July 18, 1961 W. H. INMAN 2,992,767

COLLAPSIBLE CARTON

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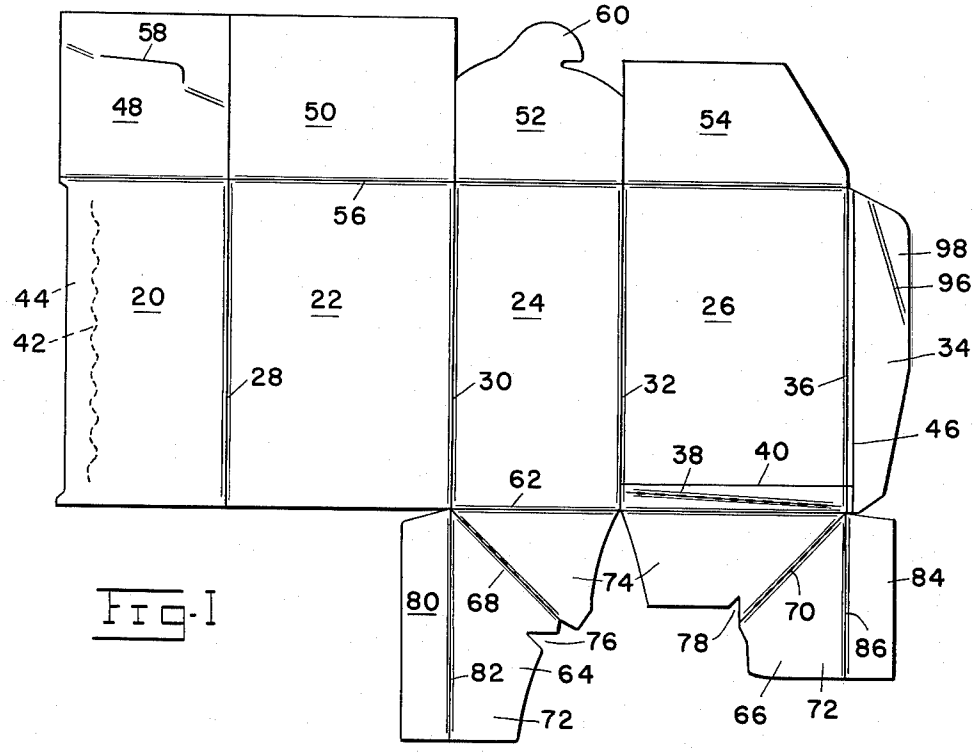


FIG-1

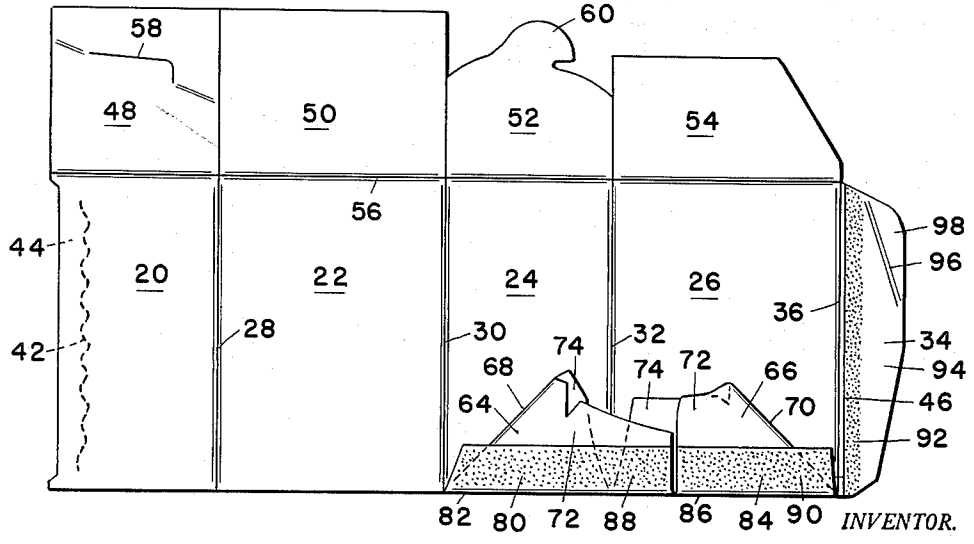


FIG-2

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COLLAPSIBLE CARTON

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Fig. 3

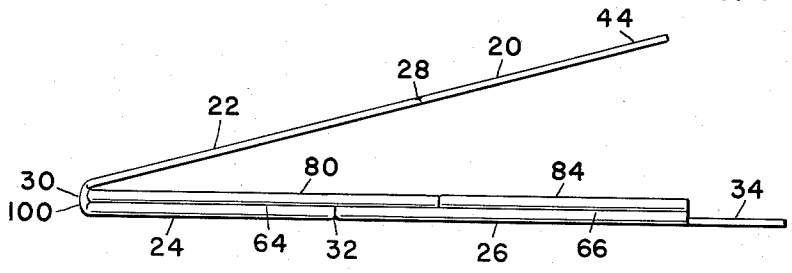
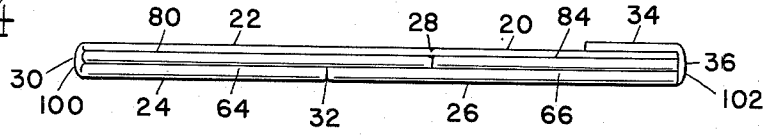


