June 20, 1967 A. S. LA SPINA 3,326,596

COMPARTMENT CONSTRUCTION FOR AUTOMOBILES

Filed May 6, 1965

Fig. 1.

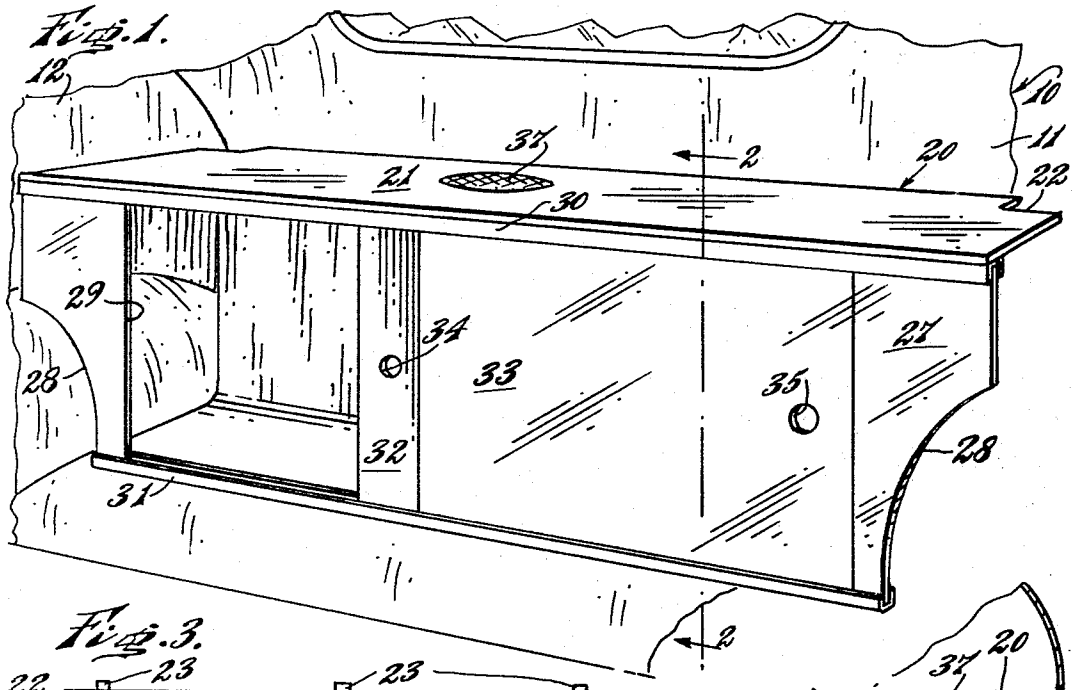


Fig. 3.

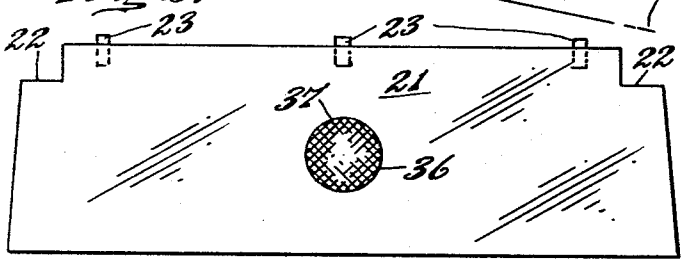


Fig. 2.

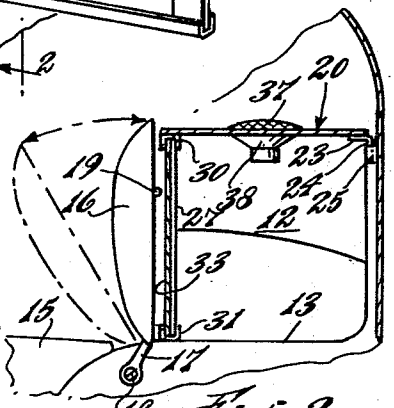


Fig. 4.

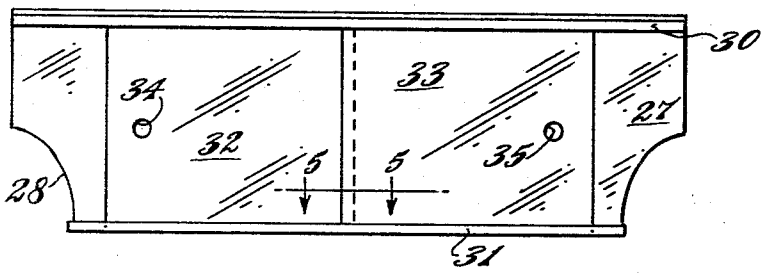


Fig. 6.

