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Paisley et al.

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[45] **Aug. 20, 1974**

[54] **PANEL CONSTRUCTION**

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[73] Assignee: **Gray Manufacturing Company**, Orange, Va.

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[52] **U.S. Cl.** **52/204**, 52/241, 52/588, 52/619

[51] **Int. Cl.** **E04b 2/82**

[58] **Field of Search** 52/241, 122, 615, 204, 52/205, 595, 593, 594, 284, 580, 619, 588, 624

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Primary Examiner—Price C. Faw, Jr.

Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Lee C. Robinson

[57] **ABSTRACT**

A metal panel construction having a series of upright panel units which abut one another to form single line joints with a saddle-shaped stilt member beneath each joint. The base members and cooperating structure are arranged such that no part of the assembly need be affixed to the floor. Each panel is formed from a pair of spaced facing sheets which are interconnected along their adjacent vertical edges by a crimped spline which extends substantially the full height of the panel. At door locations two one-piece vertical posts respectively extend along the adjacent edges of the panel units for substantially their full height. A header is interposed between the vertical posts and is detachably held in place to permit its removal without disassembling the posts.

16 Claims, 16 Drawing Figures

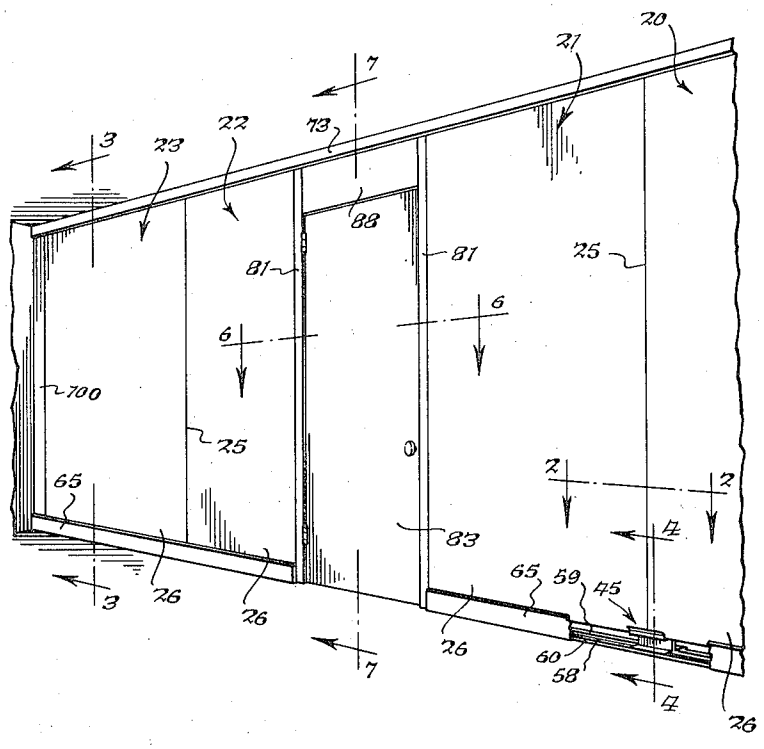


Fig. 1.

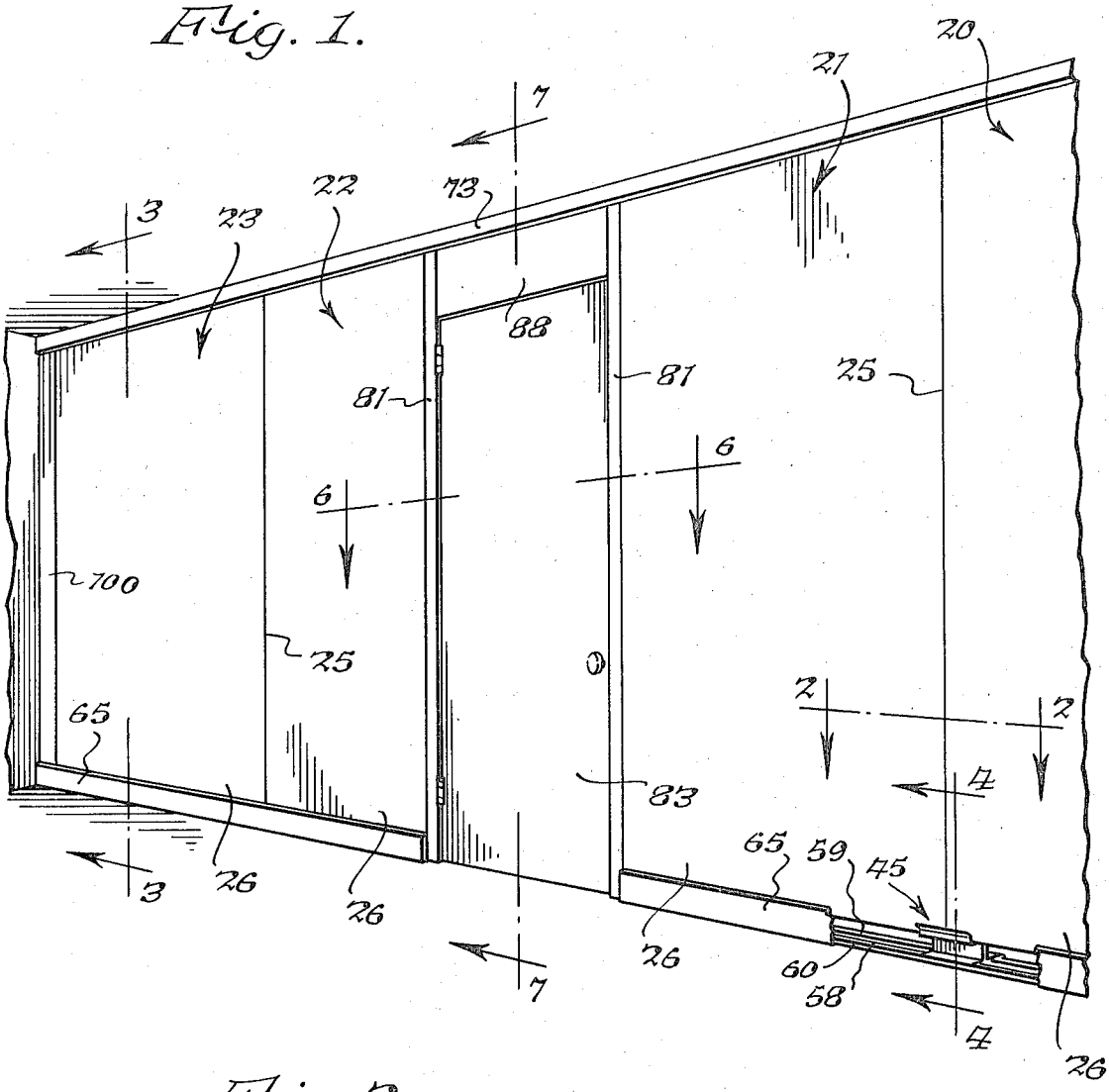
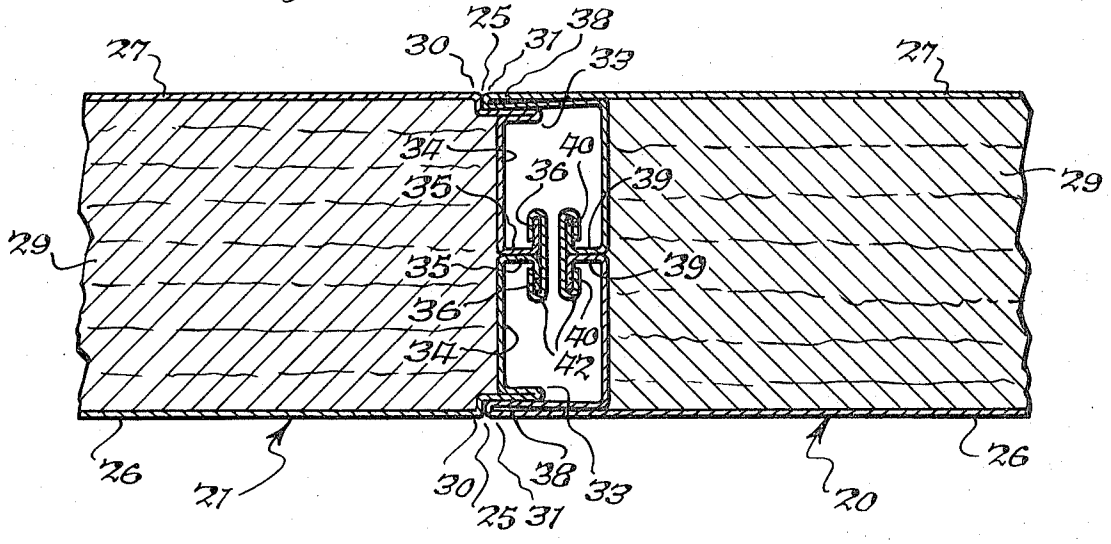

