### United States Department of the Interior Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

## National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCRS use only received JUN 2 5 1982 date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms* Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic	W. S. Jeffery Fa	armstead			
and/or common	W. S. Jeffery Farmstead		(YK00-2)		
2. Locat	ion way		999 99 99 99 99 99 99 99 99 99 99 99 99	an yang mengerakan kanan ka	
street & number	N/A		NZ	'A_ not for publication	
city, town	Benedict vić	X_ vicinity of	congressional district	First	
state	Nebraska <b>code</b>	031 county	York	<b>code</b> 105	
3. Classi	ification				
district _X_ building(s) _X structure site Pu	wnership public <_ private both Jblic Acquisition in process being considered	Status X occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible X yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use _X_ agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park private residence religious scientific transportation other:	
4. Owne	r of Proper	ty		n an an Anna Anna Anna Anna Anna Anna A	
	llis Farms, Inc., 238 Forest Bouleva		ace Ellis, Presiden	t	
city, town Hastin	ıgs	$\underline{N/A}$ vicinity of	state	Nebraska	
5. Locat	ion of Lega	l Descripti	on		
courthouse, registry	of deeds, etc. Regist	er of Deeds. York	County Courthouse		
	Courthouse Square	<b>,</b>			
city, town Yorl			state	Nebraska	
	sentation i	n Existing			
				an ang ang ang ang ang ang ang ang ang a	
title Nebraska His	storic Buildings S	urvey has this pr	operty been determined e	legible? yes _X no	
date On-going	g		federalX sta	ite county local	
depository for surve	<b>y records</b> Nebraska	State Historical	Society		

city, town Lincoln

state Nebraska

## 7. Description

Condition     excellent   deteriorated     _X good   ruins     fair   unexposed	Check one Xunaltered altered	Check one X original site moved date
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#### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The homestead of the W. S. Jeffery family is a well-preserved example of a prosperous farmstead in eastern Nebraska. The homestead has maintained the representative structures of a farm which has operated from 1878 to the present: the largest and oldest structure is the board-and-batten-sided horse barn, built in 1879-80; the large metal-sided cow barn is the other 19th century barn; the remaining farm buildings are the hog house, brooder house, grain bins, windmills, cisterns, and fences. On the opposite side of the road, the large, striking Queen Anne style house is placed on a slightly higher elevation than the barns. It is surrounded by a well-maintained yard outlined by a windbreak, rows of trees and shrubs, and a decorative wire fence. One of the more significant aspects of the farm is the full compliment of outbuildings, vegetation, and structures which stand to the rear of the yard: milk house, wash house, cob house, privy, windmill, cisterns, clothesline, and garage. The fields owned by W. S. Jeffery are included with the nomination for they are of primary importance to the operation of the farm. It is still occupied and operated as a family farm. The integrity of the site is excellent for the number of structures which have been preserved and for their good condition.

The Jeffery farmstead is located in the northwest corner of York County four miles west of the village of Benedict, and about fourteen miles southeast of the Platte River. This fertile farm land was once part of the tall grass prairie.

The farmstead is bisected by a gravel section road which divides the property into the house and attendant outbuildings on the west side and the barns and farm buildings on the east. This division separates the residential functions and the agricultural functions of the farm.

The barns are the oldest extant buildings on the farm. The largest one, the horse barn, is the only remaining structure from the earliest years of the farm. It was built in 1879-80, just a year after the family moved on to the site. The large barn housed work horses and mules as well as riding horses for Mr. and Mrs. Jeffery and their daughter, Leona Idilla. The eastern portion of the barn was a granary: grain bins are located in the loft and the east end of the first floor. The cow barn, completed in 1899, was used mainly as an enclosed cattle feeding area with a small room for milking. The other structures on the eastern side of the road are the hog house (1930), the brooder house (1946), three metal corn cribs, and assorted fencing.

