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(54) **CLIP FRAMING SYSTEM**

(76) Inventor: **Todd A. Brady**, Sherman Oaks, CA (US)

Correspondence Address:
TROJAN LAW OFFICES
9250 WILSHIRE BLVD
SUITE 325
BEVERLY HILLS, CA 90212

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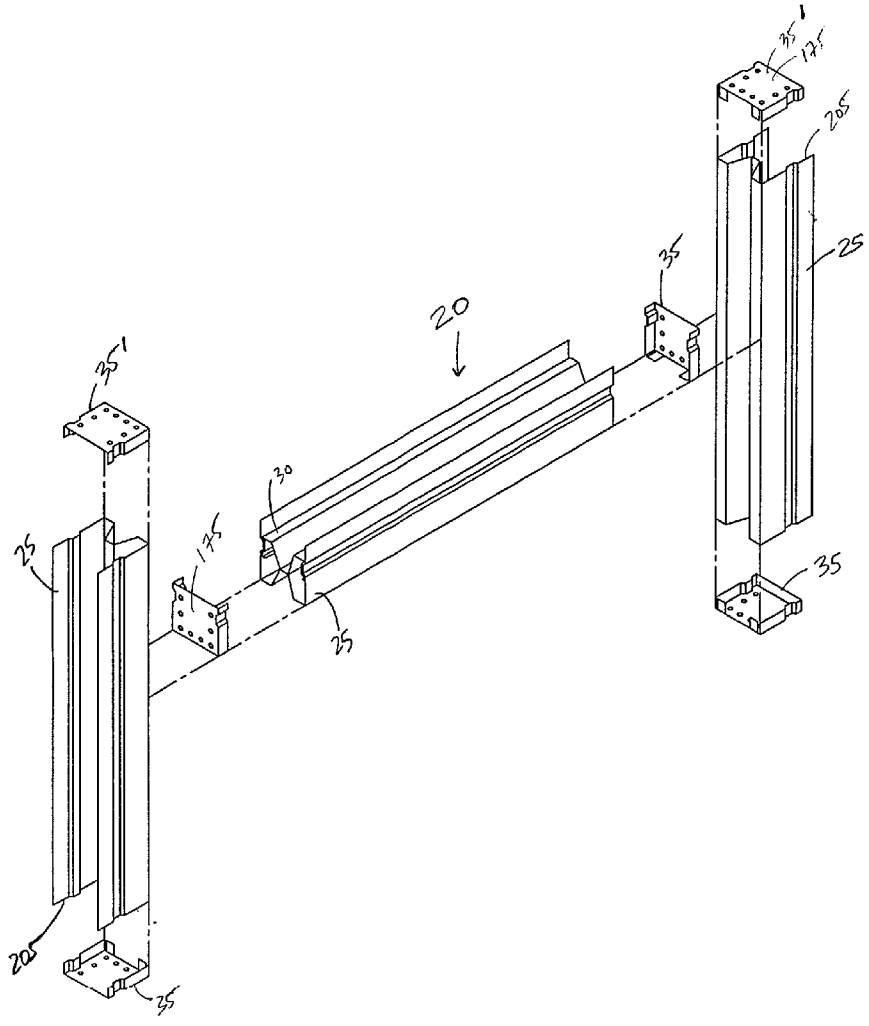
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A framing system for adjustably connecting building components comprising an outer stud, an interior support member, and a connecting clip.



