No. 705,775. Patented July 29, 1902.

W. L. MOORE.

TOBACCO FORK.

(Application filed Mar. 10, 1902.)

(No Model.)

Fig. 1.

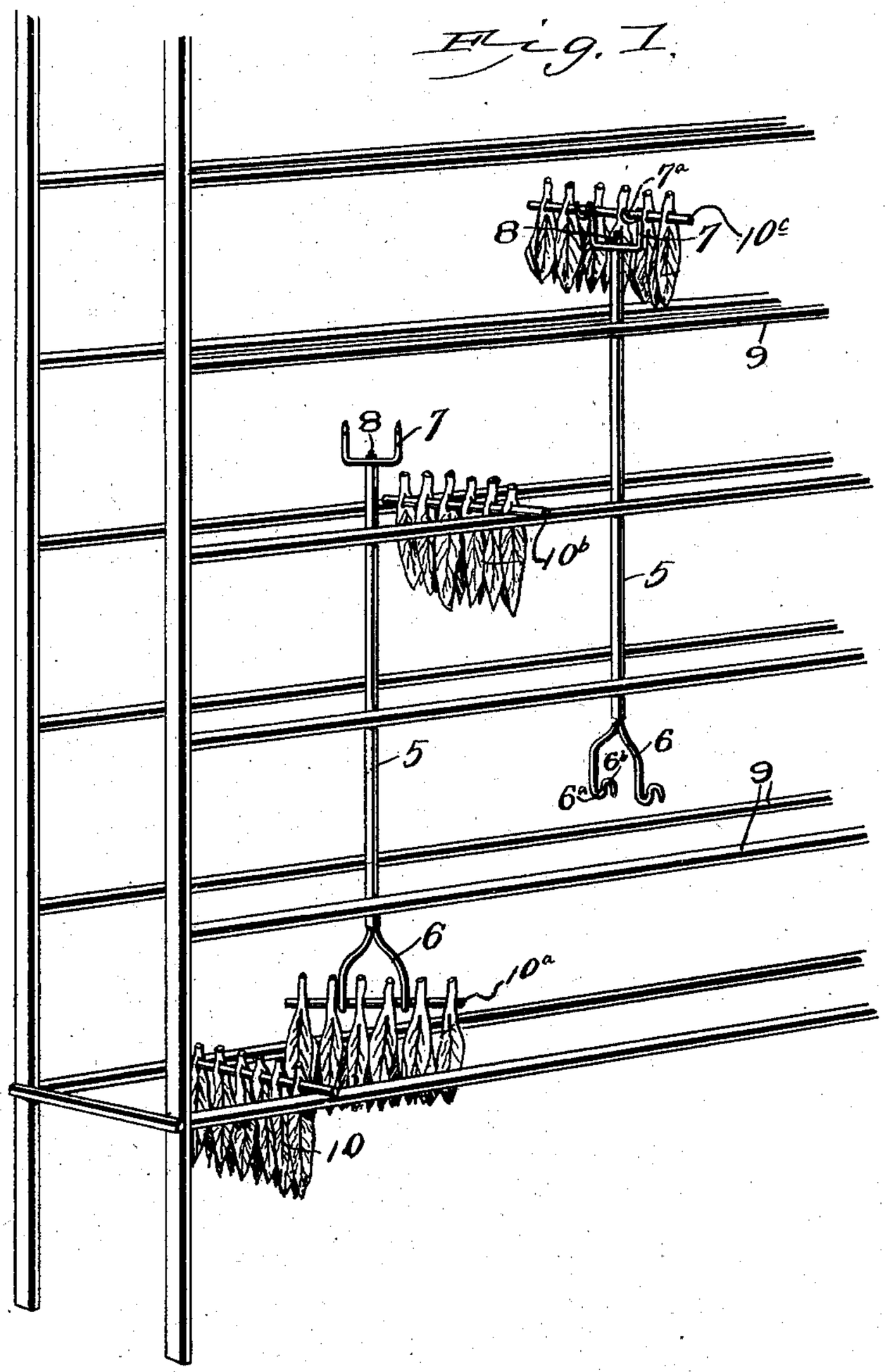
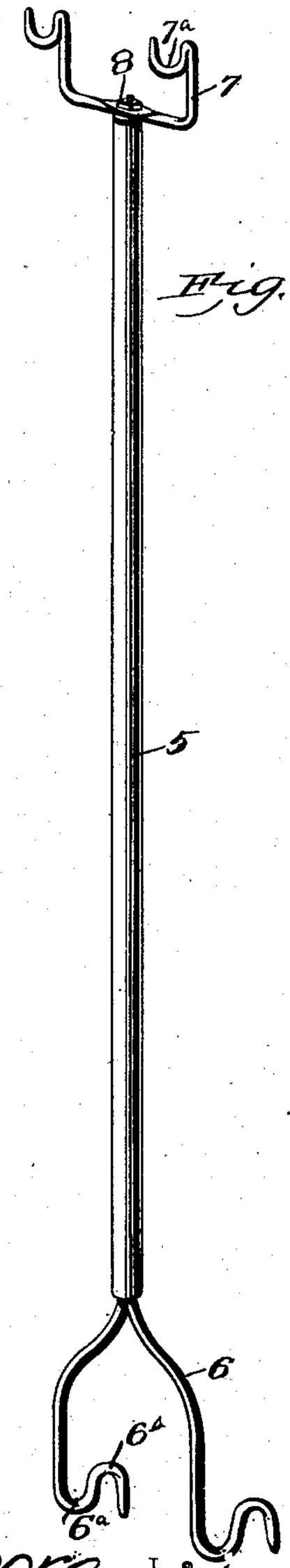


