

# Eisenhower: A Life through the Lens of Lunar Phenomena

By Isabella Henderson

## **Introduction**

Dwight D. Eisenhower's legacy, like that of others in the pantheon of great American generals, is often framed in terms of providence and sheer luck, as though fate itself played a role in his rise. Akin to Washington and Grant, much has been made of his apparent gift for fortuity. Far less, however, has been considered about the subtle confluence between lunar cycles and the milestones of his career. From his graduation at West Point under a New Moon to the launch of D-Day under a Full Moon, the moon served as a reflective companion throughout Eisenhower's military trajectory. With the assistance of celestial data provided by LunarLife, this article explores the kindred arc between Eisenhower's career and various phases of the moon, demonstrating how moments of personal and professional transformation align with lunar conditions, between new beginnings marked by the New Moon, growth and refinement by the Waxing Crescent and Waxing Gibbous phases, and fulfillment and completion by the Full Moon. Through this lens, Eisenhower's command progression is not only a story of military genius but one of timing, inner rhythm, and cosmic symmetry.

### **Graduation from West Point (New Moon)**

On June 12, 1915, under the emerging light of a New Moon, Eisenhower graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point.<sup>1</sup> The New Moon, long associated with new beginnings and latent potential, was particularly congruous with his entry into what would become an extraordinary military career. It was at West Point where Ike first honed the careful acumen and tactical discipline essential to both soldiering and leadership, training in a rigorous curriculum steeped in engineering, science, leadership, weaponry, and military regimen. By the time of his graduation, he was well-versed in military affairs, encompassing both martial doctrine and organizational structure.

The fortuitous conditions that coincided with Eisenhower's departure from West Point were hardly isolated. From admission to commencement, much of Eisenhower's time at West Point was shaped by fortune—a fortune which even Eisenhower often struggled to apprehend: "Like the other young men, I sometimes wondered—by what chance arrangement of fate did I come by this uniform?"<sup>2</sup> Born into a hardworking but impoverished family, Ike lacked the political connections typically needed for a congressional appointment to West Point. In September 1910, however, Senator Joseph L. Bristow—a progressive reformer—announced competitive exams for Kansas applicants. On October 10, under another New Moon, he sat for the exam, finishing second out of nine. By the Full Moon of October 24, he received word of his selection by Bristow.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> NASA Goddard Space Flight Center, "SKYCAL – Sky Events Calendar," NASA Eclipse Web Site, accessed June 23, 2025, <https://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SKYCAL/SKYCAL.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower, *At Ease: Stories I Tell to Friends* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1967), 26.

<sup>3</sup> NASA, "SKYCAL."

The chances of gaining a commission at graduation were slim for Eisenhower, who was sidelined by a bad knee, weathered from years of football. When informed by Colonel Henry Alden Shaw, the chief medical officer at West Point, that his injury might disqualify him from service or relegate him to the coast artillery, Eisenhower remained undaunted. Though uncertain of the role he would play, he was acutely aware of his call to service, and this would not entail the "numbing series of routine chores and a minimum of excitement" that commission in the coast artillery would.<sup>4</sup> Moved by Ike's resolve, Colonel Shaw directly appealed to the War Department's surgeon general after the West Point medical board unanimously deemed him unfit to serve. In his assessment, the surgeon general determined that Ike "would be a good gamble."<sup>5</sup>

Ike was in exceptional company. West Point's Class of 1915, famously dubbed "the class the stars fell on," produced more general officers than any other in history, with about 36% of its members receiving important distinction as general officers.<sup>6</sup> Alongside Ike and Omar Bradley—both of whom would rise to the rank of five-star general—the Class of 1915 included 2 four-star generals, 7 three-star lieutenant generals, 24 two-star major generals, and 24 one-star brigadier generals. While "stars" refers to the insignia denoting rank, the conditions surrounding his class were nearly cosmic. Graduating under the introspective glow of the New Moon, its members seemed destined for greatness.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 25.

<sup>5</sup> Colonel Herman Beukema to Dwight D. Eisenhower, April 1946, Eisenhower Library (EL), quoted in Jean Edward Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace* (New York: Random House, 2012), Apple Books edition, Chapter 1.

