Nov. 29, 1966 G. S. HOLMES 3,288,326

BOTTLE CARRIER WITH REINFORCING TAB

Filed March 22, 1965 4 Sheets-Sheet 1

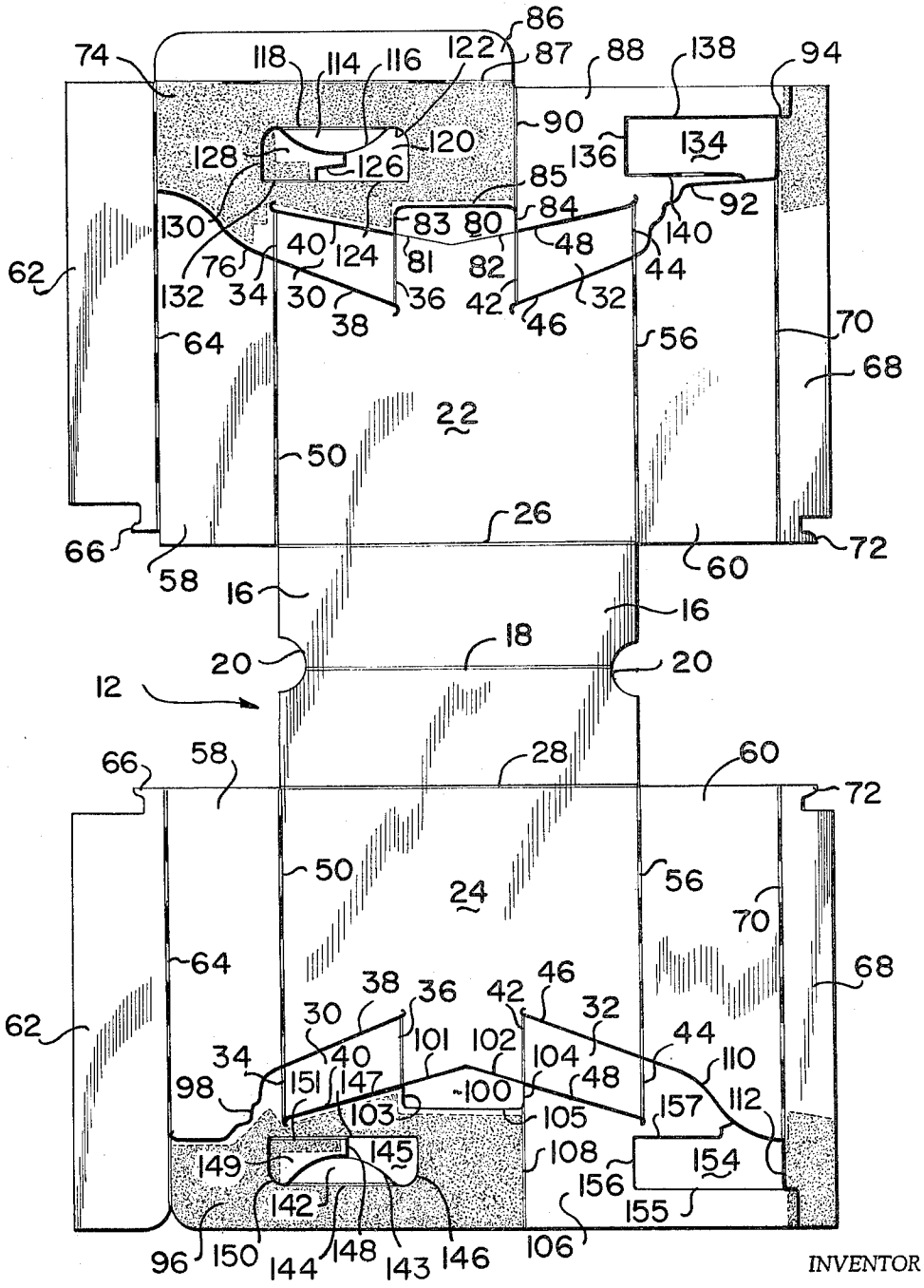


FIG. 1

INVENTOR
GEORGE S. HOLMES

BY Mason, Porter, Miller & Brown
ATTORNEYS

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BOTTLE CARRIER WITH REINFORCING TAB

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FIG.2

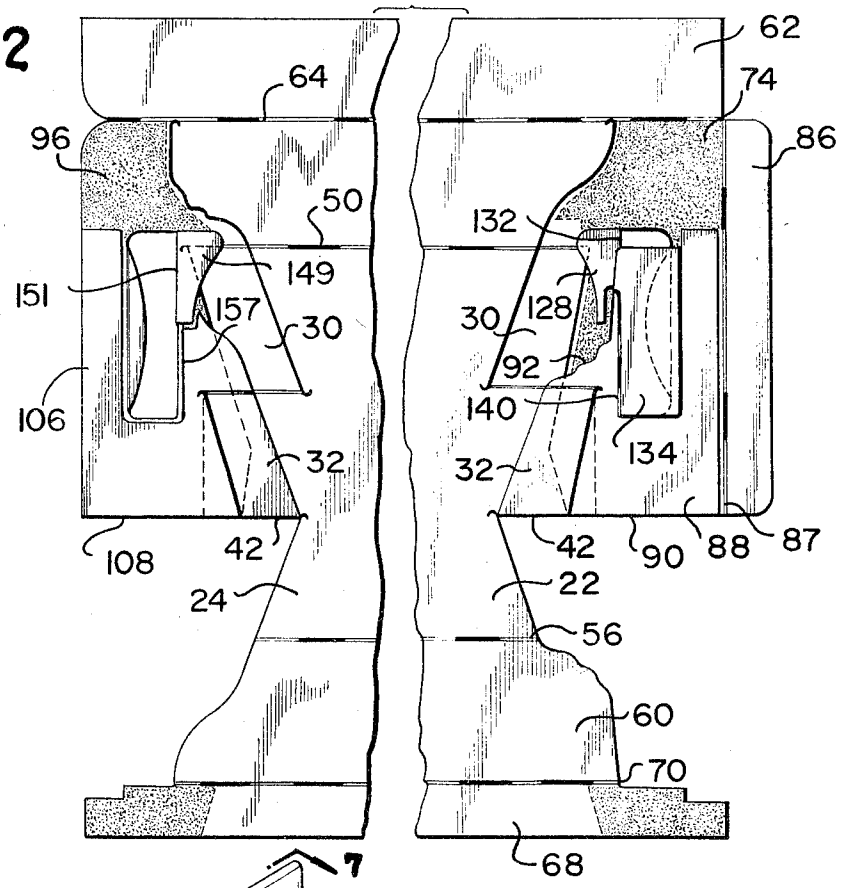
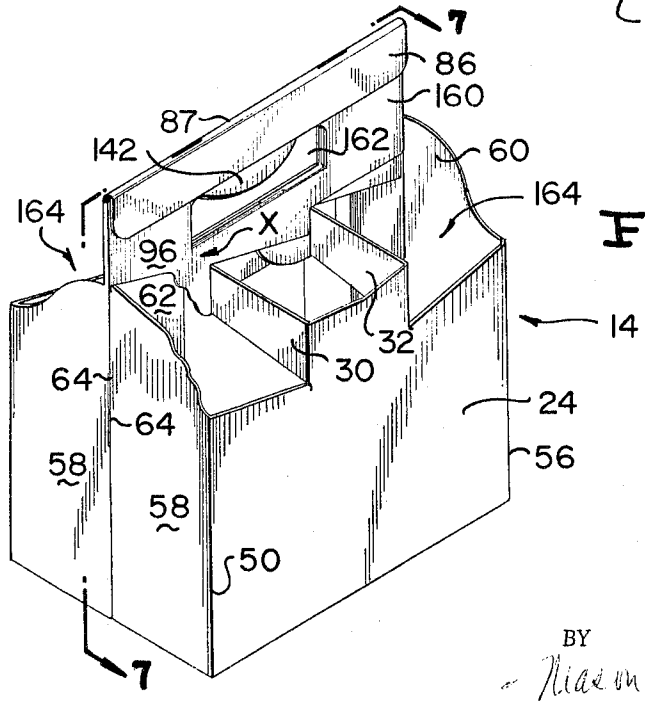


