

Long Grove History

LONG GROVE LIVING
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PIONEER PEST CONTROL • A WIRE TRAP AND A JOB
OPENING AT VILLAGE HALL

Of *Mice* and Men

By Aaron Underwood · Long Grove Historical Society

One of the joys of living in Long Grove is being in such close proximity to a variety of living creatures. Unfortunately, all those majestic animals are far outnumbered by those little pesky ones, such as the humble field mouse. When seasons change, it seems our local mice prefer the sanctuary of our homes rather



LONG GROVE FARMHOUSE COLLECTION

Late-1800s wire mouse trap. Bait in the center; a levered flap lets the mouse nose in but not back out.

than the acres of open space where they belong. The earliest settlers of Long Grove fought the battle to rid their homes of mice just like we do. One of the favorite artifacts in our restored 1840's farmhouse, is a wire mousetrap. We think it dates to the late 1800's and likely was sold out of one of Long Grove's general stores.

The trap is laid with bait in the center and lures mice through a levered flap that is angled such that the mouse can "nose through" to enter, but can't raise the flap to exit. The trap works as good today as it ever did. If evolution ever decides to bless the mouse with opposable thumbs, the effectiveness of this trap will go astray. Come to think of it, mice with upgraded thumbs might doom all of us.



The classic wooden mouse “snap” trap that you find sold in Long Grove today was invented in 1898. Given the extremely and fertile “mouse friendly” environment we live in, perhaps it’s not surprising that the classic “snap” trap was invented in Illinois, about 150 miles from Long Grove. It was noteworthy in that it didn’t rely on gravity, but rather was spring powered. Called the “Little Nipper”, the design remains virtually unchanged today.

SPECIMEN · HARDWARE AISLE			
<i>The “Little Nipper”</i>			
TYPE	Wooden snap trap	INVENTED	1898
ORIGIN	Illinois · ~150 mi from Long Grove	MECHANISM	Spring-powered (not gravity)
DESIGN	Virtually unchanged today		

Recently a brewery in Chicago received much publicity for the feral cats they use to patrol their grain stores. Our own Long Grove Village Hall occasionally does this as well. When I moved here almost twenty years ago, it was a cat named Drexler, and he was succeeded by another feline affectionately known as Drexler II. Like many roles in our community, these stray cats are unpaid volunteers. The role of Village mouse catcher is currently unfilled and available for the stray looking for some community service. To apply, simply show up at Village Hall looking hungry, meow a lot, and get to work. Not to take issue with anyone who may have reserved the name Drexler III for any new recruit, might we dub the new mouse antagonistic “Little Nipper” instead?