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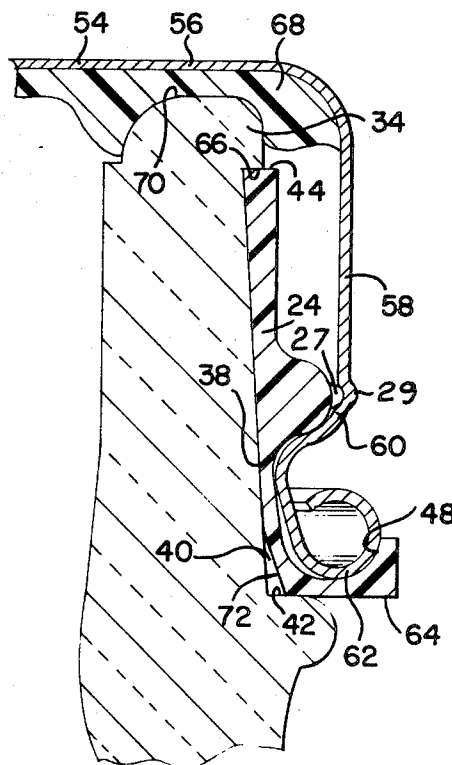
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[54] **TRANSFERABLE FINISH RING AND CONTAINER
AND CLOSURE FOR USE THEREWITH**
12 Claims, 10 Drawing Figs.

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B65d 41/62
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215/31, 40, 41, 42, 43, 43.1, 7, 82, 83, 95

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ABSTRACT: A finish ring or transfer fitment which may be transferred onto a container, preferably having a cap associated therewith at the time of transfer, in which the finish ring includes means for engaging a ring finish portion of the container, and further includes means for engaging a portion of the container to prevent rotational movement of the ring, and side finish means on a circumferentially extending portion thereof for receiving and retaining a closure member thereover so as to engage the container in a tight-sealing relation. Preferably, the ring also includes a bottom stop or bottom finish portion for locking the closure to the finish ring so the two may be handled as a unit. The finish ring may further include a top seal finish portion, with or without an integrally formed secondary container cover, which may in turn include a tear-out easy opening section. The ring may also include separate seal means for engaging the container, as well as means for being held while the cap or closure is applied thereto, and means for preventing the closure from accidentally backing off from the ring or fitment before, during or after assembly.



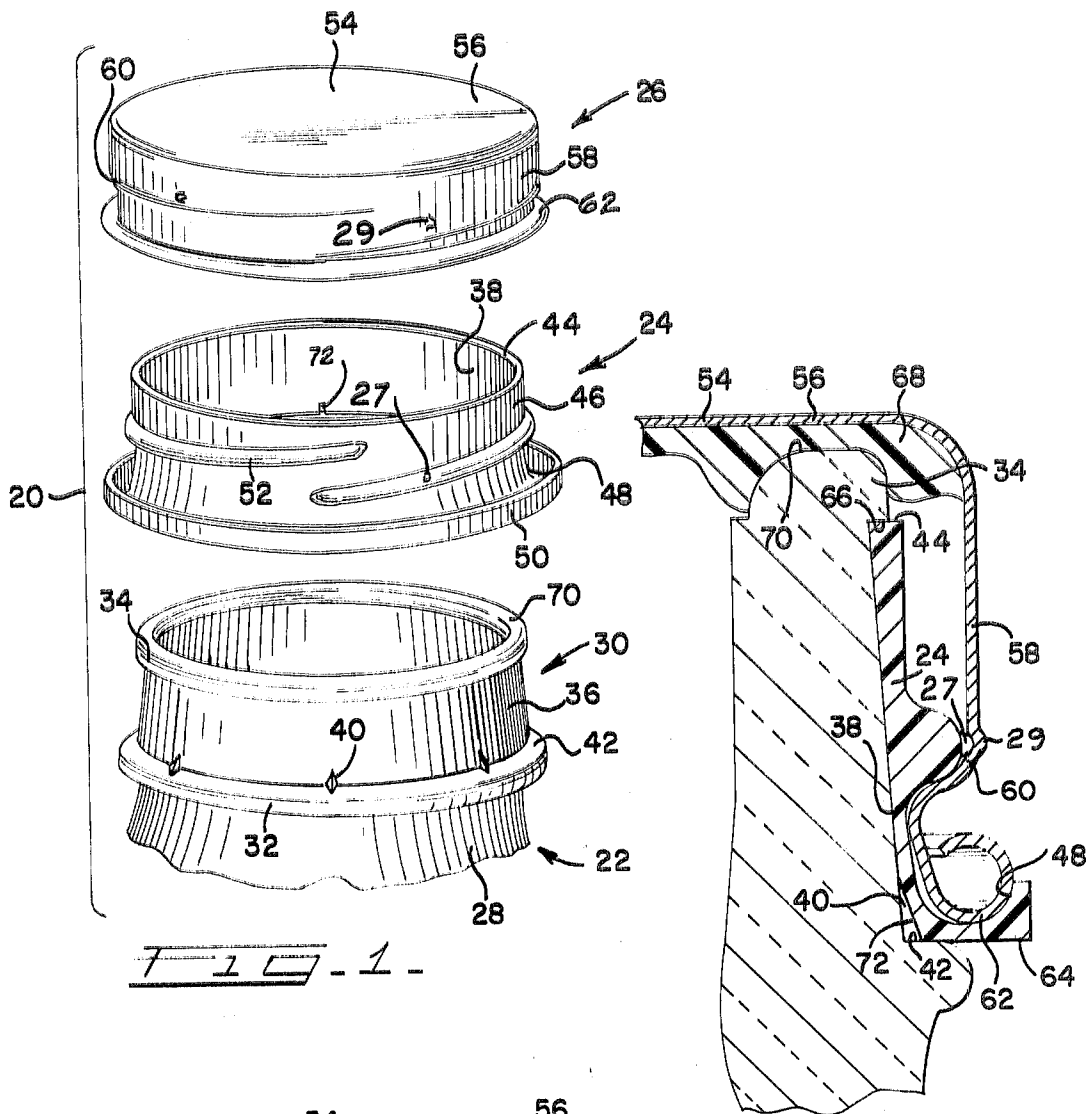


FIG. 1 -

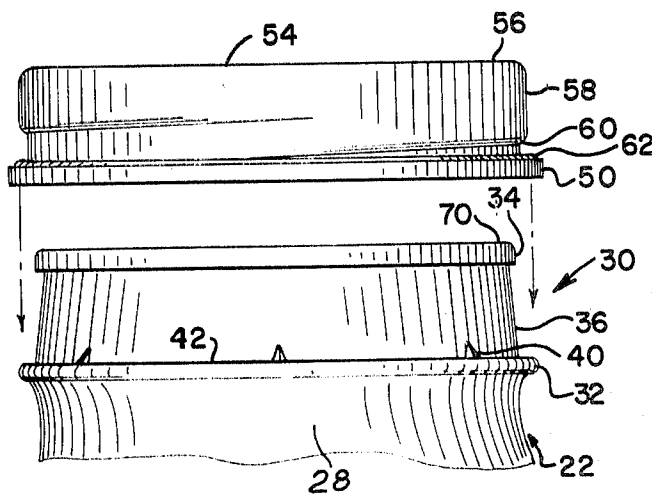
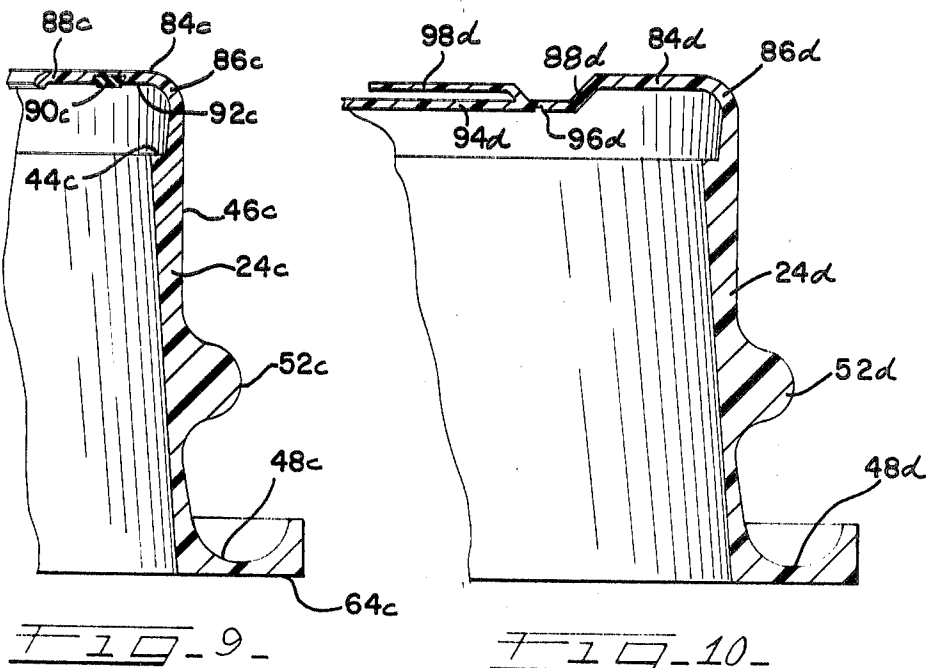
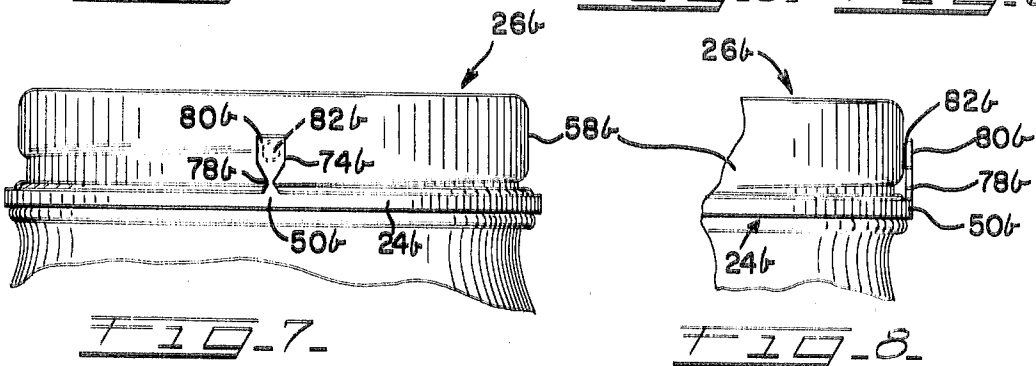
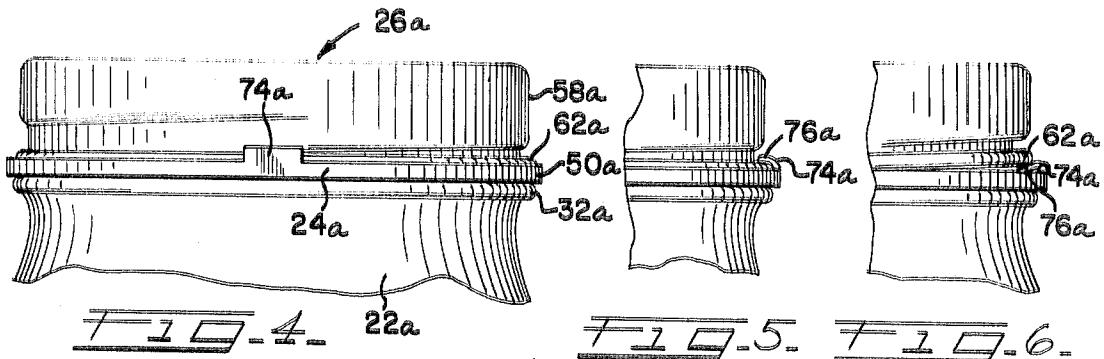


FIG. 2 -

FIG. 3 -

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TRANSFERABLE FINISH RING AND CONTAINER AND CLOSURE FOR USE THEREWITH

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

The field of the present invention is that of containers and closures, and more particularly that of containers which are adapted to receive closure means in a pressure or vacuum-tight, as well as in a liquidtight relation.

More particularly, the field is that of transferable seal rings or seal finish rings which are adapted to be received over a portion of a container to form, on the assembled container, the side finish portion thereof, and, in some cases the top seal finish portion thereof as well, in addition to providing a bottom stop or finish acting as a closure movement stop or closure locator to aid in uniform assembly.

Additionally, the field of the invention is that of container finishes or finish rings which may be associated in manufacture or assembly with the cap therefor, such as a side finish ring which may be placed on or over the container at the same time the cap is placed on the container.

In another aspect, the field of the invention is that of transfer finishes, particularly rings, which may include top seal finish portions, top covers, or top covers including easy opening, tear out portions. The field of the invention is also that of such transferable finishes or fitments having means associated therewith to facilitate assembly, handling and to afford tamperproof features for the completed container.

Additionally, the field of the invention is that of methods for assembling containers with closures, and methods for assembling the finish portions of a container with a remainder of the container to form means thereof for receiving a cap thereover in a liquidtight, pressure-tight, or vacuumtight relation therewith.

2. Description of the Prior Art

In general, containers having top and side seal finish portions adapted to receive closures comprising a shell portion and a sealing gasket portion are well known. In addition, various caps or like closures are known which are designed to be received over a bottle, jar, or the like, in which the threads or fastening means for retaining the cover in place on the container are formed after being placed over the container so that the finish-engaging portions thereof may be said to be formed after or simultaneously with installation. Caps such as those described above may have gaskets therein for engaging top seal finish of the container as well as gaskets for forming threads in association with the side finish of a container.

Closure devices are also known in the prior art in which a plastic-to-plastic seal is developed by wedging or forcing a relatively more resilient or plastic member into association with a bottle inside a relatively stiffer or less resilient plastic outer cap or cover.

Other prior art constructions have included the provision of a metal container having a separate or separately formed metal neck thereon, which included locking means for assembly with a cap or closure adapted to be engaged therewith. However, to date, it is not believed that there has been a successful transfer finish arrangement in which a finish could be transferred to a vacuum or pressure-tight container, in which the finished container could be closed without intentional rotation of the cap, in which the cap could be removed only by rotation, and in which the primary seal is effective between a gasket disposed within the metal or other rigid exterior shell of the closure and a finish portion of the container with which a transfer ring is associated.

Furthermore, it is believed that the prior art has not provided a transfer ring and cap assembly which is capable of providing, at low cost and with high reliability, an inner or secondary closure for convenience of dispensing, for use as a tamperproof feature or the like. In addition, the prior art is not known to have provided a transfer finish ring system and method in which a standard cap usable with other, conven-

tional jars and bottles, would also be usable without alternation in such transfer finish system.

Furthermore, the prior art is not believed to have provided a transfer finish for a closure cap in which a tamperproof safety device may be formed to prevent, or assure detection of relative motion between the closure and the transfer finish after assembly, and wherein such tamperproof feature can be provided before assembly of the closure and the container.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Accordingly, in view of the existing need to provide a seal finish ring for use with a cap and a container having the characteristics referred to herein, it is an object of the invention to provide a finish ring for use with a container in which the ring includes means for engaging a portion of the container to prevent axial and rotational movement of the ring, and which includes means for receiving and retaining a closure member thereof in order to seal the container in a liquid and gastight relation.

Another object is to provide a transfer finish for a container in which the finish portion adapted to be transferred may be associated with the closure before the combination closure and finish ring are applied to the container.

Another object is to provide a transfer finish system in which the transferable finish ring is adapted to receive a closure which includes a sealing member adapted to engage a finish portion of the container which lies inwardly of the portion of the container engaging the finish ring.

A further object of the invention is to provide a transferable finish ring which includes means for engaging the side finish or ring engaging finish portion of a container and which further includes seal means disposed inwardly of the side finish portion of the container for establishing a seal between a portion of the finish ring and the container with which it is associated.

Another object of the invention is to provide a finish ring which includes bottom cap skirt-engaging or bottom finish means thereon for receiving the lower portion of the skirt of a closure in a relatively snug relation to the ring before the ring and closure combination are assembled with the container.

A further object of the invention is to provide a transferable finish ring which may receive a closure thereover and which includes means for connection to the closure to provide a tamperproof feature in the assembled container.

A further object of the invention is to provide a transferable finish ring which includes an inner or secondary closure for a container.

A further object is to provide a transferable finish ring which includes an inner or secondary closure, a portion of which is of the easy opening type, to provide convenience in dispensing a product held in the container.

Another object is to provide a transferable finish ring which includes means to facilitate assembly of the closure therewith, and means for retaining the closure in place during assembly.

A still further object is to provide a closure system having one or more of the above stated characteristics in various combinations with each other.

Still another object is to provide a method of assembling a closure, a transferable finish ring and a container to provide novel combination containers and closure assemblies having a number of advantages and characteristics, including those set forth herein, and others which are inherent in the invention.

The present invention achieves these objects, and others which are inherent therein, by providing a finish ring for reception by a container to which it is transferred, wherein the ring includes means for engaging a finish portion of the container, means for preventing axial and rotational movement of the ring relative to the container, and means for receiving and retaining a closure member thereover in order to seal the contents of a container with which the ring is associated.

The exact manner in which the invention achieves these objects, and other objects inherent therein will become more apparent when considered in conjunction with the description of

the preferred embodiments set forth in the specification hereof, as defined in the appended claims, and shown in the drawings, in which like reference numerals denote corresponding parts throughout.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is an exploded fragmentary perspective view showing the container, transfer finish ring, and closure of the invention.

FIG. 2 is an exploded side elevational view, with portions broken away, showing the transfer of the assembled transfer finish ring and closure to the container.

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary vertical sectional view, on an enlarged scale, showing portions of the container and the transfer finish ring, and a portion of the closure in an assembled relation.

FIG. 4 is a side elevational view of the closure and finish ring of the invention in combination with one form of tamper-proof feature associated therewith.

FIGS. 5 and 6 are fragmentary side elevational views, showing the operation of the tamperproof feature of FIG. 4, and showing the container rotated 90° to the right of the position shown in FIG. 4.

FIG. 7 is a fragmentary side elevational view showing another embodiment of the tamperproof feature of the invention.

FIG. 8 is a fragmentary side elevational view of the embodiment of FIG. 7, show with the container rotated 90° to the right of the position shown in FIG. 7.

FIG. 9 is a fragmentary vertical sectional view, on an enlarged scale, showing another embodiment of the transfer finish ring of the invention.

FIG. 10 is a fragmentary vertical sectional view, on an enlarged scale, of another embodiment of the transfer finish ring of the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION

Referring now to the drawings in greater detail, FIG. 1 shows a combination container, transferable finish ring and closure assembly 20, which includes three principal elements, a container 22, a transferable finish ring 24, and a closure 26. The container 22 includes a body portion 28, a portion 30 for receiving a transferable finish ring, such portion 30 including a lower annular ring 32 and upper annular ring 34, defining therebetween a side finish portion 36, which is adapted to receive the inner surface portion 38, of the transfer finish ring 24 in a snug relation. The side finish portion 36 includes means for preventing rotation of the ring 24 in the form of ribs 40 extending between the side finish portion 36 and the top surface 42 of the lower ring 32.

Referring now to the transferable finish ring 24, this unit includes a generally flat top surface portion 44, a side finish portion 46, a bottom finish portion 48, an exterior lower sidewall portion 50, and means for receiving and retaining a closure member thereon in the form of threads 52 which are disposed about, and form a portion of, the side finish 46.

The closure 26 includes a top panel portion 54, an outer margin portion 56, a depending skirt portion 58, closure receiving means 60, in the form of male threads and a bottom curl portion 62 formed integrally with the skirt portion 58. Referring now particularly to FIGS. 2 and 3, it can be seen that in an assembled relation, the upper surface 42 of the ring 32 engages a lower surface 64 of the finish ring, and that the upper surface 44 of the ring 24 engages a lower surface 66 of the upper ring 34. The surfaces 36, 42, 66 combine to define the side seal finish portion of the container, which, in this case, are actually means for receiving a finish ring which in turn presents a side finish to receive the closure.

Referring now particularly to FIG. 3, it can be seen that the outer margin portion 56 of the closure 26 includes a gasket 68 disposed on the inside thereof, for engagement with the top

seal finish 70 of the container to provide a seal between the interior and the exterior of the container.

FIGS. 1 and 3 show the provision of one or more cutouts or notches 72 on the inner sidewall 38 of the finish ring for cooperation with the chuck of a holder (not shown) to prevent the ring from rotating when the closure 26 is assembled therewith. The ribs 40 on the container may dig into the inner surface of the ring to prevent rotation thereof.

FIG. 3 also shows that a bottom finish 48, which is in the form of an annular groove in the lower portion of the ring 24, is snugly engaged, at least in part, by the curl 62 at the bottom of the skirt 58, for reasons which will be set forth in greater detail herein.

Likewise, FIG. 3 also shows the snug engagement between the upper surface of the ring 24 and the lower surface 66 of the upper ring 34.

In the manufacture of the closure system of the present invention, the closure 26, having a plastomeric or elastomeric gasket 68 of a vinyl plastisol material, for example, formed therein according to techniques which are well known in the prior art, is assembled with the ring 24 by engaging the threads 60 on the closure 26 with the threads 52 on the ring 24, and rotating the closure 26 until the curl 62 engages the groove or bottom seal finish 48 of the ring 24. At this point, the closure 26 is tightly engaged with the ring 24, but the gasket 68 is in an expanded or uncompressed condition (not shown) and the closure 26 and ring 24 are not associated with the container 22. After the container 22 is filled with contents, and is desired to be sealed, the combination closure and ring assembly is forced downwardly over the container 22 until the locating surfaces 44, 66, 42, 64 engage each other, respectively, and the ring 24 is locked against axial movement. The notches 72 in the ring 24 will not normally be aligned or in registry with the ribs 40 upon installation of the ring 24, since means are not provided to rotate the closure and ring assembly, 26, 24 relative to the container 22. If they happen to be aligned, however, the notches 72 will receive the ribs 40. Either this engagement of the friction fit between the ring 24 and the container 22, will prevent subsequent rotation of the ring 24 relative to the container 22, since the ribs 40 dig into the inner surface 38 of the fitment or finish ring 24.

The ribs 40 are not a necessary feature of the invention, but may be provided, if desired to aid in preventing slippage between the container 22 and the ring 24.

In place of the ribs 40, other like means for preventing rotation of the ring 24 may be provided.

Another feature of the invention is that as pointed out above, the notches 72 may serve as cams or like means for holding the ring 24 against rotation while the closure 26 is rotated into a locked position, it may be retained by the provision of closure retainer means in the form of a dimple or dot 27 on the exterior surface of the threads 52. The dot 27 may be received in a complementary shaped thread recess 29. The cooperation of the dot 27 and the recess 29 keeps the closure 26 in place on the ring 24 during and subsequent to handling.

After the ring 24 is fitted over the container 22, the container 22 and the contents thereof may be further processed, such as by the application of heat in a retort or the like, for cooking, sterilization or other purpose. Application of sufficient pressure to move the ring 24 into the position shown in FIG. 3 also resiliently deforms the gasket 68 into the configuration illustrated in FIG. 3.

Although the ring 24 is shown with its top and bottom surface portions 44, 64 snugly engaging corresponding surfaces 42, 66, on the container 22, since the side finish portion 36 is tapered, a seal may be maintained even if there is some slight axial space between these oppositely facing surfaces. In any case, the friction between the inner surface 38 of the ring 24 and the surface 36 of the container 22 contributes to the anti-rotation feature.

Referring now to FIGS. 4 through 6, a modified form of the invention is shown. In this form, a cap 26a having a skirt 58a and curl 62a similar to those shown in FIGS. 1 through 3 is

seated in place in a tight sealing association with the ring 24a locked in position over the container 22a above the lower ring 32a. Extending upwardly from the outer surface 50a of the ring 24a and integrally formed therewith is a telltale cover 74a which includes a resiliently downwardly biased, inwardly directed extension portion 76a which closely overlies the upper portion of the curl 62a. As shown in FIGS. 5 and 6, the initial position of the telltale 74a is a normal position which renders it visible to an observer. If the cap 26a were to be rotated and unscrewed from the container 22a, and then subsequently replaced, the extension portion 76a would move to a downwardly extended position by reason of its inherent resiliency, thereby covering or restricting access to the groove or bottom finish portion 48 (FIG. 1) of the ring 24a. Thus, attempted replacement of the cover 26a would be revealed, because the telltale portion 74a would prevent reseating of the cover 26a in its initial position. One or more of such telltales 74a are normally provided to make difficult cap replacement without indicating that it has been removed. Further indicating means in the form of a tape or like seal may also be used with this construction, or may be used in place thereof, if desired.

FIG. 7 shows another form of tamperproof feature in which telltale means 74b extend upwardly from the outer surface 50b of the ring 24b and are joined to the cover 26b by a narrow rupturable neck 78b which is connected a cap-engaging portion 80b, adhered to the skirt 58b of the cover 26b by an adhesive 82b. In this version, a pressure-sensitive, heat-activatable, hot melt or like adhesive is provided to insure a firm bond between the cap-locking portion and the cap 26b. This bond is stronger than the rupturable neck 78b, so that rotation of the cap 26b will break the seal and the user can determine whether the contents have been tampered with, because the rupturable portion 78b will be broken. Instructions concerning the telltale may be placed on the container to point out this feature to the user, if desired.

Referring now to FIG. 9, another embodiment of the finish ring 24c of the invention is shown. In this embodiment, bottom finish or closure-engaging means 48c may be provided, thread means 52c are provided, as are bottom and top surfaces 64c, 44c for engaging the ring finish or side finish portions of a container. However, the embodiment shown in FIG. 9 additionally includes a top seal finish portion 84c connected by a radius 86c to the side finish 46c, and further includes a radially inner margin 88c disposed inwardly of the top seal finish 84c. A rubber or rubberlike additional sealing means in the form of a dovetailed, insertable gasket 90c is disposed on the inner surface 92c of the top seal finish portion 84c for providing a seal means inwardly of the side-finish-engaging portion of the transfer finish ring, for reasons which will be pointed out in further detail herein. The gasket 90c is shown as being a rubber or rubberlike material, but it is understood that it may comprise another elastomeric or plastomeric material, for example, a vinyl plastisol material such as that used on the gasket 68.

The installation and use of the transfer finish ring of FIG. 9 is the same as that of the embodiment shown in FIGS. 1 through 3. The principal difference between this form of the invention and those forms described above is that the closure may engage the transfer finish ring on a side finish as well as a top finish portion thereof. A seal between the transferable finish ring and the container, in addition to the seal provided by the mechanical seating and ring shrinkage, if any, is provided in the form of a ring or gasket 90c so that escape or entry of liquids and gases is prevented along the finish ring-container interface.

A further modification of the invention is shown in the embodiment of FIG. 10. In this embodiment, the transferable finish ring 24d includes thread means 52d, a bottom finish or groove portion 48d, a top finish 84d, a radius portion 86d, and, radially inwardly of the margin portion 88d, a secondary closure or cover portion 94d, which is defined by a line of weakness 96d, and to which is connected a finger tab 98d. In use, an

outer closure is fitted over the transfer ring 24d and the two units are placed as a unit in position atop a container. Thereafter, removal of the exterior cap or shell portion exposes the secondary closure or cover 94d which has a tearout portion defined therein by the line of weakness 96d. Various shapes of the line of weakness 96d may be selected to provide desired shapes of tearout portions. In addition, the secondary cover 94d may, instead of having a tearout portion, include a plurality of small openings so as to form a shaker top or like secondary closure.

The embodiment of FIG. 10 is shown without a gasket such as that shown at 90c. This construction may be used were the transfer ring affords a sufficiently tight seal with the container at the interface and at the top or bottom of the ring. However, this form of the invention may also use a gasket, if desired, such as the gasket 90c of FIG. 9.

One important feature of the present invention is that, in a typical embodiment, the transfer ring-container interface may provide a seal having the desired characteristics of the overall seal between the closure and the container. Since the closure-container seal means may also provide this feature, however, such a seal is not necessary. Another important feature of the invention is that the transferable ring and closure of the invention may be assembled and inspected as a unit, and shipped to a customer for installation independently from the container, thereby reducing the likelihood of damage to the threads and the container finishes during shipment of the containers and transfer rings, since the thread portions or side finish are protected by the closure during shipment, and the side finish or finish ring-engaging portion or finish of the container, although naturally susceptible to certain types of damage, does not necessarily provide the primary or complete container-closure seal.

Another feature of the invention is that one or more of the telltale assemblies providing the tamperproof feature may be provided for during assembly, and inspection and the like of such features may be made before shipment. Accordingly, these tamperproof features need not be provided by the filler or packer of the containers.

A still further feature of the invention is that bottom finish means, such as the groove 48, may be provided to serve the dual purposes of limiting downward movement of the closure over the ring for handling before assembly, and additionally provide a further snug fit with the finish ring, as well as imparting rigidity to the combination ring and closure during assembly thereof with the container. The snug fit thus provided minimizes the chances of undesirable infestation of various types of bacteria, insects, and the like inwardly of the skirt of the closure.

Although the materials used in the present invention are not critical, and the invention does not depend on the use of any particular material, it is preferred that the ring comprise a relatively stiff thermoplastic material. The shell portion of the closure typically is made of metal, although it might be relatively stiff thermosetting or thermoplastic material. It is preferred, but not necessary, that the container be a glass jar, although it might be a plastic bottle or the like. The tamperproof locking means may be suitably constructed of plastic when integrally formed with the ring, or they may be later applied devices such as metal or plastic units and adhesively secure to or fused with the components of the unit.

It will thus be seen, by reference to the foregoing description, the appended claims, and the drawings, that the present invention provides a novel transfer finish ring, container, and method having numerous advantages and characteristics, including those hereinbefore pointed out, and others which are inherent in the invention.

We claim:

1. A method of assembling a composite container, comprising providing a container having a product opening therein, rotating and locking a preformed closure having interior threads and seal means disposed on an interior surface thereof with a preformed cooperatively threaded transferable finish

ring, transferring said locked finish ring and closure to said container by moving said ring over a circumferentially extending exterior portion of said container, locking said ring against axial movement, compressing said seal against an axially directed finish portion of said container, thereby providing an assembled container having a closure removably mounted on a transferable finish ring affixed to said container.

2. A unitary closure system for subsequent assembly with a container comprising a ring having gripping means thereon for engaging a generally circumferentially extending finish portion of said container in snug relation to prevent relative rotation therebetween, locking means for engaging a portion of said container to prevent removal of said ring from said container by axial movement thereof, a side finish on said ring for engaging a part of a closure member associated with said ring, and a closure received over and reinforcing at least a part of said ring and having portions thereof threadedly engaged with said side finish of said ring to lock said closure to said ring to form a ring and closure unit for assembly by axial movement over an associated container, said closure system having a sealing element associated therewith for making snug sealing engagement with an axially directed top finish portion of said associated container, said ring, in position of use, being supported about the periphery thereof by said closure so as to resist axial deformation against the axially applied force able to be applied by rotation of said closure relative to said ring.

3. A system as defined in claim 2 in which said ring comprises an organic thermoplastic material.

4. A system as defined in claim 2 in which said ring further includes additional bottom finish means thereon for receiving, in a snug relation, a portion of the bottom of the skirt of said associated closure member.

5. A system as defined in claim 2 in which said closure is fitted with a predetermined torque sufficient to prevent unintentional loosening of said closure and less than the torque necessary to rotate said ring relative to an associated container.

6. A system as defined in claim 2 in which said ring further includes a lock thereof for holding a closure associated therewith in a desired position to prevent unintentional rotation of said closure relative to said ring during handling of said ring and closure.

7. A system as defined in claim in which said ring includes single means thereon for holding said ring during assembly of a closure thereover to prevent relative rotation between said ring and said closure, and for preventing rotation of said ring relative to a container when said ring and closure are placed in position over said container.

8. A unitary closure system for assembly with a container comprising a ring having gripping means thereon for engaging a generally circumferentially extending finish portion of said container in snug relation to prevent relative rotation between said ring and said finish, said ring including a gasketed top finish portion adapted to extend over and sealingly cover the top finish portion of an associated container, locking means for engaging a portion of said container to prevent removal of said ring from said container by axial movement thereof, a

side finish on said ring for engaging a part of a closure member associated with said ring, and a closure received over and reinforcing at least a part of said ring and having portions thereof engaging said side finish of said ring to lock said closure to said ring to form a ring and closure unit for assembly by axial movement over an associated container.

9. A unitary closure system for assembly with a container comprising a ring having gripping means thereon for engaging a generally circumferentially extending finish portion of said container in snug relation to prevent relative rotation between said ring and said finish, locking means for engaging a portion of said container to prevent removal of said ring from said container by axial movement thereof, a side finish on said ring for engaging a part of a closure member associated with said ring, and a closure received over and reinforcing at least a part of said ring and having portions thereof engaging said side finish of said ring to lock said closure to said ring to form a ring and closure unit for assembly by axial movement over an associated container, said closure system having a sealing element associated therewith for making snug sealing engagement with an axially directed top finish portion of said associated container, said system further including means for indicating whether said closure has been rotated, said last named means being in the form of at least one locking portion extending between said ring and said closure on the exterior thereof and fastened to said closure so that rotation of said closure relative to said ring will rupture at least a portion of said locking portion.

10. A unitary closure system for assembly with a container comprising a ring having gripping means thereon for engaging a generally circumferentially extending finish portion of said container in snug relation to prevent relative rotation between said ring and said finish, said ring also including a top finish portion, and cover means forming an integral part of said ring and extending radially inwardly of said top finish portion of said ring for covering the opening in a container with which said ring is associated, locking means for engaging a portion of said container to prevent removal of said ring from said container by axial movement thereof, a side finish on said ring for engaging a part of a closure member associated with said ring, and a closure received over and reinforcing at least a part of said ring and having portions thereof engaging said side finish of said ring to lock said closure to said ring to form a ring and closure unit for assembly by axial movement over an associated container, said closure system having a sealing element associated therewith for making snug sealing engagement with an axially directed top finish portion of said associated container.

11. A system as defined in claim 10 in which said cover means includes a tear-out portion defined at least partially by a line of weakness in said cover means.

12. A system as defined in claim 10 in which said cover means includes a tear-out portion at least partially defined by a line of weakness therein, and in which finger tab means adapted to be grasped by a user are associated with said tear-out portion for facilitating tear-out thereof.