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Article Summary: Young Man Afraid of His Horses played an important role in the Lakota peoples’ struggle to maintain their traditional way of life. After the death of Crazy Horse, the Oglalas were trapped on the reservation, surrounded by a growing, dominant, white man’s world. Young Man Afraid sought ways for his people to adapt peacefully to the changing world of the reservation rather than trying to restore the grandeur of the old life through obstructionist politics.

Cataloging Information:

Names: Man Afraid of His Horses; Red Cloud; J S Saville; Man Who Owns a Sword; Emmett Crawford; Sitting Bull of the South; Red Dog; Spotted Tail; John S Collins; Teddy Egan; Little Big Man; George Armstrong Custer; George Crook; Benjamin R Shapp; James Irwin; Little Wound; No Flesh; American Horse; George Sword; Hunts the Enemy; Standing Soldier; Billy Garnett; Crow Dog; Kills Enemy at Night; Charles F Manderson; Frank Afraid of His Horses; M A Thomas; H D Gallagher; William H Waldby; Richard H Pratt; W J Pollack; Daniel F Royer; Wovoka; Sitting Bull; Nelson Miles; Valentine McGillycuddy; Edward W Casey; Plenty Horses; Few Tails; Henry Miller; George LeRoy Brown; M W Day

Place Names: Platte River Valley; Power River; Bozeman Trail; Great Sioux Reservation; White River; Camp Robinson; Black Hills; Indian Territory; Missouri River; Spotted Tail; White Clay Creek; Pine Ridge; Badlands


Photographs: Young Man Afraid of His Horses and his father on the Pine Ridge Reservation; Pine Ridge Agent Valentine T McGillycuddy with Young Man Afraid of His Horses and Standing Soldier, George Sword and Billy Garnett; Capt George Sword and Indian police at Pine Ridge; Billy Garnett, interpreter; Pine Ridge Agency, 1891; Red Cloud; Young Man Afraid speaking in council at Pine Ridge 1891
Young Man Afraid of His Horses was born in 1836 into an old and distinguished Lakota family. His father, Man Afraid of His Horses, was a respected chief among the Oglalas, noted for his ability in war and in peace. During his early life, Young Man Afraid of His Horses played an important role in his people's struggle to maintain their traditional way of life. With the end of the Great Sioux War of 1876–77 and the death of Crazy Horse, the Oglalas were trapped on the reservation, an island surrounded by a growing, dominant white world. Unlike his contemporary, Red Cloud, Young Man Afraid of His Horses did not believe that obstructionist politics could restore the grandeur of the old life or prepare the Oglalas for the future. By temperament and background a realist, Young Man Afraid sought ways for his people to adapt peacefully to the changing world of the reservation.

Raised by his father as a hunter-warrior, Young Man Afraid of His Horses proved his courage in the wars his people fought in the early 1860s against the Crows, driving them out of the buffalo rich Powder River country. Young Man Afraid fought against the Americans for the first time in 1865 when the Lakotas and Cheyennes (in retaliation for the Sand Creek massacre) raided white settlements—civilian and military—along the Platte River Valley.

When the U.S. Army established a series of forts in 1866 in the Powder River country to protect emigrants traveling the Bozeman Trail to the rich gold fields in Montana, Red Cloud, a leading Oglala warrior, led the Lakotas against the bluecoat soldiers. Young Man Afraid, alongside Crazy Horse, his boyhood friend, fought with bravery in the Fetterman and Wagon Box fights. Sometime during this stormy period, the northern Oglalas chose Young Man Afraid, Crazy Horse, American Horse, and The Man Who Owns a Sword as "shirtwearers," investing these four outstanding warriors with full authority to protect the people.

Though Man Afraid of His Horses, and possibly the son, signed the Treaty of Fort Laramie (1868) that ended the so-called "Red Cloud's" war, they had no intention at first to settle down at an agency on the Great Sioux Reservation, as provided for in the treaty. But with the gradual disappearance of the buffalo the people suffered, and there were some winters when the Oglalas, including Man Afraid's Hunkpatila band, came to Fort Laramie hungry and cold, begging for food.

Slowly, perhaps reluctantly, Young Man Afraid of His Horses and his father began to understand that the old, nomadic lifestyle dependent on the buffalo could no longer be sustained. As a "shirtwearer" and a member of the distinguished Man Afraid family, Young Man Afraid would use his position in the long years ahead to guide the Oglalas as they slowly moved to a more settled way of life on the reservation.

Late in 1871 Young Man Afraid and his father took their Hunkpatilas into a temporary agency (named after Red Cloud) situated on the North Platte River, where the U.S. government promised to provide for their basic needs—food, clothing, housing, farm supplies, and schools. The agency, which soon moved to the White River in northwestern Nebraska, was a turbulent place by the summer of 1873. Agent J. J. Saville provoked a controversy by planning a census of all the Indians residing at the agency to better control the issuance of rations and annuities. Nontreaty Oglalas from the Powder River country, who wintered at the agency, forcibly opposed the counting as did the younger agency warriors. Red Cloud sided with the warriors, lest the census reveal the Oglalas' true numbers and result in a loss of rations. Growing impatient with the opposition, Saville threatened to withhold rations and summon troops from nearby Camp Robinson.

Seeking to avoid a confrontation, Young Man Afraid of His Horses, who was slowly emerging as a leader in his own name, stepped in to resolve the crisis. Joined by The Man Who Owns a Sword, the two shirtwearers called a council of the Oglala chiefs in which they took "a very firm stand against Red..."
Cloud and compelled him to yield. Most of the agency Oglalas, increasingly dependent on government rations and unwilling to confront the soldiers, moved their lodges closer to the agency to be counted. The northern Oglalas left for the Black Hills rather than submit to the agent’s control.

Saville provoked another crisis in October 1874, when he prepared to erect a flagpole in the agency stockade. Some Lakotas, including Red Cloud, resented the idea of an American flag flying over their agency. On October 23, 1874, forty to fifty “armed and painted” warriors (mostly Miniconjous) entered the stockade and cut the pole to pieces. Red Cloud, then at the agency headquarters, refused Saville’s plea to restore order.

Saville requested troops from Camp Robinson to protect the agency. When Lt. Emmett Crawford’s small contingent of soldiers was surrounded by about two hundred warriors, mostly northern Oglalas and Miniconjous, Young Man Afraid of His Horses and Sitting Bull of the South led some of their followers to drive back the threatening warriors. The soldiers were then escorted safely into the stockade. While Young Man Afraid’s followers protected the agency, Old Man Afraid and Red Dog harangued the angry crowd, persuading many to leave peacefully. The soldiers left when Man Afraid and the friendly chiefs promised Saville they would provide armed guards to protect the agency. Clearly, by 1874, Young Man Afraid of His Horses and his father had come to recognize the agency as their home, and they were prepared to prevent Red Cloud, angry agency warriors, and the Powder River Lakotas (including the northern Oglalas) from causing trouble that risked war with the whites.