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Fig. 2.


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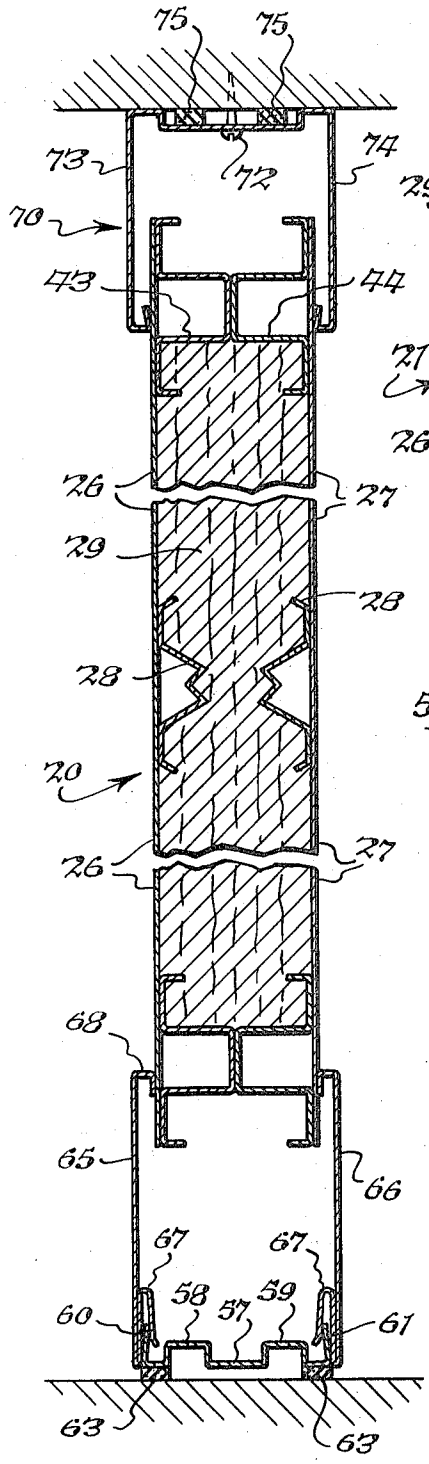


Fig. 3.

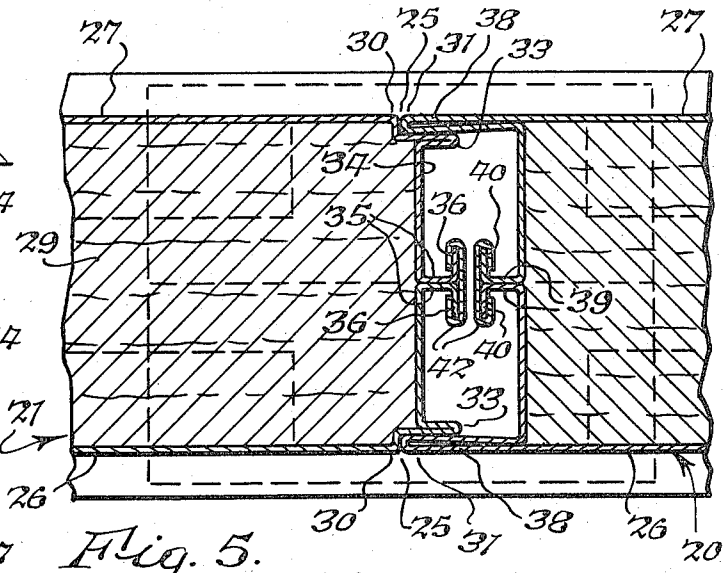


Fig. 5.

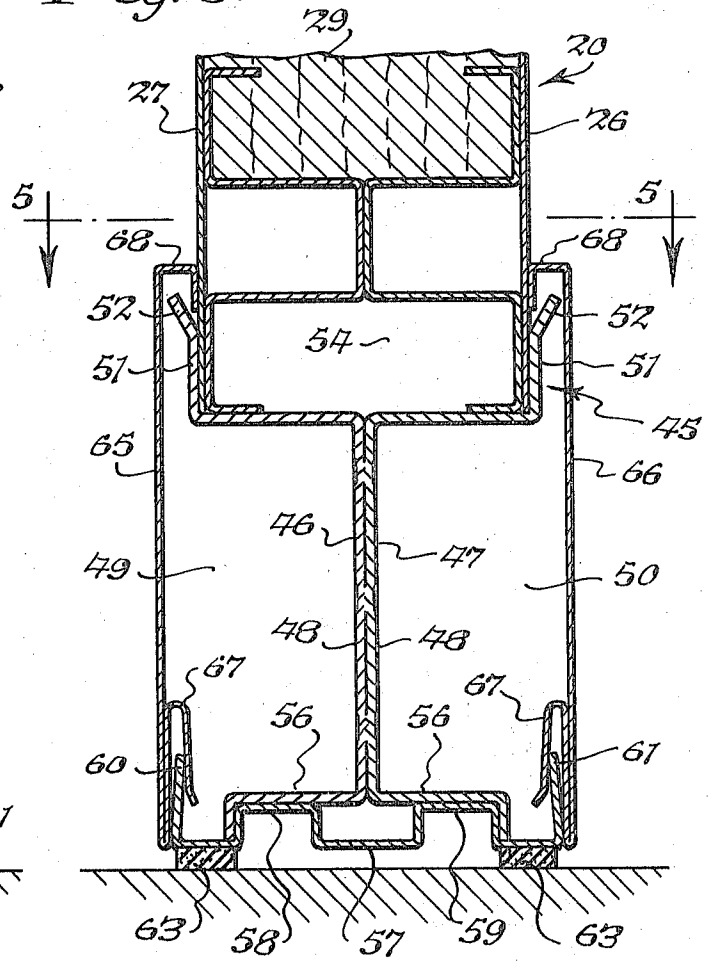
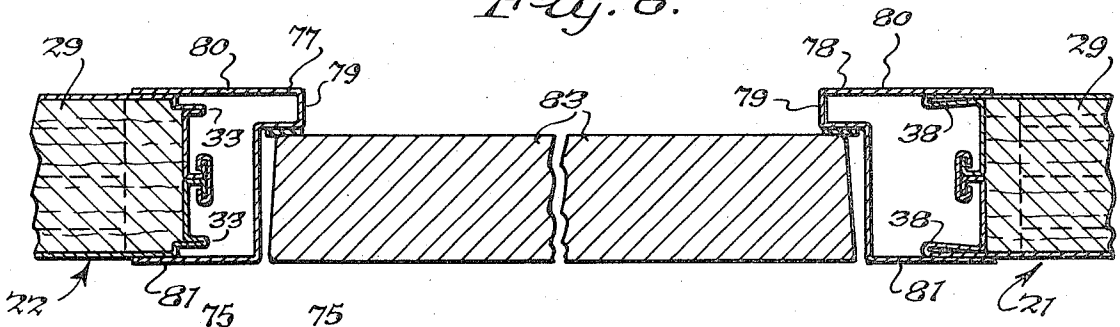


Fig. 4.

