





## The American Soldier, 1836

As the western frontier moved across the Mississippi River in the 1820's, it became apparent that cavalry would be needed to control the mounted Plains Indians. To meet this need, a battalion of mounted rangers was organized in 1832 for one year's service. This experiment was followed in 1833 by the creation of the United States Regiment of Dragoons, today the 1st Cavalry. A second dragoon regiment was added in 1836, today the 2nd Armored Cavalry.

In the right foreground stands a subaltern of the First Regiment of Dragoons in a blue coat with a yellow collar hidden by gold lace, yellow cuffs and turnbacks, and light blue trousers with yellow stripe. The drooping white horsehair plume indicates he is a troop officer, and the two buttons on the gold lace slashflaps on the cuffs show his rank of second lieutenant. In the background, the dragoons going out on patrol are dressed in their distinctive dark blue jackets trimmed with yellow lace and wear their collapsible leather forage caps. They are headed by their red and white guidon to which the word "Dragoons" was added by order of Secretary of War Lewis Cass in 1833.

In the left foreground is an ordnance sergeant -- of which there was one on every Army post to care for the arms, ammunition, and other military stores -- in his plain blue coat and light blue trousers with a dark blue stripe down the side. His grade is indicated by the four buttons on the yellow slashflaps on the cuffs, the heavy yellow worsted braid on his epaulettes, and his red sash.