After gold was discovered in the Black Hills in 1874 federal officials sought to renegotiate the Fort Laramie Treaty and dispatched a special commission to the Lakotas to negotiate a deal for the Black Hills and the Powder River country. In September 1875 the commissioners met on the White River...
The assembled chiefs, in deference to the militant northern bands, refused to discuss the cession of the Powder River and Bighorn River country. Division arose over the Black Hills. Some of the older chiefs, including Spotted Tail and Red Cloud, considered selling the Black Hills to keep the peace if the price was high enough, whereas the young warriors backed by their northern kin, refused to sell the Black Hills for any price.10

John S. Collins, secretary to the Sioux Commission, described the dramatic meeting that took place on September 23, 1875. The commissioners sat under a canvas tent fly to shield them from the sun. Capt. Teddy Egan, with some 120 cavalrymen, provided protection. The chiefs sat in a semicircle, with some seven thousand warriors surrounding the tension-charged meeting place.11

Suddenly, a lone rider, Little Big Man, one of Crazy Horse’s lieutenants, broke through the lines and with a rifle in his hands threatened to kill a commissioner or any chief that consented to sell the Black Hills. The commissioners asked Red Cloud and Spotted Tail to each send four trusted warriors to deal with Little Big Man. Young Man Afraid of His Horses was part of this group that grabbed Little Big Man and escorted him out of the circle.12

But Little Big Man’s presence excited the warriors, who pressed in on the soldiers. Capt. Egan warned the commissioners that they were surrounded and in danger. Rallying his soldier band, Young Man Afraid quickly formed a protective shield for Egan’s troops. Young Man Afraid then boldly moved among the excited warriors ordering them to disperse, which they did, reluctant to challenge the authority of this brave shirtwearer. The council then broke up.13

The Black Hills “problem” simmered throughout the fall, as thousands of miners invaded the Hills. Events took an ominous turn towards war as government officials continued to blame the northern bands under Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull as the source of the unrest at the agencies and the chief obstacle to the sale of the Black Hills and the Powder River country. Accordingly, the government ordered Indian agents to send out runners to the northern Lakota bands in the Powder River country telling them that they must report to the agencies by January 31, 1876, or be declared hostile and subject to army attack. Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull, standing on their treaty rights to live and hunt in the unceded territory, refused to come in. On February 1, 1876, the secretary of the interior turned the so-called “hostiles” over to the War Department, and so began the Sioux War of 1876.14

In the ensuing conflict some agency Oglalas (including Red Cloud’s son) joined the northern bands and took part in the fighting, which included the great victory over Custer’s troops at the Little Bighorn on June 25, 1876. Young Man Afraid of His Horses, now settled with his father on the reservation and committed to living in peace with the whites, did not join Crazy Horse in the fighting. Young Man Afraid was involved, though, in another kind of fighting as the agency Oglalas struggled to save their homeland from an angry government determined to punish all the Lakotas for the Custer disaster.

While soldiers pursued the fleeing northern bands after the Custer fight, the army took over the Lakota agencies. Congress authorized the president to create a new Sioux Commission to demand that the Lakotas cede the Black Hills and the Powder River country, and relocate their agencies to the Missouri River (as called for in the Fort Laramie Treaty) or to Indian Territory. Congress threatened to withhold all future appropriations for agency supplies until the Lakotas agreed.15

The Sioux Commission, which would meet in turn with all the agency Lakotas, first counseled with the Oglala chiefs at Red Cloud Agency in early September 1876. The commissioners informed the chiefs of Congress’s threat and insisted they sign the new treaty, a clear violation of Article 12 of the Fort Laramie Treaty, which stipulated that three-fourths of all adult males must sign any agreement ceding Lakota lands.16

With the soldiers everywhere and supplies at the agency precariously low, the dependent Oglala chiefs reluctantly signed the treaty surrendering the Black Hills and the Powder River country. Young Man Afraid of His Horses spoke with some bitterness, complaining about the soldiers in Lakota country and telling the commissioners that he expected the Great Father to provide food and clothing for the Oglalas “as long as we live.”17

Throughout the proceedings, the commission pressed the chiefs to decide where they would relocate their permanent agency — either on the Missouri River or in Indian Territory. A delegation of Oglalas and Brules, led by Young Man Afraid of His Horses and Spotted Tail, visited Indian Territory and refused to recommend it as a homeland for their people.18

Later, Young Man Afraid told Gen. George Crook that the Oglalas did not want to go to the Missouri River either, especially since the northern Oglalas under Crazy Horse had abandoned the struggle against the soldiers and just come in to the Red Cloud Agency after receiving promises they would have a permanent home in their own country. As part of a peace delegation sent by General Crook to Crazy Horse, Young Man Afraid played a small part in persuading his boyhood friend to give up the armed struggle and bring his people peacefully onto the reservation.19

Crazy Horse was easily the most popular and most controversial figure at the agency. Young warriors admired his brave exploits, but older agency chiefs resented his fame and standing. Young Man Afraid of His Horses tried to bridge the factions and integrate Crazy Horse into agency life and politics. On July 27, 1877, Special Agent Benjamin R. Shapp and new agent James Irwin met with the agency chiefs, promising them a buffalo...
hunt and a feast. Crazy Horse and Little Big Man were also present. Young Man Afraid suggested that Crazy Horse and Little Big Man be given the honor of feasting the chiefs. Red Cloud and some of his followers were unhappy with Young Man Afraid's proposal and sent a delegation to the agent to voice their displeasure at holding the feast at Crazy Horse's lodge. They viewed Crazy Horse as an "unreconstructed Indian," a "tricky and unfaithful" person, who would use the buffalo hunt as an opportunity to break away from the reservation and resume the warpath.20

Crazy Horse, increasingly dissatisfied with life at the agency, resented the increasing pressure that the Oglalas move to the Missouri River. He also resisted efforts by officers at Camp Robinson to recruit his warriors as army scouts to fight the Nez Perce, considering it a ruse to attack Sitting Bull's people. In addition, he refused to meet with Irwin and Crook, tired of dealing with the false charges directed against him by some of the agency chiefs.21

Irwin called a meeting with the agency chiefs on August 31, 1877, to discuss the problem created by Crazy Horse's attitude. Red Cloud, Little Wound, No Flesh, American Horse, and Young Man Afraid of His Horses attended. American Horse, speaking for the group, told the agent that the chiefs tried "to quiet Crazy Horse and bring him into a better state of feeling but we can do nothing with him." American Horse assured Irwin that the chiefs wanted "no more fighting and [to] live in peace."22

Crok, who met later with the agency chiefs, looked to them to arrest Crazy Horse. Young Man Afraid, who had played no part in the conspiracy of lies against his boyhood friend, now sided with the chiefs, Irwin, and Crook. He joined a large force of agency Indians who rode with the soldiers to arrest Crazy Horse, who had fled to Spotted Tail's agency. Brought back to Camp Robinson, Crazy Horse was tragically bayoneted to death on September 5, 1877, an event that generated intense excitement at the agency. Young Man Afraid and the agency chiefs exerted their influence to prevent the northern Oglalas from causing trouble.23

A few months after Crazy Horse's death, the government forced the Oglalas to relocate closer to the Missouri River. The chiefs decided to locate their new agency on White Clay Creek, some 150 miles west of the Missouri River. Young Man Afraid of His Horses played a significant part in moving the Oglalas to their new home. Agent Irwin concurred with the chiefs' decision, calling the site "the most desirable place on the reservation, there being good water . . . arable land, [and] plenty of pine timber." The commissioner of Indian affairs renamed the agency "Pine Ridge," with the intent of diminishing Red Cloud's influence among the Oglalas. The Man Afraid family would spend their last days at Pine Ridge.24

