Sept. 17, 1968 C. H. SCHAMEL 3,401,977

CONVERTIBLE BODY DUST BOOT ARRANGEMENT

Filed Oct. 25, 1966 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

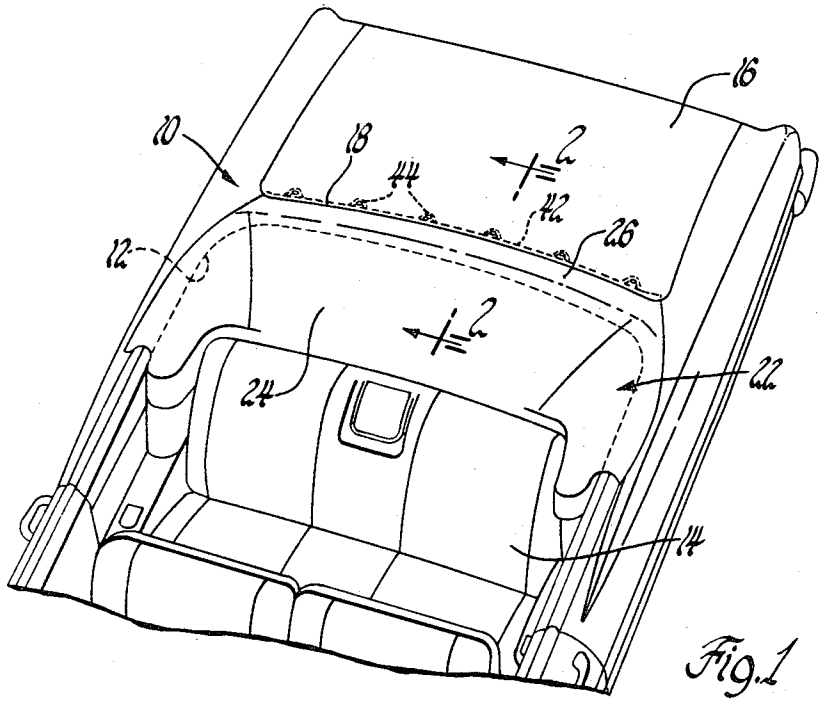


Fig. 1

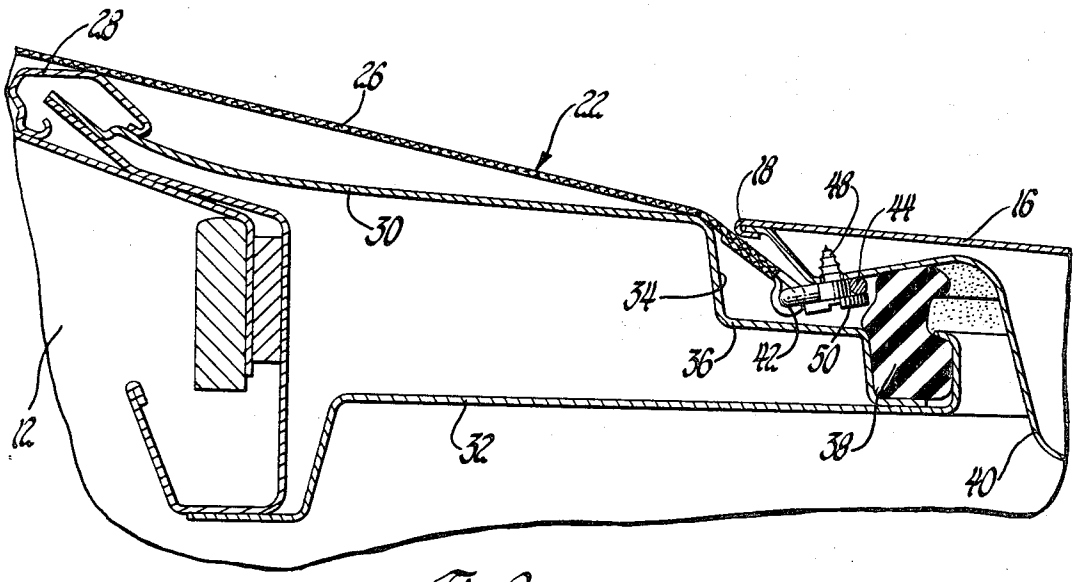


Fig. 2

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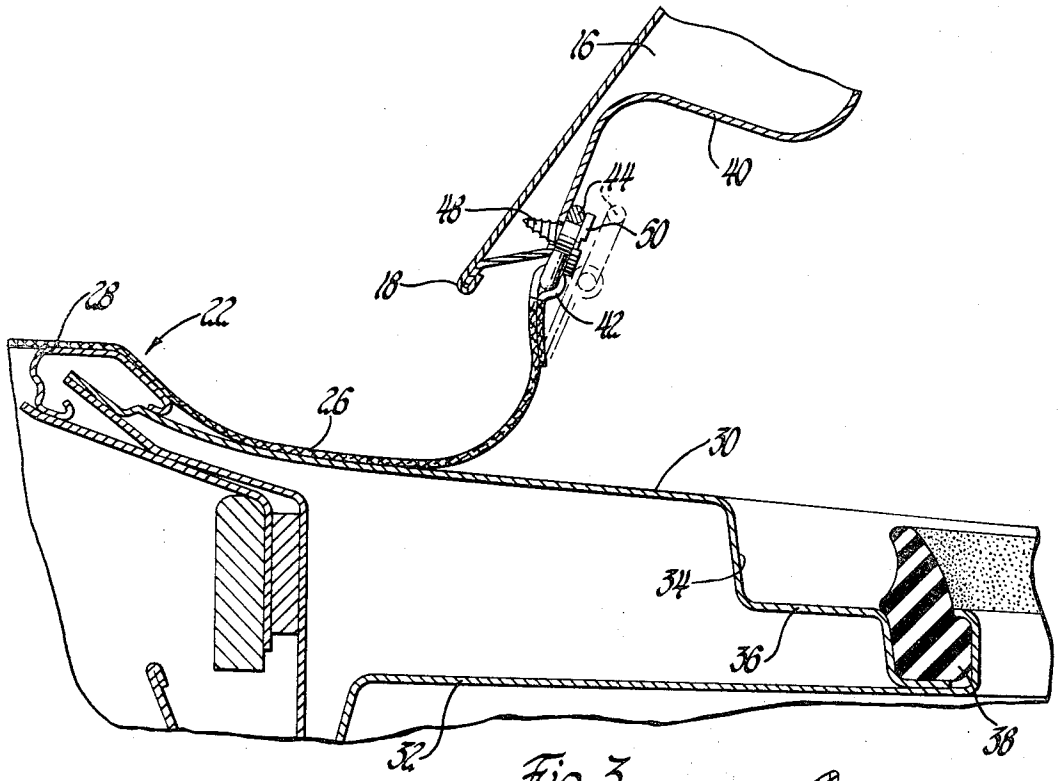


