

# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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## IMPROVEMENT IN PROCESSES FOR MAKING PLUG-TOBACCO.

Specification forming part of Letters Patent No. **154,626**, dated September 1, 1874; application filed May 19, 1874.

*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, THOMAS C. WILLIAMS of Richmond, in the county of Henrico and State of Virginia, have invented a new and Improved Process of Preparing Plug Chewing-Tobacco; and I do hereby declare that the following is a full and exact description thereof:

Heretofore plug chewing-tobacco has usually been prepared by making up into separate rolls or bunches sufficient to form single plugs, then wrapping with tobacco leaves, and pressing in molds or shapes into thin plugs; the leaves of the tobacco being in layers parallel with the sides of the plugs. There are great objections to this plug-tobacco, some of which are: First, the plugs are so thin, they soon become very dry and hard, and rapidly deteriorate in quality and in consistency for chewing. Second, it is difficult to cut or bite off pieces therefrom for chewing. Third, the quality of the tobacco is concealed from the purchaser. It is also comparatively expensive to prepare plug tobacco thus put up, wrapped, and pressed separately, and difficult to procure skillful hands to make the unpressed rolls.

By my improved process all of these objections are obviated, and I obtain all the substantial advantages both of plug and fine-cut tobacco, and avoid the disadvantages of both.

The process is substantially as follows: The tobacco leaves are first laid in quantity sufficient to form comparatively large and thick sheets or blocks when pressed, say, twenty-four inches long, twelve inches wide, and two or three inches thick. They are then pressed very compactly in molds under powerful pressure, the leaves of the tobacco lying lengthwise of the mold, so that their grain or fibers shall run in one general direction. Then the sheets or blocks are cut crosswise into bars or strips of the desired dimensions by means of saws or other cutting instrument. Afterward the bars or strips are severed by sawing, or otherwise, preferably into rectangular blocks or plugs of the desired size to be put up for sale, the flat or broad sides of the blocks or plugs being across the leaves of the pressed tobacco. Or the whole sheet or block is cut with the saw both in longitudinal and transverse directions, thus dividing it at once into the final blocks. Thus the broad surfaces of

the plugs are always cut across the grain or fibers of the tobacco leaves.

The blocks or plugs may be wrapped first in paper and then in tin-foil. This wrapping is not essential to the process. It is, however, desirable, because of its preserving the tobacco in a fresh and comparatively moist condition. But other modes of putting up and preserving the quality of the tobacco may be adopted.

The use of the saw for cutting the thick sheets or large blocks of pressed tobacco is valuable, because it is nearly, if not absolutely impossible to cut with a knife the thick, solid, unyielding material either smoothly or with true faces, as the saw does perfectly well. Besides the saw requires a much less expenditure of power in this case than does the knife.

Tobacco thus prepared presents blocks of very regular shape and fine appearance. And since the tobacco is cut across the leaves, the largest surfaces being across the leaves and across their grain or fibers, it is very easy to cleave off layers or flakes, for chewing, without cutting or biting, thereby greatly enhancing convenience in its use. The edges of the leaves are also shown to the view, and the quality of the tobacco is thus easily ascertained by the purchaser, there being no leaf-wrapper to prevent its inspection. Another important advantage is that the blocks are cut thicker, if desired, with the other advantages named, than is practicable with the old methods, so that the quality is well preserved. The expense of preparation is likewise lessened by avoiding waste in trimming, by laying and pressing in large quantities, and by saving the expense of the costly leaf-wrappers.

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

The within-described process of preparing plug-tobacco, by first laying the leaves longitudinally in molds, then pressing them under strong pressure into sheets or blocks equal in thickness to the desired breadth of the plugs, and then cutting the plugs therefrom flatwise across and transversely to the fibers or grain of the leaves, substantially as herein specified.

THOS. C. WILLIAMS.

Witnesses:

JNO. P. WORD,  
G. H. JONES.