March 1, 1932. F. H. DUNN 1,847,333

SKIN FOLDER

Filed Nov. 12, 1927

Fig. 1.

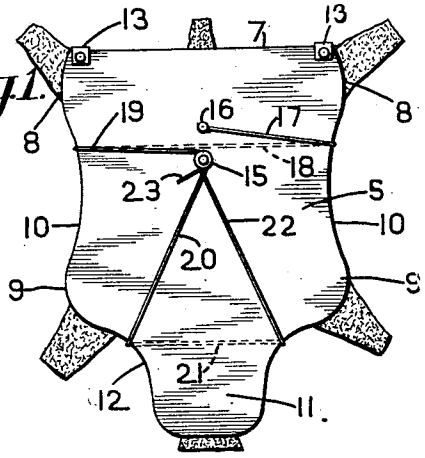


Fig. 2.

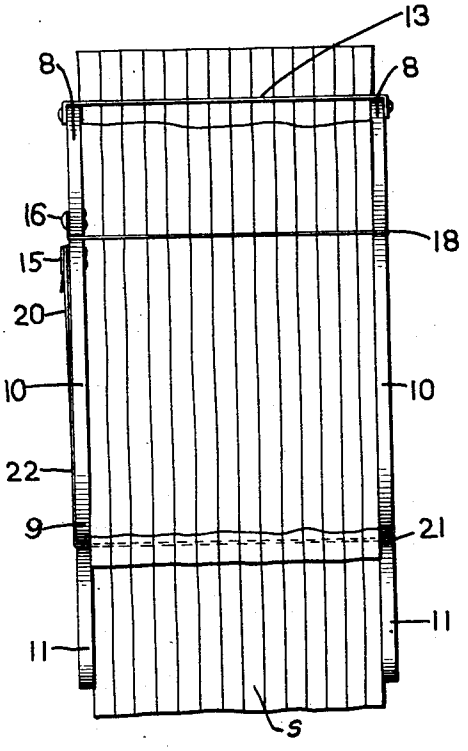


Fig. 3.

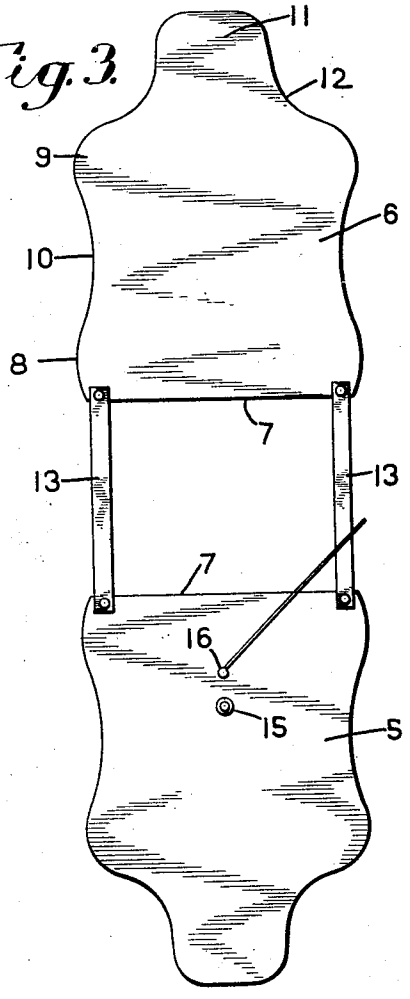
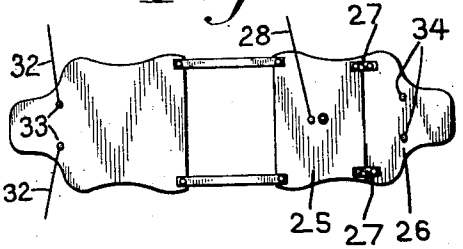


Fig. 4.



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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

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SKIN FOLDER

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This invention relates to a method of preserving dressed and/or dyed skins of fur bearing animals and apparatus whereby the method may be carried out.