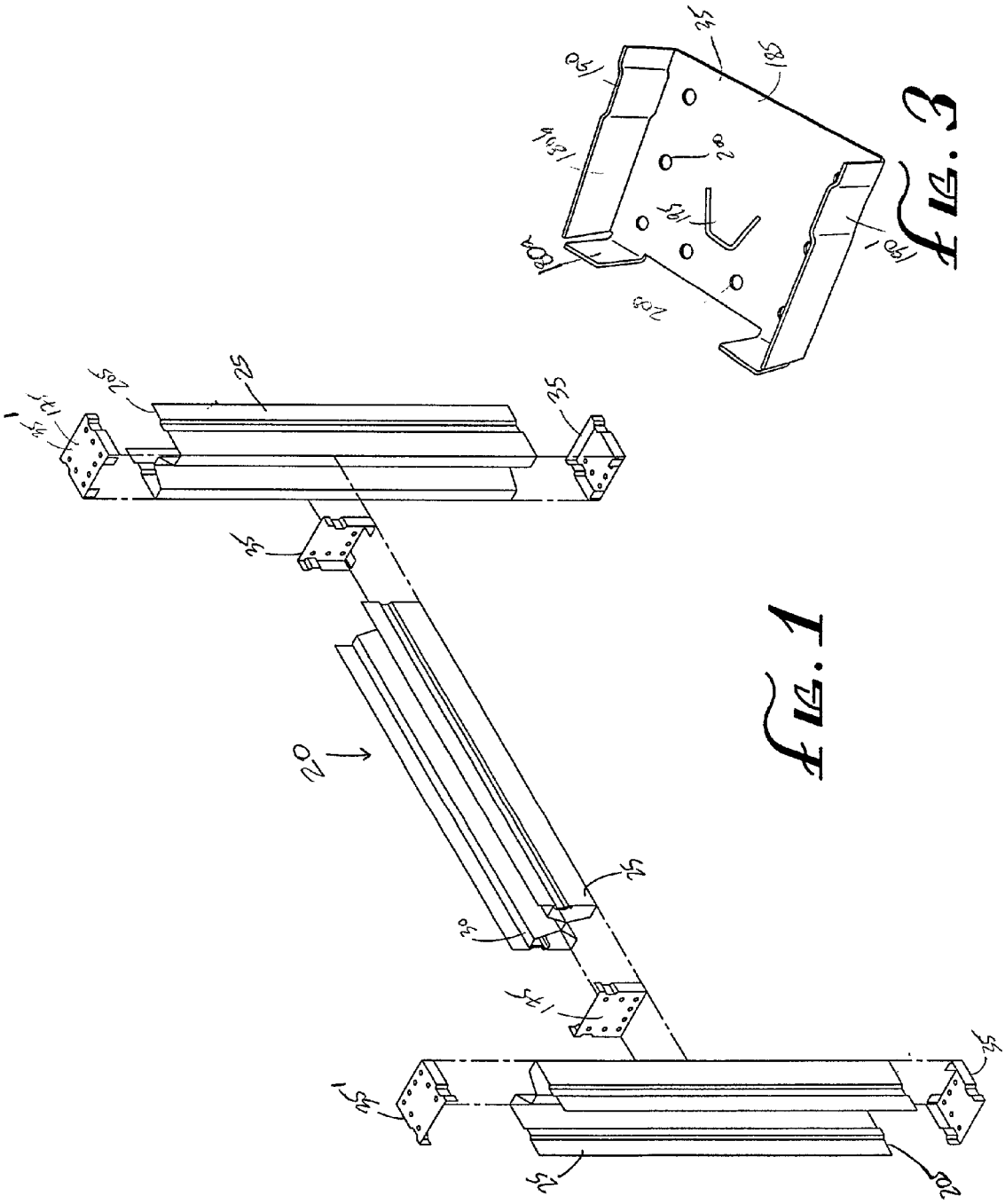
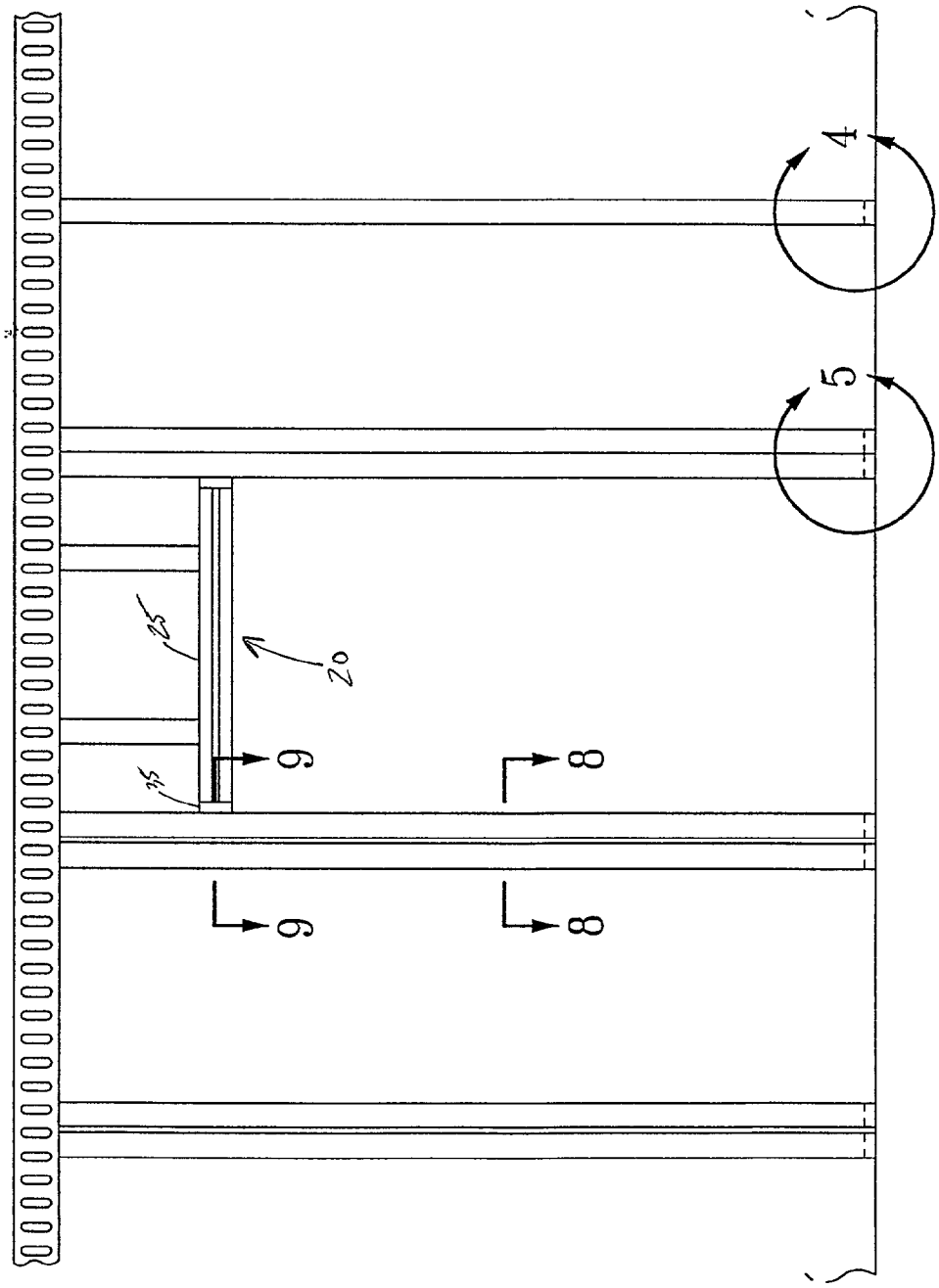