Fig. 4



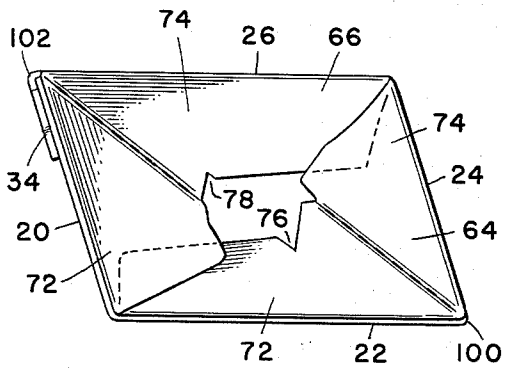


Fig. 5

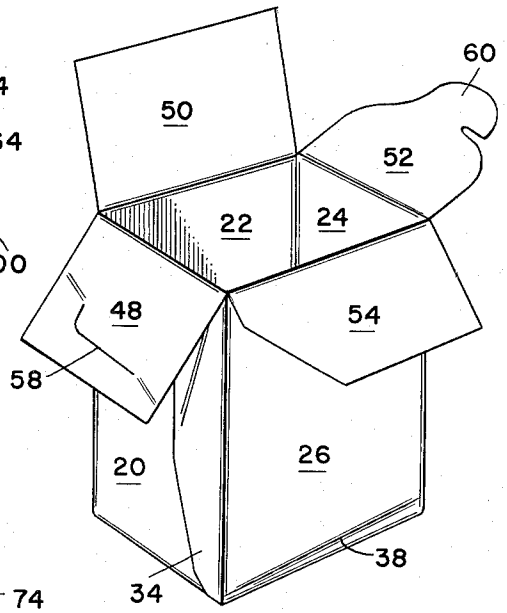


Fig. 7

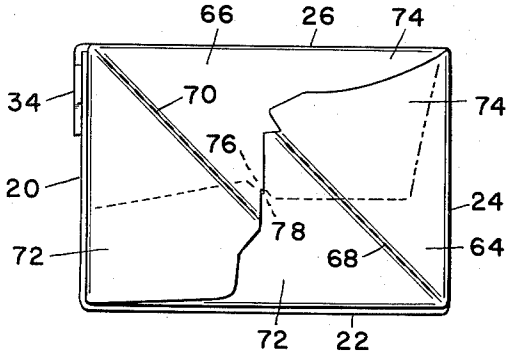


Fig. 6

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Fig-8

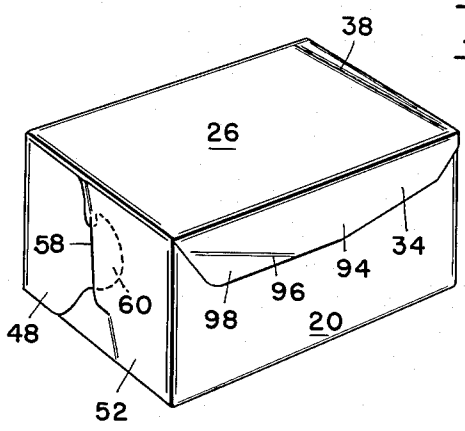
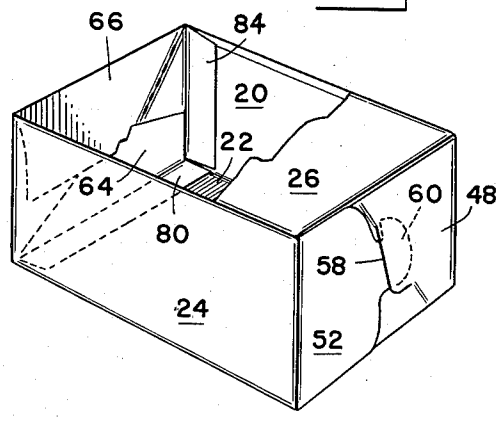


