

Oklahoma Indian Education Tribal Guide: The Comanche Nation of Oklahoma

Tribal Seal/Flag/Website

Tribal Seal:



Tribal Flag:



Tribal Website: <https://www.comanchenation.com/>



Migration/Movement/Forced Removal

Original Homeland - *What is known today as Wind River, Wyoming & near Yellowstone National Park.*

Location In Oklahoma - Lawton, Oklahoma

History

The Comanches were rulers of the Great Plains in the 1700s and became known as the Lords of the Southern Plains. Renowned for their horsemanship, they defended their land from all intruders. The introduction of the horse to Comanche people enables them to travel widely, striking terror into the hearts of their farthest enemy. It also enabled them to provide the things necessary for their families -- food, shelter, and clothing. Spaniards and Europeans were their first outside contact, but that changed by the 1830s when white men pushed westward towards a new frontier.

Comanche tribal government was a democratic process, with organized bands led by Band Chiefs, coming together as needed to discuss important issues. At one time there may have been as many as thirty-five Bands, but during the nineteenth century there were five outstanding bands identified. They were the Penatuka, Yaparuka, Noyuka, Kwaharu and Kuhtsutuuka. (*See more information in "Comanche Bands" section, below.)

From the time white men pushed westward towards a new frontier in the 1830s, many events occurred that altered the way of life for this great tribe. The Treaty of Medicine Lodge, the Battle of Adobe Walls, the Jerome Agreement, and the Oklahoma land openings were but a few of these events.

The Treaty of Medicine Lodge was signed in 1867 in Kansas with the Comanche, Kiowa, Apache, Cheyenne and Arapaho. The tribes were promised protection from the hunters who were killing off the buffalo and were to be provided schools, churches, and annuities. The tribes, in turn, were to permit railroads to be built through their lands, cease raiding, and agree to live on a reservation to be set up for them. In addition, 38.5 million acres (60,000 square miles) were given up for a reservation that contained just over three million acres (4,800 square miles). Reservation life began for the Comanches in 1869.

The Battle of Adobe Walls took place in the panhandle of Texas in 1874. Comanches, Kiowas and Cheyenne's attacked the hunters who were using the abandoned fort in their quest to kill the buffalo for their hides. Although the hunters were greatly outnumbered, the Indians were defeated because of the protection offered by the fort itself and the long-range buffalo rifles used by the hunters. The battle was disastrous for the Indians. By 1880 both the buffalo and a way of life for the Comanches were gone.

The Jerome Agreement of 1892 was signed at Fort Sill between the United States and the Kiowa, Comanche, and Apache (KCA) Tribes. The Agreement allotted each man, woman, and child 160 acres which was to be held in trust for them, free from taxation. In return the Indians gave up all their lands except for four tracts which contained over a half



million acres (862 square miles) and agreed to accept two million dollars for the relinquished land. Bitterness resulted in that most of the Indians did not want the Agreement at all. Indian leaders involved in the negotiations asked for \$2.50 an acre, but in the end, they were paid \$1.25 per acre. By June 5, 1901, Indian land allotments were completed, and this nomadic tribe of the Plains settled into the life of farmers/ranchers.

Exactly five years later, land-hungry "Boomers" forced the opening of the last remaining land held by the Indians, an area that had come to be known as "The Big Pasture." Before it was opened to white settlement, children born after the allotments of 1901 were given land. The remainder was divided into tracts for the last big land opening in Oklahoma's short history.

The Comanche Nation now numbers 13,000 persons, with more than half of them residing in this area of Southwest Oklahoma. The Comanche Nation Complex is located nine miles north of Lawton, Oklahoma, and offers many services for tribal members.

The Comanche Nation owns land jointly with the Kiowa and Apache Tribes (known as the K.C.A.), but also owns land on its own.

Comanches are the best educated of all Indian tribes with more students per capita enrolled in higher education. We have doctors, lawyers, chiefs ("chief" executive officers!), teachers, principals, superintendents, registered nurses, actors, authors, artists, craftsmen -- people in all professions -- who do an outstanding job representing themselves and the Comanche people.

The Comanches have not been "reservation" Indians since 1901. Many still live on their family's allotted land, with others living in cities all over the country and overseas. Some choose to lease their land, either to cattlemen or oil companies. A few are wealthy, most are making ends meet, some struggle through each day. Many work 9 to 5 jobs, with others owning and operating their own business.

The Comanches were once known as the Lords of the Southern Plains, and it is our vision to again be considered as such. The Comanche Nation as a whole and the Comanche people as individuals have gone through some very difficult times but are survivors.

