1971

Dr. William Bass Hatcher, Louisiana Educator.

Robert W. Gaston III
Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College

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in

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by

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B.S., Louisiana State University, 1960
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate and record the outstanding contributions of William Bass Hatcher. Hatcher, 1888-1947, was born at Ripley, Tippah County, Mississippi, and attended the elementary and secondary schools of Brownwood and Woodville, Texas, graduating from Woodville High School in 1904. He obtained from Louisiana State University the Bachelor of Arts degree, the Master of Arts degree, and the Doctor of Philosophy degree while holding various jobs in education.

At the age of fifteen, he started teaching at Woodville, Texas, but remained only one year before moving to Louisiana. During the next eleven years he taught at Junction City, Arkansas, and at Mt. Gilead, Crew Lake, Crescent, and Baker, Louisiana, acting as principal in three of the schools. The outstanding manner in which he handled these jobs led to his being elected Superintendent of Schools for East Baton Rouge Parish in 1916.

During his nineteen plus years as Superintendent, Hatcher carried out the largest building program in the parish up to that time. Some of the more important schools built during his time were Baton Rouge High, Baton Rouge Junior High, Istrouma High, and McKinley High. His ability
to enlist interest and financial support from the people of the parish enabled the parish to make great strides. He also guided the school system through a depression with a minimum loss of school days and kept the system on a sound financial basis. While establishing an excellent relationship with the teachers of East Baton Rouge Parish, Hatcher established salary schedules for the teachers and started an in-service program that could not be improved upon for years. Faced with the threat of loss of control of the school board to political enemies, he resigned to take a job with the Federal Emergency Relief Administration.

After a short stay with the federal government, Hatcher entered the employment of Louisiana State University in 1936. During the next eleven years he held the following positions at Louisiana State University: special lecturer and professor in the history department, dean of John McNeese Junior College, dean of Junior Division, and president. His work in these positions became well known and gained him the respect of the state of Louisiana.

William Hatcher was a man of highest character who possessed outstanding leadership abilities. As President of Louisiana State University, he faced the great transition problems resulting from the ending of World War II. He provided housing for the increasing enrollments while also establishing policies and regulations affecting the students and faculty of the university. Upon his resignation and
later his death in early 1947, tributes rolled in as the state of Louisiana lost a great educator, a great man.
CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

I. BIRTH AND FAMILY BACKGROUND

William Bass Hatcher was born in Ripley, Tippah County, Mississippi, on December 12, 1888. He was the first son of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas William Hatcher and the grandson and namesake of William P. Hatcher, a victim of the Civil War. The eldest William Hatcher had volunteered for duty with the Confederate forces shortly after the birth of his only son, Thomas William, on March 15, 1860, in Ripley, Mississippi. William P. Hatcher's death subsequently occurred in a Chicago military prison following his capture by Union forces at Fort Donelson in northern Tennessee.1

The son who survived him as T. W. Hatcher grew up in Ripley and then attended the University of Virginia from which he graduated in 1885. He chose teaching as his profession, and he began his career in McGregor, Texas, a small town located near Waco in McLennan County.2 While teaching in McGregor, T. W. Hatcher met and courted Ida Hopgood. They were married on January 12, 1888.

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1Delhi [Louisiana] Banner, October, 1908.

2Ibid.
The Hopgoods were originally from Tennessee, and Ida was born in that state on January 6, 1865; however, the family moved to Texas when Ida was quite young and finally settled in McGregor. Very few facts pertaining to Ida's education have survived, perhaps because of the number of moves the family made, but her education apparently included sufficient instruction in music to enable her to teach piano in her home, for that was her occupation at the time of her marriage.

Immediately after their wedding the Hatchers left McGregor to return to T. W. Hatcher's native town of Ripley where he had accepted the position of principal of the town's school. Ripley, then, was the birthplace of a third generation William Hatcher—William Bass Hatcher—on December 12, 1888.

II. BIRTHPLACE AND EARLIEST ENVIRONMENT

Ripley is located approximately 200 miles northeast of Jackson, the capitol city of Mississippi. It is in Tippah County which is in the northeastern section of the state. The county touches the Mississippi-Tennessee line on the north, the Alcorn and Prentiss County lines on the east, the Union County line on the south, and the Benton County line on

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3 Statement by Mrs. William B. Hatcher, personal interview, August 29, 1970.

4 The Observer [McGregor, Texas], January, 1888.
the west. The nearest sizable city, Corinth, Mississippi, is thirty-three miles northeast of Ripley. The nearest large city, Memphis, Tennessee, is eighty-four miles northwest of Ripley.

In the latter part of the nineteenth century the economy of Tippah County rested upon small cotton farms. The land was not very fertile; consequently, no large plantations existed in the county. This part of the state had never been as dependent on slave labor as other parts of the South were before the Civil War, and the Negro population after the war offered a sufficient source of labor for the farms. Nevertheless, most of the people were poor and relied primarily for a livelihood on the major food crop, corn.\(^5\) The Granger Movement attracted the farmers of this area during the 1870's; for, as "an association devoted to the promotion of agricultural interests" which "attacked all charter monopolies and railroads" it offered some hope to the farmers.\(^6\) They were likewise influenced by the Farmer's Alliance, a similar organization in the early 1880's.\(^7\)

Ripley, in the late 1800's, was a typical Deep-South county-seat town. It had a centrally located county court-

\(^5\)Based on personal correspondence between Elkin Jack and the writer.


\(^7\)Based on personal correspondence between Elkin Jack and the writer.
house, a few streets lined with stores and a few offices, a post office, and a railroad. The railroad, built by William Faulkner's grandfather, William C. Faulkner, extended the sixty-four miles from Middleton, Tennessee, to Pontotoc, Mississippi.

The people of Ripley were mostly Scotch-Irish Protestants: members of the Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian faiths. Religion was more than a faith; it was a way of life and a rigorous one at that. Elkin Jack described that section of the state as a "typical Bible-belt area." In addition to religion, the populace valued education. The families who achieved prominence in this community—the Andersons, Browns, Guytons, Faulkners, Lowerys, and Smiths—contributed ministers, educators, lawyers, and authors to their society. Besides William Faulkner, an author whose literary achievements brought Southern literature to full maturity and to the attention and acclaim of the rest of the literary world, Ripley produced three college presidents in the first half of the twentieth century: Dr. Lawrence T. Lowery became president of Blue Mountain College in Tippah County, Mississippi; Dr. B. D. Humphrey served as president of both Mississippi State University and the University of Wyoming; and Dr. William B. Hatcher filled the president's

8 Statement by Elkin Jack, personal interview, August 29, 1970.

9 A four-year Baptist supported women's college located six miles from Ripley.
position at Louisiana State University.\textsuperscript{10}

William Bass Hatcher was, then, born into an environment essentially rural and agricultural, but it was not an intellectually impoverished environment, for the people valued both religion and learning. Moreover, William Bass Hatcher's immediate environment—the of his home—was, of course, suffused with respect for education and its many products; for, with a father who was a school principal and a mother who was a music teacher the Hatcher home had ultimately to offer an atmosphere conducive to intellectual pursuits. In this first period of infancy and early childhood in the life of William Bass Hatcher, however, the main stirrings in the Hatchers' home atmosphere were those caused by a rapidly enlarging family. The Hatcher's daughter, Hallie, was born on April 18, 1891, in New Albany, Union County, Mississippi, and their second son, James Franklin, arrived on May 16, 1893, in Sharon, Georgia, where the family was visiting.\textsuperscript{11}

III. ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

After the births of their three children in Ripley, the Hatchers moved to Texas. Although the records detailing their lives in Texas are limited, there is evidence which

\textsuperscript{10}Based on personal correspondence between Elkin Jack and the writer.

\textsuperscript{11}Written notes of Mrs. Thomas William Hatcher.
indicates that they lived in the small towns of Temple, Brownwood, and Woodville. While the Hatcher family lived in Temple, Bell County, Frank Hatcher died on June 3, 1896. The Temple Weekly ascribed the three-year-old's death to "measles, mumps, whooping cough, flux, fever, and inanition."\textsuperscript{12}

Apparently T. W. Hatcher's teaching career subsequently moved the family to Brownwood, a small, mid-state town in Brown County west of Waco, and then to Woodville, the county seat of Tyler County, which is near the Louisiana line about fifty miles north of Beaumont. William Hatcher obtained his elementary and secondary education while attending the schools of Brownwood and Woodville.\textsuperscript{13} The school system of which Woodville was a part, the Tyler County system, employed in 1904 fifty-six white teachers and enrolled 2,257 white students.\textsuperscript{14} From this system, Woodville High School, William B. Hatcher graduated in 1904. At the age of fifteen, he applied for a teacher's certificate which was received from the office of the County Superintendent in Tyler County, Texas. The certificate, issued September 5, 1904, was a

\textsuperscript{12}The Temple [Texas] Weekly, June, 1896.

\textsuperscript{13}Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College Application Form.

second grade certificate valid for three years.\textsuperscript{15}

IV. EARLY TEACHING CAREER AND BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE

William Hatcher began his teaching career in the fall of 1904 in the Woodville school from which he had graduated. His father was a teacher in the same school while his mother taught music in their home. Like William Hatcher, most of the teachers in the Tyler system held only the second grade certificate, and the average monthly salary of white male teachers was $54.55. This meant that the annual salary averaged $289.07. As a beginning teacher William Hatcher received a smaller salary.\textsuperscript{16}

At the conclusion of the 1904-1905 school year, William Hatcher accepted the teaching position at a one-room school in Mt. Gilead or Gilead in East Feliciana Parish, Louisiana.\textsuperscript{17} Gilead, which consisted of only a post office, a school, and a church in the sixth ward of the parish, is named after the church, which received its name from the

\textsuperscript{15}Texas Teachers Certificate, September, 1904.


\textsuperscript{17}Louisiana State University Alumni News (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Alumni Federation, April, 1947), p. 2.
He taught the 1905-1906 school year in this tiny community without a Louisiana teaching certificate.

William Hatcher rejoined his family in Woodville for the summer of 1906 and then moved with them in the fall to Delhi, Louisiana, where his father was to be principal of the Delhi school. The Woodville *Messenger* suggested the family's stature in the community at the time of their departure in the following article:

Mrs. T. W. Hatcher, William and Miss Hallie left Tuesday morning for Delhi, La., where they join Prof. Hatcher, and will make their future home. Mr. Hatcher will teach the Delhi school and William will teach about twenty miles from Delhi. Prof. Hatcher and family made a host of friends while in Woodville, who were indeed sorry to see them leave, but wish them success in their new location. Mrs. Hatcher came by the MESSENGER office to order the paper sent to her address and when she told us goodbye, we could see the tears fill her eyes, and the emotion that shown upon her face, designated a feeling of love that she bore for her pupils and friends in Woodville, and in action spoke loud words, of regret in leaving good old Texas. Mr. and Mrs. Hatcher are people of true worth and will no doubt meet the favor of the best people in Delhi. Their gain is Woodville's loss.

Upon moving to Delhi, William Hatcher obtained his first Louisiana teacher's certificate in September, 1906. It was a first grade certificate valid for five years. With it he received an appointment to teach in Richland

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19*The Messenger* [Woodville, Texas], n.d.

20Louisiana Teachers Certificate, September, 1906.
Parish at another one-room school. The school was in the small town of Crew Lake, which was approximately twenty miles from Delhi, in the western part of Richland Parish. Crew Lake owed its existence to the railroad that passed through the town and serviced the farms in that largely agricultural area. Hatcher taught in this farming community from the fall of 1906 through the spring of 1908.

After four years of teaching experience, Hatcher entered Louisiana State University in the fall of 1908; however, his days at the university were few, for on October 19, 1908, his father, who had moved from Delhi, Louisiana, to Junction City, Arkansas, to be principal of the Junction City Elementary School, died. William Hatcher then resigned from Louisiana State University and accepted the position vacated by his father.

Although Junction City was also in an agricultural area, William Hatcher's move there took him to a thriving town; in 1908 the population was approximately 1200. The city was unusual in one respect: as the name suggested, it was situated at a junction—the Arkansas-Louisiana state boundary lines. Louisiana also had, in Union Parish, a Junction City. The two cities apparently cooperated to some extent in the operation of the schools, for the salary schedules were equivalent; thus, the systems did not compete for teachers with salary. 21 The average salary for Union

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Parish in 1908 for white, male teachers was $68.34 per month. Nevertheless, according to Charles H. Morton, long-time resident of the area, the Arkansas Junction City had the better schools. In this situation William Hatcher secured his first experience as a principal. Though he reentered Louisiana State University for the summer session of 1909, and, by receiving credit for his teaching experience, obtained a course requirement for a Bachelor of Arts degree of sixty-three hours, Hatcher elected to return to his position at Junction City in the fall of 1909 for the next academic year. While principal of the Junction City Elementary School Hatcher gained the respect of both the community and the students. He had no discipline problems and was well liked.

Nevertheless, Hatcher had begun the quest for higher education, and, as in the case of most educators, the shifting of roles from teacher to student. From his first foray onto the campus at Louisiana State University in 1908 until his final commencement in 1937, Hatcher filled the gaps in his schedule as teacher or principal with course work toward higher degrees. Whenever possible he took an

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23Interview with Charles H. Morton, op. cit.

24Ibid.
academic year for study. Thus, Hatcher enrolled in Louisiana State University for the 1910-1911 academic year.

The following year, 1911-1912, he returned to his profession in the position of principal at Crescent School in Iberville Parish, Louisiana. Crescent was a sawmill community. The school at Crescent was located about seven miles west of Plaquemine on the banks of Bayou Tete. The school was composed of four rooms elevated sufficiently to enable the students to play underneath. Crescent school consisted of grades one through seven and employed a principal and three teachers. Each teacher taught two grades, and the principal taught the seventh. Angie Tally and Esther Voight occupied two of the teaching positions during the two years Hatcher held the principalship, but no one teacher remained long in the third teaching position. For two years Hatcher worked at Crescent, and during those years "he improved the school library by the addition of many new volumes."^25

In September, 1913, Hatcher again entered Louisiana State University, where during the course of the year he made much progress toward completing his degree. Next he secured the principalship of the school in Baker, Louisiana, for the 1914-1915 academic year, and he returned to that position for the 1915-1916 school year. Baker, a small town

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25 Iberville Parish School Board Minutes, July 10, 1912.

26 Statement by Dr. Thomas Landry, personal interview, July 23, 1970.
north of Baton Rouge, had a two-story frame school consisting of grades one through eleven. The staff consisted of a principal and three teachers. In 1914 the teachers were Angie Williams, Pearl Williams, and Mrs. Mabel Richardson. The principal of the school received $90.00 per month, a figure considerably below the $150 per month earned by the majority of principals of state-approved high schools. Principals of state-approved high schools, based upon experience, received from $900.00 per year to $1,800.00 per year. Baker School was not, however, an accredited high school when Hatcher arrived.

In addition to his duties as principal of Baker School, Hatcher taught mathematics and coached the boys' basketball team. During the 1915-1916 basketball season, Baker had an exceptional team that defeated all parish opponents. The main challenge Hatcher faced at Baker, however, was securing accreditation for the school. To that end, he actively recruited students to attend school. The total enrollment during the 1915-1916 year was ninety-three

27East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 6, 1915.

28Ibid.


The graduating class of 1916 numbered seven. In order to meet the accreditation standards, Hatcher also requested from the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board money to equip sufficiently the laboratories and library. Thus when, in 1916, Baker High School received accreditation, the achievement was at least partially due to Hatcher's efforts.

While working in their school, Hatcher won the respect of the people of Baker. He had moved into the community upon becoming principal of the school and had resided with the Henry Youngs. Later, he established a home in Baker for his mother, his sister, Hallie, and himself. He was a religious man and a strict disciplinarian; nevertheless, he was very popular with students, teachers, and parents. His popularity was, at least in part, due to the fact that in many ways he demonstrated a desire to know his students and to help them. He often talked with students at great length. When the movie "The Birth of a Nation" played in Baton Rouge, Hatcher made it possible for a number of students to attend the performance by personally providing transportation. He often played tennis, one of his hobbies, with students after school.

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31 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 6, 1915.

32 Interview with Dr. Eric Day, op. cit.

33 Statement by Henry Young, personal interview, March 31, 1970.

34 Interview with Dr. Eric Day, op. cit.
During the summer of 1915 Hatcher attended the Louisiana State University summer session. He began his second year as principal at the Baker School in September, 1915; however, he resigned that position on February 23, 1916, when the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board elected him parish superintendent. The following summer he again worked toward his Bachelor of Arts degree at Louisiana State University, and after a final summer session in 1917, he received the degree at the August, 1917, commencement.

V. MASTER OF ARTS AND DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREES

While serving as parish superintendent, Hatcher began course work on his Master's degree at Louisiana State University. He attended the summer sessions at the university in 1919 and 1922 and took evening courses during the 1919-1920 and 1922-1923 academic years. At the spring commencement of 1923, he received the Master of Arts degree with a major in education and a minor in psychology. The title of his thesis was "Types of Thinking in Arithmetic."35

Superintendent Hatcher began the work for his doctorate at Louisiana State University in the summer of 1926 by enrolling in three history courses. He made superior grades, all in the nineties or A's, that summer.

35Educational record of William B. Hatcher, Registrar's Office, Louisiana State University.
He continued to enroll in the summer sessions through the summer of 1930. After the death of his mother in January, 1930, Hatcher decided to leave the state to work on his doctorate. The East Baton Rouge Parish School Board then granted him a nine-month leave with pay to attend Yale University during the 1930-1931 school year. Hatcher attended Yale in New Haven, Connecticut, until March, 1931, at which time he withdrew because of ill health. He underwent surgery in New Haven, but he was unable to recuperate in time to complete the semester; nevertheless, he received credit for his course work up to that point.36 He returned to Baton Rouge and resumed the job of superintendent in June, 1931. He resumed his work on the doctoral degree at Louisiana State University in September, 1933. He took evening courses at every regular session from the fall of 1933 through 1935. In 1934 the graduate council approved a transfer of credits from four courses he had taken at Yale University Graduate School. In May, 1934, Hatcher passed his German examination and his preliminary examination for a reading knowledge of French. Thus, in October, 1934, the council approved his application for admission to candidacy for the Doctor's degree in history. Finally on May 7, 1937, William Hatcher passed his final examination for the Doctor of Philosophy degree. The title of his doctoral thesis was

36Statement by Mrs. William B. Hatcher, personal interview, August 29, 1970.

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37Educational record of William B. Hatcher, Registrar's Office, Louisiana State University.
CHAPTER II

TWENTY YEARS AS SUPERINTENDENT OF EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SCHOOLS (1916-1936)

William B. Hatcher returned to his post as principal at Baker High School for the school year 1915-1916. The work of preparing for state approval of the high school had been completed, and the year was proceeding in an orderly fashion. However, in the city of Baton Rouge events were taking place which would result in changes in the school system. Auditors had discovered a shortage in the accounts of the East Baton Rouge Parish Board of Directors.\textsuperscript{1} The Superintendent of Schools, C. M. Hughes, quickly announced his resignation. When the special session of the parish school board met on February 23, 1916, to select a successor to the superintendent, William B. Hatcher was the only man seeking the job. The events of this meeting were handled very quickly. Mayor Alex Grouch of Baton Rouge rose and gave a short speech stating the importance of the selection of a good man for the job. After his speech, the board, by a unanimous vote, selected William Bass Hatcher to fill the unexpired term of C. M. Hughes.\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1}The State-Times [Baton Rouge], February 24, 1916.

\textsuperscript{2}East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, February 23, 1916.
From this moment on, William Hatcher was destined to spend one-third of his life as Superintendent of Schools for East Baton Rouge Parish. Indeed, he was reelected by unanimous votes in 1917, 1921, 1925, 1929, and 1933. Though he would never see real wealth, Hatcher enjoyed a steady increase in salary over the years. After a starting salary of $1,800 a year, the salary of Superintendent was raised to $3,600 a year plus the use of a car in 1921. In 1925 his salary was increased to $4,000 and in 1929 was raised to $5,000. There was a time, however, when the depression saw his salary drop to $4,250 per year. Obviously, this increase in salary was also accompanied by an increase in his responsibilities brought about by the growth of the school system. An account by the State-Times in 1936 recalled the growth Hatcher witnessed during his tenure of office.

When William B. Hatcher became Superintendent, there were four schools for white children (Florida Street School, Convention Street School, Asia Street School, and St. Louis Street School) in the city and one for Negroes. There were ten frame buildings used for schools for white children outside the city, and Negro schools in the rural areas were held in churches.

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3Ibid.

4East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, January 4, 1921.

5East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, January 6, 1925.

6East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, June 21, 1934.
When he left, there were nine modern brick buildings for white children in the city and four modern brick buildings for Negro children in the city. Mainly through use of Rosenwald funds, modern buildings were built for Negroes outside the city.7

Though it did grow rapidly later on, East Baton Rouge Parish was not heavily populated when Hatcher took office in 1916. The large industries had not started locating in the capital city area and the parish-wide school systems employed less than one hundred teachers and had an annual budget of only approximately $100,000. The twenty years of Hatcher's administration saw increases in both the city's importance and the size of the school system.

I. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Bond Issues

When Hatcher entered office in 1916, the parish of East Baton Rouge was divided into eleven school districts under the control of the Board of Directors of Public Schools. As the parish grew a twelfth school district was created in 1916 in the Istrouma area of North Baton Rouge. Now there were three districts within the city limits and nine in the rural parts of the parish, but the most important area was district number one, which comprised most of the city.

Traditionally districts could not see the advantage

7The State-Times, June 17, 1936.
of a parish-wide means of financial support so bond elections were held within the districts rather than on a parish-wide basis. While records show many cases of the districts petitioning the school board for permission to tax themselves, there is no evidence that the school board ever initiated action itself in the early years.

At first sixteen members served on the Board of Directors, representing the ten wards of the parish; however, this number was later reduced to thirteen when the structure of the board was changed. Because there was never a large turnover many of the members remained in office the entire time Hatcher was superintendent. Their devotion to him was obvious because they relied greatly on the superintendent to advise them on most matters facing the board. As a matter of fact, William Hatcher formulated the policies almost completely. Particularly on the matter of bond issues, he would conduct the complete procedure and then get board approval. Perhaps some of this devotion stemmed from the fact that Hatcher liked to keep the board members informed and would often start out early in the mornings in his car and drive to as many of the board members' houses as possible to discuss upcoming matters of the school board.

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8 Statement by T. H. Montgomery, personal interview, August 6, 1970.
9 Statement by W. Harry Perkins, personal interview, March 16, 1970.
relationship with the members guaranteed that Hatcher usually obtained unanimous votes when he placed something before the board.

The enrollment figures for white children in the parish increased from 3,827 during the 1916-1917 school year to 7,354 during the 1926-1927 school year. This almost doubling of enrollment during this ten-year period necessitated new school construction. In fact, one of the biggest problems facing Hatcher when he took office was the overcrowded conditions within the schools. During the next decade, the board, under Hatcher's leadership went to work constructing new buildings. By July of 1928 Hatcher reported that the schools were no longer crowded, and a deceleration in the building program could take place.

**Early millage elections.** From the very beginning of his tenure in office, Hatcher was fortunate in having the financial support of the citizens of the parish. He had been superintendent only several minutes before the board voted to call a two mill election to obtain $125,000 to build and equip school buildings and to purchase sites in school district number nine of the Reddy Street and St. Joseph

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11 *East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes*, July 6, 1927.

Street areas. The election was held March 28, 1916, and passed with a vote of four hundred and eleven for, forty-five against, and an assessment vote of $1,284,536 in favor and $174,258 against. In fact, support for schools was so strong that this one-sided margin was common for elections during this time. In 1916 alone there were five millage elections passed. School district number one also received $125,000 from a millage election that passed two hundred and eighty-two to eight in popular vote.

A millage election in Deerford in 1918 was required to equip the Deerford school which was in the northeastern end of the parish. Again the citizens voiced their consent. The popular vote was eleven to one in favor; the assessment voted was $26,241 in favor and $690 against. They were equally cooperative with large amounts of money. An example was the special election in 1920 in the newly enlarged school district number one where bonds totaling $600,000 were needed to purchase school sites and to build and equip school buildings. Two mills were levied for twenty-nine years at five per cent interest to pay off these bonds. The


15 *East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes*, February 19, 1918.
tax passed five hundred and twenty-seven in favor to twenty-four against, or a millage of $2,449,385.98 in favor to $403,133.74 against. As a result of the passage of this tax the city was able to build the first junior high school in the state.

