

# 1937 West Virginia Football Champions

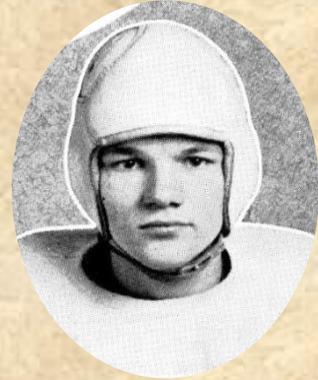
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**Dodd (Back) - '38**



**Harris (Tackle) - '38**



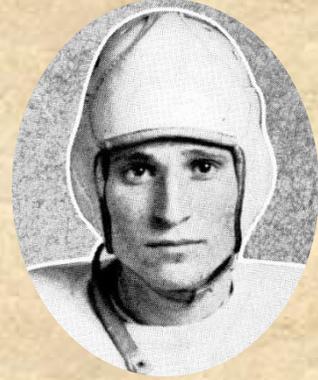
**Tyree (End) - '38**



**Gill (Guard) - '39**



**Parry (End) - '39**



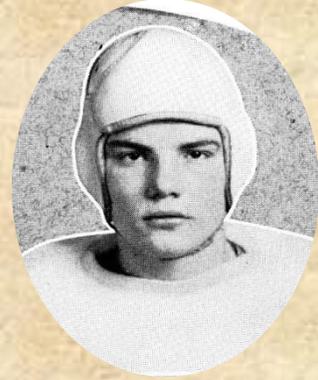
**Foster (Back) - '37**



**Stone (End) - '38**



**Lipscomb (Guard) - '37**



**Powell (Center) - '37**



**Lilly (Back) - '37**



**Cales (Tackle) - '37**



**Butler (Back) - '37**

## ***Ernie Parry's Account of HHS 1937 Football Season Championship***

**From:** *Charleston Gazette Mail - Saturday, October 31, 2015*

**Chuck McGill:** *Hinton's Parry recounts 1937 championship season*

*Ernie Parry cradles a weathered and worn high school yearbook, flipping through memories from 78 years ago.*

*"I played for Hinton," he said as the pages turn. "We won the state championship one year and only used 13 men the whole year. That was 1937, and I'm the last boy left."*

*Parry, a sprightly 96-year-old who resides in an assisted-living facility in Clemmons, North Carolina, finds the corner of a page and flips to the football section.*

*There are black and white photos of his coaches, followed by eloquent words chronicling the 1937 season.*

*The yearbook reads:*

*"Ever will the reminiscences of Hinton football, whether gridiron fortunes be at ebb or flood, turn first to 1937. About the round table where talk of Bobcat glories flows in after years, always there will be mention first of 'The Great Year' — 1937 — the year of the championship."*

*Hinton played eight games that season, winning them all with the exception of a 0-0 tie against Beckley in the rain and mud.*

*Parry's memory of it all is vivid.*

*"I was very fortunate," he said. "I played with a fine bunch of boys. Our championship team was actually made because we were all freshmen there and then that one year was when we all gelled together and made the championship team.*

*"We had so few men we couldn't have any substitutes, and of course you played both ways. You played defense and offense both."*

*Parry was one of the team's most versatile players, and with a roster of 13, that was something to value.*

*"That's what Coach liked about me," he said. "I played center, but in one game I played three positions: center, guard and blocking back. As a freshman I was what they called a running guard. We ran from an unbalanced line and we used the Notre Dame shift and we'd shift right or left, whichever way the ball was going."*

*Parry said his preference was to play end, and to make a difference on special teams.*

*"I loved to block punts," he said. "Most of my success was due to our right tackle, I played right end, and when we tried to block a punt he'd cross in front of me and take the guard who was supposed to get me on blocks and I'd go behind him and block the punt."*

*"We had quite a thing going there."*

*The pinnacle of Hinton's regular season came against Charleston High School.*

*The Oct. 12 Charleston Gazette published the headline: "Bobcats Hand Lions First Grid Setback."*

