

## Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma

(Oklahoma Social Studies Standards, OSDE)

**Tribe:** Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma

**Tribal website(s):** <http://www.iowanation.org>

### 1. Migration/movement/forced removal

**Oklahoma History C3 Standard 2.3** “Integrate visual and textual evidence to explain the reasons for and trace the migrations of Native American peoples including the Five Tribes into present-day Oklahoma, the Indian Removal Act of 1830, and tribal resistance to the forced relocations.”

**Oklahoma History C3 Standard 2.7** “Compare and contrast multiple points of view to evaluate the impact of the Dawes Act which resulted in the loss of tribal communal lands and the redistribution of lands by various means including land runs as typified by the Unassigned Lands and the Cherokee Outlet, lotteries, and tribal allotments.”

- Original Homeland – present day state of Iowa
- Location In Oklahoma – Perkins, Oklahoma

The Iowa or Ioway, lived for the majority of its recorded history in what is now the state of Iowa. The Iowas call themselves the Bah-Kho-Je which means grey snow, probably derived from the fact that during the winter months their dwellings looked grey, as they were covered with fire-smoked snow. The name Iowa is a French term for the tribe and has an unknown connection with 'marrow.'

The Iowas began as a Woodland culture, but because of their migration to the south and west, they began to adopt elements of the Plains culture, thus culminating in the mixture of the two. The Iowa Nation was probably indigenous to the Great Lakes areas and part of the Winnebago Nation. At some point a portion moved southward, where they separated again. The portion which stayed closest to the Mississippi River became the Iowa; the remainder became the Otoe and Missouri.

The Iowa Tribe relocated many times during its history; the mouth of the Rock River in present Illinois, the Root River in present Iowa, the Red Pipestone Quarry in southwestern Minnesota in the earliest historical period of 1600, and the Spirit Lake/Lake Okiboji area of what is now Iowa

in 1730. For many years they maintained a village near Council Bluffs, Iowa, abandoning it because of aggression by the Sioux and a desire to locate closer to the French traders. Thereafter in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Iowa lived primarily near the Des Moines River on the Chariton/Grand River Basin.

With the encroachment of white settlers into western lands, the Iowa Tribe ceded their lands in 1824 and were given two years in which to vacate. Additional lands were ceded in 1836 and 1838, and the Tribe was removed to an area near the Kansas-Nebraska border. The Iowas, once a proud nation whose native lands encompassed an area of the Missouri and Mississippi River Valleys in what is presently Wisconsin, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska, now found themselves with a strip of land ten miles wide and twenty miles long.

In treaties, they ceded their claims to lands in Missouri, Iowa, and Minnesota. The Treaty of 1836 assigned part of them to a reservation along the Great Nemaha River in Nebraska and Kansas. Subsequent treaties would find this land even further reduced.

Dissatisfaction with their conditions and treatment resulted in a number of Iowa tribal members leaving the Kansas-Nebraska reserve in 1878 and moving to Indian Territory (Oklahoma). In 1883 an Iowa reservation was created there, but Iowas who wished to remain on the land in the north were allowed to do so.

The original Iowa Reservation in Oklahoma was established by Executive Order dated August 15, 1883. The Iowa Nation was now divided into two tribes. Today the two are recognized as separate entities. The Northern Iowa are headquartered in White Cloud, Kansas, while the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma has offices in Perkins, Oklahoma.

Oklahoma Historical Society source to consider for Indian Removal information:  
<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/i/in015.html>

## 2. Maps

***Oklahoma History C3 Standard 2.3*** “Integrate visual and textual evidence to explain the reasons for and trace the migrations of Native American peoples including the Five Tribes into present-day Oklahoma, the Indian Removal Act of 1830, and tribal resistance to the forced relocations.”

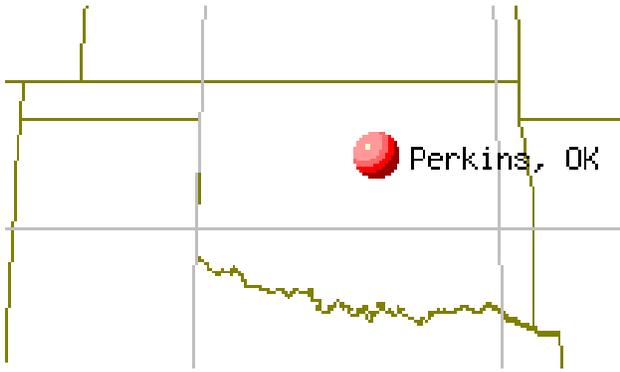
- Maps of tribal hometowns before 1830



- Relocation route & location after 1838



- Location in Oklahoma



### 3. Population Past/Present

- Total tribal enrollment – 800
- Tribal enrollment in Oklahoma – over 490 persons, with a jurisdictional area covering all or parts of Payne, Oklahoma, Lincoln, and Logan counties

### 4. Government; Chiefs vs Chairman; Elected or Paternal

**US Government C3 Standard 3.4** “Summarize and explain the relationships and the responsibilities between national and state governments including tribal and local governments.