School district number twelve in the Istrouma area produced two unanimous elections on millages. By a twenty-seven to zero vote in 1919 the district voted a millage upon themselves to raise $75,000 to build two elementary schools for whites and one elementary school for Negroes. In 1922 this same school district voted thirty-eight to zero to build one high school, four elementary schools, and one Negro elementary school. This new construction was in addition to the three schools they had voted to build three years earlier. Most of this interest in construction was promoted by Hatcher who saw a rapid increase in the importance of the Istrouma area. It was this last election from which the construction of the first Istrouma High School came.

Hatcher and the school board created an enviable
school situation in the parish in his early years. All millage elections put to the people of the various school districts of the parish passed by large majorities, and a forward looking building program was always in progress. From the results of these elections came the feeling that the people of East Baton Rouge Parish valued education and had faith in their superintendent and the school board. While the parish was not as rich as it would later become, it was clear that the people were willing to pay for education. Mainly through the hard work of Superintendent Hatcher, the board was in better financial condition that it had ever known before. When he took office, the school system was in such a poor financial state that the 1915-1916 school year had to close two weeks early because of a lack of funds to finish the school year. Even so, the board was overdrawn $192.76. One year later, at the end of the school year 1916-1917, the parish saw a cash balance of $1,805.82 in the board's account. From that time until the depression the school system found no need to worry about being on a sound financial basis.

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20 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, May 1, 1916.


22 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 24, 1917.
Later millage elections. The early elections under Hatcher got the parish school system on a sound basis. The later elections further refined the system. Parish enrollment of white children increased from a 1916-1917 low of 3,827 to a 1921-1922 total of 4,686, or an increase of 859 students in a five-year span. During the next five years this figure increased to 7,354, an increase of 2,667 students. Unprecedented growth in the area population caused this figure to increase to 8,319 by the 1931-1932 school year when the parish faced the stinging years of the depression. However, planning on the part of Hatcher prevented this increase from overcrowding the schools. The table on the following page shows the growth in educables, enrollment, and attendance percentages from 1916 through 1927.

Several important elections reduced the chances of any further problems plaguing the school system. At this time the superintendent realized that not only was Baton Rouge High School on Florida Street becoming overcrowded, but overcrowded conditions also existed in the junior high

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23 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 6, 1927.
24 Ibid.
26 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 6, 1927.
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behind it on Laurel Street. He also saw a growing need for increasing the Negro educational facilities of the city. Finally, after repeated requests by Hatcher, the school board voted to increase the size of school district number one and ordered a special election to raise $1,000,000 to purchase school sites and to build, equip, and repair school buildings in that district. The vote was four hundred and twenty-nine for, eighty-nine against; the assessments were $4,463,380.12 for and $1,266,368.11 against.\textsuperscript{27} In addition to repairing many of the existing buildings in district one, the board constructed Bernard Terrace Elementary and Baton Rouge High School for whites, and McKinley High School for blacks. This represented the biggest bond issue ever passed in East Baton Rouge Parish for schools up to that time and would insure Baton Rouge a position of leadership in public education in Louisiana.

On July 5, 1927, school district number twelve voted seventy-eight to six in favor of building schools in the Monte Sano Bayou area.\textsuperscript{28} Hatcher built Hollywood Junior High School out of this money, and made additions to the elementary schools of North Highlands, Fairfields, Wyandotte, and Istrouma. Monte Sano elementary was also built out of this money.

\textsuperscript{27}East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, February 18, 1925.

\textsuperscript{28}East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 6, 1927.
In 1929 the board called a special election in school district number ten to issue $40,000 worth of bonds for building an elementary-secondary school combination. Interest on bonds now drew six per cent as compared with the five per cent when Hatcher first became superintendent. The popular vote recorded one hundred and thirteen in favor and twenty-one against, while the assessments went $133,155.00 for, $27,559.99 against. Out of this election came Central High School.

The passage of the bond election to build Central High School closed the building program of the Hatcher era. Great strides had been taken in achieving first-class facilities for the parish. Wooden buildings that were formerly fire traps had been replaced with fine, brick structures that would last for many years to come. Overcrowded conditions had been eliminated for both whites and blacks. Schools had been built not only in the areas where the children were located at the time, but also the planners had kept an eye toward where they would be located in the future. No bond issue placed before the people ever failed to carry the unanimous consent of the school board members. Hatcher worked hard getting an agreement among the board members and this work paid great dividends. As a result, no bond issue put before the people of East Baton Rouge Parish

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29 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, December 18, 1929.
came close to failing. Wise spending by the school board plus careful levying of millages kept the confidence of the people of the parish in the superintendent and the board. The close of the building program of the Hatcher era resulted with the final elimination of all overcrowded conditions. Fortunately, the building program was successfully completed before the depression had its chance to halt it before the parish was ready. Now W. B. Hatcher was left free to turn his attention to protecting what had been gained against the problems created by the depression.

**Depression Problems**

Along with the entire nation, Louisiana and the Baton Rouge area prospered during the 1920's. However, by 1927 the economy began to slow down; residential construction, automobile output, and purchases of consumers' durable goods declined.\(^{30}\) The stock market crash of October, 1929, signaled the onset of the depression, which reached its low point in March, 1933.\(^{31}\) Nationwide, the number of unemployed people increased as the collection of tax receipts fell. People without money could not pay taxes; yet, they must do something with themselves. The net result was that many young people who would usually have been working could not find jobs; therefore, they went back to school and


\(^{31}\text{Ibid.}\)
drastically increased the number of students in the public schools. The lower tax receipts meant that less money was coming in to the local school boards and taxing agencies. Louisiana could not escape this phenomenon.

The Baton Rouge area suffered financially with the rest of Louisiana, but not to the extent that most parts of the state suffered. Happily, large payrolls at Louisiana State University, the state capital, Standard Oil, and the railroads prevented Baton Rouge from reaching the depths of depression suffered by other areas of the state.\textsuperscript{32} Nevertheless, the tremendous progress Baton Rouge had been making in education slowed.

These problems were directly related to the enrollment increase in the parish schools during the depression. White enrollment in public schools went from 7,354 for the 1926-1927 school year to 7,555 for the 1929-1930 year; to 8,319 for the 1931-1932 school year.\textsuperscript{33} This increased enrollment may have been caused partly by the depression. Not only was there a problem of providing places and teachers for these new students, but there was also the problem of gearing the curriculum to meet the needs of these students. Classes were started to prepare boys to work in some of the new industries that had come to Baton Rouge during the last decade.

\textsuperscript{32}Interview with W. Harry Perkins, \textit{op. cit.}

\textsuperscript{33}\textit{East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes}, July 6, 1927; July 31, 1930; July 30, 1932.
The effects of the depression of the early thirties caused many parish school boards to shorten school terms, reduce teachers' salaries, and cut other expenses tremendously. Yet, relief from the federal government helped keep many schools open. Parish superintendents learned quickly how important it was to be able to work well with the federal government and to be cognizant of the federal programs which aided the schools. William Hatcher made use of the federal programs. He arranged for a large number of the local schools to be repainted through the Civil Works Administration, and was instrumental in getting many of his men teachers hired to work on federal work jobs during the summer. As a matter of fact, he established such a good relationship with them that he resigned in 1935 to accept a position with the federal government.

**Budget.** In 1915 when William Hatcher became Superintendent, the school board had a budget of $81,406.57. The 1919-1920 school year saw the school board collect $186,026.19 while spending $185,769.20. For a time the budget continued to get larger, with $404,651.48 allocated

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to operate schools for the 1925-1926 school year. The 1930-1931 budget suffered the first reduction since William Hatcher had taken office. It had to be reduced to $501,991.30 as compared with the 1929-1930 budget of $506,045.15 and the 1928-1929 budget of $504,215.97. The pressure of the reduced revenues of the depression was making itself felt. The increased enrollments plus decreased revenues meant that Hatcher was having a harder time keeping the board from operating in the deficit. The depression-revised budget of 1931-1932 provided for receipts of $468,450.00 with expenditures of $532,144.42, or an overdraft of $63,694.42. Careful planning and increased money helped get the budget back up to $592,468.07 and balanced by 1935.

**Teacher salaries.** Hatcher's efforts had been directed toward increasing teacher salaries during his early years. Naturally, these increases had swelled the size of the budget. As usual, teacher salaries were by far the largest expenditure of the East Baton Rouge school system, and it was here

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37 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 28, 1926.

38 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 31, 1930.

39 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, June 28, 1932.

40 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, June 26, 1935.
that a reduction could be made that would help provide immediate economic balance. It was with much reluctance that Hatcher finally agreed to make salary cuts. Yet, for a time he was able to push the inevitable move aside. He first tried to cut little extra expenses, but they were negligible as compared to what was needed. Finally, in May, 1929, Hatcher decided that teacher salaries must be reduced.

No one could be absolutely certain about the future status of the financial situation. Various money saving devices initiated by the state were causing problems for the board. The repeal of the tobacco tax in 1928 by the state legislature was costing the school board $35,000 annually. Too, the reduction of the per educable quota from eight dollars to seven dollars and fifty cents cost approximately $8,000 to $9,000 a year; to make matters worse, a court injunction against collection of the severance tax was still in question at that time.\(^4\)

Ultimately, the board decided to give the teachers, principals, and van drivers contracts containing a clause stipulating that their pay might be reduced by possibly as much as five and four-tenths per cent. In reality only three and six-tenths per cent of the teachers' annual pay was withheld from the pay checks of the last three months, thus placing a heavy financial burden upon the teachers.

\(^{4}\)East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, May 6, 1929.
The main reason for the failure of the board to pay the full salaries was because the state failed to distribute the full amount of the school funds which were owed to the parish.\textsuperscript{42} Teacher contracts for the 1930-1931 school year contained an additional five and four-tenths per cent pay reduction clause. At the end of the 1929-1930 school year, the board had a deficit of $5,722.29 and incurred an additional $5,839.02 deficit for the 1930-1931 year.\textsuperscript{43} The only solution to the problem was for the board to borrow money to meet the shortage.

Events continued to get worse for the school system and for the teachers. In April, 1932, the school board decided to leave blank the place on the teacher's contract that stipulated what the teacher's salary would be for the coming 1932-1933 year.\textsuperscript{44} This blank would be filled in when the board knew how much money the state would provide. By now the board was meeting two or three times a month and more often in some cases. Every meeting brought forth new problems.

By the tenth of the month the financial status of the board was so bleak that they turned to the local banks and

\textsuperscript{42}\textit{East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes}, April 3, 1930.

\textsuperscript{43}\textit{East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes}, June 25, 1931.

\textsuperscript{44}\textit{East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes}, April 7, 1932.
requested $116,455.81 to meet expenses for the remainder of the school year. They were turned down by every bank in the area. Four days later, Hatcher did manage to borrow $12,000 from a local bank at eight per cent interest so that he could at least meet the payroll. Nevertheless, complications continued to increase. On April 20, 1932, the board learned that the per educable distribution from the state would be approximately five dollars per educable rather than the expected seven dollars and seventy-five cents per educable. Now they could expect to look forward to a deficit of approximately $45,000 rather than an expected surplus of approximately $10,000. In order to avoid disaster, Hatcher negotiated a contract with the Louisiana National Bank, the Bank of Baton Rouge, and the Union Bank and Trust Company to borrow $48,273.98 at eight per cent interest repayable June 30, 1932. Money from the State Current School Fund and the three-mill parish tax were pledged as security.

Hatcher had to move quickly now. Despite his efforts to avoid cutting the teachers' salaries, the money simply could not hold out. He chose the only possible solution to the money problems presenting themselves at the time. Under his direction, the board voted to pay all employees in notes at an interest of seven per cent due January 31, 1933.

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45 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, May 2, 1932.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid.
They were actually faced with a loss of $50,310.72 from the reduced per educable during 1931-1932. Money problems continued to grow and these problems were complicated by the maturation of various bonds. On July 1, 1932, school district number one faced matured bonds with no money on hand to pay the debt. Now Superintendent Hatcher was forced to arrange a new emergency loan of $12,226.73 at eight per cent interest due in ninety days.48

Other governmental agencies continued to compound the problems of the school board. Prior to this time, the Louisiana Legislature had ordered the suspension of payment on all 1931 taxes until October 15, 1932.49 Even this money would be reduced considerably. On July 12, 1932, the East Baton Rouge Parish Police Jury told the Parish Assessor to compute the assessed values on property for the year 1933 at eighty per cent of previous assessed value for state purposes. This twenty per cent reduction cost the board approximately $65,000 for the 1933-1934 year.50

In his annual report of 1932, a troubled William Bass Hatcher told the community it could expect to receive only the kind of education it could afford. He reminded the parish that schools could not operate on the philosophy of a

48 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, June 28, 1932.
49 Ibid.
50 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 30, 1932.
business in financial trouble. Schools could not allow themselves the luxury of dismissing people just because times were hard. As a matter of fact, enrollment in schools increased because people were out of work. The major problem, as Hatcher saw it, was how to reduce expenses and still have a first-rate system. He realized that teacher salaries were already very low, but he was quick to advise them that the teachers understood the problem of the board and were willing to go along with any efforts to help keep the schools open. Hatcher cited the failure of the state to negotiate a loan plus falling assessments as further increasing the problems facing the board. He was forced to request the board to reduce teachers' salaries fifteen per cent. This salary cut was designed to reduce school board expenditures for both white and black teachers from $376,398.22 in 1931-1932 to $323,464.79 in 1932-1933, creating a saving of $52,933.43.51

During the thirties the school board had to borrow money to operate the schools on their own from September through December when the property taxes were paid. Despite every effort during the summer of 1932, the school board and Superintendent Hatcher were unable to negotiate a loan for that period of time. Their only hope was to delay the opening of school until some financial arrangements could be made.52 Finally, in September the banks of Baton Rouge joined together and loaned the school board $68,705.25 which

51Ibid. 52Ibid.
was payable June 30, 1933. Upon Hatcher's recommendation, the board instructed him to issue warrants bearing seven per cent interest to the creditors of the school board, payable January 31, 1933.

January, 1933, started off on a brighter note for East Baton Rouge Parish. Collections of local tax money amounted to enough to pay in full all indebtedness through January 1, 1933. Hatcher asked for and received permission to pay all employees their past due salaries and to pay all bills owed by the board. Nevertheless, this bright picture did not last very long. Two major complications arose. First, the people of Louisiana did not have enough money to pay their taxes, but equally important was the failure of several banks in Louisiana where state money had been on deposit. Much of the state money was now frozen. It was a very unhappy William Hatcher who now went before the teachers. He explained that the board could not afford to pay the teachers their salaries past the seventh month. In fact, many of the checks issued to school employees for February were not being honored by local banks. He reported that the board wanted to close down the schools after seven months to prevent incurring any further debts. He was unequivocally opposed to any such action because it would ultimately hurt

53East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, September 29, 1932.

54East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, January 5, 1933.
the children. Pledging his support where possible, he suggested that there was still a slender chance that the state might be able to collect enough taxes to pay for the eighth month, or at least a portion of it. The teachers, principals, and van drivers voted to continue their plans for working the eighth month unless they were positive no money would be forthcoming.  

By the middle of April it was finally clear that the money would not be forthcoming. As it turned out, the board could not even pay all of the seventh month's salary. Uncollected funds provided for in the budget totaled approximately $155,000. Superintendent Hatcher announced that public schools in the parish would close April 21, 1933, after seven months and one week of the school term. Promotion and all other activities that concerned the closing of school took place immediately. The teachers received sixty-one and four-tenths per cent of their salaries.

During the 1932-1933 school year the state distributed only six dollars per educable compared to the eight dollars and fifty cents it had previously told the parishes they could expect to receive. Another $52,000 was lost from collection of the parish three-mill tax because the East

55East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, April 6, 1933.

56Ibid.

57East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 27, 1933.
Baton Rouge Parish Police Jury asked the Sheriff to delay collecting the taxes from June until October 18. As a result, the school board closed the fiscal 1932-1933 year approximately $31,000 in debt.\textsuperscript{58}

Despite its gloomy outlook, the board could carry a few assets into the 1933-1934 school year. These assets were: approximately $52,000 in uncollected three-mill taxes for 1932; approximately $1.50 per educable or $29,941.50 due from the state; and $3,361.87 which was deposited in City National Bank and would become available when the bank reopened; and whatever money could be attained from liquidation of the Bank of Baton Rouge and the Union Bank and Trust Company. Of these four, Hatcher felt the first was worth about fifty per cent of face value while the second and third were worth full face value. The latter asset would not be worth anything for several years. These four assets, at values set by Hatcher, totaled about $59,000 or $28,000 more than the debts owed.\textsuperscript{59}

By this time the state had begun to realize that decreased per educable money made it impossible for the parishes to operate for a nine-month session so they made plans for an eight-month operation during the 1933-1934 year. Hatcher was instructed to contract with teachers for only eight months employment with the understanding that if sufficient funds became available, the term could be extended

\textsuperscript{58}Ibid. \quad \textsuperscript{59}Ibid.
to nine months. Nearly all of the parish teachers and principals expressed desire to return for the 1933-1934 year.

The early part of the 1933-1934 year saw increased hope for the parish schools when the board collected $45,751.11 of the three-mill tax for the year 1932. This amount was almost $20,000 more than they expected but it was still about $6,000 less than face value. With an increased per educable allotment from the state, Hatcher hoped the schools would be able to operate for a nine-month session, and they did. The unpaid balance of the teachers' salaries for the last three weeks of the 1931-1932 school year were paid out of the 1933-1934 revenues, and the board closed the year with a balance of $15,130.88. The fact that the board was able to finish in the black was largely because of Hatcher's stand in practicing a rigid economy plus closing the schools two months early in 1933. The board also had $42,354.99 of the uncollected balance of the 1933 parish three-mill tax plus the $15,979.09 that was frozen in the closed banks of Baton Rouge.

Despite the fact that the board now had a surplus in the treasury plus money owed to it, Hatcher remained conservative in figuring out the 1934-1935 budget. The per educable distribution from the state had been eight dollars per

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60 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, January 4, 1934.
61 Ibid., July 30, 1934.
educable for the 1933-1934 year but was estimated at twelve dollars for the 1934-1935 session by the state. Hatcher recommended ten dollars per educable be used in figuring the budget. Now, despite the fact that tax payments of 1934 were postponed until October of 1935, the board was still in good financial shape, and banks were willing to lend money to the board until taxes were paid.

No doubt one of Hatcher's greatest achievements while Superintendent was the way he handled finances during the depression. The Baton Rouge Morning Advocate, upon Hatcher's taking leave in the summer of 1935, wrote the following concerning his financial strategy:

It has been a tribute to any superintendent to carry through the last five years without going into debt. Many of the parish schools of Louisiana sought to operate on borrowed money, and to operate far beyond their means. Mr. Hatcher kept the schools of East Baton Rouge Parish in splendid shape because he has refused to spend money the board did not have, or to seek to inaugurate innovations the finances of the parish would not permit.

Within the past three years when the school board, faced dwindling assessments, and in consequence shrinking revenues, Mr. Hatcher sought to set his house in order. When other parishes were spending money they didn't have, and borrowing money they could not pay back, Mr. Hatcher refused to do either. He kept East Baton Rouge Parish school affairs in splendid shape. As a result he leaves the office after the stormiest period in the history of the public schools of the nation, with the financial affairs of the schools of East Baton Rouge Parish in sound condition, with the school plants adequate, and with a splendid teaching force.

62Ibid.
63The Morning-Advocate, June 28, 1935, p. 4.
When William Hatcher took office, the board was overdrawn $192.76. When he left, it had a surplus of over $15,000 and had been through the worst part of the greatest depression the United States had ever known, and this was after Hatcher had led the system into its greatest building program up to that time. No doubt he received a great deal of help from the financial committee of the school board, but many of the problems fell to Hatcher alone.

At times Hatcher had to battle politicians to keep the school board financially solvent. In 1929 he led opposition to the passage of the "occupational tax," a tax which would have been levied on the manufacturing companies of the state and would have been really felt in the Baton Rouge area. He strongly advocated that school men should stay out of politics and politicians should stay out of the schools, but he felt called upon to make the following reference to the tax:

It is to be regretted that an attempt is being made to use the school system by a scheming politician and to induce the educational leaders to enter this political fight under the guise of securing additional funds for education without having ascertained what effect their action would have upon the future welfare of the children and upon the future industrial development of the state.64

This strongly worded statement brought him into conflict with Governor Huey Long, a conflict which would continue until Long's death in 1935.

64 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, March 21, 1929.
Few school boards in Louisiana were as financially sound as the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board. The Hatcher era saw wise spending with never a penny wasted or misplaced. Public confidence in the school board was very high, as could be recorded by their repeated votes in favor of the many bond issues put before the people. With the exception of several times during the depression, local banks were quick to lend money to the board. The school system was in sound financial shape.

II. CONSOLIDATION

When William Hatcher became superintendent in February, 1916, there were twenty-one white schools in the parish, including eight one-room schools in the rural areas. There were eighteen Negro schools operating, and two of them were located within the city. These schools, with the number of teachers in parentheses, were as follows: Baton Rouge High (16), Convention Street (14), Asia Street (8), St. Louis Street (4), Baywood High (8), Pride High (7), Deerford High (5), Central (7), Seventh Ward (6), Ninth Ward (4), Baker (4), Howell (2), and Zachary (6). The one-room schools were Highland, Monticeno, Port Hudson, Irene, Magnolia, Abramson, Manchac, and Indian Mound.65

Immediately upon assuming the office of superintendent

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in 1916, Hatcher went on a tour of the rural schools of the parish. On some of his trips to high schools, he took the State High School Inspector C. A. Ives. He described Abramson School, a one-room rural school, as having "extremely bad conditions, a dirty building, bad water supply, and very unsatisfactory work being done." Besides Abramson, he felt Central and Monticeno were in bad shape. Many of the schools were overcrowded, and there was a need for consolidation. Louisiana passed a compulsory attendance law in 1916 which, if enforced, would further crowd the schools of the parish. A resolution by the board, passed by a ten to three vote, called for enforcement of the Compulsory Attendance Law, but it could not be enforced because of a lack of available space.

Superintendent Hatcher felt that one of the first needs of the parish was to eliminate as many of the one-room schools as possible. The completion of the new Indian Mound School shortly after he took office would replace three of the one-room schools. However, petitions were presented from parents of those schools being closed, and Hatcher had to take a strong stand in preventing any changes because of this pressure. Pride and Baker both became state approved high schools in 1916, bringing to seven the number of state

66 Ibid.

67 Louisiana Revised Statutes, 1916, 17:221.
approved high schools in the parish.\textsuperscript{68}

As van service and parish roads improved, the number of one-room schools decreased. In the summer of 1921, the superintendent called for consolidation of three one-room schools in the southern end of the parish. These schools, Manchac, Highland, and Morgan, were consolidated by December of 1921, leaving East Baton Rouge Parish with no one-room schools.\textsuperscript{69} They were consolidated into the Highland School.

The fall of 1924 found the following white schools in operation with the number of students in each school in parentheses: city schools were Baton Rouge High (416), Baton Rouge Junior High (569), Asia Street (279), Beauregard Elementary (260), Convention Street Elementary (401), Dufrocq Elementary (544), Magnolia Elementary (316), and Nicholson Elementary (430); rural schools were Baker (255), Baywood (101), Central (304), Deerford (152), Istrouma (647), Pride (172), Seventh Ward (150), Zachary (155), Fairfields Elementary (52), Monte Sano (75), and Garden City (55). These enrollment figures totaled 3,215 in the city schools and 2,596 in the rural schools.\textsuperscript{70}

The tremendous building program continued to turn out

\textsuperscript{68}East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 12, 1916.

\textsuperscript{69}East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 1, 1921.

