

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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MAY 10 1988

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Brown & Hawkins Store  
other names/site number Brown & Hawkins Corporation AHR Site No. SEW-038

2. Location

street & number 205, 207, 209 Fourth Avenue  not for publication  
city, town Seward  vicinity  
state Alaska code AK county Seward Division code 122 zip code 99664

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>3</u>	<u>      </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Judith E. Batten May 4, 1988  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Alaska

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Amy Schlagel 6/23/88  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade: department store

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade: department store

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Wood

roof Metal

other

### Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Brown & Hawkins store evolved through four major periods of construction. The first, pioneering period was represented by a one-story frame building only 12 feet wide by 24 feet deep. Built in 1903 this frontier store had a low gable roof and side walls covered with tar paper and held in place with vertical battens. When constructed it had no neighbors on either side; it had a low false front with a simple cornice. Underneath were a pair of 2/2 display windows on the left and a large door on the right. A wooden sidewalk across the front provided additional display space.

The second period was marked by the construction of a two story frame store in 1904 on the site of the first store. It had two large display windows flanked by a central recessed entry and stairs to the right side leading to the second floor. Three evenly spaced 2/2 double-hung windows defined the second floor. Above them was a false front with a high, simple cornice decorated with a bracket at each end. The wall covering the stairwell extended only to the top of the second floor, presenting a stepped appearance on the building's right side. The store had a gable roof, was approximately 100 feet deep, and had freight doors in the rear.

The third period was one of expansion and development. In 1907, a one story building 30 feet wide and 80 feet long to the right (north) of the store was built. This building was acquired by Brown & Hawkins sometime prior to 1909 when William A. McNeiley was hired to build a second floor addition and to construct a single false front facade across both buildings, creating the impression of one large building. The facade included a balcony at the second floor level that extended over the sidewalk and sheltered both storefronts. The balcony and its railing were supported by eight slim, turned columns and had a light, graceful appearance. The original storefront was virtually unchanged. On the second floor four pairs of 1/1 double hung windows were installed across the width of the new facade. Above the windows was a tall false front capped with a full entablature and cornice. Also in 1909, a concrete vault was added in the store for banking activities undertaken by Brown & Hawkins.

Still part of the period of expansion, Brown & Hawkins purchased a one story frame building immediately to the left (south) of their original building between 1911 and 1915, for use as a hardware department. This was a commercial structure with a central double door flanked by large plate glass windows set on bulkheads. Above the windows was an abbreviated attic story with a modest cornice and a larger cornice at the roof line. Brown & Hawkins incorporated this building into the other two with a few

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Commerce

1903-1913

1904

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Charles E. Brown, Thomas W. Hawkins

Architect/Builder

N/A

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Brown and Hawkins Store is the oldest commercial enterprise still in the same business at its original site in Seward. The store opened for business in 1903, the same year that the railroad terminus and port town was created. It has been all or partially owned by members of the Hawkins family since its establishment. The building constructed in 1904 to replace the temporary structure still stands, flanked by additions incorporated during the early years of Seward's history.

Thomas William Hawkins, known as T.W., was among the thousands who came to Alaska in 1898 lured by discoveries of gold. He crossed the Chilkoot Pass and went to Dawson, then sought gold in the Tanana River region, and headed for Nome when word of gold discoveries there reached him. Hawkins opened a general store in Nome in 1900. A few years later he moved to Valdez. There he formed a partnership with Charles E. Brown, and they opened a general mercantile business in March 1903. Brown was also lured to Alaska by the discoveries of gold. A Canadian, Brown crossed Canada and arrived at Circle City in 1897. He headed for Nome in 1900 where he met Hawkins.

In 1903, John Ballaine founded a new community, Seward, at the head of Resurrection Bay on the Kenai Peninsula. Seward was to be the terminus of an all-American route railroad, Ballaine's Alaska Central, that would connect a year-round ice-free port and the town of Fairbanks in Alaska's interior. Learning of Ballaine's plans, Hawkins arrived at Seward aboard the Santa Ana on August 28th. Shortly after, he purchased a lot on Fourth Avenue, in the center of the commerical district, and opened a general merchandise store with \$2,000 worth of stock. The first building was a small, one-story frame building, 12 x 24 feet, with an unadorned false front. In 1904 Brown and Hawkins closed their Valdez store, and Brown joined Hawkins in Seward. The Alaska Central Railway drove the first spike of their road on April 16, 1904. Although the company and its successor, the Alaska Northern, went bankrupt and tracks only reached 74 miles to Turnagain Arm, a railroad from Seward to Fairbanks was finally completed in 1923 by the federal government. The town of Seward survived the boom and bust cycles precipitated by the railroad companies, and became the major shipping and supply center for the Kenai Peninsula and the Kuskokwim and Iditarod mining districts.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Barry, Mary J. Seward (Anchorage, Alaska: MJP Barry, 1987).

