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CIGARETTE DISPLAY CARTON

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Fig. 1

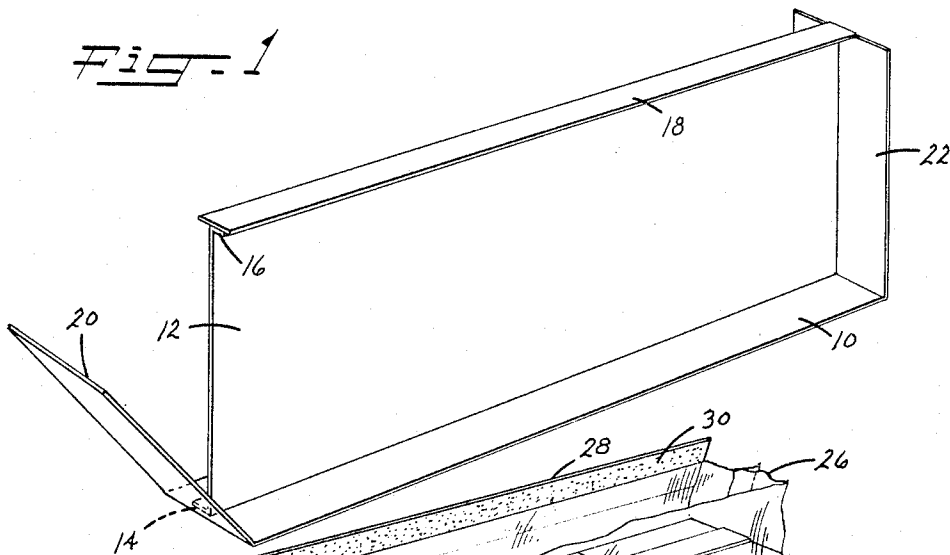


Fig. 2

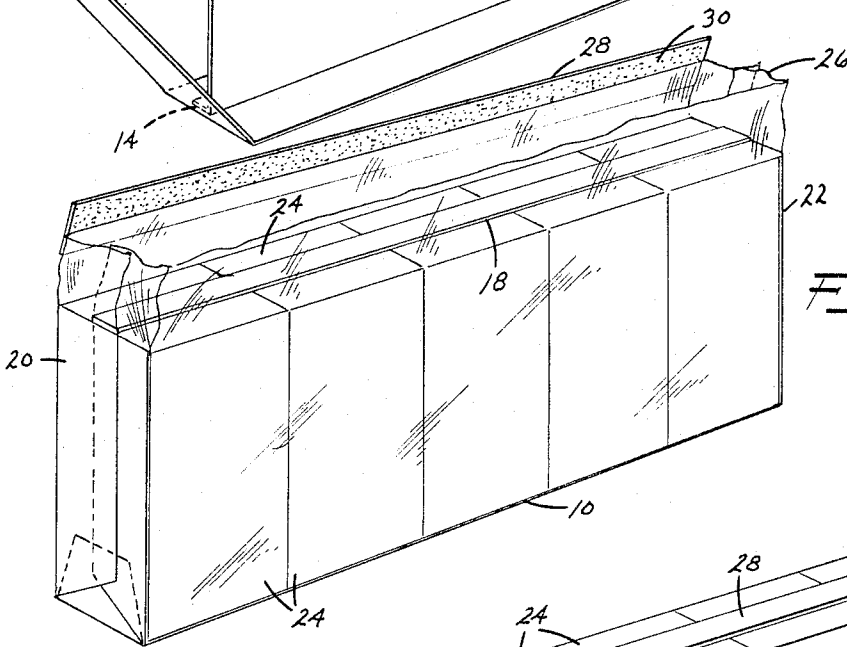
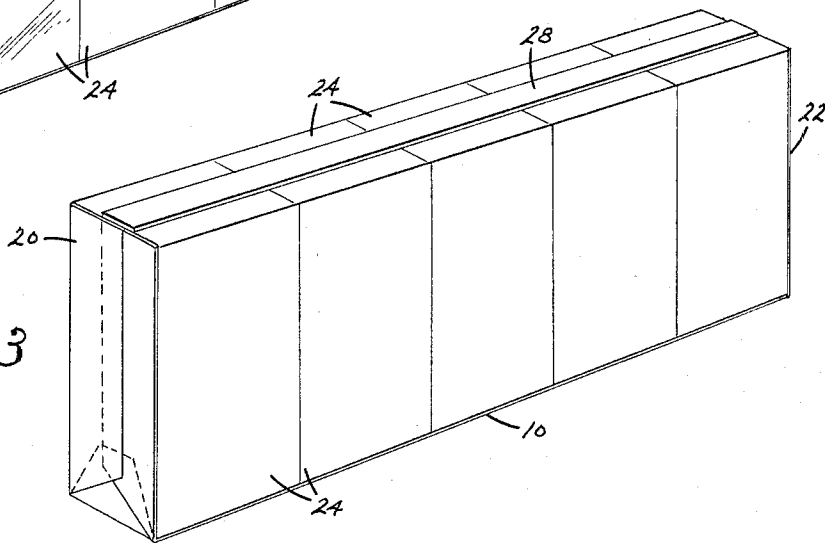


