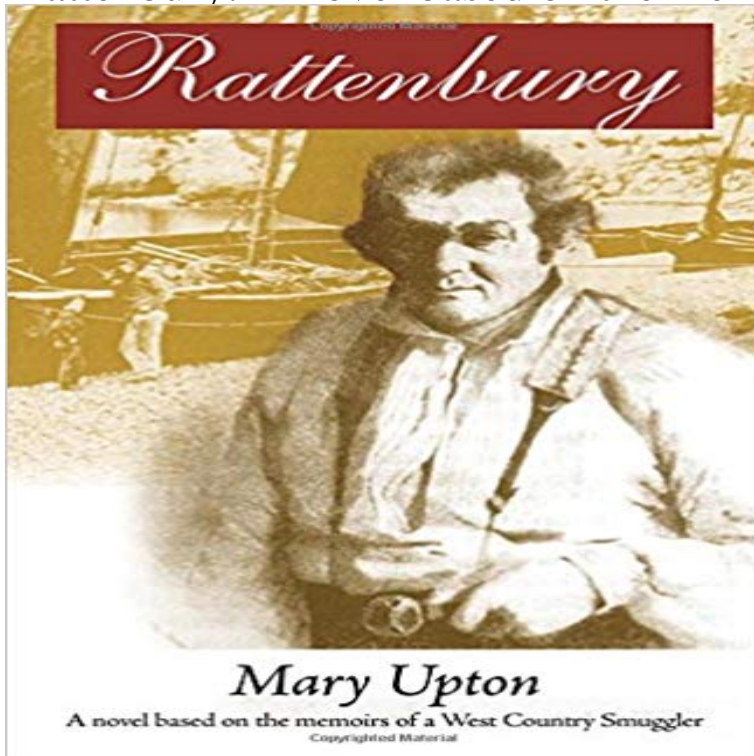


## Rattenbury: A novel based on the memoirs of a West Country smuggler



Jack Rattenbury was born in Beer Devon in 1778 and lived in the village until his death in 1844. He was renowned throughout the South West of England as a smuggler and as an exceptional sailor. The village was a secretive, tucked-away place, which made it ideal for the lucrative but dangerous profession of smuggling. Jack and his associates used the terrain and exploited the inefficient Excise Service to good effect. He became notorious for his exploits and rejoiced in the nickname Rob Roy of the West. Jack was often treated leniently by the Magistrates, who enjoyed access to a good supply of contraband French Brandy, despite the fact that, at the time, England was engaged in the Napoleonic war. During the 19th century, wealth was limited to rich land owners and merchants. The working people lived in terrible poverty. Such was the case in East Devon and it was inevitable that men and women would use, whatever opportunities existed, both in and outside the law, to provide for their families. Towards the end of his career, Jack, who was illiterate, dictated his Memoirs to a Sidmouth publisher. RATTENBURY is based the adventures Jack describes in his Memoirs and my own extensive research of life in those times.

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