\textsuperscript{70}East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 6, 1925.
new schools which eliminated many of the overcrowded conditions. Bernard Terrace Elementary for whites and McKinley High School for colored opened in the fall of 1927. The old Baton Rouge High School building was renovated for use as part of Baton Rouge Junior High after the new high school had been built on Government Street. Hollywood Junior High was opened in February, 1928, to take the pressure off Baton Rouge Junior High and to provide a junior high school for students in the northern end of the city. In the summer of 1929, Hatcher recommended the Baywood, Deerford, and Pride schools be consolidated as soon as possible. As a result, by the end of the 1929-1930 year, Baywood and Deerford schools were closed, and their students went to Pride High School, Baker High School, and Zachary High School.71

Junior High School Opened

Consolidation of the rural schools had been a big achievement of Hatcher's administration from 1916 to 1930. However, it had been overshadowed by the building of three schools from the building program. In October, 1919, Superintendent Hatcher recommended a junior high school be erected behind Baton Rouge High School, facing Laurel Street. This would be a separate school accommodating the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade pupils and was designed to relieve much of

71 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, April 3, 1930.
the congestion at the city elementary schools. At this time, 1919, the junior high school movement was new in the United States. By 1909 there were only eight schools in the United States which had divided into some form of junior high organization even though they were still housed in the same buildings. The first junior high schools to be housed separately under independent administration were at Berkeley, California, and Columbus, Ohio, in 1910. By 1920 the idea was spreading widely throughout the country, and there were over 250 junior high schools of some form in existence.

In February, 1922, the school board let the contract to erect the first junior high school not only in the parish but also the first one in the state itself. At the same meeting, two of the more important elementary schools, Dufrocq and Nicholson, were given the orders for construction. All of the money for these schools came out of the $600,000 bond issue passed by school district number one in 1920. Original estimates of cost for the new junior high were set at $155,000.

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72 *East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes*, October 7, 1919.


76 *East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes*, January 24, 1922.
In his annual report of 1923, Hatcher informed the people that the new junior high school would be composed of grades seven and eight. He explained that the junior high would make articulation to the senior high school easier while allowing the students plenty of opportunities for exploration. For years, the parish had been losing large numbers of students at the eighth grade level; now it was very possible that the junior high school concept would greatly reduce this drop-out level.

The departmentalized Baton Rouge Junior High School opened in the fall of 1923 with 473 students in attendance in grades seven and eight. The schools of the city were now organized on a 6-2-3 plan. According to Hatcher, in addition to teaching the normal seventh and eighth grade subjects, the junior high had the following two major purposes:

1. Correlating the work of the elementary and high school so as to make easier the change from the one to the other, and thus decreasing elimination, retardation, and maladjustment, growing out of the change.

2. Offering finding-out or try-out courses, and activities to help the child decide what courses he desires to pursue in his further education and as far as possible, to decide what vocation he desires to follow.77

Baton Rouge Junior High, or Junior High as it was more commonly called, was one of the most important schools in the parish for forty years. It continued to work well in its

77East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 18, 1924.
site for several years, but it quickly became overcrowded. The school population was growing too rapidly for the building to keep pace with the students. After the senior high school was moved to Government Street in 1927, the junior high took over the old building also. This change, along with the opening of Hollywood Junior High School in February, 1928, further relieved the congestion at the junior high.

Istrouma High School Opened

Baton Rouge High School on Florida Street was the high school designed for those children living within the city. It was hard to reach the school from the Istrouma area of North Baton Rouge. In 1922 school district number twelve voted thirty-eight to zero in a millage election to provide funds for the building of a high school in their area. By October, 1922, bids were accepted for $42,689.85 for the construction of Istrouma High School. The new building was constructed east of the already standing elementary school. In 1923, Istrouma opened, serving grades one through eleven. As Hatcher anticipated, by 1926, Istrouma High School, along with Baker High School, joined Baton Rouge High School in getting accepted into the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges.

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78 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, October 5, 1922.

79 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, October 7, 1926.
Istrouma High School was fed by four main schools after 1928: Hollywood Junior High, the junior high part of Istrouma, North Highlands Elementary, and Baton Rouge Junior High. By 1930 the school had become overcrowded so the school board made plans for an enlargement to be completed in time for the 1931-1932 school year. The summer of 1931 saw $48,000 worth of improvements take place. During the 1931-1932 year, an additional $74,316.96 was spent in erecting a science building and an auditorium-gymnasium and remodeling the elementary and secondary school buildings. These expenditures relieved the pressure of overcrowding at Istrouma for at least the next seven years.

Istrouma High School's athletic program was slowed somewhat by Hatcher's belief that the city was not large enough to have two high schools playing football. Therefore, Baton Rouge High was the only school participating in football. The other schools could participate in all other athletic areas and Istrouma finally started football in 1936.

New Baton Rouge High School Opened

The pride of the Hatcher administration as far as Hatcher was concerned was the building of the new Baton Rouge

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80 Interview with Jules Roux, op. cit.
81 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, October 1, 1931.
82 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 30, 1932.
83 Interview with Jules Roux, op. cit.
High School. When Hatcher took office, Baton Rouge High School was located in a three-story building on Florida Street near the downtown area. By 1924 it was clear that the school was becoming overcrowded and some relief must be sought. Hatcher foresaw the newly built junior high also becoming overcrowded and started requesting the school board to make plans to take care of these problems. Finally, in early 1925 the school board voted to increase the size of school district number one and to put a one million dollar bond issue to the taxpayers for their approval. The vote was overwhelming in favor so the board and superintendent could start making plans.84

Location and construction. The decision as to where to locate the new high school brought about one of the biggest debates in the school history of East Baton Rouge Parish. The original recommendation for the location was that it be near the School for the Deaf and the Asia Street School. However, legal difficulties arose over the ownership of the property where the Asia Street School was located, so the board decided that a new site should be selected.

Superintendent Hatcher favored a location on the eastern edge of the city. He suggested the purchase of a portion of the Pujol Tract on Government Street. T. H. Harris, State Superintendent of Education and a member of

84East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, February 18, 1925.
the building committee, agreed with Hatcher; and on October 1, 1925, the building committee, by a six to two vote, voted to recommend to the school board the purchase of a plot of land running between Government Street and North Boulevard, two-hundred feet west of Ogden Park.85

The school board meeting of October 1, 1925, was a stormy one. Hatcher and Harris defended the selection of the Government Street location against much bitter opposition from those who wanted a downtown location chosen. The resolution to accept the recommendation of the building committee passed the school board by an eleven to five vote.86 But this vote did not end the debate; petitions were circulated to recall the board members who voted in favor of the Government Street location. Opponents of the Government Street location also wanted Hatcher fired.

It was obvious to all citizens that this was Hatcher's recommendation. While the board respected Hatcher's decision because they knew he had studied the location a great deal, many people strongly opposed him for it. The major reason for this opposition was because the school was located outside the city limits and there was no transportation directly to it for those students living in the city. The rural area students from the Perkins Road and Jefferson Highway areas

85East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, October 1, 1925.

86Ibid.
would get van service directly to the school, but the closest the city students could get to the school would be the nineteenth street trolley. The students would have to walk a distance of about one mile. Of course, Hatcher and the board were looking toward the future. Already he could envision a large amount of expansion to the east of the city, and he felt he must plan for it.

Finally on March 12, 1926, the school board approved contracts for construction of the school totaling $510,243. Work was started shortly thereafter with an architect, William T. Nolan of New Orleans, and the builders, Caldwell Brothers of New Orleans. The favorite occupation of many people, particularly children, in that section of town was to watch the construction of the school.

Description of facilities. Baton Rouge High School was situated on nineteen and five-tenths acres of land facing south on Government Street. It was a three-story brick building, designed in Tudor Gothic style and containing thirty classrooms designed for 1,200 students. Other features included an auditorium seating 1,750 people with a gymnasium on the stage, a cafeteria, and a large library. The high ceilings, wide halls, and well-designed foyer added greatly to the beauty of the school. The school grounds were

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87 Interview with W. Harry Perkins, op. cit.
88 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, March 12, 1926.
large and roomy, and the athletic area behind the school extended to North Boulevard.

**Opening.** The first students were admitted Tuesday, September 20, 1927, after a short delay in finishing the school. Reine Alexander, the principal, was on hand to greet them. The formal dedication of the school took place Sunday afternoon, January 8, 1928, when large numbers gathered in the school auditorium. W. Harry Perkins, Sr., presided over the dedication, and addresses were made by William Hatcher and State Superintendent T. H. Harris. The school was one of the educational showplaces of the state. William Hatcher was extremely proud of the school and would visit it nearly every day. The part that he played in the building and locating of the school cannot be underestimated. It was truly his pride and joy.

III. TRANSPORTATION

Because the parish had a large number of rural schools, transportation was always a problem. As the schools consolidated and the one-room schools were eliminated, more children needed to be transported. The 1915-1916 school year saw thirty-two vans in operation, transporting 809 children. The total cost for operating these vans was $8,249.57 with an average cost of $1.19 per child per month.\(^{89}\)

\(^{89}\)East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 12, 1916.
In the fall of 1916, the board decided to enforce the law which said a child living less than two miles from school could not be provided transportation. The board left itself an alternative by saying that if the vans were not overcrowded, students within two miles could be picked up. The board later gave the superintendent complete authority to act on all matters of van service.

The Superintendent's Annual Report of the 1916-1917 year stated that thirty-eight school transfers or vans were used to transport 900 children daily. This was thirty percent of the total enrollment of the parish and seventy-seven percent of enrollment of rural schools.\(^\text{90}\) Drivers were paid ten cents per day for each child living more than one and one-half miles from school.

In 1924 Hatcher persuaded the school board to dispose of all transportation vehicles owned by the school board, giving the drivers first choice to purchase. He felt that all school vans should be motorized, but, because of bad roads, certain parts of the parish had to use horse-drawn vans. Too, the board reserved for themselves the right to inspect all vans. They also drew up a salary schedule providing that the drivers receive from seventy to one hundred thirty-five dollars per month, depending upon distance, type of vehicle, and number of children transported. In 1927

\(^{90}\) East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 24, 1917.
Hatcher went before the Parish Police Jury in an attempt to get them to improve certain parish roads so motorized vans could be used.

In 1927 the school board set the following minimum specifications for school vans:

The interior dimensions of the cab where children are to be seated are to be as follows: Length of body from the back of the driver's seat in the cab to be twelve feet, width to be five feet eight inches. The height of the cab to be four feet, three inches. The door to the van shall be placed on the right front and the children shall enter into the van through the driver's cab. Said door shall be two feet, six inches wide.

The floor dimensions shall be three feet, nine inches wide, by twelve feet long, and the seats for the children shall extend over the wheels of said vehicle. The dimensions from back to back of seats shall be five feet, eight inches. A seat twelve inches wide shall be placed on each side of the van running lengthwise. The length of the seat on the right side of the van shall be ten feet, four inches long. A seat shall be placed across the rear of the van, and this seat shall also be twelve inches wide. All seats shall be provided with cushions. The height of the backs of all seats are to be eighteen inches, and the top of the seats shall be eighteen inches from the floor.

The body shall be constructed of the best materials throughout, shall be braced with iron, and shall be constructed in as neat and attractive manner as possible. The floor shall be made of tongue and grooved heart pine, and all woodwork in the construction of the van body shall be painted.

The top curtain shall be made of twelve-ounce duck, painted with oil and white lead. The side curtains shall be made of eight-ounce duck and shall not be painted, but shall be supplied with suitable eyelets, buttons, and catches, in order that the body of the van may be entirely enclosed and made thoroughly water proof.  

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91 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, August 12, 1927.
Despite this vivid list of specifications, there was a good deal of variance in the vans. Some had homemade bodies on trucks with no glasses and roll up canvas, while others had factory-made bodies. In 1930 a van committee made a report that van service was unsatisfactory, and that the vans were in poor shape. Factory-made bodies were considered, but the costs were too high. The final agreement called for the van driver to furnish a good truck chassis of not less than 155 inches in length with a "substantially constructed body." The van had to be able to carry at least thirty-five children and must be painted orange with the name of the school and the ward it serviced written on each side. Van drivers had to be at least twenty-one years of age. Another regulation stated that students could not be taken to school earlier than fifteen minutes before school.

These regulations stabilized the van services and provided for a better system. A small controversy arose in the fall of 1932 when the board refused a request to transport students to private schools. The request was denied because the board was low on money, and because a local rule existed which stated that children could not be transported

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92 Interview with W. Harry Perkins, op. cit.

93 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 31, 1930.

94 Ibid.
past one school to another where the same grades were taught.95

Improved roads throughout the parish, plus motorized, weather-proof vans made for a vast improvement in the transportation system for East Baton Rouge Parish. Faster travel meant that students did not need to leave as early in the morning nor get home so late in the afternoon. This time element was important to those students who helped around the farm after school. Moreover, students from the outer regions of the parish who had been unable to attend school were now enrolling.

IV. TEACHERS OF EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH

Qualifications and Teacher Rules

At the end of the 1915-1916 school year there were 104 teachers in East Baton Rouge Parish white schools. This number included fifteen men and eighty-nine women and a total of sixty-three of the 104 as college or normal school graduates. Twenty-three were first grade teachers, thirteen were second grade teachers, and four were third grade teachers. Sixty-three pupils graduated from the high schools of the parish in the spring of 1916.96

William Hatcher was concerned with upgrading the

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95East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, September 29, 1932.

96East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 12, 1916.
teachers of the parish. Starting with the 1917-1918 school year, the school system ceased employing any more third grade teachers (the lowest classification of teachers requiring only the passage of a test). The board made another decision in the summer of 1916 which authorized the superintendent to enter into teaching contracts with the teachers which would be binding upon the board. Hatcher felt that a contract would provide security for the teachers and make it easier to hire better qualified people.

In 1922 Hatcher recommended that the qualifications for teaching in the city schools be raised for new teachers in the system. He requested that they be graduates of a standard college and have at least two years of successful teaching experience. While the board readily accepted this concept there were times when it could not be strictly adhered to. That same year he recommended, and got board approval for, a resolution directing that the superintendent, assistant superintendent, high school principals, nurse, supervisors, and teachers could not engage in any outside work for pay while being paid by the school board. This new policy was written into the teachers' contracts for the following year. Hatcher felt very strongly that school

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\(^{97}\)East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, August 28, 1916.

\(^{98}\)East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, January 3, 1922.

\(^{99}\)East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, February 24, 1922.
people should be concerned with school work and should have no outside work or attend any night classes at college.

By the 1923-1924 year, 182 of the 202 white teachers in the system were either graduates of a university, college, or normal school. This number was a vast improvement over 1916 when Hatcher took office. In 1928 the superintendent got the school board to adopt a list of rules and regulations concerning school personnel. The rules were designed to cover the responsibilities that teachers owed to students and the school. An abbreviated listing follows:

1. Teachers were required to arrive and depart at specified times.

2. Teachers were responsible for discipline in their classrooms.

3. Teachers must keep pupils after school for not more than one hour.

4. Corporal punishment must be administered by the principal only.

5. Acceptable punishments were defined.

6. Teachers were not allowed to tutor for money.

7. Teachers were required to attend professional in-service meetings.

8. Teachers were not allowed to visit each other during school hours.

9. Teachers were required to post a typewritten copy of their daily schedule.

10. Teachers were required to request excuses for student absences.

11. Teachers were required to keep rooms at the best learning temperature.

12. Teacher-parent conferences must be held in private.
13. Teachers were required to look after school furniture.

14. Teachers were given three days' sick leave per year.\(^{100}\)

Apparently the teachers felt that the rules were fair for they agreeably followed them to a large extent.

There were special rules which applied to women teachers. When the issue arose, the board was in complete agreement with the current ideas on the status of women teachers. Society expected its women teachers to be unmarried, and the board agreed to enforce this doctrine. They voted sixteen to zero to instruct Hatcher not to hire any new teachers if they were married women. Though they agreed not to disturb any teachers who were already married, they promised to dismiss any woman who married after the ruling went into effect.\(^{101}\) No problems arose from a shortage of teachers due to the ruling. As the depression hit there was always a greater supply of teachers than positions.

Another area of teaching where Hatcher took a special interest was in the field of athletics. He was a firm believer in an athletic program and supported it in every possible way.\(^{102}\) His experience in coaching at Baker, helped

\(^{100}\)East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 13, 1928.

\(^{101}\)East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, June 21, 1934.

\(^{102}\)Interview with Jules Roux, op. cit.
him count coaches as his life-long friends: even in 1935 when money was tight, the board okayed his request to hire young men to coach elementary boys at schools where no male teacher was employed.

He felt that it was very important to get some men into elementary schools to work with boys. The board agreed to pay these men a salary of $3.50 per week.\textsuperscript{103}

The majority of the teachers in East Baton Rouge Parish liked Hatcher very much and thought very highly of him. It was easy for him to know them all since the job of superintendent included the responsibilities of the director of personnel. He was the person who hired the teachers and made recommendations for promotion, and the school board seldom turned down any of his requests for promotion. This closeness was further strengthened because he made it a point to know the names of each teacher and visited with them as often as possible. It was through this warm relationship between superintendent and teachers that so much was achieved during his era.\textsuperscript{104}

Salaries

Teacher salaries were low in the early 1900's throughout the state of Louisiana. The average male teacher made $1,199 per year, and the average female teacher made $794

\textsuperscript{103}\textit{East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes}, January 3, 1935.

\textsuperscript{104}Interview with W. Harry Perkins, \textit{op. cit.}
per year in 1920.\textsuperscript{105} Even this salary was a raise of twenty per cent to thirty per cent over the previous session when the average for both teachers was $843 per year. In East Baton Rouge Parish in 1918 the high school teachers with two or more years' experience got eighty to eighty-five dollars per month while those with less than two years' experience received seventy to seventy-five dollars per month. This was the same salary that grade school teachers got who had two or more years' experience and at least a normal school diploma.\textsuperscript{106} First grade teachers, those who had some college, received sixty to sixty-five dollars depending on their experience. Second grade teachers, who were high school graduates whose competence had been proved by the passage of an examination, received from forty-five to fifty dollars per month depending on their experience. Negro teachers received ten dollars less than second grade white teachers.\textsuperscript{107}

In 1927 Hatcher proposed a new salary schedule which the parish readily adopted. The range of the salaries for white high school teachers went from $115 per month for a new teacher to $150 per month for a teacher with eleven years' experience.


\textsuperscript{106}East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, May 3, 1910.

\textsuperscript{107}Ibid.
experience. If a teacher was a department head, he could receive from $150 to $165, depending upon his experience. Elementary teachers received from eighty-five dollars for the starting teacher to $120 per month for the teacher having eleven or more years experience. Men and women received the same pay, but teachers with a Master's degree got five dollars more per month as did teachers with a college degree doing elementary work. Teachers without proper qualifications got ten dollars less per month.¹⁰⁸

During the depression teachers' salaries dropped with a median white teacher's salary in the 1934-1935 session of $850.43 per year.¹⁰⁹ Yet Louisiana, according to State Superintendent of Education T. H. Harris, suffered less than the neighboring states. By the middle 1930's there were 468,650 pupils registered in the state, and 9,488 teachers employed.¹¹⁰ But the depression destroyed any hopes Hatcher might have had for increasing teacher salaries. His foremost goal was to economize enough to be able to keep the schools open.

¹⁰⁸East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, April 5, 1927.
¹¹⁰Ibid.
The position of school principal became a more important position during the Hatcher administration. Through his leadership the job underwent a change in description and duties within this twenty-year period of time. The changes were, in part, due to a national trend and, in part, due to the increased school population in East Baton Rouge Parish. The principal's job description in the parish in 1916 nearly always included a large amount of classroom teaching with little time delegated for him to supervise and administer the school. Elementary principals usually taught the highest grade while high school principals often taught in one of the academic areas and coached. By the time the Hatcher era was over, the percentage of time the principal spent teaching in the classroom was greatly reduced in most schools and eliminated in some schools. Naturally, a corresponding increase occurred in the amount of time the principal could now spend on administrative and supervisory matters.

As their positions changed, principals received supplementary payment for assuming these additional duties. In the summer of 1916 the school board set the salaries of principals of city schools at $1,800 per year, of Zachary at $1,200 per year, and of Negro schools at seventy-five dollars per month. Hatcher had been receiving ninety dollars per month as principal of Baker when he was promoted to the superintendency. By the summer of 1917 the salaries of the
assistant principal of Baton Rouge High School and the four principals of the ward schools were raised to eighty-five dollars per month. This increase followed a seven to five vote, one of the few close votes of William Hatcher's administration.11

One of the important jobs that Hatcher had as superintendent was to nominate people for promotion within the school system. Since the school board staff was very small, this usually meant that the only advanced position open to most teachers was that of principal at one of the area schools. Since William Hatcher had a reasonable knowledge of the abilities of his teachers because of his constant contact with them, he had little trouble making wise appointments. The board gave him almost complete authority in this matter.

There was only one case in which the board went against Hatcher's recommendation. In the summer of 1918 when the board was officially approving principal and teacher lists for the next year, Hatcher recommended that Mrs. H. F. Mcgruder be retained as assistant principal of the Florida Street High School, or Baton Rouge High. However, the board voted to tear up her contract and gave her a new one assigning her to a position as history teacher in the same school. Since her salary was subsequently reduced from $100 to

111East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 24, 1917.
eighty-five dollars per month, Mrs. Magruder appealed the board's decision. Hatcher decided to take a neutral stand, but his principal of city schools, P. H. Griffith, recommended that she not be allowed a hearing so the board stuck by its original decision. Rather than accept the position as a teacher, Mrs. Magruder resigned.\textsuperscript{112}

In 1927 Hatcher decided that the parish needed uniform regulations for dealing with students and asked for recommendations from teachers and principals. From this survey he made a set of consistent rules for the parish which he distributed among the principals at the start of the 1927-1928 year for their consideration. Later these regulations were revised and put into effect for the 1928-1929 year. These rules not only gave great powers to the principal, but they also put many guidelines on his actions. Some of these are as follows:

1. It shall be the duty of the principal to enforce all rules and regulations of the school, as applied to principal, teacher, pupils, janitors, and van drivers, and to carry out the directions and suggestions of the Superintendent.\textsuperscript{113}

2. Principals were responsible for general management and discipline of the school.

3. Principals must arrive early.

4. Principals' power to dismiss school was limited.

\textsuperscript{112}\textit{East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes}, July 3, 1918.

\textsuperscript{113}\textit{East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes}, July 13, 1928.
5. Principals must see that records were properly kept.

6. Principals must make a monthly report.

7. Principals must send in a program of courses no later than the second week of school.

8. Principals must hold regular faculty meetings.

9. Principals shall devote a major portion of each day to visiting the various classes of the school for the purpose of instructing, advising, and directing the teachers.114

10. Principals were encouraged to subscribe to professional magazines.

11. Principals were warned not to confide in teachers concerning personal news of other teachers.

12. Principals had the authority to suspend pupils for the following reasons:
   a. Persistent disobedience
   b. Vulgarity
   c. Habitual truancy
   d. Determined opposition to rules of the school
   e. Committing offenses that would be detrimental to the best interests of the school.

13. Principals must see that the vans were supervised during unloading.


15. Principals must see that interscholastic athletic games are held on weekends when possible.

16. Principals must conduct fire drills.

17. Principals must consult with parents about their children.

18. Principals shall not engage in any outside activity either business or social that will in any way whatsoever interfere with the proper administration and supervision of his school and should not

114 Ibid.
allow home interests or obligations to interfere with school work.115

These rules were considered very fair and served as a guideline for many years in the parish. Moreover, they gave uniformity to the schools of the parish at a time when uniformity was greatly needed. The main advantage they served for the principal was that he gained great powers, particularly in the area of principal-teacher relations. The job of the principal had finally changed to a very important position.

When Superintendent Hatcher took leave from the school board in 1935, the following people were principals of the respective schools: Reine Alexander, Baton Rouge High School; H. P. Overton, Istrouma High School; J. B. Myers, Baton Rouge Junior High; V. E. Eskridge, Baker High; E. S. Samuels, Central High; C. C. Chaudoir, Pride High; J. M. Johnson, Seventh Ward High; J. I. Daniel, Jr., Zachary High; Anna W. Tanner, Asia Elementary; Mrs. L. M. Amiss, Beauregard Elementary; Evelyn J. Daniel, Bernard Terrace Elementary; Helen Walsh, Convention Street Elementary; Mayble Gauthier, Dufrocoq Elementary; Roberta Nesbit, Fairfields Elementary; Katie Amrhein, Magnolia Elementary; Mrs. L. W. Peters, Nicholson Elementary; Myrtie Polizzotto, Highland Elementary; C. R. Kleinpeter, Hollywood Elementary; Lulu Weiland, Howell Elementary; Mrs. C. P. Darden, Ninth
When William Hatcher became superintendent in 1916, there was not a great deal of uniformity among the curricula of the parish schools. The objectives of the rural areas differed greatly with each other, and there were even many differences among the urban schools. While he felt some differences in rural education were good, Hatcher wanted to eliminate needless ones. He felt that efforts should be made to educate rural boys and girls in the needs of the farm. He wanted to cultivate in the students an appreciation for farm life in the hope that they would stay on the farm. At this time the parish had two agricultural high schools, Pride and Baywood.

