

All the operations along the line of the Arkansas were finally placed ⁸⁰ / under direction of Colonel Lewis, whose force at last numbered about two hundred and fifty men, only one-half of them being cavalry.

On September 21, about dark, the united companies of Captain Rendlebrock and Captain Morse, numbering about one hundred and fifty soldiers, with some fifty citizens, had a skirmish with the Indians on Sand Creek, south of the Arkansas, and again upon the following evening.

On the 24th of September, the trail of the Indians was found northeast of Pierceville, showing that they had succeeded in crossing the Arkansas, and on the morning of the 25th, Colonel Lewis, in command of all the detachments of troops in the immediate neighborhood, started in pursuit, his cavalry having only just arrived at Fort Dodge, after a very hard forced march from Fort Elliott, Tex.

Colonel Lewis pursued rapidly in a northwest direction, through Kansas, until about five o'clock in the evening on September 28, when he overtook the Cheyennes on "Punished Woman's" Fork of the Smoky Hill River, where the Indians were found very strongly intrenched and waiting for the troops. Colonel Lewis attacked them at once and in gallantly leading an assault upon their position he was mortally wounded, dying the same night whilst being conveyed in an ambulance to the nearest military post, Fort Wallace, Kans.; three enlisted men were wounded, one Indian was found killed, and seventeen dead saddle ponies; sixty-two head of stock were captured.

On the morning of September 28, the senior surviving officer, Captain Mauck, Fourth Cavalry, continued the pursuit and reached the Kansas Pacific Railroad on the morning of September 29, the Indians having succeeded in passing between the infantry detachments patrolling the line of that road, and having crossed the track near Carlyle, Kans., during the night of September 28.