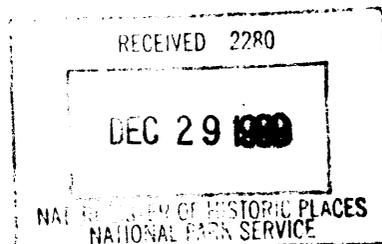


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

3



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Husung Hardware

other names/site number 5AL246

2. Location

street & number 625 Main Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Alamosa [N/A] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Alamosa code 003 zip code 81101

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] 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 [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [X] statewide [] locally. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Georgina Cougle State Historic Preservation Officer 12/10/99
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Office, Colorado Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

- 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 [] See continuation sheet.

Edson H. Beal 1-28-00
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Husung Hardware
Name of Property

Alamosa County, CO
County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce: specialty store

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce: specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Art Deco

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Terra Cotta
Brick
roof Synthetics
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Husung Hardware
Name of Property

Alamosa County, CO
County/State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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
- # _____

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Periods of Significance

1936

Significant Dates

1936

Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).
N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:
Colorado Historical Society

Husung Hardware

Name of Property

Alamosa County, CO

County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 13 423440 4146980
Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone Easting Northing

2. Zone Easting Northing

4. Zone Easting Northing

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Holly Y. Felmlee (edited by H. Wilson)

organization Alamosa Community Development Corporation date 8-27-99

street & number Cole Park telephone 719-589-3681

city or town Alamosa state Colorado zip code 81101

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Ken Swineheart

street & number 625 Main Street telephone

city or town Alamosa state Colorado zip code 81101

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

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Section number 7 Page 1

Husung Hardware
Alamosa County, CO

DESCRIPTION

Husung Hardware is sandwiched between other commercial buildings in the block on the north side of Main Street between San Juan and State Avenues, within the heart of Alamosa's downtown commercial development. The expanse of concrete sidewalk in front of the building is broken by a small square plot of ground from which an elm tree grows. The two-story, red brick building has a rectangular plan (25 feet wide by 150 long), a concrete foundation, and a flat roof with parapet covered with a rubberized tarpaper. Extending perpendicularly out from the building is a neon sign. Although part of a series of small commercial establishments that each occupy only one city lot, Husung Hardware, constructed in 1936, is particularly notable for its Art Deco detailing and well-preserved terra cotta façade. The majority of the façade is executed in cream-colored terra cotta simulating regular-coursed, smooth finished, ashlar. Art Deco motifs (volutes, sunrise and chevron patterns) in low relief terra cotta are highlighted in polychrome glazes of gold, red and blue. The building is in excellent condition, due to regular and caring maintenance by the previous owners, and retains all aspects of integrity.

The most prominent architectural feature of Husung Hardware is its Art Deco style terra cotta clad façade, which faces south onto Main Street. The storefront level is framed by fluted, terra cotta clad pilasters and is divided into three bays with the central bay containing the recessed beveled entry. The ribbed pilasters that frame the storefront end in stylized flat relief capitals contained within the width of the shaft. Two of the ribs form outward facing volutes pierced with red-glazed darts. The center rib ends in a yellow-glazed ornamental vertical bar. These pilasters rest on large, smooth black panels that extend horizontally to form the 24-inch high kick plates below the plate glass windows that are set in narrow metal frames. Each of the side bays consist of a large plate glass window. The central bay has four large plate glass windows, two on each side, that angle toward the recessed doorway. Red tiles extend from the concrete sidewalk to the entrance. Two tiles near the door frame proclaim "HUSUNG 36." Two narrower plate glass windows flank the large glass door that is framed in metal. Above these three storefront bays are five transom windows. Thin metal mullions separate the five large pieces of dark patterned glass. A retractable red canvas awning is attached to the transom bar. The scalloped edge of the awning flutters between the transom lights and the plate glass display windows.