Fig. 6.



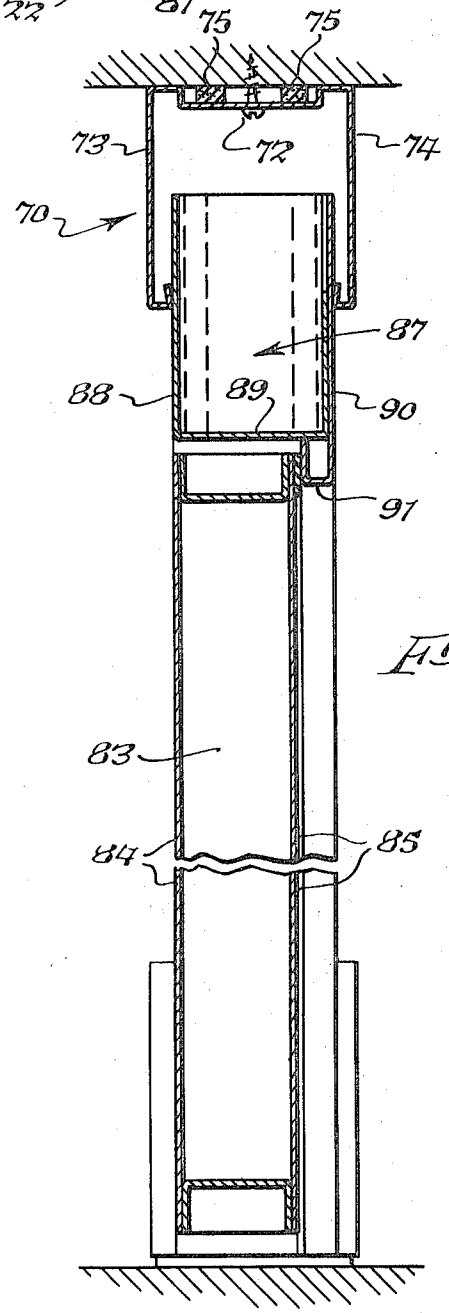


Fig. 7.

Fig. 12.

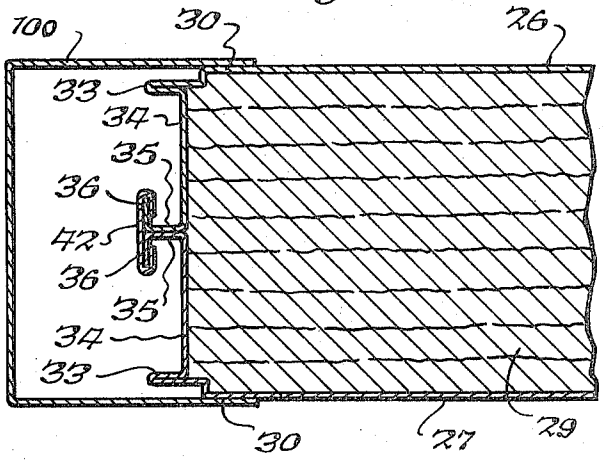


Fig. 13.

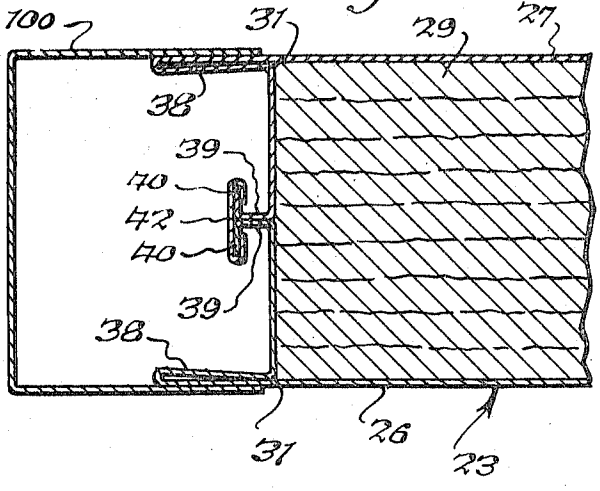
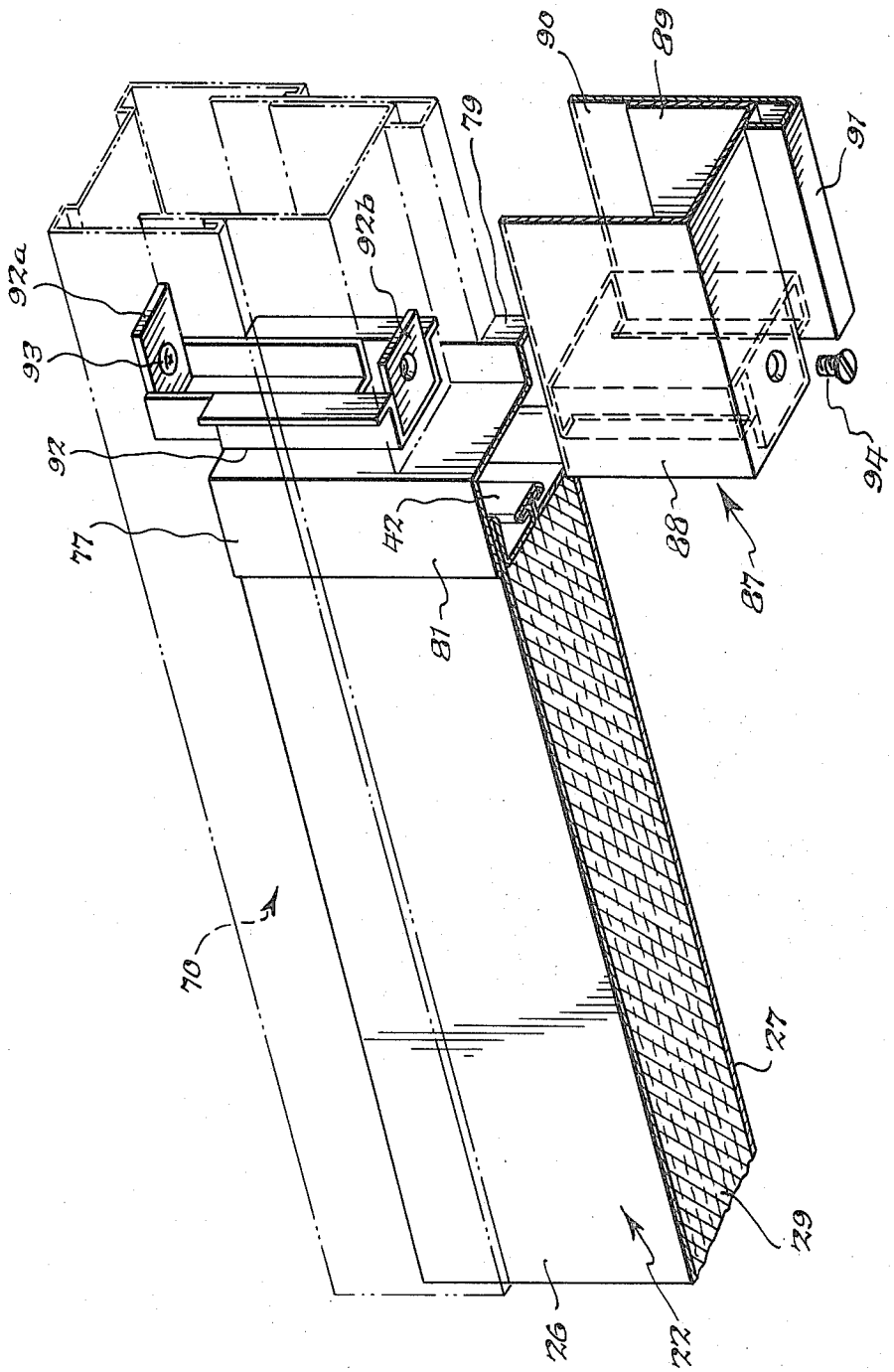


