The Pawnee lived in villages of earthlodges. Twice a year they traveled, or marched, for several weeks to hunt buffalo.

“The utensils and equipment that the women made for the household were all-year round equipment, used both in the earth lodge and on the march. The wooden bowl and the wooden ladles for serving, along with the individual buffalo-horn spoon, were a necessity for every meal, and the mortar and pestle were carried along on the march as well as being in frequent use in the earth lodge for the preparation of the meals. . . .

The spoons used for individual eating and the daily serving spoon were of buffalo horn. (See Figure 50-1) The buffalo-horn spoon was called taraha-ariki, ‘buffalo-horn.’ Buffalo horns were kept on hand so that the spoons could be made at any time. Spring was the time most preferred as they all especially like to eat soup while on the summer hunt. Practically everyone knew how to make buffalo-horn spoons. In the period from nine o’clock in the morning until noon—three hours—one could make four spoons. The following is a free translation of the account of their manufacture by Effie Blane of the Pitahawirata Band (Weltfish, 1937, pp. 59-61).

Buffalo horns were placed near the fire with the large ends extending into the coals. The heat softened the horn so that it could be more readily worked. The horn was expanded by pressing the foot on it. Then the small end was notched and scraped and the whole thing greased. When several were finished, holes were bored into the handles and they were strung on a buckskin string to be hung up when out of use.

Figure 50-1. Buffalo-horn spoon for ordinary use.
When not being used the spoons were kept strung in sets. The ordinary eating spoons are 5 inches long with a bowl diameter of 3 inches. Large serving spoons are 8 inches long, the bowl being 4 1/2 inches in diameter and 1 1/2 inches in depth. (The dimensions and the drawings were supplied by informants.)"