

Nov. 27, 1962

S. A. GRAPP
TEAR STRIP PACKAGE

3,065,896

Filed Aug. 4, 1954

5 Sheets-Sheet 1

FIG. 1.

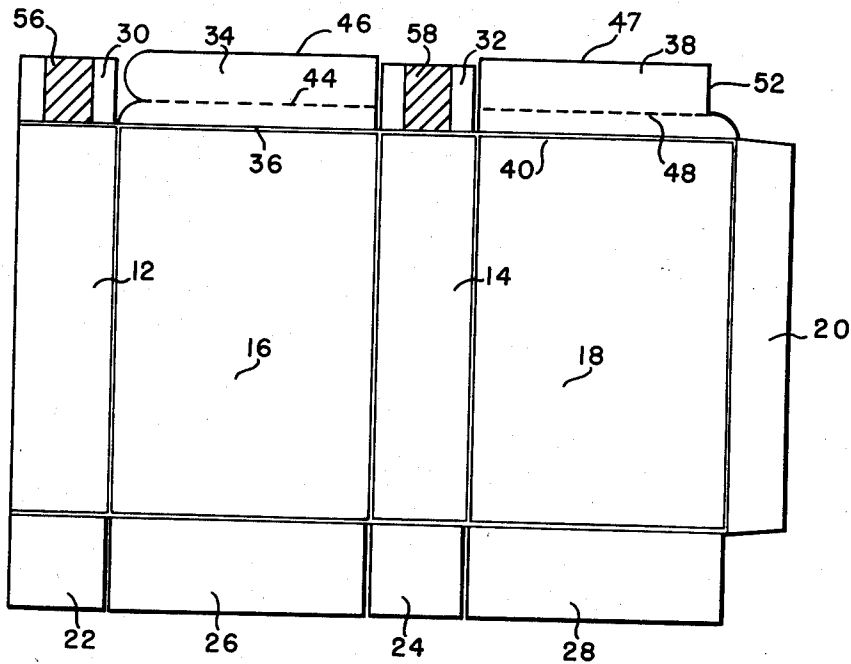
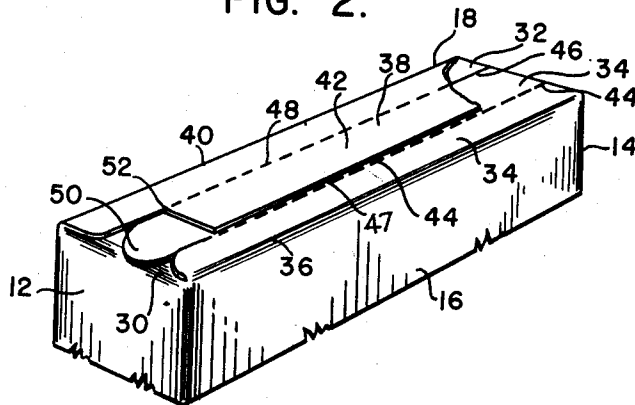


FIG. 2.



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5 Sheets-Sheet 2

FIG. 3.

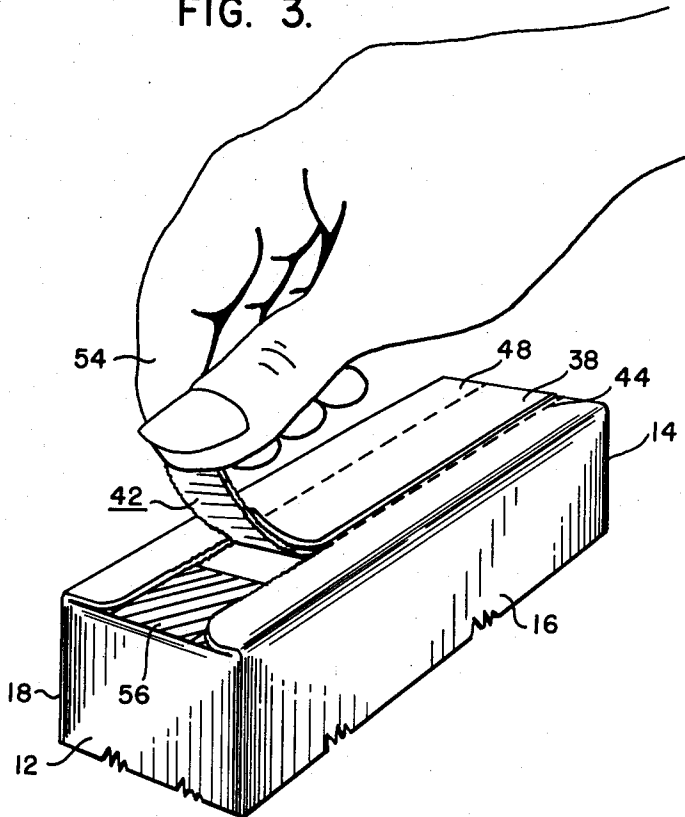
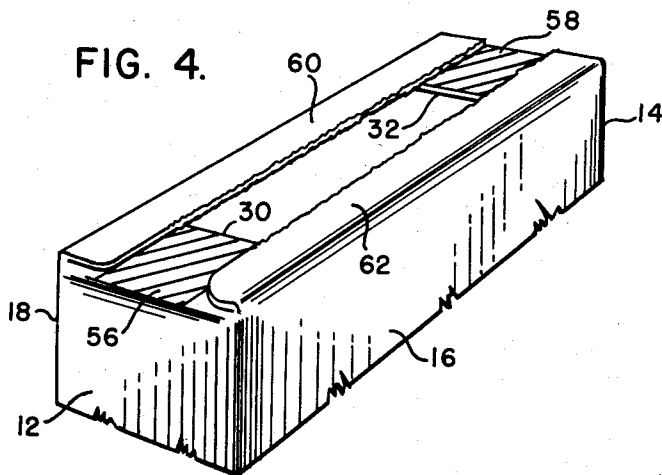


