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[54] **MOLDED PULP EGG CARTON**
9 Claims, 7 Drawing Figs.

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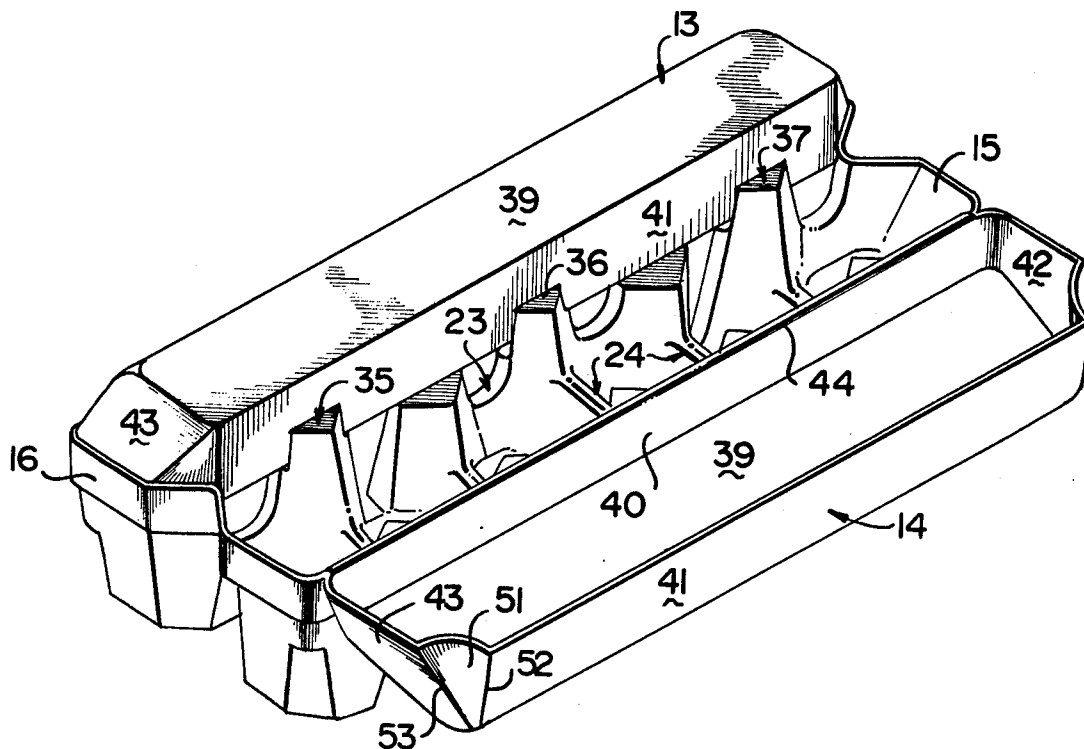
[50] Field of Search..... **229/2.5, 29**
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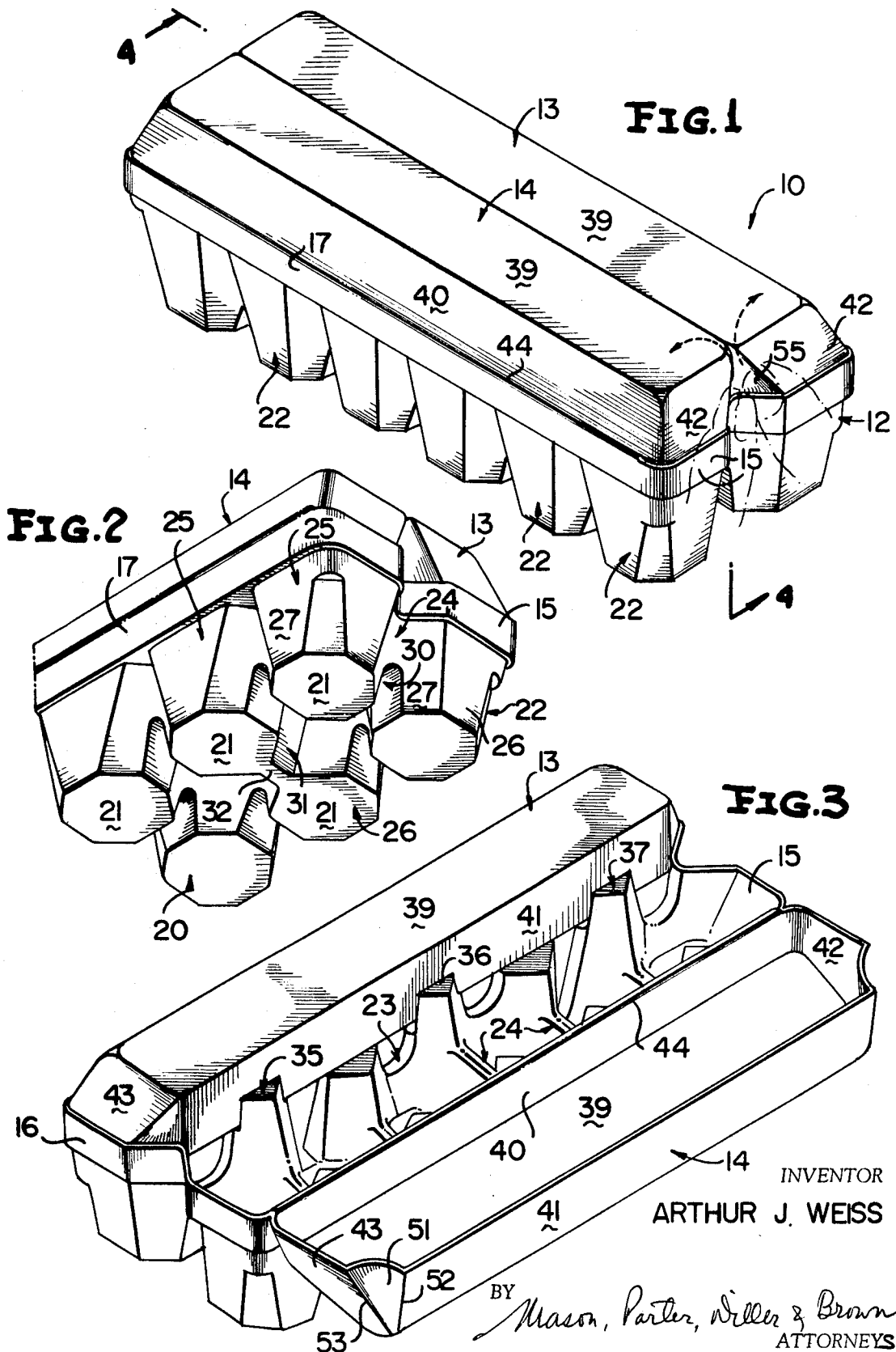
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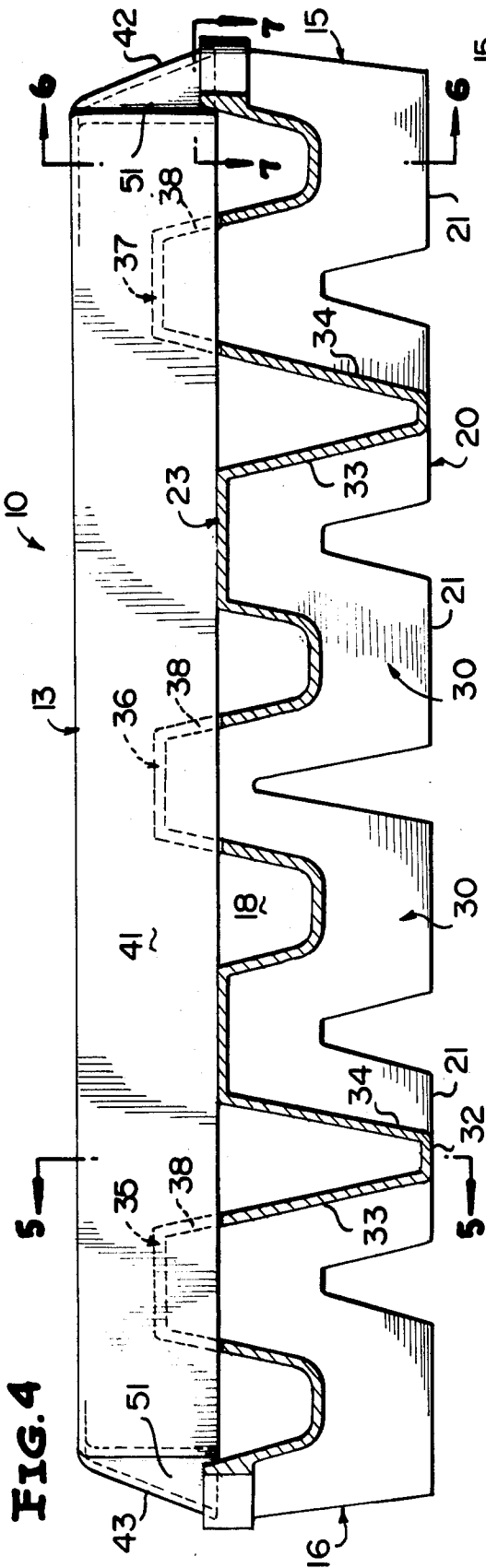
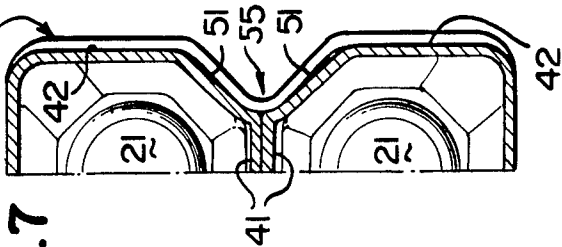
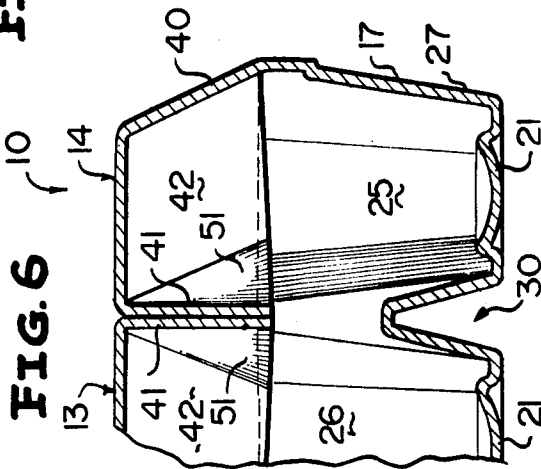
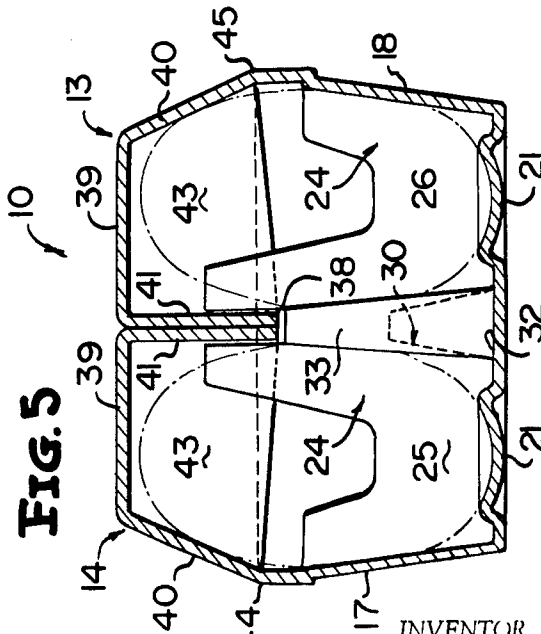
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ABSTRACT: This disclosure relates to an egg carton or the like formed of a plurality of transverse pairs of pockets for receiving eggs, and a pair of covers for closing a body of the carton. Adjacent end panels of the covers are provided with concave, triangular recesses for facilitating the introduction of a person's fingers between the covers to readily open the same. The carton is preferably of a molded pulp construction, and bottom walls of at least selected ones of the pairs of compartments are rigidified by a wall bridging a longitudinal centerline of the carton while other transverse pairs are spaced from one another by a gap across the centerline.







