

[Method of Dying Red and Yellow Leather, called Turkey Leather] Mr. Philippo

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Type

Miscellaneous

Ingredients

skins

water

lime

bran

honey

salt

Shenan

allum

turmeric

cochineal

loaf sugar

new milk

olive oil

common salt

Cassiari Gehira

Dgehira

white galls

sea salt

Places

Asia

England

Nova Scotia

Africa

Levant

Aleppo

Source: Nova Scotia Magazine

Institution: Nova Scotia Archives | **Source Origin:** Nova Scotia Newspapers on Microfilm | **Reference:**

Description

Instructions for dyeing leather. nn.336_38. Microfilm Reel 8063.

Transcription

METHOD OF DYING RED AND YELLOW LEATHER, CALLED TURKEY

LEATHER.

[As practiced in the East, by Mr. Philippo, an Asiatic; for which he received a Reward of 100£ from the Society of Arts, &c. in England, and afterwards their Gold Medal.]

THE first preparation of the skins,
both for the red and yellow dyes.

Let the skins dried with the hair on
be first laid to soak in clean water three
days. Let them be broken over the flesh,
side, and put into fresh water for two days
more, then hung to drain half an hour.
Let them now be broken again on the flesh
side, limed with cold lime on the same
side, and doubled together with the grain
side outward. Thus they must be hung
within doors on a frame five or six days,
till the hair be loose, which must then be
taken off, and the skins returned into the
lime pit for three weeks. Take them then
out, and work them well, flesh and grain,
every sixth or seventh day during that
time; after which wash them ten times
in clean water, changing it at each wash-
ing. They are next to be prepared and
drenched as follows.

2. Second preparation of the skins for
both the dyes.

After squeezing the water out of the
skins, put them into a mixture of bran
and water new milk warm, in this pro-
portion, viz. three pounds of bran for five
skins, with about a gallon of water to
each pound of bran. Here drench them
three days; at the end of which work
them well, and then return them into the

drench two days longer, after which take them out and rub them between the hands, squeeze out the water and scrape the bran clean off from both sides, and then wash them again ten times in clean water, and squeeze the water out. Thus far preparatory to both colours; but afterwards those that are to be red must be created as follows.

3. Preparation in honey and bran.

Mix one pound of honey with three pints luke warm water, and stir them well till the honey be dissolved. Then add two double handfuls of bran; and taking four skins (for which this quantity will suffice) work them well in it separately. Then fold each separately into a round form, the flesh side outward, and lay them in an earthen pan, side by side, in summer, and in winter on top of each other. Place the pan sloping that the fluid may run spontaneously from them. An acid fermentation will then arise in the liquor,

and the skins will swell considerably. Thus let them continue seven or eight days, but the draining moisture must be poured off once or twice a day; after which the next preparation will be necessary.

4. Preparations in salt.

After the last mentioned fermentation, take the skins out on the ninth or tenth day, and rub them well with dry common salt, about half a pound to each, which must be well worked into them. Then they will contract again, and part with a considerable further quantity of liquid, which squeeze out by drawing each through the hands. Next scrape them clean on both sides; after which strew dry salt over the grain sides and rub them well. Then double them length wise, from tail to tail, the flesh side outward, and strew more salt thinly on the flesh side, rubbing it in. For which two last operations a pound and a half may suffice to each skin. Then put them, folded on each other, between two clean boards, placed

sloping breadthwise, and a heavy weight laid on the upper board, in order gradual-

[page break]

ly to press out the moisture they will thus part with. They should be continued so pressed two days or longer, when they will be duly prepared for dyeing.

5. Preparation of the red dye, in the proportion for four skins, and the manner of applying it to the skins.

To eight gallons of water in a copper, put seven ounces of [Shenan](#)* tied up in a linen bag. Light the fire, and when the water has boiled a quarter of an hour, take out the bag, and put into the water still boiling, two drams of allum, three quarters of an ounce of turmeric, three ounces of [cochineal](#), and two ounces of loaf sugar. Then let the whole boil six minutes longer.