Dr. Valentine McGillycuddy, the new agent for Pine Ridge, arrived at his post on March 10, 1879, a position he would hold for seven years. Prior to his appointment, McGillycuddy served as post surgeon at Camp Robinson and knew many of the Oglala chiefs on the reservation. Hot-tempered, and narrow minded, McGillycuddy held strong opinions on how to guide the Oglalas along the white man's path. In his early reports to the commissioner of Indian affairs, McGillycuddy stated that there was no hope for progress among the agency Oglalas as long as the traditional
chiefs retained their power within a tribal system.25

Red Cloud disliked the man and his politics, which he considered a threat to the traditional power of the chiefs, and opposed the agent in every way. At first, Young Man Afraid shared Red Cloud’s concerns and signed a petition requesting the president to retain Irwin as their agent. When it became clear that McGillycuddy would remain, Young Man Afraid encouraged Red Cloud and McGillycuddy to “shake hands and work together,” but neither man was prepared to do so.26

More than once during McGillycuddy’s tenure, Red Cloud led a protest denouncing the agent’s arbitrary conduct and calling for his removal. McGillycuddy responded angrily, going so far as to “depose” Red Cloud as “head chief,” though the Oglalas refused to accept the agent’s decision. In this ongoing verbal war, which threatened at times to erupt into violence (McGillycuddy threatened to bring soldiers to the agency), Young Man Afraid of His Horses came increasingly to side with the agent.27

McGillycuddy considered Young Man Afraid a friend of “progress” and “civilization,” but this was too simplistic a view, since whatever Young Man Afraid did, he did for his own political and personal reasons. Furthermore, Young Man Afraid made a concerted effort during these years to restore the Man Afraid family to a position of political preeminence within the Oglala community at Pine Ridge and to the white world beyond—a position it held before Red Cloud replaced Man Afraid as “head chief” (at least in the eyes of white officials) during the Powder River conflict and treaty negotiations at Fort Laramie. Young Man Afraid would use McGillycuddy to enhance his position at Pine Ridge.28

During his seven years at Pine Ridge, McGillycuddy proposed various schemes to move the Oglalas along the white man’s path to “progress and civilization.” A few weeks after he assumed office, McGillycuddy met with the chiefs and proposed a plan called for by Congress to create a fifty-man Indian police force, armed and uniformed, to maintain law and order. McGillycuddy argued, rather ingenuously, that an Indian police force would make it unnecessary for soldiers to police the agency and permit the Oglalas (like white communities) to govern themselves. McGillycuddy saw the Indian police as a civilizing agent on the reservation.29

Red Cloud and his followers, along with leaders of the war societies, opposed the creation of the Indian police, which they considered unnecessary since the war societies (the akicitas) traditionally policed the camps, maintaining order and discipline. The chiefs and leaders of the war societies understood that the Indian police, under the agent’s control, threatened their power within Oglala society.30

McGillycuddy was assisted in this struggle by Young Man Afraid of His Horses, who recognized that the agent, backed by the power of the government, controlled agency affairs. Young Man Afraid preferred an Indian police force, even one controlled by the agent, to having soldiers called to the agency to keep the peace. By supporting the creation of the Indian police, Young Man Afraid helped undermine the status of the chiefs and war societies.31
It was Young Man Afraid of His Horses who recommended George Sword as the best person to lead the police. As a young man, Sword (then known as Hunts the Enemy) fought alongside Young Man Afraid in the Fetterman and Wagon Box fights. Perhaps Young Man Afraid hoped for some influence over the Indian police with Sword’s appointment. Despite Red Cloud’s opposition, Sword recruited fifty young men for the Indian police. With the support of Sword and Young Man Afraid, McGillycuddy never had to ask for soldiers to maintain order at the agency.

The legislation that permitted the creation of the Indian police did not provide for the trial and punishment of prisoners. Indian agents were free to develop informal judicial procedures to deal with offenders. Not until April 1883 did the secretary of the interior authorize the creation of the Court of Indian Offenses to deal formally with the issue of trial and punishment. The court was charged with dealing with petty crimes and misdemeanors committed by Indians on the reservation and punishing certain tribal practices that the government considered detrimental to “civilization,” such as dances, plural marriages, medicine men, and destruction of property, even in the mourning ceremony. The court could impose fines, withhold rations, and imprison offenders. The commissioner of Indian affairs recommended that the agent assign three top Indian police the additional unpaid duty as judges.

McGillycuddy, however, could not implement the Court of Indian Offenses at Pine Ridge. Standing Soldier, first lieutenant of police, argued that the Indian police did not relish taking on the unpaid job as judges since that would only increase the enmity many Oglalas already felt towards them. Besides, Standing Soldier did not think it “well to have the same man that acts as judge also act as policeman and perform the punishment.” McGillycuddy accepted the logic of Standing Soldier’s position.

In lieu of the Court of Indian Offenses, the more progressive elements among the Oglalas, with McGillycuddy’s support, organized a Board of Councilmen to regulate Indian conduct and punish offenders. The one hundred councilmen, elected from different camps at Pine Ridge, selected Young Man Afraid of His Horses as president, with George Sword as secretary. Red Cloud refused to participate in the board, which he considered an infringement on his and the tribal council’s authority.

During its brief, three-year existence under Young Man Afraid’s leadership, the Board of Councilmen fairly dispensed justice at Pine Ridge. For example, the board sentenced three men who shot some cows to fifty days at hard labor or a fine of thirty dollars each, which the men paid; it did not fine a man whose cattle destroyed another man’s garden, because the gardener had failed to maintain a strong fence; and the board recommended the release from the stockade of a young boy who served two months for a shooting, because he was repentant and promised to behave.

The Board of Councilmen also served a legislative function, enacting regulations that challenged Lakota customs. In the area of marriage, for instance, the board made it a crime, punishable by a thirty dollar fine or fifty days in jail, for any Oglala man to entice an Oglala woman to desert her husband without cause. The board also arrested and fined any Oglala who threw his wife away as customary in the social dances.

Even more controversial, Young Man Afraid of His Horses and the Board of Councilmen decided on November 11, 1884, that an Indian proved guilty of murdering another Indian on the reservation should be punished by death, the sentence to be carried out by the agent. The board’s ruling, which followed the white man’s form of justice, challenged the traditional Lakota custom whereby the chief’s council and the families involved worked out a settlement to reconcile the parties and keep the peace.

