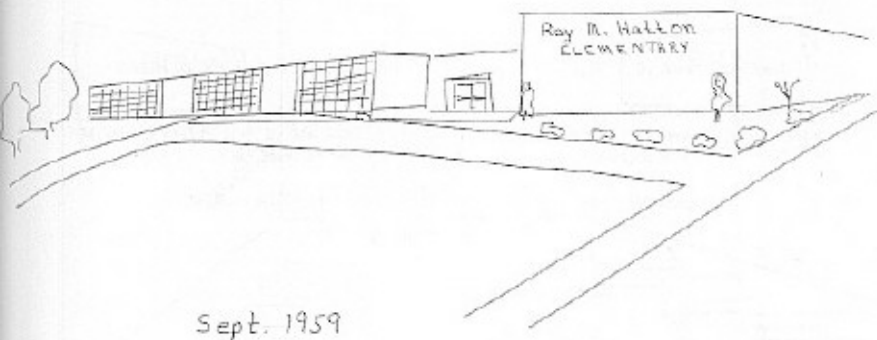


Prairie View #1

Sept. 1900



Sept. 1959

*ROY MOSES HATTON*  
*by Mark C. Hatton (Age 12)*  
*Bridge City Junior High Student*  
*March 8, 1966*

New residents to Bridge City often ask why the elementary school is named "ROY M HATTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL." The following quotation was written by Mr. Bill Townes, winner of a contest to name the new elementary school in August, 1959.

"In selecting a name for the new elementary school, I feel that we have no choice but Roy M. Hatton.

"Roy M. Hatton, a pioneer of Bridge City, has done more for the school than any other person. Not only has he spent considerable time on the school board, but also countless hours on the school grounds with his tractor.

"I feel that it would not only be an honor to Mr. Hatton, but a greater honor for us to have a school named after a local man who has devoted his life to the high principle of education."

Now I would like to tell you the story of this good man's life.

On June 15, 1893, Roy Moses Hatton was born into a family of five. His father was John Moses Hatton and his mother was the former Abigail Turner. He had two brothers, Frank and Edgar, and a sister, Ethel. His birth place was near the present site of the Gulf States Power Plant, 3 miles west of Bridge City. Two years later another sister, Ophelia, joined the family. Then on December 1, 1897, his mother died. Roy was now four years old.

After Mrs. Hatton died, Roy's father hired a housekeeper and nurse named Amanda Singleton, who later became his wife. Amanda lived only four years, but added two baby boys, Clyde and Truett, to the family.

Again, Mr. Hatton hired a house keeper and nurse to tend to the motherless children. This time it was a lady by the name of Sarah Jane Colburn of Orange. She, in due time, became the third Mrs. John Moses Hatton. Sarah Jane overflowed the nursery with Naomi, Ruby, Hazel, Joc, Helen, and Alvin. This brought the number of children to thirteen.

As a living, Roy's father farmed and ranched. Mr. Hatton raised pigs, grew rice, raised sugar cane, and did high land farming. From these things he got bacon, pork, rice, sugar, syrup, corn, and several other crops. He had his own mill where he made his sugar and syrup from sugar cane.

As might be expected, Roy had his share of the work. He had to feed the hogs, help harvest crops, chop wood, and carry water from a nearby well.

At the age of six, Roy started to Prairie View School, a school one mile west of the present Hatton Elementary. The school had sixteen to eighteen students, which were taught by one teacher. These students' ages varied from six to eighteen. The teacher was Miss Allie Bland, who later became County School Superintendent. Roy had to get to school by either walking, riding a horse, or riding in a buggy. The school was two miles from Roy's house. Roy's lunch consisted of syrup, biscuits, a sweet potato, some kind of meat, milk, and sometimes a cookie or two. He usually carried his lunch in a bucket.

At seven years of age, Roy started living upstairs with the older boys. The girls and younger boys stayed downstairs. The steps to go downstairs were on the outside of the house. When the boys got up at five o'clock, it was often very cold going down to breakfast.

A new school was built when Roy reached the seventh grade. This school was located near the old one and had increased to thirty students, but still only one teacher.

Roy was one of the older boys and it was his responsibility to carry water in buckets from a nearby spring. This was usually done during recess or lunch.

Sometime during these years Roy started smiling at Lois Faulk, a new girl in the community. Each day at school, Roy and a friend of his would race to saddle her horse for her.

During the school year, Roy would often have to stay home to help harvest crops, or drive cattle. On these cattle drives, they would drive the cattle through the marsh to the Neches River, which they had to swim, near the present city of Port Neches. When they reached Port Arthur, they would sell the cattle to buyers, who would then drive the cattle to Fort Worth or Abilene.

When Roy reached the eighth grade, he quit school to help around the farm. A year later, he left home to work for Jesse T. Turner. Roy helped Mr. Turner harvest his rice and maintain county roads. In return, Mr. Turner gave him room and board. Mr. Turner's house and fields were located near the present site of Palm Ridge. While working for Mr. Turner, Roy continued to see Lois Faulk. On January 22, 1913, they were married in Rev. Fred Burton's house in Winfree Community. Roy was nineteen years old.

After they were married, Roy and his seventeen year old bride continued to live on the farm of J.T. Turner. Roy planted his own rice crop and continued to work on county roads.

Now that Roy was married, he decided he needed more money so, he went to work for a 'soda pop' company making a drink known as "Tak-A-Pop" in Orange, Texas. Roy and Lois lived in Orange for three years. During this time they had a baby girl and named her Abbie Don for his mother. He also brought a motorcycle that he rode to work on.