FIG. 1

FIG. 3

FIG. 2



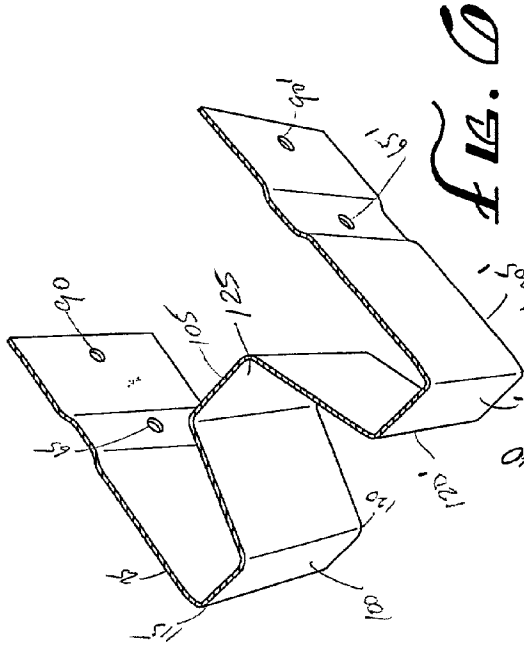


FIG. 6

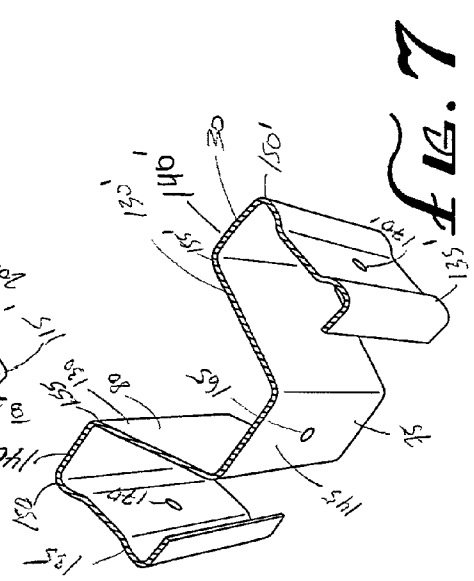


FIG. 7

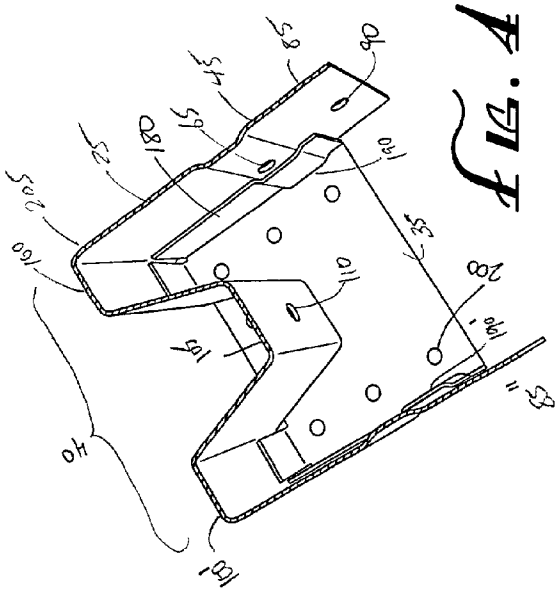


FIG. 4