Young Man Afraid and the Board of Councilmen were aware of the famous case involving Crow Dog, a Brulé Lakota, who killed Chief Spotted Tail at the Rosebud Agency in 1881. Though the Brulé chiefs helped the Crow Dog family work out a settlement with the Spotted Tail family, the agent arrested Crow Dog, who was tried for murder in the territorial court in South Dakota. Found guilty and sentenced to hang, the case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in Ex-Parte Crow Dog (1883) that courts did not have jurisdiction over crimes committed by one Indian against another on the reservation, where individuals were subject to tribal justice. Young Man Afraid and the board’s decision to have a convicted...
murderer executed by the agent represented a serious break from an ancient form of tribal justice, clearly recognized by the Supreme Court.39

Even Mc Gillicyuddy was startled by the board's decision and when he arrested Kills Enemy at Night for murder, he wrote the commissioner of Indian affairs for guidance. Fortunately for Mc Gillicyuddy, Congress had passed the Major Crimes Act on June 30, 1885, whereby Indians could be tried in United States courts for major felonies, such as murder. Mc Gillicyuddy sent Kills Enemy at Night to the territorial court for trial and punishment, thereby avoiding a clash with Red Cloud, who continued to maintain that tribal law should prevail.40

Despite Mc Gillicyuddy's praise that the Board of Councilmen was doing good work in punishing offenders, Young Man Afraid and some leaders of the board shared their doubts about its viability with Nebraska Senator Charles F. Manderson. After two years of administering justice on the reservation "our court do[es] not seem to stand solid," and they requested Manderson's help in Washington. The leaders of the board enclosed a note for the secretary of the interior requesting funds to come to Washington to discuss the board's work. With the secretary of the interior they struck a more positive note, declaring: "If it had not been for us, that these Indians would not have been in a peaceable way. We are the only ones that were trying to adopt the habits, customs, ways of the white man's ways, the civilization." Manderson praised the Oglala leaders for "voluntarily imitating the white man's method of producing order and obedience to law," and he recommended that the Office of Indian Affairs pay their way to Washington, where they could present their case for official recognition of the board. Government officials did not respond favorably to these requests.41

Mc Gillicyuddy, like most Lakota agents, wanted to suppress the Sun Dance, calling it "a barbarous and demoralizing ceremony, antagonistic to civilization and progress." The commissioner of Indian affairs, who listed the Sun Dance as one of the punishable offenses in the regulations for the Court of Indian Offenses, supported the agent. Mc Gillicyuddy forewarned the Oglalas that they would not be permitted to perform the Sun Dance after 1883.42

As Mc Gillicyuddy planned to prohibit the Sun Dance in the summer of 1884, he consulted with Young Man Afraid and George Sword. They cautioned him against using the Indian police for fear that Red Cloud and other Sun Dance supporters would forcibly resist and cause bloodshed. Instead, they recommended that the agent use the power granted in the Court of Indian Offenses to withhold rations from those who participated in the ceremony. Mc Gillicyuddy agreed and his threat proved sufficient. He proudly notified officials in Washington that the Sun Dance was not held, in large part due to progressive Indians who supported him against the Red Cloud faction.43

When Mc Gillicyuddy came to Pine Ridge, he had made the establishment
of schools (day and boarding) a priority, placing his hope for the advancement of the Oglalas on the young. Red Cloud generally opposed the schools, discouraging his own children and those in his band from attending. He considered the education provided by the reservation schools as a detriment to maintaining Lakota culture. Young Man Afraid of His Horses came to appreciate the schools' role in educating the young, particularly in learning a useful trade and farming, which he considered essential for the Oglalas' future. Though his own son, Frank Afraid of His Horses, went only as far as the third grade, Young Man Afraid wanted the Oglala children to obtain an education so they could replace whites on the reservation, make a living, and provide for the basic needs of their people.

Early in his administration, Agent McGillycuddy encouraged the Oglalas to move away from the agency headquarters and relocate in the fertile valleys, where they could "farm [the land] and live independently." Red Cloud objected to the dispersal of the people and rejected the idea of farming. The old chief kept his camp on the bank of White Clay Creek, within sight of McGillycuddy and the agency headquarters. Inspector M. A. Thomas reported in December 1885 that Red Cloud "did not encourage his people . . . to learn how to farm." Young Man Afraid accepted the agent's plan. He and his father took their band some ten miles north of the agency, where they established their community and began in small ways to adapt to the material culture of whites. For the first time Young Man Afraid began to live in a log house built and partly furnished by the government with a cooking stove, beds, chairs and a table. McGillycuddy supported the construction of log houses as "one of the first and most important steps towards semi-civilization." While the number of Oglala families living in log houses increased during McGillycuddy's tenure, photographs of Pine Ridge reveal that the Oglalas continued to erect tipis near their houses. Presumably Young Man Afraid did the same.

Though McGillycuddy understood that the land, weather, and disposition of the Oglalas would not permit large scale farming, he encouraged them to cultivate garden vegetables to supplement the weekly government rations of beef, bacon, tea, coffee, sugar, and flour. Young Man Afraid of His Horses cultivated a small garden patch, growing corn and potatoes and raising domestic livestock. He told members of the Holman Commission, "I try to farm and break up all the ground I can." Young Man Afraid had no intention, though, of becoming a commercial farmer. In an interview with the editor of the Black Hills Journal he expressed the belief that it was too late for someone from his generation to become a farmer, but that his children must learn to farm if the Oglalas were going to survive in an age when the buffalo was disappearing. The agency Oglalas, however, took easily to raising livestock and, over the years, Young Man Afraid acquired and
cared for a large number of cattle, horses, and some turkeys. While Young Man Afraid of His Horses had abandoned the nomadic lifestyle to settle on the reservation, he continued to enjoy hunting buffalo and other large game as in the old days. As a perceived “friend” of the government, McGillycuddy generally granted Young Man Afraid’s requests to take out a hunting party. Once or twice a year, Young Man Afraid would leave the reservation to hunt for weeks, sometimes months, the group always accompanied by an interpreter and Indian police. Young Man Afraid’s frequent and long excursions suggest that he sometimes found reservation life a confining experience.

Despite his willingness to work with McGillycuddy in certain areas (such as in creating the Indian police and the Board of Councilmen) and in accepting new ways to live on the reservation, Young Man Afraid of His Horses did not intend to become a white man and give up being a Lakota. He continued to speak only his native language, to live with his two wives, to hunt off the reservation, and, above all, to hold on to the remaining Lakota lands.

Young Man Afraid of His Horses began moving back to more traditional politics after the government dismissed McGillycuddy in May 1886. McGillycuddy, in his struggle to undermine Red Cloud, often turned to Young Man Afraid for support. Under McGillycuddy, Young Man Afraid at least had some voice in agency affairs. H. D. Gallagher, the new agent, did not continue this strategy. In fact, Gallagher weakened Young Man Afraid’s standing when he dissolved the Board of Councilmen, whose proceedings he called “a travesty upon justice.” Gallagher chose to dispense justice himself because he did not believe that many of the Oglalas possessed “the intelligence and progressivism necessary to be a good judge.” Young Man Afraid, who had presided over the board since its inception, was no doubt embittered by Gallagher’s arrogant action, making him more reluctant to cooperate with the agents at Pine Ridge.

It was the constant effort by the U.S. government in the late 1880s to take more Lakota land and undermine Lakota culture, however, that eventually drove a wedge between Young Man Afraid of His Horses and the agents at Pine Ridge. Slowly, Young Man Afraid renewed his friendship with Red Cloud, old-time allies reunited against the outside threat.

William H. Waldby, representing the Board of Indian Commissioners, attended a council meeting at Pine Ridge on July 26, 1887, where he witnessed Red Cloud and Young Man Afraid put
aside their differences, smoke the pipe, shake hands, and agree to work together for the good of the people. Red Cloud said to Waldb, "that he now considers himself and Young Man Afraid of His Horses as one man, and they will pull together and hereafter sit side by side in council as brothers."  

