

TURNER, GOLDIE. PAWNEE MARRIAGES.

6581

July, 5, 1937.

Marriage Customs of the Pawnees

Marriages among the Pawnees were always arranged by the parents. When a daughter became twelve or thirteen years of age her parents selected a husband for her. The girl did not always approve of the husband selected for her but she never thought of disobeying her parents, although many a woman will admit that as a girl she shed many tears over her parents' selection of a husband for her. Of course if the husband-to-be happened to be an elderly man, the arrangement was made directly with him but in the case of a young man the parents made the arrangement. If the parents were among the wealthy or more prominent members of the tribe, a feast would be arranged by the groom's parents and gifts would be exchanged after the chief had performed the ceremony. A little later another feast would be given by the bride's parents and gifts would be exchanged again.

In early days many of the Pawnees had plural wives. When the bride had a younger unmarried sister, if the groom wished he could have her for his wife as well, or if his wife died he was supposed to take her nearest unmarried relative for his wife.

Very few of the Pawnee Indians had plural wives

at the time of the opening of the Cherokee Strip in 1893.

The morals of the tribe were rather lax and it was not considered wrong for a member of the tribe to let his wife live with one of the medicine men to learn his secrets and so teach her-child to be a medicine man.