Superintendent Hatcher felt that the curriculum of the city schools should differ from that of the rural schools. He advocated that the parish follow the courses of study prepared by the Louisiana State Department of Education with a small modification designed to meet local needs. In 1931 he stated that emphasis would be placed upon the unit type of teaching and had the teachers furnished with mimeographed copies of lesson plans. Although teachers were not forced to use these plans, many did.

Hatcher worried constantly that the school was not
taking care of the needs of the students. He insisted that schools start offering special classes for weak students during his administration. Hatcher was also concerned with reducing the high percentage of failures in the parish schools. In the 1916-1917 school year alone 34.6 per cent of the students failed.\textsuperscript{117} By 1922 this figure had been reduced to 20.3 per cent, and the 1923-1924 year saw the figure reduced to 13.4 per cent.\textsuperscript{118} Hatcher realized that the main problem which caused failure was lack of attendance. His office contacted outside agencies to promote school attendance and asked the school board to give him an attendance officer. So successful was his program that by 1934 the average percentage of attendance ranged from 97.1 per cent at Baton Rouge Junior High to 90.6 per cent at Zachary for a parish average of 95.2 per cent.\textsuperscript{119}

In 1924 Hatcher recommended and received from the school board permission to lengthen the school day for primary school children in an effort to reduce the percentage of failures at the elementary level. A continued high percentage of failures in the first grade led Hatcher to suspect that some parents were lying about their children's age. Consequently, he received permission from the school board

\textsuperscript{117}\textit{East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes,} July 18, 1924.

\textsuperscript{118}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{119}\textit{East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes,} July 30, 1934.
to demand a birth certificate showing proof that the child was six years of age. 120

East Baton Rouge Parish often had higher graduation requirements than did most of the rest of the state. Although in 1925 the State Board of Education lowered the requirement in algebra from two years to one and one-half years, the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board continued to require two years of algebra for its students. 121

Hatcher was quick to make changes which would add to the curriculum of the parish. In 1923 he offered physical education for both boys and girls. By 1935 the board had created a music department and had hired a music supervisor to supervise its activities. He also initiated efforts to provide commercial subjects in the high schools, but these efforts were thwarted by large economic costs.

Though he was not a great believer in standardized testing, Hatcher initiated testing programs throughout the parish. Some of the early tests were Monroe's Reasoning Test in Arithmetic, Monroe's Silent Reading Test, Woody-McCall Mixed Fundamentals, Courtis Research Test, and the Pressery First and Second Grade Attainment Scale. 122

120 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 6, 1927.

121 Ibid., October 6, 1927.

122 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 13, 1928.
nearly all cases the parish median was well above the
standard median of each test.

State advances in educational policies were readily
adopted by Hatcher. When free textbooks were issued for the
first time during September, 1928, East Baton Rouge Parish
was quick to get its quota. By 1932 he had lengthened the
school day to meet the requirements adopted by the state.
He was quick to make any changes that resulted in a better
educational system. Through his efforts all of the high
schools in the parish were on the accredited list of the
Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges. By
1932 all of the elementary schools were on the state approved
list.

As stated earlier, William Hatcher was a great
believer in the value of extra-curricular activities. He was
especially interested in the parish rally in both athletic
and literary events and encouraged participation in the
state high school rally which was held every year at Louisi­
ana State University. He saw to it that athletic contests
were an important part of the schools of the parish as well
as such things as 4-H clubs and other activities. All in
all, education in East Baton Rouge Parish was very rich and
fulfilling.

VII. DISCIPLINE

Discipline during the Hatcher era was largely confined
to putting the "board" or "strap" on the students when they
were bad. At other times a student might be kept in at recess or after school or even placed in the coat room. As a rule classes were quiet, because the teachers tolerated very little permissiveness. Of course, there was still some misbehaving on the part of some students.

While he retained the final authority by law to discipline children, Hatcher placed a lot of responsibility on the principals in this area. Still the principals did not have a large number of problems because most teachers handled their own problems and administered their own discipline. As a matter of fact, students expected the teacher to discipline them.

The principal's main job on discipline was to support his teachers and to administer in cases involving severe departures from the normal. The superintendent's job was to work with the principals and to support them. Principals could recommend expulsion of a student, but the superintendent was the one who legally accomplished this task.

It was not always possible for the principal and superintendent to support their teachers. An interesting case occurred in the spring of 1934 when an elementary school teacher struck and injured a child with a ruler. The child's parents threatened criminal action against the teacher; Hatcher persuaded them not to take such action until he could make an investigation. After an intensive investigation by Hatcher, Assistant Superintendent C. B. Turner, and the school principal, it was decided that the
best course of action would be not to offer the teacher a contract for the following year. The teacher appealed and petitions were presented to the board in her behalf. Nevertheless the board by a unanimous vote, upheld Hatcher's recommendation.123

With the exception of this case, the schools were quiet during the Hatcher years. The students were generally a well-behaved group, and there were no disruptions in the everyday life at the schools. The clear definition of powers possessed by teacher, principal, and Superintendent made it possible for quick, clear action when it was needed.

VIII. SUPERVISION

Superintendent Hatcher was a firm believer in the importance of proper supervision in the school system. In his early years as superintendent he did not have much office work because the system was not very large. He visited the schools nearly everyday. Yet, because he had little time for follow-up visits, Hatcher asked the board for help. Because he felt the high school principal was not trained to do elementary school supervision, he requested and received an elementary school supervisor for rural schools for the 1920-1921 school year. The principal of city schools was in charge of supervision within the city.

123 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, June 21, 1934.
In 1923 Hatcher had the school board hire two assistant superintendents who devoted their full time to supervision. He enjoyed supervising the teachers himself and supervised the high school level until he left office. The other supervisors supervised the elementary level. Because of the large number of teachers in the school system and the small number of supervisors, the supervisors had time to help only the weak teachers.

The superintendent felt that the principals should be very active in supervision. He reminded them that "the spark plug of the educational system is the supervising principal."124 In an effort to improve the schools, the State Department of Education during the 1923-1924 school year conducted conferences at Louisiana State University in elementary supervision. Most of the principals and supervisors from the parish attended these meetings. During the next year conferences in supervision at the secondary level were conducted for this same group.

During the 1929-1930 school year the superintendent and the staff designed a very elaborate program of studies. The major objectives of this program were as follows:

1. To assist in the completion of a state course of study in reading.

2. To improve the teaching of arithmetic and to compare the teaching of arithmetic in the parish with that in the state through the administering of objective tests at the end of each six-weeks period.

124East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 12, 1923.
3. To establish desirable health habits throughout the elementary grades.

4. To improve lesson planning through conferences with the teachers and through improving supervision by the principals.\textsuperscript{125}

In an attempt to achieve objective number one, various in-service committees were organized. Objective two was evaluated by tests in the city schools whose scores proved to be twenty-five per cent higher than the state average. However, the rural schools ranked only approximately three per cent higher. While objective number three was handled by the school nurse, objective number four was achieved through teacher conferences designed to allow the principal to give the teachers more attention. Hatcher continued to exert influence on the principals for more supervision and held an in-service program to assist principals in using correct supervisory practices.

The organization of the 1929-1930 study served as a model for future supervisory programs in the parish. A further example of Hatcher's belief in supervision was the fact that in 1925 he persuaded the school board to refuse a request by Louisiana State University for three elementary teachers because the parish school board would have no parish supervision at the school. The supervisory program set up under Hatcher's administration remained adequate until the depression ended.

\textsuperscript{125}East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 31, 1930.
IX. HIGH SCHOOL DISTINCTIONS

Baton Rouge High School achieved one of the most envious records a school could hope to achieve while William Hatcher was superintendent. Starting in 1922, the Government Street school won the state literary rally conducted at Louisiana State University every year Hatcher was superintendent. Approximately twenty to twenty-five per cent of the individual winners were from Baton Rouge High. Warren Easton High School of New Orleans and C. E. Byrd High School of Shreveport provided the most competition.

The years of 1923, 1924, 1925, 1929, and 1931, saw Baton Rouge High winning various musical events at the State Rally. They were volleyball champions in 1923, 1924, and 1925, and won the boys' basketball championship in 1931. Baton Rouge High School had started football in 1917, but until the 1922 team won seven games with only one loss, they had not achieved much notice. The years of 1926 and 1934 also saw good teams. However, it was in track that Baton Rough High achieved its greatest athletic successes during the Hatcher years. The Baton Rouge High School track team started in 1924 under Coach Ed Young produced nine straight

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126 Interview with Jules Roux, op. cit.
128 The Buzzer [Baton Rouge High School Newspaper], March 15, 1936, p. 4.
state titles from 1924 through 1932 and then won again in 1934.\textsuperscript{129}

Other high schools in the parish did not win many events during this time because of the great emphasis placed on Baton Rouge High. The best athletes went to Baton Rouge High so the athletic programs at the other schools were not very impressive. Whether it be in an athletic area or a literary one, Baton Rouge High School could be found at or near the top during those times.

X. NEGRO EDUCATION

Facilities

During the 1916-1917 year there were eighteen Negro schools operated in the parish but only two were located in the city. The sixteen rural schools, usually housed in churches or private homes, were operated for four and one-half months each though only eight were opened each semester. The total enrollment of Negro students was 2,151, which represented only thirty-three per cent of the Negro educa-
\textsuperscript{130} Conditions were not much better in the city where overcrowded conditions forced platooning of teachers and students in the primary grades.

Superintendent Hatcher realized that these conditions

\textsuperscript{129}Ibid., p. 5.

\textsuperscript{130}East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 24, 1917.
must be corrected, and by 1921 the parish had built three more schools. When the enrollment increased to 3,478 and the session of the rural schools was lengthened to seven months, the Negro schools were once again overcrowded. In an effort to keep up with the school growth, the parish started making use of money from Rosenwald Funds to construct larger and better schools in the rural part of the parish.

The rural schools offered work of a vocational nature through the fifth grade, while the type of work in the city schools was also of a practical nature containing courses in manual training and home economics. Nevertheless, there were still a large number of academic courses that were offered because it was cheaper to offer them than to finance the vocational courses involving machinery.

By 1926 conditions were so overcrowded that it was impossible to enroll all the Negro students who applied. At this time the parish began building a large Negro school in the South Baton Rouge area. Prior to this the only Negro school with secondary school grades was the Baton Rouge Colored High School, or the Perkins Road School as it was more widely known. A majority of the board members favored making the new school an elementary school, but Hatcher, at the request of James Monroe Frazier, Sr., Negro supervisor, requested that the board open the school as a high school. The board agreed to do this.

McKinley High School, built at a cost of $175,000, served grades eight through eleven. It was a showplace for
Negro schools in the state, and people from Louisiana and the surrounding states came to observe the new school. As conditions improved, the enrollment figures for Negroes in high school increased from 307 in 1925-1926 before the new school was built to 456 for the first year at McKinley to 630 by the 1934-1935 year.\footnote{131}

**Supervision**

Superintendent Hatcher seldom visited the Negro schools of the parish because, in J. M. Frazier, Sr., he had an excellent supervising principal of the Negro schools. Frazier, who started teaching in Baton Rouge in 1908, and Hatcher had an excellent working relationship. In addition to being principal of McKinley High School, Frazier also supervised the other black schools. The position he had was almost the equivalent to the job of Negro Superintendent since he was in charge of hiring black teachers.

The good working relationship between Hatcher and Frazier was largely instrumental in the fact that East Baton Rouge Parish provided a better education for its Negroes than did most parishes in the state. While the parish did not have large numbers of blacks graduating from high school, most of those who did went into teaching. Unfortunately, however, few went to college. Still, Hatcher had the

\footnote{131}{James Monroe Frazier, Jr., "McKinley High School" (unpublished Master's thesis, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, 1939), p. 62.}
support of the black community and felt a need to help Negro education at a time when most places in Louisiana were not making much effort in that direction. 132

XI. HEALTH AND SAFETY

During the years 1916-1936 many improvements were made in the parish in the areas of health and safety. These advances resulted mostly because of the deep-rooted interest Superintendent Hatcher had in what was best for the children. William Hatcher became friends with many of the doctors of Baton Rouge, and they were free in offering him their aid when the schools needed medical assistance.

In 1919 the parish health officials required a vaccination of all school children before they would be allowed to enter school. When they set up no machinery for carrying out their orders, Hatcher visited the physicians of Baton Rouge and persuaded them to vaccinate the children free of charge if the school board paid for the vaccine. For the 800 who could not visit a doctor, he had a local doctor visit the schools to vaccinate them. 133

In 1921 he ordered that sick rooms be set up in rural schools to care for students who became ill while at school. This move helped to eliminate the fears of some parents who


133 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, October 7, 1919.
would not let their children attend school because they were afraid they might become ill and have no place to go.134

School Nurse

One of the most important events in the area of health during Hatcher's administration was the hiring of a parish school nurse in 1921. The nurse, Maude Chambers, started work immediately by inspecting Beauregard and Convention Street Elementary schools and found large numbers of children who needed medical attention. She then called at the homes of these children's parents. During her first year she examined 3,796 children out of the 4,687 enrolled and reported to the superintendent that a large percentage of the failures resulted from the poor health of the children.135

By 1928 Maude Chambers was also making a contribution in the area of instruction by lecturing on good health practices to the students of many schools. The 1929 year saw the school nurse and two doctors inoculate 1,608 children between the ages of six and thirteen in the rural schools against diptheria. This inoculation reached 95.5 per cent of the children of this age bracket.136 The school nurse more than justified her salary during these years.

134East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, January 4, 1921.
135East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 14, 1922.
136East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, July 31, 1930.
Fire Prevention

An event in 1929 in which several children were injured after jumping from a second-story window to escape a small fire at North Highlands School awakened the school board and Hatcher to the need of evaluating the fire safety program of the parish. The superintendent called attention to a 1928 Louisiana law making it mandatory for school boards to have fire escapes in all school buildings having more than one floor. Since the parish had no fire escapes at that time, the board decided to proceed with plans in this area as soon as financially possible.

In an effort to call attention to fire prevention, Hatcher initiated Fire Prevention Weeks in the school where essay contests were held at both the elementary and secondary levels. Fire Chief R. A. Bogan and his staff helped the schools in this endeavor. In 1933 the Louisiana Rating and Fire Prevention Bureau, headed by Superintendent of Rates Walter K. Grant, inspected most of the schools of the system and commended the system on their work in the fire prevention area. Hatcher received further acclaim by Grant for preparing a Syllabus of Fire Prevention which was adopted by over thirty parishes.

XII. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

As superintendent, William B. Hatcher realized that part of his leadership position demanded that he take the lead in encouraging professional activities. In this respect
he urged principals and teachers to affiliate with the national and state associations at their levels. Hatcher was active in joining school organizations which he thought would benefit himself and the system.

**Louisiana Teachers' Association**

On the state level the important organization for white teachers was the Louisiana Teachers' Association which Hatcher encouraged all teachers to join. In 1921 he obtained permission from the school board which allowed teachers time off with pay to attend the state-wide meeting of this organization in April, 1921, in Alexandria. Since this time Louisiana teachers have been allowed time off to attend these meetings.

The teachers of the parish responded well to Hatcher's encouragement. In 1923 the East Baton Rouge Parish Teachers' Association was reorganized with 100 per cent enrollment in both the parish and state units of the Louisiana Teachers' Association. In November, 1928, the state-wide meeting of the Louisiana Teachers' Association was held in Baton Rouge where the local white teachers were 100 per cent in attendance. Many East Baton Rouge Parish teachers gave demonstration lessons in their various fields.

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137 *East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, February 15, 1921.*

138 *East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, January 3, 1929.*
As the superintendent of one of the most important parishes in the state, Hatcher was called upon to serve in various positions with the Louisiana Teachers' Association and to give many talks to the association. His most important work was done when he served on the Legislative Committee. In 1933 G. O. Houston, Executive Secretary of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, wrote a letter to the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board commending Hatcher for his work on this committee.

In-Service Training

When W. B. Hatcher became superintendent, there was no in-service training program for the teachers of the parish. In the fall of 1916 the school board accepted Hatcher's plan which required all teachers to attend institutes held within the district in which they taught or else secure permission from the superintendent to be absent. Three years later he recommended that teachers be paid for a two-day institute which they attended before the opening of school each year. These meetings, which have continued until today, have always been well attended by the teachers. For example, the meeting in the fall of 1933 was attended by 265 of the 270 white teachers of the parish.139

Hatcher also encouraged the principals of the school system to attend conferences. In 1927 he secured permission

139East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, October 5, 1933.
from the school board to pay the expenses for ten high school principals to attend the state high school principals' conference in Lake Charles. This practice was designed on a continuing basis as long as Hatcher was in office with one-half of the principals going one year while the other half went the next year.

William Hatcher was a great believer in college training and, in particular, that of Louisiana State University. In keeping with this belief he encouraged his teachers to attend summer school, and large numbers of them took his advice. Of the 255 parish teachers, 170 attended summer school during 1928 while thirty-eight others took correspondence or extension courses. The superintendent further encouraged this summer education when he proposed that the salary schedule in 1927 pay a commensurate amount depending on college credits.

While Hatcher was a leader in encouraging attendance in summer school, he was a leader in opposing attendance in extension classes or enrollment in correspondence courses during the school year. He had not always held this view toward extension and correspondence classes but had attended many classes during the school year himself. However, after checking achievement tests in the spring of 1932, he discovered that those teachers who were taking extra work

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140 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, January 3, 1929.
from the university during the year were the ones whose students made the lower grades. Therefore, starting in September of 1932, teachers needed his permission to attend classes during the year. The only time he gave this permission was if the teacher was near graduation. On this issue the school board stood behind Hatcher by a unanimous vote.

XIII. PERSONAL LIFE DURING HIS SUPERINTENDENCY

William Hatcher was a handsome, distinguished looking man, five foot, nine and one-half inches tall with brown eyes, dark brown hair, and a ruddy complexion. Since the age of twenty it had been his duty to look after his mother and sister, so this did not leave him much time for himself. When World War I started he wanted to join but felt an obligation to his family and the school system to continue his work as superintendent. Finally he could not restrain his feelings any longer and joined the army as a private in August, 1918. While he was in the army, P. H. Griffith was elected to take his place. Hatcher returned to the school system in December, 1918, when the war was successfully concluded.

On December 26, 1918, William B. Hatcher married Elise McConnell of Baton Rouge. Elise McConnell was the daughter of Sam McConnell, a sugar chemist in Baton Rouge.

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Discharge papers from the United States Army, Form No. 525, November 26, 1918.
Mrs. Hatcher died of cancer, August 6, 1933, and was buried in Baton Rouge.  

Shortly after the death of his wife, Superintendent Hatcher offered a teaching job to Amelia Devall, a cousin of his first wife who was teaching at Napoleonville, so she could be near Mrs. McConnell. During the following year romance blossomed and, on October 14, 1934, William Hatcher and Amelia Devall were married. The new Mrs. Hatcher's father, Arthur P. Devall, was a sugar planter in the Baton Rouge area. When their daughter Joan Amelia was born on September 8, 1939, the Hatchers resided at 1949 Government Street in South Baton Rouge.

Superintendent Hatcher was a very active person. In his youth he played tennis but switched to golf as he grew older. However, his main hobbies were his family and his work. With the exception of a gall-bladder operation on March 24, 1931, he was a healthy person until the illness that caused his death developed in late 1946. While he was superintendent, one of his favorite activities was to get in his car and ride to the homes of various school board members. He enjoyed the excellent relationship that he always had with the board members. He also attended all Baton Rouge High School athletic events and often sat on the bench at the football games. There is no doubt that he greatly enjoyed

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the period of his life when he served as superintendent.

XIV. HATCHER TAKES LEAVE

Louisiana in the late 1920's and early 1930's was controlled by Huey P. Long. Long had been elected governor in 1928 and United States Senator in 1931. For the most part he controlled all the political activities of the entire state with very few exceptions. One of those exceptions was East Baton Rouge Parish, where Long had very little political success.\(^{143}\)

The Long forces were seeking places where they could establish political patronage in East Baton Rouge Parish, and one of those places was the school system. Hatcher, who had not supported Long in elections, became the target of the Long forces. The Senator exerted pressure on him to appoint Long people to positions in the school system. Hatcher let it be known that he had always made it a policy of hiring teachers without any consideration for politics and was not going to change now. After this statement Long advisors visited Hatcher and informed him that he had better consider resigning or he would be ousted.

Not easily scared, Hatcher knew the school board was loyal to him, but he was also aware that they would soon have pressure exerted upon them. When the state legislature

\(^{143}\)Interview with W. Harry Perkins, op. cit.
proposed a bill increasing the number of members of the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board, Hatcher decided to leave the school system. His first thoughts were to resign, but several anti-Long people in Baton Rouge had been in contact with people in the federal government. These men helped obtain for Hatcher a job offer to become the State Director of the National Youth Administration. Therefore, Superintendent Hatcher decided to ask the school board for a one-year leave without pay to go to work for the federal government. He needed this time to decide whether or not he would be able to work for the school board.

On June 26, 1935, President W. H. Perkins read the following letter to the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board:

FEDERAL EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION
803 Canal Bank Building
New Orleans, Louisiana

Frank H. Peterman June 12, 1935 Main 4688
Administrator

Mr. W. H. Perkins, President
East Baton Rouge Parish School Board,
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Dear Sir:

The Federal Emergency Relief Administration in Louisiana contemplates the coordination of all of its activities with respect to education in Louisiana under one head.

In looking about for a man to head such an important part of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, we have sought to find a man of intelligence and ability, one of sound education and broad experience, one who is equipped by training and practice to handle the job effectively, one who has merited a high standing in school administration, one who has kept
the administration of his schools free from political influence, one who can secure the ready and hearty cooperation of all the agencies in the state that are concerned with education and social uplift. Our office believes that it has found such a man in the person of W. B. Hatcher, Superintendent of Schools in East Baton Rouge Parish.

Accordingly, I am asking of your Honorable Board that it grant him a leave of absence in order that we may avail ourselves of his services in behalf of the National Government, to act as director of the educational activities of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration in Louisiana.

Yours very truly,

(FHP-w) Frank H. Peterman, Administrator

President Perkins informed the board that Hatcher desired to take this position so the following resolution was offered:

WHEREAS, the National Government, through Frank H. Peterman, Director of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration in and for the State of Louisiana, has under date of June 12, 1935, requested this Board to lend the services of W. B. Hatcher, Superintendent of Schools in East Baton Rouge Parish, as director of Emergency Education for the State of Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, this Board is willing and anxious to cooperate with the National Government in all of its activities to relieve human suffering and to promote the economic, social, and civic betterment of the State of Louisiana, and, more particularly, that of East Baton Rouge; and,

WHEREAS, this Board feels and believes that the said W. B. Hatcher is admirably fitted to perform the task delegated to him by the National Government; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, by the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board, in special session convened on this June 26, 1935, that the said Board do and hereby does resolve and ordain the following:

1. That W. B. Hatcher, Superintendent of Schools in East Baton Rouge Parish, be and he hereby is granted an indefinite leave of absence, beginning July 1, 1935,
to extend up to, but not longer than, one calendar year from the date hereof, without pay; and

2. That, during the term of this indefinite leave of absence granted to the said W. B. Hatcher, Superintendent of Schools in East Baton Rouge Parish, C. B. Turner, Assistant Superintendent of Schools, be and he hereby is named as acting superintendent at the same salary as has been paid during each of the last three years to the Superintendent.144

After the board agreed by a twelve to one vote to give Hatcher his leave, the superintendent rose to address the board. He thanked the members for their support during his nineteen plus years as superintendent. In return, he asked that the board give the same kind of support to C. B. Turner while he was acting superintendent.145 Hatcher was very fond of Turner and had recommended him as his replacement despite the fact that some felt that Turner was a Long man.

The news of Hatcher's decision surprised many people in the parish and was greeted with an air of sadness in many places. The Baton Rouge Morning-Advocate carried the following concerning William Hatcher's leave:

Mr. Hatcher's Appointment

The federal government could not have made a better appointment than to have named W. B. Hatcher as head of the federal emergency relief educational activities in Louisiana.

Mr. Hatcher has been superintendent of the schools of East Baton Rouge Parish for nearly twenty years, and his record has been an enviable one.

144East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, June 26, 1935.