Above the transom windows, flat-relief tiles form a full-width frieze. Framing the frieze at each end is a tile that contains a three-part striated wave ending in an upward facing volute. These two tiles have a blue-glazed background and are the width of the stylized capitals directly below them. The remaining 15 tiles run the width of the transom windows. Each tile features a chevron pattern above a sunrise/rosette flanked by inward facing volutes. Red glazing highlights the stippled centers of the rosette, and blue glazing fills the background. Above this frieze band are three recessed panels framed with large square terra cotta tiles. The recessed panels are painted white with black lettering. The large center panel reads "SKIS & SPORTING GOODS" and "PLUMBING HEATING ELECTRICAL." The left panel is scripted with "SCHWINN BICYLES SALES SERVICE" and the right panel reads "SCOTTS LAWN PRODUCTS." Above these panels are two courses of small rectangular tiles applied in a running bond.

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Husung Hardware
Alamosa County, CO

The remaining portion of the building is divided into five bays delineated by lighter-colored pilaster-like projections of square tile that extend upward to form the stepped parapet wall. The capped parapet wall is highlighted by small red-glazed volutes that flank the most prominent projections. Five windows fill the space between these pilasters. The metal frame windows consist of paired four-light casements below a transom. Extending from the top of each window and rising to the parapet is another pilaster-like projection flanked by yellow-glazed, outward facing volutes. This undulating series of pilasters breaking up the smooth wall surface creates the stepped parapet and accentuates the verticality—both important characteristics of Art Deco.

Extending from the center of the building by metal poles is a metal neon sign. The neon tubing traces the white lettering painted on red and yellow backgrounds. The word "HUSUNG" fills the vertical section of the sign, while the words "HARDWARE PLUMBING HEATING" fill a three-part, stepped horizontal section. These metal sections with their rounded edges create a streamlined Art Moderne effect.

A photograph believed to have been taken on the store's opening day illustrates how intact the façade has remained over the years. This photo indicates that only the neon sign and the front door have changed since 1936. Conversations with Lucian Husung, who took over the business from his father, seem to indicate that the current neon sign was installed a long time ago. Until it was pointed out in the historic photograph, Lucian always thought it was the original sign. He can not remember any neon sign other than the current one. Efforts to determine when the sign and the door were replaced have not been unsuccessful.

The east and west sides of Husung Hardware are composed of red brick laid in a running bond with a very random application of a header course. Much of the first floor is partially obscured by the immediately adjacent cluster of single-story constructions that form the neighboring commercial establishments. The expanse of upper level wall is visible and is broken by 12 buttresses. An occasional window punctuates the space between these buttresses. The metal casement windows with brick sills vary in size; some include transoms. At the northwest corner the brick walls of the elevator shaft extend beyond the parapet. A square brick chimney protrudes from the roof along the east wall.

The brick wall of the north end (rear) of the building continues the highly aberrant American Bond coursing. At the northwest corner is an oversize wooden door, comprised of vertical boards and a 16-light window that services the elevator. At the northeast corner is a large freight entrance. This entrance consists of three sections, each containing a glazed and paneled door. A small window punctuates the space slightly above and between these two openings. Two small and one large window pierce the upper story wall.

The interior of the building contains many features that were designed by its first owner, Walter Husung, to meet his needs as a hardware salesman. The first floor has built-in wooden shelves, bins and drawers. There are rope pits built into the floor. There is also the original sales counter that was specially designed by Walter Husung to facilitate the sale of screws and nails. On the top of the counter is a display with a

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Husung Hardware
Alamosa County, CO

sample of each type of nail and screw he stocked. Next to each sample is a toggle switch. When the customer chose his selection, he flipped the switch that lighted the appropriate bin under the counter. The switches and lights are still operational today. In addition the building still has its original pressed metal ceiling and light fixtures. The windows and the freight elevator are also original. The freight elevator, a platform with a simple gate and push button operation, still runs smoothly between the basement and the second floor.

The second story of the building was used for storage, but also contained living quarters. It is accessed from a stairway located at the center of the west wall or from the elevator. The northwest corner was delegated for storage, especially bicycles. At the northeast corner, there is a small utility apartment consisting of one room and a bathroom. Walter Husung lived in this apartment from the time the building was completed until his death in 1965. The southern end of the second floor contains a larger apartment with a kitchen, living room, two bedrooms, and a bathroom. At one time there was an exterior stairway to the south apartment, which was actually on a neighboring lot. These stairs were closed off ten years ago by the owners of the adjacent lot and the entrance is completely blocked off at this time.