Fig. 3



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CIGARETTE DISPLAY CARTON

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This invention relates to a carton for a plurality of packages of packaged goods, and more particularly to a display carton for cigarette packages.

Because of the legal requirement of most states that a state tax stamp be placed on each package of cigarettes after they enter the state and before they are distributed to retail outlets, the cartoning of cigarette packages presents problems not normally encountered in other fields. The manufacturer generally packs cigarettes in paperboard cartons with ten packages to the carton and the cartons are loaded in large boxes for distribution from the manufacturing plant. The cartons are provided for several reasons, principally to protect the individual packages from being crushed or torn, to provide additional moisture protection and to facilitate the handling of the packages. Upon entering a state having a state tax on cigarettes, the wholesaler or distributor removes the cartons from the large box and must open each carton in order to affix a stamp to each of the packages, this opening of the cartons and affixing of the stamps generally being done by machine. While the manufacturer could of course carton the cigarettes in a variety of different ways, his selection of the type of carton is of practical necessity limited to a carton which can be readily opened and preferably resealed by the distributor without marring the appearance thereof. While the cigarette companies go to great lengths to provide attractive packages for the cigarettes, the cartons are generally designed primarily for utility, there being a not inconsequential expense involved in attractively printing the paperboard carton. In many instances, the appearance of the carton is not particularly important because the retail merchant removes the packages from the carton and sells the packages individually but a great many cigarettes are sold by the carton, particularly in supermarkets and large drug stores, and where they are so sold it is highly desirable for the carton to present an attractive appearance. Since the individual packages are so carefully designed for attractive appearance, it would be desirable to provide transparent cartons but such cartons as heretofore constructed have not had sufficient rigidity to withstand the rough handling to which they may be subjected in supermarkets and the like.

It is an object of the present invention to provide an improved substantially transparent cigarette carton of reasonably rigid construction.

It is a further object of the invention to provide an improved transparent cigarette carton which may be opened and reclosed without damaging the same or marring the appearance thereof.

Another object of the invention is to provide a cigarette carton skeleton which will lend rigidity to a carton otherwise defined by a flexible packaging film, the skeleton itself being largely hidden within the assembled cigarette packages.

Other and further objects, features and advantages of the invention will become apparent as the description of certain preferred embodiments thereof proceeds.

Referring now to the drawing:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the cigarette carton skeleton;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view showing the transparent carton in opened condition; and

FIG. 3 is a perspective view showing the carton closed.

