

Marriage: Troubles between
husbands and wives

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They used to have three wives or four, or two, and they got along. And they all had children. There was some separation, but it was just here and there. My grandfather had three wives. The youngest one was running around with some boy; and he cut her nose off (tip of the nose--soft part). Later when they had a dance he went to the drum and hit the drum and told this boy to come out and get her. He'd already cut her nose off. He took her, but he didn't stay with her long. Later my grandfather got mad at himself for giving his young wife away. He used to beat his other wives. One got mad and tired of being beaten and decided to fight him back. When she did, he bit her ear off and threw the piece of it in the fire (Indicates he bit off a piece on the top of her ear).

They used to sing a song about him. His name was White Crow. The words of that song mean, "He bite his wife's ear off and throw it in the fire." Later he went to fight against the Pawnees and was killed. I don't remember that, but my grandmother used to tell of it. When he got killed, his wives married again--separate men. They were three sisters.

If a man was running around a wife would get jealous and fight the other woman. They used to pull hair and bite and scratch and hit one another with clubs. I seen this woman get jealous. It was in 1902 or 1901. I was in school yet. They used to butcher here at Cantonment--the Arapahoes. They'd turn the cows out and call a man's name and they'd chase them and kill them. We were camped at Cantonment. They said I could come. It was time for father to get his beef. They kill it. Drove up to where there was a wagon. Little Raven (the oldest son of Chief Little Raven), he was going with another woman. His wife came up and threw this woman off the wagon. She (the girl friend) grabbed the wagon whip. The other one was going to use her knife, but people took it away from her. But Little Raven didn't quit his wife. He stayed with her until she died. This girl friend later married a man by the name of White Shirt. They didn't have any children, but Alfred White Man is his son. (White Shirt's son) by his first wife.

There was a Cheyenne man by the name of Roman Nose. He married two sisters. They lived on this side of the bridge, on the west side of the road, near Cantonment. They used to be friends to the Arapahoes. They were close. And this youngest sister would go after wood. They had a big greyhound dog and she called it to go with her when she went after wood. And the other one said, "It's funny how my sister always has to take that dog with her whenever she goes after wood." So the husband one time followed her down there, and saw her with that dog on top of her, just going after it. She was leaning over a log (her stomach on the log) and the dog was behind her. When her husband saw this, he just shot that dog in the head. This wife had two boys. This story is what my grandmother told us. Soon after that she got sick and died. Then her husband died, and then her sister, and later his boy got killed. They all went, one right after another. The other boy turned black and soon died. Pretty soon that family was all gone.