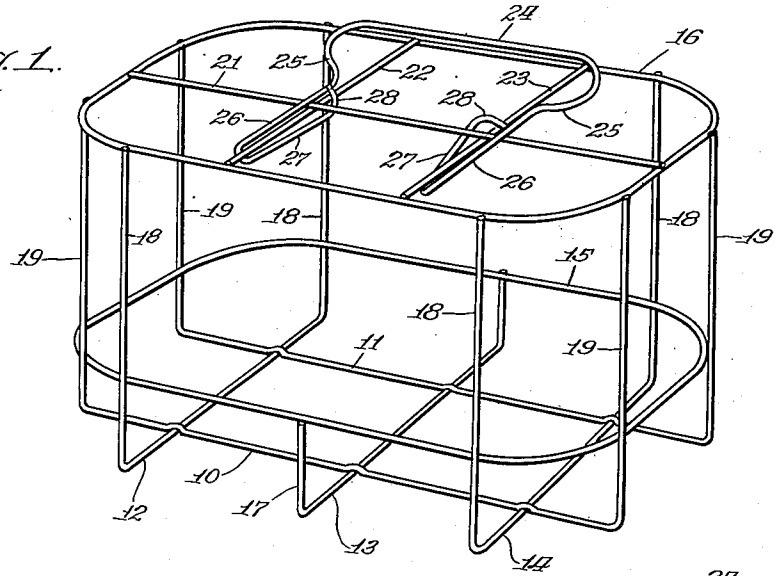
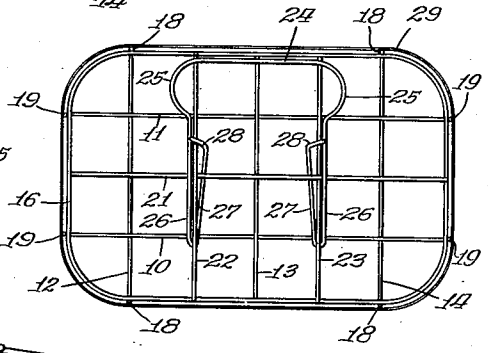
June 10, 1952 T. SCHMIDT 2,599,787

BOTTLE CARRIER

Filed Nov. 20, 1948

Fig. 1.





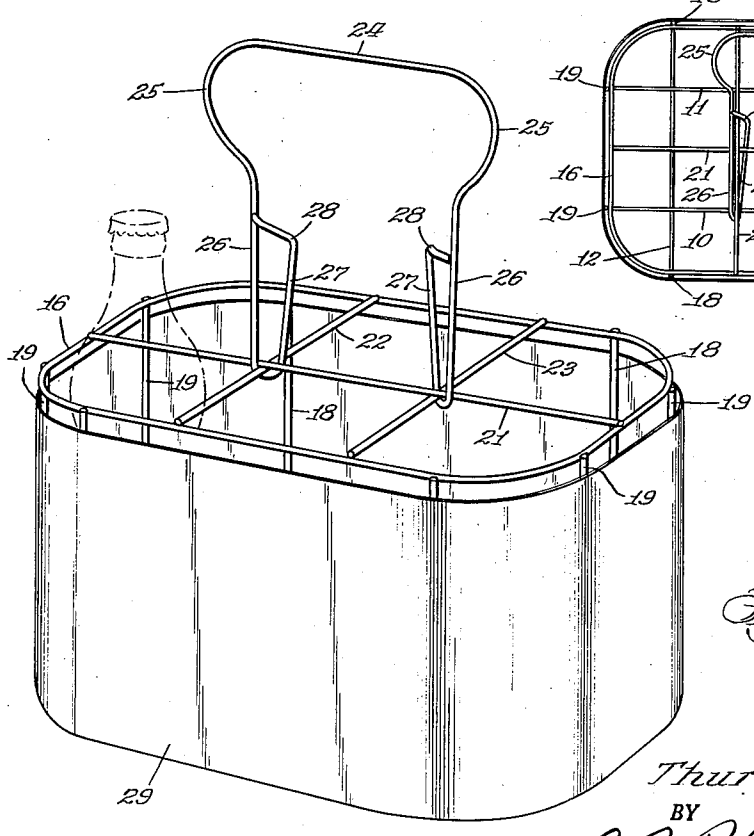


Fig. 3.

Fig. 2.