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MOLDED PULP EGG CARTON

An object of this invention is to provide a novel carton having a body defined by a bottom wall, a pair of sidewalls and a pair of end walls, a pair of covers for opening and closing an end of the carton body opposite the bottom wall, each of the covers including a top panel, a pair of side panels and a pair of end panels, and a connecting panel between the adjacent ones of the side and end panels for facilitating the introduction of a person's finger between the pair of covers and the subsequent opening thereof whereby access to the interior of the carton body and articles therein is effected rapidly and efficiently.

A further object of this invention is to provide a novel carton of the type just described in which the carton body is divided into a plurality of pairs of generally cup-shaped article receiving compartments with a compartment of each pair of compartments being disposed on opposite sides of a longitudinal centerline of the body, the compartments each having end body wall portions terminating in respective bottom walls, the end body wall portions of at least one of the pair of compartments being unconnected and spaced from one another by a gap across the longitudinal centerline of the carton, and at least another of the pair of compartments being connected to each other across the longitudinal centerline whereby transverse buckling of the carton body is precluded.

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

FIG. 1 is a top perspective view of a novel carton constructed in accordance with this invention, and illustrates a pair of covers closing an upper end portion of a body of the carton.

FIG. 2 is a fragmentary bottom perspective view of the carton of FIG. 1, and illustrates a plurality of pairs of cup-shaped article receiving compartments of the carton body, and a connecting wall portion between the lower end portions of two of the compartments.