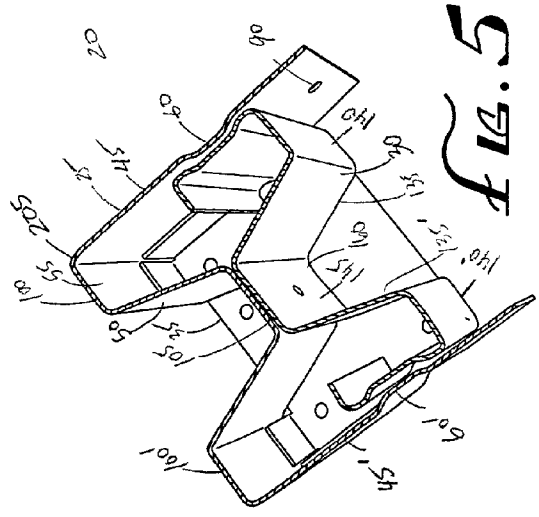


FIG. 5

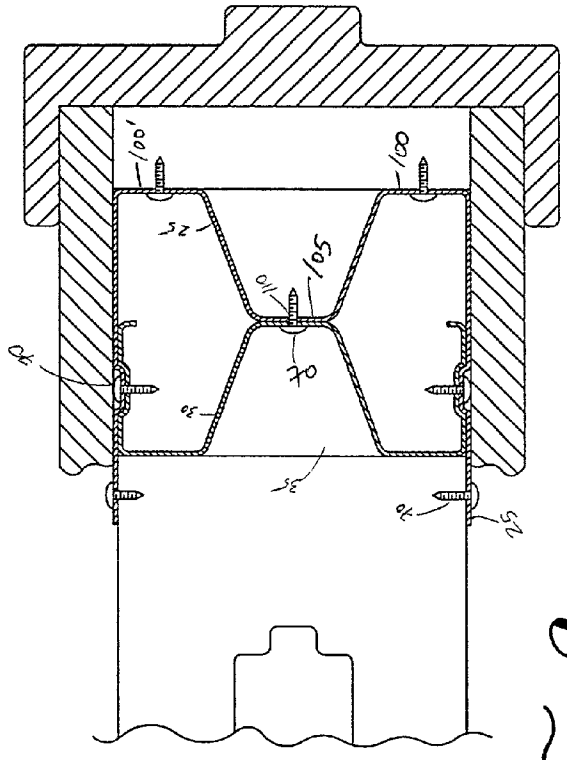


FIG. 8

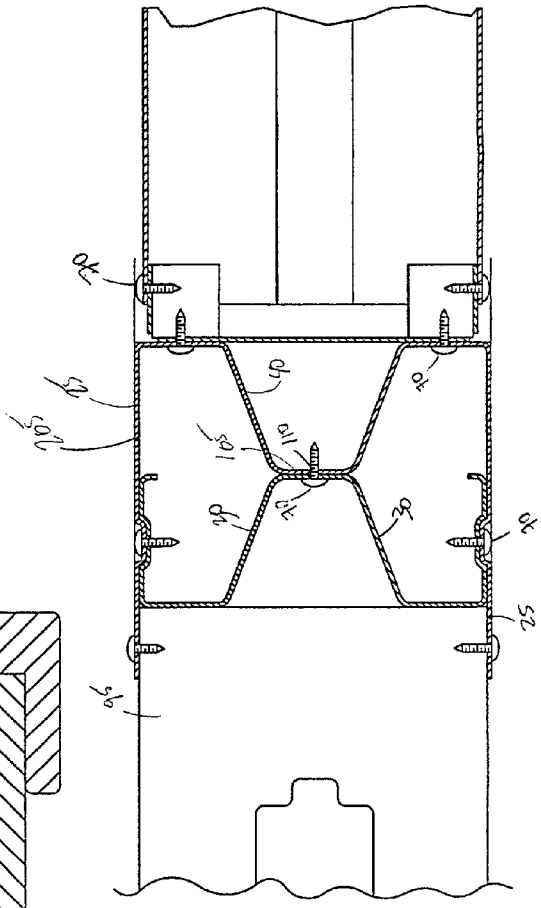
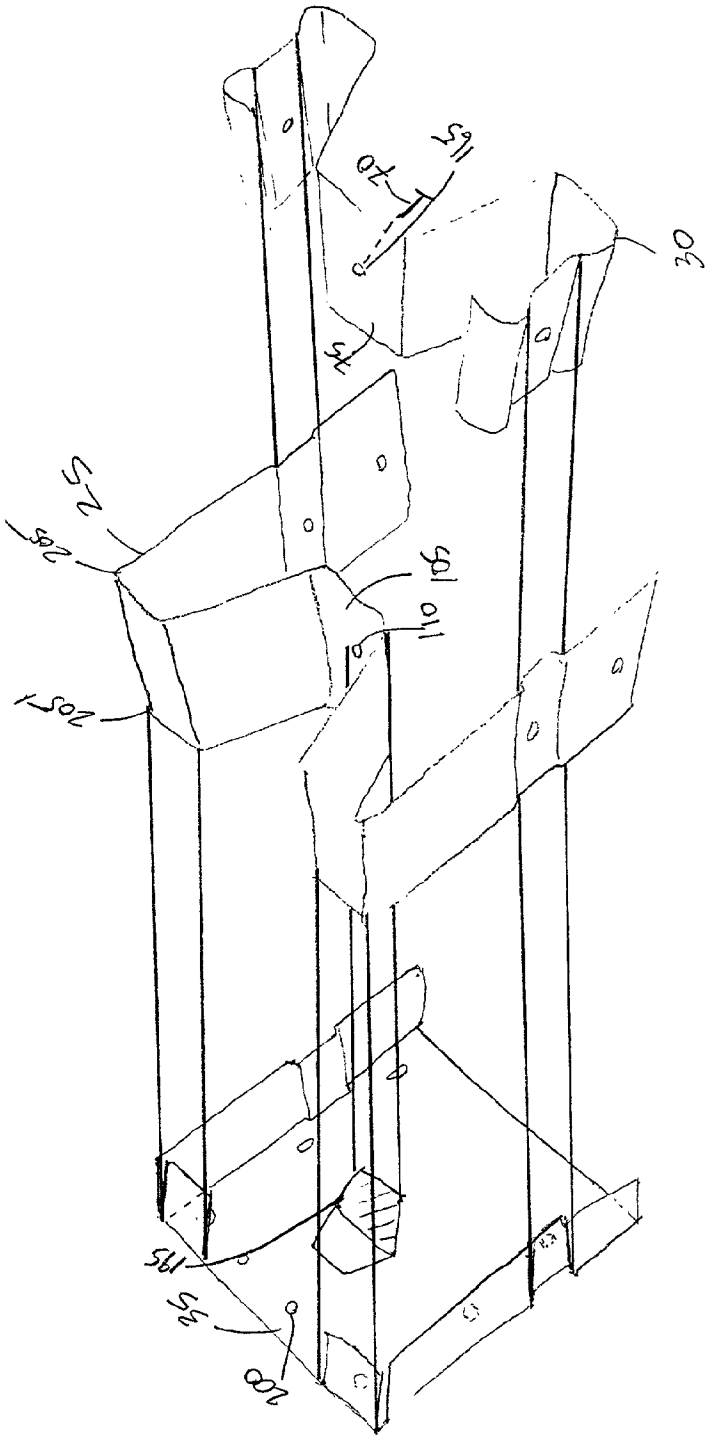