The alliance between Young Man Afraid of His Horses and Red Cloud came none too soon. On April 30, 1888, Congress passed the "Sioux Bill," which proposed to divide the Great Sioux Reservation into six smaller reserves. The surplus lands remaining (some eleven million acres) were to be sold to settlers for fifty cents an acre. To compensate the Lakotas, Congress proposed to establish a million dollar trust fund, build thirty day-school buildings, deliver 26,000 head of stock cattle, and for every family that took an allotment of land, one pair of oxen, farm equipment, and seeds. Proceeds from the sale of ceded lands, after deducting the expenses for surveying, selling, allotting and patenting the land for the Lakotas, building schools, and providing livestock and farm equipment, would go into the trust fund.  

The secretary of the interior created a commission led by Capt. Richard H. Pratt, which headed west to secure approval for the "Sioux Bill" from three-fourths of all Lakota men, as called for in Article 12 of the Fort Laramie Treaty. The Pratt Commission visited the Standing Rock, Crow Creek, and Lower Brule agencies and encountered considerable opposition. Rather than go on to the Cheyenne River, Rosebud, and Pine Ridge agencies, where they feared even stronger opposition, Pratt called for a general council of Lakota chiefs to be held on September 24, 1888, at the Lower Brule agency. Young Man Afraid and Red Cloud refused to attend. Those who did attend complained that the compensation offered was too low.  

Failing to reach any consensus at this meeting, Pratt suggested that the secretary of the interior invite a delegation of the more "progressive" chiefs to Washington. Young Man Afraid and Red Cloud, who strongly opposed the division, allotment, and sale of Lakota lands, were not invited, lest they rally the chiefs against the proposed "Sioux Bill." (Now that he opposed the sale of Lakota lands, government officials stopped calling Young Man Afraid a "progressive" chief.) The chiefs who went to Washington continued to complain that the price offered for Lakota lands was far too low and that many past promises as to education and farming had not been fulfilled. Nothing was settled and the chiefs returned to their agencies.  

At Pine Ridge the Oglalas held a council in December 1888 to discuss the government's offer. Young Man Afraid of His Horses, Red Cloud, and Little Wound, speaking for the group, wrote a remarkable letter to the president. The chiefs firmly told him they did not wish to sell the land, "having none to spare," and reminded him that the government had not yet fulfilled the promises made in earlier treaties. Feeling grieved by Washington's lack of concern for their needs, the chiefs asked: "We want to know what it is the Great Father has asked us to do that we did not do . . . We think the Great Father's Indian children pay more attention to what he says than his white children do."  

On March 2, 1889, Congress passed a new "Sioux Bill" which, like the rejected proposal of 1888, called for the division of the Great Sioux Reservation into six smaller reserves, cession and sale of surplus lands, and allotments in severality. In light of the objections voiced by the Lakota delegation that visited Washington in October 1888, Congress provided for more generous compensation—the ceded lands were to sell for as much as $1.25 an acre, the government was to pay for the surveys, costs of education and farming, and establish a three-million-dollar trust fund.  

The president created a new commission, including Gen. George Crook, to secure approval from the Lakotas. The commission began its mission at the Rosebud Agency, securing the signatures of most Brulé men. Pine Ridge proved far more difficult. Young Man Afraid of His Horses, Red Cloud, and Little Wound had rallied most Oglalas against the agreement.  

On the first day of the council with the Oglalas, the commissioners outlined the government's proposal, indicating they would share the transcript of the proceedings. Perhaps distrustful of past negotiations, Young Man Afraid of His Horses requested a printed copy of the day's talks.  

Two days later Man Afraid of His Horses rose to speak in council, the first time in years. The once great warrior and diplomat was eighty-one years old, frail in health, his hair white from age. In a rambling account, Man Afraid complained that there was no need to rush into another agreement, since there were years left on the Fort Laramie Treaty. When Red Cloud, speaking next, seemed to slight Man Afraid's role in the Fort Laramie Treaty, Young Man Afraid rose to affirm the important part his father had played in the negotiations.  

Young Man Afraid complained that there was no need for another agreement, especially since the government had not lived up to promises made in the Fort Laramie and Black Hills treaties. Remembering with some bitterness threats made by the commissioners negotiating for cession of the Black Hills in 1876, Young Man Afraid said of the present proposal: "If we don't sign it, we don't want you to get up and say we will starve to death if we don't sign."  

The conference with the Oglalas dragged on for days. The most prominent Oglalas to speak in favor of the agreement were American Horse and No Flesh. Young Man Afraid, Red Cloud, and Little Wound held firm, despite an offer by Crook that he would provide each of them with two hundred dollars to feast their bands. In the end, only 684 (mostly "mixed bloods") out of 1,306 adult males signed the agreement. The commissioners left the document with...
the agent to gather additional signatures and moved on to other Lakota agencies. In the months to follow, Young Man Afraid, Red Cloud, and Little Wound told their followers not to sign the agreement, lest they be deceived once again by the false promises of the whites. Despite pressure from Special Indian Agent W. J. Pollack and Pine Ridge agent H. D. Gallagher, Young Man Afraid, Red Cloud, and Little Wound refused to budge in their opposition.58

Young Man Afraid did not want to talk to Gallagher about the agreement. In the space of a few months after the council, Young Man Afraid had suffered the death of his daughter and his aged father. Saying that "his heart was very bad," Young Man Afraid left the reservation to hunt on the open plains. With the death of Man Afraid of His Horses, the Oglalas had lost one of their oldest and most revered chiefs; Young Man Afraid had lost his dear father and chief mentor.59

Although Young Man Afraid, Red Cloud, and Little Wound won the fight at Pine Ridge, they lost the struggle to save their land. By their count, the commissioners had secured the signatures of enough voters from all the Lakota agencies to ratify the agreement. The Great Sioux Reservation would be divided, with allotments forced on the people, and some nine million acres of Lakota lands lost to white settlers.60

The loss of their lands was a bitter blow to many Lakotas. More trouble followed. Contrary to promises made by the commissioners, Congress in 1889 cut the beef issue. Pine Ridge, for instance, lost a million pounds (20 percent of the total) for the year. In addition, the Lakotas faced serious losses to their crops in 1889 and more in the drought of 1890, with many cattle dying from "blackleg" disease. Hunger swept the agencies. Stressed in body and mind, the Lakotas fell victim to a series of illnesses, including measles, the influenza, and whooping cough, that killed many children, including Young Man Afraid's daughter in 1889.61

Desperate and disillusioned the Lakotas were ready for a hopeful message. As George Sword described it, the message came in the fall of 1889 when "the Oglalas heard that the son of God had come upon the earth in the west. They said the Messiah was there, but he had come to help the Indians and not the whites and it made the Indians happy to hear this."62

As reports about the Indian messiah reached Pine Ridge, Young Man Afraid, Red Cloud, Little Wound, and American Horse met in council. The chiefs sent a delegation to Nevada to learn more about the messiah, Wovoka, and his teachings. Returning home in March 1890, the delegates shared with the people the new religion preached by Wovoka: by praying, by singing the sacred songs, and by dancing the Ghost Dance they could hasten the day when the Indian people would miraculously reclaim the earth from the whites, see the buffalo return, and live eternal, beautiful lives.63

