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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

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CONTRADICTIONARY WEATHER PROVERBS

Many weather proverbs and popular weather rules are exactly contradicted by others. For example, if the young moon lies on her back in the evening sky it is a sign of dry weather/^{according}to some of the old saws, while according to others it betokens rainy weather.

The appearance of the "old moon in the arms of the new" is likewise given two opposite interpretations in weather folklore. One is embodied in the following lines from the "Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence":

Late, late yestreen I saw the new moon
With the old moon in her arms;
And I fear, I fear, my master dear,
We shall have a deadly storm."

The other, according to Inwards' "Weather Lore", prevails in Suffolk, England, where to see the old moon in the arms of the new one is reckoned a sign of fine weather.

The familiar notion that sunny weather on Candlemas Day (better known in America as Groundhog Day) is a sign that cold weather will continue while cloudy weather on that day means that winter/^{is over}is contradicted by an old proverb current in Touraine, France. A translation of the French rhyme would read:

^a
"If/clear Candlemas find you,
Winter is behind you;
If Candlemas sky be troubled,
Winter will be redoubled."

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