FIG. 9

FIG. 10



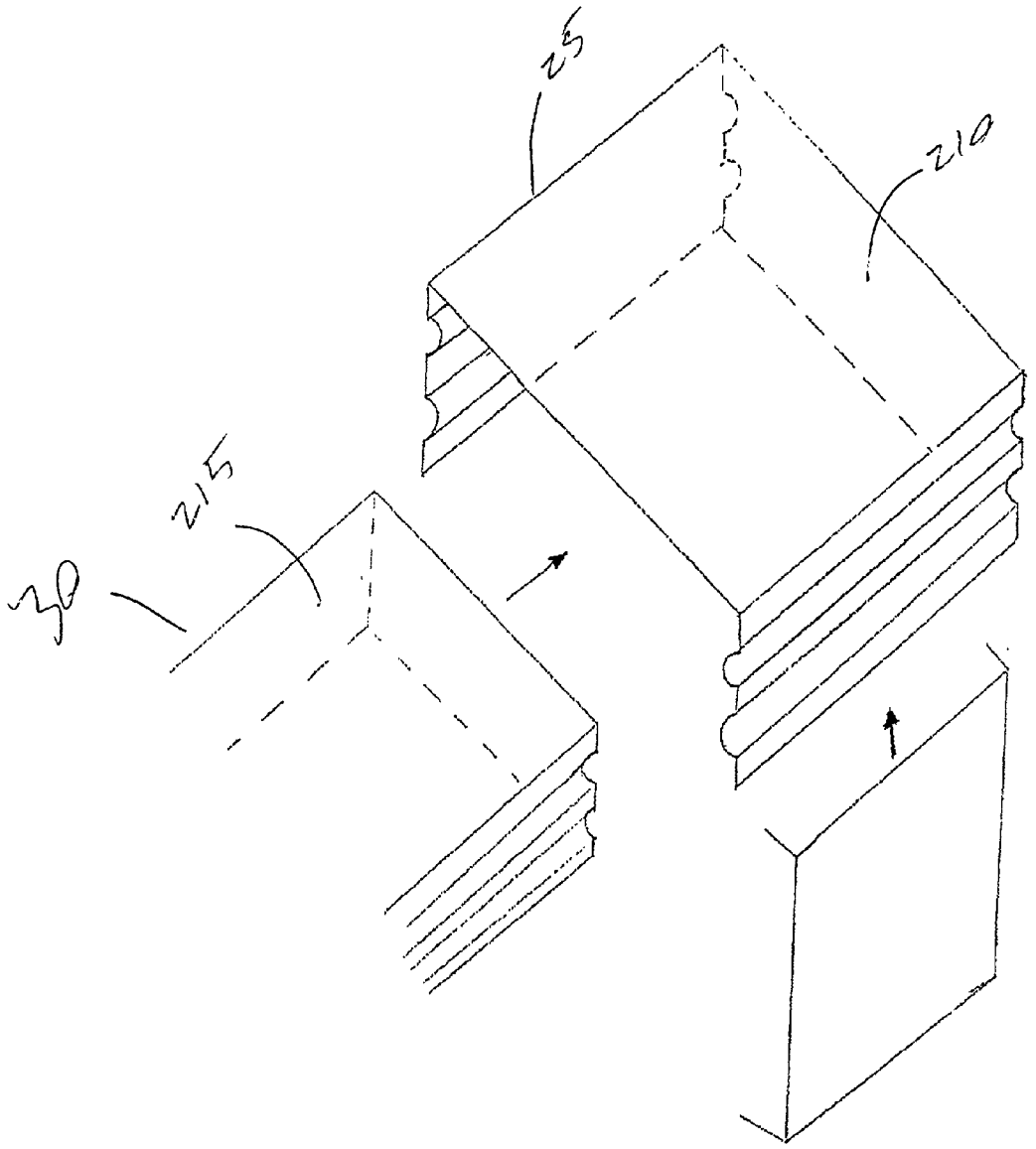


FIGURE 11

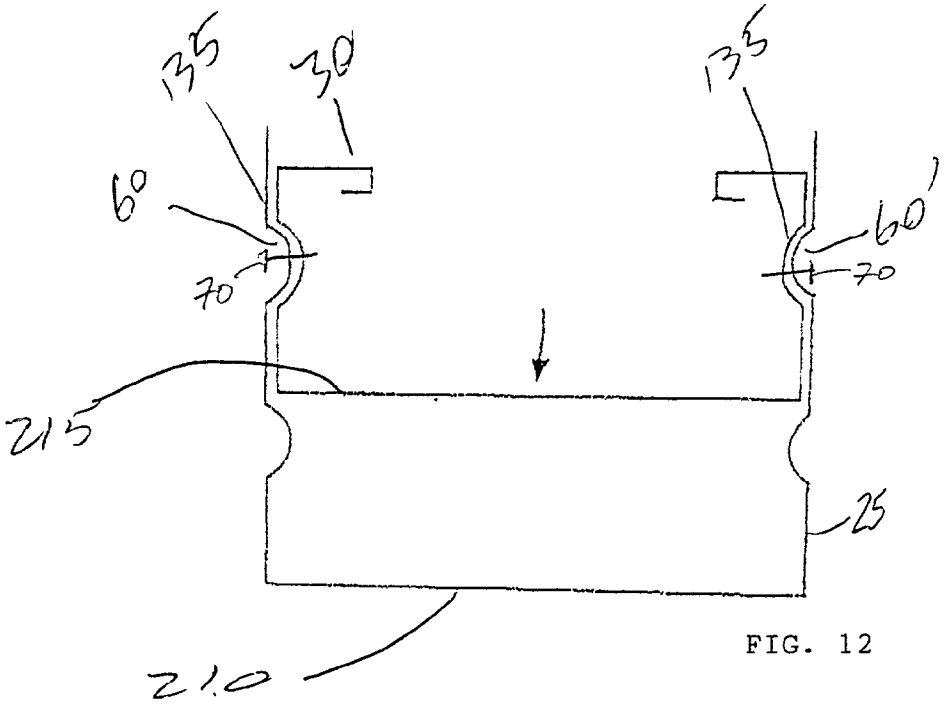

135
30
135
60
60'
70
70
215
25
210

FIG. 12

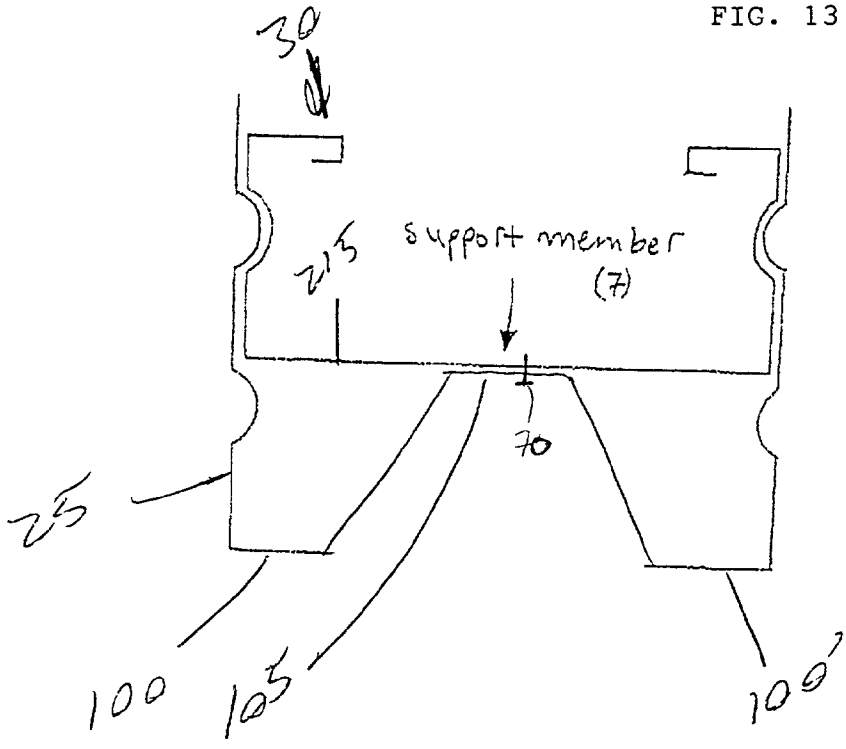

30
215
support member
(7)
70
25
100
105
100'

FIG. 13

CLIP FRAMING SYSTEM

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0001] 1. Field of the Invention

[0002] This invention relates to a building construction assembly, which provides a framing system for adjustably connecting building components and for strengthening structural wall components. By allowing for adjustable connection of these building components, the user will realize significant cost savings from using less labor and material for the same construction needs.