FIG. 4.



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5 Sheets-Sheet 3

FIG. 5

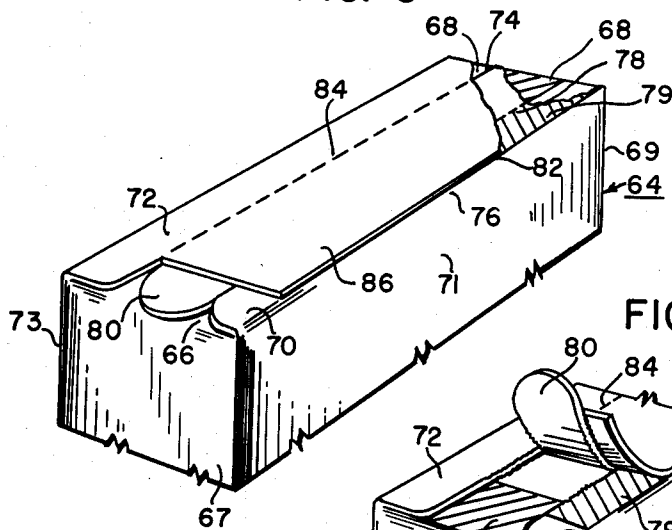


FIG. 6

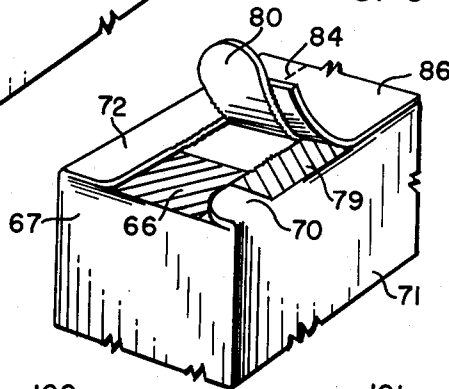
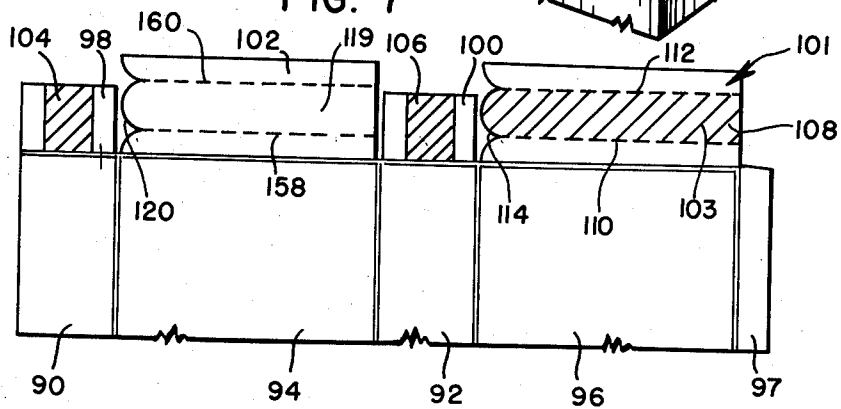