FIG.6



INVENTOR

GEORGE S. HOLMES

BY Mason, Porter, Miller & Brown

ATTORNEYS

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BOTTLE CARRIER WITH REINFORCING TAB

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FIG. 3

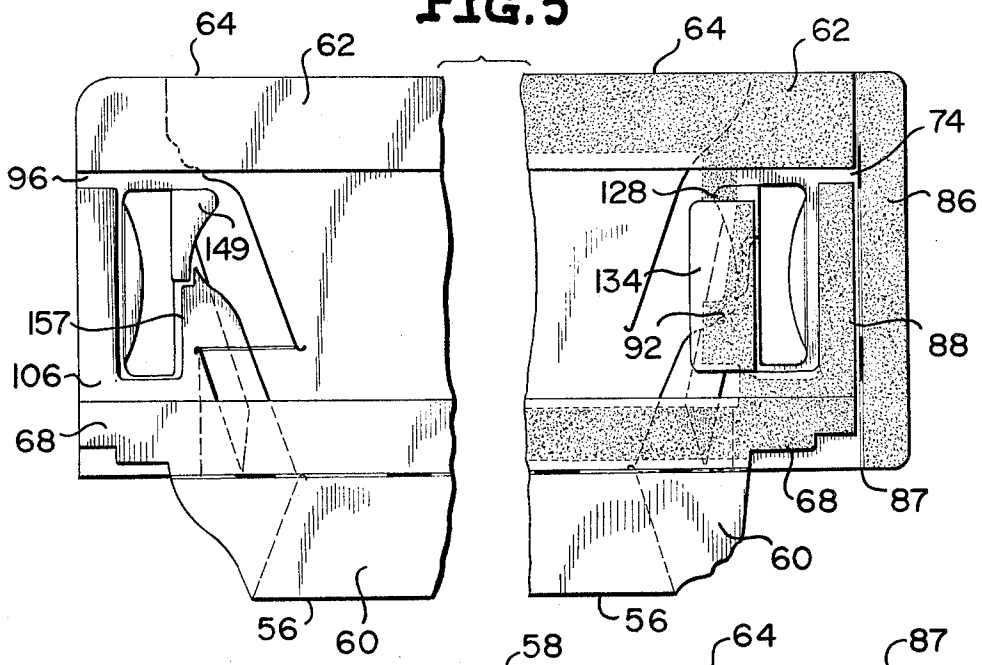
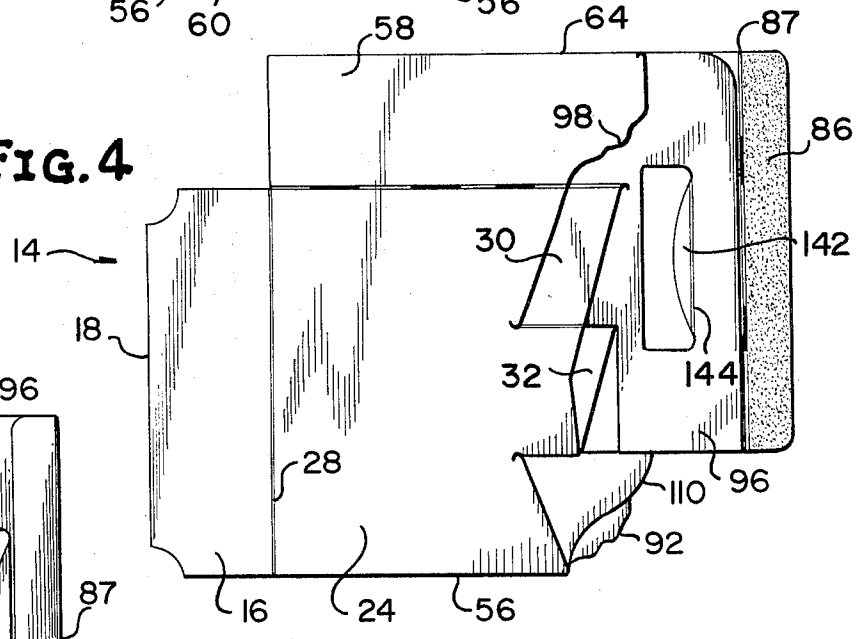