Fig. 7A.



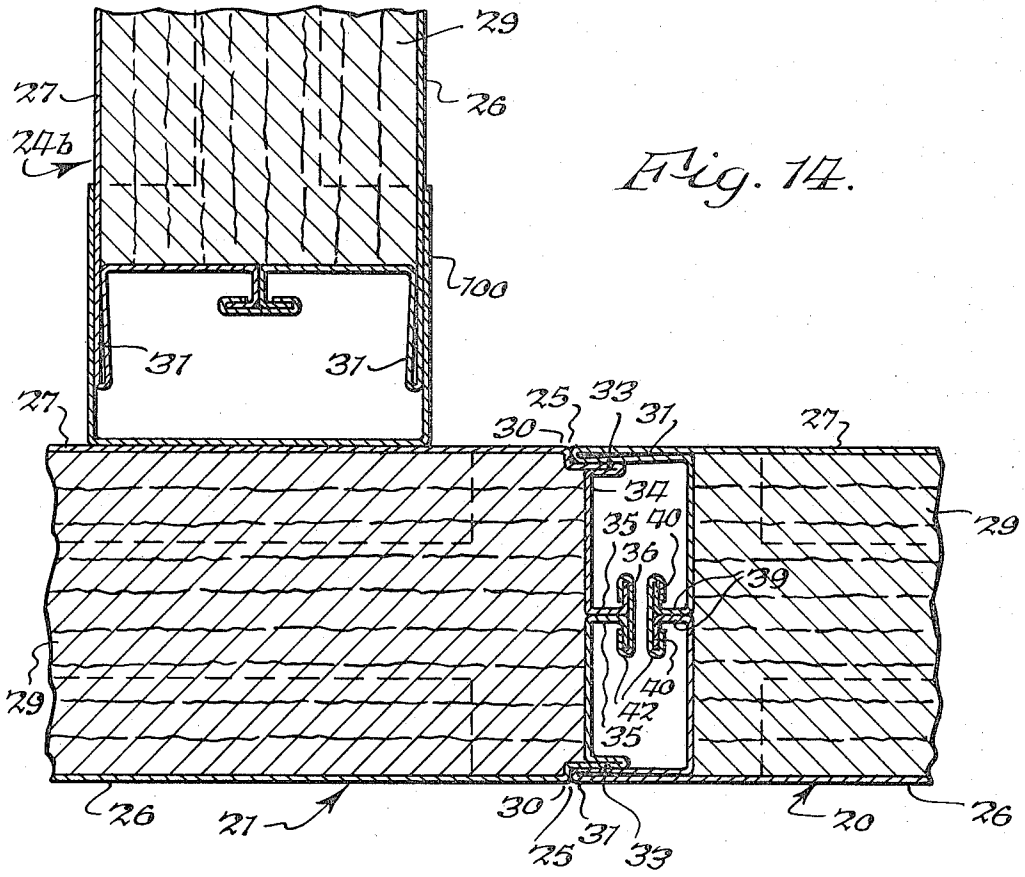


Fig. 14.

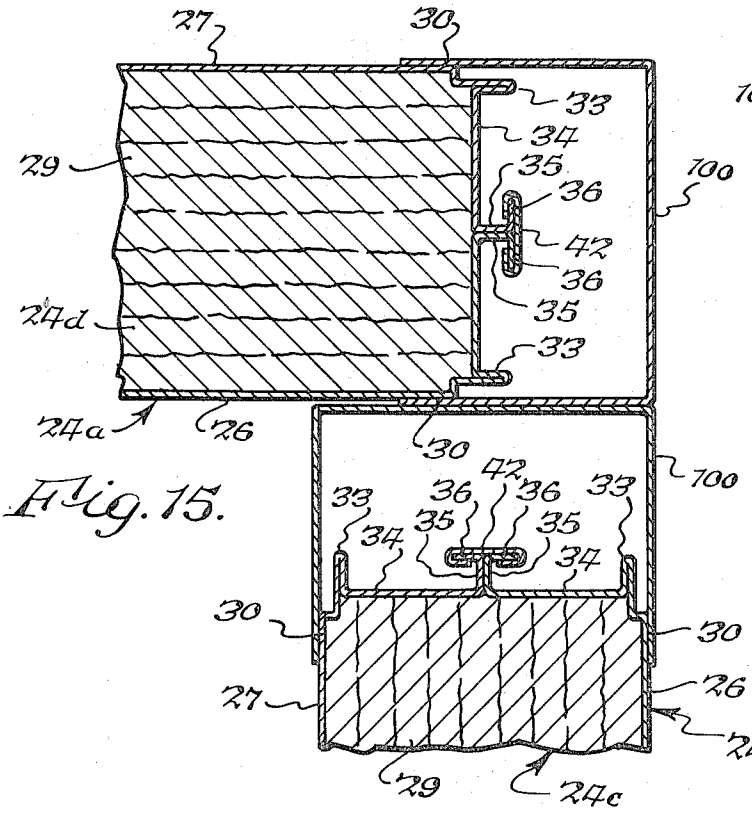
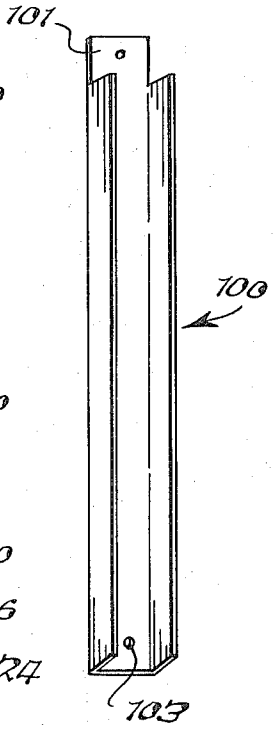


Fig. 15.

Fig. 8.



