

## AL KRANT

ONE OF THE MEN THAT THE Q.  
M. C.'s KNEW AND LOST.

A shrieking whistle heralded the oncoming 7.55 morning train. The brakes were applied, the train slowed down, and like a huge mammal shaking itself, it jerked forward, then back, and came to a standstill at Natchicez, a wee town in the heart of Louisiana. The train men opened the doors and several passengers alighted. From a car in the rear, a sack of mail was unloaded onto a waiting cart.

That day was an eventful one for Natchichez, La. The 87 inhabitants of this super-city were moving about with energy, digging out old preserved clothing and fixing up as for a momentous time.

Al Krant was leaving on an early train that day to represent his town in the U. S. Army. The villagers assembled at Krant's home, and, soon, with him at the head talking with a neighbor on either side, the procession made for the railroad station. Shaking hands with his fellow residents, Krant boarding the waiting train, and, amid the waving of headkerchiefs and hats, he was soon speeding away.

The First Sergeant of Receiving Company No. Five at a southern camp was looking out of the open doorway at what resembled a barrel of apples waddling along, now and then coming to a stop. That this object was a man, and not a barrel, was evident as the object drew near. Ere long, the man drew up to the orderly room and entered, hat in hand and perspiring profusely, and set down his grip. He presented a letter of identification from his local board, from which letter it was ascertained that the arrival was Al Krant, induced man, age 24, height 5 feet, weight 305 lbs. His greatest measurement was at the girth, where he was delightfully rounded out; and from that point his trunk sloped down until only a disfigured pair of shoes was visible.

Now, Al's retention in the army was conditional upon his being accepted by the camp medical office, and, pending this examination, he was assigned to Receiving Company No. 5 Abnormal persons, as a rule, are sensitive; but not so with Krant. He stood for the joshings of the boys, and he gave as much as he received. A half hour after assignment to his barracks, he was around and became acquainted with every corpulent man in the company. He showed surprising agility. He ran races with the boys.

He fell in the drill one morning, as the company started off for the drill grounds with Al bringing up the rear. They were out gone half a minute, when the first sergeant saw him making his way back, and snouted "What's matter, Krant."

"Well, sh'l tell yu; if them fellers wouldn't wolk so fast and took shorter steps, ah could keep up with 'em. Why at hum, ah could walk fram sunrise to sunset an' never feel it; ah; ah'd never know I was walking. Of cose, I used to walk in my own way."

Several days after his arrival, he was

## TO THE GIRL I LEFT BEHIND ME.

Darling, when I am far away,  
From you "somewhere in France,"  
I ask you to always think of me,  
And pray that I have a chance.

To be at home with you little girl,  
Is happiness that is true,  
But I can not see the enemy,  
Down the old Red, White, and Blue.

Some day in the near future,  
This great conflict will end,  
And the soldier boy who loves you,  
Will come back to you again.

When the boys are marching by,  
In step with some National Hymn,  
It thrills my heart to know,  
That I am one of them.

I will close this letter hoping,  
You will be mine some day,  
As I bid you goodbye for this hour,  
And goodbye for the day.

—By Pvt. Samuel J. Farmer, Co. B.  
7th Inf., a patient in the hospital.

called for examination. He returned with an honorable discharge for "physical deficiency." "Say, sergeant, ah wantt' stay heah; ah'm beginnin' to like this place, an' am gettin' used to the boys. Con't you fix it up for me to remain?"

In answer to this plea, Al was given the understanding that this was impossible.

The supper mess call was blown and the company filed into the mess hall and sat down. Three fellows, pushing, pulling, and lifting Krant, succeeded in squeezing him in between the fixed bench and the table. The food before Al disappeared with great rapidity. Indeed, it had not far to travel, for his face was about three inches from the plate. This method of eating has its advantage—the peas didn't have time to roll off his knife. One of the boys opposite him suspected that he was slightly cross-eyed, for once or twice he reached over into another fellow's plate and took a slice of bread. The mess was almost over when from one part of the mess hall, there were cries of "Attention! Attention!" Silence soon prevailed.

Al Krant worked his way out from the place he was wedged in, came down the aisle, and stopped at the center of the room. "Ah, ah just want to say good bye to you all. Ah got my transportation and' am goin' hum t'night. Ah'm sorry ah can't be with you all when you go across over theah, but ah wish you boys all the best of luck; go over theah, lick the stuffins out of 'em, and come back, and maybe some time we'll meet again. Goodluck, good bys."

That night a train pulled out of Jacksonville, Florida. One of the passengers on this train was Al Krant, on his way to his family and friends. His dream of heroic performances in the war is over, for he is going back to his home—the farm.

Sergeant J. Rosenberg.

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