Building 104 Overview (UIW Office Building/Industrial Relations Building)

Physical Description
Designed by prominent San Francisco architects George Percy and Frederick Hamilton, this red-brick Renaissance Revival style building is two stories high with a full basement and attic. It fronts 20th Street and is the third in the line of architect-designed buildings along this street. Built in 1896, it is the earliest of architect-designed buildings.

It has a hipped, clay tile roof and wood, one-over-one, double-hung windows. It measures 150'-6" long, by 49'-6" wide, by 60' tall, and contains 37,641 square-feet. Originally "T"-shaped, with the primary rectangular mass on 20th Street and a projecting center bay at the rear, the rear void areas have been infilled to create a rectangular footprint. The primary (south) façade features two-story brick arches, each containing paired, first- and second-story windows, which dominate the front (20th Street) and two side façades. These arches are set above a rock-faced, rusticated, concrete base, dressed to imitate sandstone. Actual sandstone accents the building as quoins, water table, keystones, windowsills, lintels and an upper-level string course. A sandstone string course separates the second floor from the attic. Deeply set, paired, rectangular windows with shouldered molded brick and terra cotta surrounds punctuate this level. A copper modillioned cornice, in poor condition, tops the building.

A finely-detailed sandstone Renaissance-style portico at the front entrance features banded rustication, engaged Ionic columns, and a projecting cornice over the arched opening. The entry recess includes a coffered, barrel-vaulted ceiling and polished marble walls. The arched sandstone door surround with voussiors frames the wood-paneled, glazed front doors with transom and sidelites. The original door hardware has been removed.

The original rear (north) projection is flanked on either side by infill additions constructed in 1941. A band of multi-lite steel sash windows with central ventilator sash are located at both the second and third stories. The original (1896) central portion features seven wood sash windows of different types and one personnel door at the ground level. The east addition also has personnel entrance doors at the ground level. Both additions have one-over-one, double hung wood windows at the ground level, and are covered with metal cladding, pressed to imitate brick on the upper two levels, and wood lap siding at the ground level. A metal fire escape attaches to the east end of the addition.

The interior of Building 104 includes three floors over a basement. The first level has linoleum floors, plaster walls and ceilings, and wood window trim. At the east end is an open office area with columns and some partial-height wood and glass partitions. The lobby at the main entrance exhibits World War II-era alterations including vinyl asbestos tile (VAT) flooring, wood paneling at the walls, and streamlined horizontal steel railing at the lobby stair hall. Similar-vintage alterations are found at the west end of the first floor including wood-paneled walls and built-in wood counters.

The second floor is a single column-free space with (non-contributing) carpeted floors, plaster walls, and a plaster ceiling. There are three private offices at the east end with mid-twentieth-century (possibly WWII) alterations, including wall trim, flush doors, and blond-wood wainscoting. Wood and glass partitions are also located at the east end. Stairhall features at the second floor include glass dividers and a safe with the words "National Safe & Lock Co., Cleveland, O." The second floor also features a WWII-era photo mural of shipbuilding and ship yard workers.

The third floor contains a single large room with partial-height wood-and-glass partitions along the east, west, and south sides. The linoleum flooring is in poor condition. Walls are of painted brick, and

the ceiling is constructed of wood with wood cross trusses in both the north-south and east-west directions. The ceiling has a total of 17 skylights.

Historic/Current Use
From the mid 1880s until 1896 the Union Iron Works executive offices were located in a corner of the western portion of the machine shop, Building 113; offices for bookkeepers, draftsman, and clerks were located in the basement of the boiler house, in the eastern portion of Building 113. The firm also had administrative offices in downtown San Francisco; in 1895, these downtown offices were located at 222 Market Street.[1]

In 1896, the company constructed a new office building to achieve many goals: to house its offices in one place, including an "elegant suite" for the executives; to consolidate the shipyard's two drafting rooms (shipyard and engineering) into one efficient system; and to relieve bookkeepers, draftsman, and clerks, who had been toiling in the dark basement of the boiler house, where, according to the *San Francisco Call*, "they were compelled to work by gaslight during the daytime."[2]

A notable functional feature of Building 104 at the turn of the twentieth century was an iron bridge spanning 20th Street, creating "ready access" between Building 104 and the machine shop in Building 113.[3] However, no physical evidence of this bridge could be found at either building.