It was a wondrous message joyously accepted by many dispirited Oglalas. But Young Man Afraid of his Horses, for reasons never articulated, chose not to embrace the new religion. Evidently, he could not bring himself to accept Wovoka's vision.64

By summer many Oglalas at Pine Ridge were passionately caught up in the Ghost Dance. On August 24, 1890, agent Gallagher, with twenty Indian policemen, confronted the Ghost Dancers on White Clay Creek, where some two thousand Oglalas had gathered for the ceremony. Most fled as Gallagher approached, but some young warriors armed with Winchesters challenged the agent's right to break up the dance. In the middle of this tense scene rode Young Man Afraid, quieting the warriors and preventing a bloody confrontation.65

In the midst of the growing crisis the commissioner of Indian affairs replaced Gallagher with Daniel F. Royer, a political appointee who knew little about the Lakotas and demonstrated an inability to understand or control the situation at Pine Ridge. Royer called for troops to deal with the Ghost Dancers. Soldiers began to arrive at Pine Ridge (and Rosebud) in mid-November 1890, frightening many Ghost Dancers, who fled from the agencies.66

For reasons not entirely clear, Young Man Afraid of His Horses chose to leave Pine Ridge around this time for an extended hunt in Wyoming, perhaps believing there was little he could do to stop the Ghost Dancers and avert trouble with the soldiers. He was gone for a long time and played no more part in this turbulent period—the disruption of everyday life at Pine Ridge, the killing of Sitting Bull on December 15, 1890, by the Indian police, the massacre of Big Foot's Ghost Dancers at Wounded Knee on December 29, 1890 by the soldiers, and the flight by thousands of Ghost Dancers into their Badlands stronghold.67

Young Man Afraid was returning to Pine Ridge in early January 1891 when Gen. Nelson Miles sent a military escort to bring him to military headquarters. Miles needed respected chiefs like Young Man Afraid to negotiate a peaceful surrender with the "hostiles" entrenched in the Badlands.68

On two separate occasions Young Man Afraid of His Horses plunged boldly into the Ghost Dancers' camp, urging them to come in peacefully. Slowly, the Ghost Dancers returned to Pine Ridge to surrender their weapons to General Miles. Young Man Afraid had played a part in bringing the Ghost Dance troubles to a peaceful close, perhaps the last great diplomatic effort of his long career as a peacemaker for the people.69

Young Man Afraid of His Horses paid a price for his role as a mediator between the Ghost Dancers and Miles. Ghost Dancers, who resented the part he and other "friendly chiefs" played during the crisis, burned down his house and stole some of his livestock. Young Man Afraid would later receive partial compensation from the government for his losses.70

Though the Ghost Dance troubles were coming to an end in early January 1891, there were some lingering acts of
violence. On January 7, 1891, Lt. Edward W. Casey, on patrol seeking information about the movement of the "hostiles" camp, was shot by a young Brulé, Plenty Horses. A few days later, three South Dakota cowboys ambushed a small Oglala hunting party, killing Few Tails and wounding his wife. Miles wanted the murderers of Lieutenant Casey, Few Tails, and agency herder Henry Miller (shot down by a Brulé warrior, Kills the Enemy) tried in the courts. He recommended that South Dakota prosecute the white men who killed Few Tails, and sought Young Man Afraid's help in apprehending Plenty Horses and Kills the Enemy.71

Young Man Afraid of His Horses, perhaps distrusting the white man's courts and preferring a more direct form of justice, replied to Miles:

No, I will not surrender them; but if you will bring the white men who killed Few Tails, I will bring the Indians who killed the white soldier and the herder, and right out here in front of your tepee I will have my young men shoot the Indians and you have your soldiers shoot the white men, and then we will be done with the whole business; They were all bad men.12

Miles declined the offer, leaving the civil courts to try the offenders.73

After restoring peace on the reservation, Miles sent a delegation of leading Lakotas to Washington. Young Man Afraid of His Horses and American Horse, whom Miles respected for their "loyalty and peace efforts," were members of the delegation. The conference did not go well, for the president and the secretary of the interior failed to give the delegation sufficient time to express their concerns. Young Man Afraid of His Horses, a delegation spokesman, took the government to task for failing to fulfill provisions of the treaties and not listening to the Lakota people's cries, especially when food rations were cut.74

The secretary of the interior assured the delegation that their concerns would receive attention, but the chiefs returned home, "disheartened and dissatisfied." Young Man Afraid of His Horses was cynical about the whole proceeding: "We had some promises, but they were like all the other promises of the Great Father. We are not fooled and we go home with heavy hearts. . . . We shall tell our people that we have got more promises. Then they will laugh at us and call us old men."75

Young Man Afraid of His Horses spent the last years of his life rethinking the role he had played earlier when he had struggled to find ways for the Oglalas to adapt peacefully to the realities of reservation life. Agent Gallagher's dismissal of the Board of Councilmen (which Young Man Afraid helped establish, serving proudly as its presiding of-
ficer); the death of his beloved father, who had guided him in times of peace and war; the loss of Lakota lands in the Sioux Bill of 1889; the death of innocent people at Wounded Knee; and the present plight of the Oglalas at Pine Ridge, caused him to change his earlier, more “progressive” position. He became ever more suspicious of white intentions and more traditional and nationalistic in his cultural and political outlook.

When Young Man Afraid of His Horses reflected on the misery of the people, as in the summer of 1890 when the Oglalas went hungry because of severe reductions in the beef issue, he expressed a longing for the old days. There was a time when we did not have to assume the character of beggars. . . . Then we were free to go where we pleased while now we are penned up like so many cattle. . . . There was a time when the buffalo covered our plains and furnished us with all the meat we needed. Now they are gone, wantonly destroyed by the white man and we are obliged to beg for something to take their place.74

Yet, Young Man Afraid was a realist and knew the Oglalas could not return to the old days. The buffalo were gone and the Lakotas were surrounded by whites. Rather, he encouraged the young people to learn farming and trades so that they could earn a living and live in peace with the whites.75

As the Oglalas searched for the right way to live in the last years of the nineteenth century, Young Man Afraid of His Horses now wanted them to do it in their own way and in their own time, free from white intrusion. He told Capt. George LeRoy Brown, acting Indian agent for Pine Ridge, that the government should not change how it conducted business at Pine Ridge "for the next thirty years," and should not force any more changes upon the Oglalas. For instance, they should not be expected to take up individually-owned lands, which many of the old people opposed for fear of breaking up tribal lands. After a period of years their children might do so.76

Young Man Afraid of His Horses repeatedly urged officials to allow the Oglalas to manage their own affairs "in accordance with their own customs and habits." He began to resent and challenge white interference in their lives. In order to try to understand how and when changes came about in the areas of Oglala religion, marriage practices, and dances, Young Man Afraid requested from the agent at Pine Ridge a copy of the Fort Laramie Treaty and subsequent orders modifying its terms. Failing to get such materials from the agent, Young Man Afraid requested them from Lt. M. W. Day, an officer at Fort Robinson. It seems that Young Man Afraid had forgotten that during McGillycuddy’s term as agent, he had played some part in the denial of Oglala traditional practices.79

