

DARK SKIES for October 2017:

S/M Oct.	1/2	3:22 a.m.	-	5:24 a.m.
M/T Oct.	2/3	4:26 a.m.	-	5:25 a.m.
T/W Oct.	3/4	none		
W/T Oct.	4/5	none		
T/F Oct.	5/6	none		
F/S Oct.	6/7	none		
S/S Oct.	7/8	8:05 p.m.	-	8:07 p.m.
S/M Oct.	8/9	8:04 p.m.	-	8:47 p.m.
M/T Oct.	9/10	8:02 p.m.	-	9:33 p.m.
T/W Oct.	10/11	8:00 p.m.	-	10:25 p.m.
W/T Oct.	11/12	7:59 p.m.	-	11:22 p.m.
T/F Oct.	12/13	7:57 p.m.	-	12:25 a.m.
F/S Oct.	13/14	7:55 p.m.	-	1:31 a.m.
S/S Oct.	14/15	7:54 p.m.	-	2:37 a.m.
S/M Oct.	15/16	7:52 p.m.	-	3:44 a.m.
M/T Oct.	16/17	7:50 p.m.	-	4:49 a.m.
T/W Oct.	17/18	7:49 p.m.	-	5:42 a.m.
W/T Oct.	18/19	7:47 p.m.	-	5:44 a.m.
T/F Oct.	19/20	7:46 p.m.	-	5:45 a.m.
F/S Oct.	20/21	7:44 p.m.	-	5:46 a.m.
S/S Oct.	21/22	7:43 p.m.	-	5:47 a.m.
S/M Oct.	22/23	8:12 p.m.	-	5:48 a.m.
M/T Oct.	23/24	8:51 p.m.	-	5:49 a.m.
T/W Oct.	24/25	9:33 p.m.	-	5:50 a.m.
W/T Oct.	25/26	10:21 p.m.	-	5:52 a.m.
T/F Oct.	26/27	11:12 p.m.	-	5:53 a.m.
F/S Oct.	27/28	12:07 a.m.	-	5:54 a.m.
S/S Oct.	28/29	1:06 a.m.	-	5:55 a.m.
S/M Oct.	29/30	2:07 a.m.	-	5:56 a.m.
M/T Oct.	30/31	3:12 a.m.	-	5:57 a.m.
T/W Oct.	31/1	4:18 a.m.	-	5:58 a.m.

Times listed are for Dodgeville, Wisconsin when

- (1) Moon is below the horizon
- (2) Sun is > 18° below the horizon
(astronomical twilight)

Please minimize your use of outdoor lighting during these times to give everyone the best possible view of the night sky.

Time Travel

conducted by David Oesper

THE BEGINNINGS OF AMERICAN ASTRONOMY (continued)

These dates and the summary history just given will serve to indicate the situation of astronomy in the United States during the first half of the present century. A little attention to the dates will enable the reader to place an individual or an institution on its proper background. It must constantly be kept in mind that the whole country was very young, and that public interest in astronomical matters was neither educated nor very general. The data here set down will have a distinct value as a contribution to the history of astronomy in America. The developments of later years have been so amazing that we forget that the first working observatories were founded so late as 1845.

American science is scarcely more than half a century old. The day will soon come—it is now here—when we shall look back with wonder and gratitude to ask who were the men who laid the wide and deep foundations which already maintain so noble an edifice.

[Edward S. Holden](#), *Science*, June 18, 1897

THE RISE AND FALL OF EDWARD S. HOLDEN: PART 1

DONALD E. OSTERBROCK, University of California

“The Devil”, “the Czar”, “an unmitigated blackguard”, “the Dictator”, “Prince Holden”, “the great I am”, “the Great Mahatma”, “that humbug”, “that contemptible brute”, “that immoral and incompetent man”, “our former colleague and fake”—these are some of the terms in which men who worked under Edward S. Holden, or were close confidantes of others who did, referred to him in their private letters. Yet, for nine eventful years he retained the confidence of several of the most influential American astronomers, including Simon Newcomb, and a majority of the regents of the University of California. With their support, Holden continued as director of Lick Observatory through the summer of 1897. Then came the fall.

Holden was born in St Louis in 1846, the only child of parents who were both descended from old New England families. His mother died of cholera when young Ned was only three years old, and a few years later he was sent to Cambridge to be raised by one of his aunts. He attended an excellent private school, taught by one of his cousins, the daughter of another of his father’s sisters. Yet another cousin was married to George P. Bond, the son of William C. Bond, the director of the Harvard Observatory until his death in 1859. George P. Bond was his father’s assistant until he succeeded him as director. Thus Holden was brought up in an intellectual atmosphere, which centred around the university, the observatory, and the Harvard Botanic Gardens. In addition to the Bonds, he saw the noted scientists Asa Gray and Louis Agassiz almost daily, as well as Charles Henry Davis, the naval officer who was the first superintendent of the Nautical Almanac Office; they were his models for emulation. Holden always remembered vividly his first glimpse of the bright star Vega through the Harvard Observatory “great [15-inch] refractor”.

When Ned was fourteen, he was sent back to St Louis to attend the Washington University Academy, a prep school, and after two years’ study there he was admitted to Washington University itself in 1862. Missouri was a border state, tugged both ways by the Civil War; Holden’s father with his New England heritage was an anti-slavery Republican and, according to his son’s memory, “lent valuable aid to the military authorities in saving Missouri from secession”.

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