

Kansas City Star
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Six Men Become Tankers

Six men were accepted today for the new tank corps by Lieut. Frank E. Cooter, who arrived from Washington yesterday to recruit men for the special service. The men were selected from a crowd of twenty that appeared at the army recruiting office at Twelfth Street and Grand Avenue today. Men of various occupations, from bookkeepers to motor operators, applied for service today. Those accepted are:

Elvin L. Loyd, 1711 Penn Street, a tractor driver.

Harold E. McEachron, Atlanta, Ga., a machinist.

Kenneth C. Dills, 3939 Agnes Avenue, stenographer.

Robert E. Watson, 1317 West Thirteenth Street, stenographer.

Albert F. Henne, 207 East Twelfth Street.

Lewis M. Dean, Chicago, Ill.

The men of the tank corps enlist in a dangerous branch of the service, but it is thrilling work and, like aviation, has long periods of rest and inactivity between the short, concentrated spells of action.

All the men taken were of draft age and were given a letter from Col. I.C. Welborn of the tank corps, authorizing any local board to immediately induct them into service.

A returned officer from the western front now training recruits at the national tank training camp at Gettysburg, Pa., tells the inside story of one of the land ships in action.

For several days the men prepare for the coming offensive. The tanks are brought up behind the first line trenches under cover of darkness and the crews crawl into the close, oily smelling steel shells. The machine gunners, artillerymen and engineers get into their cramped quarters, the commander crawls into his seat, the engines clatter and pound and the great steel monster clanks lumberingly forward. The commander is the brains and the eyes of the tank. He sits crouched close under the fore turret and has a view of the jumbled terrain of the battle field through a narrow slit. The engineer is the heart of the machine, for he changes the tank from a mere protection into a living, moving fighter.

The constant noise is the big thing in a tank attack. The Germans have no difficulty seeing the big machine as it wallows forward over the mud and a constant stream of machine gun bullets plays on the armour, seeking any crevice. The machine gun bullets do no harm except to cut the camouflage paint from the sides.

The tank lurches forward, climbs up, and then slides gently down like an otter on an ice slide. The guns are roaring inside and the machine guns making a steady typewriter clatter. Inside the tank the atmosphere becomes intolerable for want of fresh air and reeks with the smell of burnt oil, gas fumes, engine exhaust and gunpowder.

The crew inside work the guns while the constant clatter of bullets on the armour sounds like rain on a tin roof. Shells are bursting close to the tank, and a direct hit rocks the monster. But

the tank hesitates only a moment and lumbers on. Barb wire is crunched, trenches crossed and machine gun parapets smothered into the mud.

Then a whistle blows, the rear door of the tank is opened and the men, covered with grease, their faces black with the smoke of the guns, crowd out of the narrow opening to cheer as the brown waves of the infantry sweep past. Then its back to barracks and rest.

“We want fighters for the tank service,” said Lieutenant Cooter today. “Real men that want to see action. No mollycoddles need apply.” Men from 18 to 40 years old are being enlisted at the army recruiting station, Twelfth Street and Grand Avenue. Men of nearly all mechanical trades may enlist if they pass the personal inspection and mental test given by Lieutenant Cooter.