Pedersen, L.H. "Seward, Alaska: The Place and the People," Alaska-Yukon Magazine  
XI:6 (July 1911): 2-9.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

N/A

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property Less than 1 acre

**UTM References**

A 

0	6
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3	6	4	4	1	5
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6	6	6	5	1	5	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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B 

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Zone Easting Northing

D 

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Three buildings on Block 10, Lots 16, 17, and 18, Seward Townsite; each building is 30' wide and approximately 90' long.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the three Seward city lots that have historically been associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Virginia H. Darling  
organization Brown & Hawkins Corporation date April 13, 1988  
street & number 207 Fourth Avenue telephone (907) 224-3011  
city or town Seward state Alaska zip code 99664

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modifications. The large plate glass windows were retained. The central entry was recessed. Transom windows were added to the attic story to admit additional light and match those next door. The false front design was retained but made taller and the cornice was kept. At some time before 1915 an overhanging balcony was added above the transom windows (it also wrapped around a power pole) and matched the design used next door.

Few changes were made through the late 1930s. The balcony supports were replaced by sturdy columns and a post-and-beam system of support, the wooden sidewalks were replaced by concrete, a slightly more elaborate Brown & Hawkins sign was painted on the false front, and two neon signs were added.

The fourth period has been one of maintenance modifications and extends to the present. The greatest change to the three buildings has taken place in the storefronts. These have been modernized and their elements rearranged. The overhanging balcony on the two combined buildings is no longer supported by columns and has lost its railing. The windows on the combined buildings still retain their shape, and location although all but two are now single pane. The small cornice above them retains its prominent line of dentils. The wall surfaces are now covered with wide asbestos shingles that maintain the horizontal lines established by the original shiplap siding. The cornice has lost its entablature but retains its consoles and distinctive topmost fascia, cyma reversa and fillet form. The entablature may be intact beneath the shingles; the large console on the left side is missing. The overhanging balcony on the single story Brown & Hawkins building has received similar treatment.

The interior of the present Brown & Hawkins store, the building on the right, retains half of the banking counter, the walk-in Mosler safe, moveable ladder with its track on the ceiling, adjustable fitting mirrors and a recessed entry flanked by side display windows. The transom windows have been covered over, the room now has sheet vinyl flooring and neon lighting but the large, open sales area remains as it was originally organized by Brown & Hawkins with its spacious feeling.

Next door, the central building retains its use as a grocery store and consists of a large, open front room with small service rooms in the rear. A suspended ceiling hides the original one, the walls have been paneled and the floors covered with vinyl tile. While the furniture and surfaces have changed somewhat the room still supports its historic function as a grocery store in a large open room.

Between these stores a staircase rises one flight to the second floor; pressed metal fittings adorn its corners and a black pipe handrail is attached to the beaded wainscot paneling on the walls. Apartments, including the owner's, are located to the right of the stairs. Very little has been changed in this area except the front apartment was

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made smaller for ease of housekeeping in the 1940s. These quiet and elegant rooms have beamed ceilings, oak trim, and paneled doors.

To the left of the stairs, above the middle building, is a central corridor with offices and, in the back, apartments. Very little change has taken place here, paneled doors open into wallpapered rooms with double hung windows. A bathroom has been remodeled but retains its porcelain fixtures, tile, and claw-foot tub.

The single-story building on the left, first used by Brown & Hawkins for hardware, is now known as the Brown & Hawkins Mall. Inside a large open room has been subdivided by free standing partitions to create a central corridor with small stores on either side. The partitions are built in a reversible fashion and the ceiling remains intact behind suspended acoustical tiles. The central corridor opens into a large back room presently used as a store. Upon entering the room from the low corridor, one faces a wide staircase leading to a mezzanine floor and a high ceiling that wraps around the back and sides of the room. The effect is intentionally dramatic; the room remains from the period before Brown & Hawkins, when it was used as a gambling and dance hall. Behind it is a storage area with Brown & Hawkins shelving still in place, wainscot on the walls and paneled freight doors.

