

Stories of the Cahto Tribe

How Turtle Escaped

(This is a line-by-line translation (within the limits of English readability))

Turtle was walking along alone, they say.

They came to him, they say.

He was carrying some poor-quality arrows, they say.

They pushed the arrows into the ground, they say.

They spat on them, they say.

It was by the shore.

There was water there, they say, a lake.

It was summer-time.

He was angry, they say.

He sat, they say.

They laughed at him, they say.

He picked up an arrow, they say.

He shot a person, they say.

At that he jumped that water, they say.

The person died, they say.

He ran around inside the water, they say.

He made it muddy, they say.

They looked for him in vain, they say.

It became muddy, they say.

They stretched a net on a stick frame, they say.

They dipped for him in the net, they say.

He had run out without their knowing it, they say.

They went for him in vain, they say.

It was just dark, they say.

They let him go, they say.

They threw the body on the fire, they say, on the fireplace.

That is all.

Professor P.E. Goddard's Translation

Some people came where Turtle was walking along by himself. He was carrying some mean looking arrows. They took them away from him, spit on them, and thrust them into the ground. It was summer-time and a body of water was there. As he sat by the shore the others laughed at him. He took up one of the arrows and shot a man, killing him.

Turtle jumped into the pond and ran around on the bottom, making it so muddy they could not see him. They got a net, stretched it on the frame, and dipped for him. Turtle had run out without being seen. They hunted for him until it was quite dark before they gave up the search.

They put the body of the dead on the fire and burned it.

That is all.

(Based on Cahto oral traditions and beliefs)