

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

received OCT 22 1985

date entered

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination FormSee instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*

Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic Alderbrook Farmhouse

and/or common Culver Farmhouse

## 2. Location

street &amp; number Point Lawrence Road \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Doe Bay vic., Orcas Is. \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of

state Washington code 053 county San Juan code 055

## 3. Classification

| Category  | Ownership                                   | Status  | Present Use   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district               | <input type="checkbox"/> public             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied          | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied                   | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | <input type="checkbox"/> both               | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress             | <input type="checkbox"/> educational                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site                   | <b>Public Acquisition</b>                   | <b>Accessible</b>                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object                 | <input type="checkbox"/> in process         | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted              | <input type="checkbox"/> government                   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> being considered   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> industrial                   |
|   | n/a   | <input type="checkbox"/> no                           | <input type="checkbox"/> military                     |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> museum                       |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> park                         |
|   |   |   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> religious                    |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific                   |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation               |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> other:                       |

## 4. Owner of Property

name Sandra Durand

street &amp; number 815 Hilltop

city, town Kent \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Washington 98301

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. San Juan County Courthouse

street &amp; number 350 Court Street

city, town Friday Harbor state Washington 98250

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Washington State Inventory of Cultural Resources has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ nodate November 1984 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Washington State Office of Archaeology &amp; Historic Preservation

city, town 111 W. 21st Ave., KL-11, Olympia state Washington 98504-5411

## 7. Description

### Condition

☐ excellent  
☒ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☒ unaltered  
☐ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved date \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Alderbrook Farmhouse is located on the east side of Orcas Island several miles north-east of Doe Bay in San Juan County. Sited near a fifteen acre orchard, the house was once part of a fruit farm and stock ranch owned by the Culver family. Although most associated outbuildings (including barn, woodshed, prune dryer, and farm hands' house) no longer stand, the farmhouse itself retains nearly complete integrity and clearly reflects its period of construction. The house is characterized by an asymmetrical plan, intersecting gable roofs, decorative siding, and modest ornament typical of houses built in the late nineteenth century.

The two story frame house, which rests on a foundation of split granite blocks laid in regular courses, is composed of two principal intersecting wings with a secondary kitchen wing. Structural components are full dimension, rough sawn fir. Exterior walls are sided with pattern-sawn shingles on the upper story and clapboard siding on the lower story. The eaves are underscored with frieze boards and trim boards articulate the corners. The roof is sided with cedar shingles.

On the west elevation, the house is dominated by the east-west gable which projects over a livingroom bay. The same elevation features a recessed entry porch in the perpendicular (north-south) wing. The porch is sheltered by the slope of the gable roof and is supported by chamfered posts and features a balustrade and frieze ornamented with lattice stickwork. On the south elevation, the two story north-south gable wing projects beyond the east-west wing, which in turn features a gabled dormer and a two story porch with chamfered posts and lattice work balustrade and frieze. On the east elevation, the gable roof kitchen wing (with attached shed) projects perpendicularly from the main house.

Across all elevations, windows are one-over-one double-hung sash with prominent moulded drip-caps. The front door has an upper glazed panel of clear glass surrounded by a fixed pane of colored glass. Two brick chimneys with corbelled caps rise from the roofline.

The front door opens on a small hallway from which one can access the living room, dining room, downstairs bedroom and staircase. The plan is compact and efficient with little space devoted solely to passageways. All rooms can be closed off so heated areas may fluctuate with seasonal weather. Heating is supplied by the kitchen stove, wood stoves in the dining room and upper north bedroom, and fireplace, as was the case originally. Interior walls are plaster trimmed with wood corner rounds, picture rails and 12 inch baseboards. All doors are paneled and doors and windows are framed by eight inch fluted casings with turret corners. The fireplace and hearth are faced with 1½ by six inch glazed tile and surmounted by a wood cornice-shaped mantle. The south porches are accessed through doors from the south downstairs and upstairs bedrooms. The nominated property includes the house and 3.2 acres of the surrounding site. The historic orchard is not included in its entirety because it no longer reflects its original character. A rectangular, frame barn with gable roof and board and batten siding, is located about 30 feet northeast of the house on the nominated property. A pump, of uncertain age, is located about 30 feet west of the west elevation.

### Inventory of Resources on Nominated Property:

1. Alderbrook farmhouse--contributing
2. Barn--contributing

## 8. Significance

| Period  | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below    |                              |                              |                       |
|---|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| _____ prehistoric                             | _____ archeology-prehistoric                     | _____ community planning     | _____ landscape architecture | _____ religion        |
| _____ 1400–1499                               | _____ archeology-historic                        | _____ conservation           | _____ law                    | _____ science         |
| _____ 1500–1599                               | _____ agriculture                                | _____ economics              | _____ literature             | _____ sculpture       |
| _____ 1600–1699                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | _____ education              | _____ military               | _____ social/         |
| _____ 1700–1799                               | _____ art  | _____ engineering            | _____ music                  | _____ humanitarian    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899 | _____ commerce                                   | _____ exploration/settlement | _____ philosophy             | _____ theater         |
| _____ 1900–                                   | _____ communications                             | _____ industry               | _____ politics/government    | _____ transportation  |
|   |  | _____ invention              |                              | _____ other (specify) |

**Specific dates** 1889–93 **Builder/Architect** Unknown contractor from Bellingham

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Alderbrook Farmhouse is a significant example of late nineteenth century residential architecture in San Juan County and stands as one of the few perfectly preserved reminders of the prosperous years of San Juan County's agricultural economy. It remains on its original site and has been maintained unaltered by the Culver heirs. It has never been plumbed, wired, or centrally heated.