In spite of changes to the storefronts, the three buildings as a whole are still recognizable as Brown & Hawkins. Sufficient historic material remains to assure that the massing, design, materials, lines, feeling and association of the three buildings has been retained.

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The Brown and Hawkins Store, commonly known as the B&H, sold groceries, clothing, hardware, coal, and supplies for miners, trappers, and fishers. In 1904, a larger, two-story building, still standing today, replaced the first structure. The company leased warehouses, at one time five of them, near the port. A companion store building, also still standing today, was built on the north side of the 1904 building in 1907. For several years Brown and Hawkins were agents for the Alaska Coast Company that serviced Seward with the steamers Bertha and Portland from Seattle. In 1909 they operated the Seward station of the United Wireless Telegraphy Company. That year they added a bank as part of their operations, and had a vault built in the store by the Seward Concrete Stone Company. In March 1912, when banking laws were revised, Hawkins and Sidney Anderson took over the Bank of Seward and moved the bank operations out of the store building. Brown was President of the Bank of Seward in 1915, and at that time also part owner in the Independent Steamship Company. At that time, Hawkins was President and General Manager of the Independence Gold Mine Company operating in the Willow Creek Mining District to the north.

Brown and Hawkins advertised in 1911 that their business supplied buyers from Prince William Sound to Dutch Harbor and the miners in the Kuskokwim and Idatarod districts. The company issued an annual mail-order catalog through the late 1930s. Their stock list included groceries, dry goods, clothing, furniture, cement, hardware, and building materials. The firm expanded and diversified into canning, mink farming, property rental, auto sales, and many other enterprises.

Brown and Hawkins hired William A. McNeiley in 1909 to build a large second floor addition (80 feet long and 30 feet wide) to their second building. When it was completed in October, Brown and Hawkins hosted a free opening dance. The next month Alaska's Delegate to Congress, James V. Wickersham, spoke at the hall; the following spring Governor Walter F. Strong held a public meeting there. About 1913, Brown and Hawkins bought the building to the south of their store for their hardware department. The building had been a dancing and gambling hall that the owners were forced to close with Prohibition in the territory. The front facade was redone to merge the three buildings, and a balcony was added.

Further company expansion was to several other southcentral communities. In 1913, Brown opened a branch store at Knik. It closed in 1915 when Brown moved to the new community of Anchorage and opened a store there. That store operated until 1926; Brown died in 1929.

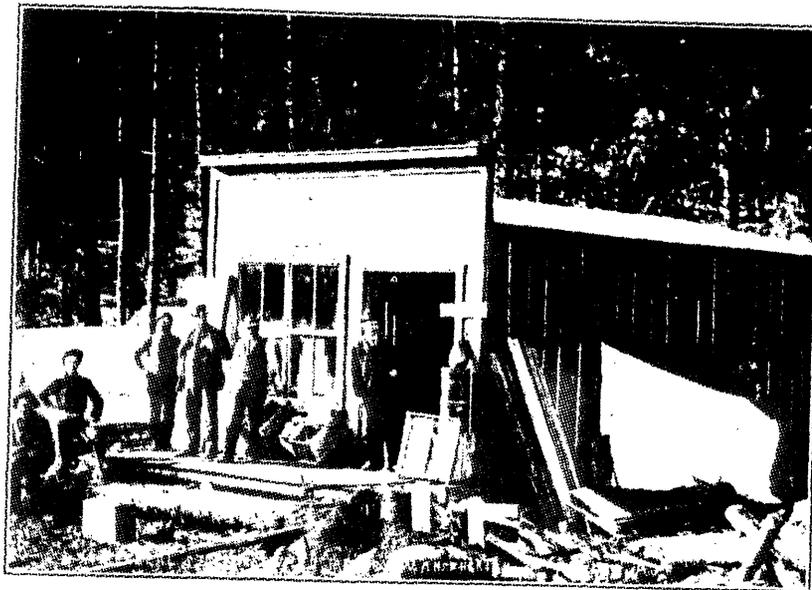
Hawkins continued to operate the Seward store until his death in 1946. That year Hawkins' son took over the store, and in 1956, T.W.'s daughter, Virginia Hawkins Darling, and her husband took over management of the store. Mrs. Darling still manages the clothing store, and owns the Seward store buildings.