145Ibid.
He has everything that a school man should have—courage, character, decision independence, leadership and scholarship. The schools of East Baton Rouge Parish have never seen such progress as they have witnessed under the administration of Mr. Hatcher. He found the system of this parish in debt, and to a certain extent disorganized. He leaves the system for government work, we hope only temporarily—with the school system in perfect financial condition, and with a loyal, competent and free school force.

It has been a tribute to any superintendent to carry through the last five years without going into debt. Many of the parish schools of Louisiana sought to operate on borrowed money, and to operate far beyond their means. Mr. Hatcher kept the schools of East Baton Rouge Parish in splendid shape, because he has refused to spend money the board did not have, or to seek to inaugurate innovations the finances of the parish would not permit.

Within the past three years when the school board faced dwindling assessments, and in consequence shrinking revenues, Mr. Hatcher sought to set his house in order. When other parishes were spending money they did not have, and borrowing money they could not pay back, Mr. Hatcher refused to do either. He kept East Baton Rouge Parish school affairs in splendid shape. As a result he leaves the office after the stormiest period in the history of the public schools of the nation, with the financial affairs of the schools of E. B. R. parish in sound condition; with the school plant adequate, and with a splendid teaching force.

The work which the government will have Mr. Hatcher do is important. He will look after the educational work in the Civilian Conservation Camps, better known as the C. C. C. Camps. He will also have charge of the distribution of a large number of scholarships which the Federal Emergency Relief Administration will distribute this coming session to the boys and girls of the state, in both private and public institutions of Louisiana. In the past these have been handed out by the institutions themselves, but in the future will be handled through Mr. Hatcher's office.

The people of East Baton Rouge Parish will note with great satisfaction that Mr. Hatcher has merely been given a leave of absence from his duties as superintendent. It is the sincere hope of those who have the best interests of the public schools at heart,
that this means that it says, and that Mr. Hatcher will return to his duties here in our own educational field.  

XV. RESIGNATION AS SUPERINTENDENT

While William Hatcher was on leave working for the federal government, Senator Huey P. Long was assassinated at the state capitol in Baton Rouge. Some people thought Long's death might make it possible for Hatcher to return to the superintendency, but Hatcher thought otherwise. His year away had given him more time to consider what he wanted to do. For one thing, he was actually uncertain as to whether he could even get the job of superintendent back again. For another, he also felt a great deal was lost when a school system had a greatly divided school board. Yet, he was also undecided about continuing in his role with the federal government because he could not give up his desire to work in the field of education.

With these thoughts in mind, William Hatcher applied to Louisiana State University for a position as teacher in the history department. When Hatcher received a letter dated June 8, 1936, from Louisiana State University's President James M. Smith, he was now free to resign from both his job as superintendent of East Baton Rouge Parish and his job as State Director of the National Youth

Therefore, in the following letter of June 15, 1936, William B. Hatcher resigned as Superintendent of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System:

Baton Rouge, Louisiana
1949 Government Street
June 15, 1936

Mr. W. H. Perkins, President
and Members of the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board

Gentlemen:

Since, on June 26, 1935, you were kind enough to grant me a year's leave of absence from the position of Parish Superintendent of Schools of East Baton Rouge, in order that I might serve as State Director of the Federal Emergency Education Program and as State Director of the National Youth Administration; since the expiration date of that leave is now drawing near; and since the time has come for the School Board to make its plans for next year, I feel that I should inform you without further delay as to my intentions with reference to returning to the position of Parish Superintendent at the expiration of my leave of absence.

Many of the ties that have been made during the past twenty years are close and binding, and my interest in the welfare and advancement of the schools of the Parish of East Baton Rouge is deep and lasting. Nevertheless, I feel that it is best for me not to return; therefore, I respectfully request that you accept this my resignation as Superintendent of the Schools of East Baton Rouge Parish.

In making this request, I want you to know, however, that I am deeply appreciative of the many kindnesses and courtesies which you have extended me while I was in your service, and I desire to take this opportunity of expressing to you, individually and collectively, my gratitude for all such favors. In addition thereto,

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147 Based on personal correspondence between Dr. James M. Smith, President of Louisiana State University, and William B. Hatcher, June 8, 1936.
I cannot fail to express my appreciation of the cooperation that I have received, not only from the School Board and its principals and teachers and other employees, but also from the pupils, the patrons of the schools, the general public, and the community leaders, whose attitude of cooperation and helpfulness contributed so much to whatever progress the school system has made. Some of the most pleasant years of my life were spent in an endeavor to serve the Board in an efficient manner, and I hope that this endeavor has been successful.

In closing, I am sure that I need not tell you that I shall always have the deepest interest in and concern for the progress, advancement, and general well being of the schools which were under my immediate administrative care for twenty years.

Yours very truly,

W. B. HATCHER
(Signed) SUPERINTENDENT

With the board's unanimous vote accepting Hatcher's resignation, and with the election of C. B. Turner as superintendent to replace Hatcher, the Hatcher administration formally came to a close.

It had been a period of time that saw many changes and improvements in the school system. A major building program had been completed with the small, one-room schools eliminated and the old wooden buildings replaced by new brick ones. New schools for the colored had been built which replaced the old policy of the Negro students going to schools in the black churches of the parish. The building of Baton Rouge High School for whites and McKinley High School for blacks gave the system two of the finest schools in the state in their respective fields.
Despite the large building program and the troubles of the depression, Hatcher left the school board in a sound, financial condition. Many looked on this alone as one of his greatest achievements. The teaching force had doubled and was much better qualified in 1936 than in 1916 when he took office. A uniform salary schedule had been adopted for teachers and van drivers while guidelines for teachers and principals had been drawn up that would serve the parish in good stead for many years to come.

The transportation within the system was greatly improved because of better roads and the use of motorized vans. A supervisory program had been organized despite the fact that there was none when he took office. Negro education had benefited greatly by having Hatcher as superintendent. The addition of a school nurse for the system plus the addition of many fire prevention policies made the school system a better one. Hatcher also started an excellent in-service program for the parish with time off with pay to attend professional meetings. The progress made under William Hatcher had been unparalleled.

XVI. TRIBUTE BY A. F. BOYD

The passing of the superintendency from William Hatcher to C. B. Turner did not go unnoticed. While most of the tributes of the newspapers for Hatcher's efforts had been made when he took leave, A. F. Boyd of the school board offered the following resolution:
Mr. President, I move that this Board accept the resignation of Superintendent W. B. Hatcher; and in making this motion, I would like to make certain comments regarding his accomplishments during his tenure of office.

I think that we cannot accept Mr. Hatcher's resignation without paying tribute to his twenty years of work in the interest of the parish school system.

When Mr. Hatcher became the superintendent in 1916, there were fewer than one hundred teachers, and the annual budget was about $100,000.00. The School Board was about a year's revenues in debt. The teachers and other employees were very poorly paid. The rating of the school system was very low. The buildings were poor, and the equipment was inadequate. The School Board had no credit.

Today, I say with just pride, we have the finest school system in the state. The School Board is solvent. The teachers are paid regularly and well. Our buildings and equipment are equal to any in Louisiana. And the rating of our schools is A-1.

This condition has not just happened. It is the result of years of patient effort, careful planning, and wise expenditure of the School Board's money. The School Board, of course, had a part in bringing about this result, but we all know that Mr. Hatcher's wise leadership has been primarily responsible for this change.

During the time that Mr. Hatcher served the Board, about two and one-half million dollars was voted by the taxpayers for new buildings. Through Mr. Hatcher's careful planning and wise spending of this money, the taxpayers always got one hundred cents on every dollar. He kept them informed of everything he did; therefore, they never refused to vote any tax that was submitted for schools.

He always consulted the Board on every measure before any public announcement was made, and he always respected the wishes of this Board in everything that was brought up.

Mr. Hatcher kept abreast of the times and did everything that the money available would allow him to do. Therefore, today, the School system is not in debt, and yet the children of the parish are as well trained as the children in any section of the state.
I think this parish owes a great deal to Mr. Hatcher. I feel that we, as board members, owe him much. He has kept the faith with us, with the teachers of the parish, and with our children, and during the most trying times of the depression he has, with our cooperation and the cooperation of the public, kept the schools operating and financially sound.

In making the motion that we accept Mr. Hatcher's resignation, I, personally, wish to express my appreciation of the service he has rendered. 148

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148 East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Minutes, June 15, 1936.
CHAPTER III

BEGINNING OF CAREER IN HIGHER EDUCATION
(1936-1941)

I. STATE ADMINISTRATOR OF NATIONAL YOUTH ADMINISTRATION

During the summer of 1935 the United States, especially Louisiana, was deeply mired in the worst financial depression in its history. Large numbers of people were unemployed and unable to feed their families. During this period President Franklin D. Roosevelt initiated programs to relieve the suffering as rapidly as possible.

Three of these programs of President Roosevelt's were the Civilian Conservation Corps created in 1933, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration of 1933, and the Works Progress Administration of 1935. The Civilian Conservation Corps authorized jobs in reforestation, road construction, prevention of soil erosion, and national park and flood control projects, for 250,000 unemployed young men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration pumped federal money into states and municipalities for work relief projects. The Works Progress Administration employed large numbers of jobless men on
various projects ranging from manual labor to actors, artists, and musicians. These three programs were geared to aiding jobless men in the United States.¹

William Hatcher was encountering at that time serious problems with Senator Huey Long; therefore, when anti-Long friends of Hatcher's approached him about a job with a federal government, Hatcher listened carefully. As a result of the conferences, he was offered a job as Director of Emergency Education for the State of Louisiana under the control of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. On June 26, 1935, the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board granted Superintendent Hatcher a one-year leave—without pay—to assume this job.

On April 8, 1935, the United States Congress passed the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act, which, in addition to establishing various agencies, gave the President of the United States the authority to create by executive order other agencies. On June 26, 1935, President Roosevelt established the National Youth Administration, an agency whose purpose was to administer a work-relief and employment program for persons between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five.² This program was to provide part-time employment for needy students attending high school, college, and graduate

schools. On July 16, 1935, William Hatcher received a telegram from Aubrey Williams, Executive Director of the National Youth Administration in Washington, D. C., appointing him the State Director of the National Youth Administration.

The job of State Director of the National Youth Administration in Louisiana was a difficult one because it was concerned with so many federal agencies other than the National Youth Administration. William Hatcher handled federal money from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration for adult education and helped establish adult education centers throughout the state. He also funneled funds from the federal government to the parishes to help the schools of the state complete the academic year. Many schools in the state would not have been able to complete the school year without the financial aid from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. In addition, he worked with the Civilian Conservation Corps in establishing forestry camps throughout the state. He also had many dealings with the Works Progress Administration under the statewide direction of J. H. Crutcher, Administrator of the Works Progress Administration for Louisiana.

Hatcher's work for the National Youth Administration was his primary concern. In this job he helped students secure scholarships and loans from the government to attend school. Jobs were created at the various colleges of the state to employ these young men. Hatcher and his staff persuaded merchants to help needy students with jobs; the
merchants in return received money from the federal government to help pay these students. Although W. B. Hatcher's office was located in Baton Rouge at the old Myer Hotel on Third Street, he traveled extensively throughout the state; in addition, various trips to Washington, D. C., were necessary to achieve the goals of his department.

The fight between Hatcher and Long continued with State Superintendent of Education T. H. Harris leading the fight against Hatcher. In 1935 Superintendent Harris had refused to permit public school buildings belonging to the state to be used for adult education classes financed by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. He further stated that no funds from the federal government for schools would be accepted because the federal government had showed disrespect for the state's school system. Neither Long nor Harris was consulted about the appointment of Hatcher, and according to the New Orleans States, this "oversight" was the reason Harris said the state would not accept federal money. A blistering editorial by the Times-Picayune upon Long and Harris brought the dissension further into the open. Harris later quietly revised his stand. Hatcher's supporting John Coxe in the election for State Superintendent of Education against T. H. Harris ultimately widened the

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chasm separating Hatcher and Harris.

In May of 1935 William Hatcher applied to President James M. Smith of Louisiana State University for a teaching position in the history department. When he received his letter of acceptance June 8, 1936, he then knew he could resign both his positions as State Director of the National Youth Administration and as Superintendent of Schools for East Baton Rouge Parish. Because Hatcher had fulfilled his responsibilities commendably for the federal government, he was highly respected. In resigning, he recommended that his assistant, H. A. Hearne, be given the position of State Director; his recommendation was accepted. William Hatcher had helped the federal government, and the federal government helped him. While there was little doubt that the position with the federal government was only temporary to elude Long's influence, Hatcher worked diligently at it.

II. SPECIAL LECTURER IN HISTORY DEPARTMENT
AT LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

William Hatcher was appointed Special Lecturer in the history department at Louisiana State University for the 1936-1937 school year at the salary of $3,600.5 Since Hatcher had not yet finished his Doctor's degree, he was not certified for a reasonably high salary unless some special

5Letter from Dr. James M. Smith, President of Louisiana State University, to William B. Hatcher, June 8, 1936.
provisions were made. Therefore, President Smith appointed him as a Special Lecturer so he could receive $3,600 per year.

Hatcher, whose major area in history was American history, was employed to teach four courses each semester. He taught courses in the History of Ancient Orient and Greece, the History of Rome, and two courses in the History of Political Parties and Party Leaders in the United States. Since this was the first time Hatcher had taught in over twenty years, he had to spend considerable time preparing for these classes. The fact that he was not well versed in the Roman and Greek courses added to his long hours of preparation for each class.

By the time Hatcher started teaching at Louisiana State University, he had completed his course work for his doctorate in history. He had to complete his dissertation and pass his final examination. During the summer of 1936 he spent six weeks in Washington, D.C., in the Library of Congress working on his dissertation. He also went to the public libraries in New York City and Albany, New York, to look up information and to revisit his old campus at Yale in New Haven, Connecticut.

William Hatcher, in addition to teaching four courses, spent many hours working on his dissertation during the 1936-1937 school year. On May 7, 1937, he passed his final examination for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, which he received at the spring commencement, May 31, 1937. His
doctoral thesis, "The Political Career of Edward Livingston," was a well-written, voluminous study. As a result of the thorough research, Hatcher was considered to be an authority on the part of American history that occurred during the life of Livingston. Dr. Hatcher's major professor was Dr. W. H. Stephenson.

III. ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AT LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

After receiving his degree, Dr. Hatcher was rehired for the 1937-1938 year at the same salary as associate professor. In addition to the classes he had taught the previous year, he added a section of American history for each semester. The new assignment pleased Hatcher greatly, and he worked overtime in preparing for the new course. He continued to teach these same courses for the next four years but always favored the American history course.

As a teacher, Hatcher was a good lecturer who presented detailed information. Not a demanding teacher, he was friendly toward the students and well liked and respected by them. Often he would remain after class and talk with the pupils concerning the course or anything about which they desired to talk. Because he enjoyed teaching formally and informally, he made himself easily accessible to the many students that sought him after class hours. One of his

sorrows as he later assumed administrative duties was that he found it necessary to diminish his teaching load. However, he always tried to retain one section of American history.

During the summer of 1941, Dr. Hatcher received tenure but continued to receive only a $3,600 per year salary. In 1942 he wrote A Syllabus of American History—Part One (1492-1865) to aid his students in the American history course. Since this syllabus was sold at the local bookstores, it aided Hatcher financially. June 1, 1942, saw him promoted from Associate Professor of History to Professor of History, effective the first semester of the 1942-1943 school year.

While Associate Professor of History, Hatcher held various other jobs. He was temporary Dean of John McNeese Junior College, Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences heading the Freshman Division, and Dean of Junior Division.

IV. TEMPORARY DEAN OF JOHN McNEESE JUNIOR COLLEGE

The Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors had a big problem on its hands in October of 1940 when the Dean of John McNeese Junior College, Dr. Joe Farrar, resigned to take a job with the State Department of Education. The acting President of Louisiana State University, Dr. Paul M. Hebert, called Hatcher into his office and offered him the permanent deanship at the college, but Dr. Hatcher refused
the offer because of his desire to continue to live in Baton
Rouge, where he had resided since 1916. At a special
meeting of the Louisiana State University Board of Super­
visors on January 13, 1941, Dr. William B. Hatcher was,
nevertheless, appointed acting Dean of John McNeese Junior
College, effective that date and continuing through August 15,
1941.7 He was also granted leave of absence from his present
position with the understanding he could return to it upon
his return to the Baton Rouge campus. The board of super­
visors granted an annual salary at McNeese of $7,000 for the
dean, but since Hatcher would not be serving a complete year,
he would receive only part of this salary.

Dr. Hatcher went to Lake Charles on December 15, 1940,
to operate the school until an acting dean could be found.
Since his stay originally was to be a temporary one, he had
left his wife and daughter Joan at home in Baton Rouge and
rented an apartment in Lake Charles. Hatcher assumed the
responsibilities from W. B. Nash, registrar, business manager,
and faculty member, who had been managing the school since
October 1, 1940, when Dr. Farrar had left.

While the school was a small one, there were many
problems associated with its operation. It had been in
operation less than three years and needed the support of the
people of Lake Charles, which it did not have completely.

7Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors
Minutes, January 13, 1941.
One of William Hatcher's major jobs was to demonstrate to the people of the Lake Charles area the value and importance of John McNeese Junior College. He spoke to many meetings in his short stay in Lake Charles and built community support for the school.

Recruitment of students was aided by this campaign. Because classes were small, much juggling of schedules was necessary for the college to provide adequate programs. It was almost impossible to justify keeping McNeese open after World War II started. The Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors went on an anti-athletics campaign and abolished athletics at McNeese. Dr. Hatcher greatly opposed this move and appealed to the Board of Supervisors to reconsider; however, he was unsuccessful in his attempts. An organized athletics program at McNeese did not reappear until after the end of World War II.

In his short stay at McNeese, Dr. Hatcher received considerable support for the junior college. He was greatly admired by the people of Lake Charles, who strongly urged that he remain at the school. The administration of Louisiana State University also wanted Hatcher to remain there, but he was determined to return to the Baton Rouge campus, a move which he made in August of 1941. Nash was again left in charge to await the coming of the new Dean.

Statement of Dr. Rodney Cline, personal interview, July 21, 1970.
Dr. Rodney Cline, who remained at the junior college until November, 1944. Hatcher was appointed Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, effective August 1, 1941, at a yearly salary of $4,000. As Dean of John McNeese Junior College, he had once again demonstrated his ability and desire to serve competently in the fields of administration and public relations.

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9Letter from Campbell B. Hodges, President of Louisiana State University, to Dr. William B. Hatcher, September 15, 1941.
CHAPTER IV

DEAN OF JUNIOR DIVISION (1941-1944)

I. UNDER THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES AS ASSOCIATE DEAN

During the 1941 summer that Dr. Hatcher served as Acting Dean at John McNeese Junior College, the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors abolished the Junior Division as a separate unit and placed it under the control of the College of Arts and Sciences.\(^1\) The Board of Supervisors followed a recommendation of the American Council on Education, which had made a study in 1940 of the Junior Division at the request of the university.\(^2\) This report conflicted with the recommendation of a committee of the University Senate that the Junior Division remain a separate branch.\(^3\)

\(^{1}\) Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, May 30-June 2, 1941.

\(^{2}\) American Council on Education, "Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, A Survey Report by a Commission of the American Council on Education" (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1940). (Mimeographed.)

\(^{3}\) Louisiana State University Senate, "Report to Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors by the Junior Division Committee of the University Senate" (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1941).
The reorganization occurred in the summer of 1941 with the Junior Division being absorbed by the College of Arts and Sciences and renamed the Freshman Division. Dr. Hatcher, upon his return from McNeese, was named Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and placed in charge of the administration of the Freshman Division. He was responsible to Dr. W. A. Stephenson, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Associate Dean Hatcher had a small staff with which to run the new Freshman Division. Dr. Frank Rickey and Dr. Arlin Turner served as counselors for the men students, Joyce Jones as counselor for women students, and Dr. E. Donald Sisson as vocational director. Several secretaries and student workers assisted the Freshman Division counselors.

The Freshman Division had as its primary concern the helping of the first-year students of the university, mainly, through the form of counseling. The counselors helped each freshman student schedule classes by giving him information supplied by the senior colleges of the university. If a student did satisfactory work during his first year, he could then matriculate into the various senior colleges of the university. Satisfactory work was defined as the completing of a minimum of thirty semester hours of credit.

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with at least an equal number of quality points. The student who could not achieve this minimum in two semesters could satisfy the requirement by completing forty-five hours with forty-five quality points. If he took two complete years to attain equal quality points he must have completed a minimum of sixty hours with an equal or better number of quality points.\(^5\)

The Freshman Division had a large number of rules above and beyond the rules that applied to other students of the university. These rules were as follows:

1. Unless properly excused, students in the Freshman Division are required to attend all classes.

2. Excuses for class absences must be submitted to the Freshman Division office, 220 Allen Hall, within three days after the student returns to his classes. Unless the student follows this procedure, the absences will be classified as unexcused.

3. Excuses for absences because of Guard Duty or hospitalization, which may be secured from the military office or hospital, must be submitted by the student to the Freshman Division office within three days.

4. When a student receives four unexcused absences in any one course or a total of ten unexcused absences in all courses, he is placed on "cut probation."

5. Absences from classes which the student plans to drop carry the same penalty (cut probation for four absences in one class or for ten absences in all).

6. Students on "cut probation" lose any scholarship, fellowship, or job given them by the University. Such students are dropped from the rolls of the University for any additional unexcused class absence during the period of such probation.

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\(^5\)University Bulletin, Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, XXXIV N. S., No. 5 (May, 1942), pp. 107-11.
7. Students absent from classes immediately before or after any regular holiday are penalized 3 college, or 6 semester hours of credit.

8. No leaves of absence or furloughs are granted immediately before or after any regular holiday. Parents and guardians are requested not to ask for such furloughs.

9. Students desiring weekend leaves involving class absences must comply with the regulation that requires the written request of the parent on forms which the student should send home in advance and which may be obtained at the military branch office or at the office of the welfare director of Parker Dormitory.

10. Students in the Freshman Division who do not earn in any one semester 8 semester hours and 8 quality credits are placed on scholastic probation. Students on scholastic probation who fail to earn 8 semester hours and 8 quality credits in one semester are not permitted to reenter the University the following semester.

11. Students under twenty-one years of age who want to resign from the University must submit a letter of permission from parent or guardian.

12. Instructors are requested to report class absences to the Freshman Division office not later than Saturday noon of the week during which the absences occur.\textsuperscript{6}

One of the most important parts of the Freshman Division was the Testing and Guidance Bureau. This bureau had charge of the following jobs: administration of the entrance testing program; clinical counseling of students; teaching of a course in occupations; administration of the sophomore testing program; maintenance of various personnel records, and research studies in student personnel

\textsuperscript{6}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 110-11.
problems. During the 1941-1942 school year, exactly 2,700 tests were administered by this bureau while over 500 personal interviews were held. 

As the head of the Freshman Division, William Hatcher had to oversee all of the above. In many cases the only work was transcribing what had been in Junior Division to that of the newly created Freshman Division. Hatcher actively counseled students while continuing to teach his class in American history. Often the work of the Freshman Division would interfere with the teaching of his class, and he relented to turn the class over to a bright, new teacher at the university, T. Harry Williams. However, despite interruptions, Dr. Hatcher earnestly endeavored to continue in the role of teacher because he enjoyed teaching.

II. FRESHMAN DIVISION OBTAINS INDEPENDENT STATUS

During the fall of 1942, in reviewing their previous study, the Louisiana State University Senate Educational Policy Committee requested the Freshman Division be granted independence from the College of Arts and Sciences.


8Ibid., p. 56.
Consequently, on October 10, 1942, the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors reversed its decision of one year earlier and declared the independence of the Freshman Division.9

The major reason for this decision was that the aims of the Freshman Division differed too much from those of the senior colleges. Newly incoming students were being forced by the senior colleges to begin specializing in their first year in college; as a result, there were few opportunities for students to take a general selection of courses while deciding what field to enter. The main purposes of the Freshman Division, to continue general education and to prepare students for their senior college, were not in conflict. There was also the matter of the terminal student who could profit from not specializing.

The report of the Junior Division Committee of the University Senate started five functions of the Junior Division. They were as follows:

1. To secure all possible information as to the qualifications of candidates for admission before they present themselves for matriculation and so digest this information as to be able to advise and to direct them intelligently when they do present themselves.

2. To make use of this information and such additional preliminary tests as may be found practicable to divide the incoming students into groups rated according to their apparent degrees of fitness for college work and to assign to each group suitable curricula of studies.

