



Kansas State University Libraries  
New Prairie Press

---

Symphony in the Flint Hills Field Journal

2013 – Fort Riley, Kansas (Bonnie Lynn-Sherow,  
Editor)

---

## Five Years a Dragoon ('49 to '54) and other Adventures on the Great Plains

Percival G. Lowe

Follow this and additional works at: <https://newprairiepress.org/sfh>



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

---

### Recommended Citation

Lowe, Percival G. (2013). "Five Years a Dragoon ('49 to '54) and other Adventures on the Great Plains," *Symphony in the Flint Hills Field Journal*. <https://newprairiepress.org/sfh/2013/foioli1/2>

To order hard copies of the Field Journals, go to [shop.symphonyintheflinthills.org](http://shop.symphonyintheflinthills.org).

The Field Journals are made possible in part with funding from the Fred C. and Mary R. Koch Foundation.

This is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences at New Prairie Press. It has been accepted for inclusion in Symphony in the Flint Hills Field Journal by an authorized administrator of New Prairie Press. For more information, please contact [cads@k-state.edu](mailto:cads@k-state.edu).

# *Five Years a Dragoon ('49 to '54)* AND OTHER ADVENTURES ON THE GREAT PLAINS

by Percival G. Lowe

—ADAPTED—

172

FIVE YEARS A DRAGOON.

ON THE second day of July, 1854, headquarters First Dragoons, "B" and "D" Troops, with a large supply train and 600 extra horses, left Fort Leavenworth for Fort Union, New Mexico, Colonel Thomas T. Fauntleroy commanding.

After some time, we crossed the Arkansas at Cimarron Crossing, and camped on the south bank. This location was like camping on a volcano liable to erupt at any moment. The character of the ground made it unfit to picket a large number of horses and mules. It was sandy and treacherous.

It was a perfectly bright, starlit night, and peace seemed to reign from end to end of the camp.... A little before nine o'clock the earth seemed to tremble as if in the violent throes of an earthquake. Like a whirlwind a stampede commenced with "D" Troop horses, rushing down through the extra horses and on through the mules, sweeping everything before it. On they went, trampling everything under foot, upsetting and breaking a dozen six-mule wagons by catching picket pins in the wheels; picket pins whizzing in the air struck an object and bounded forward like flying lances. All the string horses (600) and 600 mules were in the mad rush of destruction. Realizing the full meaning of the terrible calamity I ordered "boots and saddles" and when Lieutenant Hastings arrived we mounted and were off in the direction of the stampede.

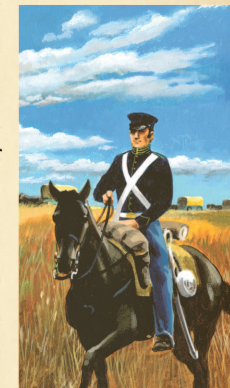
Within twelve or fifteen miles of camp we had turned back probably 400 mules and half as many horses; and now Lieutenant Hastings and a few men started back with quite a band leaving with

*Percival Lowe served as a Dragoon from 1849 to 1854 and advanced to the rank of First Sergeant. Mounted Dragoon by Hugh Brown. Courtesy National Park Service*

FIVE YEARS A DRAGOON.

173

me about twenty-five men. A mile from the river we swung around driving about sixty horses before us towards the river, and suddenly found ourselves close to an Indian camp. There was no changing our course so as to avoid the village altogether without abandoning our captured animals. I put spurs to my horse to get between the horses and the Indian camp. The horses did not seem to notice the lodges until close on to them, and we rushed through the south edge of the village at a fast gallop. In the meantime the dogs set up a terrible barking, and as we looked back the whole camp seemed to be alive, as men, women and children hustled out of their lodges. And now the sun was coming up; we had ridden our



horses at all sorts of gaits seven hours. I determined to scatter out two hundred or three hundred yards apart and drive all we could find to camp.

To the fact that Troop B was able to mount promptly, and work systematically and vigorously, Colonel Fauntleroy owed his ability to move without abandoning many wagons. If pursuit had been delayed until morning the Indians would have had most of the horses. It did not take them long to scour the country and pick up what we left. They brought a good many to the camp for which the colonel paid them.