Parkerson Corporation In City's Top-Ranking Assets

The Parkerson Insurance Corporation, with an annual payroll of $150,000 and a gross annual volume of three and one-half million dollars, is one of Lafayette's top-ranking commercial enterprises.

Parkerson Insurance Corporation was organized in 1930 by James D. Parkerson. In 1933 Rudolph Dupuis, a Breaux Bridge businessman, joined Parkerson in the enterprise. These two men guided the destinies of the corporation until May of 1936, when Felix F. Kurz, executive vice-president of the General Insurance Company of Seattle—one of the largest insurance companies in the nation—entered the firm as a partner and became one of its chief executives.

In July, 1947 Shelby H. Green, then president of Insurers Indemnity and Insurance Company of Oklahoma, joined the firm as a partner. Thus was formed the present executive and partnership family of the Parkerson Insurance Corporation.

The quartet of Lafayette businessmen—Parkerson, Dupuis, Kurz and Green—now controls and actively directs and manages: Parkerson Insurance Corporation, Parkerson and Barnes, Southern Marine and Aviation Underwriters, Inc.—which, in the aggregate, is the largest general agency in the state of Louisiana, top-ranking in size in the south and one of the largest in the nation.

First Firm in 1897

The first Parkerson insurance firm was organized in 1897 by Rene Parkerson, an uncle of James D. Parkerson and one of the outstanding Lafayette businessmen of his day. In 1927, Mr. Parkerson purchased controlling interest in Parkerson and Mills Insurance agency, the successor to Parkerson Insurance agency, organized by his uncle. In 1930, while engaged in this local agency business he organized the Parkerson General Insurance Agency, Inc., and in 1933 was joined by Mr. Dupuis.

The Parkerson Insurance Corporation maintains a staff of experts in the fields of fire and casualty underwriting, marine, aviation, bonds, safety engineering, and maintains its own claim department on a local basis to more effectively and speedily render claim service to its local agents and their clients. The corporation occupies spacious modern headquarters in the second block of Jefferson street, Lafayette's main thoroughfare.

Among the staff executives and department managers in the Parkerson Insurance Corporation are: Rock Lasser—claims; Hilton Sandoz, bonds; Dave Maddox, fire underwriter; C. R. Sliger, casualty underwriter and safety department manager; John P. Kelly, manager of the accounting and clerical department.

In 1947 the Parkerson Insurance Corporation issued a 50th anniversary book commemorating the half-century of its uninterrupted activity in the insurance field of the successive and allied Parkerson insurance agencies and organizations.

This volume was widely acclaimed by the insurance fraternity and business and professional people generally. At that time over 80 local agents, located in nearly every city, town and parish of the state, represented the companies for which the corporation is general agent. Since 1947 the number of local agencies and the gross annual volume of business has materially increased.

The Parkerson Insurance Corporation represents ten of the nation's strongest fire stock companies and four bonding and casualty companies, its managers advise. They are unanimous in their opinion that as soon as general conditions relating to fire and casualty company facilities are greatly curtailed due to the impact of the war on national economy are bettered, their corporation's volume of business will greatly increase, thereby affording Lafayette a much greater payroll and increased local expenditures.

"Opportunity Land"

Mr. Parkerson and Mr. Dupuis are both natives of southern Louisiana and naturally believe very strongly in their state.

However, it is interesting to note what Mr. Kurz, who bails from the progressive northwest, has to say about the city and section.

"I know of no section of the United States where there is greater opportunity for the progressive individual than southern Louisiana.

In fact, Louisiana generally offers unlimited opportunity to both energy and capital. After investigating many enterprises in many sections of the nation, I decided to enter this corporation, in the city of Lafayette, in the state of Louisiana—this should tell you how I feel about our opportunity in this part of the state."

Shelby Green was likewise engaged in business in another part of the Country—Oklahoma, Mr. Green even passed through Texas several times to get to Louisiana, yet in spite of all he saw and heard about Texas, he chose the "Bayou State", Mr. Green said:

"When a man has worked himself up from a salaried job to the presidency of a fair-sized insurance company he just doesn't pull up stakes and move to another state without good—very good—reasons. Such it was in my case. I had to have very good reasons to move to Louisiana and make what was to me a considerable investment. Of course, Mr. Parkerson, Mr. Kurz and Mr. Dupuis had invited me to enter a flourishing and profitable business, but even in the light of this I wanted to know much about Louisiana's future possibilities for growth and development. When I made the move in 1947 I made such an investigation and study. I was not disappointed then and I am even more enthusiastic today. With our natural resources and potentialities in almost every field of endeavor and investment, there is nothing to keep us from our rightful place in the sun."