



Tramp in Armor

Colin Forbes

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May 1940, the German panzer divisions roll across Northern France and all seems lost. Only the British Force stands between the enemy and the coast. Can one British tank which is coming up behind the German lines destroy a whole German tank division?

Tramp in Armor Details

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Author : Colin Forbes

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From Reader Review Tramp in Armor for online ebook

Gary Wallis says

Well, this here story is Murphey`s law in a book. The premise is a British tank is left behind in the German attack in the opening stages of WW2 and it`s struggle to get back to their own lines before being destroyed by said German armor columns. What can go wrong ? Well , just about everything. Besides having an endless supply of petrol (they only fill up once in the story), one by one , the members of the crew are either killed or incapacitated one by one until the last part of the story. And the ending is naturally the destruction of a complete German armor column that if it had really occurred, could have changed the course of the war ! But, fear not, someone makes it Who ? I had to re-read the end of this story to remember how it ended because a few days after I finished , I drew a blank. You can pass on this one.

Fred says

Really enjoyed this WW2 action romp

Dave says

This was, in my opinion, the best novel I've read written by Colin Forbes. It follows the adventures of a tank crew as they are stranded behind enemy lines in World War 2 and have to find their way to safety. The highlights I recall are a very suspenseful scene where they have to hide from the Nazi's, disguising their tank as a hay bale, and a very exciting tank battle at the end. I loved this one.

Michael Petersen says

Read this one as a child. It was glorious back then.

Dhiraj Sharma says

Somewhat similar to those Commando comics I used to read as a kid.

Steve says

A British Matilda tank and her crew, cut off during the Blitzkrieg in France 1940, attempt to make their way back to Allied lines. It sounds good, but the plot is ruined by implausible action and stereotyped characters -- the book fails miserably.

Nigel says

An excellent novel which shows the skill of Forbes as a story teller and that he can produce work that is not part of the Tweed & Co series. After being sent out for reconnaissance Sgt Barnes and his tank crew get separated from the main body of the British Expeditionary Force in the pre Dunkirk stage of WWII. What follows is the story of their struggles to stay alive as they try to re-join the BEF and make a contribution to the war effort.

The story moves at a good pace and Forbes provides one or two nice surprises along the way. Due to the nature of the story there are no large scale battles just the occasional skirmish, but all the action scenes are well written and believable.

Jesper Jorgensen says

In the seventies book clubs was very popular in Denmark. And my father was a member of one too. Thence our home had an ample supply of books (During the years it accumulated into many 'shelf meters')

And as my father – a history teacher with WWII as the era of interest – also was a school librarian I became 'environmental damaged' and read scores of books. Among those was 'Tramp in Armor'.

At the time I read it, it was as a good and thrilling story but I was only faintly able to see the big picture of the battles in France 1940. So I plan to read it again, could be interesting to see if it still hits home almost forty years later.

Something in my mind tells me that Forbes was one of the authors I liked but I do not remember the details from the book very well hence the three stars is only an estimated guesswork.

Keld Yding says

Spændende og letlæst. For unge og gamle.

Bill says

(Read during High School)

Duzzlebrarian says

I can't believe nobody has reviewed this yet!

This is the story of a tank named Bert and 'his' crew, who are separated from their own side during the chaos of the invasion of France. They find themselves far behind enemy lines, wandering in the empty gap between the oncoming Panzers and the BEF. At first their aim is to join up with the BEF, until they find a chance to put their full load of ammunition to really good use...

Hair-raising narrow scrapes, and bad luck follow. Forbes keeps the tension going non-stop. The story has a bare minimum of characters (obviously, since they're all alone) but those characters are nice and solid. The route can be followed along a map in the front of the book, which always gives a book a nice 3D feel, but a few times I had to pause and recollect "left turn then right turn, ok I know where we are."

John White says

I picked this book up for free when I was in hospital with a broken Ankle.
I really enjoyed his writing style and went on to read every one of his books.

Jeffrey Keeten says

"It was going to be another lovely day----for the Germans."

The German Panzer IV

When the Germans invaded Poland in 1939 Britain sent the British Expeditionary Force (B.E.F.) to defend France. May 10th of 1940 the Germans invade the Netherlands and Belgium and quickly drive through the Ardennes to attack France. Three German Panzer Corps quickly pushed the French, British, and the tattered remains of the Belgian Army to the coast of France. The Blitzkrieg tactics had worked to perfection

Everything hung in the balance.

The war, the world, the future.

The Panzer tanks were moving so fast that they were way ahead of their ground troops. They were unable to secure any of the territory they had so easily conquered. Adolf Hitler ordered a halt and that gave the Allies time to build defenses and perform The Miracle of Dunkirk. From Destroyers to pleasure craft to the most insignificant floating derelicts were all launched towards the coast of France. Civilians worked desperately along with the Royal Navy to save their boys. They pulled 338,226 troops off that deadly coast so that they would be able to fight another day.

