

The Comanche Indians are descendants of the Shoshone Tribe and in the fifteenth century were located in the northwest, Montana and the Dakotas.

There were about twelve original bands but six of the smaller bands were absorbed by other bands or were killed in wars, leaving in the nineteenth century about six principal bands.

The band that settled in Southwestern Oklahoma is the Quahada Band, however, there were some Penetakas (Honey Eaters) and Yampkaras (Root Eaters) and some of their descendants among this tribe in Oklahoma but the greater number are Quahadas (Antelope Eaters).

The language of the Quahadas is similar to the other tribes but a great many words differ, for instance, pa - ha - da, meaning bear in the other language, in Quahada is was - sa - pi. In the Comanche language one word of English may mean two words in the Indian language and both be correct, but the language spoken today is 95 per cent Quahada, and the traditions and customs are of Quahada origin.

The Comanches are copper colored with black eyes and black hair. They are taller than the Apaches, more

erect, not so squatty.

They were considered the wildest tribe in the early days because they were great warriors.

Some historians claim the Cheyennes are the greatest warriors but in my research work I find the Comanches the bravest fighters. However, they were the two bravest tribes of all the Plains Indians. They are good strategists, they have the name of being the most bloodthirsty of all the tribes and this may be true with the exception of the Apaches, or at least part of the Apache band.

Old Geronimo had the name of being the most bloodthirsty Plains Indian that ever lived and he had a robe of women's scalps at his death.

The Comanches are the great roving band, or were in the early centuries. They were the first to use horses and this accounts for their roaming disposition. In the fifteenth century all the tribes had only dogs and sleds but the Spanish people brought horses to this country in the early part of the fif-

~~teenth century and~~ traded them to the Indians for buffalo hides and they started roaming and drifting further southwest and formed different colonies and traveled in wide directions.

There is a band called the Snake Band, so called because when they were traveling southward a wolf howled in their path and they would not go south but turned back north. Part of the band picked a new leader and traveled far south and the two bands became widely separated; they called the band that turned back Snake Indians.

The Comanche Indians were great horsemen. Catlin painted a picture of them as horsemen and it hangs in the Capitol Building. They are great lovers of horses to this day and their proudest moment is when they are in a parade on a pretty horse. They paint up with yellow, red and green paint, put various feathers in their hair and put bells and ornaments on their feet. The women dress in their finest buckskin suits with elk's teeth on them. It is an imposing sight.

I saw an exhibition in 1904 in Cache with several

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hundred Indians parading and dancing in all their glory.

They had had an annuity payment and the Cheyennes, Kiowas and Arapahoes were visiting them.

I saw Indians shoot a steer in the heart with an arrow when the steer and horse would be running at full speed.

I have seen them race bareback and there is no jockeying in their race, the best horse wins.

The Comanches never shave, they pluck their beard with a pair of tweezers. I have seen Indian men sit on the streets of Cache for hours at a time plucking their beard out.

They let their hair grow long and plait it up with yarn. The women spend hours combing and brushing the men's hair and wrapping it up with gorgeous colors of yarn.

Quannah Parker always had his hair in two plaits with yarn around it.

The women do not take good care of their hair,

they let it go days and days without combing; they have no time to take care of their hair because they do all the hard work.

The men are lazy. In the early days they were supposed to be warriors and do the fighting and the women the work and after their surrender they never got in the habit of working. I have seen a couple come into my store and buy 100 pounds of groceries, including a fifty pound sack of flour and the squaw would put the groceries on her back in her shawl and walk out and the buck would walk out empty handed; and sometimes she would carry the baby on her back with the groceries. They became accustomed to this procedure in the early days and it is still practiced by the older Indians.

In the last twenty years the white man has educated the Indian and the customs have changed a great deal; they have been taught Christianity.

The old Indians were great buffalo hunters and fine archers. The Comanches resented the killing of their buffalo by the white men and the raids that were

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made into Texas were to retaliate.

The great Kiowa-Comanche Country was opened for settlement in 1901 and the money was kept in Escrow at Anadarko for them. Large payments were made from 1901 to 1912, when the Indian Trading stores were discontinued. They have spent the greater portion of their money now and are practically destitute; some few try to farm, but they are too lazy and don't know how. They are in hard circumstances financially and the older Indians are still bitter toward the white man and the Government.

The Comanches are kind and generous; they are kind to their children and help one another a great deal. When one has money they all have money. They do not know how to save money and spend every cent they get and go in debt for every cent they can.