Fig-9



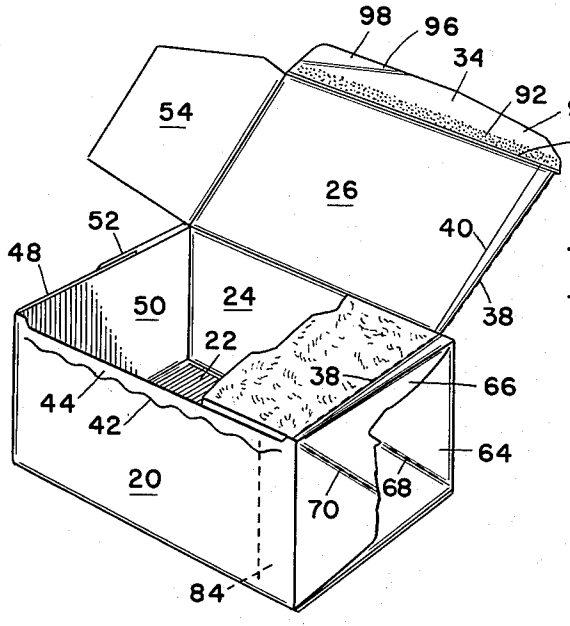


Fig-10

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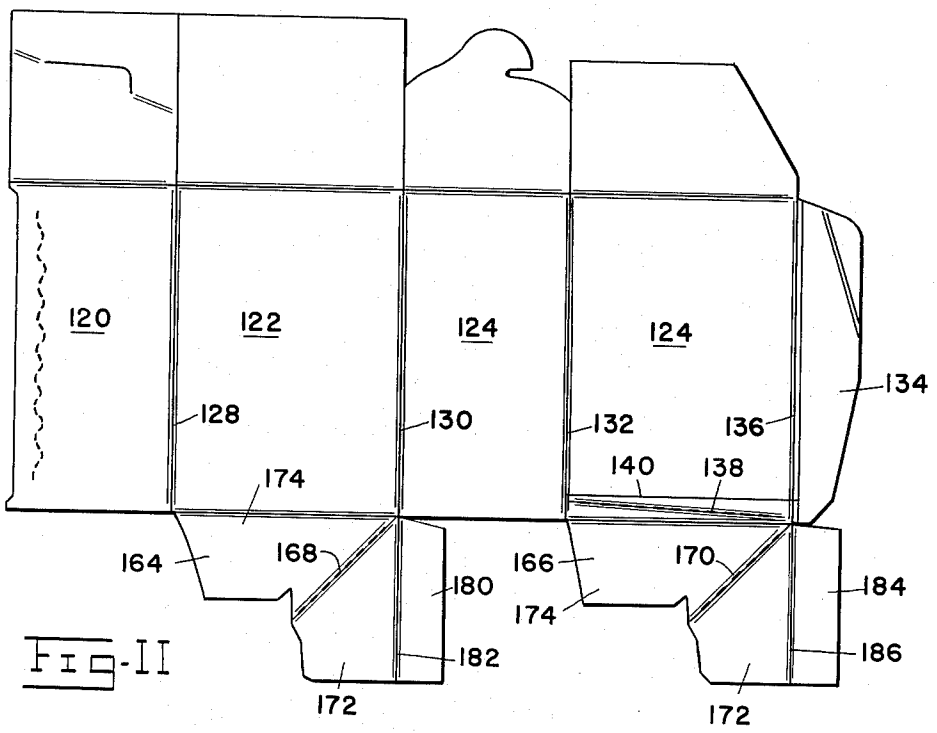


Fig-11

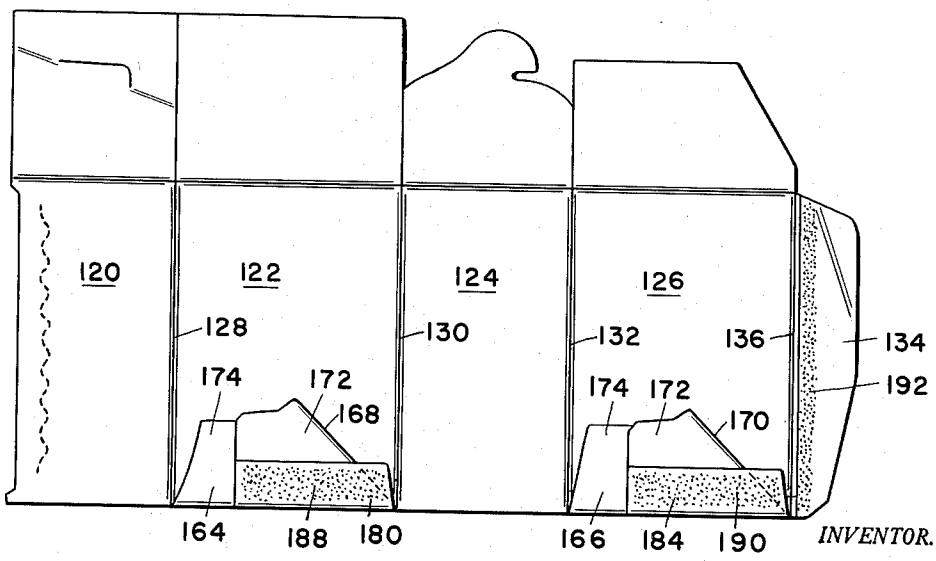


Fig 12

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COLLAPSIBLE CARTON

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Fig-13

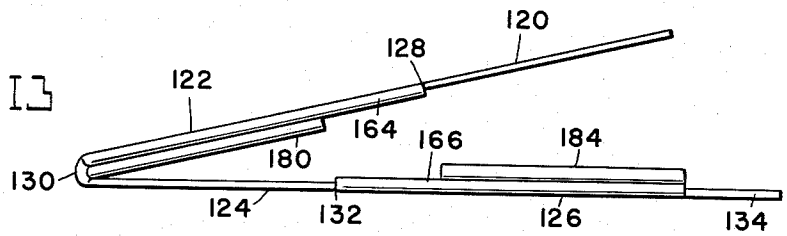
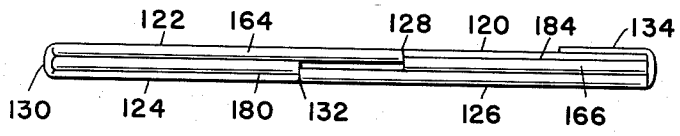