<sup>6</sup> United States Military Academy, "Selected Noteworthy Graduates," *USMA Public Affairs Office*, archived March 20, 2012, [https://web.archive.org/web/20120320064244/http://www.usma.edu/PublicAffairs/Press\\_Kit\\_files/SelectedNoteworthyGrads.htm](https://web.archive.org/web/20120320064244/http://www.usma.edu/PublicAffairs/Press_Kit_files/SelectedNoteworthyGrads.htm).

<sup>7</sup> NASA, "SKYCAL."

### **Promotion to First Lieutenant (Waxing Crescent)**

Throughout his time in uniform, Ike earned several promotions under either a Waxing Crescent or a Waxing Gibbous. Both lunar conditions represent growth, with the Waxing Crescent reflecting initial commitment to set intentions and the Waxing Gibbous symbolizing refinement and preparation for fruition. On July 1, 1916, beneath a Waxing Crescent, Ike received his first promotion to First Lieutenant—the very same day he wed Mamie Doud.<sup>8</sup> At the time, Ike was stationed at Fort Sam Houston in Texas, then the largest military installation in the United States, serving with F Company, 2nd Battalion, 19th Infantry.<sup>9</sup> In addition to the commencement of a union that would last for more than four decades (Ike would remain married to Mamie until he died in 1969), the celestial timing was fitting for his first major advancement as a soldier.

### **Promotions to Major and Lieutenant General (Waxing Gibbous)**

The Waxing Gibbous Moon—a phase that sometimes urges patience, refinement, and unwavering commitment alongside growth—aligned with a formative moment in Eisenhower's early military career. On March 24, 1918, under its steady glow, he arrived at Camp Colt, an abandoned military installation on the grounds of the Gettysburg Battlefield site in Pennsylvania, where he was tasked with training the newly formed tank corps as commander.<sup>10</sup> At the time, Eisenhower held the rank of captain. As compelling as the prospect might have been (tank

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, Chapter 2.

<sup>10</sup> NASA, "SKYCAL."

warfare was still in its infancy at the time), it also came with a bitter tradeoff: he would be sidelined from the battlefield in France, where World War I continued to rage. Ike was crestfallen at the lost opportunity, later admitting that his "mood was black." Still, he remained resolute in his duties, "[finding] no better cure than to blow off steam in private and then settle down to the job at hand."<sup>11</sup> With the war already underway, volunteers trained at Camp Colt would be sent directly overseas, with no stops between Gettysburg and the port of embarkation. As commander, Ike had to ensure that every man was thoroughly drilled and poised for combat, and "no excuses for deficiencies in their records or equipment would be accepted."<sup>12</sup>

Eisenhower's ability to stand undaunted in the face of mounting challenges at Camp Colt was quickly recognized by his superiors. Working within a fledgling branch of the military, his role as commander of the tank corps was largely unscripted. The absence of reliable communication between the front lines and training grounds offered little guidance. "We had no information from France on what types of training best suited soldiers for survival and success in that form of warfare," Ike recalled. "Our chief source of information came from newspapers, and we had to use our imagination."<sup>13</sup> One of his most imaginative initiatives was the establishment of telegraphy and motor schools, which aimed at teaching the soldiers Morse code and proper techniques of maneuvering tanks.<sup>14</sup> In April 1918, Ike's adaptability was tested further when a ferocious snowstorm besieged Gettysburg, rendering the camp inoperable for several days. He quickly secured stoves from nearby hardware stores, driving for hours through heavy snow, and

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<sup>11</sup> Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 135.

<sup>12</sup> Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 138.