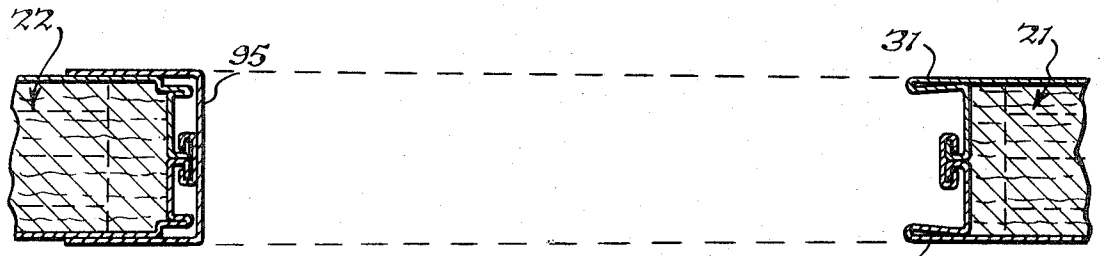


Fig. 9.

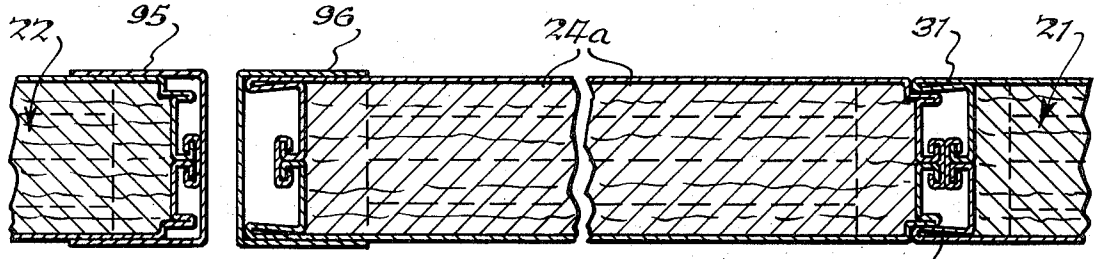


Fig. 10.

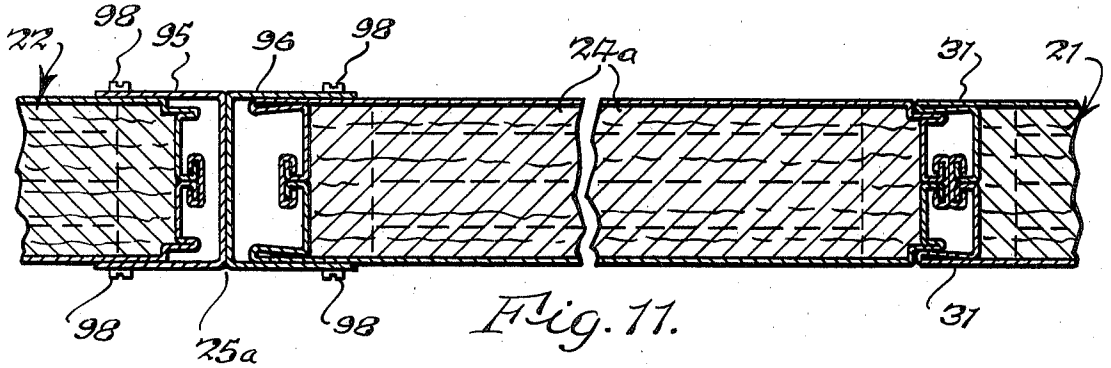


Fig. 11.

PANEL CONSTRUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to panel constructions and more particularly to demountable metal partitions for dividing interior space in a building.

In the manufacture of demountable partition systems for buildings, it is customary to employ individual panel units made up from a pair of spaced facing sheets. In some cases the panel units are separated by vertical connecting posts, while in other installations the units are arranged in abutting relationship with one another to provide a single line joint therebetween. The units are supported by suitable base assemblies affixed to the floor by screws or other fasteners, and the upper portion of the units fit within a pocket in a multicomponent ceiling assembly. At openings such as door locations, a number of specially designed members are employed to form the door jambs, headers and other elements of the frame.

Heretofore, difficulties were encountered in the fabrication and installation of building panel constructions of the foregoing type. As an illustration, many prior panel systems required an unnecessarily large number of different component parts in order to meet the widely varying demands of the building interiors. In addition, and this has been of special moment for prior panel systems having single line joints between the panels, it was difficult to interconnect the facing sheets at the edges of the panels while at the same time enabling the rapid and straightforward positioning of the panels in abutting relationship. A further difficulty has arisen, in many types of panel constructions utilized heretofore, because of the configuration and arrangement of the support for the individual panels, with the result that the constructions lacked adequate rigidity and were difficult to relocate without leaving unsightly markings on the building floor. Still other problems arose in cases in which it was desired to move a door from one location to another, and it was often necessary to disassemble an entire multipanel wall in order to gain access to the door jamb and header for this purpose.

SUMMARY

One general object of this invention, therefore, is to provide a new and improved panel construction for a building.

More specifically, it is an object of this invention to provide such a construction which permits a wide variety of panel configurations with a minimum of component parts.

Another object of this invention is to provide a panel construction of the character indicated in which the edge configuration of the individual panels greatly facilitates the location of the panels in abutting relationship with each other.

A further object of this invention is to provide a wall system in which the need for shims to accommodate building construction variations is substantially eliminated.

An additional object of the invention is to provide a multipanel wall system which may be readily moved to a different location without leaving unsightly markings on the floor.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a wall system in which such components as door frames and headers may be quickly and easily removed without disassembling the adjacent panels.

A still further object of this invention is to provide a panel construction utilizing comparatively simple mechanical components which are economical to manufacture and may be quickly and easily installed in an interior building space.

In one illustrative embodiment of th invention, the panel construction includes a series of upright panel units which abut one another to provide single line joints therebetween. Each of the panel units is made from a pair of spaced facing sheets having inwardly bending edge portions. The adjacent edge portions of each pair of sheets include coextensive intermediate sections in facing contact with each other and outwardly bent end sections extending in a plane perpendicular to the planes of the sheets. A plurality of saddle-shaped stilt members are positioned in spaced-apart relationship with each other beneath the units. Each stilt member is provided with a panel receiving pocket and a central flange defining opposed raceways for electrical wiring and other service conduits. The units are braced at the ceilng by a ceiling runner which includes a channel for receiving the upper portions of the units.

In accordance with a particular feature of the invention, in several advantageous embodiments, a continuous spline member is crimped at spaced intervals along the outwardly bent edge sections of the adjacent edge portions of each panel unit. The edge portions are recessed to accommodate the spline while still permitting the internesting of the adjacent units to provide single line joints.

In accordance with still another feature of the invention, in several important embodiments, at door locations there is provided a pair of one-piece vertical posts. These posts are respectively carried by the adjacent vertical edges of the panel units and extend from the level of the base members to the ceiling. A header is interposed between the posts and is detachably held in place in a unique manner. Upon the removal of the header, a panel unit may be positioned in the opening without the need for disassembling the entire wall.

In accordance with another feature of some embodiments of the invention, the stilt members are located beneath the single line joints between the panel units. The arrangement is such that each stilt member provides support for a pair of adjacent units. The stilt members are positioned on a runner which rests on the building floor but is movable with respect thereto to enable the partition to be readily relocated without leaving unsightly markings on the floor.

The present invention, as well as further objects and features thereof, will be understood more clearly and fully from the following description of a preferred embodiment, when read with reference to the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a fragmentary perspective view of a panel construction in accordance with one illustrative embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 2 is a horizontal sectional view taken along the line 2—2 in FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a vertical sectional view taken along the line 3—3 in FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is an enlarged fragmentary vertical sectional view taken along the line 4—4 in FIG. 1.

FIG. 5 is a fragmentary horizontal sectional view taken along the line 5—5 in FIG. 4.

