

CHEYENNES AND OWLS

Moses Starr (From Oklahoma Historical Society transcripts by Loretta Fowler)

AUDIO TRANSCRIPT:

The owls are a bad omen to the Cheyenne. They said when an owl comes around your place it's time for you to go out there and talk to him and run him off, because it's a bad omen to where they believed (and it's true) that it brings bad luck- even up to death. So that's the reason that they used to go out there and they'd tell them to leave, they didn't want them around.

FULL TRANSCRIPT:

Them owls were like----I came fishing down at the Washita River and as I was walking there was somebody following me. I was by myself and it was maybe around nine, nine-thirty, and I heard somebody walking behind me. When I turned around and looked, I couldn't see anyone, and so I got down lower to see if I could see anyone against the outline of the land, against the sky. But I couldn't see anybody and I'd been hearing them. So I started walking again and somebody was following me-we were on gravel and you could hear them on gravel. I just thought to myself, "If I get scared then he's beaten me, whatever that is, he's won his purpose." So I turned around real fast and I walked toward him, you know, toward the sound, and that owl flew out. So it was an owl that was doing that. My dad said, "When you get scared," he said, "whatever it is has beaten you and you're gonna run and you're gonna hurt yourself. That thing back there is not gonna hurt you, you're gonna hurt yourself, see." So that's what I always thought."