

In spite of all precautions, however, on October 4, the Cheyennes crossed the Union Pacific Railway at Alkali Station, a considerable distance east of Sidney. Within an hour after receipt of the news Major Thornburgh, with the troops at Sidney, were on board of a train, hastening toward the place of the crossing. Captain Mauck, with the troops following on the trail from the Department of the Missouri, arrived only a few hours later. Major Thornburgh, with his small detachment of cavalry and mounted infantry, pushed ahead rapidly upon the trail, the rest of his infantry following in wagons as fast as they could, through a very difficult country, selected by the Indians, full of high hills of soft sand, and destitute of water and grass. All of Thornburgh's wagons were soon abandoned and his troops pressed on, from October 6 to October 10, with only such supplies as could be carried on their horses. On October 10, Thornburgh's command, wholly out of rations, joined a column of five troops of the Third Cavalry, under Major Carlton, near the Niobrara River, where, finding further immediate pursuit impracticable, the two commands marched to Camp Sheridan, Nebr., having suffered severely for want of food and water, and being completely worn out by the hard pursuit through the sand hills. Captain Mauck's command was exhausted by their long march all the way from Texas and their rapid chase of the fugitives, so they moved to Fort Sidney, whence they conducted the Northern Cheyenne prisoners, held there, to the Indian Territory.

On October 15, the commanding officer at Fort Robinson telegraphed that Indians had run off stock in that vicinity, so Major Carlton's column of the Third Cavalry started from Camp Sheridan for Fort Robinson. The same day the commanding officer of Fort Sidney reported the capture of two Cheyennes, by a party of cowboys, on Snake Creek. The prisoners stated the fugitives had intended to reach the Cheyennes, supposed to be at Fort Keogh, Mont., where, if permitted to stay, they