Storage rooms occupied the basement. The ground floor had a furnace, chemical laboratory, check house, and storeroom. The first floor contained offices. To the west of the entrance hallway were the offices of the shipyard manager, secretary, and cashier. To the east were offices for Navy inspectors. The first floor also had a central telephone station with 32 circuits to various parts of the plant, and to the downtown offices of Union Iron Works.[4]

The most noteworthy feature of the four-story office building was the new drafting (or draughting) department, occupying the entire second floor. The drafting system was considered so exemplary at the time that *Engineering Record* devoted an entire article to it in March 1900. The UIW drafting department shared the second floor with U. S. Navy constructors' drafters, who had separate drafting rooms in the western portion. The UIW drafting room contained three departments: Shipbuilding, Engineering, and Electrical.[5]

Before construction of Building 104, drawings in both the shipyard and engineering departments had been stored in chests of drawers, and by 1895 there were about 60,000 drawings in a "deplorable state of preservation." Two women employees – Miss Turrell and Mrs. Davidson – spent two years indexing about 25,000 of the drawings, storing them in paper cylinders in custom-built galvanized steel racks, and developing a bookkeeping system for keeping track of them as they circulated throughout the shipyard.[6]

Tracings were stored on the third level of a three-story fire-proof vault. On the ground floor the vault served as a safe for the chemical laboratory. On the first story it was the cashier's safe. At the

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[1] "Industry 1895," in Ruth Teiser Manuscript Collection, Series 6, Subseries 3, Box 146, File 10, Folder 10, J. Porter Shaw Library, San Francisco Maritime Historical Park; *San Francisco Call*, July 26, 1896, p. 10/2.
[2] *San Francisco Call*, July 26, 1896, p. 10/2.
[3] *The Engineering Record*, Vol. 41, March 10, 1900, p. 227.
[4] *The Engineering Record*, Vol. 41, March 10, 1900, pp. 226-228; Sanborn Map Company, Vol. 6, Sheet 591.
[5] *Marine Engineering* (January 1900), 16; *The Engineering Record*, Vol. 41, March 10, 1900, pp. 226-228; Sanborn Map Company, Vol. 5 (1899), sheet 541.
[6] *The Engineering Record*, Vol. 41, March 10, 1900, 227.

drafting-room floor it held all the tracings.[7] The third floor housed the blue printing and photography departments, a laying-out floor space for the shipyard department, several offices, and a room for the electrical draftsmen. Most of the drawings were circulated in blue-print form, but photography was used to reduce drawings to a small size for mailing.[8]

In 1917 a new Main Office building (Building 101) was built at the corner of 20th and Illinois Streets. By 1938 (and perhaps earlier) Building 104 was referred to as the Navy Office building.[9]

In 1941, the rear, north elevation was infilled from the central staircase to the east and west corners. The 1945 Bethlehem Steel Co. General Plan, calls the building "Navy Office-Hospital." The hospital most likely was introduced in 1941 at the time of the addition. The 1945 Plan shows a sub-basement with storage spaces and vaults, as well as unexcavated spaces. The basement floor contained an office for Navy Inspectors at the southwest corner; hospital emergency rooms, a doctor's office and waiting room at the northeast corner; and additional offices, a dark room, and lockers. The first and second floor held offices, while the third floor had a duty officer's room, women's lounge, supply room, locker room, and storage room. The three story vault is shown extending from the sub-basement through the second floor.[10]

The building is currently vacant.

Integrity
The building retains a high degree of integrity. Interior alterations appear to date to the period of significance. The exterior retains a high degree of integrity, with no major alterations since 1941. Building 104 is a contributing resource because of its associations with the early Union Iron Works period through WWII, and for its high architectural value.

[7] "Draughting Department, Union Iron Works," *The Engineering Record*, Vol. 41, March 10, 1900, p. 227.
[8] "Draughting Department, Union Iron Works," 227-228; Sanborn Map Company, Vol. 5 (1899), sheet 541.
[9] *Pacific Marine Revie*, 35 (October 1938), p. 26.
[10] Bethlehem Steel Co. Shipbuilding Division, San Francisco Yard Calif., 1945, Sheet 20.