"Alderbrook" was built for George N. Culver by his son, Otis H. Culver. Both were from Vermont. Otis, who had a journalism background, came west in the early 1880's to manage a Bellingham newspaper. It was while he was in Bellingham that he became interested in the San Juan Islands and leased 500 acres of state land at Point Lawrence on Orcas Island. His selection of the Point Lawrence property was largely based on convenience. It was near Doe Bay, the first stop for the steamers from Bellingham carrying passengers, cargo, and mail to the islands. Having acquired the land, he encouraged his father and mother to come west and settle on the property. George N. Culver was an experienced farmer and his wife was an accomplished artist. Near the present site of the house they cleared 15 acres for a fruit orchard. Portions of the remaining acreage that were suitable, they devoted to pasture for raising cattle and Oxford Down sheep. The house was built at the height of a depression. All materials were barged from Bellingham, beached at Point Lawrence, and carried to the site by horse drawn wagon. The builders lived on the site during construction. They were paid \$1 per day plus board. G.N. Culver ran Alderbrook as a working farm until 1914, when he retired as a result of an injury.

Otis Culver, who retained ownership of the property, became head of the Tacoma Bureau of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. In 1894, John S. McMillian of the Tacoma and Roche Harbor Lime Company, encouraged Otis to move to Friday Harbor on San Juan Island and purchase the Islander, one of the first two newspapers in the San Juan Islands. In 1897, Otis was named Deputy Collector of the U.S. Customs Service in charge of entry at Roche Harbor and later at Friday Harbor. Otis Culvers' political editorializing in the Islander and his dealings with the smuggler, James "Pig Iron" Kelly as customs officer, contributed to the most colorful era in San Juan County history.

Though unpretentious, Alderbrook is a notable landmark on Orcas Island, distinguished by its irregular roofline, decorative siding, simple ornament, and state of preservation. Historic photographs illustrate that the original appearance is virtually intact. This continuing integrity is especially notable in a county where changing land use has left few remnants from the area's agricultural heritage. Recent survey work in the county reveals that Alderbrook stands in sharp contrast to other residences of the period that have been disfigured or deteriorated. As such, it is an important illustration of the building traditions of settlers in the San Juan Islands at the turn of the century.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 3.12

Quadrangle name Mt. Constitution, WA

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

A portion of the southeast quarter of the northwest quarter of Section 36, Township 37 North, Range 1 West, Willamette Meridian, San Juan County, Washington. See continuation sheet.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

| state | n/a | code | county | code |
|-------|-----|------|--------|------|
|-------|-----|------|--------|------|

| state | code | county | code |
|-------|------|--------|------|
|-------|------|--------|------|

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert J. Patton, Professor

organization Dept. of Architecture

date June 1985

street & number Washington State University

telephone (509) 335-5539

city or town Pullman

state Washington 99164

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Paul E. Patton

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date October 8, 1985

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date 11-21-85

for Melora Byers  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

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Continuation sheet

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Barfoot, Jane, (Niece, Otis H. Culver - interview September 11, 1984), Olga, Washington.  
Culver, Carrol, (Son, Otis H. Culver - interview September 10, 1984), Olga, Washington.  
Richardson, David, Magic Islands, Orcas Publishers, 1964.  
Richardson, David, Pig War Islands, Orcas Publishing Company, Eastsound, Washington,  
1971.  
Shorey Book Store, Illustrated Supplement to the San Juan Islander, 1901, Facsimile  
reproduction, 1966.

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The property is described thusly: that portion of the north half of the south half of the northwest quarter of Section 36, Township 37 North, Range 1 West, Willamette Meridian, in San Juan County, Washington, described as follows:

Beginning at the southwest corner of that certain tract of land conveyed to Leda G. Hipkoe, Mary G. Hall and Evelyn Watson by the instruments recorded under Auditor's File Nos. 54259, 54260, and 54261, records of said County; thence along the west line of said parcel north 8°57'55" east to the south margin of County Road No. 63 as existing on October 26, 1973, or the easterly extension of said margin; thence westerly and southerly along said margin to its intersection with the northerly margin of County Road No. 71 as existing on October 26, 1973; thence easterly and southerly along said north margin to the north-south centerline of said northwest quarter of Section 36; thence northeasterly in a straight line to the point of beginning;

Specifically EXCEPTING any portion thereof situated outside of the north half of the south half of the northwest quarter.