FIG. 7



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5 Sheets-Sheet 4

FIG. 8

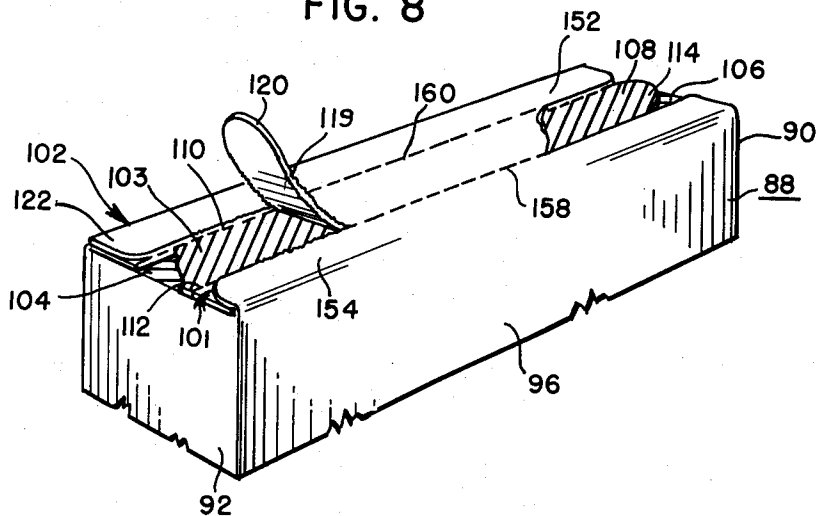
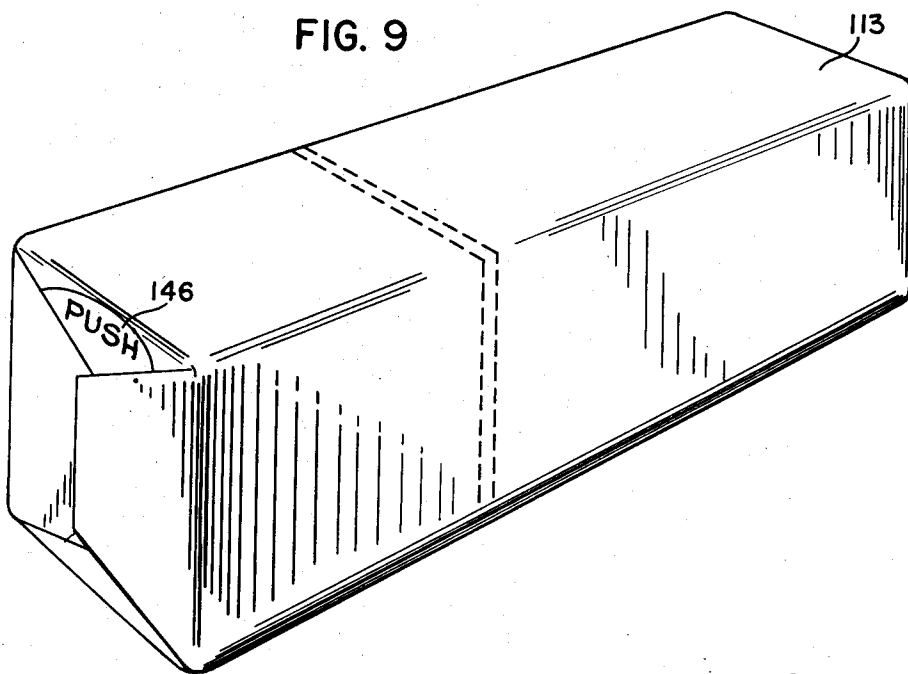


FIG. 9



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5 Sheets-Sheet 5

FIG. 11

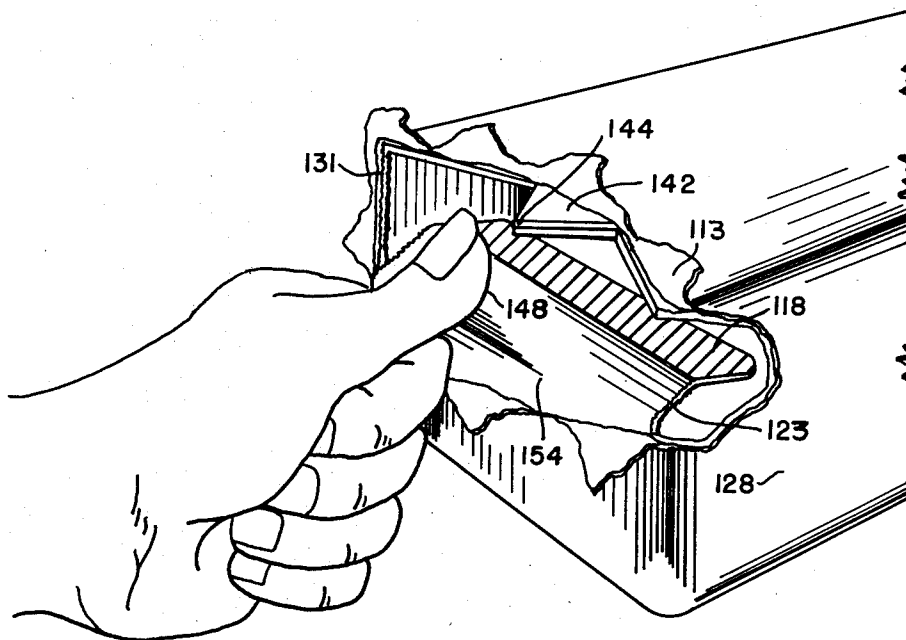
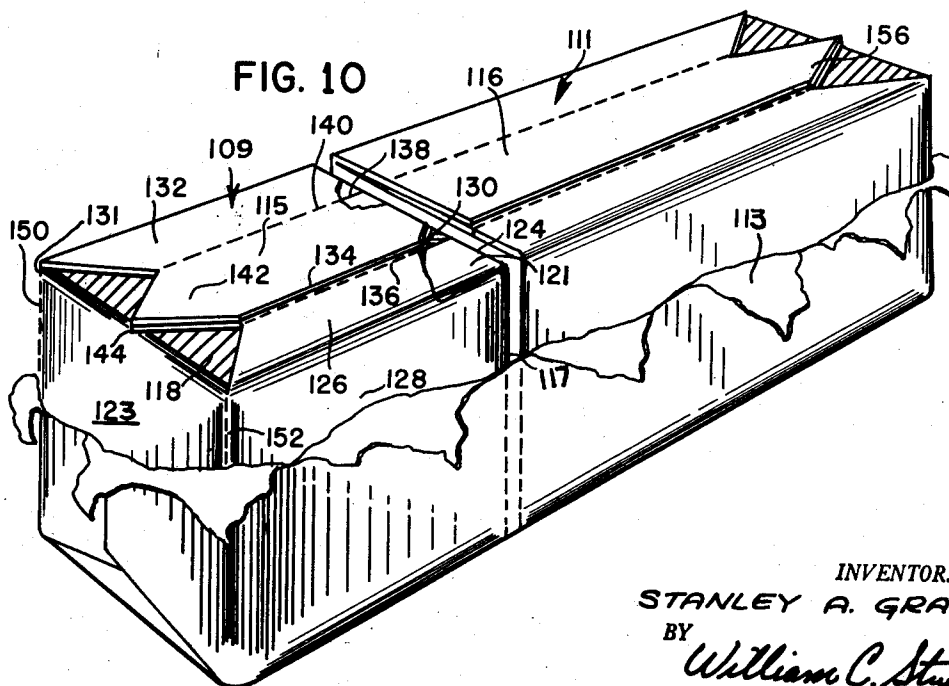