The present house was built in 1900-02 on the higher ground across the road from the barns. It was adapted from the family's winter home in Lincoln. The outbuildings and structures near the house (wash house, milk house, cob house, privy, garage, windmill, clothesline, and cisterns) followed to serve the residence. These structures are excellent physical evidence of the

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domestic functions of a turn-of-the-century farmhouse. The placement of doors on the house is particularly astute. The doors are placed on the south and east, which aids in avoiding Nebraska's cold winter winds. The seldom-used front door is located on the east; the most commonly used doors, the back porch and side porch doors, open on the south. These south doors also provide a "work" entrance and a more formal entrance with easy access from the driveway, a feature not commonly found on farmhouses.

The grounds around the house retain a significant sense of time and place. The formal landscaping of the yard with trees, shrubs, and fence provides a sense of separation from the farm area and the road. A decorative wire fence (1920's) is the eastern and southern border of the yard. The northern border is well-defined by a dense grove of trees, an excellent windbreak. The yard is grass-covered with a double row of cedar trees on the south and a single row on the east, with a few broadleaf trees and lilac bushes paralleling these rows.

Various mechanical systems aided in the functioning of the household. The windmill pumped cool ground water into the adjacent milk house for the cooling of milk and other perishables. The cistern directly south of the house's side porch collected rain water from the roof for household use. Charles Peterson, the present occupant, reported that the windmill pumped water for cisterns on both sides of the road, each cistern had a float system which stopped incoming water after a certain height was reached. Electricity was added about the time of the First World War.

An impressive feature of the entire complex is the lack of modern alterations to the buildings. The large barns are essentially unchanged from their 19th century origins, both on the interior and exterior. The only exceptions are the changing of one bedroom into a bathroom in the house and the removal of the sliding doors between the parlor and dining room. The descendants of Jeffery, who still own the farm, have completed many repairs in recent years to insure the preservation of the farm's buildings. Repairs to the horse barn and cow barn and mechanical improvements to the house were done in 1980-81. These repairs were designed to maintain the buildings in excellent condition to insure their future use. The new roofs, painting, board and batten and siding repair, and foundation reinforcement was done by Edsel C. Carlson, carpenter and contractor from Stromsburg, Nebraska.

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The description of each building, according to the Historic American Building Survey formula, is as follows:

<u>HOUSE</u>, wood frame with clapboarding, irregular shape, 12.30 x 9.70 meters, two and one-half stories, pyramidal and hipped roof sections with four gabled dormers, original porches on front (east) and side (south), bracketed cornice, corner windows on southeast decorated with corner brackets and balusters, rock-faced limestone foundation, 1900-02, Queen Anne/Neo-classical Revival.

<u>MILK HOUSE</u>, wood frame with clapboarding, rectangle,  $4.30 \times 3.10$  meters, one story, gable roof, cupola, 1900-1902.

WASH HOUSE, wood frame with brick-impressed metal siding, rectangle, 3.10 x 3.70 meters, one story, one room, gable roof, rear interior chimney, early 1930's.

<u>COB HOUSE</u>, wood frame with board and batten siding, rectangle,  $3.75 \times 4.30$  meters, one story, gable roof, limestone foundation, 1900-02.

PRIVY, wood frame with clapboarding, rectangle, gable roof.

<u>GARAGE</u>, (former Baker Schoolhouse), wood frame with clapboarding,  $6.23 \times 10.45$  meters, rectangle, one story, two room, gable roof, pedimented hood molds over windows; two sets of garage doors added on east side, moved to present site in 1915 from the southeast quarter, Section 20, for use as a garage.

HORSE BARN, wood frame with board and batten siding, rectangular shape, 15.90 x 9.22 meters, two stories, gambrel roof, two cupolas, limestone foundation, 1879-80; four irregular bays on south; horse stalls on western portion of first floor, central aisle flanked by four double stalls on west and three double stalls and grain bins on east, wider aisle at rear of stalls for horses and mules; sliding wagon door on east provides access to a wagon-width aisle running the width of the barn with grain bins along the east wall and above; original interior complete with stalls, mangers, chutes, and bins.

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<u>COW BARN</u>, wood frame with metal sheathing, rectangular shape, 12.2 x 13.33 meters, two story, gabled hip roof, 1899; a majority of the interior was a cattle feeding area with animal access from the south and east, a long manger divides the animal area from the hay storage area in the center of the south side, the entire hay storage space is open to the loft above; In the southeast corner is a small milking room with three stanchions and a smaller feed room, each with a door opening on the east.