Young Man Afraid of His Horses was no longer willing to work with Pine Ridge officials in denying Oglala customs. When agent Gallagher tried to suppress the Oglala custom of giving away and destroying property at the death of a family member, he was “opposed by every Indian upon the reservation.” Likewise, when agent Brown tried to reorganize the Court of Indian Offenses at Pine Ridge, the chiefs in council “bitterly opposed the establishment of the Court,” claiming that it had been tried before and failed.80

Young Man Afraid objected to having any judges at Pine Ridge causing trouble as they did earlier. Besides, he reasoned there was no need for judges, because General Miles had instructed him “to advise and rule his people [which] he is doing well.” Young Man Afraid was reasserting the traditional right of the chiefs and tribal council to lead the people, a right that he had earlier diminished by supporting the Indian police and the Board of Indian Councilmen.81

Young Man Afraid chafed at the restrictions placed on the right to freely visit friends and relatives living on other reservations. While hunting in the summer of 1883, Young Man Afraid had met a party of Crow Indians and made peace with his old enemies. He subsequently visited the Crows many times. Young Man Afraid resented it when the commissioner of Indian affairs in 1892 rejected Young Man Afraid’s request to visit the Crows. On another occasion the commissioner ordered soldiers to intercept Young Man Afraid’s party on its way to the Crows and return them to Pine Ridge.82

Young Man Afraid was particularly incensed when the Crows’ agent ordered the military to arrest him and put him off the reservation. He wrote a long, bitter letter to General Crook protesting such insulting treatment, especially since Crook and the government had urged the Lakotas to live at peace with their old enemies like the Crows, which such visits encouraged. Young Man Afraid claimed the same rights as white people “who do not always stay at home, but sometimes relieve the monotony of their life, ease their mind and learn how other people live by sometimes traveling around to see people.” Finally, Young Man Afraid wanted permission to visit Fort Robinson, and in a note of some bitterness expressed the wish that “the military officers would not forget us, now that we are of no use to them, but occasionally look after our interests. We were once intimate with them and want the intimacy to continue as between soldiers.”83

Young Man Afraid also defended the right of Lakotas to choose where they wanted to live. When Agent Brown denied permission for two of his relatives (then living at the Cheyenne River Agency) to come and live at Pine Ridge, Young Man Afraid voiced his displeasure. He wanted all friends and relatives of the Oglalas to be welcome and fed when they came, for the Oglalas “had the greatest hearts of all the Indians and would always share their last meat with their destitute friends.”84

As whites continued to crowd the Oglalas, Young Man Afraid became ever more protective of their interests. He willingly reached out to form an alliance with the Crows against further white encroachment, which is perhaps one reason why the commissioner of In-
The agent and the commissioner got it partly right. Young Man Afraid did indeed play a significant role during the reservation years in preserving the peace. His loyalty, however, was not to Washington, but to his family, the Oglalas, and the Lakota people. Young Man Afraid's politics were always guided by how best he could lead the Oglalas as they moved from a nomadic lifestyle to the new world of the reservation.

His greatness as a peacemaker and protector of his people has not been fully recognized. A reporter from the *Omaha World-Herald*, who wrote a glowing obituary in the flowery language of the nineteenth century lamented, "Many a white man, whose deeds have been less valorous, has had his memory kept green by monuments. Young Man Afraid of His Horses ... will go to the happy hunting ground, unwritten and unsung."  

Notes

1. I have determined Young Man Afraid's birth year to be 1835, based on a study of the *Pine Ridge Agency* census returns in Indian Census Rolls, 1884–1940 (National Archives Microfilm Publication M595, rolls 362, 1886; 363, 1887; 363, 1888; 364, 1890; and 365, 1893), Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration.

2. Young Man Afraid of his Horses told the editor of the *Black Hills Journal*, Aug. 23, 1879, that Red Cloud was an old chief who should be replaced by a younger man who "knew how to do business." Reprinted in *Rapid City Journal*, Sept. 28, 1969.


5. Man Afraid of His Horses signed the treaty on May 25, 1868. See Charles Geren, special Sioux interpreter, to N. G. Taylor, commissioner of Indian affairs (hereafter cited as CIA), July 1, 1868, in *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1868), 252–54 (hereafter cited as Annual Report); *Proceedings of the Great Peace Commission* (Washington, D.C.: Institute for the Development of Indian Law, 1975), 114–19. Man Afraid may have signed the treaty again (along with Red Cloud) on Nov. 6, 1888, but Powell, *People of the Sacred Mountain*, 2:767 and 1338 n.2, argues that it was Young Man Afraid, a shirtwearer and rising figure among the Hunkpatila Oglalas who signed the treaty, and not the father; Catherine Price, *The Oglala People, 1841–1879: A Political History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 189 n.69, suggests that the second signature could be that of Young Man Afraid. For accounts of Oglalas at Ft. Laramie, see Gen. Christopher C. Augur to the secretary of war, Jan. 11 and 13, 1871, file no. 113AG01871, Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General, (Main Series) 1871–80 (National Archives Microfilm Publication M666, roll 2), Record Group 94, National Archives and Records Administration.


I Agent: A Biography of Dr. Valentine McGillycuddy (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), chaps. 3 and 4. "Red Cloud Cuts the Flag-Pole." In 1880, some years after the flagpole incident, Indian agent Valentine T. McGillycuddy flew, for the first time, an American flag over the agency. Despite Red Cloud's protest, the entire Indian Police force under Capt. George Sword recruited by Red Cloud's protest. The Oglalas chosen by Red Cloud were Young Man Afraid of His Horses, American Horse, George Sword, and Hollow Horn.

Collins, Across the Plains in 64 (Omaha: n.p., 1904), 93–94.


5 Olson, Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem, 207–8; Hyde, Red Cloud's Folk, 234, 241–42.

6 John Swan Collins, Across the Plains in 64 (Omaha: n.p., 1904), 93–94.


10 Catherine Price, "Chiefs, Headmen, and Warriors: Oglala Politics, 1851–1895" (Ph.D. diss., Purdue University, 1987), 163–64.

11 There is some confusion as to which Man Afraid signed the treaty. William Garnett, in his Jan. 10, 1907, interview with Judge Ricker said that the father signed, because Young Man Afraid was "not around," but Young Man Afraid spoke with authority at the treaty council. See "The Report and Journal of Proceedings of the Commission to Obtain Certain Concessions from the Sioux Indians," Senate Ex. Doc. 9, 44th Cong., 2d Sess., Serial 1718, 32–36. I agree with Price, The Oglala People, 157, and Olson, Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem, 225–27, that Young Man Afraid signed the treaty.


13 Garnett interview, Jan. 15, 1907, table 2, 67–68, Ricker Collection; Sandaz, Crazy Horse, 361.


15 Ambrose, Crazy Horse and Custer, 420–30.

16 James Irwin to CIA, Sept. 1, 1877, Red Cloud Agency letters, M234, roll 721.

17 Ambrose, Crazy Horse and Custer, 420–34; Sandaz, Crazy Horse, 388–400; Gen. Philip Sheridan to E. D. Townsend. adjutant general, Sept. 6, 1877, Red Cloud Agency letters, M234, roll 721.


