The invention hereinafter to be described relates, in general terms, to containers, such for instance as are used in marketing food and other products.

The invention deals more specifically with the covers for these containers, and especially with the facilities provided for gaining quick and easy access to the contents of the containers when required for immediate use of the consumer.

For the purpose of comprehensively disclosing the nature of my invention and to point out what I consider the novelty existing therein, I have elected to choose the ordinary sardine can as the vehicle in connection with which to illustrate and describe it. I wish it understood, however, that I do not restrict myself to this particular form of application as the invention is capable of use and interpretation in various other structures.

Sardine cans, like many other carriers of products, may be and in the past have been quite commonly opened by using any one of various types of can-openers. These tools have almost invariably operated on the principle of first puncturing the cover at one point, and from that location shearing the metal plate along the marginal portion of the cover, close to the locking seam.

Can manufacturers now supply covers the diametrically opposite portion of which can be stripped from the marginal portions without resort to can-openers just referred to; and it is with this particular form of cover, but with improvements incorporated therein, that the present invention is concerned.

In producing covers of the stripping type a deep score is made on either the outer or inner face, preferably the inner, and this score line extends generally completely around the margin of the cover, somewhat weakening the plate on the score line.

In certain types of scored covers, however, more or less trouble arises, particularly when the puncture is made on the scored line, in starting the stripping operation.

With the puncture at the above mentioned point, both sides of the score turn inwardly, or toward the interior of the can body, and it is frequently difficult to straighten the side of the portion to be stripped so that it tears away from the marginal portions of the cover satisfactorily.

In the present invention I have sought to overcome this deficiency by employing two score lines, one entirely outside the main or removable-cover portion score, but in close proximity thereto.

This smaller, or primary score line permits the stripping tool to pass into the body of the can without effect on the main score line. Once the key, or stripping tool, passes below the plane of the cover it can easily be tilted under the main score line, raising the end of the portion to be stripped to a point where it can easily be engaged by the stripping implement and removed from the main portion of the cover.

In the accompanying drawing I have illustrated what, at the present time, I consider a preferred embodiment of my invention, and in the drawing, in which like parts are identified by similar characters of reference—

Fig. 1 is a perspective view of a sardine can with a cover scored in accordance with my invention;

Fig. 2 is a fragmentary plan view of the same, drawn to a somewhat enlarged scale;

Fig. 3 is similar to Fig. 2 except with reference to the small, or primary scored line;

Fig. 4 is a plan view of the stripping key;

Fig. 5 is a fragmentary side view of the stripper key;

Fig. 5a is like Fig. 5 except that the end is shown square instead of bevelled;

Fig. 6 is a section on line 6—6, Fig. 2;

Figs. 7, 8 and 9 show the various steps in the preliminary stripping operation;

Fig. 10 is a fragmentary perspective view, partially in section, showing a stripping key mounted on a can, with the cover thereof ready to be stripped, and

Fig. 11 is a section on line 11—11, Fig. 3.

Referring to the drawing, I represents a sardine can and 2 the cover therefor. The cover is secured to the body of the can by a locked seam 3, and may, of course, be removed therefrom by the use of the conventional metal-shearing tool which formerly constituted the only means for accomplishing this object.

But can covers are now made which may be removed in a much simpler manner, involving the sinking of a relatively deep score around the marginal portions of the cover, this score 3, in the sardine can conforming quite closely to the shape of the can, which in this type of container is generally rectangular.

The portion 4a, which is enclosed by the score line 3, is the part of the cover to be removed when about to gain access to the product in the can, and on one end of this removable portion is a tongue 4, also enclosed by the score line.

Between the end of the tongue 4 and the lock seam 3 is a smaller score 5, which for identifica-
tion purposes I will refer to as the primary score, the longer or border score being characterized as the secondary score.

As illustrated in Fig. 2 the primary score is made semi-circular in shape, with the rounded part adjacent the tongue. This primary score may be made straight, as shown in Fig. 3, but for practical purposes I prefer the circular form as it is better adapted to centralize the stripping tool and keep it in alignment with the tongue during the stripping operation, which will shortly be described.

In Fig. 4 I show a stripper key 8 having a slot 7 and a wedge-shape point 6a. In Fig. 5a there is shown a key end square, instead of beveling. Either of these keys will serve for the purpose of making the initial puncture, but the wedge-shape I prefer insofar as its practicability is concerned.

The next operation, shown in Fig. 8, contemplates breaking through the narrow section of plate at 8 by levering the stripper key over the top of the seam S, which latter serves as a very convenient fulcrum. Besides breaking through the portion 0, this operation starts the upward turn of the tongue 4 and starts to sever it by stripping from the adjoining portion of the non-detachable part of the cover.

With the present arrangement the break-down of the cover is made so close to the seam that the tongue 8 will give way without effecting the tongue portion 4, and leaves the latter in such shape that when the key does contact it will tear away from its connection with the adjacent part of the cover, and rise in a substantially straight condition, making it convenient and possible to apply the slotted key thereto.

It will be noted that the portions 3a of the score line 3 diverge from the tongue 4 and then merge into the longitudinal lines of the score in a curve 9b.

In my present conception the primary score 5 is so disposed on the cover that the puncturing operation is performed without appreciably deflecting the cover. This is due to the fact that this score is made in close proximity to the most rigid portion of the whole structure, the can seam S. This gives the stripping key an opportunity to get under the tongue 4 without deforming it.

What I claim is:

1. In combination, a sardine can, a cover seamed at its marginal portions to said can, a score sunk in the face of said cover in close proximity to said seam on three sides of the cover and further removed from the seam on the fourth side thereof, the score on the fourth side being irregular and including a tongue-shape contoured portion, and a short length score disposed on said cover between said tongue-shape portion of the first mentioned score and said seam, the two said scores being separate and disconnected, relatively.

2. A can cover adapted to be secured to a can at its marginal portions, a score made in said can cover surrounding a portion adapted to be stripped from said cover incident to the opening of said can, a second, semi-circular score sunk into said cover, outside and independent of said first mentioned score, a tongue-shape extension, the margins of which are included in the outline of said first mentioned score, disposed contiguous to said second score whereby in the preliminary operation of stripping the removable portion of said cover access may be had to the inner face of said tongue-shape extension by first breaking-down that area of the cover lying within the bounds of said second score.

3. A cover structure for containers adapted to be secured at its margins to said container, a long, endless score made in said cover, said score terminating at one end with a tongue-shape contour, and a semi-circular score disposed near the end and spaced from said tongue-shape contour of the long, endless score, said semi-circular score being employed to assist in puncturing said cover whereby said tongue-shape portion may be raised by stripping, the pressure being applied from the under side with a stripping tool.

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