Fig-14



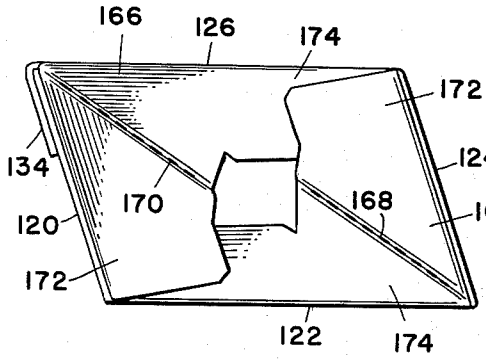


Fig-15

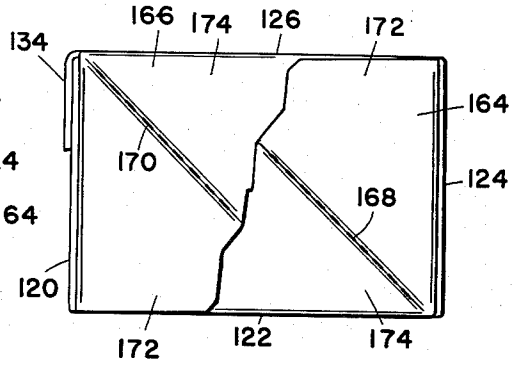


Fig-16

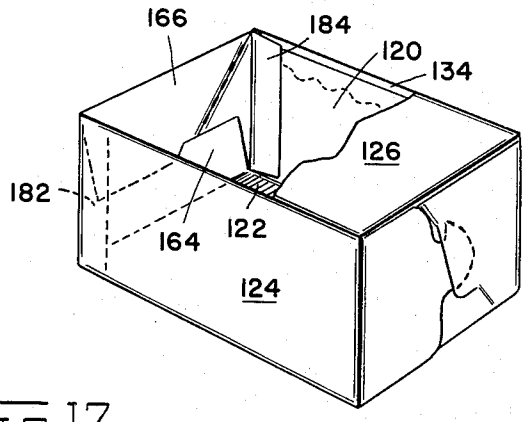


Fig-17

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United States Patent Office 2,992,767 Patented July 18, 1961

2,992,767

COLLAPSIBLE CARTON

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Filed Apr. 18, 1956, Ser. No. 578,996
4 Claims. (Cl. 229—51)

This invention relates to collapsible cartons made of fibrous material, such as cardboard, for packaging ice cream and other frozen comestibles, and the like. As the result of a recent invention, such cartons have been provided with bottom flaps so constructed as to be automatically unfolded and extended by manipulation of the side walls. This automatic bottom construction has been combined with a side opening pull flap and has resulted in a practical and useful carton, which has been widely used in the field. However, these cartons were so constructed that when the side opening flap was pulled and the closure wall opened, the bottom flaps were moved out of engagement and the carton became partially unfolded and unfit for further use.

One object of the present invention is to provide an improved carton of the general character described, so constructed as to be kept substantially intact when opened for the partial removal of the contents, and thus, kept in condition for being reclosed for further preservation of the remaining contents.

Another object is to provide a carton of the above nature which requires no more material than cartons described above in which the bottom flaps are moved out of engagement when the side opening flap is pulled.

Another object is to provide a carton having the above advantages and which is so constructed as to be readily manufactured, conveniently erected for filling and conveniently opened by the consumer, as described above.

A further object is to afford a carton having the above advantages in a form capable of being manufactured in quantity lots, by known machines and at relatively low cost.

To these and other ends the invention resides in certain improvements and combinations of parts, all as will be hereinafter more fully described, the novel features being pointed out in the claims at the end of the specification.

In the drawings:

FIG. 1 is a plan view of a one-piece blank, cut and scored ready for folding to form a carton embodying the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a similar view with the bottom flap portions folded over and glue applied;

FIG. 3 is an edge view of the blank as seen from the bottom in FIG. 2, but with the outer wall portions partly folded over toward glued position;

FIG. 4 is similar to FIG. 3, but with the parts glued together and the carton in collapsed condition;

FIGS. 5 and 6 are bottom plan views from the outside of the carton in progressive positions of erection for filling;

FIG. 7 is a perspective view of the carton in erected position with the top flaps open for filling;

FIG. 8 is a perspective view of the carton showing the same erected, filled and closed;

FIG. 9 is a perspective view of the carton with the closure wall partially broken away for showing the bottom closure of the carton;

FIG. 10 is a perspective view of the carton showing the same after being opened for removal of a portion of the contents;

FIG. 11 is a plan view of a one-piece blank cut and scored ready for folding to form a carton having a modified construction;

FIG. 12 is similar to FIG. 11, but with the bottom flap portions folded over and glue applied:

FIG. 13 is an edge view of the blank as seen from the bottom in FIG. 2, but with the outer wall portions partly folded over toward glued position;

FIG. 14 is similar to FIG. 13, but with the parts glued together and the carton in collapsed condition;

FIGS. 15 and 16 are bottom plan views from the outside of the carton in progressive positions of erection for filling, and

FIG. 17 is a perspective view of the carton with the closure wall partially broken away for showing the bottom closure of the carton.