FIG. 4



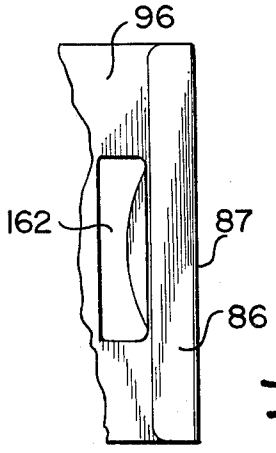


FIG. 5

INVENTOR

GEORGE S. HOLMES

BY Mason, Porter, Miller & Brown ATTORNEYS

Nov. 29, 1966 G. S. HOLMES 3,288,326

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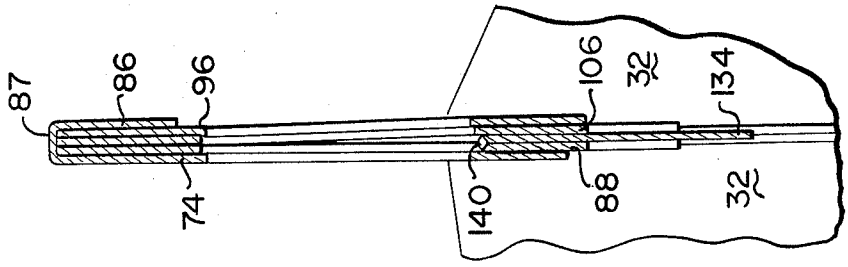


FIG. 9

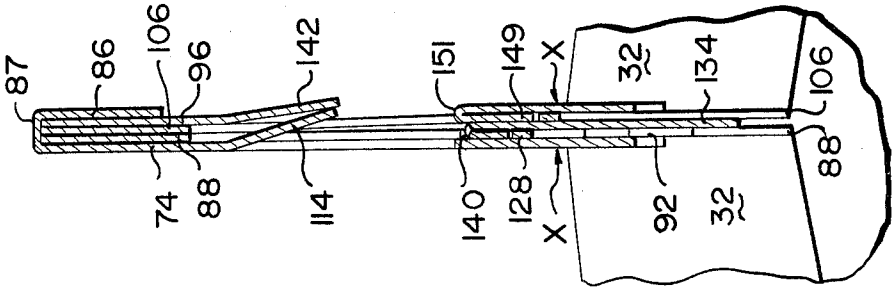


FIG. 8

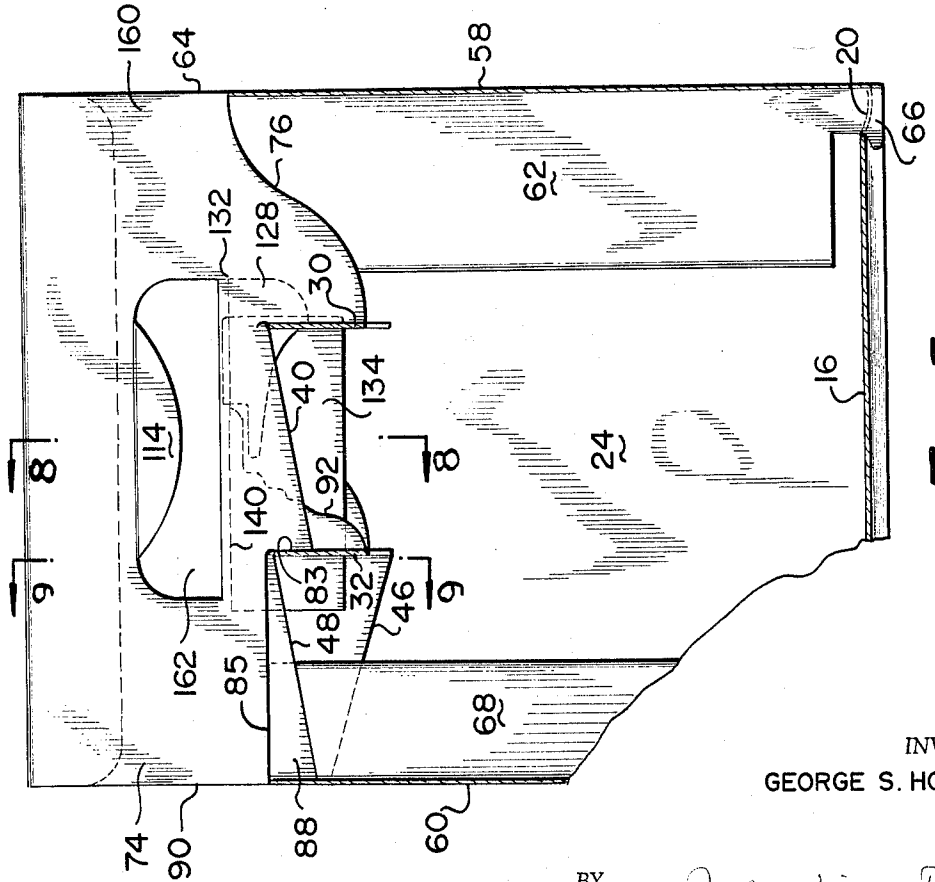


FIG. 7

INVENTOR
GEORGE S. HOLMES

BY Mason, Porter, Miller & Brown
ATTORNEYS

United States Patent Office 3,288,326 Patented Nov. 29, 1966

3,288,326

BOTTLE CARRIER WITH REINFORCING TAB

George S. Holmes, Middlesex, N.J., assignor to Continental Can Company, Inc., New York, N.Y., a corporation of New York

Filed Mar. 22, 1965, Ser. No. 441,454
14 Claims. (Cl. 220—113)

This invention relates in general to new and useful improvements in cartons particularly adapted for use in packaging a plurality of cylindrical containers, preferably bottles, in two parallel rows to form a readily handleable package, and more particularly relates to a novel carton of the handle carried type.

In the packaging of certain products, particularly soft drinks, it has proved feasible to form a readily handleable package by means of a carton of the basket-style which is used both for the purpose of retaining the bottles or like containers in two parallel rows and at the same time to function as a carrier for the bottles, the carton having a handle formed integrally therewith to effect the lifting of the resultant package and the carrying of same.

Such basket-style carrier cartons generally present two parallel rows of upwardly opening pockets defined in part by a multi-ply longitudinal divider and by transverse dividers comprised of straps which are integral with and are pivotally extended from the outer plies of the longitudinal divider. The longitudinal divider is normally provided with aligned cut-outs in the plies thereof which define the handle by which the package can be lifted or carried.

