

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

JUN 5 1985

date entered

JUL 19 1985

Continuation sheet

(North  
61 Kingstown MRA)

Item number 7

Page 61

NAME: Spink Farm  
LOCATION: 1325 Shermantown Road, Saunderstown  
OWNER: Sanford Spink  
RFD #1, Shermantown Road  
Saunderstown, RI 02874

CONDITION: Excellent; Altered; Original site

DESCRIPTION:

The Spink Farm consists of a two-and-one-half-story, gable-roofed house, with one outbuilding, a family cemetery, and large open fields bounded by carefully maintained stone walls. The farm lies in the southwest corner of North Kingstown on land that has been owned by the Spink family since 1790. The house dates from about 1798 and has a central chimney plan and Federal detailing. The farm once produced dairy products, corn, potatoes, and fruits; although no longer a working farm, its rural setting is remarkably well preserved.

The two-and-one-half-story farmhouse faces Shermantown Road to the east. A doorway flanked by plain pilasters and topped by transom lights and a shallow hood is centered in the five-bay facade. The central chimney which emerges from the gable roof serves six brick fireplaces, three on the second floor and three on the first. One of the latter, that in the southeast parlor, has been covered and the flue utilized for the furnace in the basement. Fine Federal mantels remain throughout the house. To the right of the kitchen fireplace is an oven. The house is arranged in the central chimney plan; a 1½-story kitchen lean-to and a fieldstone porch on the rear are twentieth-century additions.

An orchard, which once stood to the north of the house, and a barn once to the west, are both gone. The only outbuildings on the property are a modern two-car garage and a small milk house (probably nineteenth century) to the southwest, the first floor of which is stone with board-and-batten siding on the story above.

Stone walls outline the open fields surrounding the house. In the northeast corner of the fields is a small family cemetery holding three generations of the Spink family. Graves are marked by rows of marble and granite slabs, all facing west. The earliest dates from 1838 and was erected for the farm's founder, Isaac Spink. The cemetery is surrounded to the north and west by stone walls, and enclosed to the east and south by a delicate iron fence.

PERIOD: 1700-1799, 1800-1899

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Agriculture, Architecture

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

JN 5 1985

date entered

Continuation sheet 62

Item number 7

Page 62

SPECIFIC DATE: c. 1798  
BUILDER: probably Isaac Spink

SIGNIFICANCE:

The Spink farmhouse is an intact example of a high quality vernacular structure from the late 1700s, still able to document eighteenth and nineteenth century agricultural life in North Kingstown. Although retaining the central chimney plan, its style and craftsmanship are far more sophisticated than that exhibited by most earlier rural residences. The farm itself, despite demolition of the barn and other outbuildings, is a remarkable survival from the area's agricultural past. While much farm land in North Kingstown has been developed or become reforested and many stone walls allowed to deteriorate, the Spink farm preserves the appearance of rural North Kingstown in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Robert Spink came from England to Jamestown, Virginia, in 1635. In 1648 he moved to Newport, Rhode Island, and in 1665 he settled across the bay in North Kingstown where the Spink family proliferated and became prominent in community affairs. It was Robert's great grandson Isaac, born in 1767, who established this farm on Shermantown Road when he purchased 34 acres in 1790 from Thomas Sherman for "two hundred ten pounds Real Silver." Isaac added twenty acres directly to the north in 1793 and it is these two tracts which are here nominated. With subsequent land acquisition the farm grew to over 200 acres by the late nineteenth century. A small dwelling was erected on the southeast corner of the farm, replaced by the existing house about 1798.

ACREAGE: c. 55 acres  
QUAD NAME: Wickford, R.I.  
UTM REFERENCES:

A 19 291831 4598400  
C 19 291380 4597900

B 19 291520 4597780  
D 19 291580 4598360

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

The boundary of the Spink Farm is defined as the lot line of Assessor's Plat 10, lot 3, which includes the Spink House, outbuildings, and some open fields outlined by stone walls. The fifty-five acres nominated were historically the core of Spink Farm, acquired by Isaac Spink in 1767 and 1790.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: Local

Photo numbers 51-55