The missionaries have done a great deal to civilize the Comanche Indians and Reverend A. C. Becker at the Post Oak Mission, a Mennonite, has converted

hundreds of them. His wife is matron among them and they all go to church and worship every Sunday.

They were originally sun worshipers, believing that the great spirit was beyond the sun and the sun was the mediator for them to the great spirit and that the earth was the mother of the sun, and they worship the earth second when they smoke the pipe of peace they blow one puff to the sun and one to the earth, in other words they are nature worshipers. The Indians are deeply religious. The great warriors always prayed to the sun and earth to protect them in battle and had a star or other object on their spear made in the image of the sun and pointing to the sun.

The Chief always invoked the Great Spirit to bless them in battle and they were successful warriors. They were bloodthirsty but they prayed to their God for deliverance.

With few exceptions the Indians are honest and will not steal or lie, they will always hold a grudge. I remember Tippiance called me a liar in my store

(Un-e-sop) meaning you are a liar. I hit him and he never got over it. To this day he won't speak to me; he never will forgive me. If Indians don't like you they won't talk to you.

There are a few Indians who are dishonest. I remember in 1905 Nan-noo-ka, Black Wolf's wife, came into my store to trade. She wore a shawl around her shoulders, a waist open under the arms and a cloth wrapped around her for a skirt. This was the usual custom of woman's dress. I was looking for a certain piece of color about ten feet from her. She stole a bolt of red calico, and placed it under her shawl but she failed to cover it up entirely and I saw it. I went around and grabbed it away from her and told her to get out. She threw the scissors at me. I gave her a kick and threw her out.

He was very angry and went to the Comanche Indian Agency one mile west and told the Agent, Jim Simmons, that I kicked her out of the front door. This was not true; I did not kick her but drove her out. He started to arrest me but I told him she stole the calico and I would kick her out again and have her arrested for stealing; he dropped



the matter.

It is unusual for Indians to fight; there is not much quarreling or fighting among them. The Comanches practiced polygamy before 1902 but in that year the Commissioner of Indian Affairs issued an order that they must marry only one woman and made them secure license to marry. Before that time an Indian could buy as many women as he could support; they paid in ponies. If a buck took a fancy to a young squaw he made a bargain with her father for her with one pony, or two, or even more. If she was pretty and popular and other bucks wanted her; she married the man her father sold her to. I don't know of but one Indian now who has two wives, Oscar Yellow Wolf of Cache. He married sisters and they both still live with him and he has a large family. The Government does not bother them because they are sisters and he married them both. He violated the Oklahoma law, but since it is an old custom among the Indians the County authorities don't bother about it.

Quannah Parker had eleven wives and thirty-one children. I was personally acquainted with four of the wives. Nanooka, the woman who stole the bolt of calico was an ex-wife of Quannah Parker, and later married Black Wolf.

The following are a few words taken from the Comanche Language and translated into English.

apple	-----	am - a - gwa
banana	-----	aa - a - kaa
peach	-----	Perisuka
orange	-----	ohopit
grapes	-----	notsamoqua
cow	-----	pemero
calf	-----	tou - e - ves - ta
horse	-----	ter - yer
bear	-----	was - si - pi
person	-----	tai - wa
girl	-----	waa - a - pah

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boy	-----	tou - e - ves - ta
man	-----	tah - nap - pah
saddle	-----	not - e - no
die	-----	te - yine
hair	-----	pop - pa
yarn	-----	pop-pa-ma-wu-i-tum
money	-----	poo - a - wah
sugar	-----	pe - nah
baking powders	-----	nam - a - yi
whiskey	-----	bau - sa pia (crazy water)
crazy	-----	bausa
house	-----	kanic
barn	-----	ter - yer -- kanic (horse house)

chicken	-----	ko - ka - no - ria
quail	-----	ti - ma - su

## COLORS

black	-----	to - ho - pit
yellow	-----	chopit
blue	-----	evovit

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green	-----	esepet
white	-----	tau-sop-it
soap	-----	wanakotsa
coffee	-----	hoabe
box	-----	wabbic
race	-----	not - I - woon
hurry	-----	nam - saw
winter gone	-----	me - an
come	-----	keme
friend	-----	hites
howdy	-----	hi - hites (hello friend)
and	-----	su - da
mountain	-----	tau-yau
paint	-----	pea - saip
rotten	-----	pe - ship
pants	-----	quas - su
ice	-----	ta - aa - kabit
snow	-----	tausa    ta-aa-ka-bit (white)    (ice)