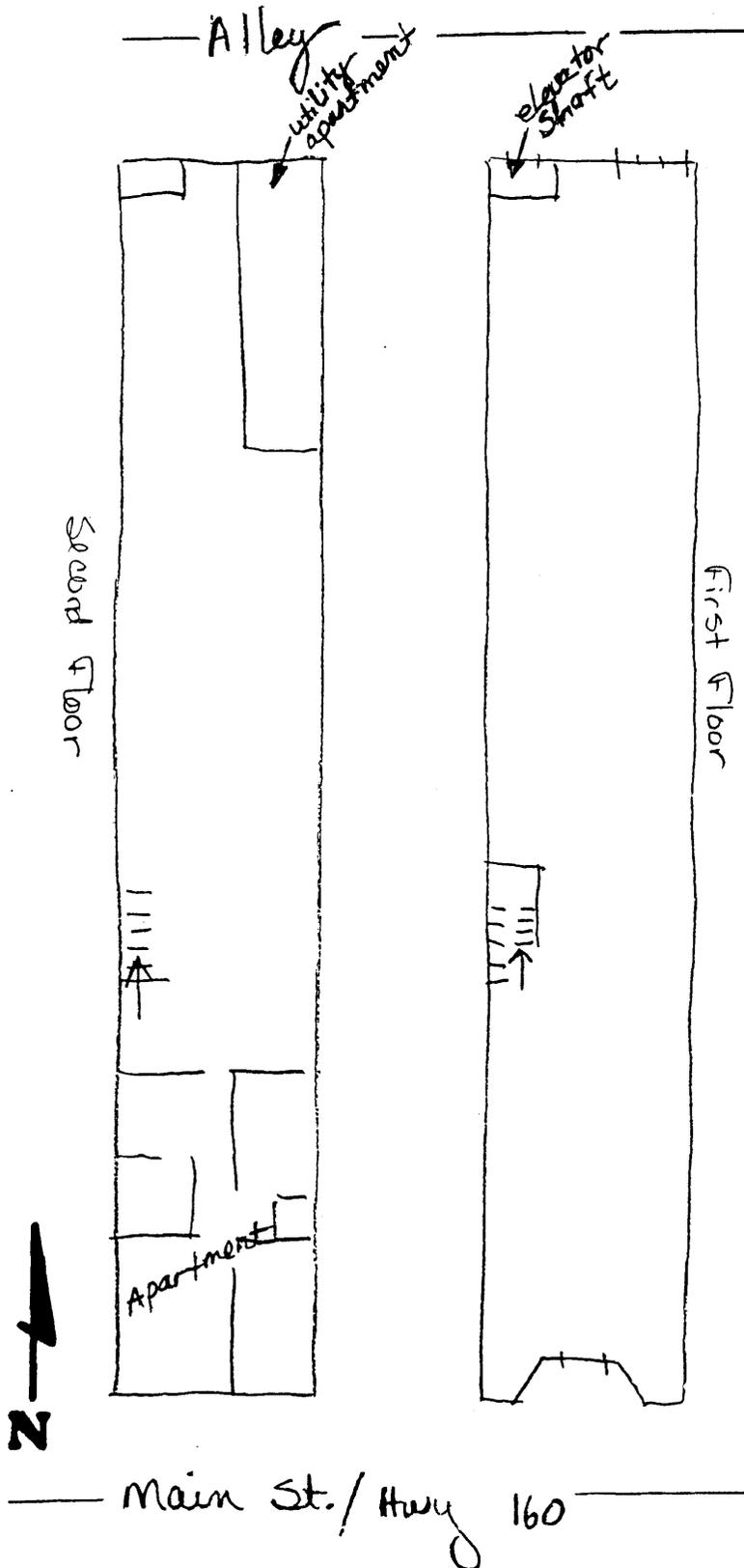
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Husung Hardware
Alamosa County, CO

sketch map



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Husung Hardware
Alamosa County, CO

SIGNIFICANCE

Husung Hardware meets criterion C for its architectural significance as it possesses the distinctive characteristics of Art Deco, a style not well represented in Alamosa County or in other small towns across Colorado. The building's terra cotta clad façade is highlighted with hard-edged low relief ornamentation that includes chevrons, volutes and stylized sunrises. The elongated pilasters that culminate in the stepped parapet successfully convey the vertical emphasis that is also characteristic of the Art Deco style. Occupying only a small lot in Alamosa (population approximately 8,000), this well-preserved building is considered one of the best small town expressions of Art Deco in the state.

