



PAPER OR PLASTIC? TYPES OF CONTAINERS AT THE GENERAL STORE

Paper or Plastic?

There was no choice at the general store, not even paper bags or cardboard boxes. Once a purchase such as a lantern or an article of clothing was made, it could be wrapped up in paper from a paper cutter on the counter and placed in a wicker basket brought from home. Smaller loose items such as dried peas or beans could be put into a **poke**. Fragile eggs were put into a basket; molasses, honey, and vinegar went home in the buyer's **clay pots** and **jars**.

The shopkeeper displayed and stored his goods in a variety of containers. Customers who lived far from the store often carried them home with them in their wagons or in their canoes.

Bulk Container Types

Bale	A bundle of goods pressed together, wrapped in cloth, then tightly tied or stitched. Cotton or wool was sold this way. Bolts of calico or hickory shirts could have come this way to the store before unpacking.
Crate	A wooden packing case. Dishes were packed in sawdust or wood shavings; tools, tin ware, medicines, etc. could be shipped this way. Crates came in all sizes depending on the item inside.
Gunny Sack	A large bag made from a coarse cloth called burlap used to hold bulky goods such as potatoes, sugar and spices.
Bags	Similar to a sack, but smaller and made of cotton.

Pre-Quiz:

1. A barrel is:
 - a) a large cask that holds butter, lard
 - b) a crate
 - c) a large cask with curved sides and flat top and bottom

2. A firkin is:
 - a) a small wooden barrel that holds butter, soap
 - b) a straight -sided keg

1.c
2.a

More Containers...

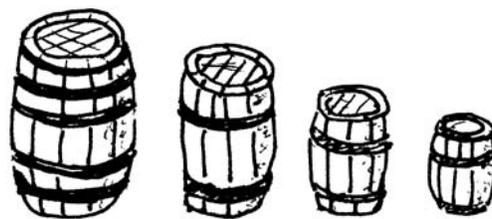
One of the most common types of containers in the general store was the **cask**. A cask is any type of container made with wooden **staves** or slats. Casks came in all kinds of sizes. Some of their names are familiar. Some are not.

The **barrel** is one cask that is well known. It is a large cask that has curved sides made of wood and a flat top and bottom. It can hold between 36 gallons of liquid.

Other Types of Casks

Pin	A cask that hold 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ gallons. Imagine 4 plastic 1-gallon milk cartons in 1 container!!
Firkin	A small wooden barrel for holding 9 gallons of soap, butter, or lard.
Kilderkin	A cask that holds half as much as a barrel. (18 gallons)
Keg	A strong, small barrel. Apple cider might be kept in a keg.
Drum	A keg with straight sides used for storing fish or fruit.
Tierce	A large cask that holds one and a half times the liquid that a barrel can contain.
Hogshead	A very large cask that can hold 54 gallons of liquid. Hogsheads of tobacco went regularly to England during the colonial period from Virginia and other southern states. This cask would have had lighter staves as tobacco is dry.

BARREL FACT: Barrels have metal hoops to hold them together, but metal hoops are never used with kegs or barrels holding explosive powder. The contents would blow up. Wooden or brass hoops are used instead.



barrel kilderkin firkin pin

BARREL LINGO

- staves** the shaped slats of wood that make a barrel
- slight barrel** a barrel made with staves of less than 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thickness
- stout barrel** a barrel made with stave thicker than 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches
- chime hoop** a hoop on the bottom and top of the barrel