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The skeleton of the carton comprises a rectangular base member 10 having a length substantially equal to the distance between the outer edges of the end ones of a preselected whole number of cigarette packages placed edge-to-edge and a width substantially equal to the thickness of two cigarette packages placed face-to-face. Normally the preselected whole number will be five since it is usual to have ten packages arranged in two rows in a carton. Extending upwardly from base member 10 is a web 12 which is coextensive in length with the base member and bisects the width of said member. Preferably, member 10 and web 12 are formed of paperboard of the type and weight normally employed for cigarette cartons and the web is adhesively secured to the base member through the intermediary of a flange 14 provided at the bottom edge of the web. The top edge of the web is bent over as indicated at 16 and to this bent over portion is adhesively secured a paperboard flange member 18 extending outwardly on both sides of the web. The base member, the web and the upper flange provide an I-beam construction which imparts longitudinal rigidity to the carton. While preferably formed as separate paperboard elements the members thus far described could be integrally molded of a suitable, light weight plastic. If desired, end flaps 20 and 22 may be hingedly connected to opposite ends of base member 10 but as will become apparent these flaps are primarily for the purpose of providing areas to effectively display the brand name of the cigarettes or the name of the manufacturer or the like and not primarily for providing structural strength. Flaps 20 and 22 are desirably the same width as the base member and the same height as the web so as to completely cover the edges of the end packages.

The cigarette packages are indicated at 24 and in the form of the invention illustrated, the carton accommodates ten packages arranged in two rows on opposite sides of web 12. The bottoms of the package rest entirely on base member 10 and the tops are partially overlapped by the flange 18. Web 12 is of course of proper height to accommodate packages of "regular" or "king size" cigarettes, depending upon the kind being cartoned.

Wrapped about the assembled cigarette packages and the carton skeleton is a transparent packing film 26 to one edge of which is secured a strip 28 of paperboard coated on one side with a suitable contact adhesive 30. While various types of packaging film may be employed, the preferred material is cellophane which has been coated with a suitable resin or polymer such as Saran so that the film may be heat sealed at the ends of the carton where the side edges are overlapped in the usual manner, as shown. The edges of the film also overlap on top flange 18 and the carton is sealed by pressing the adhesive coated face of strip 28 against the film adjacent the overlapped areas. Flange 18 serves as a stable backing to permit strip 28 to be pressed firmly into contact with the film. By employing a contact adhesive on strip 28 it is possible to remove the strip and unfold the film at the top of the carton whereby local or state tax stamps may be applied to the individual packages. The adhesive coated strip is then used to reseat the carton.

While, as mentioned, end flaps 20 and 22 are not especially needed for structural strength they will often be preferred in order to provide an ample space for display of the brand name since the side edges of an individual cigarette package are small and often not particularly attractive. The packaging film 26 may be entirely clear and transparent or may be tinted or printed, particularly for the so-called holiday cartons normally used around Christmas. Since the packages are effectively overwrapped with the packaging film, the cartons give appreciably better moisture protection than the usual

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paperboard carton and consequently the cigarettes retain their freshness longer. This new carton is also effective in reducing pilferage since all the packages may be seen without opening the carton. It is also advantageous to the consumer in that it provides a resealable humidor wherein the number of remaining packages is readily apparent.

Having thus described certain preferred forms of the invention, what is claimed is:

1. A display carton for cigarette packages comprising a rectangular base member, said base member having a length substantially equal to the distance between the outer edges of the end ones of a preselected whole number of cigarette packages placed thereon edge-to-edge and a width substantially equal to the thickness of two cigarette packages placed face-to-face, a web extending upwardly from said base member, said web having a height substantially equal to the height of a cigarette package and having a flange extending outwardly in opposite directions from the upper edge thereof, said web being coextensive in length with said base member and bisecting the width of said base member, cigarette packages

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equal in number to the above mentioned preselected whole number positioned on said base member on each side of said web, said flange overlying a portion of the tops of said packages, a transparent packaging film wrapped about said base member and said packages, said film having edges overlying said flange, and an adhesive coated strip releasably secured to the edges of said film to hold the same in position.

2. The display carton set forth in claim 1 wherein said base member and said web are formed of paperboard.

3. The display carton set forth in claim 2 wherein said packaging film is cellophane.

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