By the late 1920s, new stylistic influences emanating from Europe impacted American architecture. Art Deco was "the first widely popular style in the United States to break with the revivalist traditions represented by the beaux-arts and period houses. It was a style that consciously strove for modernity and an artistic expression to complement the machine age" (Poppeliers et al). Art Deco is characterized by a linear hard-edged or angular composition, often with a vertical emphasis, and highlighted with stylized decoration (Blumensen). Art Deco was essentially a style of decoration that was applied to furniture, jewelry, clothing, handicrafts, as well as architecture.

As a conscious rejection of historical styles and a popular form of ornamentation, Art Deco flourished in America's larger cities such as New York, Los Angeles and Miami Beach. The most elaborate examples of the style in Colorado are found predominantly in the state's largest cities (i.e., Denver, Boulder and Colorado Springs). Most of Colorado's small town buildings characterized as Art Deco exhibit a simple form with understated verticality and restrained ornamentation. There are some exceptions to this trend--most notably the 1932 Chaffee County Courthouse in Salida and the 1931 Gunnison Town Hall. However, both of these examples are public buildings, while Husung Hardware represents a commercial application of the style. A search of the Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP) database illustrates an interesting pattern. In Colorado's small towns, the Art Deco style was most often reserved for courthouses, municipal buildings, and schools; the style was less frequently used for commercial buildings. Husung Hardware's intact terra cotta facade with its characteristic stylized detailing makes this building a well-preserved example of the Art Deco style. An analysis of the OAHP database indicates Husung Hardware is one of the best small town expressions of Art Deco identified to date.

Historical Background

Alamosa, the county seat and largest town in the San Luis Valley, virtually sprang up overnight. Like many Colorado towns, Alamosa owed its existence to the railroad. The Denver & Rio Grande (D&RG) Railroad's entry into the San Luis Valley began when the rails reached La Veta in 1876. By the summer of 1878, the rails came to the bend in the Rio Grande River where a new town was to be built. Named Alamosa (Spanish for cottonwood), the town plat was filed in May 1878 with incorporation following in August. Alamosa became an outfitting point for all of southern Colorado and northern New Mexico, and large supply houses were built along the tracks. By 1880, Alamosa was the largest town in southern

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Husung Hardware
Alamosa County, CO

Colorado with a population of 800. For the next fifty years, Alamosa "was the absolute center of narrow gauge railroading in America" (Feitz). The giant D&RG shops, built soon after the town was founded, were expanded every year and the only three-track switching yards in the world were built in Alamosa.

Walter Husung was born in 1890 in Colorado Springs. He came to Alamosa in 1911 to complete the building of a house his contractor father had started on Third Street. The elder Husung, who was living in Colorado Springs, became ill and sent Walter to finish the job. According to Walter's son, Lucian Husung, the day Walter arrived he was riding a fast new Harley-Davidson motorcycle. He approached Alamosa's graveled main intersection (State and Main) going too fast, and skidded past the stop sign. A policeman having coffee at a nearby cafe saw the infraction, gave Walter a five-dollar ticket, and then returned to his coffee. Despite this discouraging beginning, Walter made his home in Alamosa, raised his two sons, and became a prominent businessman.

Walter started a bicycle and motorcycle repair shop in a little store on State Avenue, north of Main. In 1915, he purchased a hardware business that operated out of the Walsh Hotel on Sixth Street. In 1921 he added furniture to his business and moved into a two-story red brick building on State, this time south of Main. Walter continued to operate at this location until 1936 when he moved into the new building at 625 Main. (According to Sanborn maps, a smaller building on the lot was torn down to accommodate the new construction.)

