

CHAPTER IV.
ANDASTES

There is nothing in the writing and understanding of history that has caused so much trouble as the confusion of Indian names. The tribes were frequently dividing, then subdividing; in one place today and moved, conquered or annihilated tomorrow. Many of them had the custom of adopting what remained of the conquered, unto their own tribe and family. The Dutch, English and French all arrived on this side of the great pond about the same time, and as soon as they came in contact with the different tribes gave each a name, and why they gave them the names they did, it was and is to this day difficult, or impossible to tell. As an illustration the tribe located on Spanish hill was known in history by several different names. Champlain called them the Carantouans, sometimes spelled Carantonanas. The Jesuits called them the Andastes, and by this name they were best known. The Dutch called them the Minquas, while the English called them the Susquehannocks, some times spelled in several different ways, and from this came the name of our beautiful river of nearly the same name, or possibly the tribe was named after the river upon which they were located. These same Indians were also mentioned in history as the Lenape, by other writers as the Leni Lenape. The Andastes were a numerous and warlike tribe, and soon after the year 1600 they were able to muster more than one thousand warriors, and occupied all of the Susquehanna valley within the State of Pennsylvania, and at times extending up the river much farther, that depending upon their success in strife with the Iroquois, with whom they were continually, or frequently at war. They had three important villages in this vicinity; their headquarters being on and about Spanish Hill, Oo-Non-Tioga another of considerable extent at "mound hill" two and one half miles beyond Elmira, on the banks of the Chemung river, and the third at the mouth of Towanda Creek near the present city of Towanda.

The Andastes also had numerous villages and stockades as far south as the Chesapeake Bay, where Captain John Smith mentions in his "General History" having met them, and describes them as being giants. This statement has been in doubt until recent years, when several skeletons of this departed race have been discovered, which tend to prove the truth of Smith's statement. When excavating for the Spalding Memorial Building at Athens they exhumed a skeleton about eight feet in height, which can be seen in the collection immediately over where he had been buried several hundred years before.

The Broadhead expedition in the summer of 1916 secured the skeletons of several of this people on Queen Esthers Flats, near the public highway leading to Towanda about one-half mile west of the Chemung river bridge at Athens; many or all of these remains indicated that they were about seven feet in height.

Smith also stated in his book quoted above that the Andastes, were known as Cannibals, eating the flesh of their victims boiled. They also had a custom of leaving one of their war clubs near the victim they had slain, so that no innocent party might be accused of the deed. He also states that the Andastes had powerful voices in proportion to their bodies.

To the student of history who wishes to go deeply into the history of the Andaste Indians we would recommend that they consult "Annals of the Susquehannock and other Lancaster County Pa. Indians, 1500-1763" by H. Frank Fshelman, pub. Lancaster, Pa., 1908. It contains a valuable fund of information. Most of the history of the Andastes is from copies of original documents contained in this work. The Andastes and Mohawks were the bitterest of foes and undoubtedly had many wars, but there seems to be some confusion about a war between these tribes about the year 1600. We believe there were two different wars one just before 1600, and another lasting from 1607 to 1620, at the expiration of which the Mohawks were nearly exterminated.

In 1655 the Cayugas one of the League were forced across Lake Ontario by the Andastes and took refuge in Canada but the Andastes must have been hard pressed by the League previous to this date, for in 1652 they enter into an Alliance with the Commonwealth of Maryland to assist them to overcome the League. In 1662 the League penetrated to Southern Pa. with a large force and attacked the Andastes at their principal stockade stronghold, but were unable to capture the place by force, and attempted to do so by stratagem. Making overtures for a parley, they requested permission for twenty-five of their parley to enter the stockade ostensibly to treat for

peace, and obtain provisions to return home, but intending, evidently, to assist in some manner to open a way for their forces to overcome the garrison. As soon as they were admitted inside, they were placed on platforms so as to be seen by their friends from the outside, and burned to death. After this the League returned to their homes. The following year (1663) the League again penetrated to Southern Pa. 1600 strong and pressed the Andastes so hard that Maryland came to their assistance with powder and lead. In 1664 the Andastes and Maryland troops assailed the Senecas in their own country in western New York, as Maryland feared the power of the League if the Andastes were overpowered. The war continued with varying success. In 1669 the League was in great fear of the Andastes. In 1672 the League was seeking allies to fight the Andastes. In 1673, the Marylanders who had declared war against the Andastes, defeated them near the Susquehanna river, and soon after what remained were nearly exterminated by the League, and from this time on they ceased to be a power, and Maryland acknowledged their subjugation by the League. Part of those remaining, located in Maryland with a small tribe called the Piscataways whom a short time previous they had looked upon with contempt. This remnant of a once powerful tribe were later treated with great injustice by the people of that colony. About one hundred of the Andastes were adopted into the several tribes of the League, and these were the only ones who ever again after 1774 traveled this beautiful valley which they had possessed for ages.