In 1917, Roy, Lois and the baby girl moved back to the old family homestead (near the present Gulf States Plant). While living here, Roy worked shift work for the Texaco Inc. and saved

his money to buy a car, a 1916 Chevy. During this time, in 1919, they had a son, Roy Melvin. Roy moved his family to the Texaco Pump Station in 1920. It was less than a mile from his family homestead. In 1922, another son was added to the family. This child was named for Roy's oldest brother, Frank.

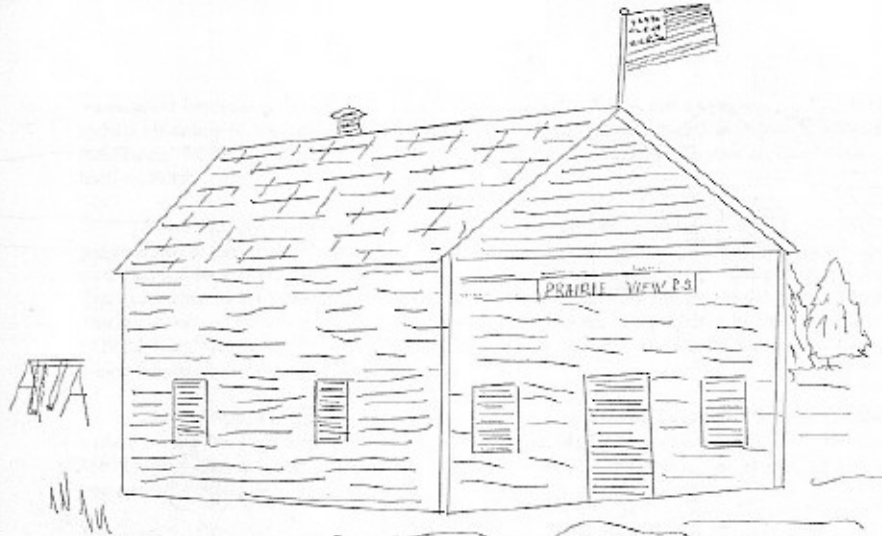
About this time a new school was completed on a new site. It was also called Prairie View and consisted of three rooms and an auditorium. The number of teachers was raised to four. Soon after this school was built Roy Hatton was elected to the local school board. The buildings were improved from time to time until it was considered one of the most modern in the state. It had running water and modern plumbing. According to the minutes of the County Board for the year 1929-30, Miss Allie Bland, County School Superintendent, reported that electric lights and electric ceiling fans had been installed in Prairie View School.

About ten years later, on April 14, 1936, Roy resigned from the local board in order to take a place on the Orange County School Board. He served faithfully exactly twenty four years. On April 14, 1960, Roy resigned and retired. He was replaced by his oldest son, Roy Melvin, who was elected by the voters of Precinct 3.

On August 2, 1941, the Prairie View School District and the Winfree School District, a small adjoining district, voted to consolidate. The new school district was named Bridge City School District. Roy spent many hours helping to plan and work with this fast growing school and its problems. In 1949, a new Bridge City School was built on Highway 87. The old Bridge City School, the former Prairie View building, was torn down, but the property was retained by the school.

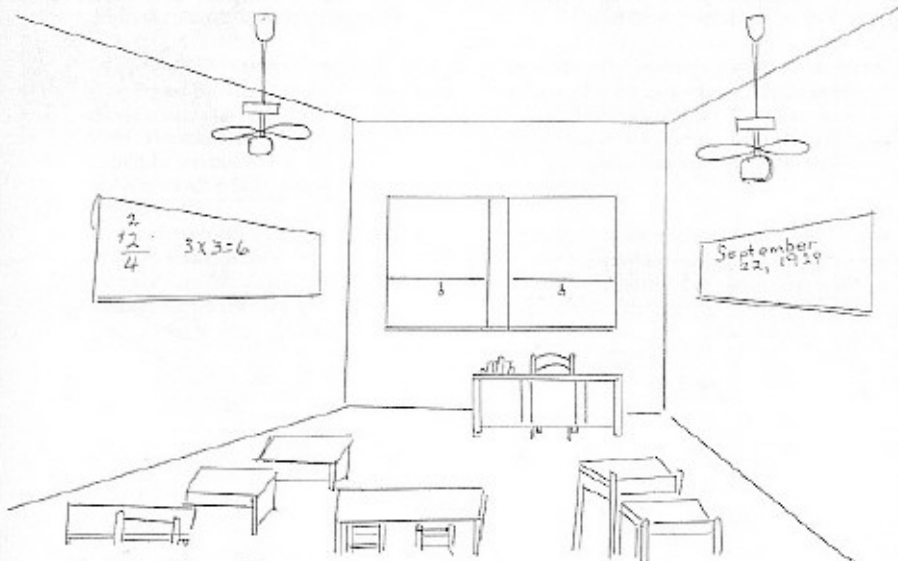
In 1959, a new elementary school was constructed on this property, the street was named West Round Bunch. During the construction period, Nick's Pharmacy contacted the school board asking permission to sponsor a contest to name the new elementary school. The prize would be \$500. The school board would select the name. The permission was granted and entry #190 was chosen by unanimous vote of the school board. The school would be named ROY M. HATTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL as suggested by Mr. Bill Townes.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Hatton celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary in their new home just off West Round Bunch Road on January 22, 1963. They have been an active part of every thing good in Bridge City Community for these 50 years and I, also feel it is good that an elementary school is named for my grandfather.



Prairie View #1

Sept. 1905



Prairie View School #3

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