Husung family history indicates that Walter Husung designed and built the hardware store, including the unique interior features. Family members speak of Walter's love of the Art Deco style and his interest in terra cotta as a building material. Unfortunately, it has proven very difficult to confirm the family assertion that Walter designed the building. There are no existing building permits for the city or county of Alamosa before 1960. City Council minutes from 1935 through 1937 record the council voting on building permits, but do not provide any specific information regarding the permits. The *Alamosa Daily Courier*, the only newspaper in Alamosa in the 1930s, printed very little about the construction of the building (see bibliography) and did not indicate a designer or architect. The newspaper did list Hinkle & Sons, a firm that built many Alamosa buildings in the early to mid-1900s, as the contractors.

Family history also indicates that Walter designed the San Luis Valley Federal Savings & Loan Building (currently Acheson's Attic) at 709 Main, which was built in 1937. This building has a terra cotta façade, but is devoid of any Art Deco ornamentation. It is a simple execution of large square tiles which emphasizes turquoise-colored tiles. Family members state that Walter designed and built an apartment complex at Third and Edison. This simple blond brick complex includes a cottage to the west. The cottage and apartments were built and deeded to Bessie Jones, the Husung's bookkeeper for many years, for her retirement income.

Walter Husung's decision to relocate his business in a new building on Main Street gave Alamosa hope in the economically gloomy times during the depression. He leased his building on State Street to the Montgomery Wards Company, thus bringing a national mail order and retail outlet into the San Luis

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Husung Hardware
Alamosa County, CO

Valley. In an editorial in the *Valley Courier* (14 May 1936) the nationwide chain was seen as an economic boon. "With Montgomery Ward locating in the valley, those purchases that formerly were made through the post office will now be made locally. Part of the money spent will be paid to valley people as salaries, to the local shipping companies for bringing the goods here, and to other local interests through rent, taxes, and banking earnings." Mr. Husung was also lauded. "When Husung leased his present location to Montgomery Ward, he took the opportunity to better his own hardware company. "Men have been given work constructing the new building, more people will be able to find jobs in the Montgomery Ward store. The city is moving ahead."

Walter was active in the community. His obituary indicated that he "was a member of the Alamosa Elks Lodge No. 1297 for more than 50 years, was president of the Alamosa National Bank for 30 years, and was chairman of the board of directors at the time of his retirement in 1963. For many years he was Alamosa's fire chief. He sat on the city council for five years, and at the time of his death was president of the San Luis Valley Federal Savings & Loan Association of Alamosa" (*Valley Courier*, 16 September 1965).

Walter Husung's sons continued his business and community involvement. Martin served as mayor of Alamosa until his untimely death in an automobile accident. Lucian married Lois Ryan from Saguache in 1948 and they made their home in the upstairs apartment of the Husung Hardware store where Lucian ran the business with his father. Lois attended Adams State College for a year and a half before becoming a bookkeeper and steno clerk. She says she was the first woman to work at the shops of the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad. Her grandfather, August Johnson, had immigrated from Sweden and developed Swede's Corner northwest of Monte Vista, which today is one of the valley's richest agricultural producing areas.

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Husung Hardware
Alamosa County, CO

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- "New Business" [Editorial]. (Alamosa) *Valley Courier* 14 May 1936.
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Husung Hardware
Alamosa County, CO

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 29, Block 39, Town of Alamosa

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property includes the entire parcel of land historically associated with the hardware store.