FIG. 10



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1

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4 Claims. (Cl. 229-51)

This invention relates to improvements in containers and more specifically to a container closure which has a tear strip for opening the carton.

Cartons formed of paperboard such as white patent coated newsboard, chipboard and similar materials are commonly used for merchandising products such as food-stuffs. The cartons have sufficient strength to protect the contents, can be stacked and printed, are economical and have many other desirable features. Because of the strength of the material, however, it is difficult to manually open these cartons without the aid of a sharp knife or other opening instrument. In addition to causing inconvenience in having to provide an opening instrument, the inner liner, if one is provided, and the contents are often damaged by the opening instrument. In efforts to provide cartons which are easily opened, various structures have been attempted but these structures frequently require the provision of extra carton material, thus increasing the cost of the carton. In other structures attempts to provide easy opening features have resulted in weakened carton structures which inadequately protect the contents.

It is accordingly an object of the present invention to provide an improved carton structure which is readily and easily opened and yet which is competitive in strength with other cartons.

Another object of the invention is to provide a carton blank which has easy opening features but which can be closed on a standard closing machine without changing the arrangement of the gluing or the folding elements of the machine.

Another object of the invention is to provide a tear strip opening for a carton which does not deform the carton end and permits stacking the carton for merchandising and display purposes.

Another object of the invention is to provide a carton which is overwrapped with a sheet of printed paper and is provided with an easy opening feature of a type which makes it unnecessary to alter the structure of the paper overwrap and yet in which the carton and paper overwrap can be simultaneously opened to obtain access to the contents.

A still further object of the invention is to provide a tear strip opening feature for a carton which makes it possible to use shortened top closure flaps, thus saving carton material.

Other objects and advantages will become apparent in the following specification taken in connection with the appended drawings in which:

FIGURE 1 is a plan view of a carton blank embodying the features of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of a carton formed from the blank of FIG. 1;

FIG. 3 is a perspective view illustrating how the carton of FIG. 2 may be opened;

FIG. 4 is a perspective view of the carton after the tear strip has been removed;

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of an alternate embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 6 is a perspective view of FIG. 5 shown to illustrate how the carton of FIG. 5 is opened;

FIG. 7 is a plan view of a blank consisting of still another embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 8 is a perspective view of a carton made from

2

the blank of FIG. 7 and illustrating how the carton is opened;

FIG. 9 is a perspective view of a further embodiment of the invention;

FIG. 10 is a perspective view of the carton of FIG. 9 with the outer paper overwrap partially removed to illustrate the structure of the wrapped carton; and,

FIG. 11 is a perspective view illustrating opening the carton of FIG. 9.

In the drawings the embodiments shown illustrate a carton which may be formed of paperboard or the like and which may be used for various types of contents. If the contents are to be foodstuffs the carton frequently is provided with an inner air-tight liner to give double protection to the contents. Several embodiments of the invention are shown and will be described separately and the descriptions of each of the embodiments will follow the headings which indicate the drawings in which each embodiment is shown. It will be understood, however, that the features of the embodiments illustrate only the preferred form of the invention and other embodiments fall within the teachings of the invention. Further, the features of the various embodiments may be used interchangeably and are not to be restricted to the particular showing.

FIGURES 1-4

The blank which forms the carton of this embodiment is shown in FIGURE 1. Panels 12 and 14 represent the transverse side walls of the carton as shown in FIG. 2 and panels 16 and 18 represent the front and rear or longitudinal side walls of the carton.

A carton side flap 20 is attached along the side of the rear panel 18 to be adhered to the inside surface of the side wall 12 when the carton is folded into tubular form in the well known manner.

End flaps are connected to the top and bottom edges of the carton side walls for folding over the carton end to form an end closure. For the bottom of the carton, flaps 22 and 24 are attached to the bottom ends of side walls 12 and 14 respectively and bottom end flaps 26 and 28 are attached to the front and rear walls 16 and 18 respectively. When the carton is folded into tubular form these flaps are folded across the bottom end of the carton and are adhered to each other by a suitable adhesive in the manner well known to the art and not shown in detail in the present drawings.