<sup>13</sup> Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 139.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 140.

instructed his men to build makeshift hearths when supplies ran short. "When the storm ended, we were ready to tackle anything in the way of work," Ike wrote later.<sup>15</sup> On June 17, 1918, under a Waning Gibbous Moon, he was promoted to Major—an auspicious reward for his resilience.<sup>16</sup>

In September 1918, the greatest challenge of all arrived at Camp Colt: the Spanish Flu. Within a week of its arrival, 175 men had succumbed to the disease.<sup>17</sup> The camp's infrastructure was barely equipped to accommodate mass quarantine, let alone the piling bodies of the dead. Joining forces with the camp's chief surgeon, Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Scott, Ike oversaw the setting up of tents to isolate those with symptoms, the refashioning of nearby churches into makeshift care centers, and the temporary closure of nearby businesses to restrict viral spread. Doctors moved quickly to administer inoculations, and camp facilities were rigorously disinfected daily with Lysol and kerosene. Within a week of the first death, the outbreak had run its course and was suitably contained.<sup>18</sup>

Camp Colt's success stood in stark contrast to other training camps across the country that struggled to control the virus. The War Department heralded Eisenhower's response as an example, inviting thirty of the camp's doctors to Washington to demonstrate their containment efforts. After more than seven months at Camp Colt, Eisenhower had more than proven his ability to lead through adversity, from a lack of institutional guidance to a global health crisis. On October 18, 1918, coinciding with his birthday, he was promoted to lieutenant colonel under

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 138-139.

<sup>16</sup> NASA, "SKYCAL"; Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, Chapter 2.

<sup>17</sup> Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 149.

<sup>18</sup> Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, Chapter 2.

another Waxing Gibbous Moon.<sup>19</sup> "I regard this officer as one of the most efficient young officers I have known," wrote Colonel Ira C. Welborn, a War Department official who oversaw Ike's work. "He had the duties and responsibilities commensurate with the rank of brigadier general, and he performed those duties under trying conditions in a highly credible manner."<sup>20</sup> The promotion marked the culmination of months of perseverance, quiet command, and rising promise.

### **German Armistice (First Quarter)**

Just as Eisenhower's star seemed to rise, the war itself began to wane. On November 11, 1918, under a First Quarter Moon—a phase that often brings tension and roadblocks—Germany signed the armistice agreement, effectively ending World War I.<sup>21</sup> While the surrender was cause for celebration across the Western Hemisphere, Ike was devastated: "I suppose we'll spend the rest of our lives explaining why we didn't get into this war," he reportedly lamented to a colleague.<sup>22</sup> From that point on, he would regard the loss of opportunity to serve abroad as one of his greatest disappointments.

Just days earlier, Ike had finally received orders to depart Camp Colt on November 18, 1918, to command an armored regiment overseas. Having been passed over for shipment several times throughout his nascent career, he was eager to prove himself in combat. Recognition for

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<sup>19</sup> NASA, "SKYCAL."

<sup>20</sup> DDE efficiency report, March 15, 1918, to November 15, 1918, EL, quoted in Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, Chapter 2.

<sup>21</sup> NASA, "SKYCAL."

<sup>22</sup> Randolph to DDE, June 20, 1945, EL, quoted in Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, Chapter 2.

his success at Camp Colt, though meaningful, felt hollow compared to the opportunity to fight. When Colonel Welborn offered him a guaranteed promotion to full colonel in exchange for staying behind at Gettysburg, Ike declined, reiterating his strong desire to go overseas and even volunteering to accept a demotion if needed.<sup>23</sup> In the aftermath of the armistice, Ike grappled with what this lost chance might spell for his future: "As for my professional career, the prospects were not too bright. I was older than my classmates, was still bothered on occasion by a bad knee, and saw myself in the years ahead putting on weight in a meaningless chair-bound assignment, shuffling papers and filling out forms. If not depressed, I was mad, disappointed, and resented the fact that the war had passed me by."<sup>24</sup>

### **Interwar Promotions (Waxing Gibbous)**

Contrary to his own pessimism at the end of World War I, Eisenhower's military career was far from over. Though assigned to the fringes of the war he'd long prepared for, he emerged from Camp Colt with more than frustration—he left with command experience, crisis-tested leadership, and a growing reputation that would carry him into the next chapter of his career. Between the German armistice and the United States' entry into World War II, Eisenhower steadily carved out an impressive military career. Notwithstanding a demotion to Captain on June 30, 1920 (routine for peacetime army reorganization), Eisenhower received several promotions, often under a Waxing Gibbous Moon.