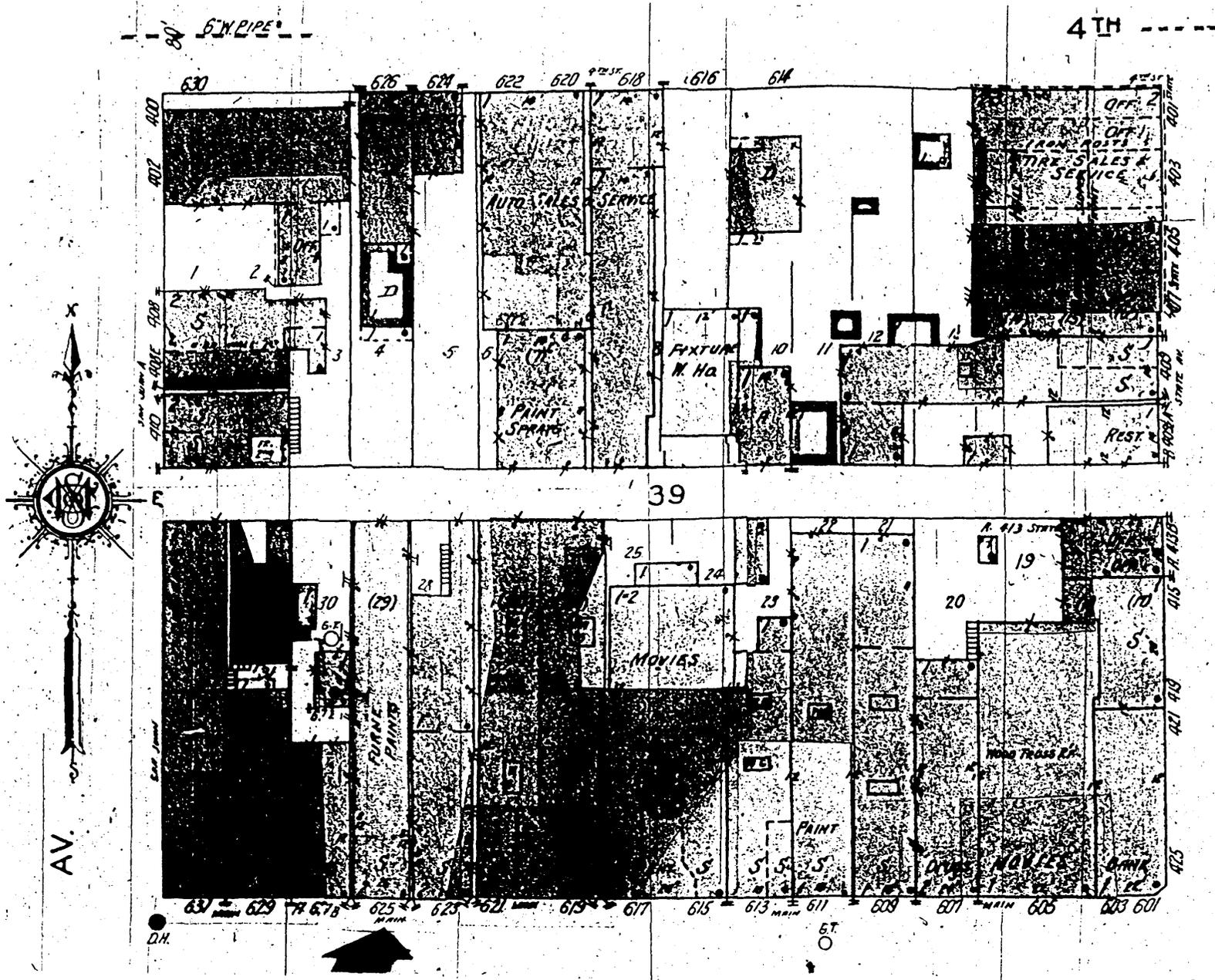
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Alamosa County, CO