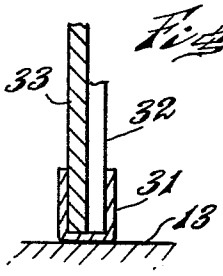
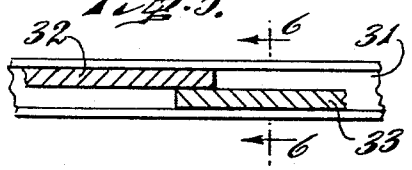


Fig. 5.



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COMPARTMENT CONSTRUCTION FOR AUTOMOBILES

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This invention relates generally to automobile-body constructions, and is especially concerned with a unique compartment construction for automobiles.

It is an important object of the present invention to provide a compartment construction for automobiles, which may be installed as original or accessory equipment to provide a neat and convenient storage space, which is effectively concealed from view for added attractiveness and security.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a compartment construction for automobiles having the advantageous characteristics mentioned in the preceding paragraph, which further serves as a chamber for a loudspeaker to afford desirable esthetic effects while occupying a minimum of space.

It is a further object of the present invention to provide a compartment construction of the type described which may be conveniently removed, when desired, as for rearrangement or hauling of relatively large articles.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide a compartment construction of the type described which is extremely simple in design, durable and reliable throughout a long useful life, and which can be economically manufactured for sale at a reasonable price.

Other objects of the present invention will become apparent upon reading the following specification and referring to the accompanying drawings, which form a material part of this disclosure.

The invention accordingly consists in the features of construction, combinations of elements, and arrangements of parts, which will be exemplified in the construction hereinafter described, and of which the scope will be indicated by the appended claims.

In the drawings:

FIGURE 1 is an interior rear perspective view of an automobile, showing a compartment construction in accordance with the teachings of the present invention;

FIGURE 2 is a sectional elevational view taken generally along the line 2—2 of FIGURE 1;

FIGURE 3 is a top plan view showing the compartment construction of the present invention apart from an automobile;

FIGURE 4 is a front elevational view of the removed compartment construction of FIGURE 3;

FIGURE 5 is a partial sectional view taken generally along the line 5—5 of FIGURE 4; and

FIGURE 6 is a partial sectional elevational view taken generally along the line 6—6 of FIGURE 5.

Referring now more particularly to the drawings, and specifically to FIGURES 1 and 2 thereof, a vehicle or automobile body is there generally designated **10**, and may include a rear or back wall **11**, a pair of laterally spaced, opposed side walls **12** extending forwardly from said back wall, and a generally horizontal platform **13** extending forwardly from said back wall and laterally between said side walls. In particular, the illustrated vehicle body **10** is that of a Volkswagen, to which the device of the present invention is particularly well adapted. However, it is understood that the instant construction may be employed in other vehicles of similar design, if desired.

Best seen in FIGURE 2 is a rear seat **15** extending generally horizontally forwardly from the platform **13**, and including a fold-down seat back **16** having depending

arms **17** pivotally secured to the body side walls **12**, as by pins or pintles **18**. Spaced above the pivot pins **18** may be a pair of stop members or pins **19** fixed to or projecting inward from respective side walls **12** for limiting abutting engagement with the seat back **16** in its upstanding position. A forwardly and downwardly swung position of the seat back **16** is shown in phantom in FIGURE 2. As thus far described, the automobile-body construction may be conventional.

However, interposed between the seat **15** and rear wall **11** is a compartment, generally designated **20**. The compartment **20** may include a generally horizontal top wall **21** having its rear edge proximate to the rear wall **11** and extending horizontally forward therefrom toward and terminating short of the seat back **16**, in the upright position of the latter. The top wall **21** is at an elevation approximately equal to that of the upper edge of seat back **16**, or slightly lower. The top wall **21** also extends laterally and may have its side edges cut away, as at **22**, for conforming engagement with the interior of side walls **11**. The forward edge of top wall **21** may be generally straight, substantially normal to the forward-and-rearward axis of the vehicle body.

Suitable detachable connection means may be provided for securing the top wall **21** in position, such as a plurality of inverted, L-shaped brackets **23**, each having a leg **24** depending from the rear edge of the top wall at spaced locations therealong. Complementary thereto, the rear wall **11** may be provided with a plurality of receivers or eyes **25** fixed to the back wall and opening upwardly for receiving respective legs **24**.

