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The French Foreign Legion

Douglas Boyd

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The French Foreign Legion

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The French Foreign Legion Douglas Boyd
Known for its austerity and discipline, deprivation and sacrifice, the French Foreign Legion is perhaps the most intriguing and famous fighting force in the world. For 170 years, jobless, homeless and loveless men have found in the Legion a sense of purpose worth all the rigors and risks of serving in the world's longest-standing mercenary army. One of the rewards for which men sign on with the Legion is French citizenship, and every legionnaire may claim it after serving three years with good conduct. The Legion has never had any problem attracting recruits: seven out of ten applicants are still rejected. But what is it that attracts men from so many countries and social backgrounds to accept the harsh discipline of this legendary mercenary army with a rigid code of honor straight out of the nineteenth century? Douglas Boyd tells the eventful story of the Legion from its inception in 1831 to defend France's colonial interests, to the Legion of today involved in peacekeeping and humanitarian duties worldwide. The author also examines the reasons behind the love-hate relationship between France and the foreigners she pays to spill their blood for her which are at the core of the Legion's history.

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