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**Transcript of DARE Interview (1968): Salem, Indiana; Primary Informant IN008  
(Tape 0484-S1)**

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INTRODUCTION: The following was recorded from Dictionary of American Regional English, tape zero four eight four, side one.

FIELDWORKER: This is a recording of Mr. Asbury [beep] made at Salem, Indiana, on May thirtieth, nineteen sixty-eight by [beep]. Go ahead

- 5 INFORMANT: This is a short talk on some of the facts and figures of the, the solar system. The solar system is con-, consists of the sun as a central body, and nine, uh, planets, which revolve around the sun. The sun is, uhm, it's a star, is known as, it is a star, but is not known generally as a star. It's uh, it's eight hundred and forty thousand, three hundred and fifty miles in diameter. It's bigger than all the planets and their satellites combined. The, the satellites are,
- 10 Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune, and then recently have discovered one called Pluto. The nearest one to the sun is uh, Mercury, six, thirty-eight million miles from the sun. The Venus is sixty-seven million miles, the Earth is, eh, ninety-two, approximately ninety-two million miles and the, and, ehm, Mars a hundred and forty million miles. Jupiter is, eh, eh, four hundred and forty million miles, and Saturn eight hundred and
- 15 eighty-seven million miles. These figures of course don't mean very much to, to a person. And, uh, the, the mo-, the one that is the most interesting to us, is the Earth. Not so very much is known about, uh, the other planets. The astronomers do not know whether there's any plant life or animal life on the other planets. None except the Earth. And the, the Earth is, uhm, is the one that we are interested in more than any other, because it has plant and animal life. The
- 20 Earth and Venus are practically the same size. Seven thousand, nine hundred and twenty-seven miles in diameter. And, eh, all of these planets revolve around the sun. The Earth, it takes it three hundred and sixty five and a fourth days to make the journey. And, uhm, some of the planets have, uh, satellites, as the moon. The earth has one satellite, the moon. And, uh, Mercury and Venus do not have any satellites. Mars has two, I think, and Jupiter twelve. All told
- 25 there's thirty satellites. And, eh, the moon, or the Earth, is practically round. It's not exactly round on the account of, eh, due to, eh, centrifugal force, the, the equatorial diameter of the Earth is about, eh, eh, oh several thousand miles less than the polar diameter, it's rather flattened at, flattened at the poles. And uh, th-the, eh, moon, eh, has, well, there's another

30 thing I wanted to say about the Earth. It's not perpendicular to the plane of its orbit. It's inclined  
twenty-three and a half degrees. And on the account of this inclination, the s-, we have the  
seasons, uh, the spring, winter, eh, summer and fall, so on. The moon makes, eh, one circuit  
around the Earth, e-, about every twenty-nine days. Twenty-nine days and five hours and a few  
minutes. But, eh, one thing about the moon that is not generally known, is that it travels from  
35 west to east. The moon doesn't rise in the east and set in the west as many people think, but it  
o-, it uh, travels from west to east continually. It takes it, eh, it travels about, uh, twenty-three  
hundred miles an hour, and that would be about fifty-five thousand, two hundred miles a day.  
That is the reason that it appears a little earlier of a night. New moon, you always see the new  
moon in the west. We have new moon now. New moon was the twenty-seventh. And the, the  
40 distance it travels during the day is the, is the reason it appears earlier in the evening. And, uh,  
it, uh, makes a trip around the earth in about, I believe I said twenty-nine days. So we have the  
f-, the four phases of the moon. The f-, the first, the new moon, the first quarter, full moon, and  
the last quarter. And about, eh, after, uh, new moon, about seven days it's almost, uh, up  
straight in the heavens and, and we call it the first quarter, we can only see half, half of it or a  
quarter of it. And the west side, is lighted up. In another eight days, it goes across to the, uhm,  
45 w-, eastern horizon, and we'll have full moon. The whole face of the moon is lighted by the sun.  
And in another, ehm, eight days, the, we have the, the, uh third quarter and it's about the same  
place where the [laugh] the uhm, first quarter is, only the west side, the east side is lighted up  
instead of the west side. Now the Earth is not quite r-round as I said. I believe I'd said that once  
before, though, (that is eh), it, on account of centrifugal force, it's a little flattened at the poles.  
50 And, let's see, that's about all I have, I guess, on the, offhand, a-all the, some of the distances.  
The, uh, the solar system is in a space that, eh, about eh, fifty trillion miles in diameter, which is  
un-, a figure that's a, doesn't mean anything to most people. The nearest star to the sun is  
twenty-five, is uh, million, trillion miles from the sun.