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9Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, October 9-10, 1942.
3. To supervise the scholastic work of its students, keep complete records of their achievement in such work, and certify to the deans of the various senior colleges the records of students desiring to enter such colleges upon completing their work in the Junior Division.

4. To have charge of the discipline and guidance of all students as long as they remain in the Junior Division.

5. To have authority, under the President, to dismiss any of its students for infractions of discipline or scholastic deficiencies.10

These functions were used as guidelines in setting up the Junior Division after its release from the College of Arts and Sciences.

The Junior Division Committee of the University Senate listed twenty-one recommendations pertaining to the Junior Division. These were as follows:

1. That the Junior Division be retained as a Division of the Louisiana State University with such modifications as are herein recommended.

2. That an Educational Policy committee be established for the Junior Division. This committee shall be composed of one member elected from the College of Agriculture, one from the College of Commerce, one from the College of Education, one from the College of Chemistry and Physics, one from the College of Engineering, one from each of the election districts of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Dean of the Junior Division. The elective members of this committee shall be chosen by the Educational Policy Committees of the various colleges from their own membership. The term of office of these elected members shall be for a term of two years. This term of office applied to all members of the Committee except four members of the first group who shall be chosen by lot after their election and they shall serve for one year.

10Louisiana State University Senate, "Report to Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors by the Junior Division Committee of the University Senate," (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1941).
3. That on the basis of all available information when students present themselves for admission, the Junior Division shall divide the incoming students into three groups: an upper group whose members have demonstrated such fitness as to make it practically certain that they will be able to do satisfactory senior college work; a middle group whose members have shown sufficient ability to justify the belief that with further training they may be able to do such work; and a lower group who show little or no promise of being able to benefit by senior college study.

4. That it assign to the members of the upper group curricula of studies acceptable to the particular senior colleges which the students desire to enter, or, in case no such preference is expressed, a program of general education.

5. That it assign to the members of the middle group largely elective general educational curricula containing no technical courses peculiar to a specific senior college.

6. That it assign to the members of the lowest group curricula of studies designed to make up their deficiencies and other subjects to make a normal schedule of work.

7. That in order to facilitate the carrying out of the above program, a longer period of orientation be provided for incoming freshmen.

8. That the Junior Division be authorized to make arrangements with the State Department of Education and the State Board of Education by which suitable tests may be given to all high school seniors through the Testing Bureau to determine their relative fitness and preparedness for college work; that sufficient funds be allocated to the Junior Division to enable it to perform this service; that results of these tests be made available to any college or university in which a student plans to enroll; that the Testing Bureau keep the high schools informed of the status and progress of their graduates who are in attendance at Louisiana State University.

9. That the Junior Division supervise the scholastic work of its students, keep complete records of their achievement in such work, and certify such records to the deans of the various senior colleges which students may desire to enter upon completion of their Junior Division work.
10. That the Junior Division have charge of the discipline and guidance of its students and that it be empowered with the approval of the President to dismiss any student at any time for infractions of discipline or scholastic deficiencies.

11. That all changes in rank or personnel of the Junior Division be made upon the recommendation and with the approval of the department concerned and the Dean of the Junior Division; that all instructors in any subject in the Junior Division be considered members of the staff of that department of instruction.

12. That the teachers of all Junior Division courses be responsible to the administration of the Junior Division for the effective teaching of courses assigned to them.

13. That the services of the Testing Bureau be extended with the provision that all examinations in any course taught in the Junior Division shall be prepared by or under the supervision of the department having charge of the course and marks earned shall be determined by that department.

14. That the Testing Bureau cooperate with the Bureau of Educational Research in making available to the faculty the results of their studies.

15. That sufficient funds be made available to the Junior Division as soon as possible to enable it to employ full-time, properly qualified instructors for all classes.

16. That no student be allowed to remain more than six semesters in the Junior Division.

17. That consideration be given to students who do not intend to pursue work leading to a degree or who have failed to gain admission into a senior college; that these students be allowed to register as special students in such vocational courses as may be provided in the various departments for them and that on the completion of such course or courses the students be given certificates of proficiency.

18. That the proper agencies of the Louisiana State University investigate and adjust inequalities existing in rank and salary of instructors in the Junior Division.

19. That laboratory facilities be made available as soon as feasible to students who are enrolled in natural
or biological science courses of which laboratory work usually forms a part.

20. That the junior colleges which are owned and operated by the Louisiana State University continue as a part of the Junior Division and that in so far as possible the same policies, curricula, etc., be in force in these junior colleges as in the Junior Division.

21. That the activities of the University should tend toward the eventual establishment of a two-year program of general education as a basis for acceptance of students into one of the senior colleges.11

These recommendations became important when Dr. Hatcher set up the Junior Division. Hatcher had desired the separation from the College of Arts and Sciences because the Junior Division was so large. He pointed out to President C. B. Hodges, the problems of including the Junior Division under the College of Arts and Sciences. President Hodges agreed with Hatcher. Despite Hatcher's work, much of the credit, however, must go to the University Senate, which felt strongly that the Junior Division must be a separate organization.

III. REORGANIZATION OF JUNIOR DIVISION

On December 1, 1942, the Junior Division was recreated as an independent unit out of the Freshman Division of the College of Arts and Sciences. Dr. W. B. Hatcher was named as dean on an equal status with the other deans of the university and was to report directly to the president of the university in the same manner as other deans.

11Ibid.
The aim of the Junior Division was "to provide for the needs of entering students and to administer their work during the first year." Junior Division students continued to come from many areas. Most were the recent high school graduates who were entering the university for the first time, but others were transfer students who were not admitted to one of the senior colleges. Still others were second-year students who had failed to meet the requirements of the senior colleges of their choice.

The organizational structure was much the same as it had been under the College of Arts and Sciences. Assisting Dr. Hatcher were two men counselors, Dr. E. M. West and Dr. Ira D. George, while Joyce Jones continued as the women's counselor. Dr. Cecil W. Mann had replaced Dr. E. Donald Sisson as the vocational director. Their jobs were the same as they had always been with the exception that the vocational director began giving a wider variety of tests on a larger scale.

With the exception of the independent status, the Junior Division was much like the old Freshman Division. Dr. Hatcher had already incorporated many of the recommendations of the Junior Division Committee of the University Senate into his program under the College of Arts and

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Sciences. However, many could not be put into effect until the unit was an independent unit. Originally when the Junior Division had been independent, it had its own faculty responsible to the dean, Dean Ben Mitchell. When it was placed under the College of Arts and Sciences, the faculty was taken away from the control of the Freshman Division. When the Junior Division was again separated from the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Hatcher tried in vain to have a faculty attached to the division. Not having the faculty under his jurisdiction placed certain limitations on his powers; nevertheless, he performed with proficiency, foresight, and understanding as dean. 13

IV. ARMED SERVICES TRAINING PROGRAM DIRECTOR

In December of 1942, President C. B. Hodges appointed William Hatcher to serve as Director of the Army Services Training Program in addition to his assignment as Dean of the Junior Division. Dean Hatcher served as the liaison agent between the University and the Armed Forces on all matters pertaining to college enlistment plans as formulated by the services. He was in charge of maintaining accurate lists of enlisted students and seeing that the students were counseled on various matters. Hatcher's duties also included checking on the standing of the enlisted men in the

13 Statement by Dr. Ben F. Mitchell, personal interview, September 2, 1970.
program, billing the Army for the services rendered and then paying the faculty out of one check from the Army.

In addition, Dean Hatcher had to see that the men were provided proper housing in the Baton Rouge area. He was then in charge of training and testing the students. The army personnel attended both regular classes with the other students of the university and some special classes reserved for the military men only. Hatcher, aided by a large number of Army personnel, was also forced to utilize the services of many civilians to assist in the record keeping and grading of papers. He often employed the teachers of East Baton Rouge Parish to help in the record keeping and paper grading.

In April of 1943, the Specialized Training and Reclassification Center (STAR) was organized at Louisiana State University. The purpose of this organization was to select and classify army personnel for college training. During the war over 6,000 men were tested for classification purposes.14

In June of 1943, the first arrival of army personnel for a course in Basic Engineering reached the university. The Junior Division helped to develop programs, to classify and register students, to review educational progress, and

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to administer examinations to the students. The normal cycle for the students was approximately three months with the students being evaluated at the end of six weeks to see whether they could continue in the program. Refresher courses were also taught to these large numbers of students.\textsuperscript{15}

Despite the fact that the position of Director of the Armed Services Training Program was a demanding one, Dean Hatcher enjoyed it greatly. He had always had the utmost respect for the military and had tried to join the Army at the outbreak of World War II. However, he had been told that he was needed more in the field of education and that the Army already had enough men of his age.\textsuperscript{16} As Dean of the Junior Division and Director of the Armed Services Training Program, Hatcher was in charge of a large number of people. He spent long hours at his job and was the first to arrive and the last to leave at the end of the working day. He cherished the close contact with the students and felt an obligation to their parents to guide them in the best manner possible. While many of the policies of the Junior Division were set by higher agencies, he did his best to carry out these policies. William Hatcher felt the Junior Division was the most important division of the University. His

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., p. 76.

\textsuperscript{16}Statement by Mrs. William B. Hatcher, personal interview, August 1, 1970.
responsibilities were great; these responsibilities helped to prepare him for his next job, that of the President of Louisiana State University.
CHAPTER V

PRESIDENT OF LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY
(1944-1947)

I. SELECTION AS PRESIDENT

In 1941 after a lengthy study of candidates for the presidency of Louisiana State University, the board of supervisors chose General Campbell B. Hodges to succeed Dr. James Monroe Smith as President of Louisiana State University. Prior to a final selection of the president, Dr. Paul Hebert of the Law School had served as acting President. Hodges, a former army man, had retired from the army in 1941 after a history of abnormal blood pressure. After two years in office Hodges became alarmed once again about his health and advised the members of the board of supervisors that they should proceed immediately with efforts to find a replacement for him.¹

During the following months the members held informal discussions but they seemed to be in no real hurry to select someone to take Hodges' place. However, on May 31, 1944, President Hodges became very ill again and urged board

¹The State-Times [Baton Rouge], June 20, 1944, p. 1.
members to find his successor as soon as possible. J. E. Smitherman, chairman of the board of supervisors, informed the other members of the board of the necessity to speed up the selection of the new president. Before they had made a decision, on June 10, 1944, General Hodges handed in his resignation, effective July 1, 1944.\(^2\)

With the assistance of Governor James Davis, the board began to narrow down candidates for a possible selection. Such influential men as Colonel Eddie Argo, Commandant of Cadets, Dean Jordan G. Lee of the College of Agriculture, Dr. S. A. Caldwell, and other faculty members contacted several members of the board of supervisors in an effort to promote Dr. Hatcher for the presidency. Since the board of supervisors had been criticized four years earlier for taking such a long time selecting a successor to Dr. Smith, they wanted to make a quick appointment this time. When Governor Davis read the list of persons being considered, he realized that the board favored Dr. W. B. Hatcher. After careful study of the candidates Davis agreed that Hatcher's qualifications would best serve the office of the presidency. Because the legislature was in session at that time, and wanted to know who would be president, Governor Davis felt the appointment should be made as soon as possible.\(^3\)

With an eye toward the time element, the board decided to name Dr. Hatcher president at their next meeting.

\(^2\)Ibid.  \(^3\)Ibid.
Actually, no one on the board was surprised when Dr. W. B. Hatcher's name was submitted. They knew him well. Five members of the board had been fellow students with William Hatcher, and five others had at one time or another had a working relationship with him. As a matter of fact, Hatcher was the only person seriously considered for the job by the board. Therefore, at a special meeting of the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors on June 14, 1944, they accepted the resignation of General C. B. Hodges and announced the appointment of Dr. William Bass Hatcher as the President of Louisiana State University after a unanimous vote.

Many people readily accepted the decision hiring Dr. Hatcher as an excellent one, but there were those who criticized the haste of the decision. Some of the faculty, while agreeing with the decision, felt that they should have been allowed some voice in the selection of the president. The main problem resulted from the fact that while the board of supervisors had known for some time of General Hodges' intent to resign, the vast majority of the people did not and were, therefore, surprised at the quick selection of Hatcher.

William Hatcher was also not surprised to learn that he had been named president of Louisiana State University. When someone mentioned his name in 1941 as a possible

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successor to Dr. Smith, Hatcher had not had enough experience at the university level. Now, in the three years since, he had served as acting Dean at John McNeese Junior College, Dean of Junior Division at Louisiana State University, and Director of the Army Services Training Program at the same institution. This experience, along with his other qualifications, gave him a rich background as an administrator and made him an excellent choice for the university. Dr. Hatcher greatly desired to be president and was overjoyed at his own selection. Since General Hodges had been unable to serve out his term until July 1, 1944, Hatcher agreed to become acting President, without pay, for the few days until he formally took over on July 1, 1944. The new president of Louisiana State University made the following acceptance speech to the board:

I sincerely and deeply appreciate the honor that you have bestowed upon me. In my opinion the highest honor that can be paid a man in the field of education is to be elected President of the institution which is the capstone of the State's public educational system. Your action is particularly gratifying to me because many of you have known me since the days we were fellow undergraduates in this institution. Others of you have known me intimately in the field of public education; consequently it is very flattering to me to have merited your confidence sufficiently for you to entrust the direction of this great institution to my hands. I shall always strive to see that this confidence has not been misplaced.

I recognize the serious responsibilities that are incumbent upon the executive office of this Board. These responsibilities are broad and inclusive. The executive officer of this Board must not only see that this institution serves the people of the State but that it anticipates the needs of the State; and the University's program must be so planned that the
greatest assistance possible will be rendered the people of this State in solving their problems. At this particular time, the responsibility is very exacting in that plans must be formulated not only for the forward operation of the institution but also for the needs of the postwar period. I believe that my experience in the public school system of the State has given me an opportunity to understand these problems and to offer for your consideration a well-balanced program.

There are many concepts as to the relationship that should exist between a board and its executive officer. My philosophy is that the executive officer should be the liaison between the Board and the University. He should interpret the wishes of the Board to the faculty and the student body on the one hand, and he should relay the plans of the faculty to the Board on the other hand. He should formulate a program for submission to the Board, and if approved, should pursue it vigorously. The executive officer should keep in contact with the public in order that he may know what needs of the public are to be served. And he should be aware that no agency could be more informative of those needs than the institution's alumni association, an agency which has the interest of this institution and the people of this State at heart and upon which this institution must depend for guidance and advice. The executive should at all times be cognizant of the fact that final authority rests with the Board. As long as I serve you, my sense of responsibility to you and my recognition of the authority vested in you will not allow me to falter in executing the decisions of this group.

It shall be my policy to confer with you from time to time in order that you may be acquainted with the problems confronting the institution. I have some definite ideas in regard to the University's program; and as soon as I have become sufficiently acquainted with the various phases of the University procedure to make definite recommendations, I shall present them to you for your consideration. I therefore, conceive that it be the policy of the Board to formulate policies and that it be the duty of the executive to carry them into effect.

Definitely times and conditions challenge the University; and, if we have the vision and perseverance, we can make this institution the greatest in the South if not one of the greatest in the nation. As I view the situation, the University must be prepared to point the
way to further success and progress particularly in the fields of engineering, agriculture, chemistry, and physics. These fields are the ones in which the most progress is being made and can be made in the future. Unless this University and other universities of the South are willing to accept this responsibility, I fear that the leadership will pass into other hands. Louisiana State University should assume this leadership; and, if it does not, it will lose the support of the people of this state.

I pledge you that my actions at all times will be prompted by those things which I feel are for the best interest of this institution and for the good of the people of the State. I realize fully that without your support, and without you and me working together we cannot succeed, and I assure you that I will do everything in my power to cooperate with you by submitting for consideration my plans for improvement and finally by carrying into execution the policy and plans you may adopt. By working in this manner, there is no reason why we cannot make this institution the greatest in the Southland.  

As president of Louisiana State University, Dr. Hatcher received an annual salary of $12,000, which was later raised to $15,000, plus a furnished house with lights, gas, and water free. The position also included a chauffeur-driven automobile and an allotment of $1,000 per year for entertainment expenses. Along with the other compensations, Hatcher retained his faculty status and academic tenure while he was president of the University.

5Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, June 14, 1944.

6Ibid.
II. PROBLEMS OF RAPID EXPANSION

The major work of President Hatcher in his short stay as president concerned the problems caused by the ending of World War II. Large numbers of servicemen returned as both students and faculty members, and room had to be found for them. He welcomed the veterans back and even went to the trouble of writing personally to servicemen who had left the university inviting them to return even if they were in bad academic standing. To make room for these students, new facilities had to be built, and as the economy boomed, adjustments had to be made in the salaries of the university personnel.

Enrollment

The enrollment in the university system had been lower than usual because of the war, but the next few years witnessed an unprecedented period of growth at Louisiana State University. The enrollment figure for the fall of 1944 was 4,208, with 131 students at John McNeese Junior College, 362 students at Northeast Junior College, 325 in the School of Medicine, 77 in Nurse's School in New Orleans, and 3,313 on the main campus in Baton Rouge. The spring enrollment of 1945 increased to 4,733, with 3,816 on the Baton Rouge campus.


8Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, October 14, 1944.
Enrollment continued to increase with 7,351 students registered for the 1946 spring session. By the fall of 1946 there were 10,008 students enrolled in the system with 8,484 on the Baton Rouge campus, 758 at Northeast Junior College, 315 at the Medical School, and 124 in the Department of Nursing Education. Late enrollment increased the figure to 10,580. By the end of the war, more than 2,800 veterans had enrolled in Louisiana State University.

Expansion of Facilities

The large increase in enrollment tested the housing facilities of the university. Because of the tremendous housing shortage, William Hatcher had the board create a policy which stated that no student living within ten miles of the university could reside on the campus. He further advised that women's housing would be closed to out-of-state women effective by the 1946-1947 session.


10The Reveille [Louisiana State University Newspaper], September 20, 1946, p. 1.

11Ibid., October 8, 1946, p. 1.


13Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, April 6, 1946.

14Ibid., February 2, 1946.
Yet, one of his biggest problems concerned men's housing. The board of supervisors took so long a time deciding where to locate the new men's housing that they created problems in the meantime. Fortunately, some fraternities on the campus began to take an interest in constructing houses of their own. Kappa Alpha Fraternity received permission in 1945 to build a fraternity house as did Theta Xi Fraternity in 1946. These buildings helped to relieve some of the pressure for a short time.

The board purchased additional land for future expansion at McNeese Junior College in Lake Charles and at Northeast Junior College in Monroe. They also purchased land to build Francis T. Nichols Junior College in Thibodaux. Even then the board also had to add more land to the Baton Rouge campus.

By very close votes by the board of supervisors, they issued ninety-nine-year leases to build two new churches on the campus, the University Methodist Church and the University Presbyterian Church. Both churches had hoped to purchase the land permanently, but a compromise was reached, and they were leased land for the ninety-nine-year period. As a further improvement on the campus, Hatcher renovated and added to the University hospital.

Because of the large number of ex-servicemen on

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campus, a military atmosphere existed everywhere. These hard-working veterans contributed a great deal to the university. When they made a heavy demand for a Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps, William Hatcher went to Washington, D. C., to attempt to persuade officials to start a program at Louisiana State University. After he was unsuccessful with the naval officials, he talked to the Army Air Reserve Officers' Training Corps personnel and they expressed a great desire to establish a program at Louisiana State University. This corps later became a reality on the campus.

Despite the needs and Hatcher's efforts, the board was slow to build instructional buildings at this time. In fact, there were only two major buildings planned during this time, one for the Laboratory School of the College of Education and one for the Home Economics Department. Other buildings got to the early planning stage for future consideration, but housing proved to be the main concern and hampered most efforts at building instructional buildings.

Faculty

As the war drew to a close, over 300 faculty and staff members returned to the university. This return to pre-war jobs created problems because other teachers had been

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employed to replace them while they were gone. Neverthe­
less, the veterans had been guaranteed that they would have
their jobs back. The return of vast numbers of students did
solve the faculty problem somewhat, but they also created
many problems in scheduling for Hatcher and the deans of the
various colleges. Along with many of these returning
servicemen, General Troy H. Middleton returned to his job as
Comptroller of the university, replacing George F. Matthew,
who took over the position of Purchasing Agent.

One of the major problems facing Hatcher concerned
salaries for university personnel. He set up a committee to
study the problem and make recommendations. The committee's
report, entitled "Report and Recommendations on Policies
Governing Salary Scales and Increases for University
Employees," made recommendations in four areas: (1) con­
cerning the teaching and research staffs; (2) concerning the
Agricultural Extension Service Staff; (3) concerning the
library staff; and (4) concerning the university classified
civil service personnel.

Included in the report were such items as procedures
in making appointments and promotions, qualifications for
appointments and promotions, evaluation of qualifications,
duration of service in the ranks, and compensation of
teaching and research staffs. These compensations varied
according to position with an assistant with no experience
making $1,200 a year for nine months' work, and a professor
with five or more years' experience working twelve months
making $5,400. The provisions provided for merit raises, but they were not to exceed $200 per individual per year, nor were they to raise the budget more than one per cent for a year. The same provision applied to the Agricultural Extension Staff and library staff.

The report listed six areas under "evaluation": (1) the worth of a teacher; (2) achievement and competence in research, creative effort, or other professional endeavors; (3) standing in the profession; (4) personal qualities; (5) service to the community and to the general public; and (6) general value to the university.17

The board of supervisors adopted these recommendations in full. When he went before the board, President Hatcher felt that this salary schedule and these procedures would build morale and cut down on the charges of favoritism expressed by many of the teachers previously. Even though salary increases were somewhat automatic, promotions were not; neither were the merit raises, which encouraged further work. This salary schedule became one of the major accomplishments of the Hatcher administration because it tended to draw to Louisiana State University some very excellent teachers.

17Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, August 25, 1944.
Junior Division

The appointment of Dr. Hatcher as president of the university left the Junior Division without a dean. William Hatcher's first appointment as president was to move Dr. S. A. Caldwell, professor of economics, to the position of Dean of Junior Division.

In the fall of 1944, the board of supervisors placed the dean of Junior Division in charge of the general supervision of the junior colleges of the system and named him coordinator over them. The deans of the two junior colleges had to report to Dean Caldwell rather than directly to the president.

Junior Division, which usually enrolls approximately thirty-five to forty per cent of the total enrollment of the main campus, had 1,552 students registered the first quarter of 1944-1945. This figure increased to 1,831 by the first semester of the 1945-1946 school year school year and 3,210 by the second semester of the 1945-1946 year. Other than the placement of the junior colleges under the dean of Junior Division, policies continued to be the same as under Dean Hatcher.

New appointments to Junior Division, other than Dean Caldwell, were: Charles C. Elkins as Director of Remedial Reading, Mrs. Carolyn T. Melampy, Acting Director of the Bureau of Testing, and George T. Walker, Director for
Counseling for men of the Junior Division. 18

College of Agriculture

The College of Agriculture, directed by Dean Jordan G. Lee, Jr., comprised three separate branches: resident teaching, agricultural and home economics extension, and research and experiment stations. Even though the return of instructors from the war greatly helped the resident teaching branches, increasing enrollments made it almost impossible to keep pupil-teacher rates balanced.

As with most of the university, class sizes continued to increase while adjustments were being made. By the end of 1946 the university still had fifteen instructors on leave, and these vacancies were hurting the entire college. However, the curriculum had finally gotten back to the level it had been before the war when all courses had been offered. The adjustments in the Department of General Agriculture included a section in wood technology and sections on utilities and merchandising in the Department of Home Economics. In cooperation with the Department of Sociology, they had adopted a cross-filed curriculum in Rural Sociology which dealt with the problems of the rural areas of Louisiana.

Under Hatcher's administration the university built

new facilities for the College for teaching and research in food processing and preservation. By now they had almost completed a large building for the Home Economics Department. Both buildings housed facilities for short-service courses and extension courses for the farm people of the state.

A second important branch of the College of Agriculture was the agricultural and home economics extension department. This division handled the extension work done by the county and home demonstration agents. Of more than usual importance was the emergency labor program which was designed to offset the shortage of working men available for farm work. Through the home demonstration program, the college tried to teach methods for the farmer and his wife which would help increase the food supply in this area. This division also aided in 4-H Club work during a time when the state had over 50,000 4-H Club members.

