The man's mother usually gave a feast for the couple, and because of this everybody knew that this woman was her son's wife. Other men would know from this that this woman was now married. Sometimes the man arranged with the parents of the woman he wished to marry. I did that twice. One time when I wanted to marry a woman I went out hunting and caught three deer. I brought these to the parents of the girl, but they told me I'd have to bring two horses also. Well, I couldn't afford to give that much for the girl so I didn't marry her. (14)

Just once I had simultaneous wives and that lasted one night! They were so jealous of each other that I left both of them. The other women that I married were no good: they were pretty mean and weren't able to take care of me. By one of these marriages I had two children. When I sent the woman away, she took one of the children, a girl, with her; I kept the one she left behind a boy. After she died I went to her place and brought the girl back to my home. I got rid of this woman because she threw a piece of bread at our little girl when she asked for something to eat. Well, that was enough for me; I let her go. My present wife reared both of these children.

Sometimes when a couple was separating, the man hit a drum once and threw the stick into the air. (15) This meant: Whoever is able to take care of this woman and thinks he can live with her, can have her. I never did that; some, however, did. I just quit the women. The man doesn't in any way support the woman after they have parted.

(14) Paul Beckwith recorded in 1886 that the Sioux "purchase their wives by tying a horse at her parents' door; if, on returning the following day, they find the horse still there, they will add another, keeping this up until their limit is reached; if the horses are taken away he will then enter the lodge and take his bride home; if it requires more horses than he is willing to give he takes his horses away and tries elsewhere." (Loc. citl., p. 256.)

(15) Beckwith wrote in 1886: "The Dakotah is a polygamist, having as many as five wives. The marital tie is not very binding, and divorces are not sought after in the courts; but in the straw dance they will 'throw away' those wives they no longer wish to retain; in many instances they will take 'unto themselves' several wives in order to throw them away at this dance, believing it will add to their importance to have so strong a heart." (Loc. cit., p. 256)