



Left: Robert S. Dale, editor of the Carthage Evening Press, Dr. Harlow Shapley, and Mrs. Shapley (the former Martha Betz).

Above: Governor John M. Dalton visits with Dr. and Mrs. Shapley during a pause in Shapley Day activities at Carthage.

Harlow Shapley

If the citizens of Carthage, Missouri, ever felt that a neighboring farm boy named Harlow Shapley had been slighted by the local high school, they have more than made amends. They did it on May 3. That was Shapley Day in Carthage, when thousands of Southwest Missourians paid homage to a native of their area who became world renowned as an astronomer.

That high school incident goes back more than half a century. From a nearby rural school young Harlow sought admission to the Carthage high school. He was turned away on the grounds that his previous schooling had not prepared him for freshman status. Dr. Shapley holds no grudge about that decision. He says the administrators were right in their action, and he would have done the same thing. A student who finished the rural school he attended had the equivalent of a fifth-grade education, it is reckoned by today's standards.

The story has a happy, if belated, ending. One of the events of Shapley Day was the presentation of an honorary diploma to Dr. Shapley from the Carthage

Senior High School, the first it had ever awarded. Now the professor emeritus at Harvard can place the diploma with the three degrees he won from the University of Missouri, the Ph.D. from Princeton, and honorary doctorates from sixteen universities in this country and in various parts of the world.

When young Shapley was denied entrance to the high school, he enrolled in the Carthage Collegiate Institute, which offered a high school and junior college education. He finished the course in one and a half years and was valedictorian of his class of four.

Prime mover of Shapley Day was E. L. Dale, publisher of the Carthage Evening Press. A believer in flowers for the living, he had for some time nurtured the idea of his city and surrounding area paying respects to their famous native son in an appropriate manner. He approached Dr. Shapley about his coming to Carthage for such an occasion. While impressed the scientist was genuinely modest, and this was a deterrent; but more than that his heavy schedule made it difficult for him to work in a date. Mr. Dale



Left: *Publisher E. L. Dale with Mrs. Shapley and her famous husband.*

Below: *Dr. Shapley receives honorary diploma from Carthage Senior High School. Schools Superintendent Lester Gillman makes the presentation.*



Photos courtesy Carthage (Mo.) Evening Press

Comes Home

left it to Dr. Shapley to decide when the date could be, and this was eventually done. Everything worked out beautifully. In the bargain, Mr. Dale got an honorary diploma from the high school too—he had dropped out as a student when the lure of printer's ink proved too strong. The Chamber of Commerce shared responsibilities for Shapley Day with the Carthage Evening Press. Mr. Dale served as chairman. His son, Robert S. Dale, B.J. '41, editor of the Press, had a big role with a 33-member committee.

The homecoming celebration began with a dedication at the Mark Twain school, which stands on the site of the old Collegiate Institute. Dr. Shapley's portrait and a picture of the Institute were presented to the school district in his honor. After a press conference, there was a Chamber of Commerce luncheon, with Governor John M. Dalton as the speaker. A parade in the afternoon featured floats representing incidents in the life of Dr. Shapley and was followed by a reception at the Civic Center. That night Dr. Shapley was guest of honor at the 16th annual Car-

thage Evening Press 4-H and Future Farmers of America dinner. Many notables were present; praise and more honors were heaped upon the special guest. Representing President Elmer Ellis of the University was Dr. William H. Pfander, professor of animal husbandry, who is a native of the same rural area as Dr. Shapley. The program closed with Dr. Shapley taking the audience on a trip among the galaxies by means of a slide lecture.

The scientist, who has won world acclaim for his research and scientific advancements while serving as a staff member at Mount Wilson Observatory and as director of the Harvard College Observatory, made this comment at one stage of the homecoming celebration: "It is an emotional experience and I appreciate what has been said." This may well sum up his feeling about the home folks' tribute to him.

The Carthage Evening Press published excellent accounts of the background and accomplishments of the noted astronomer and other members of the illustrious Shapley family.