In lifting and carrying such basket-style carrier cartons it has been found, particularly when they have become wet, that there is an undesirable tendency for the load of the bottles carried therein to tear the carton in the structurally weakened areas of the outer plies of the longitudinal divider-handle located generally below the cut-outs and near the points of extension therefrom of the transverse divider straps.

In accordance with this invention it has been found that by providing means for reinforcing the structurally weakened areas of the outer plies of the longitudinal divider-handle located generally below the cut-outs and in the vicinity of the points of extension therefrom of the transverse divider straps, the undesirable tearing of the carrier carton at said structurally weakened areas such as normally occurs in the prior art carrier cartons can be greatly mitigated. It has been further found in accordance with this invention that the most economical and readily available source of such means for reinforcing resides in the material normally discarded from the longitudinal divider-handle in providing the cut-outs in the plies thereof which define the handle by which the package may be lifted or carried.

It is, therefore, an object of this invention to provide a novel and improved collapsible basket-style carrier carton which presents two parallel rows of upwardly opening pockets defined in part by a multi-ply longitudinal divider which is provided with aligned openings in the plies thereof forming a handle by which the package may be carried and by transverse dividers comprised of straps which pivotally extend outwardly from the outer plies of the longitudinal divider-handle, wherein means is provided for reinforcing the structurally weakened areas of the outer plies of the multi-ply longitudinal divider-handle located generally below the aligned openings and in the vicinity of the points of extension therefrom of the transverse divider straps, whereby the undesirable tearing of the carrier carton at said structurally weakened areas such as normally occurs in prior art carrier cartons has been overcome.

It is an additional object of this invention to provide a novel and improved carrier of the character stated wherein the means provided for reinforcing the structurally weakened areas of the multi-ply longitudinal divider handle is comprised of portions of the material normally discarded from the longtiudinal divider-handle in providing the openings in the plies thereof, said portions being secured flatly and by adhesive bonding against said structurally weakened areas whereby the undesirable tearing of the carrier carton at said structurally weakened areas such as normally occurs in prior art carrier cartons has been overcome.

It is a further object of this invention to provide a novel and improved carrier of the character stated wherein the means provided for reinforcing the structurally weakened areas of the multi-ply longitudinal divider-handle is comprised of portions of the material normally discarded from the longitudinal divider-handle in providing the openings in the plies thereof, said portions being folded over and secured flatly and as by adhesive bonding upon said structurally weakened areas, whereby the undesirable tearing of the carrier carton at said structurally weakened areas such as normally occurs in prior art carrier cartons has been overcome.

It is another object of this invention to provide a novel one-piece blank for a collapsible basket-style carrier having severance and fold lines defining a substantially rectangular bottom forming panel, side walls forming panels joined to the longitudinal edges of the bottom forming panel, end wall forming panels joined to the opposite ends of the side wall forming panels, each of said end wall forming panels terminating in a connecting flap, complemental ultimately joined longitudinal partition forming panels offstanding from the ultimate top edges of the side walls and being provided with aligned openings therein defining a handle, transverse partition forming straps defined from the side wall forming panels and joined thereto and to the longitudinal partition forming panels below the ultimate lower edges of said aligned openings at their opposite ends respectively along fold lines providing hinge connections with the side wall forming panels and the longitudinal partition forming panels, and wherein portions of the blank forming material displaced in providing the aligned openings are retained in attachment with the longitudinal partition forming panels along a longitudinal fold line about which said portions may be folded into contact with the areas of the longitudinal forming panels below the ultimate lower edges of said aligned openings.

It is a further object of this invention to provide a novel one-piece blank of the character stated wherein the edges of the longitudinal partition forming panels and the edges of the foldable portions of displaced blank forming material are so shaped as to lie in a substantially interlocking relationship when said longitudinal partition forming panels are ultimately joined and when said portions are folded into contact with the areas of said longitudinal partition forming panels below the ultimate lower edges of the aligned openings in said longitudinal partition forming panels.

With the above and other objects in view that will hereinafter appear, the nature of the invention will be more clearly understood by reference to the following detailed description, the appended claims, and the several views illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

In the drawings:

FIGURE 1 is a plan view of the inner face of a one-piece material blank sheet from which the carrier carton of the invention can be made. The view also shows the formation of the aligned openings in the blank sheet which provide a handle by which the carrier carton of the invention may be lifted and carried and further shows

the areas of the blank sheet to which glue or some other suitable adhesive is applied during the first adhesive applying operation prior to the performance of the first folding operation.

FIGURE 2 is a plan view of the blank (rotated 90 degrees to the right from the view of FIGURE 1 and with certain of its areas not immediately essential to the description, such as the bottom panel, broken away) after the completion of the first folding operation.

FIGURE 3 is a plan view of the blank similar to that shown in FIGURE 2 after the second folding step has been performed and shows the areas on parts of the handle forming panels and the riser panels to which an adhesive has been applied before the performance of the third and fourth folding step.

FIGURE 4 is a plan view of the whole blank after completion of the third folding step, and immediately preceding the performance of the fourth and final folding step.

FIGURE 5 illustrates a cut-away plan view of the blank showing the completion of the fourth and final folding step wherein the four handle forming panels or plies are secured together by folding the joiner flap which extends from the upper left handle forming panel (as seen in FIGURE 1) over the tops of the other three handle forming panels and securing it to the outer face of the lower left handle forming panel (as seen in FIGURE 1) with glue or other suitable adhesive.

FIGURE 6 is a perspective view of the erected carrier carton showing the vertically disposed handle member comprised of the four handle forming panels (plies) and extending above the carton and also serving in conjunction with the strap panels which extend transversely therefrom into connection with the side panels to form two parallel rows of upwardly extending pockets into which cylindrical containers, such as bottles, may be inserted.

FIGURE 7 is a longitudinal cross-sectional view taken vertically of the erected carrier carton along line 7—7 of FIGURE 6 showing the vertically disposed handle member extending above the carrier carton, and in dotted lines the longitudinal location of the portions of material displaced but not completely severed from the handle forming panels in forming the aligned finger receiving openings therein. This view also shows the riser panels at one end of the carrier carton as being locked under the bottom panel.

FIGURE 8 is a vertical transverse cross-sectional view of the erected carrier carton along line 8—8 of FIGURE 7 and shows the transverse locations of the handle forming panels, the material not completely severed from said handle forming members in forming the hand grip spaces therein, and the strap panels.

