

On Captain Johnson's recommendation Major Grierson's command was at the same time ordered by rail from Gillette, westward to Arvada, and from there northward down the Powder River. In connection with these movements, the Commanding General, Northern Division directed the Commanding General, Department of Dakota, to send from Fort Keogh all available rations under escort of two troops, 6th Cavalry, belonging to that post, the instructions for this command being to move up the Tongue river to Ashland, with a view of providing rations and grain to Colonel Rodgers's command, if the latter arrived in that vicinity. The Indians, did not, however, move west of Powder River, the rations were delivered to him there.

On October 29th Colonel Rodgers succeeded in establishing communications with Major Grierson's column, and the junction of these two commands on Powder River was effected on October 31st. On this day, also, Captain Johnson, 19th Cavalry, made arrangements through interpreters for a conference with the Utes on the following day, to be held between the camps. The conditions on the morning of November 1st did not appear favorable to a peaceable solution, as the Utes, divided in opinion, were wrangling among themselves. Colonel Rodgers insisted on a meeting, as had been agreed the day before, the Utes finally yielded, bringing one hundred or more Indians to the conference. There was much talk regarding grievances and wishes, and the Utes finally asked to send chiefs to Washington to obtain permission to settle on some Sioux Reservation. They were asked if they would return to their homes on the Uintah Reservation, to which they answered that they would not. It was evident that this was the final decision, as they would not even discuss the question. Captain Johnson, through Sioux Indians and interpreters, who had been sent to him, had found that it was practically certain the Utes would fight and break up into small bands, burning and murdering, rather than go back. Colonel Rodgers, concurring