July 22, 1958 D. E. KESSLER ET AL 2,844,299

BEVERAGE COOLER CARTON

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Fig. 1.

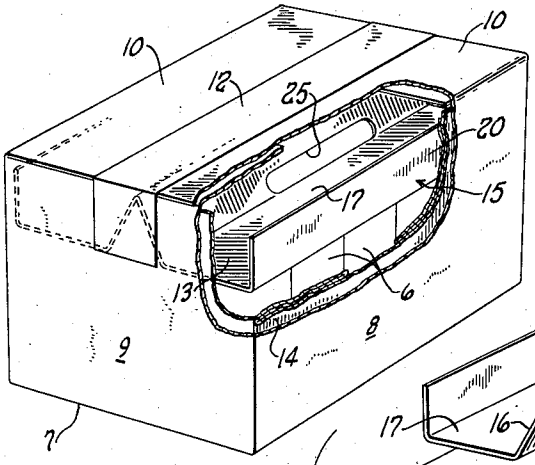


Fig. 2.

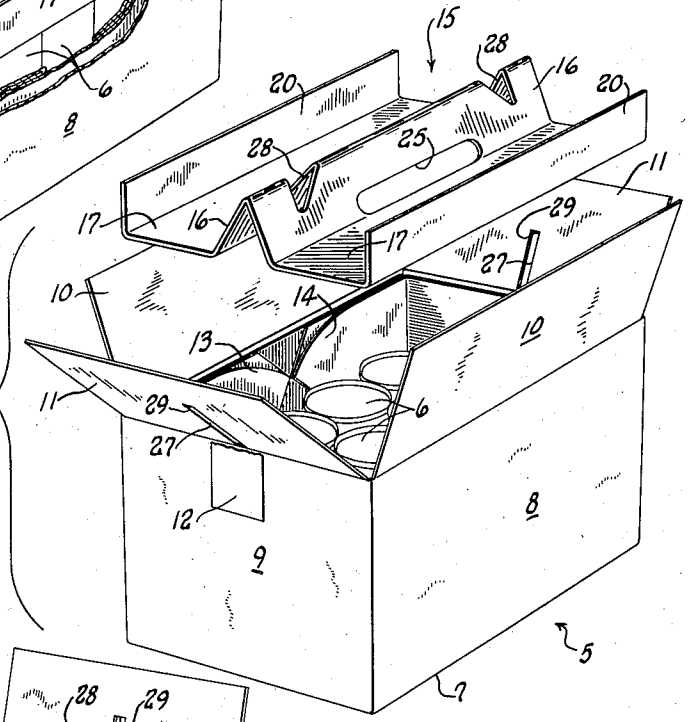
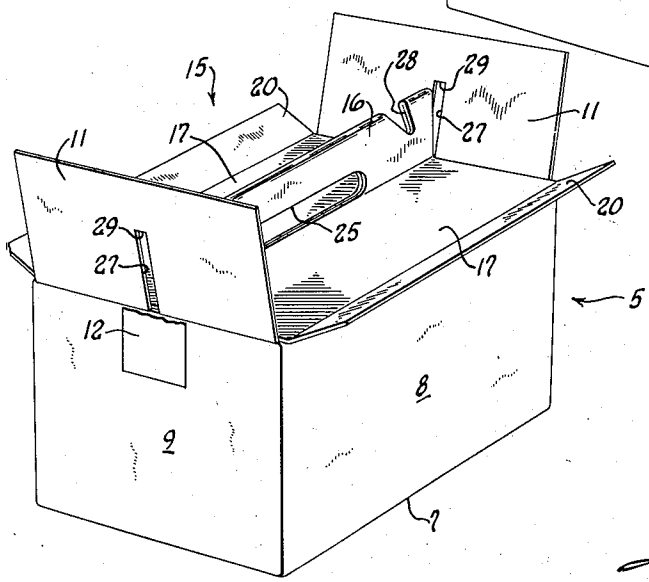


Fig. 3.



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Fig. 4.

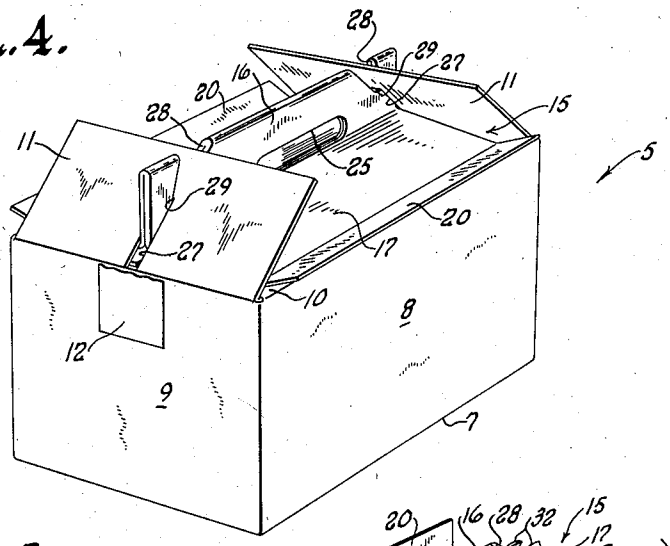
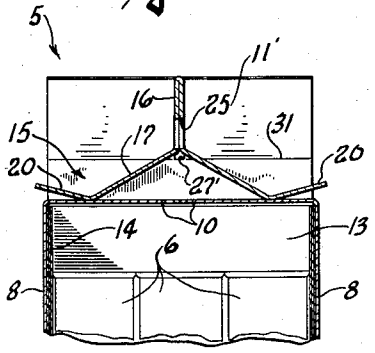


Fig. 7.



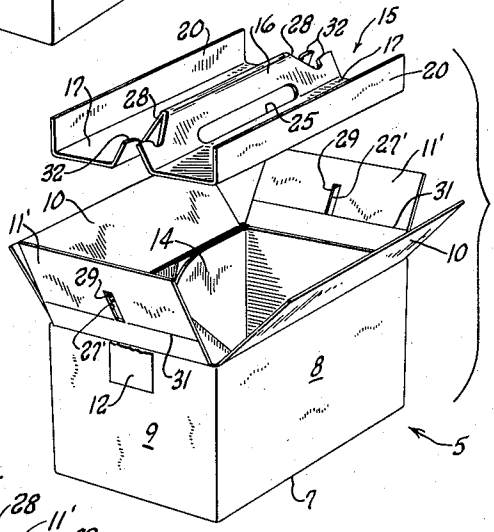


Fig. 5.

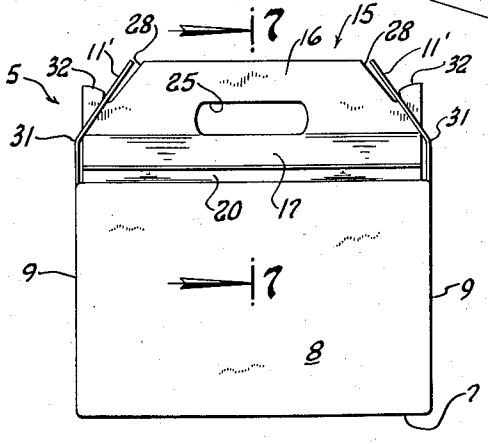


Fig. 6.

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BEVERAGE COOLER CARTON

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Application June 17, 1957, Serial No. 666,088

5 Claims. (Cl. 229—52)

This invention relates to packages comprising a carton having a number of containers, such as beer cans or the like, packed therein, and the invention refers more particularly to a package of that type which is adapted to be packed with ice for cooling the contents of the containers.

Purchasers of beer and other beverages sold in cans frequently wish to take the beverage with them on a picnic or outing, and they wish to have some means for keeping it cool. One solution to this problem was to pack the beverage containers in a portable refrigerator chest of a type now commonly used for such purposes, but this involved unpacking the containers from the cartons in which they were sold as well as the bother of transporting the empty refrigerator chest after it had served its purpose.

Another and more satisfactory solution to the problem required the manufacturer to package bottles or cans of beverage in a leak proof shipping carton somewhat larger than required to accommodate the beverage containers, so that the purchaser could pack the extra space in the carton with a sufficient amount of ice to keep the beverage cool for most of a day. Because the carton had to be oversize, however, the cans or other containers therein were free to rattle and shift around in it when the package was en route from the manufacturer to the consumer.

It is therefore an object of this invention to provide a filler for a carton packed with a number of containers and providing space above the containers for ice, which filler may be interposed between the containers and the top wall of the carton, in said space, to hold the containers against rattling and shifting, and may also be used to provide a convenient carrying handle for the carton after the carton has been filled with ice.

Another object of this invention resides in the provision of a carton for beverage containers and the like having a complementary unitary member which provides a convenient carrying handle for the carton, and in the provision of simple means for interlockingly connecting the carton and said member to assure against any possibility that the handle may be inadvertently disengaged from the carton.

Still another object of this invention resides in the provision of a handle forming member which is cooperable with a shipping carton of the character described and which carton has a construction that is in every respect common and conventional except for the provision of straight slits in two opposite cover forming flaps thereof.

With the above and other objects in view which will appear as the description proceeds, this invention resides in the novel construction, combination and arrangement of parts substantially as hereinafter described and more particularly defined by the appended claims, it being understood that such changes in the precise embodiment of the hereindisclosed invention may be made as come within the scope of the claims.

The accompanying drawings illustrate two complete

examples of the physical embodiments of the invention constructed according to the best modes so far devised for the practical application of the principles thereof, and in which:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a package embodying the principles of this invention assembled in its shipping condition, portions being cut away and shown in section;

Figure 2 is a disassembled perspective view of the package shown in Figure 1;

Figure 3 is a perspective view of the package shown in Figure 1 with the filler and handle forming member in the process of being installed in its handle forming position;

Figure 4 is a perspective view similar to Figure 1 but showing the handle and filler member installed in its handle forming position, as the consumer would use the package in taking it on an outing;

Figure 5 is a group perspective view of a modified embodiment of the invention;

Figure 6 is a side elevational view of the embodiment of the invention shown in Figure 5, with the filler and handle forming member assembled to the carton in its handle forming position; and

Figure 7 is a fragmentary vertical sectional view taken on the plane of the line 7—7 in Figure 6.

Referring now more particularly to the accompanying drawings, in which like numerals designate like parts throughout the several views, the numeral 5 designates generally a shipping package or carton adapted to contain a number of similar upright containers 6, such as beer cans. The carton generally is of a conventional construction, well known to those skilled in the art. It has a bottom wall 7 to which are connected opposite side walls 8 and opposite end walls 9. Attached to the upper edge of each of the side walls is a cover forming flap 10, and a similar flap 11 extends from each end wall. As is well known, the flaps 11 on the end walls are adapted to be folded downwardly over the top of the carton, in coplanar relationship with one another, and the flaps 10 on the side walls are folded over the flaps 11 and held in coplanar relationship by a strip 12 of gummed tape or the like overlying their adjacent marginal edge portions. The four flaps thus cooperate to form a top wall for the carton when the package is in its shipping condition.

The side and end walls of the carton are substantially higher than the containers 6, so as to provide a space 13 above the containers which the consumer may fill with cube or crushed ice if he wishes to use the carton for a cooler. To prevent ice water from leaking out of the carton it is preferably provided with a waterproof liner 14.

Because the height of the carton is greater than that of the containers in it, the containers would normally be free to move up and down in the carton during handling, but the present invention provides means for preventing such displacement of the containers, which means comprises a filler and handle forming member 15 fitting in and occupying the space in the upper portion of the carton and formed from a unitary rectangular blank of corrugated paperboard or the like.

The member 15 is scored and folded to provide a pair of substantially L-shaped sections having their upright legs 16 disposed back to back and connected at their upper edges. These legs may be considered as flanges integrally connected with one another along their upper edges, and the horizontal legs of the sections provide panels 17 extending laterally in opposite directions from the lower edges of the flanges. Each flange is defined by a central portion of the member 15 folded upon itself so that the flanges extend the full length of the carton along the center thereof. Preferably the outer portions

of the panels **17** are bent upwardly to provide a second pair of upright flanges **20** equal in height to the depth of the space in the upper portion of the carton.

When the package is in its shipping condition with the filler and handle forming member occupying the space therein between the tops of the containers and the underside of the carton top wall, the outer flanges **20** on the panels overlie the adjacent inner surfaces of the carton side walls and supportingly engage the underside of the top wall all along its length. The two back to back legs or flanges **16** converge upwardly at an acute angle to one another, as best seen in Figure 2, and their connected upper edges provide a ridge which supportingly engages the underside of the top wall of the carton all along its length. Since the panels **17** rest flatwise on the tops of the containers, the flanges **16** and **20** thus serve as stiffeners for the filler, resisting upward displacement of the cans and downward deformation of the cover of the carton.

When the package is opened by the consumer, as by slitting the gummed tape strip **12**, and the top wall forming flaps **10** and **11** are folded back out of the way, the filler may be readily removed by drawing it upwardly out of the carton. Ice may then be laid on the tops of the containers and the side flaps **10** folded inwardly toward each other over the supply of ice. Thereafter, the filler is placed on top of the side flaps, with the ridge defining inner flanges **16** extending lengthwise between the end flaps as shown in Figure 3, preparatory to interlocking the filler member with the carton in a manner which enables the filler member to serve as a handle for the package. For this purpose the flanges **16** are provided with lengthwise elongated and registering finger receiving slots **25** which define a handle grip on the filler member.

Each of the flaps **11** extending from an end wall of the carton is provided with a medial slit **27** extending outwardly thereof part-way toward its free edge, and the end portions of the back to back flanges are engaged in these slits by swinging the end flaps toward one another to positions at which they are in upwardly convergent relationship. To provide an interlocking connection between the handle member and the end flaps **11**, the flanges **16** have notches **28** opening to their upper edges, near each end thereof. Each slit **27**, which may extend from the edge of the flap **11** adjoining the end wall outwardly toward the free edge of the flap a distance slightly greater than the height of the flanges **16**, defines an inwardly facing shoulder **29** at its outer end. When the notched ends of the flanges are projected through the slits **27**, and the handle member is then pulled upwardly, the shoulders **29** on the flaps are engaged in the bottoms of the notches **28** to interlock the handle member to the carton in a manner precluding displacement of the handle member from the carton.

Interlocking securement to the carton of the filler and handle forming member, of course, entails squeezing the two flanges **16** together into flatwise overlying relationship, with the member disposed in the position shown in Figure 3, and then swinging the carton flaps **11** inwardly until their shoulders **29** register with the notches **28** in the flanges. Inasmuch as the panels **17** inherently tend to spring downwardly, they force the flanges **16** up so that the bottoms of their notches firmly engage the shoulders **29** at the outer ends of the slits **27**, and the outer flanges **20** on the panels also engage under the convergent flaps **11** and tend to swing them outwardly, to seat said flaps firmly against the outer edges of the notches.

Removal of the handle forming member, for access to the contents of the carton is, of course, readily accomplished by pressing downwardly on the flanges to release the flaps from the notches **28**, and then swinging the flaps **11** outwardly beyond the ends of the flanges.

In the embodiment of the invention shown in Figures 5 through 7, each of the flaps **11'** which project from the end walls of the carton is provided with a bend line **31** parallel to and spaced a short distance from its inner edge. The inner end of the slit **27'** in each flap terminates at this bend line and the slit extends outwardly to about the same distance from the free edge of the cover as the slit **27** in the embodiment of Figures 1 through 4. To fit into this shorter slit, the upper edges of the flanges **16** are cut down outwardly of the notches **28**, as at **32**.

When the filler and handle forming member of this embodiment of the invention is used as a filler, its installation and functions are in all respects the same as for the previously described embodiment. However, when the unitary member is installed in its handle forming position, the outer portions of the flaps **11'** may be swung inwardly about their bends **31**, and if the flanges **16** are held downwardly while the flaps **11'** are thus swung inwardly it is not necessary to force the flaps over the cut down end portions **32** of the flanges. Instead, raising the flanges **16** into the slits hooks them into engagement with the panels. The normal tendency of the panels **17** to swing downwardly relative to the flanges yieldingly holds the flanges upwardly in this locked position.

From the foregoing description taken together with the accompanying drawings, it will be apparent that this invention provides a package comprising a carton and a plurality of containers wherein a space in the carton, adapted to be filled with ice, is occupied by a unitary filler member when the package is en route to the consumer, and wherein the filler member may be readily installed on the carton to provide a convenient handle therefor when the carton is packed with ice.

What is claimed as our invention is:

1. A shipping package, comprising: a plurality of similar containers; a carton enclosing said containers, said carton having side and end walls with a height substantially greater than that of the containers so as to provide a space in the carton above the containers, a bottom wall connected with said side and end walls, and flaps folded inwardly from said side and end walls to define a top wall closing the top of the carton; a handle and filler forming member in said space, said handle and filler member being made from a unitary blank and having a pair of similar edgewise adjacent substantially coplanar panels resting upon and covering the containers in the carton, and a pair of upstanding flanges on the adjacent edges of the panels having their upper edges connected with one another and defining a ridge to have supporting engagement with the underside of the top wall, whereby the handle and filler member inhibits up and down movement of the containers in the carton, said flanges having lengthwise extending grip forming slots therein and notches opening to their upper edges at locations spaced inwardly of their ends; and said carton flaps which overlie the opposite end portions of said ridge having openings therein which substantially register with the ridge in the filler forming position of sad member and which define downwardly facing shoulders on the flaps when the latter are in substantially upright handle retaining positions, said shoulders being engageable in the notches in said flanges to interlock the member with the carton when the member is in its handle forming position.

2. The shipping package of claim 1, further characterized by the fact that said panels have flanges turned upwardly from their remote edges and substantially equal in height to the depth of said space so that in the filler forming position of the member the upper edges of said last named flanges engage the underside of the carton top wall to preclude upward displacement of the remote edge portions of the panels.

3. In combination: a plurality of similar containers; a carton housing the containers and having a bottom wall upon which the containers rest, two pairs of opposite upright walls joined to the edges of the bottom wall and

rising therefrom to a height greater than that of the containers to provide an ice storage space in the upper portion of the carton, and cover flaps hinged to the upper edge of two opposite upright walls, said flaps extending upwardly from the carton and each having a medial slit therein extending from its hinge part way toward the free end of the flap to define an inwardly facing shoulder at the outer end of each slit; and a handle forming filler of a size and shape to substantially fit said space in the upper portion of the carton, said filler being made from a unitary rectangular blank of paperboard scored and folded to provide a pair of adjacent L-shaped sections having upright legs which are disposed back to back and joined together at their upper edges, said upright legs having a height substantially equal to the depth of said space in the upper portion of the carton so that the upper edges thereof provide a centrally disposed ridge to support the carton flaps when the filler is in place in the carton and the flaps of the carton are folded inwardly over the top of the carton, the ends of said upright legs projecting through the slits in the flaps and having upwardly opening notches therein near their ends, the shoulders at the outer ends of said slits engaging in the bottoms of said notches to interlock the upright legs of the filler to said flaps; the upright legs of the L-shaped sections having elongated registering finger receiving slots therein intermediate their ends defining a handle grip on the filler by which the carton may be carried with the carton suspended from the handle grip by its flaps; and the other legs of the L-shaped sections extending outwardly from said upright legs toward the upper edges of the remaining upright walls of the carton to cover the top thereof.

4. In a carton adapted to hold a plurality of containers and having a bottom wall, opposite side and end walls connected with the bottom wall, and flaps projecting upwardly from the upper edges of the end walls at convergent angles to one another, means providing a handle for the carton, said means being made from a unitary blank of sheet material and comprising: a medial

grip defining portion folded upon itself to provide a pair of central upstanding flanges connected at their upper edges and substantially equal in length to that of the carton side walls, the end portions of the flanges projecting through openings in said carton flaps and having upwardly opening notches in their opposite end portion in which flap portions adjoining the openings therein engage to interlock the handle means with the carton through said flaps thereof, and said handle means including a pair of panels, one joined to the lower edge of each flange, said panels extending laterally from the flanges toward the sides of the carton, above and covering the top of the carton.

5. In combination with a carton of the type having a bottom wall, opposite side and end walls, and a flap projecting from the top edge of each of said end walls, a handle for the carton made from a unitary blank of paperboard or the like and comprising: a pair of panels each extending outwardly from the medial longitudinal zone of the top of the carton and over one side portion of the carton so that said panels together cover the top of the carton, and said handle further comprising an elongated, upright grip portion integral with and provided by upstanding flatwise adjacent flanges having their lower portions connected to the inner edge portions of the panels and connected to one another along their upper edges, said flanges having registering lengthwise extending finger receiving slots therein and having notches opening to their connected upper edges at locations spaced inwardly from the ends of the grip portion, the notched end portions of said flanges being engaged in slits in said flaps to interlockingly secure the handle to the carton.

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