FIGURE 9 is a similar view to that shown in FIGURE 8 only it is taken along line 9—9 of FIGURE 7.

Referring to the drawings in detail and in particular to FIGURES 1–5 there is shown a blank generally indicated by the numeral **12**, for forming a collapsible carrier carton generally indicated by the numeral **14**, which is shown erected in FIGURES 6–9.

The blank **12** is preferably made from paperboard or other suitable flexible material and includes a bottom panel **16** having a locking notch **20** at opposite ends of a longitudinal fold line **18**, which bisects the bottom panel **16**. A pair of side forming panels **22** and **24** are connected to the bottom panel **16** along a pair of longitudinal fold lines **26** and **28**, respectively. The side panels **22** and **24** are each provided with a first strap forming panel **30** and a second strap forming panel **32**. Each of the strap forming panels **30** is defined by a pair of transversely disposed and longitudinally spaced fold lines **34** and **36** and a pair of oblique severance lines **38** and **40**. The strap forming panels **32** are each defined by a pair of longitudinally spaced and transversely disposed fold lines **42** and **44**, and a pair of oblique severance lines **46** and **48**. Each of the side panels **22** and **24** is defined by the respective longitudinal fold lines **26** or **28**, a perforated transverse fold line **50**, the severance line **38**, the fold line **36**, the fold line **42**, the severance line **46**, and a perforated fold line **56**.

Each of the side panels **22**, **24** is provided along the fold lines **50** and **56** with end forming panels **58** and **60** respectively. Each of the end forming panels **58** is provided with a riser panel **62** which is connected to the end forming panel **58** along a perforated transverse fold line **64** and has a locking tab **66** at the inwardly disposed end thereof. Each of the end forming panels **60** is provided with a riser panel **68** which is attached to the end forming panel **60** along a perforated transverse fold line **70** and has a locking tab **72** at the inwardly disposed end thereof.

As seen in FIGURE 1, an upper left or first handle forming panel **74** is provided and is connected along the transverse fold line **34** to the strap forming member **30** which is in turn connected along the transverse fold line **36** to the side panel **22**. The first handle forming panel **74** is separated from the end forming panel **58** along an irregularly oblique severance line **76** and is connected to the riser panel **62** along the perforated fold line **64**. The first handle forming panel **74** is separated from the side panel **22** along the oblique severance lines **38** and **40** and by a pentagonal-shaped space **80** which results from the total removal of blank forming material along two oblique severance lines **81** and **82** are colinear with the oblique severance lines **40** and **48** respectively, along two transverse severance lines **83** and **84** and along a longitudinal severance line **85**. The first handle forming panel **74** is also provided with a joiner flap **86** which is connected to it along a perforated longitudinal fold line **87**. The first handle forming panel **74** is also provided with a finger receiving opening. Both the purpose of the joiner flap **86** and the formation of the finger receiving opening of the handle forming panel **74** will be described at length later below.

The first handle forming panel **74** is connected to an upper right or second handle forming panel **88** along a transverse fold line **90**. The second handle forming panel **88** is connected along the fold line **44** to the strap forming panel **32** which is, in turn, connected along the transverse fold line **42** to the side panel **22**. The second handle forming panel **88** is separated from the side panel **22** along the oblique severance lines **46** and **48** and is separated from the end forming panel **60** adjacent to said side panel **22** along an irregular severance line **92**. The second handle forming panel **88** is separated from the riser panel member **68** along a severance line of stair-step configuration **94**. The second handle forming panel **88** is also provided with a finger receiving opening, the formation of which will be described in detail later below.

A lower left or third handle forming panel **96** is provided and is connected along the transverse fold line **34** to the strap forming panel **30** which is, in turn, connected along the transverse fold line **36** to the side panel **24**. The third handle forming panel **96** is separated from the end forming panel **58** along an irregular severance line **98** and is connected to the riser panel **62** along the perforated fold line **64**. The third handle forming panel **96** is separated from the side panel **24** along the oblique severance lines **38** and **40** and by a pentagonal-shaped space **100** that results from the total removal of blank forming material along oblique severance lines **101** and **102** which are colinear with severance lines **40** and **48**, respectively, two transverse severance lines **103** and **104**, and a longitudinal severance line **105**. The third handle forming panel **96** is also provided with a finger receiving opening the formation of which will be described in detail below.

The third handle forming panel **96** is connected to a lower left or fourth handle forming panel **106** along a

transverse fold line 108. The fourth handle forming panel 106 is connected along the fold line 44 to the strap forming panel 32 which is, in turn, connected along the fold line 42 to the side panel 24. The fourth handle forming panel 106 is separated from the side panel 24 along the oblique severance lines 46 and 48 and is separated from the end forming panel 60 adjacent to side panel 24 along an irregular severance line 110. The fourth handle forming panel 106 is separated from the riser panel 68 adjacent to side panel 24 along a severance line of stair-step configuration 112. The fourth handle forming panel 106 is also provided with a finger receiving opening, the formation of which will be described in detail below.

As seen in FIGURE 1, the four handle forming panels 74, 88, 96 and 106 are provided with aligned finger receiving openings as follows:

In the first handle forming panel 74, a tongue-shaped flap or "center" portion 114 is separated from the first handle forming panel 74 along a crescent-shaped severance line 116, but remains connected to the first handle forming panel 74 along a longitudinal fold line 118. An irregularly shaped cut-out or right portion 120 of the blank forming material is completely separated and removed from the first handle forming panel 74 along a cane-shaped severance line 122, a longitudinal severance line 124, a Z-shaped severance line 126 and a section of the crescent-shaped severance line 116, leaving an open space. An irregularly shaped tab or left portion 128 of the blank forming material is separated from the first handle forming panel 74 along a cane-shaped severance line 130, a section of the crescent-shaped severance line 116, and the Z-shaped severance line 126, but remains connected to the first handle forming panel 74 along a longitudinal fold line 132.

In the second handle forming panel 88, a substantially rectangular tab portion 134 is separated from the second handle forming panel 88 along a transverse severance line 136, a longitudinal severance line 138 and a section of the irregular severance line 92. The tab portion 134 remains connected to the second handle forming panel 88 along a perforated transverse fold line 140 and is, of course, separated from the riser panel 68 along the lower section of the severance line 94.

