



## Camerone: The French Foreign Legion's Greatest Battle

Rosemary Rohmer, James Ryan

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The first detailed account in English of the battle that defined the elite unit's fidelity to the mission. The battle was fought at Camerone, some 40 miles west of Vera Cruz, Mexico, on April 30, 1863; the opponents were the half-strength 3d Company, 1st Battalion, of the Legion opposed by more than 2,000 Mexican regulars and guerrillas. After several fights against the Mexican lancers just beyond the deserted La Trinidad Hacienda at Camerone, the 3d took cover behind the old walls of the hacienda. There, for ten hours the Legion withstands repeated assaults from a Mexican force that grew to more than 2,000 men. Finally, the surviving officer and four men of the 3d charge into the midst of the massed *juaristas*. The officer is mortally wounded, two men are killed, the other two captured. The Legion has never regarded Camerone as a defeat but rather as the prime example of fidelity to the mission. Annually, on April 30, Legion units, whether in peace or war, commemorate the gallantry of the 3d of the 1st.



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