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[Last of the Mohicans] Carte dresse pour la lecture des Pionniers Roman de J. Fenimore Cooper

Stock#: 50993
Map Maker: Tardieu / Cooper
Date: 1836 circa
Place: Paris
Color: Hand Colored
Condition: VG+
Size: 5 x 6.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

Finely engraved map of "Templeton ou Cooperstown", and the Lake Otsego vicinity, which illustrated a French edition of James Fenimore Cooper's work of historical fiction on life in colonial America.

Templeton was the name given by Cooper for Cooperstown in the novels and the town in which Cooper was raised.

James Fenimore Cooper's "Leatherstocking Tales" is a fictional five-volume series, whose main character is Natty Bumppo, a child of European-American descent who was raised by the Delaware Indians. In his adulthood he became a fearless warrior with his Indian foster brother, Chingachgook, by his side. The second and most famous volume from this series is "The Last of the Mohicans."

Last of the Mohicans



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The Last of the Mohicans is set in 1757, during the French and Indian War (the Seven Years' War), when France and Great Britain battled for control of North America. During this war, both the French and the British used Native American allies, but the French were particularly dependent, as they were outnumbered in the Northeast frontier areas by the more numerous British colonists.

The novel is primarily set in the upper New York wilderness, detailing the transport of the two daughters of Colonel Munro, Alice and Cora, to a safe destination at Fort William Henry. Among the caravan guarding the women are the frontiersman Natty Bumppo, Major Duncan Heyward, and the Indians Chingachgook and Uncas, the former of whom is the novel's title character. These characters are sometimes seen as a microcosm of the budding American society, particularly with regards to their racial composition.

At the time of Cooper's writing, many people believed that the Native Americans were disappearing, and would ultimately be assimilated or fail to survive. Especially in the East, their numbers continued to decline. At the same time, the author was interested in the period of the frontier of transition, when more colonists were increasing pressure on the Native Americans. Cooper grew up in Cooperstown, New York, which his father had established on what was then a western frontier of settlement and later developed after the Revolutionary War.

Cooper set this novel during the Seven Years' War, an international conflict between Great Britain and France, which had a front in North America known by the Anglo-American colonists as the French and Indian War. The conflict arrayed British colonial settlers and minimal regular forces against royal French forces, with both sides also relying on Native American allies. The war was fought primarily along the frontiers of the British colonies from Virginia to Nova Scotia.

In the spring of 1757, Lieutenant Colonel George Monro became garrison commander of Fort William Henry, located on Lake George (New York) in the Province of New York. In early August, Major General Louis-Joseph de Montcalm and 7,000 troops besieged the fort. On August 2, 1757, General Webb, who commanded the area from his base at Fort Edward, sent 200 regulars and 800 Massachusetts militia to reinforce the garrison at William Henry. In the novel, this is the relief column with which Monro's daughters travel.

Monro sent messengers south to Fort Edward on August 3, 1757, requesting reinforcements, but Webb refused to send any of his estimated 1,600 men north because they were all that stood between the French and Albany. He wrote to Munro on August 4 that he should negotiate the best terms possible; this communication was intercepted and delivered to Montcalm. In Cooper's version, the missive was being carried by Bumppo when he, and it, fell into French hands.



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On August 7, Montcalm sent men to the fort under a truce flag to deliver Webb's dispatch. By then the fort's walls had been breached, many of its guns were useless, and the garrison had taken significant casualties. After another day of bombardment by the French, Monro raised the white flag and agreed to withdraw.

When the withdrawal began, some of Montcalm's Indian allies, angered at the lost opportunity for loot, attacked the British column. Cooper's account of the attack and aftermath is lurid and somewhat inaccurate. A detailed reconstruction of the action and its aftermath indicates that the final tally of British missing and dead ranges from 70 to 184, while more than 500 British were taken captive.

Detailed Condition: