Aug. 21, 1956 F. A. E. PORSCHE 2,760,050

DOOR HANDLE LIGHTING FIXTURE FOR AUTOMOTIVE VEHICLES

Filed Nov. 12, 1953

FIG. 1

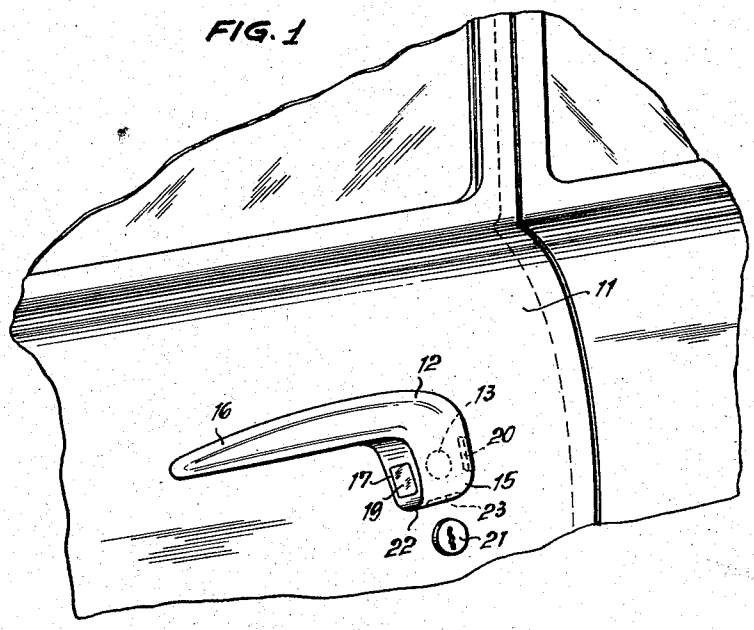


FIG. 2

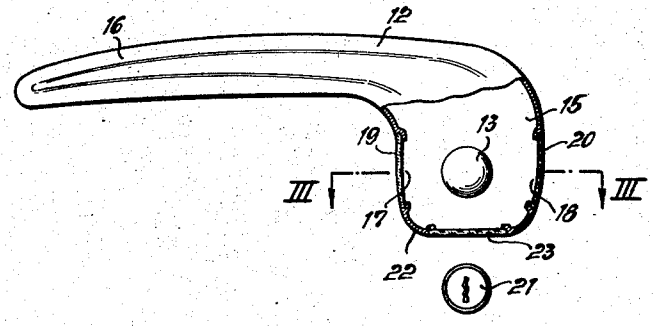
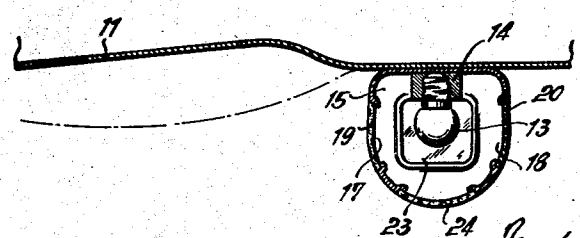


FIG. 3



INVENTOR

Ferdinand A. E. Porsche

By:

Pennie, Edmonds, Morton, Barrows & Taylor

Attorneys.

United States Patent Office 2,760,050
Patented Aug. 21, 1956

2,760,050

DOOR HANDLE LIGHTING FIXTURE FOR AUTOMOTIVE VEHICLES

Ferdinand A. E. Porsche, Stuttgart, Germany, assignor to Dr. Ing. h. c. F. Porsche K.-G., Stuttgart-Zuffenhausen, Germany

Application November 12, 1953, Serial No. 391,706

Claims priority, application Germany December 18, 1952

2 Claims. (Cl. 240—2.13)

This invention relates to improvements in lighting fixtures for automotive vehicles and more particularly to a combined door handle and lighting fixture for the doors of automotive vehicles.

It has previously been proposed to locate a source of light in the door handle of an automotive vehicle and to insert lenses at the ends of the door handle so that light from the light source can be radiated forwards and backwards. In such constructions the door handle has been made square in order to enable the mounting of lenses at the ends of the door handle. Constructions of this kind are not practical and, moreover, the lenses carried by such handles are readily subject to damage. Furthermore, in such constructions the interior surfaces of the handle were not finished off and the light rays were absorbed to a large extent by the rough inner surfaces of the handle, thus reducing the lighting effect.

The primary object of the present invention is to provide an improved illuminated door handle which will avoid the disadvantages of previously known constructions of this general type.

A further object of the invention is to provide an illuminated door handle which will be useful for defining the greatest width of the motor vehicle and at the same time provide light for other purposes.

According to the invention, the drawbacks of previous constructions are avoided by making part of the handle of translucent material for defining the boundary of the vehicle or the vehicle's greatest width, while the downwardly directed part of the door handle nearest to the door lock is made of a transparent material for illuminating the door lock. The making of part of the door handle of translucent material is of considerable advantage, since handles illuminated in this manner readily define the greatest width of the vehicle for parking purposes and readily locate the position of the handles and door lock at night.