<u>HOG HOUSE</u>, wood frame with brick-impressed metal siding, rectangular shape,  $\frac{122 \times 36}{120}$  feet, one story, gambrel roof, three bays wide, seven bays long, feed aisle down the center, 1930.

BROODER HOUSE, wood frame with clapboarding, rectangular shape, one story, one room, gable roof, three-bay front, concrete foundation, 1946.

The nominated property includes the entire 360-acre farm of W. S. Jeffery, consisting of the eighty acres he homesteaded ( $N_2^{1}$ ,  $NW_4^{1}$ , Section 20) and other adjacent lands which he purchased from 1879-89. Although W. S. and O. S. Jeffery acquired considerable property in York County, this is the "home place." All of the other land, outside the farmyard, is farmed.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geograph	ical Data				
Acreage of nominated property	360 acres				
Quadrangle name <u>Bradshaw</u> , UMT References	NE, and Durant	, NE (see belo	w) Quadrang	le scale <u>1:24000</u>	
A 114 6 1 1 1 3 10 4 Zone Easting	4  5  3  9  8  1  0   D lorthing	urant B <u>1  4</u> Zone	6 <u>1 1 1 4 0</u> Easting	4 15 3 18 9 12 10 Northing	Bradsha
	<u>+ 15  3 18  9 10 10  </u> B <u>+ 15  3 19  2 19 10  </u> B			4 <u>15 3 19 3 10 10</u> 4 <u>15 3 19 6 17 10</u>	
Verbal boundary description NW <sup>1</sup> <sub>4</sub> , Section 20, T12N, T12N, R3W; NE <sup>1</sup> <sub>4</sub> , NW <sup>1</sup> <sub>4</sub> , Se of the historically ass	R3W; W <sup>1</sup> 2, NE <sup>1</sup> 4, ection 19, T12N, sociated propert	R3W, in York y.	County, Nebrask	ka, including all	L
List all states and counties state N/A			county boundaries		
	code	county		code	
state	code	county		code	
organization Nebraska State street & number 1500 R Sta			date February, telephone 402/471		
city or town Lincoln		state Nebraska			
12. State Hist	toric Pres			ertificatio	n
The evaluated significance of th	is property within the	state is:		₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩₩	
national	X_state	local			-
As the designated State Historic 665), I hereby nominate this pro according to the criteria and pro	perty for inclusion in t	the National Registe	er and certify that it h	as been evaluated	89-
State Historic Preservation Offic	er signature	anin DJ	mett	6/15/82	
title Director, Nebraska	State Historica	1 Society	date	. ,	
For HCRS use only I hereby certify that this p	roperty is included in	the National Regist	er		
	Brainam			7.26.82	
Attest:			date		
Chief of Registration					

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—C	heck and justify below		
prehistoric	archeology-prehistoric	community planning	landscape architecture	e religion
1400–1499		conservation	law	science
1500–1599	<u>X</u> agriculture	economics	literature	sculpture
1600–1699	_X_ architecture	education	military	social/
1700–1799	art	engineering	music	humanitarian
<u>    X    1800–1899</u>	commerce	X	t philosophy	theater
<u>    X                                </u>	communications	industry	politics/government	transportation
		invention		other (specify)

#### Specific dates 1878 to the present Builder/Architect N/A

#### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The W. S. Jeffery Farmstead is significant to the architectural history of Nebraska as a well-preserved example of a prosperous farm of excellent integrity. Still owned by Jeffery family descendants, the farm buildings and structures date from the earliest years of the farm to the steel grain bins of today. The farm has maintained a sense of time and place through these buildings, especially with the striking Queen Anne style house and its adjacent landscaping and outbuildings. In York County history, the Jeffery family has held a prominent place: W. S. and Laura (Dickey) Jeffery were early settlers who homesteaded part of this property, became prosperous farmers, and assisted in the development of the county; their eldest son, Orman S. Jeffery, continued their farming traditions on this farm and became a prominent York County landowner.