There are certain dressed skins, such as, broadtail, caracul, or kid skins, which, from their very nature, must be kept and maintained in a flat and fixed and firm position in order to preserve and retain them in a usable condition. As soon as such skins have been dressed and dyed they must be maintained in a flat condition otherwise they crumple up and crack. Skins which in their flat state are worth, say thirty five dollars each, to the fur trade, are, if crumpled up and cracked, worth nothing and cannot be sold or used.

The invention forming the subject matter of this application is the result of observation and study of the needs and requirements of the fur trade and offers a solution of problems which have been present since the inception of that industry many centuries ago.

One object of the invention is the provision of a structure by means of which dressed and/or dyed skins of the character described may be preserved and maintained in a salable condition and which structure can be used, without previous experience or skill, by dealers and their employees in the fur trade.

I have discovered that if one or more dressed skins are laid out flat between the proximate plane surfaces of a pair of separate members forming what I call a skin folder and of a shape substantially that of a dressed skin exclusive of the extremities of the neck, legs and tail and retained in that condition until used, that they will not crumple up and crack and will retain their full sale value indefinitely.

A further object of the invention is the provision of a structure which shall permit of an examination of the skins retained therein by prospective purchasers without disturbing their relative position in the retaining structure nor rendering ineffective the general preservative character of the invention.

Still another object of the invention is the provision of an instrumentality whereby the foregoing objects may be attained, which is practical in use and may be readily availed of by the class of labor employed in the fur trade without previous experience or training.

These and other objects of the invention and the means for their attainment will be more apparent from the following detailed description, taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, and in which:

Figure 1 is a plan view of the skin folder looking from above and showing the fastening means in operative position with skins contained therein.

Figure 2 is a vertical longitudinal view of the folder with a plurality of skins therein.

Figure 3 is a plan view of the folder opened up to show the construction thereof and also illustrating a modification by which an inspection of the contents may be had.

In its broadest aspects, the skin folder of this invention comprises two flat sections of identical size and shape which I have designated as the top board 5 and the bottom board 6. These boards 5 and 6 have the general outline of a skin with the extremities of the neck, leg and tail portion removed. Thus the rear edge 7 of each board is defined by a straight line which terminates at each rear corner in a rump portion 8 curved outwardly to provide an additional bearing surface where the hind legs of the skins join the body. The top and bottom boards 5 and 6 are also formed with outwardly curved shoulders 9 to have a similar function with respect to the forelegs of the skin. The edges of the boards between the rumps 8 and shoulders 9 are reversely curved as at 10 not only because the skin is of a less width at this point, but also to serve to position the securing devices hereinafter to be described. At the front end and centrally, the section is extended as at 11 to provide a bearing surface for that portion of the skin terminating in the neck of the animal and between the shoulder 9 and neck 11, the edges on each side are again reversely curved as at 12 to conform to the skin and also to position fastening devices described hereinafter. These top and bottom boards 5 and 6 are conveniently manufactured of some light material such as wallboard or the like of dimensions no great-

er than is necessary to slightly overlap the skins in order that the skin folder as a whole may not contribute materially to the weight of a bundle of skins contained therein and thus the preserved bundle is rendered as easy to handle as possible. As an example, the boards 5 and 6 may be approximately one quarter of an inch in thickness with an overall length of approximately twenty inches and an overall width of approximately fourteen inches.

Two identical boards, the top board 5 and the bottom board 6, may comprise the folder and may be connected together at their rear ends 7 by flexible hinge members 13 of fabric, leather or the like and thus permit the positioning of the boards in parallel relation at any desired distance to contain a pile of skins, within the limit, of course, of the length of the hinge members.

One of each pair of boards so connected say, the top board 5 is provided at its upper surface with a button 15 preferably on the longitudinal median line of the board and approximately one-third the distance from the rear edge 7; and between the button 15 and the rear edge 7, but nearer the button 15 than the edge 7 and preferably also in the longitudinal median axis, there is secured as at 16 a fastening cord 17—23 whereof the manner of its use will be described hereinafter.

