

R. H. BULLIS.
 DEVICE FOR STRETCHING FURS OR SKINS.
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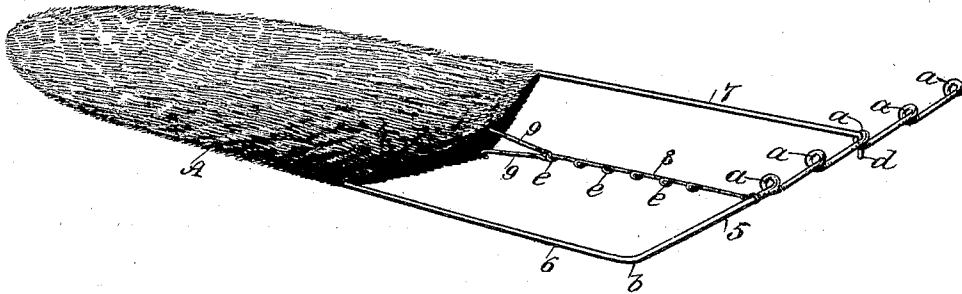


Fig. 1

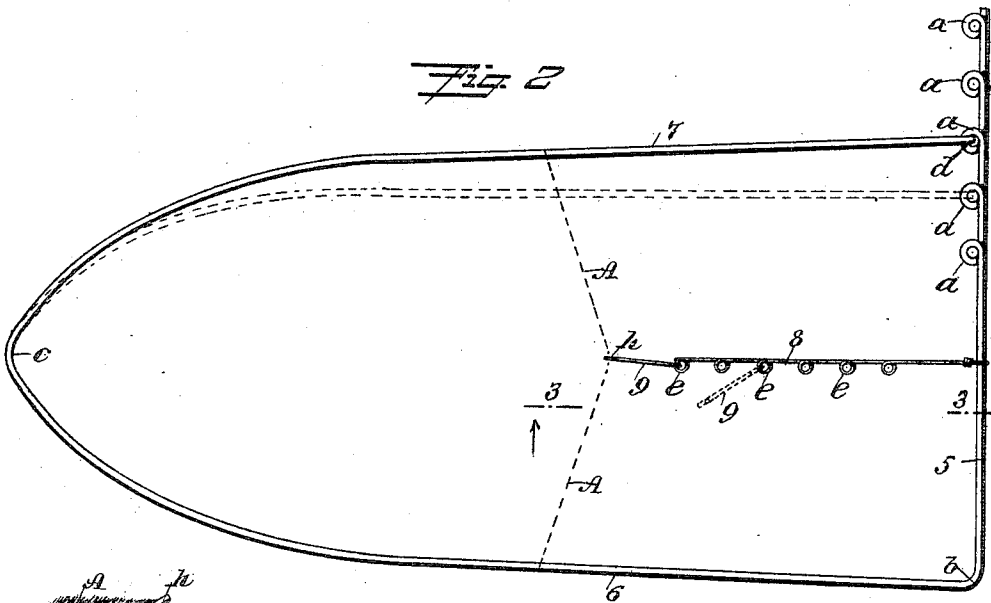


Fig. 2

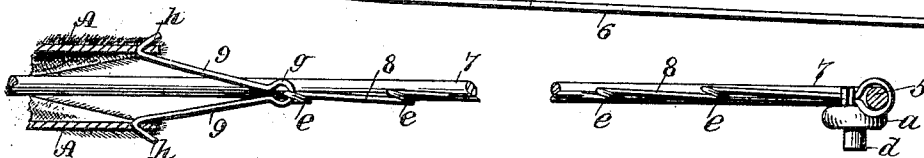


Fig. 3

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DEVICE FOR STRETCHING FURS OR SKINS.

971,969.

Specification of Letters Patent.

Patented Oct. 4, 1910.

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To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, ROY H. BULLIS, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of Winnebago, in the county of Faribault and State of Minnesota, have invented a new and Improved Device for Stretching Furs or Skins, of which the following is a full, clear, and exact description.

This invention relates to means for stretching and holding the skin of a wild animal in a smooth, stretched condition while the skin is drying, and more particularly for preventing the skin of a fur-bearing animal from shrinking while it is drying.

The object of my invention is to provide a novel, simple device that may be readily applied upon the skin of an animal while it is in fresh condition, and after its engagement therewith be adapted to receive such adjustment as will stretch the skin in different directions, and retain the skin in distended condition until the device is purposely removed therefrom.

The invention consists in the novel construction and combination of parts, as is hereinafter described and defined in the appended claims.

Reference is to be had to the accompanying drawings forming a part of this specification, in which similar characters of reference indicate corresponding parts in all the views.

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the improved stretcher device applied for distending a skin; Fig. 2 is an enlarged plan view of the stretcher frame; and Fig. 3 is an enlarged broken, longitudinal, sectional view, taken substantially on the line 3—3 in Fig. 2.

The improved stretcher frame is preferably formed of wire rod material and mainly consists of a piece of resilient wire having sufficient length and thickness to adapt the frame for effective service.