Comanche Timeline 1500- 2003/Comanche Bands:

<http://www.comanchelanguage.org/beginner-s-packet.html>

Oklahoma Historical Society source to consider for Indian Removal information:

<https://info.library.okstate.edu/oklahoma/nativeamerican>

The Library of Congress documents:

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Indian.html>

Oklahoma Indian Country Guide, Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department

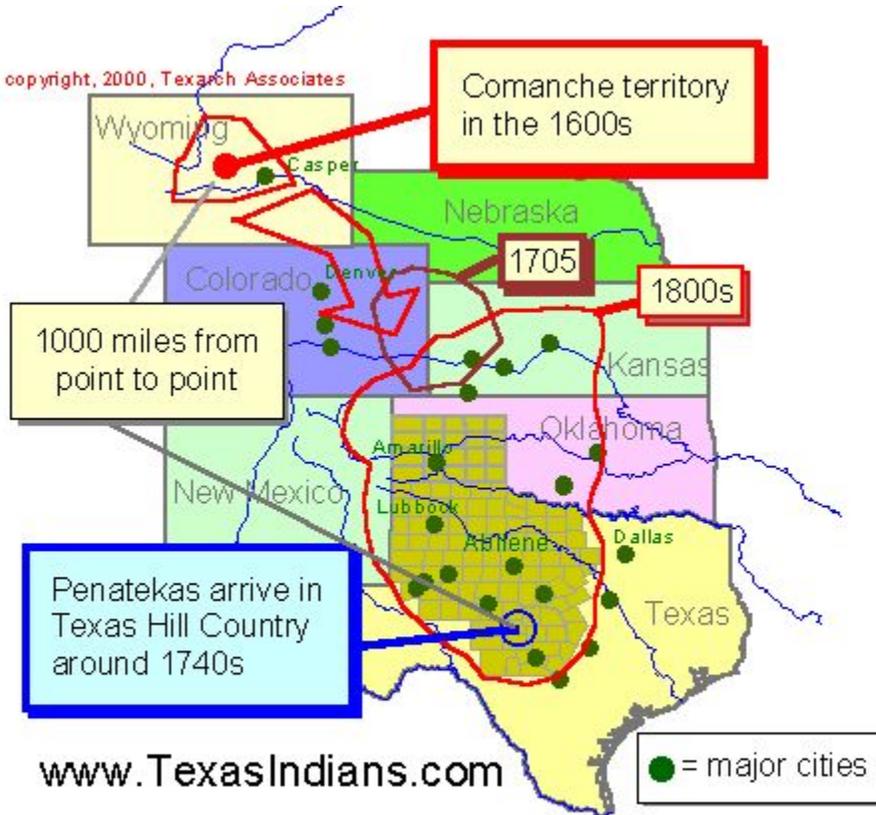
http://s3.amazonaws.com/content.newsok.com/newsok/images/NIE/nie_docs/Indian%20Country%20Tab,%2036%20page.pdf



Maps

Comanche Migration 1700 & 1800's:

<http://www.texasindians.com/commgs.jpg>

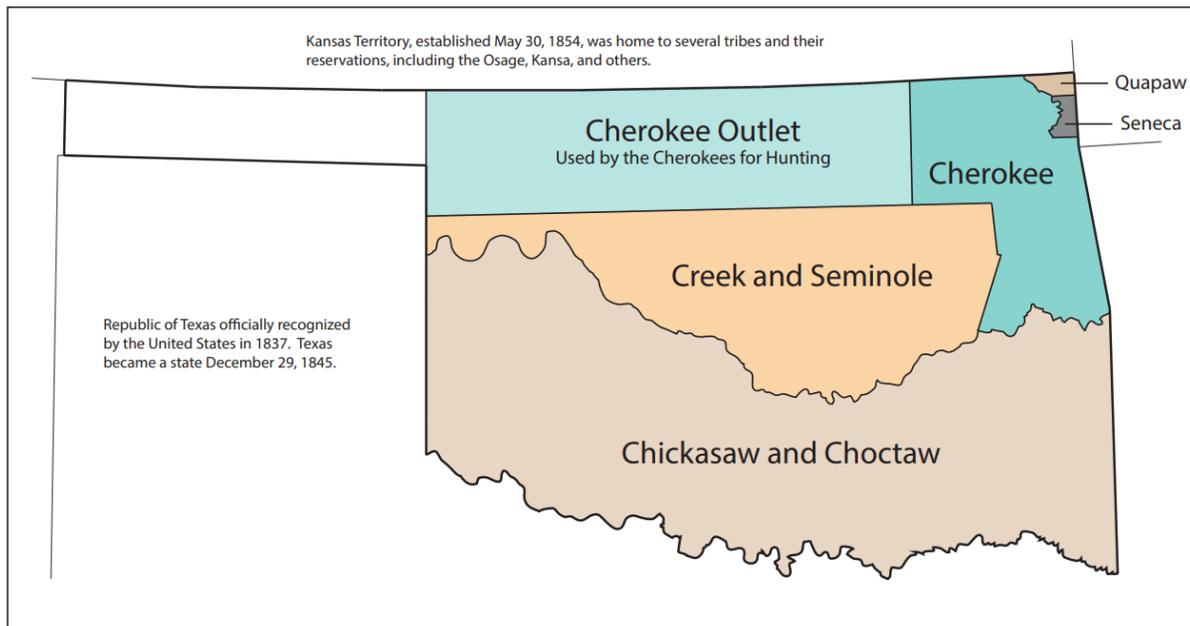


Comanche Migration



Tribal lands after 1830, Tribes and Nations of Oklahoma and Indian Territories:
<https://www.okhistory.org/images/research/IT.2.removal.pdf>