FIELDWORKER: What star is that?

55 INFORMANT: And that makes the diameter of this space in here about fifty trillion miles. And  
the, the solar system, sun and all the planets, are travelling through space at a tremendous  
rate. There's no end to space. I believe that's about all I have to say. Raised in Howard  
Township.

FIELDWORKER: Could you repeat that, I didn't have it on.

60 INFORMANT: I was born and raised in Howard Township and lived in Washington County the  
most of my life. I can remember Salem when there wasn't any automobiles, and there wasn't  
any good roads, we had mud roads. And, uhm, I have a, uh, faint re-remembrance of the old  
court house, had an old wooden courthouse here in Salem, before this modern one was built.  
And I have a, I was educated in the country schools, I went to a country school till I was, well  
65 through the eighth grade. I taught school in Washington County, for about twelve years, and, is  
that all right to go into? [laugh] Then I left here and went up north and taught school in, in  
LaPorte County and I also taught in, uh, Missouri and Oklahoma and Idaho and Illinois. I went to

school at um, I graduated from the Lincoln Business College in Lincoln, Nebraska, and, uh, graduated from, uhm, Valparaiso University with a B.S. degree. I graduated from Indiana  
70 University with an M.S. degree, and all told, I, I taught about, eh, twenty-eight years. And that's about all I ever did do, was teach school and farm, I was raised on a farm and farmed part of my life. That's about all I have to say about.

FIELDWORKER: OK.

INFORMANT: Eh, once upon a time there was a young rat who couldn't make up his mind.  
75 Whenever the other rats asked him if he would like to come out hunting with them, he would answer in a hoarse voice, "I don't know." And when they said, "Would you rather stay inside?" he wouldn't say yes, or no either. He'd always shirk making a choice.

One fine day his aunt Josephine said to him, "Now look here. No one will ever care for you if you carry on like this. You have no more mind of your own than a greasy old blade of grass!"

80 The young rat coughed and looked wise, as usual, but said nothing.

"Don't you think so?" said his aunt stamping with her foot, for she couldn't bear to see the young rat so cold-blooded.

"I don't know," was all he ever answered, and then he'd walk off to think for an hour or more, whether he should stay in his hole in the ground or go out into the loft.

85 One night the rats heard a loud noise in the loft. It was a very dreary old place. The roof, the roof let the rain come washing in, the beams and rafters had all rotted through, so that the whole thing was quite unsafe.

At last one of the joists gave way, and the beams fell with one edge on the floor. Oh, I see. The walls shook, the cupola fell off, and all the rats' hair stood on end with fear and horror.

90 "This won't do," said their leader. "We can't stay cooped up here any longer." So they sent out scouts to search for a new home.

A little later on that evening the scouts came back and said they had found an old-fashioned horse-barn where there would be room and board for all of them.

The leader gave the order at once, "Company fall in!" and the rats crawled out of their holes  
95 right away and stood on the floor in a long line.

Just then the old rat caught sight of young Arthur—that was the name of the shirker. He wasn't in the line, and he wasn't exactly outside it—he stood just by it.

"Come on, get in line!" growled the old rat coarsely. "Of course you're coming too?"

"I don't know," said Arthur calmly.

100 "Why, the idea of it! You don't think it's safe here anymore, do you?"

"I'm not certain," said Arthur undaunted. "The roof may not fall down yet."

"Well," said the old rat, "we can't wait for you to join us." Then he turned to the others and shouted, "Right about face! March!" and the long line marched out of the barn while the young rat watched them.

105 "I think I'll go tomorrow," he said to himself, "but then again, perhaps I won't—it's so nice and snug here. I guess I'll go back to my hole under the log for a while just to make up my mind."

But during the night there was a big crash. Down came beams, rafters, joists—the whole business.

110 Next morning—it was a foggy day—some men came to look over the damage. It seemed odd to them that the old building was not haunted by rats. But at last one of them happened to move a board, and he caught sight of a young rat, quite dead, half in half out of his hole.

Thus the shirker got his due, and there was no mourning for him. (laugh)

FIELDWORKER: Thank you. That was what our Informant Don [beep] called a "rat tale."

INFORMANT: (laugh) Yeah.

115 FIELDWORKER: Put it in the "rat tale" file.