A prominent business personality...Ivan J. Bourque

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One of Kaplan's most outstanding business personalities is Mr. Ivan J. Bourque, who began his working career as a shoe shine boy, then a delivery boy, next and employee of O.G. Hebert's Grocery, and finally the sole owner of Lafitte Wholesale Company.

Mr. Bourque is one of seven children, his father, Ulysses Bourque, now being one of his employees. Mr. Bourque stated something that may be of interest to the younger generation (the largest pay that I have received before I opened my own business, was $15 a week).

Mr. Ivan Bourque certainly accomplished a rapid climb to businessman. He began in the wholesale business on May 15, 1939, when he was only 19 years old. About a year and a half later, on the day that he was 21 years old, Dec. 5, 1940, he married the former Mary Louise Romero. Today, with the help of this three children, Charles, a graduate of USL with a business degree, Genny, now Mrs. Russell Pierce of Houma, who works part time during the summer and Joey-his wife, he has one of the largest wholesale businesses in the state. Mr. Bourque states, "From year to year, after my business was established, I invested in other businesses. I am a previous co-owner of Bourque-Simon Insurance Agency and I served as councilman for the City of Kaplan for 16 years. Today, I am president of the Lafitte Wholesale Drug Company Inc., president of the Kaplan Loan and Investment Inc., a director of the Kaplan State Bank, a dictator of Washington Life Insurance Company, and a director of KATC TV3 Lafayette. I am also a notary public.

He is a very busy man attending three or four meetings each week. But as the saying goes, "If you want something done, always ask a busy person." This old adage certainly applies to Mr. Bourque, for he still finds time to belong to organizations. He comments, "I have been in just about every organization in Kaplan. I am a previous JC member, a member of the Lions Club and a past Lions President, a charter member of the Knights of Columbus, a member of the 4th Degree K of C, and a member of the Cattleman's Association.

The original building of Bank of Kaplan on the corner of Cushing and 2nd Street. Opened as Kaplan State Bank March 17, 1928. Original building still within walls of present bank.