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Brown & Hawkins, 1903

First Brown & Hawkins Store

Seward, Alaska (SEW-038)

Photographer unknown

Photograph taken in 1903

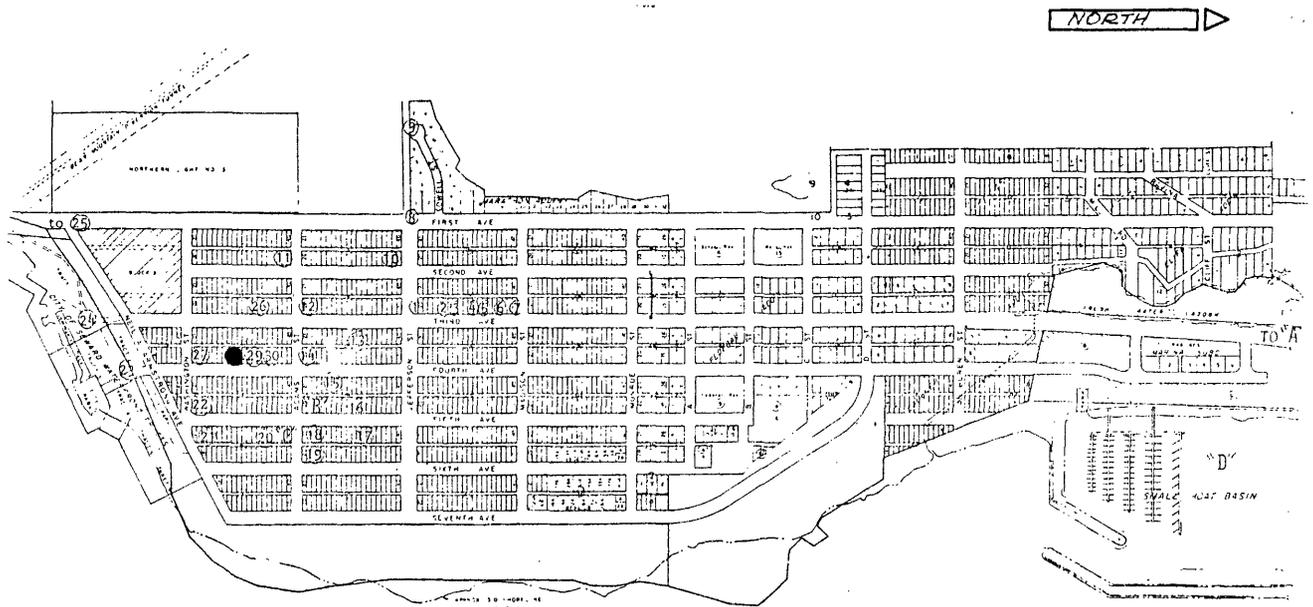
Location of original negative unknown; copy made from  
All Alaska Review, October 1915, page 24, in the Alaska  
& Polar Regions Department, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.  
Photograph shows construction of first Brown & Hawkins Store  
Camera facing southwest

No. 1

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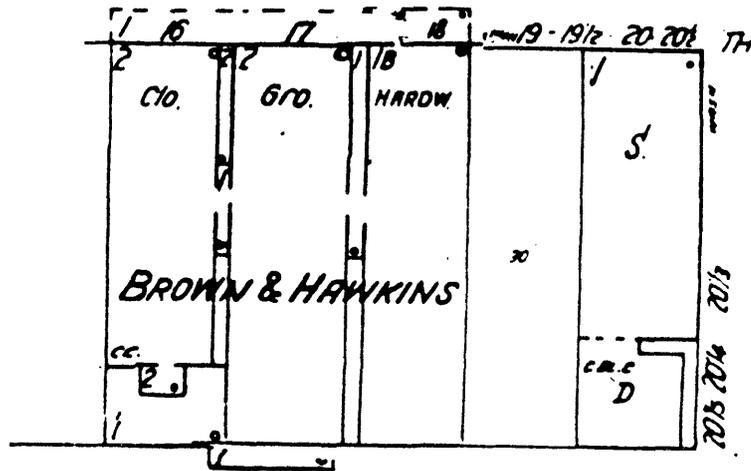
# SEWARD, ALASKA