Fig. 3

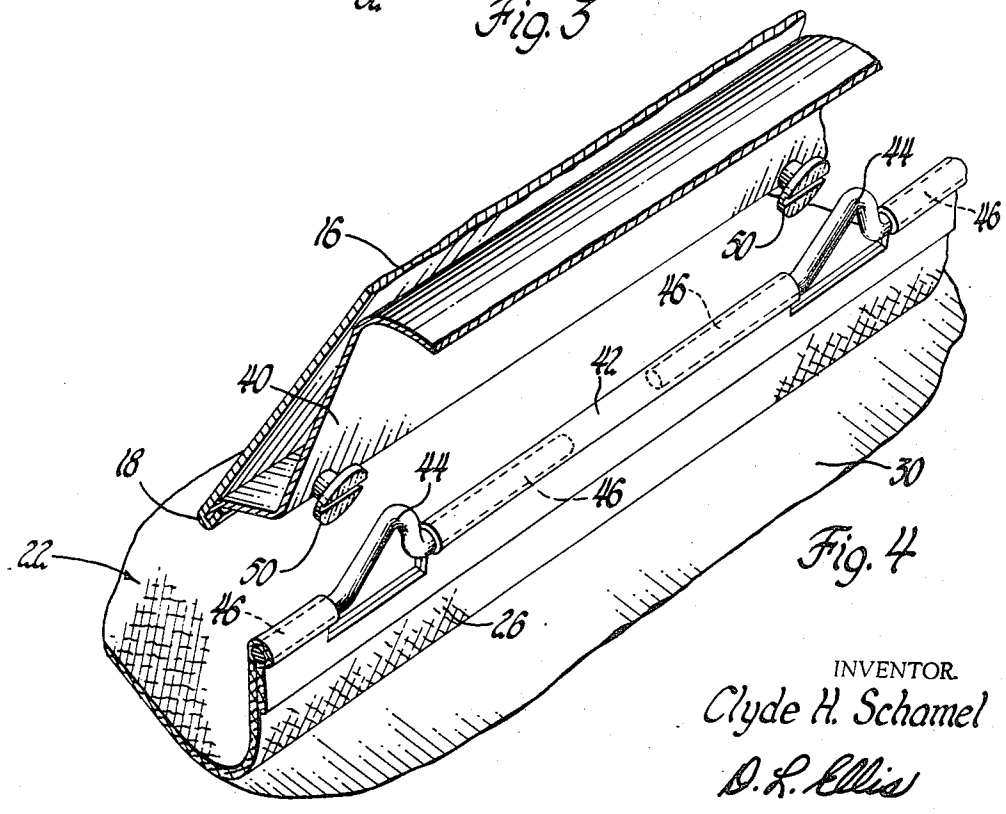


Fig. 4

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CONVERTIBLE BODY DUST BOOT ARRANGEMENT

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A dust boot for the storage well of a convertible vehicle body has its forward and side edge portions releasably mountable to the body at the edges of the well opening and has its rearward edge detachably connectible to the adjacent edge of the swingable deck lid of the body such that the boot is tensed over the well opening when the deck lid is swung to closed position.

This invention relates generally to convertible vehicle bodies and more particularly to an improved dust boot arrangement for the folding top storage wells of convertible vehicle bodies.

One feature of this invention is that it provides a new and improved dust boot arrangement for the folding top storage wells of convertible vehicle bodies. Another feature of this invention is that it provides a new and improved dust boot arrangement including a flexible dust boot or cover having portions thereof releasably mounted to the vehicle body over the storage well opening therein and having another portion connectible to an adjacent deck lid or other compartment closure of the vehicle body in a manner to partake of closing movement of the closure for tensing of the dust boot on the body over the well opening for smooth and neat appearance. A further feature of the invention resides in the use of concealed fasteners for connecting a marginal edge of the dust boot to the deck lid or other closure. Yet a further feature of the invention resides in the use of a flexible dust boot or cover including a main portion complementary to the storage well opening for overlying the same and a further integral flap proportioned for overall pleasing appearance with the main portion and extending therefrom over intervening areas of the body to the adjacent marginal edge of the deck lid for connection thereto.

These and other features of the invention will be readily apparent from the following specification and the drawings wherein:

FIGURE 1 is a fragmentary perspective view of a convertible vehicle body including a dust boot arrangement according to this invention shown installed over the top storage well opening of the body;

FIGURE 2 is an enlarged sectional view taken generally along the plane indicated by lines 2—2 of FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 3 is a view similar to FIGURE 2 showing the deck lid of the vehicle body in an open position; and

FIGURE 4 is a perspective view showing the dust boot disconnected from the deck lid.

Referring now particularly to FIGURE 1 of the drawings, there is shown a convertible vehicle body **10** of the type having a folding top movable between a raised position enclosing the passenger compartment of the body, and a lowered position received within a top storage well which opens upwardly of the body immediately rearward of the rear passenger seat back **14**. Body **10** further includes a rear deck lid **16** conventionally hinged adjacent its forward transverse edge portion **18** on the body for swinging movement upwardly and forwardly of the body

from a closed position, as shown, to an open position, indicated in FIGURE 3, relative to a rear compartment opening in the body spaced slightly rearwardly of the top storage well opening. A dust boot assembly according to this invention is provided to close the top storage well opening when the folding top is retracted to lowered position therewithin.

The dust boot assembly includes a dust boot or cover **22** of flexible fabric or similar sheet material and having a main covering portion **24** generally complementary to the shape of the storage well opening, as partially indicated in broken lines in FIGURE 1, and a further flap portion **26** extending rearwardly from the main portion **24**. The two portions **24** and **26** are blended and proportioned to provide an overall pleasing shape and appearance to the dust boot.

