

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

DAVID MUMMA, OF MOUNT CARROLL, ILLINOIS.

IMPROVEMENT IN TREATING SKINS WITHOUT REMOVING THE HAIR OR FUR.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **31,005**, dated December 24, 1861.

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, DAVID MUMMA, of Mount Carroll, in the county of Carroll, in the State of Illinois, have discovered a new and improved process for tanning skins with or without the fur or hair on them; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full and exact description thereof.

The nature of my improvement consists in applying the tanning-liquid directly on the dry or fresh skins, thereby acting immediately and thoroughly on them in the shortest time and leaving them in the strongest and most perfect condition.

To enable others skilled in the art to use my discovery, I will proceed to describe the process and its operation.

My process for tanning skins with the fur or hair on them is as follows: I first take them on the beam, and with a fleshing-knife move all the grease and flesh from the pelt. Then I soak them in common wood-ash lye. I take lye that will carry up a hen's egg to the surface. Then add two quarts of water to one quart of lye, which quantity is sufficient to tan two skins of the size of "coon-skins." It must be milk-warm. I rub them soft as soon as I can after having them in the liquid two or three minutes. I then take them on the beam and go over them with the flesh-knife, which assists in removing the hard spots in the skin, and I then put it back in the lye again and work and stretch it by hand until thoroughly

soaked. Then I squeeze the lye out, put it on the beam, and remove the lye from the flesh side, being careful to use the knife lightly, and then apply sperm-oil by rubbing it on the flesh side, and then I lay it in the sun or before a fire until half-dry. I then pull it by hand thoroughly, then lay it again in the sun or before a fire until three parts dry. I then take it on the beam and go over it again with the knife, and that will leave it thoroughly tanned. The skins will turn yellow in a short time. The time required for tanning and drying a skin of the size of a raccoon-skin is but two hours, and smaller skins take less time. Heavy fur and wool skins take longer, owing to the time required for drying them.

To tan skins with the hair and grain off, I simply make the liquid stronger, and continue the operation until the hair starts freely.

I do not claim the application of the oil.

What I claim as my discovery, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

Taking the skins in a dry or fresh state and immediately immersing them in the tanning-liquid, so that sufficient of the liquid remains in the skins when coming in contact with the second ingredient to destroy the gum without losing the fur, substantially as specified.

DAVID MUMMA.

Witnesses:

JOHN B. CHRISTIAN,
W. H. HARRIS.