

Ike Matthews

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**Full Revelations of  
a Professional  
Rat-catcher**

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 **Publio**

**Full Revelations of a Professional Rat-catcher  
After 25 Years' Experience**

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Minden jog fenntartva!

**Introduction.**

In placing before my readers in the following pages the results of my twenty-five years' experience of Rat-catching, Ferreting, etc., I may say that I have always done my best to accomplish every task that I have undertaken, and I have in consequence received excellent testimonials from many corporations, railway companies, and merchants. I have not only made it my study to discover the different and the best methods of catching Rats, but I have also taken great interest in watching their ways and habits, and I come to the conclusion that there is no sure way of completely exterminating the Rodents, especially in large towns. If I have in this work referred more particularly to Rat-catching in Manchester that is only because my experience, although extending over a much wider area, has been chiefly in that city, but the methods I describe are equally applicable to all large towns.

Yours truly,

IKE MATTHEWS.

PROFESSIONAL RAT-CATCHER,  
PENDLETON,  
MANCHESTER.

**PART I.**

**HOW TO CLEAR RATS FROM WAREHOUSES, OFFICES, STOREROOMS, ETC.**

In the first place my advice is—never poison Rats in any enclosed buildings whatever. Why? Simply because the Rats that you poison are Drain Rats, or what you call Black Rats, and you can depend upon it that the Rats that you poison will not get back into the drains, but die under the floor between the laths and plaster, and the consequence is that in a few days the stench that will arise will be most obnoxious. And there is nothing more injurious than the smell of a decomposed Rat.

Having had a long experience in Manchester I am quite sure of this. As an instance, I remember a private house where I was engaged catching Rats under a floor with ferrets. I went as far as possible on my belly under the floor with two candles in my hands, and I saw the ferret kill a large bitch Rat, about six yards from me against a wall, where neither the dog nor myself could get at it. I finished the job and made out my bill for my services, but in about two or three weeks after they again sent for me, declaring they could not stay in the sitting-room on account of the smell that arose from beneath the flooring boards. They had in consequence to send for a joiner; and as I knew the exact spot where the Rat was killed I ordered him to take up the floor boards just where the dead Rat lay, and the stench that arose from the decomposed Rodent was bad in the extreme. I disinfected the place, and I was never sent for again. This was under a cold floor, and it is much worse where there is any heat.

Now to deal with the different methods of catching Rats. The best way, in my opinion, is,

**TRAPPING THEM WITH STEEL SPRING TRAPS.**

Whenever you are trapping, never on any consideration put bait on the traps; always put traps in their runs, but you will find Rats are so cunning that in time, after a few have been caught, they will jump over the traps, and then you must try another way. A good one is the following, viz.:—Get a bag of fine, clean sawdust, and mix with it about one-sixth its weight of oatmeal. Obtain the sawdust fresh from under the saw, without bits of stick in, as these would be liable to get into the teeth of the trap and stop them from closing. Where you see the runs put a handful in say about 30 different places, every night, just dropping the sawdust and meal out of your hands in little heaps. That means 30 different heaps. Do this for four nights, and you will see each morning that the sawdust is all spread about. Now for four more nights you must bury a set trap under every heap of sawdust. Thus you will have 30 traps, on each of which there is a square centre plate; you must level the sawdust over the plate with a bit of stick, and set each trap as fine as you can on the catch spring, so that the weight of a mouse would set it off. They will play in the sawdust as usual, and you will have Rats in almost every trap. You will find that this plan will capture a great many of the Rodents. I have trapped as many as 114 in one night

in this way.

In time, however, the Rats will cease to go near sawdust. Then you must procure a bag of fine soot from any chimney sweep, and you will find that they will go at the soot just as keen as they did in the first instance at the sawdust. When they get tired of soot (which they will in time) you must procure some soft tissue paper and cut it fine, and use that in the same way as the sawdust and the soot. You can also use light chaff or hay seeds with the like result.

I must not omit to tell my readers to always trap Rats in the night, and to go very quietly about it, for if you make much noise they will give over feeding. You must not go about with too big a light whilst trapping. You should stay at the building from dark until midnight, and every time a Rat is caught in the trap you should go with a bull's eye lamp, take it out of the trap or kill it, and then set the trap again, as you have the chance of another Rat in the same trap. From experience I can say that you need not stay in any place after 12 o'clock at night, as I think that the first feed is the best, and that the first three hours are worth all the other part of the night. You can go home at 12 o'clock, and be sure to be in the place by 6 or 7 a.m., for many a Rat caught in the trap by the front leg will, if it gets time, eat off its leg and get away again, and they are very cunning to catch afterwards.

**NEVER HAVE YOUR TRAPS SET IN THE DAYTIME.**