[0003] 2. Description of Related Art

[0004] Prior to the present invention, walls were constructed with vertical studs secured to horizontal headers. When there was a need for an opening in a wall, such as the case with a door or windows, then considerable time, energy, and resources were devoted to creating the window or door opening to avoid the opening in the wall from compromising the structural integrity of the wall. For example, each widow requires its own header running along the top edge of the window. The ends of the window header must be secured to adjacent vertical studs on each side of the window. In commercial construction, the window headers had to be secured to the studs with plates, straps, or brackets, which needed to be bolted and/or welded to both the horizontal and vertical pieces. In addition, brackets were formed when the ends of studs were cut and bent back in a "dog-eared" or "dovetailed" fashion. This extra work to cut, to bolt, and to weld these brackets added considerably to the construction time and the work load. In addition, the construction codes governing many commercial and public buildings require that studs be re-enforced at critical load points in the building by strapping, bracketing, and/or welding together multiple vertical studs. In many cases, the straps and/or brackets themselves must be welded to the studs to meet the government code requirements. Welding together multiple studs to increase the structural integrity of the wall is an extremely labor and material intensive activity that significantly adds to the cost of construction. The need for reenforcing headers over door and window openings sometimes requires that multiple stud pieces and tracks be welded, bracketed, and/or strapped together in similar fashion to form the proper header. Further, the studs and tracks normally arrived at the construction site in oversize lengths, and the studs were usually cut to fit at the job site. Having to spend time and labor to cut these lengths to custom fit the particular application also increased construction costs.

[0005] As the result of the extra welding and strapping required by the re-enforcing of headers and studs, cosmetic problems were created because the above straps, welds, brackets, and plates connecting the studs and headers rose above the planar surface of the wall, which would create bulges in the wall board. To correct for this problem, additional labor and material was needed to tape and to plaster over these indentations on the surface of the wall. Hence, the prior art method was definitely in need of improvement.

[0006] The claimed invention avoids the above problems and provides a significant savings in material and labor costs. To provide similar or even improved structural support, less material is used in the claimed invention; for example, one framing clip system with its internal support member can replace up to 4 or 5 pieces of welded studs. Plus, valuable time and labor would not be wasted in welding and/or fastening these studs together. At the corner of frames, the claimed invention also avoids having to use large brackets, straps, or plates to connect a horizontal header to the vertical studs. By not having these brackets and plates jut out of the wall surface, labor and materials would not be needed to hide these wall imperfections. Further, because this invention allows for fine adjustment due to the frictional connection between the components of the invention, the users of this invention can have the studs and building pieces prefabricated and cut to the custom specifications of the project at the factory. As a result, instead of having to measure and cut the building studs at the work site, the user will simply make fine adjustments during assembly with the prefabricated pieces.

[0007] From the preceding descriptions, it is apparent that the devices currently being used have significant disadvantages. Thus, important aspects of the technology used in the field of invention remain amenable to useful refinement.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] The purpose of the present invention is to provide a framing system for adjustably connecting building components for a building construction. This framing system employs an outer stud, which is frictionally and adjustably connected with a connecting clip, and an interior support member.

[0009] Another purpose of the present invention is to provide a sufficient and easy way to connect horizontal building pieces with vertical pieces in constructing wall openings, such as doorways and window openings.

[0010] Another purpose of the present invention is a way to streamline the construction process by allowing adjustability of the building parts during construction.

[0011] Still a further purpose of the present invention is to reduce the time, labor, and materials used in strengthening and constructing walls in buildings.

[0012] The present invention introduces such refinements. In its preferred embodiments, the present invention has several aspects or facets that can be used independently, although they are preferably employed together to optimize their benefits. All of the foregoing operational principles and advantages of the present invention will be more fully appreciated upon consideration of the following detailed description, with reference to the appended drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0013] **FIG. 1** is an exploded view of the framing system in a vertical and horizontal position;

[0014] **FIG. 2** is a side view of the framing system when assembled for the frame of a door, window, or wall opening;

[0015] **FIG. 3** is a view of the connecting clip;

[0016] **FIG. 4** is a sectional view of the connecting clip removably connected to the outer stud as shown in **FIG. 2**;

[0017] **FIG. 5** is a sectional view of the framing system with the connecting clip, the interior support member, and the outer stud as shown in **FIG. 2**;

[0018] **FIG. 6** is a sectional view of the outer stud in **FIG. 2**;

[0019] **FIG. 7** is a sectional view of the interior support member in **FIG. 2**;

[0020] **FIG. 8** is sectional view of the framing clip in connection with another framing clip in **FIG. 2**;

[0021] **FIG. 9** is a sectional view of a framing clip in **FIG. 2**;

[0022] **FIG. 10** is a perspective and exploded view of the framing clip engaging the end of the stud;

[0023] **FIG. 11** is a perspective view of the second embodiment;

[0024] **FIG. 12** is a terminal end view of the second embodiment; and

[0025] **FIG. 13** is a terminal end view of the third embodiment.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

[0026] Referring to **FIGS. 1 and 2**, there is illustrated a framing system **20** for adjustably connecting building components for the construction of buildings and structures and comprises an outer stud **25**, an interior support member **30**, and a connecting clip **35**.

[0027] Configuration of the Outer Stud

[0028] In FIGS. **4-6**, the outer stud **25** has a web **40** from which two flanges **45**, **45'** extend perpendicularly. This web **40** also has an outer web surface **50** and an inner web surface **55**. Each of said flanges **45**, **45'** includes receptors **60**, **60'**, which are substantially opposite of each other and engage said interior support member **30**. In the preferred embodiment, the receptors **60**, **60'** are curved slightly inward and concave to the surface of the flanges, but can be any configuration that serves the function of a receptor. The receptors **60**, **60'** also can have holes **65**, **65'** for attachment devices **75**, such as self-tapping screws or bolts, for securing the inner surface **75** of the interior support member **30** to the outer stud **25**. The interior support member also has an outer surface **80**. The flanges **45**, **45'** of the outer stud **25** have peripheral ends **85**, **85'**, which also can have holes **90**, **90'** for attachment devices **70**, such as self-tapping screws or bolts, for securing the outer stud **25** to another structure **95** of the building, another stud, or another framing system. The web **40** of the outer stud **25** has at least a first elevation **100** and a second elevation **105**.