FIG. 6 is an enlarged horizontal sectional view taken along the line 6—6 in FIG. 1.

FIG. 7 is a vertical sectional view taken along the line 7—7 in FIG. 1.

FIG. 7A is a fragmentary perspective view of a door jamb and associated parts useful in connection with the invention.

FIG. 8 is a perspective view of a channel member employed in erecting transverse panel systems in accordance with the invention.

FIGS. 9, 10 and 11 are enlarged horizontal sectional views similar to FIG. 6 but illustrating three successive steps in the substitution of a panel unit for the door assembly shwn in that figure.

FIGS. 12 and 13 are fragmentary horizontal sectional views of respective connections between the opposite vertical edges of one of the panel units and an interior wall of a building.

FIG. 14 is a fragmentary horizontal sectional view of the intersection between two walls using the panel units.

FIG. 15 is a fragmentary horizontal sectional view showing a corner formed by the panel units.

DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Referring to FIGS. 1–3 of the drawings, the panel construction comprises a series of upright panel units 20, 21, 22 and 23 arranged between the floor and ceiling of an interior building space. In the illustrated embodiment the units 20, 21, 22 and 23 are arrayed in a vertical plane and abut one another to provide single line joints 25 therebetween. Each unit is formed from a pair of spaced-apart facing sheets 26 and 27 which illustratively are fabricated from steel. Although the sheets 26 and 27 are comparatively rigid, they may be reinforced by internal stiffeners 28. The space between the sheets is filled with mineral wool 29 or other comparatively loose insulating material.

Each of the facing sheets 26 and 27 is bent inwardly along its upstanding edges to provide vertical edge portions 30 and 31. The edge portions 30 of the sheets forming a given panel are arranged in a male configuration and internest with the female edge portions 31 of the sheets forming the adjacent panel to provide the single line joints 25. Each portion 30 extends inwardly a short distance from the plane of the corresponding sheet and then proceeds in a plane which is parallel to but offset from the facing sheet plane. The portion 30 is then bent back on itself to form a protrusion 33. An inwardly extending section 34 of the portion 30 is located in a plane transverse to that of the facing sheet, and its inner end is bent in a U-shaped configuration to provide additional sections 35 and 36. The section 35, corresponding to the bight of the U, is in facing contact with the corresponding section 35 of the adjacent facing sheet, and the two sections 35 extend in centrally located planes parallel to the planes of the facing sheets. The end sections 36 of the facing sheets are bent outwardly and lie in a single plane perpendicular to the planes of the sheets.

The edge portions 31 of the facing sheets 26 and 27 are arranged in a female configuration. Each of the portions 31 is bent back on itself to form a protrusion 38, and the edge portion then extends inwardly in a plane transverse to the plane of the facing sheet. The inner end of the edge portion 31 is of U-shaped configuration to provide an intermediate section 39 and an end section 40. The section 39 is arranged in facing contact with the corresponding section 39 of the adjacent facing sheet and extends in a plane parallel to the plane of the sheet. The section 40, on the other hand, is bent outwardly in the transverse direction and is coplanar with the adjacent section 40. The plane of these latter sections is perpendicular to the planes of the facing sheets.

A continuous spline 42 is affixed to each of the adjacent vertical edge portions 30 and 31 to hold the edge portions together. The spline 42 extends substantially the full height of the panels and is disposed around the corresponding end sections 36 and 40 to provide a secure connection therebetween. The spline is crimped in place at spaced intervals which illustratively are of the order of 12 inches apart.

The upper and lower edges of the facing sheets 26 and 27 are secured together by horizontal frame members 43 and 44. The central web portions of the members 43 and 44 are connected by spot welding or other suitable technique, and the edge portions of the members are similarly connected to the corresponding sheet 26 or 27. The members 43 and 44 serve to provide additional lateral rigidity for the panels.

The assembled panel units 20, 21, 22 and 23 are supported at spaced intervals by saddle-shaped stilt members 45. As best shown in FIG. 4, each of the stilt members 45 comprises two generally U-shaped channels 46 and 47 which are rigidly affixed together to provide an upstanding, centrally located flange 48. The flange 48 partially defines opposed raceways 49 and 50 on opposite sides of the flange for electrical wiring or other service conduits. The upper portion 51 of each of the channels 46 and 47 is bent outwardly and then upwardly with an integrally formed retaining clip 52 at its upper end. The portions 51 form a panel receiving pocket 54 which accommodates the lower edge of the panel unit.

The lower portions 56 of the stilt member channels 46 and 47 are bent outwardly and then downwardly and are supported by a comparatively thin floor channel 57. The floor channel 57 includes two ridges 58 and 59 and a pair of upstanding flanges 60 and 61 along its outer edges which are canted in an inward direction. The ridges 58 and 59 respectively engage the channels 46 and 47 and serve as guides for the stilt members 45 to facilitate the sliding of the stilt members along the floor channel to their proper positions.

The channel 57 rests on the building floor and is readily movable with respect thereto such that a given panel installation may be quickly and easily changed from one location to another. In some instances, particularly in cases in which there is no carpet beneath the channel 57, the channel may be provided with strips of foam tape 63 adhesively affixed to its lower surface. The tape 63 acts as a sound and light seal and provides a degree of friction between the assembly and the floor to facilitate installation.

Two removable base members 65 and 66 extend along opposite sides of the stilts 45 to enclose the race-

ways 49 and 50. Each of the base members 65 and 66 is provided with an integrally formed clip 67 at its lower end which fits over the corresponding canted flange 60 or 61 on the floor runner 57. The upper ends 68 of the base members are bent over and are held in place against the panel facing sheets 26 and 27 by the canted flanges.

The individual panel units 20, 21, 22 and 23 are supported at the ceiling by a ceiling runner 70 (FIG. 3). The runner 70 is in the form of a comparatively deep channel which is secured to the ceiling by screws 72. The flanges 73 and 74 of the runner 70 serve as cornices and extend downwardly below the upper edges of the panel units by a distance sufficient to provide for variations in ceiling height. Strips of foam tape 75 are interposed between the runner 70 and the ceiling to provide a sound and light barrier.

To assemble the partition, the runner 70 is affixed to the ceiling along the partition location, and the channel 57 is placed loosely on the floor beneath the runner. The stilt members 45 are disposed at intervals along the channel 57. The upper portions of the panel units 20, 21, 22 and 23 are then successively inserted in the pocket formed between the ceiling runner flanges 73 and 74, and the lower portions of the units are located in the pockets 54 within the stilt members 45. For many types of installations the stilt members advantageously are positioned beneath the single line joints 25 between adjacent panel units, such that each stilt member provides for a pair of adjacent units. Upon the installation of suitable service conduits within the raceways 49 and 50, the bases 65 and 66 are clipped in position to complete installation.

At door locations a pair of one piece vertical posts 77 and 78 (FIG. 6) are respectively disposed along the exposed edges of the adjacent panel units 21 and 22. The posts 77 and 78 are of substantially identical construction and serve as vertical framing members for the door. Each of the posts is of generally channel-shaped configuration but includes an integrally formed ridge 79. The posts extend substantially the entire distance from the floor to the ceiling with their lower ends adjacent the stilt members 45 and their upper ends adjacent the ceiling runner 70. Each post is provided with side flanges 80 and 81 which are spaced apart by a distance equal to the thickness of the adjacent panel unit. A door 83 is hinged in the usual manner to the post 77. In the illustrated embodiment the door is fabricated from a pair of spaced metal facing sheets 84 and 85, although in other arrangements the door may be of wood or similar material.

