

The French Foreign Legion in Mexico

In Mexico, the French Foreign Legion earned its reputation for bravery and determination in an 1863 battle.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, April 16, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The French Foreign Legion enjoys a storied history that extends beyond the most commonly depicted desert locales and touches the 'New World' in Mexico.

Barely three decades after the [French Foreign Legion was](#) formed, the branch embarked on a multi-year Mexican expedition that added an epic course in battlefield bravery to the legendary forces' legend.

Over 35,000 soldiers were initially dispatched to Mexico in two battalions to intervene after Mexico decided to stop repaying interest on loans obtained from wealthy European nations. Ultimately, France hoped to install a monarchy open to robust trade with Europe.

Four years into a planned six-year tour, the forces were withdrawn, but an infamous battle during their first year in the country had already shaped the history of the Mexican Campaign.

The epic Battle of Camarón took place in April 1863 with eleven hours defining the bravery of [the French Foreign Legion for](#) eternity.

In the battle, 65 Legionnaires, including three officers, battled up to 3,000 fighters loyal to Mexico and organized into infantry and cavalry regiments.

The battle took place at a small farm as Legionnaires led by French Foreign Legion Captain Jean Danjou sought shelter in outbuildings and a yard on the estate and Mexican loyalists occupied the main house and quickly surrounded the Legionnaires.

Despite Mexican officials arguing for a surrender based on their superior numbers, Danjou refused and was later killed by a bullet to the chest.

With limited supplies, including ammunition, the French Foreign Legion Legionnaires were full of fighting spirit but outgunned in the end.

The battle raged for wave after wave as the [French Foreign Legion soldiers](#) were slowly reduced in number while picking off over 300 Mexican loyalists from their vantage points.

When only six French Foreign Legion Legionnaires remained, they pursued an additional charge that earned the legion a reputation for fighting until the last man and never giving up.

These last six soldiers shot their only remaining bullets before embarking on a final bayonet charge into the throng of Mexican loyalists.

Three were immediately killed before a Mexican commander stayed his men. The last three French Foreign Legion Legionnaires were wounded but survived the battle to form an impromptu honor guard to remove the remains of their commander from the sight of the siege and carry their colors.

One of the Legionnaires, French Foreign Legion Lt. Clement Maudet, died several days after the battle from his wounds, but the legacy of the Battle of Camarón lives on as an official holiday for the French Foreign Legion celebrated every year on April 30.

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