The top closure flaps are similar in some respects to the bottom flaps in that they are folded across the end of the carton and adhere to each other to form a top closure. The top flaps, however, are unique in structure and are uniquely joined to obtain the special opening features of the present invention.

Attached to the top edge of the side walls 12 and 14 are inner top closure flaps 30 and 32. These flaps, as is the case with the others, are continuous and integral with their adjoining side walls and as such are formed simultaneously with the rest of the blank by cutting the entire blank out of a single sheet of board.

Attached to the top of the longitudinal or front wall 16 of the carton is a first outer top closure flap 34 which is hinged to the wall along line 36. This first outer closure flap is adhered to the underlying flaps 30 and 32 in a specific manner which will be later described in greater detail. It will be noted from the portion removed from the drawing in FIG. 2 that the first flap does not extend all the way across the depth of the carton and thus uses less material than if a full depth flap were used. With this economy sized flap, each of the flaps 30 and 32 and the first and second outer flaps 34 and 38 can extend beyond the side walls the same distance and thus the entire blank can be cut from material the exact width of

3

the blank and no material is wasted in having to shorten some of the flaps.

The second outer top closure flap 38 is connected to the opposite longitudinal or rear wall 18 along fold line 40 and when folded in position over the container top overlies the first outer flap 34. A layer of adhesive is positioned between the first and second outer flaps to join them. Another layer of adhesive is positioned between the inner flaps 30 and 32 to join them to the first and second overlying flaps.

It will be understood that whether the first or second flap is the overlying flap and the other the underlying is a matter of choice usually dependent on the packaging machinery that is to close the carton. Likewise any face of the package may be chosen as the front and the terms used to describe the parts of the carton are for description only and are not to be taken as limiting.

Extending across the center of the carton top is the tear strip 42. The tear strip is defined by lines of weakened resistance in the first and second closure flaps. In the first closure flap 34 a weakened tear line 44, which may be in the form of a series of perforations, extends parallel to the side of the package and is spaced from the edge 36 of the package. This perforated line substantially corresponds in location with the free edge 47 of the second overlying flap. A similar parallel perforated line extends the width of the second overlying flap and is spaced from the rear edge 40 of the carton. This perforated line 48 substantially coincides in location with the free edge 46 of the first underlying flap.

The two layers of material formed by the first and second flaps 34 and 38 in the area between the weakened tear lines 44 and 48 form the doubled layered tear strip 42. In order that this strip may be torn from the top of the package to open it, a pull tab 50 is formed at one end of the tear strip. The pull tab is cut into the lower flap and has a rounded end. The tab extends the width of the tear strip with one inner edge coinciding with the tear line 44 and the other edge coinciding with the tear line 48. The second overlying flap 38 is cut away at its end 52 so that the pull tab is visible and accessible.

To remove the tear strip from the top of the package this pull tab 50 is manually grasped by hand as is shown in FIG. 3 and drawn away from the carton. This causes the strip to tear along the perforated lines 44 and 48.

In order that the pull tab may be readily lifted and separated from the end closure flap 30, the under surface of the tear strip is not adhered to the carton flap 30.

This could be accomplished by omitting adhesive between these two surfaces but preferably ease of separation between the two surfaces is accomplished in a different manner.

In the preferred embodiment, the carton is designed so that it may be closed by a standard type package closing machine. These machines customarily have apparatus which spreads adhesive over the entire surface of the flaps such as flaps 30 and 32. To change the machine so that it would apply adhesive to only limited areas of the flaps would require additional expense which is unnecessary with the present carton.

Therefore, in order to enable using the standard packaging machine and yet have the tear strip unadhered to the flaps, the blank is printed with an ink over the areas which are to remain unadhered so that the adhesive will not penetrate the fibers of the carton and therefore will not cause the facing surfaces to stick to each other. In FIGS. 1, 3 and 4 ink is applied to flap 30 over the shaded area 56 and to the flap 32 over the shaded area 58. With the area thus inked the tear strip 42 is readily separated from the upper surface of the flap as is shown in FIG. 3. It will be understood that in each instance where the area is inked to prevent the adhesive from being effective either of the facing surfaces or both could be printed or inked with the same result.

As the tear strip is torn completely from the top of

4

the package along the dotted lines 44 and 48, it easily separates from the area 58 on the tab 32 leaving the carton as is shown in FIG. 4 with an opening down the center and with the areas 60 and 62 on each side of the tear strip remaining. The package may be emptied through the opening formed by the tear strip or may be completely opened by tearing the small remaining flaps 60 and 62 from the tabs 30 and 32 to which they are adhered. This may be easily accomplished by grasping them at their torn edge and drawing them outwardly.

It will be understood that whereas the carton is shown with a pull tab at one end of the tear strip, a tab could be formed in both ends of the strip so that it could be torn from the carton in either direction. In this case the top flap would be cut away at both ends to reveal both tabs.

Thus the above described carton obtains a closure which is very easily opened yet which has considerable strength. The flaps are each short contributing to the efficiency of the opening structure and also effecting an important saving in material.