In practice the bottom board 6 may be placed upon a flat surface, such as a table, and a stack or pile of skins built up thereon, care being taken that each skin lies flat and unwrinkled and the neck portions, front and rear leg portions and tail portions overlapping, respectively, the neck 11, shoulder 9 rump 8 and rear edge 7, as shown in Figure 1. After all the skins desired are built up into this pile, within the limits of the capacity of the molder as defined by the hinges 13, the top board 5 is placed thereon and top and bottom boards 5 and 6 are secured together in the following manner:

Referring now to Figure 1 it will be observed that the cord is passed from its point of fastening 16 toward one side of the board and about that side at the reversely curved portion 10 as by the length 17 and then across and underneath the outer surface of the bottom board 6 as shown in dotted lines by the length 18 and upwardly around the reversely curved edge 10 at the opposite side edges of the boards and skins, and is then directed about the button 15 by leading the length 19 thereof thereabout. From the button 15 the cord is directed along the top of the folder as shown at 20 to the reversely curved portion 12 between the shoulder 9 and the neck 11 on the same side as that from which the length 19 has been led. From this edge the cord is passed beneath the bottom board 6 to the opposite reversely curved part 12 as shown at 21 and up over this edge from whence it is returned to the same side of the button 15 as shown by the length 22 and then is merely turned thereabout for approximately 180° leaving the end 23 loose as shown. In this simple fashion and with a minimum number of turns the pile skins S is firmly held between the boards 5—6 and a single turn is sufficient to secure the end against working loose no matter how roughly the package of skins is thrown about or handled.

In order to provide for the inspection of the individual skins by a prospective purchaser without affecting the general preservation of the same within I show a modified form of bundle, the top board that is divided into two parts, as shown in Figure 4, on a line just in rear of the shoulders 9, these parts comprising a main part 25 and a flap 26. Flap 26 may be secured conveniently by hinges 27 to the main part 25. In this instance, the cord 28, which is secured to the main part 25 in the manner previously described, is caused to encircle the bundle only about its mid-portion and the end is secured about the button 13 by a single turn and is not brought forward about the neck 11. Instead short lengths of cord 32 are secured to the bottom board 6, as at 33 at each side of the neck inwardly of the edges 12 and are brought upwardly at the reversely curved portions 12 between the neck 11 and shoulders 9 and given a single turn about buttons 34 carried with the flap 26. Thus to inspect the pile of skins, it is only necessary to disengage the cords 32 from the buttons 34 and throw back the flap 26 and permit the prospective purchaser to determine the quality of the skins by such inspection, after which the neck portions of the skins thus freed for inspection may be again smoothed out and the flap 26 secured and the skins preserved as before, the major portion of the skins never having been disturbed.

It will thus be seen that a skin folder has been provided which is readily handled and operated without skill or experience and which retains the skins in a flat and smooth condition so that they cannot wrinkle or crack. At the same time the folder is readily opened to permit frequent inspection by prospective purchasers without delay and in a manner which will not permit any of the skins to be wrinkled in the handling. The skin folder is inexpensive to manufacture and convenient to handle, which are important considerations since a great many of these devices are required by each dealer.

Various modifications may be made in the composition and configuration of the component elements going to make up the folder as a whole and no limitation is intended by the phraseology of the foregoing description or illustrations in the accompanying drawings, except as set forth in the appended claim.

What I claim is:

A folder for dressed skins comprising top and bottom boards of a shape substantially that of a dressed skin exclusive of the extremities of the neck, tail and legs, the top board being subdivided into a main part and a flap, and between which board a pile of dressed skins may be placed, flexible hinge means securing an edge of one member to an edge of the other member, flexible hinge means securing the main part and flap together, a button secured to the outer side of the main part in the longitudinal axis thereof, flexible means adapted to be secured to the button and to be wrapped about the boards with the skins therebetween, buttons secured adjacent the sides of the flap and flexible members secured adjacent to the sides of the bottom board and adapted to be secured respectively to the last named buttons.

In testimony whereof I affix my signature.

FRANK H. DUNN.