless to them. The eccentric music master David's psalm-singing is no protection from Indian arrows, although his innocence helps to save him in the end. Without the woodcraft skills of Hawkeye and his Indian companions, Duncan and his two charges, Cora and Alice, would have perished almost before their journey had begun.

In *The Last of the Mohicans* we sense Cooper's closeness to the time, the place and the people about which he writes. His is the authentic voice of the early struggles of the American nation. His tales of the hardship and danger of frontier life were the first of their kind, and paved the way for the vast numbers of such stories which have appeared since. Our appetite for tales of adventure has not diminished in the one hundred and seventy odd years since these stories were written, and they continue to give as much pleasure today as they did when first published.

Notes by Neville Jason

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