22 McGillycuddy, McGillycuddy Agent, 104; Annual Report, 1877, 2–3. Responding to requests from Indian agents, Congress passed legislation on May 27, 1878, which empowered Indian agents to create Indian police under their direct control to maintain law and order on the reservations. For the origin of the Indian police see William T. Hagan, Indian Police and Judges (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980), chap. 2, "Origins of the Police," 25–50.

23 Valentine T. McGillycuddy to Hiram Price, CIA, Sept. 6, 1881, file no. 16308–1881, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1881–1907, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives and Records Administration (hereafter cited as Letters Received, 1881–1907).

24 ibid.

25 McGillycuddy, McGillycuddy Agent, 113, 237; McGillycuddy to E. A. Hayt, CIA, Nov. 17, 1879, Red Cloud Agency letters, M234, roll 725. One of the men Swords recruited was Little Big Man, Crazy Horse's lieutenant during the Sioux War of 1876.


27 Annual Report, 1884, 40–41.


29 McGillycuddy to John Atkins, CIA, Sept. 19, 1885, file no. 22392–1885, Letters Received, 1881–1907; "Holman's Report," 30; McGillycuddy to Price, CIA, Sept. 26, 1884, file no. 18328–1884, encl. 1, Letters Received, 1881–1907.


31 McGillycuddy to Price, CIA, Nov. 29, 1884, file no. 23371–1884, Letters Received, 1881–1907.

32 For a thorough study of this controversial incident see Harring, Crow Dog's Case, chap. 4, "Crow Dog's Case," 100–11.


34 George Sword, Standing Soldier, Joseph Pont Horse, Young Man Afraid of His Horses, and William Selwyn to Charles F. Manderson, United States Senator, Nebraska, Nov. 27, 1886, file no. 2016–1886, encl. 1 and 2, Letters Received, 1881–1907; Annual Report, 1885, 37; Manderson to John Atkins, CIA, Jan. 20, 1887, file no. 2016–1887, Letters Received, 1881–1907.

35 Annual Report, 1884, 37; McGillycuddy, McGillycuddy Agent, 167.
Young Man Afraid of His Horses

44 McGillycuddy to Price, CIA, May 4, 1884, file no. 9141-1884, and June 2, 1884, file no. 10836-1884, encl. 1; Letters Received, 1881–1907; Annual Report, 1884, 37.


47 Hyde, A Sioux Chronicle, 70. Special Indian agent James R. O’Beirne, who was in charge of the building program at Pine Ridge, recommended to the commissioner of Indian affairs that the government build homes for prominent Oglala chiefs, including Young Man Afraid and Red Cloud. See O’Beirne to E. A. Hayt, CIA, Nov. 29, 1879, file no. 311E1888 (later transferred to file no. 716-1888), Proceedings of the Great Sioux Commission, Aug. 20, 1889, Oct. 3, 1889, file no. 311E1888 (later transferred to file no. 716-1888), Letters Received, 1881–1907.

48 Olson, Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem, 312–13.


50 Olson, Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem, 317; Hyde, Sioux Chronicle, 217–18; Annual Report, 1890, 49.


53 In a council held at Pine Ridge on July 22, 1890, Young Man Afraid of His Horses, Little Wound, and Fast Thunder called upon the president to restore the beef cut because the people were hungry, and children dying. For their comments see H. D. Gallagher to T. J. Morgan, CIA, July 23, 1890, file no. 23071-1890, Letters Received, 1881–1907. For a description of the harsh conditions at the Lakota agencies in 1889 and 1890 see "The Messiah Craze," in Annual Report, 1891, 35.


56 Olson, Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem, 323.


59 Hyde, Sioux Chronicle, 260, suggests that Young Man Afraid left Pine Ridge in October, but he was still there at the end of the month, working with Royer to stop the Ghost Dancers. See D. F. Royer to R. V. Belt, acting CIA, Oct. 30, 1890, in "Ghost Dance," Special File No. 188, M574, roll 1. For a detailed account of these events see Mooney, The Ghost Dance Religion and Utley, Last Days of the Sioux Nation.


63 "For details of the killing of Lieutenant Casey and Few Tails see Utley, Last Days of the Sioux Nation, 256–58, 261–66.

64 Indian Rights Association, Ninth Annual Report, 1891, 43. See also clippings from The Pioneer, Mar. 20–25, 1891, in "Ghost Dance," Special File no. 188, M574, roll 2.

65 Plenty Horses was arrested and brought to trial. The judge ruled that Plenty Horses had killed Lieutenant Casey as a combatant in a time of war and the jury cleared him of murder charges. The cowboys who ambushed Few Tails were also brought to trial, but despite the hard evidence against them a jury acquitted them of murder. Utley, Last Days of the Sioux Nation, 265–67.

66 Miles to adjutant general, Mar. 13, 1891, "Ghost Dance," Special File no. 188, M574, roll 2; Utley, Last Days of the Sioux Nation, 275–77.
Young Man Afraid's speech is in Gallagher to Morgan, CIA, July 23, 1890, file no. 23071-1890, Letters Received, 1881–1907.


Capt. George LeRoy Brown to T. J. Morgan, CIA, Feb. 6, 1892, file no. 5514-1892, and July 7, 1892, file no. 24550-1892, Letters Received, 1881–1907; Annual Report, 1892, 457.


Annual Report, 1888, 49; 1892, 454.

Young Man Afraid of His Horses to White Eagle, an officer at Fort Robinson, Nov. 21, 1892, Indian Rights Association Papers, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

McGillycuddy to Price, CIA, June 26, 1883, file no. 11605-1883, and June 1, 1884, file no. 10836-1884, Letters Received, 1881–1907; Gallagher to CIA, Dec. 3, 1888, file no. 30024-1888, ibid.; Capt. Charles Penney to CIA, Aug. 4, 1891, file no. 29233-1891, ibid.; Brown to Morgan, CIA, Oct. 9, 1892, file no. 37032-1892, ibid.; commanding general, Department of Dakota, to assistant adjutant general, Division of the Missouri, July 19, 1887, file 3470 AGO 1887, Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series), 1881–1889 (National Archives Microfilm Publication M890, roll 53B) Records of the Adjutant General's Office, Record Group 94, National Archives and Records Administration.

Lt. M. W. Day, an officer at Fort Robinson, wrote the letter for Young Man Afraid. See Day to Crook, Jan. 26, 1889, file no. 5119-1889, Letters Received, 1881–1907.

Brown to Morgan, CIA, Feb. 16, 1892, file no. 6888-1892, ibid.


Brown to CIA, Nov. 12, 1892, file no. 41209-1892, ibid.; James Cooper, special Indian agent, to CIA, Aug. 21, 1891, file no. 51194-1891, ibid. The statement attributed to Young Man Afraid was quoted in Day to Crook, Jan. 26, 1889, file no. 5119-1889, ibid.

John P. Ost, Newcastle, Wyoming, to Capt. Charles Penney, acting Indian agent, Pine Ridge Agency, July 13, 1893, file no. 27392-1893, ibid. Ost was the mortician at Newcastle; R. O. Pugh interview, Oct. 26, 1906, Tablet 1, 111–113, Ricker Collection. Pugh, the issue clerk at Pine Ridge, was at the agency office when a member of Young Man Afraid's band brought the sad news.


Omaha World-Herald, Aug. 2, 1893.