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<sup>23</sup> Eisenhower, *At Ease*, 151.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.



Over the next two decades, Eisenhower served as Executive Officer to Brigadier General Fox Conner in Panama (1922-1924), graduated first in his class from the prestigious Command and General Staff School, and authored a comprehensive guidebook on French battlefields for the American Battle Monuments Commission—a foretoken of the expertise he would later bring to Normandy. He then completed a six-year tenure at the War Department, serving first as Executive Officer to Assistant Secretary of War General George V Mosely, and later as Assistant Military Advisor to Army Chief of Staff General Douglas MacArthur.<sup>25</sup>

At the time of his promotion to Lieutenant Colonel on July 1, 1936, Eisenhower was stationed in the Philippines, accompanying MacArthur, who was tasked with assembling the Filipino military. Though Ike's tenure serving under MacArthur's tutelage was notoriously fraught with ideological friction and personal clashes, it was also deeply formative. His ability to manage MacArthur's volatile temperament while coordinating directly with Philippine President Manuel L. Quezon sharpened his diplomatic instincts and broadened his capacity as both a military strategist and an emerging political figure.<sup>26</sup> While the promotion itself was automatic, based on time in grade rather than merit, its coincidence with a Waxing Gibbous Moon felt emblematic of a career defined by patience, endurance, and a quiet readiness for what lay ahead.

Nearly six years after his last promotion, Eisenhower's ascent to Colonel on March 11, 1941, followed a period of intense reflection and deep apprehension about the state of his career.<sup>27</sup> In December 1939, upon his return to the United States, he was assigned to the 15th

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<sup>25</sup> Eisenhower Presidential Library, “Eisenhower’s” (homepage), accessed June 23, 2025, *Eisenhower Presidential Library & Museum*, <https://www.eisenhowerlibrary.gov/eisenhowers/>.

<sup>26</sup> Eisenhower Foundation, “Clouds of War,” *Ike’s Life* section, accessed June 23, 2025, <https://eisenhowerfoundation.net/ikes-life/clouds-war>.

<sup>27</sup> Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, Chapter 7.

Infantry and reported as regimental executive officer of the 1st Battalion on February 5, 1940.

Eisenhower thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to directly oversee the troops at Fort Lewis, a responsibility that he had not held since commanding the 301st Heavy Tank Battalion at Fort Meade two decades earlier. However, as thrilling as the post was, he remained eager to lead his own regiment—an opportunity that would significantly strengthen his case for promotion.

Eisenhower was painfully reminded of the opportunities that his lack of seniority precluded when he was informed that a request by General Walter Krueger, commander of the Third Army, to designate Ike as his chief of staff had been denied on the grounds of his junior rank: "When a man has reached the age of fifty years and has been graduated more twenty-five, and is some two and one half years away from his eagles, it seems that the matter of rank could be so adjusted that the War Department could put a man wherever they wanted to."<sup>28</sup>

Amid Eisenhower's growing anxiety, the War Department was undergoing considerable changes prompted by the looming possibility of U.S. involvement in the war abroad. On September 16, 1940, Congress enacted the Selective Training and Service Act, instituting the nation's first peacetime draft, which eventually expanded the army to approximately 1.4 million by mid-1941. Faced with a ballooning army and a shortage of experienced officers, Chief of Staff George C. Marshall and Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson secured congressional approval to temporarily promote officers across the ranks. Thus, under the Waning Gibbous Moon of March 11, 1941, Eisenhower was promoted to Colonel to accommodate his appointment to Chief

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<sup>28</sup> DDE to T. J. Davis, November 14, 1940, EL, quoted in Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, Chapter 7.

of Staff of the IX Corps, a position identical to that which General Krueger had recommended him for.<sup>29</sup>