FIGURES 5 AND 6

In FIG. 5 an alternate construction is shown in which the carton body 64 is tubular in form and has four side walls similar to the carton of FIGS. 1-4. The top closure flaps comprise end flaps 66 and 68 which are attached to the opposing side walls 67 and 69 of the carton. A first top closure flap 70 is attached to the front side wall 71 and overlies the flaps 66 and 68 and is adhered thereto over certain areas which will later be defined. A second top closure flap 72 is attached to the rear side wall 73 and overlies the first closure flap 70 and is adhered thereto in a special manner which will also be described.

The first top closure flap 70 which is attached to the front wall of the carton is substantially the same in structure as the first closure flap 34 of the embodiment of FIGS. 1-4 extending partly across the depth of the carton with its free edge terminating at 74. Between this edge 74 and the line of attachment 76 to the carton wall, which is the corner of the carton, is a perforated tear line 78. The area between the perforated line 78 and the edge 74 of the first flap is the part of the tear strip which is to be torn from the top of the carton. A pull tab 80 is formed in one end of the tear strip and extends the width of the tear strip with its corners rounded so that it may be easily grasped when the package is manually opened.

The area which lies beneath the tear strip is unadhered to the tear strip and this again is accomplished by inking the flaps 66 and 68 along the narrow area beneath the tear strip.

The second flap 72 overlies the first flap and is adhered thereto over the tear strip area only. The outer part of the second flap between the perforated line 78 of the first flap and the outer edge 82 of the second flap is not adhered to the underlying first flap and to prevent this adherence this area is coated with an ink 79 to prevent the adhesive from penetrating the carton material. Thus the entire surface between the flaps can be coated with adhesive as is done with a standard packaging machine and yet the areas will remain unadhered.

The second or overlying flap 72 has a perforated line 84 which substantially coincides with the free edge 74 of the first flap.

To open the carton the pull tab 80 is grasped and drawn away from the carton thus tearing the carton top along perforated line 84 and along the perforated line 78. Since the outer portion 86 of the overlying flap is unadhered to the first flap, it will freely separate therefrom as is shown in FIG. 6 and will be removed with the central tear strip. This extra portion on the second overlying flap does not impede the opening of the carton yet it presents an improved carton in that a top of a carton has a complete and smooth surface and there is no ridge down the center of the carton which would make it more difficult

5

to stack. This complete top surface also enhances the appearance of the carton and protects the perforated line 78 of the underlying flap.

FIGURES 7 AND 8

In the embodiment shown in these figures the carton body 88 is similar to the carton of FIGS. 1-6. As is shown in the blank of FIG. 7, the carton blank has panels 90 and 92 which represent the side walls and panels 94 and 96 which represent the front and back side walls. Attached to the side of 96 is a strip 97 which is secured to the adjoining side wall 90 when the carton is folded into tubular form. Attached to the side walls 90 and 92 and continuous therewith are the top closing flaps 98 and 100.

Overlying these flaps 98 and 100 is a first closure flap 101 which is secured to the rear side wall 96 and which extends the full depth of the carton. This flap is adhered to the flaps 98 and 100 by an adhesive. These flaps 98 and 100 again have printed areas 104 and 106 extending across their mid-portion which prevent the first flap from adhering to them in the central area. This central unadhered area of the first flap represents the lower tear strip 108 of the double tear strip. The lower tear strip 108 is defined between perforated lines 110 and 112 which extend the length of the tear strip and are spaced from the edges of the flap. At one end of the tear strip a rounded pull tab 114 is formed as shown at the right end of the carton in FIG. 8.

It will be noted that in this carton the first or underlying flap is attached to the rear wall rather than to the front wall of the carton. It is a matter of choice which of the flaps are folded down first since both flaps have tabs, i.e., 114 and 120. The first flap folded, however, must have the inked area 103.

A second flap 102 is attached to the front side wall 94 and overlies the first flap 101. This flap also has a central tear strip 119 but this strip is torn separately from the tear strip 108 of the first flap when the carton is opened. The tear strip 119 is formed by parallel perforated lines 158 and 160 in the flap 102. The second flap is adhered to the first flap, except for the area 103, between the perforated lines by a layer of adhesive spread between the flap surfaces. The center area 103 of the first tear strip 108 is printed, i.e., coated with an ink, making the adhesive ineffective and therefore the two tear strips are easily separable as is illustrated in FIG. 8.

For the purpose of removing the upper tear strip 119 a rounded tab 120 is formed in its end and this may be grasped and torn from the package as is shown in FIG. 8. With this tear strip removed the package is still sealed by the first flap 101. To finish the opening of the package the lower tear strip 108 is grasped by the pull tab 114 and this strip tears away from the package along its perforated lines 110 and 112 completing the removal of the tear strips. The package may be opened further by pulling back the areas 152 and 154 on each side of the tear strip tearing them away from the flaps 98 and 100.

It will be seen that this double tear strip doubly secures the package and maintains the seal on the package even if one of the tear strips accidentally is broken. The carton also presents a smooth finished top with the upper flap 102 extending completely across the carton and covering and preventing accidental removal of the pull tab 114 of the lower flap.