William Scott Jeffery (1843-1921) was born in Hookstown, Beaver County, Pennsylvania, the son of Robert H. and Mary (Scott) Jeffery from Pennsylvania and Virginia, respectively. In 1853 his family moved to McDonough County, Illinois. Since his father had been a teacher, he received what was considered a good education at the time, attending the common schools of McDonough County, Illinois, and Hancock County, Virginia (the latter due to extended visits with his maternal relatives).

In 1866, at the age of twenty-three, he purchased forty acres of land in Illinois. This land he farmed, with an adjoining forty acres, to which he brought his bride the following year. Laura Louisa Dickey (1849-1906) was born in rural Ohio, the daughter of James and Laura (Russell) Dickey. Early in life she moved with her family to Illinois, where she married W. S. Jeffery in 1867.

The family moved westward to York County, Nebraska, on March 31, 1874, four years after the organization of the county, after retaining ownership of the Illinois farm and a subsequent Iowa farm. Jeffery moved to eighty acres purchased from the Union Pacific Railroad, and the family occupied a sod house the first winter. Two years later Jeffery filed a declaratory statement for homestead land and moved his family onto the present property in 1878.

The land upon which the barns stand ( $N_2$ ,  $NW_4$ , Section 20) was this homesteaded property, whose sod was first broken by W. S. Jeffery. During the 1880's, he purchased land to the south, east, and west, including the land across the road where the house stands. The first buildings were all located on the east side of the road. The first house stood near the northern-most windmill and is no longer extant (see sketch map).

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Due to personal enterprise, initiative, good management, and nearly half century of hard work, he became one of York County's most successful farmers and stockmen. He acquired almost 1500 acres of York County land and was able to make a gift of a quarter section to his eldest son in 1889.

Mr. and Mrs. Jeffery were always interested in the education of their children. During the major portion of the last decade of the 19th century, the family lived in Lincoln during the winter in order to educate the two younger sons and the daughter. Leona Idilla and Earl graduated from the University of Nebraska; the youngest son, Basil, died in medical school.

Jeffery was intensely interested in the development of York County. He served as county commissioner and supported the growth of the Republican Party. He was a member of several fraternal organizations. The nearby village of Benedict had four banks over the years; Jeffery was involved in each, including serving as president of the Farmers State Bank at the time of his death. Jeffery was always generous with his neighbors, many times providing seed wheat and grain to those less fortunate.

Perhaps Jeffery's role in the county and his concern about his family and neighbors is best described in <u>York County</u>, <u>Nebr. and Its People</u> (Sedgwick, p. 945):

> His memory practically compasses the period of pioneer development and later progress here, and he has ever borne his share in the work of upbuilding and improvement, and as a citizen he occupies a foremost place in the hearts and confidence of his numerous friends and neighbors.

A major reason that the Jeffery farmstead has remained in the family and continued to prosper was that the eldest son, Orman Schuyler Jeffery, maintained the family farming traditions on the home place. O. S. Jeffery (1868-1951) lived most of his childhood and all of his adult years on the farmstead. He did not elect to go on to higher education and remained on the farm in the 1890's when the family wintered in Lincoln. From the quarter section he received on his twenty-first birthday, he went on to acquire nearly 2000 acres, 1700 acres in York County and the rest in Wyoming. Since his death in 1951, his nieces and nephews have retained ownership and the farm has been rented.

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#### Architecture

Architecturally, the house is striking in its size, degree of ornamentation, and integrity of site and structure, all somewhat unusual in York County. The stylistic inspiration for the house was taken from the family's Lincoln home (227 North 27th Street, Lincoln), where they wintered in the 1890's while the children attended school. The fronts of the houses are identical (door, porch, fenestration, corner window, ornamentation), however the Jefferys built a much larger farmhouse with additional rooms to the rear. The latter house is mainly Queen Anne in style, as evidenced in the irregularity of the exterior and the floorplan, and the multiplicity of roof lines. The simple turned porch railings and balustrade give it a somewhat more classical appearance. The yard, plantings, and outbuildings are very well preserved and vividly show the various domestic functions of a farmhouse of this period. Corn Belt farmhouses are noted for being large (eight rooms are common), two-story, frame structures (Trewartha, p. 216). The Jeffery house is noticeably larger and has more stylistic features than many farmhouses in the area.