*"That was a good ballgame," Parry said of the Bobcats' 9-6 win. "[Charley] Harris got a safety in that ballgame and I blocked a punt."*

*Bobby Dodd, who Parry called "one of our stars," scored from 3 yards out. Charleston's Bob Dale scored on a 9-yard pass from Sherwood Condit in the fourth quarter, which spoiled Hinton's shutout but didn't stifle the celebration.*

*Gazette sports writer Russell Thom called it "one of the greatest 'do or die' fighting exhibitions ever presented on Laidley Field." There were 5,000 in attendance.*

*The newspaper lauded Hinton star Paul Butler.*

*"Paul Butler, boy he could kick the ball," Parry said. "He's one of the reasons we won that state championship because anytime we got in trouble we'd put Paul back there to kick and keep the opposition in a hole."*

*"Bobby Dodd, I never had thought of it this way, but Bobby Dodd said it wasn't our offense with our team that we had, he said it was our defense that we had. All of*

*our boys were rough and ready to play ball. The defense won the game for us. We would get the team back there in a hole and they couldn't go anywhere."*

*The 1937 Hinton team were called "Iron men" because of the two-way play, and "Worthmen" in honor of their head coach.*

*"Johnny Worth was a very good coach," Parry said. "He played with Red Grange. He was the coach the year we won the state championship, and the last two years I was there we lost only one ballgame.*

*"That's when we wore helmets but didn't have nose guards and facemasks and all. You had a leather helmet."*

*Hinton also handed East Bank its only loss in 1937. The Bobcats traveled for that game, with hundreds riding a train to see Hinton's 19-6 triumph.*

*"Hinton was a railroad town and the railroad would do anything for them," Parry said. "The railroad would run a special train for the East Bank-Hinton game, they'd run it right into East Bank for the ballgame and then bring you home.*

*"That was quite a thing. East Bank and Beckley were our two greatest rivals."*

*The yearbook read:*

*"The ironmen were on their way. Butler, all-state backfield material, flanked by Lilly, commanding, Dodd and Ratliff. Big, heady linesmen — Lipscomb, all-state, and his henchmen, Harris, Powell and Gill, Parry, Cales, Stone and Tyree. The reserves — Vass and Foster. Coach Johnny Worth, in his second year at the helm, and assistants Paul Smith and Bun Goff. Onward they swept, halting for nothing, across West Virginia's gridiron."*

*Hinton was named the state champion in football on Dec. 4, 1937. The West Virginia Sports Writers Association had 17 voters. Ten voted for Hinton and four for Wheeling. No other team received multiple votes.*

*The Dec. 5 headline in the Charleston Gazette announced the outcome: "Hinton Gridders Awarded State Scholastic Crown."*

Parry's yearbook read:

*"Seventeen years of organized football, years of good teams, bad, indifferent — they were all reincarnated in 1937. Hinton stood at the top, not only of her own football ladder, but of West Virginia's. 'The iron men' — that swaggering nom de plume of news headlines — filtered into every mountain-bound crag, and with it went word of the prowess of the Bobcats."*

*Parry married and had one daughter after graduating Hinton, fought in the Battle of Okinawa (World War II) in June of 1945, and worked 44 years and 22 days for Kroger. He managed the store in Whitesville for three decades, and then moved to North Carolina with his ailing wife after retirement.*

*His room is decorated with photographs and keepsakes from athletics and the military. Marine Corps hats cover the tops of his bedposts. Pictures of his daughter, granddaughter and great grandchildren are affixed to the blinds that cover the window.*

*He keeps the gold-covered yearbook nearby. Black and white photographs are safely tucked between the glossy pages.*

*And the closing words from the yearbook's author, Henry Kinney, cannot be erased.*

*"Conquest rode with Hinton that fall — conquest and glory, honor and never-failing loyalty — that year of the championship."*