In June 1941, having attained the rank of Colonel, Eisenhower was sufficiently qualified when General Krueger reached out again to name him as his personal Chief of Staff. Under General Krueger's orders, Ike was soon assigned to participate in the Louisiana Maneuvers. The Maneuvers, devised by senior army leadership, consisted of extensive mock battle exercises conducted throughout 1941. At a time when Nazi tyranny was rapidly expanding across the Atlantic, these maneuvers were intended to ensure that the United States could mobilize a robust and strategically positioned force at a moment's notice. More than assessing logistics, equipment, and doctrine, the maneuvers were aimed at streamlining commanders and eliminating those who were unfit. Over the next two months, Eisenhower's conduct and abilities as the Third Army's Chief of Staff were laid bare for strict scrutiny as he helped the Third Army triumph against the Second Army. Ike unquestionably distinguished himself among his fellow commanders. Only eleven of the original forty-two commanders who participated in the Louisiana Maneuvers, including Eisenhower, George Patton, Omar Bradley, Terry Allen, and William H. Simpson, would remain in post. The rest of the thirty-one commanders were either discharged or demoted.<sup>30</sup>

On September 29, 1941, following his exemplary performance in the Louisiana Maneuvers, the Waxing Gibbous again presided over Eisenhower's temporary promotion to Brigadier General.<sup>31</sup> For a soldier who had once anxiously questioned whether another

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<sup>29</sup> NASA, "SKYCAL"; Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, Chapter 7.

<sup>30</sup> Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, Chapter 7.

<sup>31</sup> NASA, "SKYCAL."

promotion would ever be feasible, Eisenhower's advancement to general officer was a testament to the keen judgment, administrative capability, and leadership potential he had cultivated throughout his service. After years of holding primarily staff positions, the attainment of a star opened doors to critical strategic planning positions and brought him closer to the army's senior decision-makers. Ike's new rank was timely in addition to pivotal, occurring a mere two months before the United States's entry into the Second World War. Here, he would firmly establish his record as an exceptional leader.

### **Promotion to Major General (Waxing Gibbous)**

Following Eisenhower's ascent to Brigadier General would be a quick succession of promotions, concluding with his appointment to the permanent rank of Five-Star General of the Army. Remarkably, of the six dates on which he received appointments, three would occur on either a Waxing Gibbous or Waxing Crescent. On March 27, 1942, under a Waxing Gibbous Moon, Eisenhower was temporarily promoted to Major General, marking a crucial step in his rapid advancement during World War II.<sup>32</sup> As ascertained by Army Chief of Staff General George C. Marshall, a key factor in Eisenhower's promotions was his ability to respond deftly to orders without further direction. Reporting to President Franklin D. Roosevelt in March 1942, Marshall noted that the brigadier general was "able to function without constantly referring problems to him."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> NASA, "SYKCAL."

<sup>33</sup> Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, Chapter 8.

During this period, Eisenhower was serving in the War Plans Division—initially as Deputy Chief of Pacific Defenses from December 1941 to February 1942, and subsequently as Chief of War Plans from February to June 1942. On one occasion, on Christmas Day 1941, Marshall directed Eisenhower to outline the responsibilities and role of a Supreme Commander stationed in the Southwest Pacific theater. Before midnight, he had independently produced a comprehensive summary of the position's duties and functions with little guidance. Marshall, thoroughly satisfied with Eisenhower's vision, immediately presented the largely unedited draft to President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill for approval. His draft subsequently provided the foundation for the responsibilities of Supreme Commanders across all Allied theaters, including his own. Though technically a temporary rank, this promotion was a decisive moment in Eisenhower's path, elevating him from a gifted staff officer to a central figure in the Allied command.<sup>34</sup>

### **D-Day (Full Moon)**

It was only fitting that D-Day, the peak of Ike's military legacy, transpired under a Full Moon.<sup>35</sup> Where the New Moon and consequent lunar phases represent the sowing and early germination of the seeds of our deepest intentions, the Full Moon is emblematic of the harvest of our long-laid plans. Moreover, they represent moments when what has been hidden or brewing comes fully into view. For Ike, it marked the culmination of the past several years that had been poured into the planning of the Normandy Invasions, in addition to the decades that Ike had

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> NASA, "SKYCAL."

spent honing his career as a soldier. The campaign launched under this moon did more than alter the trajectory of the war and restore freedom to a continent engulfed by tyranny; it altered the trajectory of Eisenhower himself, carrying him from the face of the Allied victory to his eventual presidency. The early years that he spent panicking about the future of his career were bygone. After being relegated to staff positions and non-combat roles for so long, Ike was now at the forefront of the largest and most ambitious military operation in history.

As Eisenhower remembered several years later, conditions for the invasion had to encompass "a particular combination of tides, light, and *moon*."<sup>36</sup> The presence of a Full Moon was crucial not just for symbolic reasons but for logistical and tactical ones. For the Airborne divisions who would begin landing shortly after midnight, the Full Moon provided critical illumination for paratroopers and glider pilots to accurately identify their drop zones without risk of landing off-course or into enemy territory. Just as vital was the moon's influence on tidal patterns. The invasion was timed to coincide with low tide at dawn, when German beach obstacles—including mines, wooden stakes, and steel hedgehogs—would be most visible. Naval forces could then target and destroy these defenses before the main assault. As the tide rose, landing craft would follow the water inland, carrying troops as close to shore as possible. This approach minimized their exposure to enemy gunfire during the beach crossing and helped prevent landing craft from becoming stranded on the sand.<sup>37</sup>

The Normandy campaign marked the most consequential test of Eisenhower's leadership and decisiveness. Originally slated for early May before being pushed back to June 5, the

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<sup>36</sup> D-Day Plus 20 Years – Eisenhower Returns to Normandy (1964), YouTube video, published 1964, accessed June 23, 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vNaxTXfjXk>.

<sup>37</sup> NOAA Ocean Podcast, "Turning the Tide: D-Day from an Oceanographer's Perspective," *NOAA Ocean Podcast*, accessed June 23, 2025, <https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/podcast/june20/nop36-dday-tides.html>.

eventual designation of June 6, 1944, as the date of the invasion was a last-minute decision, helmed entirely by Eisenhower. When reports of inclement weather were presented to him on the evening of June 4, he approved a 24-hour delay, but no longer.<sup>38</sup> After June 6th, the next optimal date weather and moon-wise was June 19th, and a two-week delay would surely affect Allied morale.<sup>39</sup> On June 5th at approximately 0400, during the last meeting between him and his team of fellow commanders, Ike uttered his famous directive at his headquarters in Portsmouth, England, setting the invasion in motion: "OK, we'll go."<sup>40</sup> The decision to go ahead was by no means an easy one for Eisenhower, who agonized with the reality that he would be sending hundreds of thousands of young men into uncertain fates, including death. Hours before the landings, Eisenhower drafted a memo that would be published in the event of the campaign's failure, commending the actions of the troops and assuming full responsibility: "The troops, the air, and the Navy did all that bravery and devotion to duty could do. If any blame or fault attaches to the attempt, it is mine alone."<sup>41</sup>

By the evening of June 6, 1944, the Allies had carved out a fragile but vital foothold in Normandy. The cost was staggering, but the mission had succeeded, with the first, most uncertain objective having been met. Over the following months, Allied forces forged steadily eastward through Europe, liberating Paris along the way in August to great jubilation. The road ahead was not without challenges. In December, the Germans launched a final counteroffensive

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<sup>38</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower, *Crusade in Europe* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1948), 274.

<sup>39</sup> Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, Chapter 13.

<sup>40</sup> Eisenhower Foundation, "Nothing Less Than Full Victory," *Ike's Life* section, accessed June 23, 2025, <https://eisenhowerfoundation.net/ikes-life/nothing-less-full-victory>.

<sup>41</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower, drafted statement in case of D-Day failure, June 5, 1944, *Eisenhower's Pre-Presidential Papers, Principal File*, Box 168, Butcher Diary June 28 – July 14, 1944 (2); National Archives Identifier #186470.

through the Ardennes, resulting in the grueling Battle of the Bulge, which would mark the bloodiest engagement for US troops in the war. Still, Eisenhower and his troops stood undaunted on the road toward victory.<sup>42</sup>

In the aftermath of D-Day, Eisenhower was propelled to mega stardom. Like the Full Moon under which the invasion had begun, he had reached the most luminous phase of his trajectory. The man who spent much of his early career working behind the scenes was now recognized as the figurehead of the Allied cause across continents. The spotlight would not fade; it would follow him into the postwar era, illuminating a new path that would eventually carry him to the presidency.

### **Promotion to General of the Army (Waxing Crescent)**

In the aftermath of D-Day, Eisenhower's military stature continued to grow. His promotion to Five Star General—or General of the Army—under the Waxing Gibbous Moon of December 20, 1944, could not have been more opportune.<sup>43</sup> Only four days earlier, the Wehrmacht had launched its final and most aggressive counteroffensive against the Allies: the Battle of the Bulge. Though initially caught off guard, Eisenhower quickly regained control as German forces penetrated through the sparsely defended Ardennes front. With more than four million Allied troops under his command, Eisenhower knew he had to respond swiftly, likely galvanized by the recent award of his fifth star.

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<sup>42</sup> Eisenhower Foundation, “Nothing Less Than Full Victory.”

<sup>43</sup> NASA, “SKYCAL.”



The alignment of Eisenhower's promotion under a Waxing Gibbous Moon was especially apt. Although the designation was born out of wartime necessity (meant to elevate senior American commanders to the stature of their fellow British field marshals), the conferral of a fifth star carried enormous symbolic weight. Eisenhower was now formally recognized among the great American generals, joining the ranks of figures such as Ulysses S. Grant and Marshall, whose leadership had shaped the nation's destiny.<sup>44</sup> The timing of his promotion, in the war's penultimate phase and on the precipice of Germany's surrender, was a genuine reflection of the lunar themes of refinement and preparation before culmination.

Despite initial setbacks, Eisenhower and the Allied forces held firm against the German advance in the days following the surprise assault, particularly in key towns such as Bastogne and St. Vith in Belgium. By December 27, the Germans, their supplies exhausted and casualties numbering between 80,000 - 100,000, were forced to retreat. The conflict marked a turning point in the war. From thereon, the Germans would be confined to the defensive, while the Allied push continued with mounting force. By March 1945, they had crossed the Rhine, and within two months, Germany surrendered unconditionally.<sup>45</sup>

Nearly a year and a half later, on April 11, 1946, Eisenhower's legacy as a principal architect of victory was cemented when his temporary rank as General of the Army was made permanent. By this time, Eisenhower had assumed new roles as both military governor of the American-occupied zone of Germany and Army Chief of Staff, overseeing both post-war reconstruction abroad and military reorganization at home.<sup>46</sup> The conversion of his rank was

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<sup>44</sup> Smith, *Eisenhower in War and Peace*, Chapter 15.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Eisenhower Presidential Library, "Eisenhower's."

largely ceremonial, but it reinforced what was already clear: Eisenhower's service and the confidence placed in him extended beyond the battlefield. The moment marked the close of one arc and the quiet beginning.

## **Conclusion**

Cast in moonlight, Dwight D. Eisenhower's path from uncertain cadet to the face of Allied victory and restored liberty unfolded gradually, shaped by moments of doubt, growth, and decision. From new beginnings at West Point under a New Moon to major turning points marked by his many promotions, lunar cycles seemed to mirror the rhythm of his rise. Attributing Eisenhower's command achievement solely to fortune would be reductive. Rather, the comparison between lunar phenomena and the milestones of Ike's career begs consideration of how symbolic patterns, such as lunar phases, might offer new ways of interpreting his trajectory. Eisenhower's story, framed in step with the moon, is not just a chronicle of military triumph but a testament to persistence, preparation, and the quiet force of timing.

## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to extend a thank you to the science and development team at LunarLife™ for their assistance in researching Ike's extraordinary celestial path. LunarLife™ is built on a revolutionary N of 1 model—where the individual, not the average, becomes the engine of insight. By harnessing personal lunar and biological cycles, our adaptive system creates real-time, personalized wellness algorithms that reflect your internal rhythms.

This data driven, precision-tuned approach becomes the LunarLife Engine™.