

## ROYAL SPANISH HONORS FOR ASBURY PARK MAN

### Harral Ayres Gains Old Castilian Order

#### Thus Signally Rewarded For Work In Building Highway From St. Augustine to San Diego, From the Atlantic to the Pacific.

### KINGLY DECORATION AND RECIPIENT

### Former Prominent Seashore Resident

#### At One Time Served As Secretary to Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Association and Di- rected Baby Parade Fetes Here.



At what is described as having been a diplomatic function with precedent in the United States, a distinguished honor was paid by the Spanish king to a former well known citizen of Asbury Park, Harral Ayres, now a resident of San Antonio, Texas, when he was invested with the decoration of the Royal Order of Isabel la Católica, with the title of Knight Commander. It is the most distinguished royal order of Spain, memorializing the golden age of Ferdinand and Isabella.

The event, which took place Tuesday evening, April 22, just passed, signaled the practical completion of the work undertaken 12 years ago to establish and open the Old Spanish Trail, which threads its way thru old Spanish lands across the continent from the old Spanish city of St. Augustine, on the Atlantic coast, to the old Spanish city of San Diego, on the Pacific coast. The honor was conferred upon Mr. Ayres in recognition of his work as managing director of the great undertaking. The trail is today the most complete trans-continental highway in the United States.

The investiture was in the nature of a formal reception participated in by Spanish, American, Mexican and Texas officials and over 100 distinguished guests. Don Pablo de Urbani, consul of Spain in Texas and New Mexico, representing the Spanish crown, presided at the consecration. Don Urbani was in his gold-brocaded diplomatic uniform and chaparral. The official crowd surrounding Don Urbani, consisting of state, county and city officials, civic club executives, the major general of the army and the consul-general of Mexico, were all in formal dress and diplomatic usages prescribed.

The ceremony was in the nature of a noted San Antonio home where all surroundings were in keeping with the diplomatic function. Both Spanish and American music were played, and the addresses were read in Spanish and American, as etiquette required. All guests stood during the ceremony.

The condecoracion jewel is a double-sided cross and surmounts in the red and gold Spanish colors, two inches in diameter, suspended from a laurel leaf. On one side are the names of the king and monogram. On the reverse side, the coat of arms and "L. Leal y Acordado." "Awarded in honor and merit." The title conferred is that of Knight Commander, highest appointment in the order. The highest title, Knight of the Great Cross, comes "from promotion from a lower title, or as complimentary title is "Illustrissimo" (illustrious). So carefully are the honors of this order conferred, this condecoracion cross

married to Don Fernando de Catholic, rulers who lived in the XV century, and who, as well known in history, lent their names to America's national symbol support to the distinguished Cristobal Colon, discoverer of America.

The Cross of "Isabel the Catholic" rewards those who, on this side of the sea, distinguish themselves in ways that contribute to the prestige and distinction of Spain. You, Senor Ayres, have shown this on the present occasion and it is for this that I have the honor of presenting to you, in the name of his majesty Alphonso XIII, these insignias, being certain that you will continue in the future to labor for the good name of my country where a great sympathy for the American people is entertained.

I also wish to acknowledge my gratitude to an illustrious lady, Mrs. Henry Drough, who not only helped in a very diligent way Senor Ayres in his efforts, but has also rendered aid in her beautiful and stately home for this official act now so brilliantly displayed.

In closing I wish to salute the noted personalities here in the official group: Major-General O. C. Lander, Mayor Chambers, Judge Robertson, Consul-General Santhibanes de Mexico, wife and the president of the city, officials of the noted civic organizations of this city, the distinguished, Walter Walball and T. H. Eberidge, and my good

friends Dr. Frederick Goette, Werner N. Bergmann and Prof. F. Treston. To all of them I express my sincere thanks in the name of my government and my government for the courtesies they have extended to me during my stay here, which will always make me remember delightfully my visit to this beautiful city of San Antonio.

Senor Harral Ayres: You are now declared Comendador de Isabel la Católica, in this island.

I have spoken.  
Mr. Ayres Reply  
Following the applause which greeted the remarks of Don Urbani, Mr. Ayres made a graceful response in recognition. He spoke as follows:

Senor Urbani:  
"The graciousness of his majesty, your king, in honoring me with this condecoracion it

deeply appreciated, the more so because it was well unexpected and because in such character and dignity shows recognition in your country of our citizens in this southern part of the world. It is a great honor to bring to life the story of the remarkable works of the Spanish fathers of the golden age of Ferdinand and Isabella and of the centuries that followed.

We have not been seeking to build merely a road. We have found the history and works of those centuries worthy of our veneration and we hope that from this great highway movement will come the spirit that will restore these old Spanish missions and other great works and preserve them as a rich heritage to posterity and will preserve the history of those days for the people of coming ages. I give you assurance

that in some sections this work of condecoracion is making progress and movements to revive the cultural aspects of that Spanish age are growing in strength.

I believe I am primarily grateful for this condecoracion because it is a recognition of the work of the Old Spanish Trail and we hope to develop its attractions and its historical and romantic background and draw travelers from all over the world to it. The high resolve of the Spanish fathers and the Spanish forefathers are constantly brooding better and better lighted for our American people.

For myself and for all Old Spanish Trail people I ask you to express to your sovereign and to his government, our gratitude and esteem. To you as the sustainer of the condecoracion of old and would not let difficulties stand against our warmest greetings. May your charm and cordiality, the blessings of life be extended with you and your country and his majesty your king through all time!

He has been 20 years since Mr. Ayres has resided in Asbury Park, but during his residence both here and in Ocean Grove he took a foremost part in civic affairs and is well remembered by a large circle of friends. When he was 19 years old, H. B. Ayres, as he was then known to his friends, became cashier of the Ocean Grove Camp Meeting association, "in full charge of interests involving many thousands of dollars annually and the delicate duties of business, resident wife and successful management," as Dr. E. H. Stokes, president of the board, wrote two years later in a commendation approved by the whole association.

It was a responsible job for a lad of 19 but he proved equal to the responsibility. However, after ten years he resigned because he had reached the highest position attainable in that work. Twice while here he refused the association leadership, reducing it from a 6 percent basis to 4 1/2. During this period he was a member of the school board and chairman of its finance committee. He built the Ocean Grove high school. He was also a member of the Asbury Park Wheelmen and refused appointment in 1904-5 to rent rooms for the club after a committee consisting of Charles A. Adams and A. C. Twining had reported a club house could not be financed. The club then met in 1905 and the League was organized. Instead of renting rooms the Ayres committee, after several meetings, obtained permission to build. The Ayres club house "financed to stay for years," as he reported, was ready in 1905 and the League was organized. When his 1910 carnival report was filed he announced he would leave and fight for his health.

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Originator of Carnival of Queen Titiana and the royal celebration of the centennial of events that crowded the city over the years from 1901 to 1904 and to the cost of up to thousands of dollars but always reported a cash profit from a 6 percent basis to 4 1/2. The strain of his work in New York and these summer responsibilities in Asbury Park, however, began to tell upon his health, illnesses which later made him a handicapped man to uphold him. He refused appointment in 1904-5 to rent rooms for the club after a committee consisting of Charles A. Adams and A. C. Twining had reported a club house could not be financed. The club then met in 1905 and the League was organized. Instead of renting rooms the Ayres committee, after several meetings, obtained permission to build. The Ayres club house "financed to stay for years," as he reported, was ready in 1905 and the League was organized. When his 1910 carnival report was filed he announced he would leave and fight for his health.

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