● -- Brown & Hawkins Store

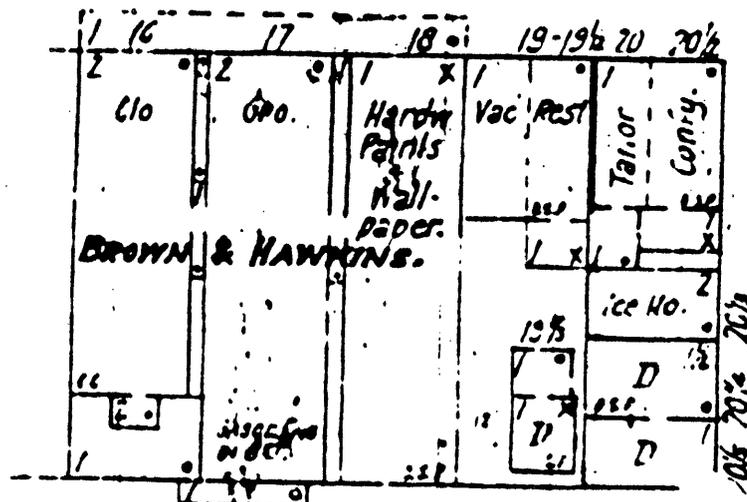
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Brown & Hawkins Store as shown in fire insurance map.  
Sanborn Map Co., page 3, 1927 corrected to 1948



Brown & Hawkins Store as shown in fire insurance map.  
Sanborn Map Co., page 3, 1927. Note at back of grocery store says "Gasoline Engine in Basement"

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Photograph identification

1. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Photographer unknown  
1903  
Copy from All Alaska Review, October 1915, p. 24. The periodical is located at the Alaska and Polar Regions Department, University of Alaska, Fairbanks, AK 99775  
First Brown & Hawkins Store at Seward, camera facing southwest
2. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Photographer unknown  
1904-1907  
Anchorage Museum of History and Art, 121 W. 7th Ave., Anchorage, AK 99501  
Second Brown & Hawkins Store, camera facing southwest
3. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Photographer unknown  
1920s  
Copy negative at Office of History & Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, AK 99510  
The three Brown & Hawkins buildings, camera facing west
4. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Photographer unknown  
Late 1930s  
Copy negative at Office of History & Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, AK 99510  
The three buildings behind two facades, camera facing northwest
5. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Photographer unknown  
1911  
Virginia Darling, 205, 207, 209 Fourth Avenue, Seward, AK 99664  
Second floor interior of north building, camera facing east
6. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
R.E. Hegg  
Date unknown  
Virginia Darling, 205, 207, 209 Fourth Avenue, Seward, AK 99664  
Interior view showing banking department, camera facing west

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Photograph identification (continued)

7. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Paul W. Chattey  
September 1987  
Office of History & Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, AK 99510  
Front of north and central buildings, camera facing west
8. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Paul W. Chattey  
September 1987  
Office of History & Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, AK 99510  
Front of south building, camera facing west
9. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Paul W. Chattey  
September 1987  
Office of History & Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, AK 99510  
Rear and side of north building, camera facing southeast
10. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Paul W. Chattey  
September 1987  
Office of History & Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, AK 99510  
Rear of all three buildings, camera facing east
11. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Paul W. Chattey  
March 1988  
Office of History & Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, AK 99510  
Banking counter, camera facing southwest
12. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Paul W. Chattey  
March 1988  
Office of History & Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, AK 99510  
Moveable ladder with fixed ceiling track, camera facing west

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Photograph identification (continued)

13. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Paul W. Chattey  
March 1988  
Office of History & Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, AK 99510  
Safe, camera facing west
14. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Paul W. Chattey  
March 1988  
Office of History & Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, AK 99510  
Interior of Brown & Hawkins Store, camera facing east
15. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Paul W. Chattey  
March 1988  
Office of History & Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, AK 99510  
Interior of Brown & Hawkins Store, camera facing west
16. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Paul W. Chattey  
March 1988  
Office of History & Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, AK 99510  
View of grocery in central building, camera facing west
17. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Paul W. Chattey  
March 1988  
Office of History & Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, AK 99510  
View of balcony in south building, camera facing northwest
18. Brown & Hawkins Store (AHRS Site No. SEW-038)  
Seward, Alaska  
Paul W. Chattey  
March 1988  
Office of History & Archaeology, P.O. Box 107001, Anchorage, AK 99510  
Corridor in south building, camera facing west

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 88000710 Date Listed: 6/23/88

Brown & Hawkins Store Kenai Peninsula Borough AK  
Property Name County State

Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*Amy Schlager*  
Signature of the Keeper

6/23/88  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8 of the nomination form lists Charles E. Brown and Thomas W. Hawkins as significant persons, but criterion B is not claimed. A call to Jo Antonson of the Alaska SHPO office on 6/23/88 confirmed that criterion B should have been selected on the nomination form.

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DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)