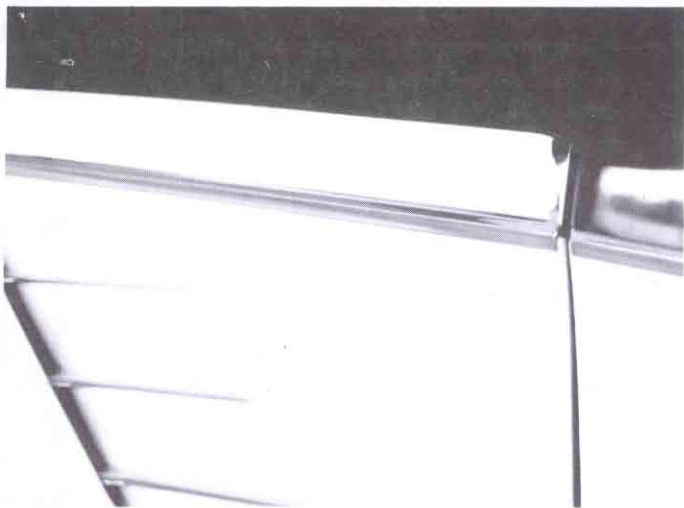


1958-61 Fender Upper Side Stainless Molding

—Tony Catalano

This stainless molding as a reproduction is one that could use some retooling by the manufacturer. I am reluctant to totally criticize this piece because, as one friend pointed out, "We should be grateful that many of these parts are available at all." Well, I guess there is some truth to this, and yes, I am grateful, but some of these parts just do not fit well, such as the upper fender stainless molding. This part has been manufactured poorly for so long that many people don't realize it. I have overheard conversations pointing out how these parts were originally "ill fitting from the factory" and "they're supposed to fit that way." The part has been wrong for so long that people think that it's correct. Well, it's not correct!

The problem with this piece is at the front where the part curves around the edge of the wheel well. Instead of following the curvature around the well, it sticks out too far to



the front of the fender. This creates a gap between the molding and the wheel well. I've seen some individuals that have tried to bend the piece back to where it's supposed to fit—only to bend a little too hard and kink the molding. At that point you have to start over by getting a new molding.

When replacing my own molding, I bent it as much as I dared as well as twisting it. I also tried adjusting the piece back and forth front to back. Some pieces fit better than others. This, I feel, depends on how recently the part was made. The more recent the manufacture, the poorer the fit.

I found where the front of the molding is lined up at the front of the wheel well at the point where it's supposed to be, that the back end of the molding will stick out too far past the door. I solved my problem by aligning the front of the molding with the wheel well the way it should and then cut off the back end of the molding at the appropriate place at the door. I used a very fine metal saw blade to cut the molding and finished the job by curling over the cut edge as it is with a correctly finished piece. I used an old dented molding that I was replacing as a practice trial piece. It worked just fine and the fit that I ended up with was almost perfect. As can be seen from the picture, I used a large piece of masking tape over the top of the molding on the fender itself. This tape kept my fingernails from scratching the new paint job. Even the shortest of nails will scratch the paint after intense fitting and refitting of the molding. I also took a great deal of the sticking power out of the tape by first sticking the tape to a towel three or four times. This was done so the tape itself would not damage the paint.

Good Luck!

—Tony

LEFT: Top and bottom view of the molding as installed.

Figure 15 — Front End Mouldings and Fender Emblems

