B.C. Student Turns Hick
Spends Summer On Farm; Up Early; Milks Cows

[Dick Hershcopf, an upperclassman at Brooklyn College, enlisted his services with the Volunteer Land Group this summer, to help stem the labor shortage on farms throughout the country. He was sent to a farm in Vermont—Ed. Note.]

By RICHARD HERSHCOPF

It was bad enough getting up at 7 o'clock to go to school, but 4:30 every morning, including Sundays and holidays, is about the worst. Then out into a black, foggy morning; trying to find 55 cows, hiding behind trees and rocks in a huge pasture, is not easy when you yell: “Here Boss!”

It's natural to fear the cows a little. That's why my knees shook that first morning when my farmer told me to drive them into the barn. After all, I said to myself, they don't know me and they have horns — but I learned the hard way — you just have to stand behind them and keep 'em moving.

Next was learning the art of milking. Many difficulties. I didn't squeeze hard enough because my humanitarian instinct said I would hurt Miss Jersey, and I had trouble making my thumb and forefinger close first with the other fingers following in succession. But I did manage to get a couple of pints.

The barn odors didn't bother me much and it was a real pleasure cleaning out our bull, Ferdinand, although many times I sprinted after him, trying to get him back in his pen. And since the barn was cleaned after each milking, I became most proficient with a broom and shovel.

The big job was getting 300 tons of hay into the barn. One of my chief duties was "mowing" the hay away, that is, when it was taken into the barn from the fields, I had to distribute it evenly on the floor. As more and more hay is taken in, you get closer to the roof. Now, hay heats when a hot sun beats down on a metal roof, and the temperature in which you're working rises to 120°F. I was soaking wet all the time, and must have sweated off 20 pounds in perspiration.

Farm colloquialism bothered me also. I was asked whether I could "strip" a cow. I said: "Don't be silly, a cow doesn't have clothes." It was finally explained to me that "stripping" was the milking out of the last few quarts by hand, which the machines can't get.

I learned many new and interesting thing. But above all, I learned that the college and high school pupils who worked on farms in the area I was sent to are prepared to make all necessary sacrifices to insure that the United Nations gain a speedy and complete victory over fascism.