In the preferred form of door handle light fixture construction, the handle includes a downwardly directed foot portion sloping away from the handle proper and containing the light source and its mounting means. The foot member may be integral or fitted onto the handle proper and is made light pervious or is provided with openings at points lying in the direction of travel of the vehicle, thus providing means for directing light beams forwards and backwards along the sides of the vehicle.

Door handle lighting fixtures constructed in accordance with the invention include translucent and transparent materials made of plastic or glass set in or otherwise included in the peripheral contour of the handles. The translucent material of the door handle is profiled in order to prevent any glaring action. If necessary the translucent material may be colored in a known manner. The source of light used in the illuminated door handles according to the invention preferably comprises a two filament lamp, one filament of which serves as a boundary light or parking light for the vehicle, while the second filament is used as a blinker light, as for example in a directional signal system for the vehicle.

The improved construction according to the invention includes other features and advantages described more in detail hereinafter in connection with the accompanying drawings which illustrate two embodiments of the invention by way of example.

In the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a broken perspective view of a portion of an automotive vehicle showing a door fitted with a combination door handle lighting fixture in accordance with the invention;

Fig. 2 is a front view, partly in section, of the door handle shown in Fig. 1 on a larger scale; and

Fig. 3 is a sectional view taken on the line III—III of Fig. 2

Referring to the drawings, a car door **11** of the vehicle is provided with a door handle **12**. A light source comprising a conventional light bulb **13** is mounted in a socket or retaining means **14** located in a depending hollow end section, base or foot part **15** of the door handle, which slopes away downwardly relatively to the generally horizontal handle part **16** containing a door latch, not shown.

The part or section **15** of the door handle **12** is provided with openings **17** and **18** disposed respectively at the front and rear sides in such a way that light from the bulb **13** may shine both forwardly and rearwardly. The front opening **17** is closed off with a piece of transparent material **19**, which is preferably not colored, whereas the opening **18** is closed off with a piece or section of translucent material **20**, preferably colored red.

The car door **11** is provided with a lock **21** and this is illuminated from the bulb **13** from the bottom face **22** of the lighting fixture part of the handle by light shining through a section of transparent material **23** inserted in the bottom **22**.

In addition to the light transmitting inserts described above the front face of the part **15** is provided with an insert of translucent material **24** (Fig. 3) so that where the lamp or bulb **13** has two filaments the insert **24** can be used as a blinker light, which may form a part of a directional signal system for the vehicle. With a handle constructed and arranged as just described, parking lights for both sides of the car are provided, together with door lock illumination and a blinker or directional light, all combined in a common housing.

The base section **15** of the door handle may serve as the means for securing the rear end of the handle to the door, while the upper portion **16** bows outwardly with its front end secured to the door in the usual way. Furthermore, the inserts of light transmitting material **19**, **20**, **23** and **24** are mounted in the wall of the handle structure, which is usually of metal, in such a manner that they do not protrude beyond the surface of the metal but provide a smooth outer contour, the part **16** of the door handle being readily illuminated through the window or light transmitting section **19**, so that the handle is readily visible at night.

It is to be understood that the invention is not limited to the illustrative embodiment shown in the drawings and described above, and that door latches may be combined with the illuminated handles in any way. In showing and describing the illustrative embodiment, various conventional details are omitted, such as the means for securing the handles to the doors and the wiring connections for the light sources.

What I claim is:

1. In an automotive vehicle having a door on each of its opposite sides, a combination door handle and lighting fixture structure mounted on each of said doors of the vehicle and including a horizontally-extending handle portion and a hollow lighting fixture portion extending downwardly from the rear end portion of the handle portion and having front, rear, and bottom walls, both ends of said

structure being fixed to the vehicle door, a light source located in said hollow lighting fixture portion, a window of light-transmitting material in the front wall of said hollow lighting fixture portion beneath the handle portion for transmitting light from the light source forwardly thereof and for illuminating the horizontally-extending handle portion, a window of light-transmitting material in the rear wall of said hollow light fixture portion for transmitting light from the light source toward the rear of the vehicle, a lock located in the door directly below the bottom wall of said lighting fixture portion, and a window of light-transmitting material in said bottom wall for transmitting light from the light source onto said lock.

2. An automotive vehicle as claimed in claim 1, in which the combination door handle and lighting fixture structure on the respective sides of the vehicle define substantially

the vehicle's greatest width, whereby the boundary of the vehicle is defined by light from the front and back windows of the lighting fixtures for oncoming vehicles either from in front or behind.

References Cited in the file of this patent

UNITED STATES PATENTS

1,523,495	Silberman	Jan. 20, 1925
1,629,456	Pellegrini	May 17, 1927
2,256,670	Greenlees	Sept. 23, 1941
2,308,844	Wilshusen	Jan. 19, 1943
2,628,304	Boyd	Feb. 10, 1953

FOREIGN PATENTS

657,284	France	May 21, 1929