The research and experiment stations' division was greatly expanded when the board of supervisors agreed to build two new experimental stations. The investment in these stations more than paid for itself. Through the efforts of the university extension stations, Louisiana State University filed for a patent on a vitamin enrichment process in rice, improved varieties of oats, soybeans, sweet potatoes, and strawberries, and discovered additional uses for chemical fungicide.\(^\text{19}\)

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\(^{19}\)Ibid., pp. 9-12.
College of Arts and Sciences

Before he was president of the University, William Hatcher had been Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences during the 1941-1942 school year under Dean W. H. Stephenson. During this time there was a certain amount of strife between them since both men were very ambitious and did not get along well while working together. Nevertheless, their dislike for each other did not seem to hurt their work in their respective positions in the College of Arts and Sciences. The real break between the two men finally occurred when Hatcher was named president of the university. In an effort to end the strife, Hatcher asked Dean Stephenson for his resignation, but Stephenson refused. Hatcher then turned to the board of supervisors. At his request, they relieved Stephenson of his position as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences as a result of his "unsatisfactory work." This change became effective September 1, 1944, with Dr. Henry Howe appointed as the new dean.

Enrollment in this college, along with the rest of the university, now began to show a definite increase. It moved from 550 in the fall of 1944 to 595 in the fall of 1945 and 748 in the spring of 1946. A big problem facing

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20 Interview with Mrs. Jean B. Ford, *op. cit.*

21 *Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes*, August 26, 1944.
Hatcher was that the College of Arts and Sciences had over one-third of its faculty in the Armed Services during the war. The curricula were divided into three main branches; science, social science, and liberal arts. The fusion of the faculty back into their positions with these three branches was the main task of the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.22

**College of Chemistry and Physics**

One of William B. Hatcher's early appointments was to make Dr. Arthur R. Choppin Dean of the College of Chemistry and Physics, replacing Dean Raoul L. Menville.23 This college, as most of the other colleges, suffered from an overloaded staff until adjustments could be made for returning faculty and students. The College of Chemistry and Physics had the additional problem of fighting the offers of industries who were trying to lure its underpaid professors away from teaching. Nevertheless, the College of Chemistry and Physics did maintain an adequate staff as evidenced by the fact that it had twenty-eight articles of merit published in the leading professional journals.24

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23 *Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, August 26, 1944.*

College of Commerce

Under the direction of Dean James B. Trant, the College of Commerce experienced tremendous changes. Enrollment had increased forty-six per cent over the 1943-1944 session and the faculty was also increasing. Many changes were also occurring in the curricula of the college which, by 1946, included areas in insurance and real estate, personnel management, light construction, accounting and management for cooperatives, business administration for prison management, and a restored curriculum in commercial aviation.

By 1945 the Louisiana Bankers' Association had resumed its educational conference on the campus. Bankers from throughout the South attended this conference as it was one of the best of its kind in the South. The Bureau of Business Research, in addition to its publication of the monthly Business Review and seven yearly Business Bulletins, started a research-teaching program where teachers under this program would teach part time and spend the other one-half time in the twelve fields of research.25

College of Education

The College of Education, headed by Dean Edward Bane Robert, reached its low point in enrollment during the 1944-1945 year when only 274 students were registered. This

figure increased only slightly for the 1945-1946 year making 334. Graduate enrollment shrank to forty-seven in 1944 but increased to eighty-seven one year later.

In 1944 the Bureau of Educational Research and the Statistical Office were combined to make the Bureau of Educational Statistics and Research by the board of supervisors and placed under the control of the College of Education. Dr. Ben F. Mitchell, former dean of Junior Division before Dr. Hatcher, headed this bureau and was instrumental in distributing many of its publications during this time. In another addition to the College of Education, the board of supervisors placed the Division of High School Relations under its control with Colonel J. Perry Cole as its director. Dr. Hatcher, who worked hard in promoting the entire university, was especially interested in this division. He made sure that it had the proper staff and as much money as it needed. He felt that this division belonged naturally under the College of Education since they both worked so closely with the high schools of the state.

The Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors added the Master of Education degree during Hatcher's time as president. This degree, which was being adopted by most of the universities of the country, did not require the foreign language, thesis, or oral examination that the Master of Arts degree required. The only requirement beyond the course work was the completion of a written comprehensive examination. Designed to offer some relief to the
overwhelming load of the teachers in the College of Education, this degree decreased the amount of time the professors had to spend assisting students with thesis writing.

The College of Education served one of its most important functions when it held teacher workshops throughout the state. As part of this function they began to take a serious look at the curriculum within the university. In the Department of Health and Physical Education, they devised a program for corrective work for undergraduate women and reorganized the basic course in required physical education for men. The Louisiana State University code had placed intramural athletics under the Department of Athletics many years earlier when the board was controlled by ex-athletes of the university. The original purpose of this move was designed to give football players much needed jobs (at least in name) since there were no athletic scholarships at the time. By the time William Hatcher became president, athletic scholarships were given to nearly all players, and there was no need to keep intramural athletics under the Athletic Department. As a result, Dr. J. W. Kistler, head of the Department of Health and Physical Education, Athletic Director T. P. Heard, and Dean E. B. Robert went to President Hatcher and asked that the intramural program be placed under the Department of Health and Physical Education so they could use it as a laboratory to train prospective

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26 Ibid., pp. 19-21.
physical education teachers. Hatcher felt this was a good idea and agreed to make the change the next time the board met.

The day after the next meeting of the board of supervisors, President Hatcher summoned Dean Robert to his office and said, "Robert, I promised you I would move those intramurals into the College of Education. By God, I can't do it. The board rose up as a racoon and knocked my teeth out. They won't have it." When Dr. Hatcher realized, as he always did, that the board was his superior, he dropped the whole matter.

In May of 1945 the board of supervisors authorized President Hatcher to obtain an architect to draw up plans for a new College of Education building. President Hatcher called Dean Robert into his office and asked him, "Robert, what architect do you want for this College of Education building you've been wanting?" Dean Robert replied that the only architect he could recommend was Nolan, Norman, and Nolan of New Orleans. Hatcher said, "I'm glad you said that, because that is the firm you were going to get anyway. They built the Baton Rouge High School while I was superintendent."

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28 Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, May 28, 1945.

29 Interview with Dean Emeritus E. B. Robert, op. cit.

30 Ibid.
The original plans called for a complete laboratory school, a swimming pool, and a nearby College of Education building. However, this idea proved too costly so the construction of the College of Education building and the swimming pool had to be abandoned. The architects drew plans for the laboratory school, and the board set aside eleven acres on the northeastern edge of the campus. The university was ready to let the contract when Hatcher died in early 1947.

Dr. Hatcher's successor, Dr. Harold M. Stoke, made no effort to build the school until the president of the board of supervisors, Tommy Lee, called Stoke and informed him that he had better come up with a plan for the laboratory school by the next board meeting, or the board would adopt the plan Dean Robert had submitted. Stoke reversed himself, and work began on the elementary and secondary school buildings. These buildings were completed during General Troy Middleton's presidency. Middleton also added the cafeteria and gymnasium, and President John Hunter built the auditorium.31

Dr. Hatcher knew the value of the College of Education; and while he did not favor it over the others, he gave it as much attention as he could.

31Ibid.
College of Engineering

Dean Leo Joseph LaSalle headed the College of Engineering during Hatcher's administration. During the 1944-1946 period of time the faculty of the College of Engineering, under the leadership of the dean, completely revised the curriculum. Civilian enrollment increased as the war ended, and large numbers of faculty members returned. The College of Engineering was busy during the war aiding in the Army Services Training Program as large numbers of army personnel were taking refresher courses in engineering. Courses in Basic Engineering were offered to large numbers of army personnel starting in June 1943. Though somewhat limited by a lack of adequate facilities, the college added a Graduate School in Hydraulic Engineering at this time.  

Law School

Considered by many as one of the finest educators in the state, Dean Paul M. Hebert headed the Law School of Louisiana State University at this time. Dean Hebert had ably served as acting president of the university between the administration of Dr. James Monroe Smith and General Campbell B. Hodges.

Enrollment in the Law School reached a low of eighteen during the 1943-1944 school year but increased to

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170 during the spring semester of 1946, the highest enrollment in the history of the university. Despite the fact that the faculty of the Law School consisted of only ten members, one of its most important jobs was the publication of the Louisiana Law Review. Ably run and well staffed, the law school also boasted the fourth largest library in the South.

The war had hit the law school hard. One of the highlights of the year for law students, the Moot Court, which had been discontinued during the war, resumed in the fall of 1946. To encourage new interest in the study of law, the Law School dropped its pre-law requirement to two years, and refresher courses were offered for returning servicemen. Increased emphasis was placed on comparative law with regard to Latin-America in hopes of obtaining additional faculty and books for the library on Latin-American law.33

Revisions were made in the Law School curriculum during 1946 with four major changes taking place. These were as follows: (1) the number of hours required for graduation was increased from eighty to ninety-two; (2) starting in the fall of 1947, first-year students would be admitted only in the fall; (3) effective in the fall of 1947, there would be a return to three years of pre-law before entrance into law school; and (4) if first-year classes got too large, they would be divided into sections to insure

33Ibid., pp. 23-25.
that discussion could take place. A ten-week summer program became an important part of the law school program.\(^{34}\)

In the spring of 1946, Dr. Hatcher, at the urging of Dean Hebert, presented a minimum-maximum salary schedule for the Law School which was adopted by the board of supervisors. As with all of President Hatcher's salary schedules, this one contained the use of merit raises. Figured on the basis of nine months, instructors would make from $2,000 to $3,000 per year, assistant professors from $3,000 to $4,000 per year, associate professors from $4,000 to $5,000 a year, and full professors from $5,000 to $6,000 per year.\(^{35}\) This became the first pay raise for Law School personnel since 1936.

Library School

The Director of the Library School, Florrinell F. Morton, was also the president-elect of the Association of Library Schools. The enrollment of the library school, which was usually small, reached its lowest total during the 1944-1945 year but increased by the 1945-1946 session. Inadequate housing for graduate women was one of the reasons listed for the small attendance. To encourage enrollment, the Library School had a complete revision of its curriculum in hopes of

\(^{34}\)The Reveille, September 13, 1946, p. 7.

\(^{35}\)Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, May 27, 1946.
attracting more students in the future.  

School of Music

The School of Music played an important part in the activities of the Louisiana Music Educators' Association in Louisiana, particularly at the annual meeting of the Louisiana Teachers' Association. Twenty-six faculty recitals and concerts were conducted during this period of time. Enrollments and faculty lowered by the war were on the upswing by 1947.

The School of Music offered a Master's degree in music. Barrett Stout was the Director of the School of Music. L. Bruce Jones was appointed as the director of bands during Hatcher's administration.  

School of Social Welfare

The purpose of the School of Social Welfare was "to provide professional education for the social services and to develop attitudes of professional integrity in public services." This purpose could best be achieved through classroom instruction, social clinical instruction, and work through welfare organizations. Louisiana, which had such a large investment in welfare, benefited greatly from this school. In 1946 the school provided for only a one-year
graduate program that met the minimum accreditation require-
ments. Nevertheless they were making plans to set up a two-
year program in the future under the direction of Earl E.
Klein, the Director of the School of Social Welfare. 39

Graduate School

The Louisiana State University Graduate School suffered
enrollment declines like the other departments, but the 1945-
1946 session showed an increase of 94.6 per cent over the
1944 session. This figure left the university with the
third largest graduate enrollment south of the District of
Columbia, behind the University of Texas and the University
of North Carolina. More veterans registered at the Louisiana
State University Graduate School than at any other school in
the South, constituting thirty-five per cent of the graduate
enrollment. Dean William O. Scroggs, Dean of the Graduate
School, felt that the veterans were a more purposeful group
of students than Louisiana State University had ever enrolled.

During the 1944-1946 period, a revision of existing
programs took place. The University Council on Research gave
the faculty members a chance to participate in independent
investigations of their own, and the publication of their
findings improved greatly the status of the university. 40

39 Ibid., p. 30. 40 Ibid., pp. 31-32.
General Extension Division

Dr. M. B. Smith resigned as Director of the General Extension Division, effective October 1, 1944, and Dr. J. W. Brouillette took his place. One hundred and fifty-five faculty members participated in some way with the General Extension Division. This division worked in cooperation with the other departments of the university and got its teachers from the various departments of the campus. The 1944-1945 year saw over 3,700 students enrolled in the program, but this figure jumped dramatically to approximately 3,500 people for the first semester of the 1945-1946 year.

The General Extension Division consisted of four departments: extension teaching, correspondence, study, radio, and Acadian Handicraft Project. Over four hundred schools participated in radio activities under the radio department during the biennium. When the university received permission for an F. M. radio station, the radio department began immediately setting up programs for the new station, which started operating in April, 1945.

41 *Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, August 26, 1944.*


43 *The Reveille, April 10, 1945, p. 1.*
Northeast Junior College

Northeast Junior College, established in 1931, was a strong junior college located at Monroe. Dr. Rodney Cline, who was appointed dean, effective December 1, 1944, replaced C. C. Calvert, who had been Dean of Northeast since its inception. The physical plant at Northeast was very adequate for the time. While Hatcher was president, the land on which Northeast Junior College was located was transferred from the Ouachita Parish School Board to Louisiana State University. Enrollment reached a low of 362 students in the fall of 1944 but increased to 437 students by the fall of 1946. However, the summer school session at both Northeast and McNeese Junior College had to be discontinued after the 1944 summer session when the Army Specialized Training Units were discontinued at the two colleges.

Northeast Junior College had a fine faculty that was older than most faculties so they did not lose many faculty members to the war. However, salaries were very low and no teacher received as much as $3,000 per year. Happily, the adoption of a new salary schedule, effective 1945-1946,

\[\text{\cite{44} Ibid., November 21, 1944, p. 1.}\]
\[\text{\cite{45} Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, August 26, 1944.}\]
\[\text{\cite{46} Ibid., December 16, 1944.}\]
\[\text{\cite{47} Statement by Dr. Rodney Cline, personal interview, July 21, 1970.}\]
helped insure an adequate faculty.\textsuperscript{48} With the return of students to the college after the war, activities returned to normal, including a resumption of football with the team winning six out of eight games in the fall of 1945.

The people of Monroe were very interested in their junior college. The primary concern of the junior college was in putting forth a program on the freshman and sophomore levels which would compare to the programs on the main campus at Baton Rouge. This program would facilitate an easier articulation of students into their junior year at Baton Rouge.

Dr. Hatcher, while not as strong a supporter of junior colleges as was General Hodges, visited Northeast during his tenure as president. He went to obtain the backing of the people when he attempted to get legislation passed which would help the university financially. He told the people of Monroe that the first item considered would be a new science building for Northeast, and when the legislation passed, Dr. Hatcher made good his promise with the construction of Caldwell Hall for the science department.\textsuperscript{49} During William B. Hatcher's administration, the board placed the two junior colleges under the control of the Dean of Junior Division, Dean S. A. Caldwell. This represented one of the

\textsuperscript{48}Biennial Report of the Board of Supervisors to the Governor and Members of the Legislature, 1944-1946, Vol. 38 N.S., May 10, 1946, p. 34.

\textsuperscript{49}Interview with Dr. Rodney Cline, \textit{op. cit.}
rare cases of a dean reporting to another dean who then reported to the president. All in all, it was a very poor situation.

John McNeese Junior College

At a special session of the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors held on November 18, 1944, Lether E. Frazar was named Dean of John McNeese Junior College, replacing Dr. Rodney Cline, who became Dean of Northeast Junior College. Frazar assumed the major problem Dr. Cline had been experiencing during the war—fighting a holding action to keep enrollment high enough until the war would be over and enrollment would increase.

The people of Lake Charles did not support their junior college as well as did the citizens of Monroe. Salaries for teachers were very low, and all teachers had the rank of instructor. During the war a great number of large industries employing many workers began locating in Lake Charles. This development resulted in an increased employment demand in the areas of chemistry, physics, and mathematics. Enrollment increased at McNeese to 270 for the second semester of the 1945-1946 year, the highest in its history. It also increased in the fall of 1946 with the return of more veterans. John McNeese then became a strong

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50 *Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, November 18, 1944.*

51 Interview with Dr. Rodney Cline, *op. cit.*
junior college, and Dean Frazar's new problem became one of keeping up with the increasing enrollment.52

School of Medicine

Due to the changeover of deans of the Medical School during this period of time, the medical school had big problems. The controversy over the deanship will be discussed later. During this time there were four deans, or acting deans: Dr. Beryl Burns, Dr. Wilbur Smith, Dr. George W. McCoy, and Dr. V. W. Lippard.

During the war the school of medicine operated on accelerated programs designed to provide medical officers for the Armed Forces. The school operated under a severe handicap because the Armed Forces had taken many of the teaching doctors from the medical school and placed them in the army. This shortage of teachers created a tremendous strain upon the work load of the remaining faculty.

About seventy per cent of the enrollment during this time was composed of Army and Navy students. The accelerated program was discontinued in March of 1946, but the School of Medicine started offering refresher courses in the same month to help many of the veterans who were returning. These courses were divided into three areas: medicine and medical specialties, surgery and surgical specialties, and

obstetrics, gynecology, and pediatrics. The number of medical students enrolled in the School of Medicine averaged slightly over three hundred during this time.  

In January, 1946, President Hatcher recommended to the board of supervisors a minimum-maximum salary schedule for the medical school which was adopted, effective July 1, 1946. Full-time preclinical people made as follows: instructors, $1,800 to $3,200; assistant professors, $3,000 to $5,000; associate professors, $4,000 to $7,000; and professors, $6,000 to $10,000. These salaries made the Louisiana State University School of Medicine more competitive in comparison with other universities' schools of medicine.

IV. CONTROVERSIES

President William B. Hatcher's administration was marked by several volatile controversies, some of which were blown out of proper proportions.

One controversy occurred in the fall of 1944 and concerned Gloria Dean Heller of Havana, Cuba. Dr. Hatcher, following the recommendation of the Louisiana State University Disciplinary Committee, ordered Heller to resign from the


54 Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, February 2, 1946.
university because of a leaflet which she had printed and
distributed.

The university students became indignant when they
heard about Hatcher's orders. They held mass meetings to
support Heller and were ready to initiate a mass strike.
Working quickly, Dr. Hatcher met with the student leaders
and after a short while both sides agreed to concessions.
Hatcher insisted on expelling Heller, but he agreed to give
the students more authority and placed them on important
committees. Despite the unrest on the campus, Governor
Davis and other major leaders of the state backed Hatcher's
decision. While Heller's insubordination played a large
part in her dismissal, Hatcher was mainly concerned with the
nature of the material in the pamphlets. He felt that they
were designed to stir up student unrest and would lead to
flagrant permissiveness on the campus. Hatcher felt himself
a man of high standards who could not allow this sort of
thing on the campus.  

During President Hatcher's administration, Negroes
made an effort to enter the Medical School and the Law
School. The Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors
instructed its lawyer, B. B. Taylor, to defend the university
from a law suit brought by Vida M. Johnson, who wished to

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enter the medical school. At the same time Negroes were also attempting to get into the Law School because Southern University in Baton Rouge had no law school. People from the Louisiana State University Law School met with officials from Southern in an effort to organize a law school at Southern for Negro students. Some of the law school professors actually taught the courses the first time they were offered at the newly established Southern University Law School.

Football Stadium

A small controversy started under President Hatcher's administration but became a larger one for President Stokes. The controversy concerned efforts to increase the capacity of the football stadium. Athletics held a high position during President Hatcher's administration. The 1945-1946 football team had won seven and lost two games, while the 1945-1946 basketball team had eight wins and zero losses in conference play and fifteen wins and two losses for the season.

William Hatcher had always been a good friend of

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56 *Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes*, October 5, 1946.

57 Statement by Dr. Dale Bennett, personal interview, September 6, 1970.

football and athletics, and often watched football practice while he was president of the university. However, he never interfered with his coaches. He supported athletics whenever possible and would often talk with some of the players after practice. He was well liked and respected by the players and students.

Athletic Director T. P. Heard, Football Coach Bernie Moore, and many important alumni members wanted the stadium completely enclosed to form a bowl. Others opposed this idea because the stadium was not being filled at the time, and they felt it was a waste of money. Since the university library was inadequate then, many favored building a new library before adding to the stadium. In the fall of 1946 the board of supervisors, decided that any consideration for enclosing the south end of the football stadium should be postponed until money became available. Therefore, this controversy passed on to Hatcher's successors.

Appointment of Dean of Medical School

By far the biggest controversy of William Hatcher's administration concerned the deanship for the school of medicine. The board experienced a great deal of sentiment


60 Statement by Dr. Clyde Lindsey, personal interview, July 2, 1970.

61 Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors, Minutes, November 2, 1946.
to get rid of the present dean, Dr. Beryl Iles Burns, and to make some changes at the medical school which would raise its standards. Hatcher and several board members actually visited several medical schools to study their operation.

Finally the board asked for and received Dr. Burns' resignation. Dr. Wilbur Smith, Director of Athletics at Tulane University in New Orleans and a former member of the School of Medicine of Tulane, became the new dean. Hatcher, who did not know much about the medical school, was not sure of his appointment and had relied greatly on the advice of Dr. Emmitt L. Irwin in appointing Dr. Smith. Hatcher felt the only thing he could do was to take the advice of a board member who was not only in the profession, but also lived in New Orleans.62

Dr. Smith, a friendly man who had a remarkable ability to remember students' names, aspired to become the dean. Since he was a close friend of Dr. Irwin,63 and because Dr. Irwin was very much involved with the medical school, the board followed Irwin's suggestion.64 Immediate opposition arose to Dr. Hatcher's appointment, mainly from the staff of the School of Medicine. Not only did the opposition feel that Smith was not well qualified, they also disapproved

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63 Statement by Dr. Harold Cummings, personal interview, August 22, 1970.

64 Interview with Mrs. Jean B. Ford, op. cit.
of the circumstances concerning his appointment. The Executive Committee of the Louisiana State University Medical School Alumni Association asked for a special meeting with the board of supervisors and President Hatcher.

At a special meeting of the board of supervisors in September, Dr. Sam Nelken, a member of the medical school faculty, spoke first. He stated that he realized that it was the board's right to make the change, but he questioned the wisdom of it. He also spoke of the great unrest in the medical school faculty. According to Nelken there were several reasons for their concern: first, Dr. Burns was first notified of the change by reading the newspaper; second, that a faculty letter expressing confidence in Dr. Burns which had been sent to Dr. Hatcher three days before Dr. Burns was asked to resign had been ignored; and third, the medical school faculty was not consulted about Dr. Burns' replacement. Dr. Nelken also expressed concern over the rumors of great changes in the faculty and stated his fear that a large number of resignations might be forthcoming from the faculty of the School of Medicine.65

The second to speak at the board meeting was Dr. Chester Fresh, President of the Medical School Alumni Association. He told of calling Dr. Smith's office and requesting a meeting between Dean Smith and the Executive

65Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, September 8, 1945.
Committee of the Louisiana State University School of Medicine Alumni Association. He was refused a meeting. After hearing the speakers, the board of supervisors stated that President Hatcher had acted within his rights in making the change, and they would not interfere in his decision.66

Dr. Nelken's concern about mass resignations of medical school faculty members proved correct because twenty-three doctors resigned by October 26, 1945. On that date Dr. Hatcher told reporters of the university newspaper, The Reveille, that the rating of Louisiana State University would not be affected by the investigation of the medical school in New Orleans by accrediting agencies.67

Another special meeting of the board took place on October 31, 1945, when the board heard a report from President Hatcher on the status of the medical school. He stated that he had met the previous Sunday with twelve members of the medical school faculty and that a committee from the medical school had five proposals for settling the controversy. These proposals were as follows: (1) The faculty wanted to be consulted on major staff appointments and major changes of policy; (2) They further recommended that the dean be a medical educator and he should be recommended to the board by a committee composed of outstanding men in medical education who were acceptable to the medical

66Ibid.
67The Reveille, October 26, 1945, p. 1.
faculty; (3) They recommended the board of supervisors appoint a committee of its own members on a permanent basis to learn the problems of the medical school and to meet quarterly with an elected committee from the faculty; (4) They recommended that a person have a background of extensive research before he could obtain the rank of professor; and (5) They urged the board to try to get the resigned members to reconsider and come back to work.68

Board chairman Daniel Debaillon, ill at the time, was the third to speak at the board meeting. He expressed his concern that the total collapse of the medical school was imminent. He cited the large numbers of resignations that had taken place and expressed his fear that many of the twelve who had met with Hatcher would soon resign if things did not change. He then moved that the resignation of Dr. Wilbur C. Smith, offered that day, be accepted; that President Hatcher appoint an acting dean; that the accrediting agencies submit a list of five candidates from whom Hatcher would choose, and that the resigned faculty members be requested to withdraw their resignations.