FIG. 3 is a top perspective view of the carton of FIGS. 1 and 2, and illustrates one of the covers in an open position thereof and means forming an integral portion of the open cover for facilitating the opening thereof.

FIG. 4 is an enlarged sectional view taken generally along line 4-4 of FIG. 1, and illustrates the cross-sectional configuration of the carton along a longitudinal centerline thereof.

FIG. 5 is a sectional view taken generally along line 5-5 of FIG. 4, and illustrates a wall portion connecting two adjacent compartments across the longitudinal centerline of the carton body.

FIG. 6 is a fragmentary sectional view taken generally along line 6-6 of FIG. 4, and illustrates internally recessed connecting walls between side and end walls of each of the covers which define the means for facilitating the opening of the covers.

FIG. 7 is a sectional view taken generally along line 7-7 of FIG. 4, and more clearly illustrates the connecting panels between adjacent side and end panels of the covers.

A novel carton constructed in accordance with this invention is generally referred to by the reference numeral 10, and is an integral one-piece structure of a molded pulp construction. The carton 10 comprises a carton body generally referred to by the reference numeral 12 and a pair of covers 13, 14.

The carton body 12 includes opposite end walls 15, 16, a pair of sidewalls 17, 18 and a bottom wall, generally referred to by the reference numeral 20 (FIG. 2) which is defined by a plurality of individual bottom wall portions or walls 21. The carton body 12 is divided into a plurality of pairs of compartments 22 by a longitudinal partition wall 23 (FIG. 4) and a plurality of transverse partition walls 24 (FIGS. 2 and 3). One

compartment 25 of the plurality of pairs of compartments 22 is disposed to one side of the longitudinal center partition wall 23 while another compartment 26 of each of the pairs of compartments 22 is positioned at an opposite side of the longitudinal centerline of the carton body.

Each of the compartments 25, 26 includes a compartment body (unnumbered) having a lower end body wall portion 27 terminating at an adjacent one of the bottom wall portions 21. The body wall portions 27 of all but the second pair of compartments from each end of the carton body 12 are free and unconnected and are spaced from one another by a gap 30 across the longitudinal centerline of the carton body 12, as is best illustrated in FIGS. 2 and 6 of the drawings.

The second pair of compartments 26 from each of the opposite longitudinal end portions of the carton body 12 are connected to each other across the longitudinal centerline of the carton body by identical connecting wall portions, generally referred to by the reference numeral 31. The connecting wall portions 31 each include a bottom connecting wall portion 32 (FIGS. 4 and 5) coplanar with the bottom walls 21 of the adjacent compartments 25, 26 and upwardly diverging connecting wall portions 33, 34 (FIG. 4). The connecting wall portions 31 reinforce the carton body 12 in a transverse direction and prevent the carton body from collapsing under the influence of forces applied against the sidewalls 17, 18.

Means in the form of three identical upwardly directed bosses 35, 36 and 37 function to retain the covers 13, 14 in the closed positions thereof, as is best illustrated in FIG. 5 of the drawings. The bosses 35 through 37 each include an identical slot 38 which cooperates with the covers 13, 14 in a manner to be described more fully hereafter.

The covers 13, 14 are generally identical and each includes a top panel 39, opposed side panels 40, 41, and end panels 42, 43. The side panel 40 of the cover 14 is joined to the sidewall 17 of the carton body 12 along a fold line or hinge line 44 while the side panel 40 is joined to the sidewall 18 along a similar fold or hinge line 45. In the closed position of the covers 13, 14 (FIG. 5) the side panels 41, 41 of the covers are in opposed abutting relationship and are received in the slots 38 of the bosses 35 through 37. The slots 38 of the bosses 35 through 37 thereby function to retain the covers 13, 14 in the closed position thereof. Articles A such as eggs or similar articles individually packaged in each of the compartments 25, 26 are removed therefrom by opening the covers 13, 14 by hinging the same about the respective fold lines 44, 45.

Means 50 are associated with each of the covers 13, 14 to facilitate the opening of the covers to gain access to the interior of the carton body 12. The means 50 is an identical connecting wall 51 at opposite longitudinal end portions of the covers 13, 14 between the side panels 41, 41 and adjacent end panels 42, 43. The connecting walls or panels 51 are generally of a triangular configuration set off by fold lines 52, 53 which converge toward the top panel 39. Each of the connecting panels 51 opens concavely outwardly and adjacent pairs of the connecting panels 51 define a finger-receiving recess, generally referred to by the reference numeral 55 (FIG. 7).

