College Women to Pick Beans, Study Rural Problem First Hand

Miss Barnes, of Brooklyn, to Direct I40 Who Will Go To
Classes After Day in Field

By Emma Bugbee

String beans and rural sociology go hand in hand to make a summer program for Miss Mary Edna Barnes, instructor in sociology at Brooklyn College, who has been made dean in charge of 10 women students from that institution who will pick beans this summer at Morrisville, N. Y., under a "save the beans" slogan. Their labors begin tomorrow.

Granting that the patriotic impulse to help harvest farm products is the chief motive which impelled the Brooklyn College student in their rural adventure, Miss Barnes nevertheless sees it as a hopeful portent of better understanding between city and rural folks.

Just before leaving the college for Morrisville, Miss Barnes gave an interview, in which she analyzed some of the possibilities for good in the emergency which has attracted so many city students to enroll as victory farmers this year.

"The difficulty their mothers encountered in finding markets for canning fruit and vegetables in the markets," Miss Barnes said, "first directed the attention of these students to the fact that here are many people who have argued that beans were always to be found at the corner grocery; suddenly they learned that something like the Brooklyn College student was arising which lessened the quantity of beans in the corner market."

Will Learn—The Hard Way

"Now they are going to learn—by the sweat of their own brow and the kinks of their own backs—just how beans are harvested for those markets. It will make a difference all their lives in their appraisal of the farm problem, and while the need for canning American farm land, circumstances were arising which lessened the quantity of beans in the corner market."

"In my course," she said, "we shall study rural institutions and

Miss Mary Edna Barnes

been assigned to the college students where they will be at all times under the supervision of some faculty member.

Inscribed by Patriotism

"We do not expect to fall down on our share of the harvest," Miss Barnes said. "Our students may not feel the same compulsion to earn every possible dollar that the seasonal laborer does, but we have entered this campaign thoroughly impressed by the necessity of saving the crops, and patriotism will inspire us when perhaps finances alone would allow us to falter. The students are well aware that they are in for a summer of hard work, for we stressed the 'no glamour' aspects in our recruiting."

Miss Barnes has been a student of rural life since she began her teaching career twenty-five years ago in a one-room school in the blue grass country, and in a "moonlight school"—the beginning of an adult education program started in the Kentucky Mountains during the last war."

"It was a moonlight school," she said, "for the men and women could come down the mountain only on moonlight nights. Since then I have passed many vacation months in the coal mining counties of Pennsylvania and the sharecropping areas of Tennessee."

Born in Dry Ridge, Ky., in the foothills of the mountains, Miss Barnes studied at Oxford (Ohio) University and the University of Cincinnati, and acquired her master's degree at Columbia University. She passed the summer of 1932 in Germany, studying the educational system of that country, but 1932 was the year of the first Hitler election, and although she does not like to talk about her last summer in Germany,