Put two pints of this liquor into a flat earthen pan; and when cool as new milk, take one skin folded lengthwise, grain side outward, and dip it in the liquor, rubbing it gently with the hands, then take it out and hang it to dry. Proceed thus with the rest of the skins seperately, eight times before each fresh dipping, squeezing them by drawing through the hand. Then lay them on one side of a large sloping pan, for as much of the water to drain as may be without pressure in two hours, or till cold.

6. Of tanning the red skins.

Powder four pounds of fine white galls,

in a marble mortar, sift them fine, and mix-them in three quarts of water. Work the skins well in this mixture half an hour or more; then folding them four-fold, let them lye in it twenty four hours; then work them again as before; when taken out and scraped clean on both sides, put them into the like quantity of fresh galls and water. Work them here again three quarters of an hour, fold them up as before, and leave them in this fresh

tan three days. On the fourth, take them out again, wash them clean from the galls in seven or eight waters, and hang them up to dry.

7. Manner of dressing the red skins after tanning.

When near dry, scrape them with a proper scraper, on the flesh side, to a requisite thickness. Lay them on a smooth board, and glaze them with a sleek stone. After this, rub them with olive oil, and linen rag, an ounce and half of oil to four skins; then grain them on the graining board, lengthwise, breadthwise, and crosswise from corner to corner.

8. Preparation with galls of the skins for the yellow dye.

When the four skins are taken out of the bran drenched and clean washed as before directed, Art. 2d. work them very well half an hour more, in a mixture of one pound and a half of fine white well powdered galls, with two quarts of clean water. The skins are then to be separately doubled lengthwise, rolled up the flesh side outward, laid in the mixture, and close pressed down, on each other, so to continue two days; the third day work them well again in the tan, and afterwards scrape them clean from the galls with an ivory or brass scraper, but not an iron one. Put them again into fresh tan, made of two pounds of galls with three quarts of water, and work them well in it fifteen times. After this, double and roll them up as before, and lay them in the second tan two days: on the third, work a quarter of a pound of a white sea salt into each skin, and double and roll them up as before, to be returned into the tan till the day following, when they must be taken out and well washed six times in luke warm. Squeeze the water by keeping the skins under pressure between boards half an hour, with two or three hundred pounds weight on the upper board, then they will be ready for the dye.

9. Preparation and application of the yellow dye for four skins.

Mix six ounces of [Cassiari Gehira](#), or Dgehira,t with the same quantity of alum, and pound them together till fine, in a marble mortar with a brass pestle. Thus powdered, divide them into three equal parts, one of which put into a pint and half of hot water in an earthen vessel and stir the mixture.

Let the boiled fluid cool till the hand can bear it. Then spread one of the skins on a flat table in a warm room, the grain side upward; and pour a quarter of the tinging liquor, prepared as here directed, over the grain side, spreading it equally over the skin with the hands, & rubbing it well in. Do the like with the other [page break] three skins, for which the mixture first made will suffice.

Then repeat the operation twice more, seperately on each skin, with the remaining eight ounces of powder of berries and alum, with the aforesaid proportions of hot water put to them as before.

Hang the skins when dyed, upon a wooden frame, the grain side outwards, without folding, and let them drain three quarters of an hour, then wash them six times, or more, in a running stream; which done, press them about an hour to squeeze out the moisture, and hang them up to dry in a warm room.

Lastly, dress and grain them, as directed for the red ones; except that these must not be oiled.

Annotations

[Shenan](#)

[annotation in the original] Shenan is an eastern drug for dying, easy to be procured at any of the ports of Asia, Africa, or the Levant. It is jointed Kali, by botanists called Selicornia.

[Cassiari Gehira](#)

[annotation in the original] t Cassiari Gehira is the berries of an Eastern buckthorn tree, and may be had at Aleppo, or other parts of the Levant, at a small price, by the same means as the Shenan. The common Avignon berries, or yellow berries, may be substituted, but not with so [sound] effect.

[cochineal](#)

According to the OED, cochineal is "A dye-stuff consisting of the dried bodies of the insect *Coccus cacti*, which is found on several species of cactus in Mexico and elsewhere."

Method of Dying Red and Yellow Leather, called Turkey Leather recipe from Early Modern Maritime Recipes:
<https://emmr.lib.unb.ca/recipes/46>