**Oklahoma History C3 Standard** “The student will analyze the formation and development of constitutional government in Oklahoma. 1) Compare and contrast the development of governments among the Native American tribes, the movement for the state of Sequoyah. 2) Describe and summarize attempts to create a state constitution joining Indian and Oklahoma Territories including the impact of the Progressive and Labor Movements resulting in statehood on November 16, 1907.”

The Iowla Tribe of Oklahoma is an independent nation, complete with its own constitution, laws, and governing bodies. There are many aspects of the Tribal Government, all necessary to ensure the best for the Tribal Community.

As indigenous people, we are the center of a Sovereign Nation with inherent powers of self-government recognized as such by treaties and legislation.

The strengthening of the powers of the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma by enhancing government operations through tribal legislative and judicial methods is an ongoing process. The Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma has strengthened its judicial capabilities by the successful operation of the Tribe's court system. By administering its own judicial system, speedy and impartial adjudication of violations of tribal law and resolution of civil disputes are handled accordingly.

The Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma first established and operated its tribal court system through an inter-tribal agreement with a neighboring tribe in 1987. In 1992, the Iowas assumed complete operation of its tribal court and physically relocated the court from the inter-tribal location to the Iowa Tribal Headquarters in Perkins, Oklahoma.

The tribal court is a court of general jurisdiction and administers its law and order in civil, criminal and juvenile matters. The court staff consists of a district court judge, public defender and prosecutor. The Iowa Supreme Court is made up of two justices and one Chief Justice. The Tribe's judicial authority is based upon its Constitution, its Tribal Law and Order Code, and the unique relationship between Native Americans and the United States.

## 5. Language Group

***Oklahoma History C3 Standard 4.1*** “Compare and contrast the successes and failures of the United States policy of assimilation of the Native Americans in Oklahoma including the passage of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 and the effects of the Indian Boarding Schools (1880s-1940s) upon Native Americans’ identity, culture, traditions, and tribal government and sovereignty.”

Their language is a Chiwere dialect of the Sioux language.

Currently, the Iowa Tribe does not offer language classes. Two years ago we were able to offer classes which taught language and songs. The Tribe sponsored a language workshop, and a number of Tribes attended with the purpose of exchanging ideas for language retention. It is our intention to be able to offer similar programs in the near future. In the interim, we have given recording devices to our elders and the request that they record any words, stories, and songs they can remember. This information will be catalogued and used for additional programs.

## 6. Cultural Identifiers – i.e. Mound Builders; Plains

**Oklahoma History C3 Standard 4.1** *“Compare and contrast the successes and failures of the United States policy of assimilation of the Native Americans in Oklahoma including the passage of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 and the effects of the Indian Boarding Schools (1880s-2013) upon Native Americans’ identity, culture, traditions, and tribal government and sovereignty.” Oklahoma schools only.*

The Iowa Tribe has given priority to the protection, preservation, and retention of its culture, and underscoring this aim, the Business Committee and General Council have enacted the Cultural Heritage Ordinance, which affords protection to all aspects of culture. For this reason, the Iowa Tribe has committed itself to dignified and respectful reburial of their ancestors, their cultural heritage code also addresses other protections, such as language, dance, song, religion, intellectual properties, images, and archaeological sites.

To further this end, not only for their tribe but to assist all other Native American peoples in repatriation efforts and historic preservation, the Iowa Tribe has developed special expertise in sensitive archaeological projects. The center of these operations is located in Perkins, Oklahoma.

Oklahoma Historical Society source to consider for Boarding Schools:  
<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/a/am012.html>

## 7. Fine arts

**Oklahoma History C3 Standard 4.1** *“Compare and contrast the successes and failures of the United States policy of assimilation of the Native Americans in Oklahoma including the passage of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 and the effects of the Indian Boarding Schools (1880s-1940s) upon Native Americans’ identity, culture, traditions, and tribal government and sovereignty.”*

The Iowa Tribal Powwow, is held in Perkins and includes traditional camping, social dancing, arts and craft vendors and plenty of food. Come to this annual powwow to view American Indian dancers in full regalia. This event features gourd dancing, as well as dance competition categories that includes cloth, buckskin, jingle, fancy shawl, straight, traditional, grass and fancy dancing.