The forward edge of the top wall **21** terminates forwardly just short of the seat back **16**. Depending rigidly from the top wall **21** along the forward edge thereof is a generally vertical front wall **27**. That is, the front wall **27** is fixedly secured by any suitable means, such as fasteners (not shown) to the top wall **21** along the forward edge thereof and depends generally vertically toward and terminates at the platform **13**, adjacent to and spaced rearward behind the seat back **16**. Thus, the lower edge of the front wall **27** rests on the platform **13** and combines with the top wall **21** and its connection to the rear body wall **11** to define a rigid structure.

Also, the front wall **27** may extend laterally and have its side edges **28** specifically configured for conforming engagement with the side walls **12**. Intermediate the side edges **28** of the upstanding front wall **27**, there is formed a thru opening **29** affording access into the space enclosed between the top wall **21**, rear body wall **11**, platform **13** and the front wall **27**. Further, the front wall includes an upper, downwardly facing channel or track **30** fixedly secured in position extending along the juncture of the upper front-wall edge and forward top-wall edge. The medial portion of channel or track **30** faces downwardly into the opening **29** of front wall **27**. A lower, upwardly facing channel or track **31** extends along the lower edge of front wall **27**, and the medial region of track **31** faces upwardly and opens into the front-wall opening **29**. Thus, the medial portions of upper and lower tracks **30** and **31** are generally coplanar and in faced, spacing relation with each other.

Extending vertically between and having their upper and lower edges slidably received in the respective tracks **30** and **31** are a pair of slidable closures, panels or doors **32** and **33**. If desired, the slidable closures **32** and **33** may be respectively provided with finger holes **34** and **35** to facilitate sliding movement thereof. Thus, the closures **32** and **33** are slidable away from each other in the tracks **30** and **31**, toward opposite vehicle side walls **12** to completely close the front-wall opening **29**, and are selectively slidable toward each other to open the opening **29** and

afford access therethrough to the interior of compartment **20**.

In addition, the top wall **21** may be provided with a thru opening **36**, centrally of the top wall, if desired, which may be covered with a screen or cloth **37**. Directly beneath the thru opening **36**, on the underside of the top wall **21**, may be mounted a speaker **38**, see FIGURE 2, facing upwardly through the opening **36**. Any suitable connections (not shown) may be provided for the speaker **38**, as desired. In addition to this maximum utilization of space, both for storage in the compartment **20**, and for the speaker **38**, the compartment **20** serves to provide a sound chamber for esthetically enhancing the sound of the speaker.

If desired, suitable lock means may be provided on the closures **32** and **33**, for the purpose of discouraging theft. However, the presence of the compartment **20** is effectively concealed and hardly noticeable, the doors **32** and **33** being entirely hidden when the seat back **16** is upstanding.

As the staunch and sturdy relationship of compartment **20** with the vehicle body **12**, as described hereinbefore, requires only a minimum of fasteners **23**, **24** and **25**, and as these fasteners or connection means are detachable, it will be appreciated that the entire assembly of top wall **21** and front wall **27** may be removed from the vehicle body **10** when desired.

From the foregoing, it is seen that the present invention provides a compartment construction for a vehicle which fully accomplishes its intended objects and is well adapted to meet practical conditions of manufacture, installation and use.

Although the present invention has been described in some detail by way of illustration and example for purposes of clarity of understanding, it is understood that certain changes and modifications may be made within the spirit of the invention and scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. In an automobile body including spaced side walls, an upstanding rear wall, a rear seat having a fold-down back spaced forwardly from said rear wall, and a platform between said rear wall and seat, the improvement comprising a top wall extending forwardly from said rear wall spacedly over said platform and generally level with the top of said rear seat, a front wall depending rigidly from the front edge of said top wall to said platform, slidable door means in said front wall affording access therethrough, said top wall and said front wall extending laterally between said side walls, and detachable connection means on said top wall for connecting the latter to said rear wall, said top and front walls being otherwise unsecured to said rear and side walls and said platform, for removal of said top and front walls upon detachment of said connection means.

2. An automobile-body construction comprising a pair of laterally spaced side walls, a rear wall upstanding between said side walls, a laterally extending rear seat having a fold-down back and arranged in spaced relation forwardly from said rear wall, a platform extending forwardly from said rear wall toward said seat, a top wall extending forwardly from said rear wall toward said seat back and spaced over said platform generally level with the top of said seat back, detachable connection means detachably connecting said top wall to said rear wall, a front wall fixedly depending from the front edge of said top wall to said platform, said top and front walls being otherwise unsecured to said rear and side walls and said platform, for removal of said top and front walls upon detachment of said connection means, said top and front walls extending laterally into conforming relation with said side walls, and slidable door means in said front wall affording access therethrough.

3. An automobile-body construction according to claim **2**, in combination with a speaker mounted on the underside of said top wall and facing upwardly therethrough.

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