saw the two men I had sent across the river first coming in from the prairie. They reported the trail and I at once started for it. I struck the trail about 4 miles from the crossing or six miles from Dodge City and soon after the citizen who was with Mr. Lloyd turned back to the Post. The trail was quite fresh and plain and had evidently been made about 7 hours there were the tracks of a wagon 10 mules (4driven and 6 led) 2 horses and a poney the latter being "plate shoes". This trail I struck about 12:30 P.M. and at once set out upon it in a West South Westerly direction. Crossing the headwaters of the West fork of Crooked Creek and went into Camp at 7:15 P.M. between the east and West branches of the Creek. As soon as it was light enough on the following morning to follow the trail, I broke Camp and marched out in the same direction, found at 10 A.M. on a branch of Crooked Creek the place where the theives had eaten supper and moved on travelling nearly all night, their halt having been made on the west fork of Crooked Creek about 60 miles from this post as travelled, there their trail struck nearly due South for about 20 miles, then turned in a direction a little north of West towards the old Santa Fe road. Then thinking it their intention of taking that road I pushed forward to strike it before dark with the intention to follow it after dark should they have turned into it. I struck the Santa Fe road at 7:15 P.M. Where it crosses Sand Creek about 8 miles from the Cimarron River upon arriving there I found the trail crossing the Santa Fe Road and going west. When I went into Camp it being then dark I could not follow the trail. I found from all appearances they had crossed the road and creek between 4 and 5 O'clock or less than three hours a head of me. here the rations gave out, as I was provided with but two days supplies for the party and I was compelled to abandon the pursuet, the civilians employment were anxious to follow the trail alone but I would not give my consent as I considered the country unsafe for so Small a party to travel.

On the following morning I broke Camp at 4:45 A.M. and started for the Arkansas River on the Santa Fe Road and marched until 8 P.M. (halting about an hour to graze the horses) and camped on the South Side of the river being unable to find the ford in the dark. the command would have had nothing to eat had we