This was one of the finest moments not only in British history, but in world history in my humble opinion.

If you ever want to see me tear up just mention one word...Dunkirk, but you will have to buy me a pint.

They went and got them by any floating means possible.

Churchill was under immense pressure to sue for peace by his cabinet. This is one of those times in history where one man did make a difference. One man refused to bend under the weight of a seemingly impossible situation. One man saved civilization as we know it. He refused thoughts of surrender and gave one of the most important speeches of his career. The we shall Fight on the Beaches speech. Linked below for those that may not have heard it:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MkTw3...>

That is a Matilda II Tank shown in front of a Valentine Tank in a demonstration in 1940.

Now Sergeant Barnes commander of a Matilda II tank has no idea all of this is going on. All he knows is that he, his crew, and his beloved tank (nicknamed affectionately Bert) are trapped after the Luftwaffe of the Wehrmacht chased them into a railroad tunnel and bombed the opening closed. They dig their way out only to find that the world has changed. They aren't sure what has happened, but their sole desire is to rejoin the B.E.F. and stay alive in the process. They soon find themselves in a cat and mouse game with German Panzers and doing their best to avoid a series of fortunately poorly manned roadblocks. They also have to contend with looters, French and German who are desperate and frankly despicable. They meet some wonderful French people who are willing to risk their lives to give these British soldiers a chance to return to the fight.

"If the generals had fought this war the way some of these people fight when they get a chance we'd be over the Rhine now."

What he is alluding to of course is the disastrous command structure of the French Army. The top leadership was loaded with ancient, career officers most many decades removed from their peak mental and physical years. The young Frenchmen who volunteered to defend their country deserved much better.

Towns have been obliterated by the firepower of the Luftwaffe.

"Barnes ordered Reynolds to drive down the very centre of the rubble-littered highway as he anxiously watched the spectral walls of the bombed buildings they were passing, wondering whether they should turn back at once. It was by no means certain that the vibrations of the tank movement might not bring down one of those hanging walls. Some of them seemed to stay upright by a miracle of balance."

Lives shattered by the passing hordes of armies. One, then another, then maybe the same one again.

Sergeant Barnes and his tank crew found bombed cities in the wake of the German invasion.

As they keep out of the clutches of the Germans, they often have to take Bert over terrain that tanks were not really meant to contend with. The descriptions that Colin Forbes A.K.A. Raymond Harold Sawkins shares of the formidable, but vulnerable aspects of the Matilda tank certainly provided me with more insight into the continual problems of tank warfare that still exist clear up to the present day.

They have to hide under bridges, in abandoned buildings, in tunnels of trees, in river beds and even in one real moment of desperation... a haystack. The eyes of the Germans are randomly circling overhead and spell doom for them if they are spotted. As they put two and two together and start to understand the extent of the

German triumph. They decide they must do something to put a damper on the victory dancing.

I had been intending to read Colin Forbes spy series Tweed & Co., but this book just happened to fall into my hands. I don't believe I've ever read a novel involving a tank of any kind from WW2. This is the first book that he wrote under the Forbes pseudonym. He was able to lend authenticity to his books by personally visiting the places utilized in all of his novels, due diligence that I appreciate. The book was published in 1969. The events of World War II was still fairly recent history for most of his audience in Britain so he did not include much of the background of what was happening (as I did at the beginning of this review) partly also because this tank crew was cut off from being able to communicate with their own command. The tank crew had to rely on the mostly sketchy information provided by the French people willing to offer them help.

This is certainly a man's book, not in the graphic sex, graphic violence sense (if that is even a designation anymore), but simply because the only female character is a French wife, unable to speak English, who dresses their wounds and exits stage right. Now me, I would have had to add a character, an intelligent, extremely attractive female French resistance fighter who would provide some saucy repartee while firing off a few rounds in the direction of the German soldiers. :-)

This book fulfills a high quota for adventure as it was intended and a low quota for literary value also as it was intended. It is an entertainment, a page flipper, a Walter Mitty adventure for those whose most exciting moment of the day is shaking the pop machine so it will drop their Sierra Mist.

***Best read in a hammock with a glass of condensation beaded lemonade (cause you will be thirsty) attire should consist of aviator Ray-bans, cargo shorts, and a box of smokes (smoking them not recommended) rolled up in one sleeve of your short sleeve western style snap shirt. Also this is the proper attire to attract females who like their men with a dubious nature.

Lew says

Great WWII war story about a British Tank crew during the battle of Dunkirk.

Sharath Gopal says

This was absolutely fabulous. One of those rare action adventures that also serves as brain food. Forbes' prose was spot on - neither dragging, yet very nicely prosed. Saving Private Ryan meets Mission Impossible!!
