

CHIRICAHUA

(Apache: great mountain).

From: Handbook of Amer. Indians, etc. pp. 282-284.

An important division of the Apache, so called from their former mountain home in SE Arizona. Their own name is Aíáha. The Chiricahua were the most warlike of the Arizona Indians, their raids extending into New Mexico, southern Arizona, and northern Sonora, among their most noted leaders being Cochise, Victorio, Loco, Chato, Nachi; Bonito and Geronimo.

Physically they do not differ materially from the other Apache. The men are well built, muscular, with well-developed chests, sound and regular teeth, and abundant hair. The women are even more vigorous and strongly built, with broad shoulders and hips and a tendency to corpulence in old age. They habitually wear a pleasant open expression of countenance, exhibiting uniform good nature, save when in anger their face takes on a savage cast.

White wrote that their manner of life, general physique, and mental disposition seemed conducive to long life. Their characteristic long-legged moccasins of deerskin have a stout sole turning up at the toes, and the legs of the moccasins, long enough to reach the thigh, are folded back below the knee, forming a pocket in which are carried paints and a knife. The women wore short skirts of buckskin, and the men used to display surplus skins folded about the waist.

Their arrows were made of reed tipped with obsidian or iron, the shaft winged with three strips of feathers. They used in battle a long spear and a sling-shot made by inserting a stone into the green hide of a cow's tail, leaving a portion of the hair attached. They possessed no knowledge of weaving blankets. White (M.S., B.A.E.) supposed that they had immigrated into Arizona