[0029] In the embodiment shown in FIGS. **4-6**, the web **40** has at least a first elevation **100**, **100'** and a second elevation **105**. The first and second elevations **100**, **105** are shown in the preferred embodiment as perpendicular to the flanges **45**, **45'**, and the second elevation **105** is parallel to the first elevation **100**. As shown in **FIGS. 8 and 9**, the second elevation **105** also can have a hole **110** that allows an attachment device **70**, such as a self-tapping screw or a bolt, to connect the outer stud **25** with the connecting clip **35** and/or the internal support member **30**. The second elevation **105** of the web **40** is located between the flanges **45**, **45'**.

[0030] In the embodiment, as shown in FIGS. **4-6**, the first elevation **100** has a first edge **115** and a second edge **120**. From the first edge **100**, the web slants towards the second elevation **105** to form a second elevation surface **125**. Then, the web **40** continues from the second elevation surface **125** towards the adjacent next first elevation **100'**. The outer stud **25** also has a terminal end **205**. This terminal end **205** will contact the connecting clip during assembly.

[0031] Inner Support Member

[0032] In FIGS. **5-7**, the interior support member **30** has an inner surface **75** that is substantially perpendicular to the flanges **45**, **45'**. The interior support member **30** also has an outer surface **80**. The inner surface **75** has bracing arms **130**, **130'** extending therefrom toward said flanges **45**, **45'** of the outer stud. The bracing arms **130**, **130'** have extensions **135**, **135'** for engaging said receptors **60**, **60'** of the outer stud's flanges **45**, **45'** with the interior support member **30**. In the embodiment shown in **FIGS. 5 and 7**, the interior support member has at least a third elevation **140**, **140'** and a fourth elevation **145**. The third **140** and fourth **145** elevations are substantially parallel to one another in the preferred embodiment, but the third elevation **140** exists on a different horizontal plane in relation to the fourth elevation **145**. The third elevation **140** has a third edge **150**, **150'** and a fourth edge **155**, **155'**. From the third edge **150** to the fourth edge **155**, the inner surface **75** slants towards the fourth elevation **145** to form a surface **160**. Then, the inner surface **75** continues from the fourth elevation surface **160** towards the adjacent third elevation **140'**.

[0033] The fourth elevation **145** is located between the bracing arms **130**, **130'** and can have a hole **165** for an attachment device **70** to secure said inner surface **75** and the second elevation **105** together. When assembled with the outer stud **25**, the interior support member **30** is substantially flush with said second elevation **105**. An attachment device **70**, such as a self-tapping screw or bolt, secures said inner surface **75** and said second elevation **105** together. The extensions **135**, **135'** of the interior support member **30** can also have holes **170**, **170'** for an attachment device **70**, such as a self-tapping screw or a bolt, to further secure said internal support member **30** and said outer stud **25** together. **FIG. 5** shows how the inner support member **30** fits inside the sides **180** of the connecting clip **35**.

[0034] In **FIGS. 11 and 12**, a second embodiment is shown in which outer stud **25** has a web **210** that has a single elevation. In this second embodiment, the inner support member has a web **215** that is preferred to be of a single elevation. Otherwise, the second embodiment functions substantially the same as the first embodiment with receptors **60**, **60'** engaging the extensions **135** of the inner support member **30**.

[0035] In **FIG. 13**, there is depicted a third embodiment illustrating a hybrid of the first and second embodiments wherein the web has two elevations **100** and **105** wherein the second elevation **105** is secured to a single elevation **215** of the interior support member **30**. The single elevation **215** of interior support member **30** can be secured to the outer stud **25** with an attachment device **70** such as a screw or a bolt.

[0036] Connecting Clip

[0037] In FIGS. **3-5**, the connecting clip **35** has an outer contact surface **175** and sides **180**. The connecting clip also has an inner contact surface **185** and elevation sides **180*a*** and flange sides **180*b***. The elevation sides **180** also have

indentations **190**, **190'** that correspond to the receptors **60**, **60'** on the outer stud's flanges **45**, **45'**. As shown in FIGS. **3-5**, these indentations **190**, **190'** are concave to the outer contact surface **175**. The connecting clip **35** has a tab **195**, which can be bent from the outer contact surface **175** of the connecting clip **35** and can extend therefrom between said flanges **45**, **45'**. This tab **195** is substantially flush with the outer stud's second elevation **105**. An attachment device **70**, such as a self-tapping screw or a bolt, can secure said tab **195** and said second elevation **105** together as shown in **FIG. 10**. The connecting clip **35** can be used with any of the three embodiments shown in the drawings.

[**0038**] The outer contact surface **175** of the connecting clip **35** can have a multitude of holes **200** wherein said connecting clip **35** secures to a building or secures to another assembly perpendicularly as shown in **FIG. 9**. The connecting clip **35** frictionally engages the terminal end **205** of the outer stud **25**. **FIG. 4** shows how the sides **180** of the connecting clip **35** are overlapped by the flanges **45**, **45'** of the outer stud **25**.

[**0039**] The framing assembly's outer stud **25** and interior support member **30** may be in the shape of a "W," but it will be apparent that the invention is not limited by the shape of the outer stud and interior support member. The outer stud, interior support member and connecting clip can be constructed or any metal or metallic building compound. The width of the web **40** of the outer stud **25** is slightly greater than the width of the flange sides **180***b* of the connecting clip **35** so that the sides **180** of the connecting clip **35** can fit within the web **40** of the outer stud **25** but over the extensions **135**, **135'** of the interior support member **30**.

Method of Assembly

[**0040**] The claimed invention can be used in a variety of horizontal or vertical building applications.

