DARK SKIES for April 2018:

S/M Apr.	1/2	none
M/T Apr.	2/3	9:06 p.m. - 9:57 p.m.
T/W Apr.	3/4	9:07 p.m. - 10:59 p.m.
W/T Apr.	4/5	9:08 p.m. - 11:59 p.m.
T/F Apr.	5/6	9:10 p.m. - 12:54 a.m.
F/S Apr.	6/7	9:11 p.m. - 1:46 a.m.
S/S Apr.	7/8	9:13 p.m. - 2:33 a.m.
S/M Apr.	8/9	9:14 p.m. - 3:16 a.m.
M/T Apr.	9/10	9:16 p.m. - 3:54 a.m.
T/W Apr.	10/11	9:17 p.m. - 4:29 a.m.
W/T Apr.	**11/12**	**9:19 p.m. - 4:42 a.m.**
T/F Apr.	**12/13**	**9:20 p.m. - 4:40 a.m.**
F/S Apr.	**13/14**	**9:22 p.m. - 4:38 a.m.**
S/S Apr.	**14/15**	**9:24 p.m. - 4:36 a.m.**
S/M Apr.	**15/16**	**9:25 p.m. - 4:34 a.m.**
M/T Apr.	**16/17**	**9:27 p.m. - 4:32 a.m.**
T/W Apr.	17/18	9:43 p.m. - 4:30 a.m.
W/T Apr.	18/19	10:53 p.m. - 4:28 a.m.
T/F Apr.	19/20	Midnight - 4:26 a.m.
F/S Apr.	20/21	1:03 a.m. - 4:24 a.m.
S/S Apr.	21/22	1:59 a.m. - 4:22 a.m.
S/M Apr.	22/23	2:48 a.m. - 4:20 a.m.
M/T Apr.	23/24	3:30 a.m. - 4:17 a.m.
T/W Apr.	24/25	4:06 a.m. - 4:15 a.m.
W/T Apr.	25/26	none
T/F Apr.	26/27	none
F/S Apr.	27/28	none
S/S Apr.	28/29	none
S/M Apr.	29/30	none
M/T Apr.	30/1	none

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 RISE AND FALL OF EDWARD S. HOLDEN: PART 1

DONALD E. OSTERBROCK, University of California

As president of the University of California, Holden seems to have done a competent, workmanlike job. He and everyone else recognized that he was there only temporarily, until he could take over the observatory. He made the customary inspirational and uplifting addresses to the students, exhorting them to be "manly, upright, dignified, just". In one respect at least he learned to operate like a university president, for he later wrote to a friend, "I must say that I think the U. of Cal. foot-ball team has done more to cultivate a sense of loyalty to an abstraction–the Univ[ersit]y–than anything I know of & I think it is worth its cost".

During Holden's second year as president, a nasty row erupted in which his astronomical abilities were strongly criticized in print. It began with an article by Richard A. Proctor, the English lecturer and popular writer on astronomy. He forecast that not much would be accomplished with the giant Lick 36-inch refractor when it went into operation, for, he claimed, experience had proved that observers who had done admirable work with small telescopes did little with the superior potential of larger ones. Thus, he concluded, from the great Lick telescope, "we can hardly expect aught but disappointment, though we may hope–hope springs eternal in the human breast–for better things". This was anathema to the California boosters, and the *San Francisco Examiner* in an editorial the next day labelled Proctor's thesis "a proposition of self-evident absurdity, . . . too gross for serious consideration". A reporter was sent to interview Holden, who wisely said that he did not want to prophesy what the telescope would do; it would soon go into operation and the results would speak for themselves. He went on with some well chosen words on the superior light-gathering power of the 36-inch refractor, and on the advantages of the steady atmosphere at Mount Hamilton. This would have been enough for any ordinary university president or observatory director. But Holden could not resist adding a few remarks which appeared in the *Examiner* as "I know I am familiar with the history of every observatory and astronomer of note since the world began–that's my business and from my knowledge I can say that what Mr. Proctor says is not true. . . . Mr. Proctor is not a working astronomer but a writer of books. He has done much to popularize astronomy in the way of compilations and for this he deserves credit. He has made the science familiar, but the telescope used by him was a small one, and he has never yet done anything of consequence. That's all I care to say now, but a book would not hold all I can say."

This reply was sent off to Proctor, who, not to be outdone, fired back a few thousand words of his own. He attributed Holden's attack to a previous controversy over a review of one of his own books, and claimed that "[n]ear the very time when he was writing that spiteful and dishonest review he was sickening me with compliments and adulation in Washington". Proctor called Holden "a convicted utterer of untruths" and "the telescopist who failed utterly at Washington", and concluded, "Professor Holden has done no single thing, either in the way of observation, thought or exposition, which will live beyond his own time, and he has done much which should make him thankful that such will be the fate of his work". As for himself, Proctor said, he did not like to boast, but looking back over the past twenty-five years of astronomy, all the important changes in ideas were ones that he himself had had a large share in bringing about.

Journal for the History of Astronomy, Vol. 15:2, No. 43, 1984