

FROM Old Spanish Trail Assn., Gunter Hotel, San Antonio, Tex., April 17, 1930

SPANISH KING HONORS OLD SPANISH TRAIL
HARRAL AYRES DECORATED
GREAT ACHIEVEMENT OF SOUTHERN PEOPLE INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED

San Antonio, Texas, Apr. -- Harral Ayres, ten years leader of the Old Spanish Trail development, has received distinguished honor from the King of Spain. The Condecoration 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 will be 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 motoroade started from California carrying an eminent delegation of San Diegans, joined by delegates from other States; they traveled from San Diego to Saint Augustine, 2750 miles in eleven days, keeping to a schedule like a railroad train.