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March 1946 Sanborn Map



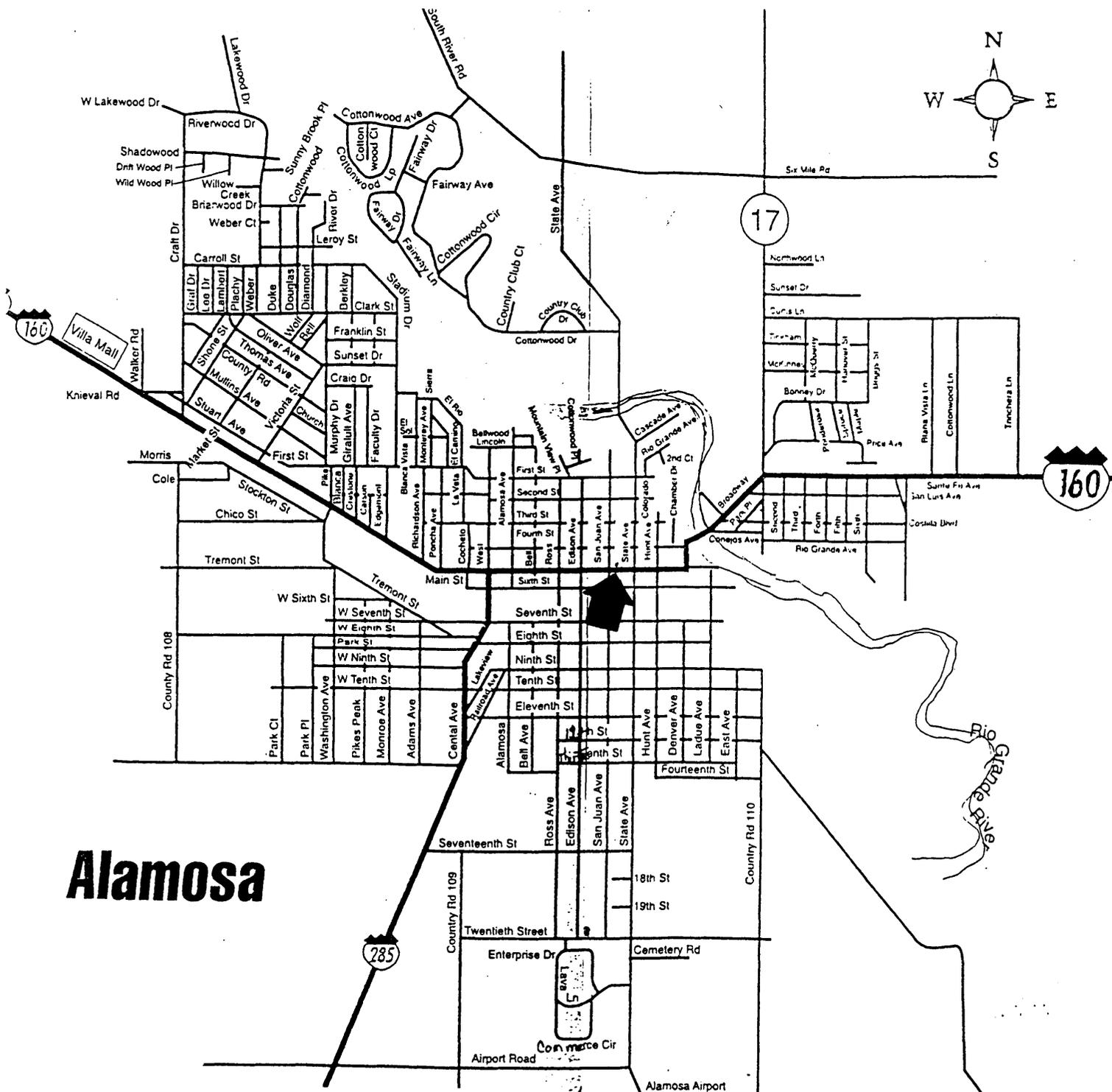
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Alamosa County, CO