Indian Territory During the Initial Removal of the Five Tribes
as per the Indian Removal Act of 1830



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2010 Census: <https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/race-and-ethnicity-in-the-united-state-2010-and-2020-census.html>



Population Past/Present

- Total tribal enrollment: 15,191
- Tribal enrollment in Oklahoma: 7,763
- Membership criteria ¼ blood quantum

Government: Chiefs vs Chairman, Elected or Paternal

Tribal Government Leadership

The Comanche Nation is governed by a Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary-Treasurer along with four business committee members. Jointly the elected officials are known as the Comanche Business Committee, or the C.B.C. These persons are elected by tribal members, who are the supreme governing body of the Comanche Nation. A constitution adopted in 1967 sets forth the conditions under which the Comanche Nation operates. The C.B.C meets monthly to take care of business, with tribal members present and offering input into decisions that affect all members.

Constitution

<https://comanchenation.com/sites/comanchenation.com/files/Constitution%2012.09.2023.pdf>

Language Group

Language Family - Uto-Aztecan

Comanche Sounds and Alphabet <http://www.comanchelanguage.org/donate.html>

Traditional Lifeways

Known as “Lords of the Plains”

Comanche National Museum and Cultural Center

[http://www.comanchemuseum.com/gallery#photoGallery\[gal\]/2/](http://www.comanchemuseum.com/gallery#photoGallery[gal]/2/)

Oklahoma Historical Society source to consider for Boarding Schools:

<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/a/am012.html>

Fine Arts

Art Slide show: <https://www.comanchemuseum.com/gallery.html>

Music: [https://www.comanchemuseum.com/videos.html#prettyVideo\[gal\]/0/](https://www.comanchemuseum.com/videos.html#prettyVideo[gal]/0/)



Significant Events

Comanche Code talkers During World wars I and II

http://www.comanchemuseum.com/code_talkers

See Comanche timeline 1,500-2,000

<http://www.comanchelanguage.org/Comanche%20Timeline.htm>

Fort Sill: <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/f/fo038.html>

Oklahoma Historical Society source: <http://www.okhistory.org/research/indianrecs>

History

<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/p/pa014.html>

Timeline: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Quanah-Parker>

Doc Tate Nevaquaya: <https://www.okhistory.org/publications/enc/entry?entry=NE004>

Charles Chibitty, 1999, Last Comanche Code Talker, received the Knowlton Award by the United States Government for the Code Talker's help in WWII.

Current Tribal Information

"The Comanche Nation news", (April 2024): <https://comanchenation.com/tcnn>

Famous Tribal Members

(in no particular order)

- Leader Quanah Parker
- Wilhorse
- Yellowfish
- Hoahway
- Horseback
- Ischiti
- Lookingglass
- Moway
- Otter
- Tabanani
- Tabanatica
- Tenbears
- Whitewolf

Literature:

- **Being Comanche**, by Morris W. Foster. University of Arizona Press, 1991.
- **Border Comanches**, translated by Marc Simmons. Stagecoach Press, 1967.
- **Carbine & Lance: The Story of Old Fort Sill**, by William S. Nye. University of Oklahoma Press, 1969.



- **Comanche and Kiowa Captives in Oklahoma and Texas**, by Hugh D. Corwin. Cooperative Publishing Co., 1959.
- **Comanche Barrier to Southern Plains Settlement**, by Rupert N. Richardson. 1933.
- **Comanche Belief and Rituals (thesis)**, by Daniel J. Gelo. University of New Jersey, Rutgers, 1986.
- **Comanche Code Talkers of World War II, The**, by Dr. William C. Meadows. University of Texas Press, 2003.
- **Comanche, Kiowa & Apache Obituaries**, by Sam DeVenney. Southwest Oklahoma Genealogical Society, 1999.
- **Comanche Land**, by J. Emmor Harston
- **Comanches in the New West, 1895-1908: Historical Photographs**, text by Stanley Noyes with the assistance of Daniel J. Gelo, forward by Larry McMurtry. University of Texas at Austin, 1999.
- **Comanches: Lords of the South Plains**, by Wallace and Hoebel. University of Oklahoma Press. 1986.

Sources:

Britannica
 Comanche Tribal Nation Website
 Comanche Museum
 Oklahoma Indian Country Guide, Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation
 Department
 Oklahoma Indian Affairs Website
 Oklahoma Historical Society
 The Library of Congress