In the third handle forming panel 96, a tongue-shaped flap or "center" portion 142 is separated from the third handle forming panel 96 along a crescent-shaped severance line 143 but remains connected to the third handle forming panel 96 along a longitudinal fold line 144. An irregularly-shaped cut-out or "right" portion 145 is completely separated and removed from the third handle forming panel 96 along a cane-shaped severance line 146, a longitudinal severance line 147, a transverse severance line 148 and a section of the crescent-shaped severance line 143 leaving an open space. An irregularly shaped tab or "left" portion 149 is separated from the third handle forming panel 96 along a cane-shaped severance line 150, a section of the crescent-shaped severance line 143, and the transverse line 148. The tab portion 149 remains connected to the third handle forming panel along a longitudinal fold line 151.

In the fourth handle forming panel 106, a single irregularly-shaped portion 154 of the blank forming material is completely separated and discarded from the fourth handle forming panel 106 along a longitudinal severance line 155, a transverse severance line 156, and an irregular severance line 157 leaving an open space. Panel 106 is also separated from the end forming panel 60 along the irregular severance line 110 and is separated from the riser panel 68 along a section of the severance line 112.

The blank 12, described above, is formed into the collapsible carrier carton 14, as seen in FIGURES 4–6, by a sequence of two adhesive applying and four folding operations which will become apparent from a consideration of FIGURES 1 through 5 and the following description.

FIGURE 1 shows appropriate areas of the riser panels 68 and of the four handle forming panels 74, 88, 96, and 104, and the tab portions 128 and 149 of the handle forming panels 74 and 96 respectively which have glue or other suitable adhesive applied thereto during the first adhesive application and prior to performance of the first folding operation.

FIGURE 2 shows a plan view of the blank 12 (rotated 90 degrees from the view of FIGURE 1 and with certain of its areas not immediately essential to the description, such as the bottom panel 16, broken away) after the first folding operation has been completed. During the first folding operation the tab portions 128 and 149 are folded over along the fold lines 132 and 151 respectively, and their inner faces are secured flatly to the inner faces of the handle forming panels 74 and 96 respectively for the purpose of reinforcing said handle forming panels in the areas approximately opposite the transverse fold lines 34 for the strap panels 30. Simultaneously during the first folding operation, the handle forming panels 88 and 106 are folded over along the fold lines 90 and 108 respectively and their inner faces are secured flatly to the inner faces of the handle forming panels 74 and 96 with their edges as defined by the irregular severance lines 92 and 157 respectively in a substantially interlocking relationship to the edges of the tab portions 128 and 149. Concurrently with the folding of the handle forming panels 88 and 106, the respective strap panels 32 attached thereto are also folded over along the fold lines 42 which are colinear with the fold lines 90 and 108.

FIGURE 3 shows the blank 12 after completion of the second folding operation and shows selected areas to which adhesive is then applied during the second adhesive application operation in preparation for the third folding operation.

The second folding operation is performed by simultaneously folding the riser panels 62 along the fold lines 64 so that their inner faces are secured flatly to the inner faces of handle forming panels 74 and 96 respectively and by folding the side panels 60 along the fold lines 56 so that the inner faces of the riser panels 68 are secured flatly to the outer faces of the handle forming panels 88 and 106 respectively, and by folding over the tab portion 134 so that its outer face rests flatly upon the outer face of the second handle forming panel 88 and the tab portion 128 of the first handle forming panel 74.

After the completion of the second folding operation, adhesive is applied, as shown in FIGURE 3, to selected areas of the riser panels 62 and 68 and to the second handle forming panel 88 and its tab portion 134, and adhesive is applied to the total area of the inner face of the joiner flap 86.

FIGURE 4 shows the blank 12 after completion of the third folding operation. During the third folding operation, the blank 12 is folded along the longitudinal fold line 18 across the center of the bottom panel 16 to secure flatly together the outer faces of the riser panels 62 and 68, the handle forming panels 88 and 106 and the tab portions 134 and 149.

FIGURE 5 shows the blank 12 after completion of the fourth and final folding operation of folding over the joiner flap 86 along longitudinal fold line 87 flatly securing its inner face to the outer face of the third handle forming panel 96.

Upon completion of the above described two adhesive applying and four folding operations, the blank 12 has been transformed into the carrier carton 14 which is in a collapsed condition as shown in FIGURES 4 and 5. It is in this collapsed or flattened condition that the carrier carton is shipped to the customer.

FIGURE 6 is a perspective view of the carrier carton 14 in an erected form. Opposed forces are applied to the side forming panels 22 and 24 causing them to move apart. This causes the end forming panels 58 and 60 to move apart and the bottom forming panel 16 to expand

along the fold line 18. Continued application of the opposed forces described above causes the carrier 14 to be erected in the form shown in FIGURE 6. The carrier 14 has a tendency to collapse but is kept from doing so by engaging the locking tabs 66 and 72 located on the riser panels 62 and 68 respectively to the underside of the bottom panel 16 inwardly of the notch 20. See FIGURE 7.

FIGURE 7 is a longitudinal cross-sectional view taken vertically of the erected carrier carton 14 taken along the line 7—7 of FIGURE 6 showing the vertically disposed multi-ply handle member 160 extending above the carton and showing in shadow the longitudinal location in the erected carrier carton 14 of the tab portions 128, 149, and 134 produced during the formation of the finger receiving openings in the handle forming panels 74, 96, and 88 which comprise respectively two outer plies and one inner ply of the handle member 160.

FIGURE 8 is a vertical transverse cross-sectional view of the erected carrier carton 14 taken along line 8—8 of FIGURE 7 showing the transverse locations of the first and third handle forming panels 74 and 96 respectively which form the two outer plies of the multi-ply handle member 160 and of the second and fourth handle forming panels 88 and 106 respectively which form the two inner plies of the multi-ply handle member 160. Also shown in FIGURE 8 are the transverse locations of the tab portions 128, 134, and 149, of the strap panels 32, of the tongue portions 114 and 142, and of the joiner flap 86 as taken along the line 8—8 of FIGURE 6.

FIGURE 9 is a similar view to that shown in FIGURE 8, only it is taken along line 9—9 of FIGURE 6.

