

Rider College News

TRENTON, N. J., MAY 9, 1930

Rider Alumnus Has Been Honored By King of Spain For Promotion of Old Transcontinental Trail

San Antonio, Texas, May 8.—Harral Ayres, a graduate of Rider, class of 1890, and ten years leader of the Old Spanish Trail development, has received distinguished honor from the King of Spain. The decoration of the Royal Order of Isabel la Catolica, with title of Knight Commander, has been conferred, and on April 29, at a reception by San Antonio people, the ceremonies of presentation were held, with Spanish Consul Pablo de Ubarri officiating.

The jewel of the Order is a double-sided Spanish sunburst two inches in diameter, suspended from a laurel wreath. On one side the name of the Order; on the other side, "La Lealtad Acrisolada," expressive of loyalty and merit. There are three titles in the Order—"Knight of the Great Cross," and "Knight Commander," and "Knights."

When Harral Ayres accepted the Old Spanish Trail leadership in 1919 there was no travelable route across the Southern Borderlands. Automobiles found round-about courses through mud, cattle ranches and deserts, and on numerous long and undependable ferries. The Spaniards in the old days extended their princely explorations, missions and colonies from Florida to California with such difficulty their centuries of effort have gone into history as a heroic age.

Today the Old Spanish Trail is one of the noted highways of the United States; the pioneer history of the Spaniards, most ancient on the continent, is attracting the people; Spanish architecture and atmosphere are being revived.

Progress reports indicate pavement will, in another two to three years, be complete on this highway from Saint Augustine, Florida, to San Diego, California.

When the monument was dedicated at Saint Augustine, April, 1929, the Spanish Crown was represented by Senor Don Rafael Casares Gil. On that occasion a motorcade started from California carrying an eminent delegation of San Diegans, joined by delegates from other States; they traveled from San Diego to Saint Augustine,

DECORATED



Harral Ayres, '90

2750 miles, in eleven days, keeping to a schedule like a railroad train.

This monument is not alone to mark the beginning of the Old Spanish Trail of today in its long span across the continent. It is a memorial to the men and women who have mastered the problems and made the highway possible. It is a tribute to the Spanish people of yesteryear and of today. It is a challenge now to the people to go on with this work and to keep this far southern land a joy for travelers for years to come, and a memorial to all that is good in that age of art and chivalry, and adventure, and of great mission work.

SENIOR OF 1890