Fig. 2.



Witnesses
E. F. Stewart
E. N. Woodward.

Inventor.
W. L. Moore,
by Cachow & Co.
Attorneys

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

WILLIAM LEE MOORE, OF LACIE, KENTUCKY.

TOBACCO-FORK.

SPECIFICATION forming part of Letters Patent No. 705,775, dated July 29, 1902.

Application filed March 10, 1902. Serial No. 97,571. (No model.)

To all whom it may concern:

Be it known that I, WILLIAM LEE MOORE, a citizen of the United States, residing at Lacie, in the county of Henry and State of Kentucky, have invented a new and useful Tobacco-Fork, of which the following is a specification.

This invention relates to implements employed in handling tobacco in drying or curing barns, and has for its object the production of fork whereby the "sticks" or "laths" on which the tobacco-plants are strung may be placed upon the drying-racks in an expeditious manner and with the expenditure of a minimum amount of labor and time; and the invention consists in a handle or stock having a fork at each end, one fork being narrower than the other and preferably removable.

The invention consists in certain novel features of the construction and as hereinafter shown and described, and specifically pointed out in the claims.

In the drawings illustrative of the invention, Figure 1 is a perspective view representing two of the improved forks, together with a number of the sticks or laths of tobacco-plants, and a diagrammatic representation of a number of the racks on which the sticks are supported. Fig. 2 is a perspective view, enlarged, of one of the improved forks.

In the handling of tobacco for the purpose of placing it in the drying-sheds much valuable time is lost and much needless labor expended in handling the sticks in stowing them upon the drying-racks, and to obviate this is the object of the present invention.

In the invention is comprised a stock or handle 5, preferably of wood, and with a fork 6 at one end and a fork 7 at the other end, the fork 7 being narrower than the fork 6, as shown. The extremities of each of the arms or "tines" of the fork 6 are formed with independent reversed hooks 6^a and 6^b, the hooks 6^a opening toward the handle 5 and the hook 6^b opening outward away from the handle. The extremity of each of the arms or tines of the fork 7 is formed with a hook 7^a, opening outward or away from the handle 5, as shown. The fork 6 is permanently attached to the handle 5, while the fork 7 is preferably removable from the handle, as by a bolt and nut 8, as shown, so that when the fork 7 is not required it may be removed. It may sometimes happen that the implement may be required in localities where one fork only is required, and in that event the fork 7 might be removed.