As noted above it has been found in lifting and carrying the basket-style carrier cartons disclosed in the prior art, particularly when such cartons are wet, that there is an undesirable tendency for the load of the bottles or such to tear the carton at the structurally weakened areas below the finger receiving openings and in the vicinity of the points where the transverse divider straps extend from the outer plies of the multi-ply longitudinal divider-handle member. As stated above, it is an object of this invention to eliminate this long existing problem by providing a novel collapsible carton carrier made from a one-pieced blank wherein the structurally weakened areas of the handle member 160, e.g. as at "X" as seen in FIGURE 6, below the finger receiving opening 162 and near where the transverse divider strap panels 30 extend from the outer plies 74 and 96 are reinforced, whereby the previously noted undesirable tendency for the load of bottles or such to tear prior art versions of such a carton carrier at such weakened areas is greatly mitigated.

Although it should be understood that the above-mentioned reinforcement of the longitudinal divider-handle member may be provided by a variety of means, it has been found in accordance with this invention that the most economical and readily available source of such reinforcement resides in folding of the tab portions 128 and 149 produced during the previously described formation of the finger receiving openings of the first and third handle forming panels 74 and 96 respectively along their respective fold lines 132 and 151 and securing their inner faces flatly to the inner faces of said handle forming panels 74 and 96 with glue or some other suitable adhesive during the previously described first folding operation in the construction of the novel collapsible carrier carton of the invention from a one-piece blank.

In addition to providing the reinforcement of the structurally weakened areas X of the outer plies 74 and 96 of the handle member 160 as described above, the invention described herein further provides, through its novel construction of the inner plies 88 and 106 of said handle member 160, additional reinforcement of these same structurally weakened areas X of the outer plies 74 and 96 of said handle member 160. As best seen in FIGURES 7 and 8, the edges of the inner plies (handle forming panels 88 and 106) of the handle member 160 are so shaped along their respective severance lines 92 and 157 that when they are folded about their respective fold lines 90 and 108 and their inner faces are secured flatly to the inner faces of the outer plies (handle forming panels 74 and 96 respectively) during the previously described first folding operation, said inner plies 88 and 106 are disposed in a substantially interlocking relationship with the tab portions 128 and 149 of the respective outer plies 74 and 96 which during the same previously described first folding operation are simultaneously folded over their respective fold lines 132 and 151 and have their inner faces secured flatly to the inner faces of said outer plies 74 and 96. This substantially interlocking relationship is also shown in FIGURES 2 and 3. This substantially interlocking relationship between the tab portions 128 and 149 and the inner plies 88 and 106 respectively provides an added strength protection for the handle member 160 in that, should a tear occur in the area reinforced by the tabs 128 and 149, the tear would be limited at the point of intersection of the tap with its respective substantially interlocking inner ply.

The novel carrier carton described herein can be made from paperboard, heavy paper, plastic, or other similar materials.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that the present invention is well adapted to carry out the ends and objects hereinbefore set forth, and that there has been provided a novel one-piece blank for a collapsible basket-style carrier having severance and fold lines defining a substantially rectangular bottom forming panel, side wall forming panels joined to the longitudinal edges of the bottom forming panel, end wall forming panels joined to the opposite ends of the side wall forming panels, each of said end wall forming panels terminating in a connecting flap, complemental ultimately joined longitudinal partition forming panels offstanding from the ultimate top edges of the side walls and being provided with aligned openings therein defining a handle, transverse partition forming straps defined from the side wall forming panels and joined thereto and to the longitudinal partition forming panels below the ultimate lower edges of said aligned openings at their opposite ends respectively along fold lines providing hinge connections with the side wall forming panels and the longitudinal partition forming panels, portions of the blank forming material displaced in providing the aligned openings are retained in attachment with the longitudinal partition forming panels along a longitudinal fold line about which said portions may be folded into contact with the areas of the longitudinal forming panels below the ultimate lower edges of said aligned openings and wherein the edges of the longitudinal partition forming panels and the edges of the foldable portions of displaced blank forming material are so shaped as to lie in a substantially interlocking relationship when said longitudinal partition forming panels are ultimately joined and when said portions are folded into contact with the areas of said longitudinal partition forming panels below the ultimate lower edges of the aligned openings in said longitudinal partition forming panels. Therefore, tearing of the carrier carton at said structurally weakened areas such as normally occurs in prior art carrier cartons formed of one-piece blanks has been overcome in an economical and practical manner by using available material of a one-piece blank.

What is claimed is:

1. In a bottle carrier of the type presenting two rows of upwardly opening pockets defined in part by a longitudinal divider comprised of four parallel plies and transverse dividers extending outwardly therefrom, and wherein said longitudinal divider has aligned openings in the plies thereof defining a handle, the improvement residing in folding over material displaced but not totally detached from the outer two of said plies in the forming of said openings against normally weak areas of said outer two

of said plies of said longitudinal divider and bonding said material thereto and in shaping the edges of said material and of the inner two of said plies such that said edges shall lie in a substantially interlocking relationship to one another.

2. A collapsible basket-style carrier for bottles or the like, said carrier being made of a one-piece blank of flexible sheet material and including a substantially rectangular bottom forming panel having a locking notch at opposite ends of a longitudinal fold line which substantially bisects said bottom forming panel into two sections, the inner faces of which are folded adjacent to one another along said longitudinal fold lines when the carrier is collapsed, side wall forming panels joined along a fold line to the longitudinal edges of said sections opposite said longitudinal fold lines, end wall forming panels joined along perforated transverse fold lines to the opposite ends of said side wall forming panels, each of said end wall forming panels terminating in a riser panel joined thereto along a perforated transverse fold line, the outer faces of each opposing pair of said riser panels being bonded together with glue or other suitable adhesive and each of said riser panels being provided at its bottom with a locking tab for engagement with said locking notches, a multi-ply longitudinal partition member offstanding from the top edges of said side wall forming panels and joined at its opposite ends to said riser panels, said longitudinal partition forming member having blank-forming material displaced from plies thereof to provide aligned openings defining a handle by which the carrier may be carried, a pair of transverse partition forming strap panels defined from each of said side wall forming panels and joined thereto and to the longitudinal partition forming member at their opposite ends respectively along transverse fold lines providing hinge connections with the side wall forming panels and the longitudinal partition forming member below the lower edges of said aligned openings, means are provided for reinforcing the normally structurally weakened areas of said multi-ply longitudinal partition member, said areas being located below the lower edges of said aligned openings and in the vicinity of the hinge connections of said transverse partition forming strap panels to said longitudinal partition forming member whereby the tendency of said carrier to tear at said normally structurally weakened areas is greatly reduced, said means are comprised of portions of the blank-forming material displaced in providing said aligned openings, said portions being retained attached to said plies along longitudinal fold lines at the lower edges of said openings about which said portions are folded against and bonded to said structurally weakened areas, said means comprising sections of the inner of said plies which are bonded to said structurally weakened areas in a substantially interlocked relationship with said portions, said means further being comprised of sections of said riser panels which are bonded to said structurally weakened areas in a substantially intersecting relationship with said portions, said means are further comprised of sections of the outer of said plies which are formed of a greater than normal longitudinal dimension, the portions of said areas at which said outer of said plies are bonded to said portions, riser panels, and inner of said plies.