The preferred embodiment of the present invention, herein disclosed by way of illustration, is preferably made of a one-piece blank such as shown in FIG. 1, cut and scored to form front, intermediate, rear and closure walls, **20**, **22**, **24** and **26**, respectively, separated by parallel scored fold lines **28**, **30** and **32**, as shown. A securing strip **34** is foldably connected with closure wall **26** along a fold line **36** which is parallel to fold lines **28**, **30** and **32**, as shown in FIG. 1. Securing strip **34** is adapted to be detachably glued to the free edge portion of the opposite or front wall **20** when the walls are folded over, as hereafter described. Closure wall **26** is preferably provided adjacent the bottom of the carton with a line of weakening which may comprise, singly or in combination, a line of perforations **38**, a single slit **40** extending partially through the material forming the closure wall, or any other known means whereby the material forming the closure wall is weakened for controlling the direction and extent of the tearing action of the closure wall. Line of perforations **38** preferably comprises a series of spaced short slits which may extend partially or completely through the material forming the closure wall, as shown in FIG. 1, and this line of perforations **38** preferably starts adjacent the lower front corner of the closure wall and extends transversely across the closure wall to the rear edge thereof at a point upwardly from the bottom edge of the closure wall. This gives the line of perforations a slight tapering effect, as can be seen in FIG. 1. Slit **40** which is partially cut through the closure wall on the under surface thereof (upper surface as viewed in FIG. 1) extends substantially transversely across the closure wall from the front to the rear edge thereof, and is spaced slightly upwardly from the line of perforations, as shown in FIG. 1, and for a purpose hereafter described.

Front wall **20** has an undulating slit **42** extending thereacross adjacent the upper free edge thereof, as shown in FIGS. 1 and 10. Slit **42** extends only partially through the structure forming front wall **20** and provides a weakened surface area **44** to aid in the opening of the carton and to prevent peeling of front wall **20** when the carton is opened. Securing strip **34** is also preferably provided with a slit **46**, adjacent to score line **36**, to prevent an extension of surface peeling of strip **34** into the closure wall when the carton is opened.

Side walls **20**, **22**, **24** and **26** are provided with top closure flaps **48**, **50**, **52** and **54**, respectively, which are foldably connected therewith along a score line **56**. Flap **48** is formed with a slit **58** to receive a tongue or hook **60** on flap **52** for securing these top flaps in position for closing the top of the carton. The carton is erected and filled through the top, after which the top flaps are folded over and locked in position for closing the carton. When the carton is opened, as hereafter described, the top flaps preferably remain in locked position for holding the top of the carton erect.

My carton is also preferably provided with bottom closure flaps which are so constructed that the carton may be completely folded and glued by the manufacturer

and then shipped in collapsed, flat condition to the user who may erect it by merely applying pressure to the opposite corners of the collapsed carton, as hereafter described. The bottom flaps are so constructed that they will fold inwardly inside the carton when the carton side walls are collapsed and will automatically move outwardly to their erected positions normal to the side walls of the carton when the carton is erected.

To this end, I preferably provide two bottom closure flaps which are foldably connected with an adjacent pair of carton walls along a score line **62** (FIG. 1). An inwardly folding flap **64** is connected with rear wall **24** while a second inwardly folding flap **66** is foldably connected with closure wall **26**, as shown in FIG. 1. Flaps **64** and **66** are provided with score lines **68** and **70**, respectively, extending diagonally across and separating each of them into two portions, as at **72** and **74** (FIG. 1) so that each may be folded over itself and over the side wall to which it is connected as hereafter described.

The outer free edges of flaps **64** and **66** have the irregular shape shown in the drawings, including notches **76** and **78**, respectively, for engagement with each other in the erected position of the carton. Flap **64** has a member or flange **80** foldably connected therewith along a score line **82**. Score line **82** is substantially parallel to score lines **28**, **30**, **32** and **36** and in effect forms an extension of score line **30**, as shown in FIG. 1. Flange **80** is adapted to be folded over flap **64** along score line **82** and thereafter be attached to the adjacent wall of the carton intermediate wall **22**, as hereafter described. Flap **66** is similarly formed with a flange or member **84** along the free edge thereof. Flap **84** is hingedly connected to flap **66** by a score line **86** which is substantially parallel to score line **36** and in effect forms an extension thereof, as can be best seen in FIG. 1. Flange **84** is adapted to be folded over flap **66** along score line **86** and subsequently attached to the adjacent wall of the carton, which when the carton is folded over is front wall **20**, for a purpose hereafter described.

In the folding and gluing of the blank, as shown in FIG. 2, bottom flap **64** is folded upon itself along score line **68** and then folded inwardly over rear wall **24** as shown. Flap **66** is similarly folded upon itself and folded over closure wall **26**. In this position of the parts, glue is applied to the upper surface of flange **80** as at **88** (FIG. 2). Glue is likewise applied to the upper surface of flange **84**, as at **90**, as shown in FIG. 2. Glue is likewise applied in a narrow band **92** on securing strip **34** adjacent its line of fold leaving an unglued outer portion **94** to provide a free pull tab. Outer portion **94** is preferably formed with a diagonally extending score line **96** adjacent one end thereof for forming an extension **98** which may be readily grasped for initiating the opening of the carton.