In Fig. 1 a sufficient showing of a number of tobacco-drying racks and sticks of the tobacco-plants is made to illustrate the operation, the racks being represented at 9 and the sticks of strung tobacco at 10, 10^a, 10^b, and 10^c at various points.

In the diagrammatic representation in Fig. 1 one of the sticks of tobacco is shown at 10 resting on the lower tier or rack, the stick 10^a supported on the fork 6 of one of the forks, at 10^b resting on one of the intermediate tiers or racks, and at 10^c supported by the fork 7 of another of the forks to illustrate the various ways in which the forks may be employed. The racks are built so close together that there is very little room to move the implements employed in handling the sticks. Hence any implement designed to be employed in such localities must be capable of adaptation to the conditions and arrangement of the racks, and the improved fork herein illustrated is admirably adapted to enable the operator to quickly and easily place the sticks upon the racks.

In operating the device the sticks are first placed upon the lower tier of racks by the workmen, and boys are generally employed for this purpose. Two operators are then disposed in each tier, (or two operators employed at a time successively in each tier,) one on the ground and the other on a suitable platform at a suitable intermediate point above him in the tiers of racks. The lower workman then engages one of the sticks with the hook 6, as shown at 10^a in Fig. 1, and elevates it up as high as he can reach without turning the handle 5 end for end and hangs it on a rack as high as he can reach. He then allows the handle to slip through his hands until the fork 7 is within reach of the stick just elevated, when he engages the stick by the fork 7 and elevates it up as high as he can reach and either hangs it on a higher rack or passes it to the workman above, who is also provided with one of the double-ended forks. The second workman may be located

at so high a point in the barn that he will have to pass his fork down a considerable distance below the level at which he is standing and take the stick off from the lower workman's fork, the difference in width of the two forks 6 and 7 enabling him to do this, as will be readily understood. The second workman can then pass the stick on up in the same manner as the first workman, and so on as high as may be required, according to the size of the curing-barn. By this means the workman can handle and hang as many of the sticks as three or even four workmen can handle in the same time by the ordinary means and with less trouble and less labor and without danger of injuring the tobacco.

The upwardly-opening hooks 6^a on the fork 6 enable the workmen to lift the sticks from a lower to a higher level, while the outer hooks 6^b enable him to lift them from this higher level to one still higher.

The difference in width of the two forks 6 and 7 is an important feature of the invention, as it enables the workmen to pass the sticks directly from one fork to another and pass them on up to a higher point without taking the time to place them upon the racks with one fork and then removing them and passing them on upward with another, as with ordinary forms of fork.

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed as new is—

1. As a new article of manufacture, a tobacco-fork consisting of a handle having a fork at each end adapted to engage the sticks of tobacco, one of said forks being narrower than the other, substantially as shown and described.

2. As a new article of manufacture, a tobacco-fork consisting of a handle having a fork at each end and adapted to engage the sticks of tobacco, one of said forks being permanently attached to one end of the handle and the other removably secured to the opposite end of the same, the said permanent fork being provided with divergent arms each terminating in reversed oppositely-opening hooks, substantially as shown and described.

3. As a new article or manufacture, a fork for handling tobacco consisting of a handle with a fork connected to one end formed of two diverging arms each terminating in reversed oppositely-opening hooks, substantially as shown and described.

4. As a new article of manufacture, a tobacco-fork consisting of a handle having a fork at each end adapted to engage the sticks of tobacco, one of said forks being narrower than the other and detachable from said handle, substantially as shown and described.

5. As a new article of manufacture, a tobacco-fork consisting of a handle having a fork at each end adapted to engage the sticks of tobacco, one of said forks being narrower than the other and detachable from the handle, and the other, permanent, fork being provided with or formed of two diverging arms each terminating in reversed oppositely-opening hooks, substantially as shown and described.

In testimony that I claim the foregoing as my own I have hereto affixed my signature in the presence of two witnesses.

WILLIAM LEE MOORE.

Witnesses:
TULL. DARNOLD,
LUTHER BERRY.