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Alamosa City Map



Alamosa

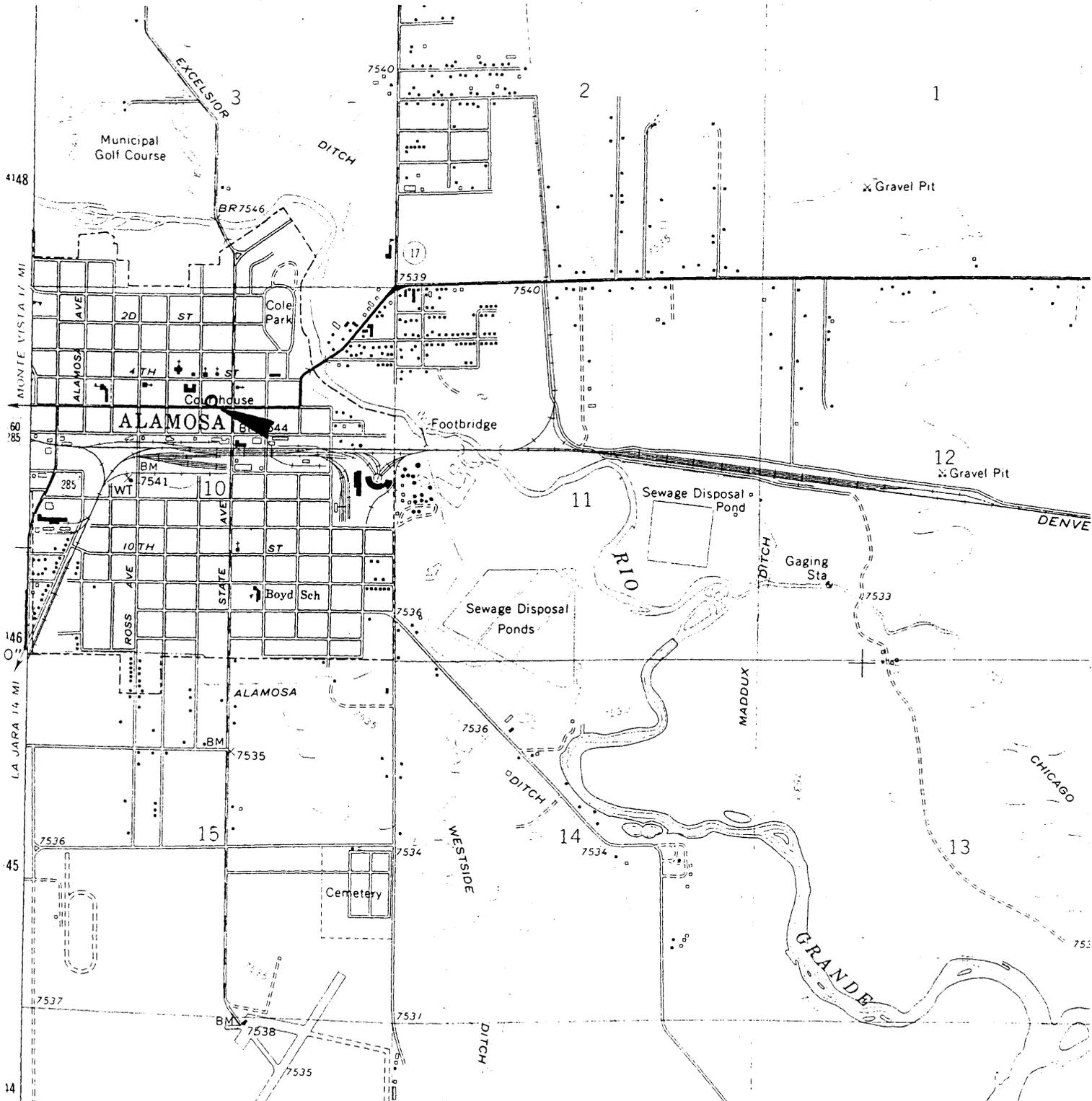
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Husung Hardware
Alamosa County, CO

U.S.G.S. Quad Map - Alamosa East



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Husung Hardware
Alamosa County, CO

PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Name of property: Husung Hardware
City, County, State: Alamosa, Alamosa County, Colorado
Photographer: Dennis Felmlee
Date of photograph: 17 August 1999
Location of original negatives: Alamosa Chamber of Commerce

<u>Photo #</u>	<u>Description</u>
1	front (south) façade; camera facing N
2	terra cotta detailing on façade; camera facing NW
3	north (rear) and east sides; camera facing SW
4	north and west side; camera facing S
5	first floor, looking north through the store. Note "rope pits" in the floor.
6	central sales counter; lower bins are lit by toggle switches
7	toggle switch board
8	built-in file cabinets along west wall; stairs lead to office on landing.
9	west wall with built-in drawers and shelves under the stairs
10	from the back of the store looking south toward the Main St. entrance
11	pressed tin ceiling with bicycle tires on display
12	elevator cage at first floor
13	manufacturer's name plate on beam above elevator cage
14	the elevator's pulley system
15	close up of elevator motor
16	second floor, view to north towards elevator cage
17	second floor, view to south towards large apartment



photo taken evening Jan, 1936