3. In a bottle carrier of the type presenting two rows of upwardly opening pockets defined in part by a longitudinal divider comprised of a plurality of plies and transverse dividers extending outwardly therefrom, and wherein said longitudinal divider has aligned openings in the plies thereof defining a handle, the improvement residing in folding over material displaced but not totally detached from the outer two of said plies in the forming of said openings against normally weak carriers of said outer two of said plies of said longitudinal divider and bonding said material thereto and in shaping the edges of said material and of the inner two of said plies such that said edges shall lie in a substantially interlocked relationship to one another.

4. In a bottle carrier of the type presenting two rows of upwardly opening pockets defined in part by a longitudinal divider comprised of a plurality of generally parallel plies and transverse dividers extending outwardly therefrom, and wherein said longitudinal divider has aligned openings in the plies thereof defining a handle, the aligned openings having associated lowermost edges, the improvement residing in folding over material along first fold lines of each of the outer two of said plies into underlying adjacent relationship to the lowermost edges of said openings, folding over material displaced but not totally detached from the outer two of said plies in the forming of said openings against normally weak areas of said outer two of said plies of said longitudinal divider adjacent and below said lowermost edges, and bonding all of said material together whereby the portion of the longitudinal divider beneath and along the entire lowermost edge of said openings is defined by an equal number of plies.

5. In a bottle carrier of the type presenting two rows of upwardly opening pockets defined in part by a longitudinal divider comprised of a plurality of plies and transverse dividers extending outwardly therefrom, and wherein said longitudianl divider has aligned openings in the plies thereof defining a handle opening, the improvement comprising a first portion of material of an outermost one of said plies being folded about a first fold line into overlying relationship to said outermost ply, said first portion of material having a terminal end portion remote from said first fold line, a second portion of material displaced from but not totally detached from one of said plies in the forming of one of said openings, said second portion of material being displaced by folding along a second fold line substantially normal to said first fold line, said first and second portions of material being in a common plane, and means bonding said first and second portions of materials in sandwiched relationship between said outermost and another ply of said longitudinal divider.

6. The combination as defined in claim 5 wherein said terminal end portion of said first portion of material is disposed adjacent said second portion of material.

7. The combination as defined in claim 5 wherein another portion of material of another outermost one of said plies is folded about a third fold line into overlying relationship to said another outermost ply, and said bonding means further bonds said another portion of material to said another outermost ply.

8. The combination as defined in claim 7 wherein said first and third fold lines are generally in parallel relationship to each other and to the planes of said plies.

9. A one-piece blank for a collapsible carrier, said blank comprising a bottom panel, a side panel joined to said bottom panel along each of first and second fold lines, an end panel joined to each side panel along third and fourth fold lines which are generally normal to said first and second fold lines, transverse partition forming strap panels defined from each of said side panels, a longitudinal partition forming panel joined by said strap panels to each of said side panels, at least one of said longitudinal partition forming panels being defined by a main panel portion and a minor panel portion joined to said main panel portion along a fifth fold line generally parallel to said third and fourth fold line whereby said minor panel portion is foldable into overlying relationship to said main panel portion, said main panel portion including a handle-forming opening, a reinforcing panel formed from material displaceable from but not totally detached from said main panel portion, said reinforcing panel being joined to said main panel portion along a sixth fold line whereby said reinforcing panel is foldable to a position beneath said ultimate lower edge of said handle-forming opening, said minor panel terminating in

a terminal edge, and the distance between said fifth fold line and said terminal edge corresponding to the distance between said fifth fold line and an edge portion of said reinforcing panel whereby said minor panel is foldable along said fifth fold line to a position underlying the ultimate lower edge of said handle-forming opening adjacent and coplanar with said reinforcing panels.

10. The one-piece blank as defined in claim **9** wherein said terminal edge and said edge portion of the reinforcing panel are generally complementary contoured for cooperative folding relationship in a common plane upon the folding thereof about said fifth and sixth fold lines.

11. The one-piece blank as defined in claim **9** wherein another of said longitudinal partition forming panels is defined by another main panel portion and another minor panel portion joined to said another main panel portion along a seventh fold line generally parallel to said third and fourth fold lines whereby said another minor panel portion is foldable into overlying relationship to said another main panel portion, said another main panel portion including another handle-forming opening, another reinforcing panel formed from material displaceable from but not totally detached from said another main panel portion, said another reinforcing panel being joined to said another main panel portion along an eighth fold line whereby said another reinforcing panel is foldable to a position beneath the ultimate lower edge of said another handle-forming opening, said another minor panel terminating in a terminal edge, and the distance between said seventh fold line and said another terminal edge corresponding to the distance between said seventh fold line and an edge portion of said another reinforcing panel

whereby said another minor panel is foldable along said seventh fold line to a position underlying the ultimate lower edge of said another handle-forming opening adjacent and coplanar with said another reinforcing panel.

12. The one-piece blank as defined in claim **9** wherein said first mentioned and another reinforcing panels are in longitudinal alignment.

13. The one-piece blank as defined in claim **9** wherein said sixth fold line is generally parallel to said first and second fold lines, and said sixth fold line is disposed along the ultimate lower edge of said handle-forming opening.

14. The one-piece blank as defined in claim **13** wherein said terminal edge and said edge portion of the reinforcing panel are generally complementary contoured for cooperative folding relationship in a common plane upon the folding thereof about said fifth and sixth fold lines.

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GEORGE O. RALSTON, *Primary Examiner.*