The covers 13, 14 are opened by a person inserting one or more fingers or thumbs into the recess 55 against either or both of the connecting panels 51 at either of the opposite longitudinal end portions of the carton 10. Preferably a person's thumbs are inserted into one of the recesses 55 in the manner illustrated in phantom outline in FIG. 1 of the drawings while the carton 10 is supported in the palm and fingers of the person. By pressing against the connecting panels 51 and turning one's thumbs away from each other in the direction of the unnumbered headed arrows in FIG. 1 the covers 13, 14 are readily and effectively progressively opened by folding about the hinge lines 44, 45.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that novel and advantageous provisions have been made for carrying out the desired end. However, attention is again directed to the fact that additional variations may be made in this invention without departing from the spirit and scope thereof as defined in the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A carton comprising a carton body having a bottom wall, a pair of sidewalls and a pair of end walls, at least a pair of covers for opening and closing an end of said carton body opposite said bottom wall, each of said covers including a top panel, a pair of side panels and a pair of end panels, one of said side panels being hingeably connected to an associated one of each of said sidewalls, the others of said side panels being in generally opposed relationship along a longitudinal centerline of said body, a connecting panel between one of said other side panels and an adjacent one of said end panels, said connecting panel including means for facilitating the introduction of a person's finger between said pair of covers and the subsequent opening thereof whereby access to the interior of the carton body and articles therein is effected rapidly and efficiently, and said facilitating means is a generally outwardly opening concave recess defined by a wall of said connecting panel.

2. The carton as defined in claim 1 wherein said carton is of a molded pulp construction.

3. A carton comprising a carton body having a bottom wall, a pair of sidewalls and a pair of end walls, at least a pair of covers for opening and closing an end of said carton body opposite said bottom wall, each of said covers including a top panel, a pair of side panels and a pair of end panels, one of said side panels being hingeably connected to an associated one of each of said sidewalls, the others of said side panels being in generally opposed relationship along a longitudinal centerline of said body, a connecting panel between one of said other side panels and an adjacent one of said end panels, said connecting panel including means for facilitating the introduction of a person's finger between said pair of covers and the subsequent opening thereof whereby access to the interior of the carton body and articles therein is effected rapidly and efficiently, and said facilitating means is a generally triangularly shaped wall of said connecting panel converging toward said top panel.

4. The carton as defined in claim 3 wherein said facilitating means is a generally outwardly opening concave recess defined by a wall of said connecting panel.

5. A carton comprising a carton body having a bottom wall, a pair of sidewalls and a pair of end walls, at least a pair of covers for opening and closing an end of said carton body opposite said bottom wall, each of said covers including a top panel, a pair of side panels and a pair of end panels, one of said side panels being hingeably connected to an associated one of

each of said sidewalls, the others of said side panels being in generally opposed relationship along a longitudinal centerline of said body, a connecting panel between one of said other side panels and an adjacent one of said end panels, said connecting panel including means for facilitating the introduction of a person's finger between said pair of covers and the subsequent opening thereof whereby access to the interior of the carton body and articles therein is effected rapidly and efficiently, and said body is divided into a plurality of pairs of generally cup-shaped article receiving compartments with a compartment of each pair of compartments being disposed on opposite sides of a centerline of said body, said compartments each having end body wall portions terminating in respective bottom walls, the end body wall portions of at least one of said pair of compartments being connected to each other across said centerline, and the end body wall portion of at least another of said pair of compartments being unconnected and spaced from one another by a gap across said centerline.

6. The carton as defined in claim 5 wherein the connected compartments are connected to each other by a connecting wall portion between the bottom walls thereof and a pair of spaced wall portions joined to each of the connected end body wall portions and to said connecting wall portion.

7. The carton as defined in claim 5 wherein said carton is of a molded pulp construction.

8. The carton as defined in claim 6 wherein said carton is of a molded pulp construction.

9. A carton comprising a carton body having a bottom wall, a pair of sidewalls, and a pair of end walls, cover means for opening and closing an end of said carton opposite said bottom wall, said cover means including a pair of covers each of which includes a top panel, a pair of side panels and a pair of end panels, one of said side panels of each cover being hingeably connected to an associated one of said sidewalls, the other of said side panels of each cover being in generally adjacent relationship along a longitudinal centerline of said body, and means for facilitating the introduction of a person's finger between said covers and the subsequent opening thereof whereby access to the interior of the carton body and articles therein is effected rapidly and efficiently, said facilitating means being defined by opposed wall portions of said adjacent side panels, said opposed wall portions being in generally transverse alignment and being disposed between the end walls of each pair of covers, and said wall portions being directed generally toward each other in an outwardly opening concave configuration.

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