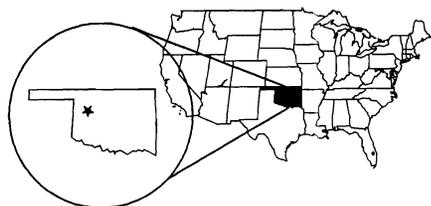


CHEYENNE & ARAPAHO



The Cheyenne and Arapaho of Oklahoma unite two of the most famous tribes in the American West. Both nations are actually the southern branches of their respective tribes [see Arapaho, Northern Cheyenne]. The Southern Cheyenne, now officially just the Cheyenne, are survivors of the Sand

Creek Massacre (ENAT, 48-53). Today, the Arapaho and Cheyenne share tribal trust lands in western Oklahoma where they earn income from farming and from leasing mineral rights.

The flag of the Cheyenne and Arapaho is a slightly modified version of the old flag of the Southern Cheyenne and Arapaho. An outline of the state of Oklahoma fills the center of a light blue field. Across this outline is a lance bearing two sets of fourteen white-and-black eagle feathers standing for the fourteen members of the old tribal council. In the center is the seal of the two tribes. It bears a tepee with three crosses in white above and beside it (the cross is often used as a star in Indian symbolism). Ringing this is a band bearing fourteen stars, again for the tribal council members. Except for the crosses, all items appear in black against a background of peach, apricot, or light beige, the color probably recalling the rawhide used on Cheyenne and Arapaho shields.



Behind the shield are traditional emblems of war and peace used by many Native Americans. The arrow, traditionally a symbol of war, points downward, meaning the Cheyenne and Arapaho are at peace. The pipe, not only a symbol of peace, is also very important in the ceremonies of many tribes. These symbols cross, forming an "X".

Arching over the entire device is “CHEYENNE AND ARAPAHO TRIBE” in black; below is “OF OKLAHOMA”, also in black. The flag was altered to reflect both the name change of the Cheyenne and the makeup of the Tribal Council. The word “SOUTHERN” was removed and a row of eight white stars was added across the top of the map of Oklahoma to show the new council’s structure.

A variant of the flag was created for the Flag Plaza in Oklahoma City (Homer Miller Co., Oklahoma City, OK). The background is white, not blue. The official seal has two arrows for the two tribes, rather than one; the feathers are gold and white rather than black and white. 🏹