In the further folding and gluing, front wall **20** and intermediate wall **22** are folded, as a unit, about score line **30** thereby bringing the front wall over closure wall and bringing the intermediate wall over the rear wall, as shown in FIG. 3. Front wall **20** comes into contact with glued area **90** of flange **84** and becomes attached thereto while intermediate wall **22** is brought into contact with glued area **88** of flange **80** and becomes attached thereto. Securing strip **34** is simultaneously folded about score line **36** and is glued to the weakened outer surface area **44** of front wall **20**, thus completing the folding and gluing of the carton in compact, collapsed flat position shown in FIG. 4 ready for storage and shipment to ice cream dispensers.

Thus, it will be seen that flap **64** becomes attached to intermediate wall **22** for the full width of the wall adjacent the lower end thereof. As flap **64** is foldably connected with rear wall **24**, the flap and associated flange form a positive connection between rear and intermediate walls which, in the erected position of the carton, tends to hold said walls at substantial right angles to one another. Similarly, flap **66** is attached to front wall **20** for the full width of the wall by flange **84**. Flap **66** and flange **84** form a positive connection between the front and closure walls of the carton in the same manner that flap **64** and flange **80** connect the rear and intermediate walls.

When it is desired to erect the carton for filling, this is quickly accomplished by inward pressure against the opposite edges **100** and **102** (FIG. 4) which serves to separate and distend the side walls in the progressive manner shown in FIGS. 5 and 6, as viewed from the bottom of the carton. The separation of front wall **20** from closure wall **26** tends to pull inwardly folded flap **66** to erected position while the separation of intermediate wall **22** from rear wall **24** pulls inwardly folded flap **64** to erected position. The inner portion of flap **64** rides along the outer surface of the inner portion of flap **66** while the outer portion of flap **66** rides along the outer surface of the outer portion of flap **64**, as shown in FIG. 5, thereby initiating proper movement of the flaps towards erected position. As a result, the flaps move towards each other until they come into interengagement with notches **76** and **78** interengaged as shown in FIG. 6. Such engagement of the notches limits erecting movement of flaps **64** and **66** with these flaps in frictional interengagement and in position substantially normal to the walls of the container.

With the bottom flaps in erected position, as shown in FIG. 6, the inner portion of flap **66** underlies the free end of score line **68** in flap **64** while the outer portion of flap **64** underlies the free end of score line **70** in flap **66**. Thus, a portion of each of the bottom flanges is outermost while another portion is innermost. This construction provides a strong bottom closure which will remain in erected position and which is substantially leakproof.

After the carton has been erected, as above, it is placed with the top closure flaps in open position, as shown in FIG. 7. The carton is then filled and the top closed by folding flaps **50** and **54** in order down across the filling opening, after which flap **48** is folded down followed by flape **52**, the tongue **60** of which is engaged in slit **58** of flap **48** to secure the closure of the top or filling opening. It will be noted that tongue **60** is on the flap of the rear wall to which the closure wall is attached, and is pointed in the direction of the closure wall so that an opening pull of the latter serves to keep the tongue engaged in slit **58** and to maintain that end of the carton closed. The carton is now in its condition shown in FIG. 8 and is ready for delivery to the consumer.

To open the carton, it is only necessary to grasp and pull the unglued free edge **94** or extension **98** of securing strip **34**. For this purpose, tab or extension **98** may be bent relative to securing strip **34** along diagonal fold line **96**. The opening of closure wall **26** is made easier by the provision of weakened area **44** on the upper free edge of front wall **20**. This weakened area, which is defined by slits **42**, not only makes it easier to break the detachable connection between securing flap **34** and front wall **20**, but it also prevents undesired surface peeling of either the front wall or securing strip. Surface peeling of closure wall **26** is also prevented by slit **46**.

After securing strip **34** is separated from front wall **20** it is necessary to separate closure wall **26** from bottom flap **66** which is foldably connected therewith. I have found it desirable to separate the above wall and flap along a line extending substantially transversely across the closure wall adjacent the lower or bottom end of the carton. I have found that if the carton is made of cylinder board, and the blank is positioned so that the fibers extend substantially transversely across the closure wall, the closure wall **26** may be moved to open position, as shown in FIG. 10 and separated from bottom flap **66** by merely exerting sufficient force in the opening direction, as by means of an upward pull on securing

strip 34. However, I have found that closure wall 26 may be more readily separated from bottom flap 66 if the closure wall is provided with a suitable line of weakening along which the tearing action may readily take place in a predetermined manner and direction. To this end, closure wall 26 is preferably provided with line of perforations 38 or slit 40, or both, extending substantially transversely thereacross adjacent the lower end of the carton.