As best viewed in FIGURES 2 and 3, the flap portion **26** covers whatever structure of the body that intervenes between the rearward transverse marginal edge of the storage well opening, as normally defined by the transverse portion of a belt molding indicated at **28**, and the forward edge portion **18** of the deck lid. Such intervening portion of the body is conventionally comprised of tulip panel structure including outer and inner tulip panels **30** and **32**, outer panel **30** being provided with an inwardly turned rearward flange **34** defining the forward transverse edge of the deck lid opening of the body. Flange **34** merges with a flange structure **36** joined with the inner panel **32** and mounting a deck lid seal strip **38** engageable with the inner reinforcing panel **40** of the deck lid **16** in the closed position of the latter.

The main portion **24** of the dust boot **22** is provided with conventional snap or other fasteners for detachably mounting its forward and side edges to adjacent portions of the belt molding **28** or other mounting structure of the body. The main portion **24** is free of the usual attachment to the rearward transverse portion of belt molding **28**, the rearward marginal edge **42** of flap portion **26** being detachably connected to the forward edge portion **18** of deck lid **16**. As shown best in FIGURES 2 and 4, a plurality of spaced fastening hooks or loops **44** of bent wire or rod stock have leg portions **46** thereof sewn or otherwise secured within the turned marginal edge **42** of flap portion **26**, the loop portion of each hook **44** extending through a perforation in the marginal edge **42** to be receivable over a headed stud portion **50** of a screw **48** threaded into the inner panel **40** of deck lid **16** adjacent the forward marginal edge thereof.

In installation of dust boot assembly **22** on body **10** following movement of the folding top to lowered position, deck lid **16** is moved to raised position as indicated in FIGURE 3, and the dust boot **22** is then placed over the well opening **12** and the various fasteners for the main portion **24** thereof secured in place. The various hooks **44** are then placed over the projecting stud portions **50** on deck lid **16** and the deck lid is then moved to fully closed postion. The downward and rearward movement of the edge portion **18** of the deck lid obtaining during such closing movement serves to tension the dust boot **22** longitudinally on the body against the reaction of the fasteners of main portion **24**.

In the style of vehicle body shown, the belt molding **28** is seen as being somewhat elevated with respect to the upper corner or edge of the flange **34** of tulip outer panel **30**, such that dust boot **22** has engagement at the belt molding and at this corner of the flange to aid in the tensioning of the dust boot and prevention of extensive puckering or the like therein as might arise from any uneven spacing of the fasteners on the forward edge portion **18** of the deck lid.

The dust boot arrangement of this invention however provides for highly efficient tensioning and smoothening of the dust boot even in the absence of such aids. It will be further noted that the usual bulky rearward marginal edge of the dust boot containing snaps or similar fasteners for attachment to belt molding **28** is eliminated in favor of fasteners on an undersurface of the deck lid which are completely concealed when the latter is in closed position. It will further be appreciated that as the longitudinal expanse of the tulip panel structure varies from body style to body style the flap portion **26** will be altered, even to the point of total elimination thereof in the condition wherein the forward marginal edge of the deck lid actually defines the rearward edge of the top well storage opening of the body.

Having thus described the invention, what is claimed is:

1. In combination with a vehicle body having a convertible top well opening therein, said body having a compartment opening therein adjacent said well opening, a compartment closure mounted on said body for movement between open and closed positions with respect to said compartment opening, a flexible dust boot for closing said well opening, means for connecting to said closure an edge portion of said dust boot, and means for detachably mounting remaining portions of said dust boot on said body, movement of said closure from the open to the closed position thereof stretching said dust boot taut on said body between said connecting means and said detachable mounting means.

2. The combination recited in claim **1** wherein said connecting means include releasable fasteners having cooperating portions on said dust boot edge portion and on an undersurface of an adjacent marginal edge portion of said closure, said fasteners being concealed under said closure in the closed position thereof.

3. The combination recited in claim **2** wherein said fasteners include a hook mounted in the marginal edge of said dust boot edge portion and a stud projecting from said undersurface of said closure.

4. The combination recited in claim **1** wherein said dust boot includes a main covering portion complementary to said well opening and a flap portion extending from the main portion to an adjacent marginal edge portion of said closure for connection thereto.

5. The combination recited in claim **2** wherein said connecting means include releasable fasteners having cooperating portions on a marginal edge of said boot flap portion and on an undersurface of said marginal edge portion of said closure, said fasteners being concealed under said closure in the closed position thereof.

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