FIGURES 9, 10 and 11

The carton shown in this embodiment of the invention is of the overwrapped type wherein a paper is wrapped around one or more paperboard cartons. The cartons within give strength and rigidity to the carton as a whole and the outer wrapper protects the carton and holds together the plurality of cartons and is used to carry the printing and advertising matter.

In FIG. 10 the package is shown with cartons 109 and

6

111 having a paper overwrap 113. Each of the cartons within the paper overwrap has a tear strip 115 and 116 for the cartons 109 and 111 respectively. These tear strips are similar in certain respects to the tear strips formed in the embodiment of FIGS. 1-4.

Since both cartons 109 and 111 are substantially the same only one need be described in detail. Carton 109 has top closure flaps 118 and 121 attached to the opposing side walls 123 and 124 respectively. These carton flaps are folded across the end of the body 117 of the carton. A first flap 126 is attached to the front wall 128 and overlies the flaps 118 and 121 and a layer of adhesive is positioned between their surfaces.

The flap 126 is adhered to the flap 121 but not to the flap 118 for reasons which will later be made clear. To prevent this adherence, the adhesive may be omitted from the flap 118 or in order to close the package on a standard closing machine, the entire surface of 118 may be inked so that the adhesive placed thereon will be ineffective. The central portion 130 of the flap 121 is also inked so that the adhesive will be ineffective and the tear strip 115 will easily separate from the flap.

The second flap 132 is attached to the rear side of the carton and is folded across the carton top to overlie the first flap 126. This flap is shorter than the depth of the carton and its outer edge 134 corresponds with a perforated line 136 in the first flap to define the edge of the tear strip 115. The other edge of the tear strip is defined by the outer edge 138 of the first flap and by a perforated line 140 extending across the second flap and substantially coincident with the edge 138 of the first flap.

At one end of the tear strip, shown as the left end of package 109 in FIG. 10, a pull tab 142 is formed in both the first and second flaps 126 and 132. By using both flaps for the pull tab, greater strength is accomplished for purposes which will later appear clear. This pull tab is formed by cutting back both flaps and terminates in a sharp point 144 substantially coincident with the face of the side wall 123 of the carton.

This sharp point 144 when the carton is opened penetrates or tears through the frangible paper overwrap 113 when the side of the carton is pushed in the manner shown in FIG. 11. A marker 146 is printed on the side of the paper overwrap as shown in FIG. 9 to indicate where the user should apply pressure with this thumb 148 (FIG. 11). To facilitate the puncturing of the paper overwrap 113 by the point 144 of the pull tab 142, the upper portion of the side wall 123 is constructed so that it will break away from its adjoining side walls 128 and 131. Perforated weakened lines of resistance 150 and 152 are located at the juncture of the side wall 123 and the rear wall 131 and front wall 128 respectively. These perforated lines break freely when the thumb pressure is applied at point 146, FIG. 9, and the flap folds inwardly along a line 154 as shown in FIG. 11. It is to be remembered that the tab 118 was coated with ink so that the adhesive thereon would not cause it to adhere to the flaps 126 and 132 which lie over it and thus the tab 118 and the upper part of side wall 123 easily move inward to permit the thumb, FIG. 11, to force the paper overwrap 113 against the pointed pull tab 144 and tear the paper.

Once the paper 113 is torn and the point 144 of the tab 142 projects therethrough, it can easily be grasped and torn from the carton 109. The frangible paper 113 will be torn with the tear strip.

After this the paper may be pulled from the other carton 111 and this carton opened by grasping the tab 156 or the tear strip 116 from the carton 111 may be opened without first removing the paper overwrap by proceeding to force in the end of the carton 111 in the same manner as the carton 109 was opened. This may be easily accomplished since the structure of carton 111 is identical with carton 109.

Thus it will be seen that this structure has obtained

an overwrap package in which no weakened areas need be provided in the overwrap and yet the package may be easily opened. The cartons and the package may be formed in the same manner as a conventional type package and yet the inherent difficulties met when trying to open the conventional type package are avoided.

In the embodiments discussed above a package is obtained which meets the objectives set forth in the beginning of the specification and obtains a simple economical structure and one which is simply and easily opened. In addition to presenting a saving in carton material the package is additionally economical because it can be handled and closed on standard packaging machinery without requiring costly adaptation of the machinery to a special package.

I have, in the drawings and specification, presented a detailed disclosure of the preferred embodiment of my invention. It is to be understood that the invention is susceptible of modifications, structural changes and various applications of use within the spirit and scope of the invention and I do not intend to limit the invention to the specific form disclosed but intend to cover all modifications, changes and alternative constructions and methods falling within the scope of the principles taught by my invention.