I have also found that while the tearing action can be controlled by means of either line of perforations 38 or by slit 40, the tearing action is easier and more readily controlled if the closure wall is provided with both perforations 38 and slit 40. Line of perforations 38 is preferably inclined slightly upwardly towards the top of the carton and extends substantially transversely across the closure wall. Slit 40 also extends substantially transversely across the closure wall, but is spaced upwardly from the bottom of the carton and upwardly from perforations 38, as shown in FIG. 1. Slit 40 not only limits any uyward tearing of the closure wall at an angle to the line of perforations, but slit 40 also prevents any undesired peeling of the closure wall which might result from the tearing action. In addition, slit 40 may serve as either a supplementary line of separation for the closure wall or as a substitute line of separation. That is, the closure wall may separate along slit 40 instead of perforations 38, or it may separate partially along the line of perforations and partially along slit 40.

Regardless of the exact line of separation of closure wall 26 from inner bottom flap 66, both ends of the carton remain erect when the carton is in open position, as shown in FIG. 10. The upper end of the carton remains erect because flap 54 which is foldably connected with closure wall 26, may move independently of top locking flaps 48 and 52, and therefore, the opening of the closure wall does not disturb the position and locking action of flaps 48 and 52. That is, although top flap 54 is held in closed position by flaps 48 and 52 when the carton is in closed position, as shown in FIG. 8, flap 54 is at the same time held out of contact with the contents of the carton by flap 50. Therefore, when closure wall 26 is raised, flap 54 readily moves upwardly with the closure wall to its position shown in FIG. 10, while the remaining top flaps are maintained in closed position, thereby holding the upper end of the carton in shape, as shown in FIG. 10.

At the lower end of the carton the front and rear walls are held in their erected position as a result of the unique construction and arrangement of the bottom flaps and the adherence of the contents of the carton to the various wall and bottom flap members. Specifically, there is a positive connection between the front and rear walls of the carton, adjacent the lower end, comprising inwardly folding flap 66 which is glued to the front wall of the carton and is attached to closure wall 26, and the lower portion of closure wall 26 below the line of separation thereacross, said closure wall in turn being connected to rear wall 24.

There is another positive connection between the front and rear walls of the carton which holds the same erected, and which does not depend upon the closure wall for its operation. That is, flaps 66 and 64 which are attached to the front and rear walls, are interengaged through notches 78 and 76 and are so positioned that they hold the lower end of the carton erect. Flaps 64 and 66 cannot swing outwardly because of their overlapping relationship, they cannot swing inwardly because of the contents of the carton, and the opening action of closure wall 26 tends to move flap 66 downwardly in a clockwise direction as viewed in FIG. 10, and thus, even more securely holds the bottom flaps in engaged position.

Rear wall 24 is also held in erected position at substantially right angles to intermediate wall 22 by the glued connection between flap 64 which is connected to the rear wall, and intermediate wall 22. This positive connection also tends to hold the bottom of the carton erect. Still another factor tending to hold the bottom erect when the closure wall is opened, results from the adhesion of the contents of the carton to the front and rear walls and to the inner surface of bottom flaps 64 and 66.

With the carton in its position shown in FIG. 10, the contents may be removed to the desired extent and the carton thereafter readily reclosed for replacing under refrigeration to preserve the residue of the contents for further consumption. This is done by merely guiding flap 54 into position outside of the top flap 50 and inside of locking flaps 52 and 48 and then swinging closure wall 26 downwardly to its closed position.

In FIGS. 11–17, I have shown a slightly modified construction wherein the inwardly folding flaps are on opposite rather than adjacent side walls. In all other respects this modified construction is identical with the construction shown in FIGS. 1–10. The elements of the modified carton constructon are indicated by reference characters which are 100 units higher than the reference characters indicating the same or similar parts in the carton construction shown in FIGS. 1–10.

As can be seen in FIGS. 11 and 12, inwardly folding flap 164 is foldably connected with intermediate wall 122. Flap 164 is formed with a diagonally extending score line 168 for dividing the flap into two portions, as at 172 and 174. Flap 164 is formed with a member or flange 180 along a free edge thereof. Flange 180 is foldably connected with flap 164 by a score line 182 which is substantially parallel to score lines 128, 130, 132, 136 and, in effect, forms an extension of score line 130. Flange 180 is adapted to be folded over flap 164 and have glue or other suitable adhesive applied thereto as at 188 for adhesion to the inner surface of the rear wall 124 adjacent the lower end thereof. Glue is applied to the upper surface of flange 184, as at 190 (FIG. 2), and in a narrow band 192 on securing flap 134.

With the blank in its position shown in FIG. 2, the further folding and gluing of the carton is similar to that described earlier. When front wall 120 and intermediate wall 122 are folded as a unit about score line 130, front wall 120 is brought into engagement with closure wall 126 while intermediate wall 122 overlies rear wall 124. Flange 180 becomes attached to the lower bottom edge of adjacent wall 124, for the full width of the wall while flange 184 becomes attached to the inner surface of front wall 120 in the same manner, as described earlier in reference to flange 84.