## 8. Significant events (ie. Massacres, Battles, Supreme Court cases...)

**Oklahoma History C3 Standard 2.4C** *“Summarize the impact of the Civil War and Reconstruction Treaties on Native American peoples, territories, and tribal sovereignty including the a) Required enrollment of the Freedmen, b) Second Indian Removal and the role of the Buffalo Soldiers, c) Significance of the Massacre at the Washita, d) Reasons for the reservation system, and e) Establishment of the western military posts of Fort Sill, Fort Supply, and Fort Reno.”*

The Iowa Tribe was fortunate enough to have been awarded an ANA grant which we entitled cultural enrichment. The grant covered a number of activities. One important aspect of the grant was the construction of traditional Ioway homes, including long houses and bark houses. The grant was written to urge this construction in a traditional manner rather than using tools. Adjacent to the houses, a traditional garden was planted with corn, beans, and squash. Our attempt was to do all of our work without modern technology, including using a garden hose to water the garden. An antler rake and a bison scapula were used as tools. Members came away with an increased respect for our ancestors, and a greater appreciation of the challenges they faced. If a crop failed due to lack of water in a nearby stream and a lack of rain or a home was not completed prior to the onset of winter, this is precisely what the ancestors would have faced. The construction activities served as a great learning tool, particularly for the younger generations.

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

## 9. Current Information on tribe

The Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma developed an eagle rehabilitation program to protect injured eagles and increase community awareness of wildlife and Native American culture. The Bah Kho-Je Xla Chi (Grey Snow Eagle House) was completed in January 2006 through funds provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) and the Iowa Tribe. The Grey Snow Eagle House operates under four USFWS permits. The Religious-Use Permit allows the Tribe to house eagles that are non-releasable due to the nature or severity of the injuries. This permit also allows the tribe to gather naturally molted feathers and distribute them to tribal members for use in cultural ceremonies. The second permit allows the tribe to rehabilitate eagles for their eventual release. The eagle exhibition permit allows eagles trained to sit on the glove to go out and teach the general public about eagles and Native American culture. The scientific permit allows the facility to study eagles for future conservation efforts. The Iowa Tribe is the first tribe in the country to be permitted through the USFWS as Eagle Rehabilitators.

Land operations of the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma includes the agricultural program under which buffalo, cattle, and crops are raised. The agricultural program is participating in the United States Department of Agriculture EQIP program under which ponds and other work has been accomplished. The maintenance sub-division is tasked with the responsibility of the upkeep and preservation of the Tribal lands and facilities. The Iowa Tribe owns over 600 acres which maintenance oversees and maintains. This includes preparation of the Pow Wow grounds and the Bah-Kho-Je Chena building, located south of the Tribal complex, for the annual Pow Wow held the third week-end in June each year.

The Office of Environmental Services protects, maintains and restores natural resources by implementing conservation programs for the preservation of cultural beliefs and ecological integrity.

#### **10. Other information (ie. Elder testimonials; Guest speakers; Literature; Famous Tribal members...)**

The Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma is one of the largest employers in Payne County and in the Perkins area with over 350 employees in a wide variety of positions. Some of the tribe's ventures include the Cimarron Casino, Ioway Casino, Smoke Shop, the Bah-Kho-Je Gallery, and BKJ Solutions.

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Digital Library Collections:

Woodland Complexes – in Northeastern Iowa

The Ioway Language

Iowa Grammar

Iowa Hymnal

Photographs

Photographs of North American Indians 1850-1879 Vol. 1 &

Photographs of North American Indians 1850-1879 Vol. 2

*Iowa Treaties*

Iowa Treaty of 1854

*Iowa Books*

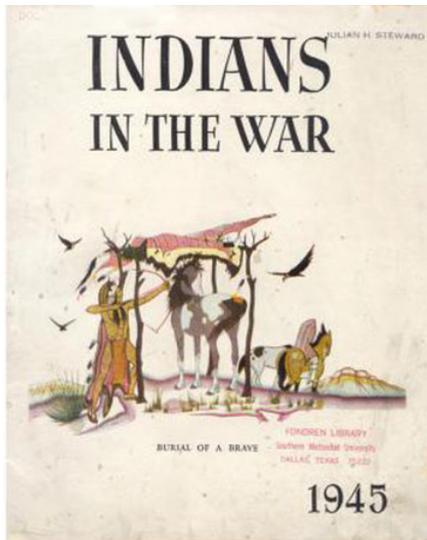


The Iowa

Thomas Foster (of Washington, D.C.),

William Harvey Miner

*Native Americans in History*



Indians In The War: Burial of a Brave 1945

By Julian H. Steward

**Sources:**

Oklahoma Historical Society

Oklahoma Indian Country Guide, Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department

The Library of Congress