

## THE OPEN CLUSTER NGC 4609 BEHIND THE COALSACK

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Photoelectric observations in the *UBV* system are given for stars in and near the open clusters NGC 4609 and Hogg 15. NGC 4609 is at a distance of 1320 pcs and it is  $6 \times 10^7$  years old. The spread of stars around its main sequence is larger than in other clusters and this may be related with the absorbing material of the Coalsack.

*Key words:* star cluster — photometry

The open cluster NGC 4609, close to the bright Be star HD 110432, is an inconspicuous group of stars near the center of the dark cloud known as the Coalsack. The cluster is well behind the

Coalsack according to Rodgers (1960), as he derived a distance of 174 pcs for the Coalsack and 1520 pcs for NGC 4609.

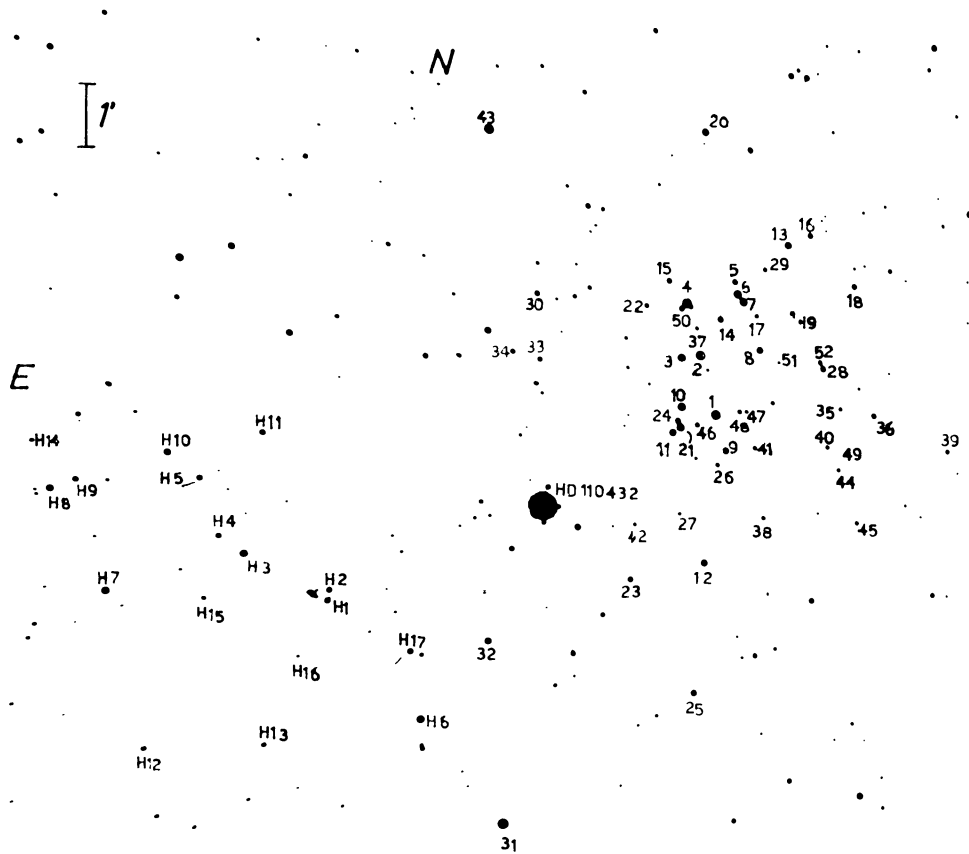


FIG. 1 — The identification chart for NGC 4609 and Hogg 15. The star HD 110432 is also indicated.

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