The horse barn and granary is a sophisticated agricultural building unique in the Nebraska Historic Building Survey to date. No other barn has been recorded with a large granary space on the main floor. The barn has the typical small grain storage space near the horse stalls, but in addition, the eastern end of the barn is devoted to grain bins with an adjacent wagon entrance. The loft houses grain bins and hay area. This plan appears to be a hybrid, which is rare and little discussed in the literature of barn typologies (Adler & Adler, pp. 211-212). The barn reflects Jeffery's sophisticated operation, his innovations, and the amount and variety of the grain production in the early years of the farm. In addition to its unique characteristics, the barn is important for the increasing rarity of horse barns on the rural landscape.

The metal-sided cow barn has a more typical plan and emphasizes the stock-raising aspects of the farm. The majority of the space is a cattle feeding area and hay storage. The small milking room has a separate outside entrance. The large hay storage area is open to the loft above, an easy and accessible system.

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The division of the farmstead by a public road is uncommon in Nebraska and the nation. Only 8% of Corn Belt farms are divided by a public road, according to the research of Glenn T. Trewartha (fig. 3 and p. 216). One reason for this may be that the system of land division made it less likely for a farmer to own land on both sides of a road (Trewartha, p. 222). W. S. Jeffery purchased the land for the house site in 1889 and planned to build a house on this higher point opposite the barns (see USGS map). The separation creates a pleasing division between the domestic and agricultural functions of the farmstead. The house and its surroundings on higher grounds dominate the scene and create an elegant approach.

#### Agriculture

The diversity of the farming operation has been and continues to be a typical feature of Corn Belt farmers.

"Even today Corn Belt farmers hate to have all their eggs in one basket. The early farming patterns should be visualized in terms of more or less wheat, corn, oats, barley, rye, flax, and hay, and a few more of cattle, swine, sheep, and horses." (Bogue, p. 124).

W. S. Jeffery was a shining example of a diversified farmer, and appears to be more innovative than many. In his first decade on the farm, he great expanded the number of animals and poultry. By 1885, the holdings included 67 cattle, 12 milch cows, 60 hogs, 125 poultry, 8 horses and 2 mules. All the crops mentioned above were grown: oats, barley, flax, wheat, rye, and These included all the principal crops of Nebraska in the early potatoes. 1880's (U.S. Board of Agriculture Annual Reports, 1885, p. 358). For pasturage, many farmers continued to use prairie grass for a number of years (Bogue, p. 141). Some farmers, however, tried to improve the pasture through the introduction of clover, millet, and other grasses, including for a brief time, Hungarian grass. Jeffery was growing all of these in the early Orchardists advocated groves of apple trees for fresh apples and 1880's. cider (Bogue, p. 144). Jeffery planted fruit trees (apple, pear, cherry, plum) in 1876, the year he filed for the homestead and before he moved onto the land. He was noted for his home-pressed cider.

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W. S. Jeffery was a native-born farmer of English ancestry who moved across the country as new areas opened for settlement, i.e. Pennsylvania, Illinois, Iowa, and Nebraska. He appears to have brought to Nebraska more financial resources than many homesteaders and prospered considerably in York County. He retained ownership of the Illinois and Iowa farms for many years; the lumber for a frame house was shipped to York County in the family's second year in Nebraska; and he could afford to purchase land initially and acquired more within ten years. His farming operation has many features typical of Corn Belt farmers in this period. However, he appears to be more innovative in the variety of crops, grasses, animals, and orchards established in the first years of his farm and proceeded fairly quickly to stock-raising. The initiatives of him and his son created a more prosperous and innovative farmstead than many, which is reflected in its architecture and plan.

The farmstead has been well-preserved by his son and grandchildren (the current owners), who intend to continue their stewardship. The Knights of Ak-sar-ben (an Omaha benevolent organization) recently presented the Nebraska Pioneer Farm Award to the farmstead in recognition of one hundred years of ownership in the same family.

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- Arthur, Eric and Dudley Whitney. <u>The Barn: Vanishing Landmark in North</u> America. Greenwich, Ct.: New York Graphic Society, Ltd., 1972.
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Historic Sites Survey form prepared by Lura Lou Wallace Ellis, November 9, 1981.