A header 87 is interposed in the space between the upper edge of the door 83 and the ceiling runner 70. The header 87 includes a facing sheet 88 which is bent adjacent its lower portion to provide a U-shaped flange 89. The opposite surface of the header 87 is defined by a facing sheet 90 having a ridge 91 at its lower end which extends beneath the flange 89 and forms a continuation of the ridges 79 on the posts 77 and 78. The sheet 90 is spot welded or otherwise secured to the flange 89 on the sheet 88 to form a unitary assembly.

The header 87 is held in place by two jack posts 92 (FIG. 7A). These posts are respectively affixed to the upper portions of the framing posts 77 and 78 and are each provided with upper and lower horizontal flanges 92*a* and 92*b*. The upper flange 92*a* is connected to the ceiling runner 70 by a self-drilling screw 93. The lower flange 92*b*, on the other hand, is located in position to engage the horizontal portion of the header flange 89 and is removably connected thereto by a screw 94. Upon insertion of the header 87 in the pocket formed by the ceiling runner flanges 73 and 74, the header is fastened to the respective jack posts 92 by two of the screws 94 to hold the header in place. The arrangement is such that the header may be readily installed and removed through the use of only two screws without the necessity for removing the vertical framing posts 77 and 78.

In cases in which it is desired to remove a door from its existing location, the header 87 is unscrewed and slid from its position between the ceiling runner flanges 73 and 74, and the jack posts 92 and the framing posts 77 and 78 are detached. A panel unit 24a may then be readily inserted within the resulting open space between the adjacent panel units 21 and 22 by the sequence shown in FIGS. 9–11. A vertical channel 95 is first placed over the exposed edge of the panel unit 22, for example, and a similar channel 96 is placed over the adjacent edge of the panel unit 24a. The opposite edge of the panel unit 24*a*, illustratively the male edge, is then inserted in interlocking relationship with the exposed female edge of the panel 21 such that the panels 21, 22 and 24a are in coplanar relationship with each other as shown in FIG. 10. The vertical channels 95 and 96 are thereafter moved into abutting relationship to provide a single line joint 25a (FIG. 11), and each channel is held in place by upper and lower self-drilling screws 98.

In some cases it is desired to position one of the vertical edges of a given panel unit, such as the unit 24*b* in FIG. 14, for example, in abutting relationship with an existing partition installation. For this purpose there is employed a channel 100 which is best shown in FIG. 8. The channel 100 is of conventional configuration but includes an upstanding tab 101 at its upper end and a screw opening 103 adjacent its lower end. The channel 100 is affixed to the facing sheet 26 or 27 of the existing partition by a single self-drilling screw (not shown) within the opening 103. The opening location is disposed below the level of the bases 65 and 66, such that the screw is hidden from view in the completed installation. The vertical edge of the panel unit 24*b* is then inserted within the channel 100. In its assembled position the channel member 100 is interposed between the facing sheet of the existing partition and the vertical edge of the unit 24*b*. The channel member engages both the facing sheet and the vertical edge with the tab 101 disposed behind the depending flange of the ceiling runner 70 to hold the upper portion of the channel member in place.

The channel 100 also may be employed in cases in which a given panel unit extends transversely from an existing building wall. The channel is arranged to accommodate either the male edge of the panel unit, as illustrated in FIG. 12, or the female edge as illustrated in FIG. 13.

The channel 100 is of additional utility in cases in which the panel units are arranged to form an exposed corner. Referring to FIG. 15, there are shown two panel units 24*c* and 24*d* which meet one another at a right angle. The exposed vertical edges of the units 24*c* and 24*d* are each provided with one of the channels 100, and the center portion of the channel on the unit

24c is screwed or otherwise secured to the adjacent side flange of the channel on the unit 24d. Succeeding panel units are then connected to the units 24c and 24d in the manner described above to complete the desired partitions.

One of the advantages of the panel construction is that the basic partition unit includes only five different-shaped assemblies. Thus, a given wall may be erected through the use of only the ceiling runners 70, the floor runners 57, the panel units 20–23, the stilt members 45 and the bases 65 and 66. For door frames, only four additional assemblies need be employed, that is, the vertical posts 77 and 78, the jack posts 92 and the headers 87. The use of the multi-purpose structural channel 100 permits the adaptation of the panel system for an extremely wide variety of floor plans.

The terms and expressions which have been employed are used as terms of description and not of limitation, and there is no intention in the use of such terms and expressions of excluding any equivalents of the features shown and described or portions thereof, but it is recognized that various modifications are possible within the scope of the invention claimed.

What is claimed is:

1. A panel construction comprising, in combination:

a series of upright panel units which abut one another to provide a single line joint therebetween, each of the panel units including a pair of spaced facing sheets with inwardly bent vertical edge portions, the adjacent edge portions of each pair of sheets having end sections extending in a single plane perpendicular to the planes of the sheets;

spline means affixed to the end sections of each pair of adjacent edge portions and constituting the sole means for holding the edge portions together;

a plurality of stilt members respectively positioned in spaced-apart relationship with each other beneath the panel units in supporting relationship therewith;

means for supporting the stilt members; and

means including a ceiling runner having a channel for receiving the upper portions of the panel units.

2. A panel construction for an interior building space, the panel construction comprising, in combination:

a series of upright panel units which abut one another to provide a single line joint therebetween, each of the panel units including a pair of spaced facing sheets with inwardly bent vertical edge portions, the adjacent edge portions of each pair of sheets having coextensive intermediate sections in facing contact with each other and extending in planes parallel to the plane of the sheet and having outwardly bent end sections extending in a plane perpendicular to the planes of the sheets;

spline means extending along substantially the full length of the outwardly bent end sections of each pair of adjacent edge portions and constituting the sole means for holding the edge portions together;

a plurality of stilt members respectively positioned in spaced-apart relationship with each other beneath the panel units in supporting relationship therewith;

means resting on the building floor for supporting the base members; and

means including a ceiling runner having a channel for receiving the upper portions of the panel units.

3. A panel construction as defined in claim 2, in which the spline means is crimped at spaced intervals to the outwardly bent end sections of the corresponding edge portions.

4. A panel construction for an interior building space, the panel construction comprising, in combination:

a series of upright panel units in coplanar relationship with one another, each of the panel units including a pair of spaced facing sheets with inwardly bent vertical edge portions, the adjacent edge portions of each pair of sheets having end sections extending in a plane perpendicular to the planes of the sheets;

spline means affixed to the end sections of each pair of adjacent edge portions and constituting the sole means for holding the edge portions together;

a plurality of stilt members respectively positioned in spaced-apart relationship with each other beneath the panel units in supporting relationship therewith;

means resting on the building floor but movable in detached relationship therewith for supporting the stilt members; and

means including a ceiling runner having a channel for receiving the upper portions of the panel units.

5. A panel construction for an interior building space, the panel construction comprising, in combination:

a series of upright panel units which abut one another to provide a single line joint therebetween, each of the panel units including a pair of spaced facing sheets with inwardly bent vertical edge portions, the adjacent edge portions of each pair of sheets having coextensive intermediate sections in facing contact with each other and extending in planes parallel to the planes of the sheet and having outwardly bent end sections extending in a plane perpendicular to the planes of the sheets;

means affixed to the outwardly bent end sections of each pair of adjacent edge portions for holding the edge portions together;

a plurality of stilt members respectively positioned in spaced-apart relationship with each other beneath the single line joints between the panel units in supporting relationship therewith;

means resting on the building floor but removable in detached relationship therewith for supporting the stilt members; and

means including a ceiling runner having a channel for receiving the upper portions of the panel units.