I claim as my invention:

1. A carton comprising a tubular body rectangular in cross section formed of longitudinal and transverse side walls with end closure flaps folded across an end of the carton body to form an end closure, the end closure flaps including at least one inner closure flap hinged to a transverse side wall of the carton, a first outer closure flap hinged to one longitudinal side wall and overlying at least part of said inner flap, a second outer closure flap hinged to the opposite longitudinal side wall and at least partially overlying the first outer closure flap, said first closure flap extending from its hinge less than the full width across the body end and thereby having a free edge spaced inwardly from the hinge of the second closure flap, said outer flaps providing a tear strip which includes overlying areas of the outer flaps, and extends fully across the closure flaps and carton end with one end of said tear strip overlying said inner flap, said tear strip being defined at one side by a first weakened tear line in the first outer flap parallel to and spaced between the hinge connection and free edge of said first outer flap and extending substantially across the flap and carton end, and said tear strip being defined at its opposite side by a weakened tear line in the second closure flap in substantial alignment above the underlying free edge of the first closure flap, means providing adhesive engagement between said outer flaps and joining them to each other within the area of the tear strip, and means providing limited adhesive attachment between the said inner flap and at least one of the outer flaps, said last mentioned means providing adhesive attachment in a substantial area outside the tear strip and also defining a substantial region between said inner flap and overlying tear strip end which is free of said adhesive attachment for ready outward removal of said tear strip end and separation of said tear strip along said weakened lines and free edge.

2. A carton comprising a tubular body formed of said side walls with end flaps folded across an end of the body to form an end closure, the end flaps including a first end closure flap hinged to one side wall at a first hinge line, and a second end closure flap hinged to an opposite side wall at a second hinge line and at least partially overlying the first flap, said first and second closure flaps being adhered to each other and having a tear strip area which includes overlying portions of both said flaps, said tear strip having at one side a first weakened line extending substantially entirely across the width of said first flap and spaced between said first and second hinge lines, said tear strip having at its opposite side a second weakened line extending substantially entirely across said second

flap and spaced between said second hinge line and said first weakened line, and said first closure flap having a free edge space between said first and second hinge lines and located in substantial alignment under said second weakened line, whereby a force exerted on one end of the tear strip upwardly and away from the body end causes separation along said one side of the tear strip area by tearing said first weakened line and along said opposite side of the tear strip by tearing said second weakened line, as said tear strip end and free edge of the first flap are pulled upwardly.

3. A carton comprising a tubular body rectangular in cross section formed of longitudinal and transverse side walls with end closure flaps folded across an end of the carton body to form an end closure, the end closure flaps including a pair of opposing inner closure flaps hinged to opposite transverse side walls of the carton, a first outer closure flap hinged to one longitudinal side wall and overlying at least part of each inner flap, a second outer closure flap hinged to the opposite longitudinal side wall and at least partially overlying the first outer closure flap, said outer flaps providing a tear strip area which includes overlying portions of the outer flaps, said tear strip having at one side a first single weakened tear line in only the first outer flap and having at its other side a second single weakened tear line in only the second outer flap, each of said tear lines being parallel to and spaced between the hinge connection of its flap and the other of said tear lines and extending substantially across the flap and carton end with said tear strip having ends overlying each of said inner flaps, said first outer flap extending only partially across the carton end toward the hinge line of the second outer flap, said first outer flap thereby having a free edge in alignment with the single weakened tear line of the second outer flap to define one edge of the tear strip, means providing adhesive engagement between said outer flaps and joining them to each other within the area of the tear strip, and means providing limited adhesive attachment between the said inner flaps and at least one of the outer flaps, said last mentioned means providing adhesive attachment between said inner and outer flaps in a substantial area outside the tear strip and also defining a substantial region between said inner flaps and overlying tear strip which is free of said adhesive attachment for ready removal of said tear strip.

4. A carton comprising a tubular body rectangular in cross section formed of longitudinal and transverse side walls with end closure flaps folded across an end of the carton body to form an end closure, the end closure flaps including a pair of opposing inner closure flaps hinged to opposite transverse side walls of the carton, a first outer closure flap hinged to one longitudinal side wall and overlying at least part of each inner flap, a second outer closure flap hinged to the opposite longitudinal side wall and at least partially overlying the first outer closure flap, said outer flaps providing a tear strip area which includes overlying portions of the outer flaps, said tear strip having at one side a first single weakened tear line in only the first outer flap and having at its other side a second single weakened tear line in only the second outer flap, each of said tear lines being parallel to and spaced between the hinge connection of its flap and the other of said tear lines and extending substantially across the flap and carton end with said tear strip having ends overlying each of said inner flaps, each of said first and second outer flaps extending only partially across the carton end toward the hinge line of the other outer flap, with each outer flap having only one of said weakened tear lines, said one tear line of each outer flap being located in substantial alignment with the free edge of the other outer flap thereby defining said tear strip substantially coextensive with the overlapping areas of the outer flaps, means providing adhesive engagement between said outer flaps and joining them to each other within the area of the tear strip, and means providing limited adhesive attachment between the

said inner flaps and at least one of the outer flaps, said last mentioned means providing adhesive attachment between said inner and outer flaps in substantial area outside the tear strip and also defining a substantial region between said inner flaps and overlying tear strip which is free of said adhesive attachment for ready removal of said tear strip.

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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

Patent No. 3,065,896

November 27, 1962

Stanley A. Grapp

It is hereby certified that error appears in the above numbered patent requiring correction and that the said Letters Patent should read as corrected below.

Column 5, line 63, for "and" read -- end --; column 7, line 62, strike out -- said --.

Signed and sealed this 11th day of June 1963.

(SEAL)

Attest:

ERNEST W. SWIDER
Attesting Officer

DAVID L. LADD
Commissioner of Patents