In the construction of the device, a plurality of integral ring eyes *a* are formed at intervals on one end portion of a wire rod from which the stretcher frame is to be made. At a suitable distance from the end of the rod having a ring eye *a* thereon, the material is bent at a right angle, as shown at *b*, affording a cross bar 5, whereon the ring eyes *a* are formed. The main portion of the wire rod that extends from the bend *b* is return bent at its longitudinal center, as shown

at *c* in Fig. 2, said bend *c* forming an ovate-shaped end for the frame, and as shown, the bends *b* and *c* are disposed in the same plane with that occupied by the ring eyes *a*. The formation of the ovate-shaped bend *c* provides two side bars 6 and 7 for the stretcher frame, and normally said side bars may be disposed parallel with each other, as is shown by full lines and dotted lines in Fig. 2, or may be diverged from each other by the resilience of the material. The side bar 7 that is farthest from the bend *b* is provided with a hook member *d* that projects at a right angle therefrom and toward the cross bar 5, said hook being adapted for insertion downward into either of the ring eyes *a*, as shown in Fig. 1.

A link rod 8, preferably formed of wire, is a detail of the improvement, it consisting of a wire rod having a series of spaced ring eyes *e* formed thereon and projected from the same side of the rod level with each other. One end of the link rod 8 is secured upon the cross bar 5, thus disposing said link rod at a suitable distance from the bend *b* and adapted for adjustment in a plane parallel with the frame side bars 6, 7, when it is rocked so as to project toward the bend *c* at the forward end of the stretcher frame.

A duplex coupling hook is a completing feature of the invention, and as shown, consists of a wire rod, bent at its center so as to form an open ring *g* thereon and produce two limbs 9, 9, of an equal length, that terminate in oppositely bent hooks *h*, *h*, the limbs normally diverging from each other at an acute angle, as shown in Figs. 1 and 3.

To preserve the skins of small animals, such as musk rats, skunks or squirrels so that after their removal from the carcass they will dry in proper condition, it is essential that when the skins are stripped from the bodies of the animals, they be distended so as to avoid wrinkles and left to dry in a stretched condition.

Assuming that the skin or fur-bearing pelt *A* of an animal has been removed therefrom without splitting the pelt, the improved stretcher frame is applied for the distension of the hide as follows: The front end *c* of the stretcher frame is introduced into the open rear end of the pelt, and pushed therein, so that the frame is fully inserted. The side bar 7 is now diverged from the bar 6, so as to stretch the skin

laterally, and the hook *d* is inserted downward into the nearest ring eye *a*, for retention of the side bar as adjusted. The hooks *h*, *h*, are now hooked into the rear edge portion of the pelt A, centrally between the frame bars 6, 7, after the duplex hook piece has been engaged with one of the ring eyes *e* on the link rod 8.

It will be noted that as the length of skins varies, the provision of the plurality of spaced ring eyes *e* on the link rod 8, is very essential, as the skin, after it is mounted upon the side bars 6, 7, may be stretched lengthwise a proper degree by a suitable adjustment of the duplex hook piece on the link rod 8, to effect which one hook *h* and the limb 9 on which it is formed, are passed through an appropriate ring eye *e* until the open ring *g* is engaged with said ring eye, thus loosely securing the duplex hook piece on the link rod, as is clearly shown in Fig. 3.

The skin that is shown mounted upon the stretcher frame has the fur exposed, but it is to be understood that if the proper treatment in curing a skin requires it, the fur may be disposed innermost and the fleshy side of the pelt outermost.

When a skin has been cured and dried, this operation being technically known as "casing" the pelt, it may be readily removed and the improved stretcher frame be adapted for re-use as may be desired.

Having thus described my invention, I claim as new and desire to secure by Letters Patent:

1. A pelt stretcher, comprising a frame formed of a wire rod bent between the ends providing two side members, a cross bar bent on an end of one side member and extending across the end of the other side member, a depending hook on the free end of the last mentioned side member, spaced ring eyes on the cross bar, any one of which may be engaged by the said hook, a member mounted on the cross bar, and a hook for engagement

with the pelt and connected with said member.

2. A pelt stretcher, comprising a frame formed of a wire rod return bent to give the bend ovate form and provide two side members that may be diverged at one end thereof, a cross bar bent on an end of one side member and extended across the other side member, a depending hook on the free end of said side member, and spaced ring eyes on the cross bar, any of which may be engaged by the hook.

3. A pelt stretcher, comprising a frame formed of a wire rod, bent between its ends providing two side members, a cross bar formed on the end of one side member, means for detachably securing the end of the other side member on the cross bar at a selected point, a link rod mounted at one end on the cross bar, and having a series of spaced eyes formed thereon and a coupling hook for engagement with one of the eyes of the link rod, the said coupling hook being formed with an open ring and two limbs diverging from the ring and terminating in oppositely bent hooks.

4. A pelt stretcher, comprising a frame formed of a wire rod bent between its ends, providing two spaced side members, a hook on one side member, a cross bar on the other side member that extends toward the hook, spaced ring eyes on the cross bar either of which may receive the hook, a link rod having ring eyes thereon, and mounted at one end on the cross bar, and a duplex hook that is formed with an open ring that may be engaged with any of the ring eyes on the link rod.

In testimony whereof I have signed my name to this specification in the presence of two subscribing witnesses.

ROY H. BULLIS.

Witnesses:

H. L. BULLIS,
MARIE BUSHARD.