6. A panel construction as defined in claim 5, in which each of the stilt members includes a panel receiving pocket and a central flange defining opposed raceways beneath the pocket.

7. A panel construction comprising, in combination:

a series of upright panel units in coplanar relationship with one another, each of the panel units including a pair of spaced facing sheets with inwardly bent vertical edge portions;

spline means affixed to the adjacent edge portions of each of the panel units and constituting the sole means for holding the edge portions together;

a plurality of stilt members positioned in spacedapart relationship with each other beneath the panel units in supporting relationship therewith;

means resting on the building floor for supporting the stilt members;

means including a ceiling runner having a channel for receiving the upper portions of the panel units;

an additional upright panel unit spaced from one of the panel units in said series to form a door opening therebetween; and

a door frame within said opening, the door frame including a pair of one-piece vertical posts in respective engagement with the adjacent vertical edge of portions of said one panel unit and said additional panel unit and extending from the level of said stilt members to the level of said ceiling runner.

8. A panel construction as defined in claim **7,** in which the adjacent edge portions of each pair of panel facing sheets include coextensive intermediate sections in facing contact with each other and extending in planes parallel to the planes of the sheets, the adjacent edge portions additionally including outwardly bent end sections extending in a single plane perpendicular to the planes of the sheets.

9. A panel construction as defined in claim **8,** in which the means for holding the adjacent edge portions together comprises a continuous spline crimped at intervals to the outwardly bent end sections of sad adjacent edge portions.

10. A panel construction for an interior building space having a floor and a ceiling, th panel construction comprising, in combination:

a series of upright panel units in coplanar relationship with one another, each of the panel units including a pair of spaced facing sheets with inwardly bent vertical edge portions;

means affixed to the adjacent edge portions of each of the panel units for holding the edge portions together;

means resting on the building floor for supporting the panel units;

means including a ceiling runner for receiving the upper portions of the panel units;

an additional upright panel unit spaced from one of the panel units in said series to form a door opening therebetween;

a door frame within said opening, the door frame including a pair of one-piece vertical posts respectively carried by the adjacent vertical edge portions of said one panel unit and said additional panel unit and extending from adjacent the floor to the ceiling; and

header means interposed between the vertical posts and detachably connected to the ceiling runner to permit removal of the header means without removing the posts.

11. A panel construction as defined in claim **10** which additionally comprises:

at least o0e further upright panel unit extending in a plane transverse to the plane of said series of panel units, the further panel unit having an edge portion in juxtaposition with one of the facing sheets of a panel unit in said series; and

an upright channel member interposed between the edge portion of the further panel unit and said one facing sheet, the channel member engaging both said edge portion of said further unit and said one facing sheet.

12. A panel construction for an interior building space, the panel construction comprising, in combination:

a series of upright panel units which abut one another to provide a single line joint therebetween, each of the panel units including a pair of spaced facing sheets with inwardly bent vertical edge portions;

means affixed to the adjacent edge portions of each of the panel units for holding the edge portions together;

means resting on the building floor but movable in detached relationship therewith for supporting the panel units;

means including a ceiling runner having a channel for receiving the upper portions of the panel units;

an additional upright panel unit spaced from one of the panel units in said series to form a door opening therebetween;

a door frame within said opening, the door frame including a pair of one-piece vertical posts in respective engagement with the adjacent vertical edge portions of said one panel unit and said additional panel unit, each of the vertical posts being substantially coextensive with the corresponding edge portion; and

header means interposed between the vertical posts and detachably connected to the ceiling runner to permit removal of the header means without removing the posts.

13. A panel construction as defined in claim **12,** in which the door frame further comprises:

means suspended from the ceiling runner for supporting the header means.

14. A panel construction for an interior building space, the panel construction comprising, in combination:

a series of upright panel units which abut one another to provide a single line joint therebetween each of the panel units including a pair of spaced facing sheets with inwardly bent vertical edge portions;

spline means affixed to the adjacent edge portions of each of the panel units and constituting the sole means for holding the edge portions together;

a plurality of stilt members positioned in spacedapart relationship with each other beneath the single line joints between the panel units in supporting relationship therewith, each of the stilt members having a panel receiving pocket and a central flange defining opposed raceways beneath the pocket;

means resting on the building floor for supporting the stilt members;

means including a ceiling runner having a channel for receiving the upper portions of the panel units;

an additional upright panel unit spaced from one of the panel units in said series to form a door opening therebetween;

a door frame within said opening, the door frame including a pair of one-piece vertical posts in respective engagement with the adjacent vertical edge portions of said one panel unit and said additional panel unit and extending from the level of said stilt members to the level of said ceiling runner; and

header means interposed between the vertical posts and detachably connected to the ceiling runner to

permit removal of the header means without removing the posts.

15. A panel construction for an interior building space, the panel construction comprising, in combination:

a series of upright panel units which abut one another to provide a single line joint therebetween, each of the panel units including a pair of spaced facing sheets with inwardly bent vertical edge portions, the adjacent edge portions of each pair of sheets having end sections extending in a plane perpendicular to the planes of the sheets;

means affixed to the end sections of each pair of adjacent edge portions for holding the edge portions together;

a plurality of stilt members positioned in spacedapart relationship with each other beneath the single line joints between the panel units in supporting relationship therewith, each of the stilt members having a panel receiving pocket and a central flange defining opposed raceways beneath the pocket;

means resting on the building floor in detached relationship therewith for supporting the stilt members;

means including a ceiling runner having a channel for receiving the upper portions of the panel units;

an additional upright panel unit spaced from one of the panel units in said series to form a door opening therebetween;

a door frame within said opening, the door frame including a pair of one-piece vertical posts respectively carried by the adjacent vertical edges of said one panel unit and said additional panel unit and extending from the level of said stilt members to the level of said cei ing runner; and

header means interposed between the vertical posts and detachably connected to the ceiling runner to permit removal of the header means without removing the posts.

16. A panel construction for an interior building space, the panel construction comprising, in combination:

a series of upright panel units which abut one another to provide a single line joint therebetween, each of the panel units including a pair of spaced facing sheets with inwardly bent vertical edge portions, the adjacent edge portions of each pair of sheets having coextensive intermediate sections in facing contact with each other and extending in planes parallel to the planes of the sheets and having outwardly bent end sections extending in a plane perpendicular to the planes of the sheets;

spline means extending along substantially the full length of the outwardly bent end sections of each pair of adjacent edge portions, the spline means being crimped at intervals to said end sections and constituting the sole means for holding the edge portions together, the spline means being located wholly within the peripheral outline of the corresponding panel unit;

a plurality of stilt members respectively positioned in spaced-apart relationship with each other beneath the single line joints between the panel units in supporting relationship therewith, each of the stilt members having a panel receiving pocket and a central flange defining opposed raceways beneath the pocket;

means resting on the building floor but movable in detached relationship therewith for supporting the stilt members;

means including a ceiling runner having a channel for receiving the upper portions of the panel units;

an additional upright panel unit spaced from one of the panel units in said series to form a door opening therebetween;

a door frame within said opening, the door frame including a pair of one-piece vertical posts in respective engagement with the adjacent vertical edge portions of said one panel unit and said additional panel unit and extending from the level of said stilt members to the level of said ceiling runner; and

header means interposed between the vertical posts and detachably connected to the ceiling runner to permit removal of the header means without removing the posts.

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