[**0041**] Horizontal Assembly

[**0042**] As shown in **FIGS. 1, 2**, and **9**, the user places a connecting clip **35** at each terminal end **205**, **205'** of an outer stud **25**. Because the connecting clip **35** frictionally engages the terminal end **205**, **205'** of the outer stud **25**, the invention affords fine adjustment of the length of the outer stud **25** before the connecting clips **35** are secured with an attachment device **70**, such as a nail, screw, or bolt, to an adjoining building structure **95** or another framing assembly **20**. Because the connecting clip **35** rests substantially flush against an perpendicular outer stud **25'** or adjoining building structure, the horizontal outer stud **25** and connecting clip **35** can be securely connected with attachment devices **70**, and the invention avoids the need for separate plates or brackets or cutting the ends of the studs to connect the vertical stud pieces to the horizontal stud pieces. Since the horizontal studs and the vertical studs form a smooth surface, no finishing plaster work will need to be done in completing the construction project. For heavier duty projects, the internal support member **30** can be used with the connecting clips **35** and the outer studs **25**.

[**0043**] Vertical Application

[**0044**] For vertical applications, as shown in **FIGS. 1, 2, 4, 5**, and **8**, instead of being placed horizontally, the connecting clip **35** will be securely fastened to the floor of the building and will hold the outer stud **25**. The user will frictionally engage the terminal end **205** of the outer stud **25** on the inner contact surface **180** of the connecting clip **35**. At the other end of the outer stud **25**, a second connecting clip **35'** can be placed. Because the connecting clip **35'** frictionally engages the outer stud **25**, there is a level of vertical adjustment possible by sliding the outer stud **25** with the connecting clip **35'** before the connecting clip **35'** is securely fastened to the building structure.

[**0045**] To provide a stronger building structure, the interior support member **30** can be used in both the horizontal or vertical application. Further, the basic framing system of an outer stud and an interior support member with the connecting clips or the terminal caps at each end of the outer stud can be combined with other framing systems to increase the strength of the building components. Multiple framing systems can be simply attached to each other with attachment devices such as self-tapping screws or bolts at the proximal ends of the flanges. Also, with the use of other metal parts, such as a metal bar or a post, different combination of parts can be assembled.

[**0046**] While the invention as described in connection with its preferred embodiments, it will be understood that it is not intended to limit the invention to those embodiments. On the contrary, it is intended to cover all alternatives, modifications, and equivalents as may be included within the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A framing system for adjustably connecting building components comprising:

an outer stud,

an interior support member, and

a connecting clip wherein

said outer stud having a web from which two flanges extend perpendicularly,

said web having at least a first elevation and a second elevation,

said second elevation of said web located between said flanges,

each of said flanges having receptors substantially opposite of each other for engaging said interior support member,

said outer stud having a terminal end;

said interior support member having an inner surface that is substantially perpendicular to said flanges and that is substantially flush with said second elevation of said web,

an attachment device for securing said inner surface and said second elevation together,

said inner surface having bracing arms extending therefrom toward said flanges,

said bracing arms having extensions for engaging said receptors with the interior support member; and,

said connecting clip having a top and sides,

said cap frictionally engaging said terminal end of said outer stud,

said top having a tab extending therefrom between said flanges and that is substantially flush with said second elevation of said web,

an attachment device for securing said tab and said second elevation together.

2. The framing system of claim 1 wherein the outer stud has holes in the receptors for attachment devices for securing the inner surface of the interior support member to the outer stud.

3. The framing system of claim 1 wherein the flanges of the outer stud have a peripheral end, which have holes for attachment devices for securing the outer stud to another structure.

4. The framing system of claim 1 wherein the inner surface of the interior support member has a third elevation and a fourth elevation, and said fourth elevation of said inner surface located between said bracing arms.

5. A framing system comprising:

an outer stud and an interior support member wherein said outer stud includes a web from which two flanges extend perpendicularly;

said web having at least a first elevation and a second elevation;

said second elevation of said web located between said flanges;

each of said flanges having receptors engaging said interior support member;

said interior support member having an inner surface that is substantially flush with said second elevation of said web;

said inner surface having bracing arms extending therefrom toward said flanges; and

said bracing arms including a portion for engaging said receptors of said flanges whereby said framing member may be installed in a wall to provide additional support.

6. The framing system of claim 5 wherein the outer stud has holes in the receptors for attachment devices for securing the inner surface of the interior support member to the outer stud.

7. The framing system of claim 5 wherein the flanges of the outer stud have a peripheral end, which have holes for attachment devices for securing the outer stud to another structure.

8. The framing system of claim 5 wherein the inner surface of the interior support member has a third elevation and a fourth elevation, and

said fourth elevation of said inner surface located between said bracing arms.

9. The framing system of claim 6 wherein said fourth elevation of said inner surface has a hole for the attachment device to secure said inner surface and the second elevation together.

10. The framing system for adjustably connecting building components of claim 6 wherein said bracing arms have extensions, which have a hole for said attachment device to further secure said internal support member and said outer stud together.

11. The framing system for adjustably connecting building components of claim 5 wherein a connecting clip is secured to a terminal end of said framing system.

12. A framing system comprising:

an outer stud and an interior support member wherein said outer stud includes a first web from which two flanges extend perpendicularly;

said first web having at least a first elevation and a second elevation;

said second elevation of said first web located between said flanges;

each of said flanges having receptors engaging said interior support member;

said interior support member having a second web that is substantially flush with said second elevation;

said interior support member having bracing arms extending from said second web of the interior support member toward said flanges; and

said bracing arms including a portion for engaging said receptors of said flanges whereby said framing member may be installed in a wall to provide additional support.

13. A framing system comprising:

an outer stud and an interior support member wherein said outer stud includes a first web from which two flanges extend perpendicularly;

each of said flanges having receptors engaging said interior support member;

said interior support member having a second web;

said second web having bracing arms extending from said second web toward said flanges; and

said bracing arms including a portion for engaging said receptors of said flanges whereby said framing member may be installed in a wall to provide additional support.

* * * * *