Hatcher agreed that unless some compromise was reached, the school might be forced to close. Colonel Tom Dutton called for support of Dean Smith and suggested that if the resigned members did not return, they should be fired.

68Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, October 31, 1945.
A vote to table Debaillon's motion passed eight to three. After hearing Smith state that he could find replacements for the resigned members the board expressed a vote of confidence in both Smith and Hatcher, but decided to set up a committee of five board members to study the school.

The five-member committee was chaired by Monroe Lanier of Plaquemine. Others on the committee were Roland B. Howell of Baton Rouge, T. W. Dutton of New Orleans, James E. Smitherman of Shreveport, and C. B. Sherrouse of Gilbert. At the same time, the Association of the American Medical Colleges requested a full report on the events that led to the mass resignations.

The committee made its report November 15, 1945, at a special meeting of the board. After the report, Homer Brinkley offered a resolution vacating the position of dean and setting up a committee of the board of supervisors to meet with faculty members to select a new dean. This resolution passed with only Colonel Dutton and Dr. Irwin opposing. After the meeting members decided that if Smith should resign, Brinkley's resolution would be changed to delete the part about the dean's position being vacant and replaced by a sentence recognizing Smith's resignation. They also decided that the board express to Dr. Smith its confidence in his sincerity of purpose. This proposal was verified by telephone when Dean Smith's resignation came in.

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69 The Reveille, November 2, 1945, pp. 1, 3.
They agreed that Smith would be paid his $10,000 salary for one year. 70

The committee reported again December 3, 1945, stating that all but five faculty members had withdrawn their resignations. The committee also recommended that Dr. George W. McCoy, head of the Department of Public Health and professor in the medical school, be made acting dean and Dr. Hull becoming acting assistant dean. 71 In June of 1946 the board of supervisors, by a unanimous vote, and upon the recommendation of President Hatcher, named Dr. Vernon William Lippard Dean of the School of Medicine at a salary of $11,000, effective September 1, 1946. 72 At the time of his appointment Lippard, a graduate of Yale University, was holding the position of associate dean of the College of Physics and Surgeons of Columbia University. 73

This controversy was a physical and mental trial to President Hatcher because he was a conscientious person who worried about public opinion. While he was not really sure of the appointment when he had made it, he defended it in public. As president, Hatcher took the brunt of the

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70 Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, November 15, 1945.
71 Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, December 3, 1945.
72 Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, June 17, 1946.
73 The Reveille, June 18, 1946.
criticism because he felt he should. He believed the president was up front to be "shot at" and must take the responsibility for the errors.\textsuperscript{74}

\textbf{Location of New Men's Dormitories}

The increasing enrollment demanded new dormitories for the men, but the board of supervisors could not agree as to the exact location of the new dormitories. During the summer of 1945 the board of supervisors toured the campus while Dr. Hatcher pointed out several possible sites. Major Howell, the chairman of the building committee, recommended converting one of the women's dormitories, Parker Dormitory, into a men's dormitory. J. Stewart Slack suggested building the new buildings east of the football stadium as did Colonel Lanier. Dr. Hatcher had no specific recommendation on the matter.

By an eleven to two vote, with Dr. Irwin and Major Howell voting against, the Slack and Lanier suggestion was adopted. The board agreed that the buildings should be elongated to fit the land, which was on a hill, and that Parker Dormitory should be used for graduate men as soon as a place could be found for the women living in Parker. The original plan called for housing 1,000 men with the cost set at $1,000,000.\textsuperscript{75}

\textsuperscript{74}Interview with Mrs. William B. Hatcher, \textit{op. cit.}

\textsuperscript{75}\textit{Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes}, June 30, 1945.
After the plans were finalized for the three new dormitories, the estimated cost amounted to $2,900,000. The board of supervisors decided to wait before asking for bids. Meanwhile, the president and the board of supervisors encountered much criticism concerning the location. In November of 1946, the board, in executive session, reaffirmed its previous action on housing.

Work started on the three buildings with Bodman and Murrell, architects, and Henry C. Beck Company, Contractor. The northern most building was Campbell B. Hodges Hall with William B. Hatcher Hall in the center, and William P. Johnston Hall on the southern end. Work was completed in June, 1947, under Dr. Fred Frey the acting president of the university after Dr. Hatcher's death.

V. ILLNESS OF HATCHER

Dr. Hatcher had always been a healthy, active person, but he actually never experienced really good health while he was president of the university. In the fall of 1946, his already poor health took a turn for the worst. After a week's illness at home, he entered Our Lady of the Lake Hospital in Baton Rouge on Monday, November 25, 1946, with

76Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, March 18, 1946.

77Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, November 30, 1946.
heart trouble. Though he was seriously ill most of December, he was able to return home at the end of the month.

With his wife nursing him, President Hatcher worked at regaining his health. Nevertheless, Dean of the University, Dr. Fred C. Frey, started taking over President Hatcher's work. When his recovery was slower than expected, Hatcher soon realized that he was not going to be able to return to work.

VI. RESIGNATION AS PRESIDENT

After he decided he would not be able to return to the rigorous work of president of a large university, Dr. Hatcher's thoughts turned to resigning. Members of the board of supervisors did not want him to resign and requested that he delay his resignation until the board of supervisors had a chance to select his successor. In early February they gave Dean Frey authority to act in behalf of William Hatcher in signing legal contracts.

On Saturday, February 8, 1947, President William Bass Hatcher, upon the advice of his physicians, resigned as president of Louisiana State University in a special session of the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors. The

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79 Interview with Mrs. William B. Hatcher, op. cit.
80 Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, February 1, 1947.
text of President Hatcher's letter of resignation reads:

February 8, 1947

To the Board of Supervisors of Louisiana State University and A. and M. College:

I hereby tender you this, my resignation, as president of the great institution whose destiny you placed in my hands over two years ago. This action is impelled by the condition of my health and the realization that I cannot under the circumstances, do full justice to the University. This resignation is to become effective at your pleasure.

I wish to reserve the right to elaborate on this letter, wherein I shall set forth the things accomplished under our administration and the deep appreciation which I feel to each one of you for your active cooperation.

With great respect and affection, I am

Yours sincerely,

W. B. Hatcher

The board of supervisors accepted Dr. Hatcher's resignation with deep regret and elected him president emeritus for the full fiscal year, ending June 30, 1947.

The full text of the resolution accepting President Hatcher's resignation reads as follows:

Whereas, President W. B. Hatcher has this day tendered his resignation to the Board of Supervisors, and

Whereas, his physicians have advised that his condition would be better served by the immediate acceptance of this resignation to relieve him of the strain of the duties of his office; and

Whereas, Dr. Hatcher, during his brief term as

81 Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, February 8, 1947.
president, has rendered the University loyal, faithful and distinguished service, and

Whereas, the occasion which prompts Dr. Hatcher to tender his resignation is regrettable and unfortunate, now therefore

Be it resolved by the Board of Supervisors of Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College that it accepts with reluctance his resignation as of this date, and expresses to him its deepest regret that the condition of his health has made it necessary for this action, and further expresses to him individually and collectively the wish that his health may be restored at an early date; and

Be it further resolved that since, for a period of time, the board feels that it should avail itself of Dr. Hatcher's experience, counsel and advice on a number of important matters not yet completed, he is hereby elected President Emeritus of the Louisiana State University to be determined by the board at the end of the fiscal year; and

Be it further resolved that in view of the fact that Dr. Hatcher has been employed at a fixed annual salary, the board herewith recognizes its obligation for the payment of that salary and the continuance of the other prerequisites of the office of president for the full current fiscal year. 82

The board of supervisors then elected dean of the university Fred C. Frey acting president of the university with the same powers possessed by Dr. Hatcher.

Expressions of regret came from all sections of the state in response to Dr. Hatcher's resignation. While some of the faculty opposed Dr. Hatcher because of the manner in which he was chosen, he was very popular with a vast majority of the faculty. His two plus years of service to the university had been busy ones.

82Ibid.
Hatcher had successfully coped with the tremendous problem of rapid expansion, and now with the building of the three new men's dormitories, the housing problems would be soon solved. Policies pertaining to faculty pay had been set, and the publication in 1945 of a booklet "Regulations for the Organization of Louisiana State University" classified people's position within the university. In addition students were given more rights under a newly adopted student constitution. President Hatcher "had seen the University climb back to a measurable degree of pre-war normalcy."  

As president of a great state university, a man feels tremendous pressures exerted upon him. On every hand, one must cope with the criticism of the position, and it takes a person of much more than average ability to hold the job. William B. Hatcher was one of those men. Hatcher was a good president. His courage, scholarship, administrative ability, knowledge of education and people, and integrity exemplified the virtues needed by a president of such a great university. William Bass Hatcher loved Louisiana State University. In fact, he was so dedicated to Louisiana State University that he gave his life for it.

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83 The Reveille, February 11, 1947, p. 4.

84 Interview with Dean Emeritus E. B. Robert, op. cit.
VII. DEATH OF HATCHER

Despite a tremendous effort to overcome his heart ailment, Dr. Hatcher died shortly before midnight, Thursday, April 3, 1947. His health had deteriorated rapidly the last several days, and his death was no surprise to his friends. Funeral services were held the next day at the Memorial Tower with Reverend Philip P. Werlein of St. James Episcopal Church officiating. Burial was at Roselawn Memorial Park.\(^85\)

The entire state mourned the loss of so great an educator and person. All of the public schools of East Baton Rouge Parish were closed in honor of his memory. The university that he loved so dearly paid its respect as students, professors, deans, and members of the board of supervisors attended the funeral, Friday, April 4. The many parts of the university which he had made work came to a halt in honor of his passing. On April 5, 1947, the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors passed the following resolution:

A RESOLUTION

Whereas, the death of William Bass Hatcher, which occurred April 3, 1947, is a grievous loss to the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College and to education in Louisiana, and;

Whereas, his loyal and able performance as President of the University is recognized by the members of the Board of Supervisors with whom he worked harmoniously and effectively to build a greater institution, and;

\(^{85}\)The Reveille, April 10, 1947, p. 1.
Whereas, his interest in the education of the youth of the State, to which he devoted a lifetime of service, was continued throughout his successful career as an educational leader, and;

Whereas, through this noble and unselfish service to others he has made a lasting contribution to education in Louisiana and the South, and;

Whereas, his high sense of justice and duty and his personal honesty and integrity were predominating traits of his fine moral character, and;

Whereas, he will always be remembered as a true friend and a devoted husband and father, therefore

Resolved: that the Board of Supervisors, in realizing its own great loss in the passing of a friend and counselor, expresses its deepest sympathy to his bereaved widow and young daughter, and be it further

Resolved: that a copy of this resolution be spread upon the minutes of the Board and a copy be sent to the members of his family. 86

Some people are content to be followers while others search out the positions of leadership. William Hatcher was one of those who desired to lead. As an ambitious person, he sought the higher position. His rise from a teacher in a one-room, rural school to superintendent of one of the largest systems in the state is a climb few people are able to make. As superintendent he faced tremendous problems and overcame them, leaving the school system he directed for nineteen plus years a much better one.

After standing up for what he thought was right, Hatcher met the opposition of the political powers of the

86Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors Minutes, April 5, 1947.
state and resigned when it became evident he was going to lose out. He then worked his way up through the ranks of the state university, reaching the presidency in the culmination of his climb.

William Hatcher possessed an honesty that was unquestioned. He made mistakes and suffered from his mistakes because he was more than usually conscientious. His mistakes, honest mistakes, were few. A deeply religious person, he set an example for people to follow. He had a definite code for his life which he refused to ignore. Once, while acting Dean of John McNeese Junior College, the Governor of Louisiana, Sam Jones, called him into his office and offered Hatcher the job of assistant state superintendent of education, assisting Superintendent John E. Coxe. Dr. Hatcher wanted to know if the Governor had consulted Superintendent Coxe on the question. When the governor said no, he would tell him later, Dr. Hatcher replied he would not consider the job because Superintendent Coxe had not asked him.87

He was a very hard worker who was the first at work and the last to leave. In fact, he often worked late at night after others had long gone to sleep.88 While he was a man who could readily make decisions, he was also one who believed in getting the facts first and then making the

87 Interview with Dean Emeritus E. B. Robert, op. cit.
88 Interview with Dr. Dale Bennett, op. cit.
decision. He valued the advice of his advisors and had faith in his co-workers.

Most of all, Dr. Hatcher drew from the students. He knew them well, having known them as a teacher, coach, principal, superintendent, professor, dean of junior division, and president of Louisiana State University. His concern was always for the students. In return, the students responded to him, holding Dr. Hatcher in the highest esteem.

The teachers of East Baton Rouge Parish, while Hatcher was superintendent, were great believers in him and appreciated all he did for them. His selection as president of Louisiana State University was a popular one with the faculty, and he always maintained a good relationship with them.

Those who had contact with Dr. Hatcher profited from it. He devoted his whole being to every endeavor he undertook, and others followed his lead. The State of Louisiana benefited greatly by being served by William Bass Hatcher.

VIII. TRIBUTES TO DR. WILLIAM BASS HATCHER

The following editorial appeared in the Advocate, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on April 5, 1947:

A Long and Valuable Career

The death of William Bass Hatcher, president emeritus of Louisiana State University, ended a life of long and valuable service to the cause of education in Louisiana. Perhaps if Dr. Hatcher's devotion to his work had not been so great, he would have lived longer. The strain of his work as president of Louisiana State University during the difficult wartime and postwar periods, carried
on in the face of prolonged ill health, undoubtedly contributed to his untimely death. Dr. Hatcher lived a life of more than average length and fullness, but the death of a good public servant always is untimely, no matter at what age it might occur.

Dr. Hatcher's career constitutes a success story of the kind not often told in these days of doubtful change and uncertain values. He began his career as a teacher in a one-room school and ended it as president of Louisiana's greatest public institution of higher education. His progress upward was steady, marked by industry, faithfulness, and constant endeavor to improve himself and do his job always better.

Even in these somewhat cynical days of quick money, big deals, pull and politics, the example of such a career cannot be overlooked. There is some value to patience, determination and industry, after all. These were the qualities that won for Dr. Hatcher his position as one of the foremost citizens of Louisiana.

Dr. Hatcher's monument will be the ever greater L.S.U., which has been in the building for nearly a century now, and looks forward, as always, to greater and finer days. Many able and brilliant men have contributed their life's work to this institution. Dr. Hatcher's name has been added to the list of those who have built the University, who have guided it through its difficult years, who have given it the best they had, and who thereby have contributed greatly to the welfare of the entire state and every individual in it.

The following editorial appeared in the State-Times, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, on April 4, 1947.

Dr. W. B. Hatcher

Sorrow that overspreads the city and campus over the death of Dr. Wm. B. Hatcher is shared by many persons over the state who knew him as a leading Louisiana educator, who admired him as a man, and who felt warm personal friendship for him.

Dr. Hatcher had served less than three years as president of Louisiana State University when failing health caused his resignation in midwinter. In that relatively brief span he had set his mark upon our
great institution, as he had set it earlier upon the public schools of this city and parish, and as he had filled worthily and well other responsible positions in the field of education in this state. As teacher in the classroom, as administrator, as executive, as one who sensed his obligation to the public and to the individual, and to the high standards of his inmost self, he gave a type of service that is more than wage can pay, more than money can buy. He will be remembered through the years, we believe, as one of the finest and strongest superintendents of education East Baton Rouge or any other parish has ever had. And in the annals of LSU, his own alma mater, his name will be written clearly along with the names of those presidents, who have given something of themselves, as well as their ability, to this beloved institution.

We have known Dr. Hatcher for a great many years, and have counted him our friend. We have found him a dependable friend in return. He was a man of sincerity, and of deep feeling. He had dignity of bearing, yet a warm personality, and his serious countenance often relaxed into the engaging smile that put at ease those about him. He bore bravely his personal burdens, and faced the harassments that come to those in public position. He had great determination, and once he had set his mind and heart on a course he felt was proper and right, he was apt to be unswerving in his conviction, and in his acts, regardless of possible differences or criticism. Though he had sympathy, he was never vacillating, and he gave a sense of strength to the administrative positions he filled. He was a man of high integrity and character, who walked honorably among his fellow men, and whose pledged word could be trusted in matters great or small.

In a personal way, Dr. Hatcher was an affable and courteous gentleman, of the traditional "old school" manners. Though there were times when he spoke firmly and vigorously, he had a kindly and understanding feeling toward his fellow man, and his co-workers and he enjoyed the human contacts. In his daily walk and conversation, there was evidence of the Christian precepts that helped guide his course.

A man of business capability, Dr. Hatcher was unusually valuable in the education field. As superintendent of the public schools of this city and parish for almost 20 years, he was concerned not only in good teaching and in proper and helpful school atmosphere, but also in the improvement and modernization of the physical plants. It was under his leadership that the
public schools came into larger growth, and he directed a program of building that added to the school facilities in the city and suburbs and those throughout the parish. It was while he was superintendent that the first junior high school was built, in the heart of the city, and also the splendid senior high school on Government Street, and other units in the various wards. He had just pride in the completed building program, and our citizenry shared pride in our excellent school system.

When Dr. Hatcher was called to the presidency of LSU, after having served on its staff for eight years as teacher and in executive capacities it was felt that he would give his best to the school, and provide capable and honorable administration. He helped bring it through the final year of the war, and then faced the tremendous task of meeting the postwar demands. As hundreds of returning veterans, many of them with families, thronged the campus, and all available quarters were occupied, the housing emergency had to be met with patience and determination, with ingenuity and resourcefulness. In this regard, Dr. Hatcher did a splendid work, that alone would have marked distinctive service to the school. At the same time, he was mindful of its academic needs and its ever broadening field of influence. As its president, he set a worthy stride.

Still in his fifties, Dr. Hatcher might well have looked to longer years of service had not failing health cut short his career, and brought to an end his earthly span. But into the years allotted him, he had crowded a great deal, and he has left behind him a noteworthy record of achievement.

Dr. Hatcher was one of our finest citizens, and here in Baton Rouge, and on the campus, he was held in respect and love. There are many to grieve with his beloved wife, and the little daughter that had blessed their home.

As a leading educator of this state, as a friendly and helpful member of our community for many years, and as a loyal and dependable friend, Wm. B. Hatcher will be greatly missed. The influence of his life and career will linger long, in this parish of East Baton Rouge, on university campus and in this state.

The following editorial appeared in the New Orleans Item on April 5, 1947.
Death closed an active, vigorous and useful career when it brought to William Bass Hatcher release from long illness. The measure of a man is what he leaves behind him at life's close. Dr. Hatcher bequeathed to his community and his generation forty years of devoted educational service. Starting as a country school teacher, he became for nearly thirty years superintendent of public education in East Baton Rouge. That the schools of his parish advanced under his administration speaks for itself. So, too, does the force with which he opposed the politicalization that befouled the state's educational system under Huey Long. Dr. Hatcher's position was so effectively maintained that Long ousted him as soon as he gained control of the local school board.

His uncompromising stand for decency in this instance prompted the LSU board of supervisors, some years later, to appoint him to the presidency of the state university. While his record merited recognition, his failing health was unequal to the many exactions so demanding an assignment imposed. After two years of striving, he resigned last February, in the hope that the leisurely peace of retirement might enable him to repair his health. Many who knew him only by repute will join the general regret that this was not to be his portion, and the hope that the inevitable pangs of grief will be softened by surviving members of his family by realization of how widely their sense of loss is shared.

The following editorial appeared in the *Iberville South*, weekly newspaper in Plaquemine, Louisiana, on February 15, 1947, after his resignation.

**Dr. W. B. Hatcher**

With the resignation of Dr. W. B. Hatcher as president of Louisiana State University, the school has lost one of its most conscientious leaders.

Dr. Hatcher's term as president was marked by many accomplishments, and by many problems not faced by the University's past presidents.

Swollen registration in itself offered problems that had never been faced by past presidents, and this, coupled with problems of helping the returning veteran to adjust himself again to civilian college life, presented a formidable job to the man at the head of the South's largest state university.
In times when it would have been easier to bow to the will of the majority at the sacrifice of what he believed right, Dr. Hatcher "stuck by his guns" and in the long run proved his points in many controversial issues.

To those teachers and students who knew him personally, Dr. Hatcher was always a genial friend willing to listen patiently to problems faced by his students and to offer counsel to them. Whether students knew it or not, the president was always willing to take time off to discuss their problems with them.

And now, ill health has forced the resignation of Dr. Hatcher. He did not want to resign. He loved his work and the University, and wanted, if possible to continue to serve as that University's president.

Now that he has made his decision and his resignation because of ill health has been accepted, he is to be congratulated on a job well done. His many friends join in wishing him a complete and speedy recovery.

The following appeared in Louisiana Schools, journal of the Louisiana Teachers' Association, May, 1947.

Dr. W. B. Hatcher

William Bass Hatcher was born December 12, 1888, at Ripley, Mississippi, and died April 3, 1947. At the age of fifteen he moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Long before he finished his formal education, at the early age of seventeen, he began teaching. He graduated with the following degrees from Louisiana State University: B.A. 1916; M.S. 1923; Ph.D. 1937. His services covered a wide range of positions, but all were in the field of education: a one-room school teacher, a high school principal, a parish superintendent, a university professor, Dean of the Junior Division, and President of the University. In each of these positions he enthusiastically exerted those characteristics which made up his personality.

The passing of Dr. Hatcher has been a peculiar loss to the state of Louisiana. During all of his professional life, he was struggling in behalf of improved educational facilities in order that the youth of this state might have better opportunities for educational training. He recognized the importance of better teachers and better pay for them. During the years he
served as President of the University he vigorously planned for an expanded research of a type that would help all the people of the state.

Duty was the "sublime" word in his life. It was his job, his recreation, and his thought. Robert E. Lee was no more sensitive to duty than Dr. Hatcher. He loved to do those things which he conceived to be his duty to do.

Dr. Hatcher's entire life was centered around the philosophy expressed by the Master of teachers: "The truth shall make you free." He, unlike Pilate who ran from the truth, searched diligently for it. He believed the truth would win in the long run. He was also convinced that progress could come only through the finding of new truth. This idea was basic in his desire for more and better research.

Dr. Hatcher did things accurately at the time they should have been done. Thomas Henry Huxley expressed the idea when he wrote:

Perhaps the most valuable result of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do, when it ought to be done, whether you like it or not; it is the first lesson that ought to be learned; and however early a man's training begins, it is probably the last lesson that he learns.

The above needs no comment except to say that his thorough ways of doing things permeated his colleagues so effectively that it gave color to the entire system.

Any kind of treatise on Dr. Hatcher would be incomplete without including his passionate love. His love for his profession was so deep that he could not stay away from his work. He loved the Louisiana school system and rightfully felt himself a part of it. There seldom, if ever, has been an alumnus of Louisiana State University who was as devoted to the University as he was. Only those close to him had any conception of the love which he had for his family. It was simply beautiful.

His admiration for woman was far more than what is generally conceived in the idea of a southern gentleman. He recognized the mentality of women on a par with men. This recognition extended to all phases of social education and economic life.

We have lost a man of more than ordinary ability. His unique personality, his devotion to duty, his will
to do, his love for others, his admiration for womanhood, will remain in the hearts of those who knew him as long as they live. May his spirit live with the unborn generations. Louisiana and the Nation have lost a leader in education, a patriotic citizen, and a real man.

S. A. Caldwell
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VITA

Robert W. Gaston, III, was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, the son of Dr. Robert W. and Melba Liner Gaston. He attended schools in Louisiana and Tennessee and graduated from Baton Rouge High School. His undergraduate degree was earned in social studies and health and physical education at Louisiana State University at Baton Rouge, Louisiana. His work on his Master's degree was done at Louisiana State University in an administration major in education and a minor in health and physical education. Work past the Master's degree has also been done at Louisiana State University with a major in secondary education and a minor in sociology. He has taught in the East Baton Rouge Parish School System and at Louisiana State University and is presently a faculty member of Louisiana State University Laboratory School in Baton Rouge.
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Robert W. Gaston, III

Major Field: Education

Title of Thesis: Dr. William Bass Hatcher, Louisiana Educator

Approved:

[Signature]
Major Professor and Chairman

[Signature]
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

Date of Examination:

December 7, 1970