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BOTTLE CARRIER

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Application November 20, 1948, Serial No. 61,269

2 Claims. (Cl. 224—48)

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In introduction to this disclosure it may be mentioned that in recent years bottlers of soft drinks and other beverages have sought to promote the sale of their products by marketing them in small, handy carriers adapted to hold only six or eight bottles, for example, and to feature the convenience of these carriers in displays and merchandising plans. These small carriers have become quite widely used in the trade and many and various specific types have been developed, but it is believed to be an acknowledged fact that none of them have been found to be entirely satisfactory.

It is not the purpose of this disclosure to belittle the structures heretofore devised for this general purpose, but it is felt necessary to point out certain disadvantages commonly encountered, in order to clearly demonstrate the manner in which the present teaching overcomes the shortcomings of earlier structures. In general, it may be said that the prior teachings have contemplated making these carriers in either of two general types, that is, of metal or of cardboard. It has been found that the metal carriers fail to meet the requirements of the trade partially by reason of the fact that the type offered have been too heavy and bulky, but principally because of the fact that they are far too expensive to use. In this connection, of course, it will be remembered that one of the aims of bottlers in selling the beverages in a container of this type is to encourage the purchase of several bottles of beverage at a time, yet to avoid the necessity for requiring a deposit covering the cost of the case. In short, it is necessary to produce a carrier that, while rugged enough to stand repeated use, is sufficiently inexpensive that a substantial percentage of the carriers may be lost from time to time without seriously affecting the dealers' margin of profit. The cardboard containers naturally reduce the original cost of manufacture, but these have not shown themselves to be particularly satisfactory either. This is due to the fact that they disintegrate quickly, particularly if exposed to dampness and moisture and because they are generally unsanitary and provide a refuge for vermin, especially if any effort is made to reuse them.

It is the general aim of the present invention to overcome the disadvantages inherent in previously known types of containers by the provision of a novel and improved container having a wire frame to support the bottles, together with a paper display panel on which the name of the product and various advertising matter may be conspicuously set out. By this expedient the shortcomings of prior carriers of this kind are largely overcome since it is economically feasible to provide a new paper panel on the carrier before each use so that it always presents a clean, fresh and crisp appearance adding to the salability of the product, yet the wire frame is strong durable, able to withstand long use and even to resist

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considerable physical abuse. The entire unit is relatively inexpensive and entirely verminproof, and is so designed that it will not readily accumulate dust or dirt. Moreover, it may be easily cleaned by immersion in a hot caustic solution, for example.

The form of the invention chosen as best illustrative of the concept herein is illustrated in the drawings of this specification wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a bottle carrier constructed in accordance with these teachings; showing it with the handle in lowered position and without the paper advertising display panel;

Figure 2 is a perspective view with the handle raised and the display panel applied; and

Figure 3 is a top plan view of the carrier of Fig. 1, illustrating the manner in which it may be conveniently placed in a space of restricted height, such as between the shelves of a refrigerator.

The carrier comprises, in general, a wire frame provided with a folding handle, with a display panel in the form of a flexible paper or card sheet drawn around the outside of the frame. The opposite ends of the sheet are joined, so that it holds itself in position on the frame.

The wire frame itself consists of a bottom formed of intersecting longitudinal wires 10 and 11 and cross wires 12, 13 and 14 each joined to the other and their points of intersection by welding or otherwise. The wires are each bent upwardly at their outer ends to form uprights extending up to a marginal wire 15 extending completely around the frame near the base of the bottles. All of the cross wires and longitudinal wires may extend on up from the lower marginal wire 15 to the top marginal wire 16, if desired, although it has been found entirely satisfactory to terminate the upright 17 of the center cross wires at the lower marginal wire 15 and extend the others upwardly to provide a pair of corner members 18 and 19 at each corner of the carrier.

The top of the carrier frame also consists of a longitudinal center wire 21 and intersecting cross wires 22 and 23 welded or secured to each other at their point of intersections and having their outer ends secured to the top marginal wire 16, so that while both the lower and upper portions of the frame consist of substantially square sections, these are offset from each other both longitudinally and laterally, so that the points of intersection of the wires of the lower frame lie substantially in the center of the openings of the top frame. Thus bottles inserted through the openings of the top frame come to rest on the point of intersection between wires at right angles to each other to give a good support for the base of each bottle. In addition, the vertical wires 18 and 19 coact with the marginal wires 15 and 16 so each bottle is protected not only at its base but also along its sides.

The carrier is preferably provided with a folding handle. In the form of the invention shown

this consists of a center bail **24** having curved end portions **25** and downwardly extending legs **26**, each provided with an elongated reverse loop **27** joined to the legs by a link **28**. The loops are angularly offset from the plane of the bail, however, in order that they may extend around one of the cross wires of the top frame, as well as around the longitudinal wire **21**. Thus, when the handle is lifted to the erect position shown in Figure 2 the bail **24** will extend sufficiently above the necks of the bottles carried within the carrier to be conveniently grasped, yet when released it will drop by gravity to a position just below the bottle tops where it is accessible but out of the way. The exact position is determined by the length of the handle loops, since the motion is limited by contact of the link portions **28** with the top wires of the frame. By providing the legs of the handle with offset loops of the configuration shown, the loops may encircle both the longitudinal wire **21** and the cross wires **22** and **23** in such a manner that the weight of the bottles in the carrier is distributed throughout the entire frame rather than being imposed on one wire only. This means that relatively light wire may be used for the carrier, yet it will have ample strength. It is also worthy of note that the provision of the offset loops encircling the intersecting wires on the top of the frame prevents any possibility of the handle being distorted by pulling the opposite legs of the bail apart.

Carriers according to this invention may be stacked in the position shown in Figure 1 without any interference due to the presence of the handles. In use, however, the frame is preferably provided with the paper display panel **29** wrapped around the frame with the ends slightly overlapped and joined (as by stapling or adhesives) so that the paper holds itself in position on the frame. It is contemplated that advertising copy be printed on this panel to identify the product and carry any advertising message that the manufacturer may desire.

When the bottles are loaded in the carrier the handle is ordinarily placed in an upright position but the elongated shape of the loops on the handle legs means that it will drop downwardly until the upper link portion **24** of the bail is no higher than the tops of the bottles, yet is easily accessible. When the handle is lifted to its full height as shown in Figure 2, however, it projects well above the bottle caps and is easily held as the bottles are carried.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the bottle carrier according to these teachings solves the dilemma heretofore encountered by bottles in attempting to provide an acceptable portable carrier, since it has ample strength in the frame for repeated use, yet may be constructed at a very low manufacturing cost. After each use the paper panel may be stripped from the frame and, if desired, the frame may be cleaned by immersion in a hot solution. A new advertising panel is applied when the carriers are refilled and again delivered to the dealers. Thus in each use of the device it will present a clean, fresh and attractive appearance; in sharp contrast to present cardboard types of carriers that become dirty, discolored, smudged and generally so unattractive as to detract from the salability of the manufacturer's product.

In addition, to its function as a carrier, it is contemplated that the device here shown will be of utility in storing beverages on the premises of the consumer, since even when filled with bottles it may be placed on edge as shown in Figure 3 so that half a dozen bottles may be stacked in a comparatively small space, as between the closely spaced lower shelves in an ordinary household refrigerator. In this use it is also noted that the metal frame is superior to the cardboard types previously proposed since the normally high humidity of the refrigerating chamber has been found to soften and weaken cardboard structures so that they bend, distort and in some instances even pull apart after a short exposure to the humid atmosphere.

Having thus described the invention, what I claim as new and desire to protect by United States Letters Patent is:

1. A bottle carrier comprising an open wire frame having a top consisting of an upper marginal wire extending around the frame and intersecting longitudinal and cross wires defining a plurality of rectangular openings for receiving bottles, together with a bottom comprising intersecting longitudinal and cross wires offset with respect to the upper wires to provide an intersection below each opening in the upper frame; a plurality of vertical wires interconnecting the bottom and top of the frame at each side and each end and a lower marginal wire extending around the frame and secured to said vertical wires; together with a folding handle consisting of a bail having legs spaced apart from each other and provided with elongated loops encircling a wire of the frame, said loops being offset from the plane of the bail and encircling a longitudinal wire, and a cross wire at their point of intersection.

2. In combination, a bottle carrier comprising an open wire frame having a top comprising an upper marginal wire extending around the frame and intersecting longitudinal and cross wires defining a plurality of rectangular openings for receiving bottles, together with a bottom comprising intersecting longitudinal and cross wires, with both the longitudinal and the cross wires offset with respect to the upper wires to provide a bottle support of the intersecting wires directly below the center of each opening in the upper frame, wires interconnecting the bottom and top of the frame and a folding handle consisting of a bail having legs spaced apart from each other and provided with elongated loops encircling a wire of the top frame, said loops being offset from the plane of the bail and encircling a longitudinal wire and a cross wire at their point of intersection.

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