In the erection of the bottom flaps, the flaps are in the same relative position as flaps 64 and 66. That is, that portion of flap 164 which extends along intermediate wall 122 is underneath that portion of flap 166 which extends along front wall 120. However, since flap 164 is foldably connected with intermediate wall 122, whereas flap 64 was foldably connected with rear wall 24, it is the inner portion of flap 164 that underlies the outer portion of flap 166 while the inner portion of flap 166 underlies the outer portion of flap 164. Thus, as in the case of the carton disclosed in FIGS. 1–10, each bottom flap underlies the free end of the diagonal score line in the opposite bottom flap, thereby providing a strong and substantially leakproof bottom construction. In other respects the erection and opening of the carton and the reclosing for further use are similar to the corresponding operations described earlier relative to the carton disclosed in FIGS. 1–10 so that further discussion thereof is believed unnecessary.

Thus it will be seen from the above description that my invention provides a carton which may be readily and economically manufactured with the usual materials and by known methods and standard machines in compact, collapsed condition for storage or shipment to food dispensers. The latter may erect the carton by merely

pressing on its opposite corners to erect the automatic bottom construction. Thereafter, the carton may be easily filled at the top and closed in the usual manner until ready for delivery to the consumer. The consumer can readily open the carton to remove a portion of the contents by pulling on tab 98 so as to swing the closure wall to open position in which the contents are exposed and dipped out to the extent desired. Thereafter, the carton may be reclosed to preserve the remaining contents. In addition, it will be seen that cartons having the above advantages may be readily manufactured with a minimum of wastage of cardboard stock material.

This invention, as herein disclosed, comprises related embodiments of the inventon dsclosed in my copending patent applications, Serial Nos. 578,993, now Patent No. 2,936,103, and 579,008, filed April 18, 1956, and certain features disclosed and claimed herein are claimed in my said copending applications.

It will thus be seen that the invention accomplishes its objects and while it has been herein disclosed by reference to the details of preferred embodiment, it is to be understood that such disclosure is intended in an illustrative, rather than a limiting sense, as it is contemplated that various modifications in the construction and arrangement of the parts will readily occur to those skilled in the art, within the spirit of the invention and the scope of the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A collapsible carton having a self-erecting bottom comprising a blank cut, scored and folded to form foldably connected front, side, rear and closure walls, a detachable connection between said closure wall and said front wall for securing said closure wall in closed position, top closure flaps on said walls, bottom closure flaps comprising a pair of flaps foldably connected with two of said walls, each of said bottom flaps being formed with a substantially diagonal fold line and being adapted to fold inwardly at said fold line between said walls when said walls are collapsed, each of said bottom closure flaps having a member foldably connected therewith along a free edge, said front and side walls being foldable as a unit over said closure and said rear walls, respectively, a first one of said pair of bottom flaps and its member connecting said closure and said front walls, a second one of said pair of bottom flaps and its member connecting said rear and said side walls, said bottom flaps being moved to erected closed position normal to said walls and into frictional engagement by the erecting movement of said walls for closing the bottom of said carton, locking means on two of said top closure flaps for releasably locking said top closure flaps in closed position in the erected position of said carton, said closure wall being divisible adjacent the bottom of the carton into two portions, one of said portions being connected to said front wall through said first mentioned bottom closure flap and the member foldably connected therewith, the other of said closure wall portions being detachable from said front wall and separable from said first mentioned portion for movement to open position to expose the carton contents, said first mentioned bottom flap and its member together with said first mentioned portion of said closure wall maintaining a fixed connection between said front and rear walls for holding said bottom flaps and said front and rear walls in erected position.

2. A collapsible carton having a self-erecting bottom comprising a blank cut, scored and folded to form foldably connected front, side, rear and closure walls, a detachable connection between said closure wall and said front wall for securing said closure wall in closed position, top closure flaps on said walls, bottom closure flaps comprising a pair of flaps foldably connected with two of said walls, each of said flaps being formed with a substantially diagonal fold line and being adapted to fold inwardly at said fold line between said walls when said walls are collapsed, each of said bottom closure flaps having a member foldably connected therewith along a free edge, said front and side walls being foldable as a unit over said closure and said rear walls, respectively, a first one of said pair of bottom flaps and its member connecting said closure and said front walls, a second one of said pair of bottom flaps and its member connecting said rear and said side walls, said bottom flaps being moved to erected closed position normal to said walls and into frictional interengagement by the erecting movement of said walls for closing the bottom of said carton, locking means on two of said top closure flaps for releasably locking said top closure flaps in closed position in the erected position of the carton, said closure wall having a line of weakening extending thereacross adjacent the bottom of the carton, for dividing said closure wall into two portions, one of said portions being connected to said front wall through said first mentioned bottom closure flap and the member foldably connected therewith, the other of said closure wall portions being detachable from said front wall and separable along said line of weakening from said first mentioned portion for movement to open position to expose the carton contents, said first mentioned bottom flap and its member together with said first mentioned portion of said closure wall maintaiing a fixed connection between said front and rear walls for holding said bottom flaps and said front and rear walls in erected position.

3. A collapsible carton as specified in claim 2 in which said bottom closure flaps are foldably connected to a pair of adjacent side walls and are located between said detachable connection and a hinge connection between said side and rear walls.

4. A collapsible carton as specified in claim 2 in which said bottom flaps are foldably connected with a pair of opposite walls and are located on opposite sides of said detachable connection and on opposite sides of a hinge connection between said side and rear walls.

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