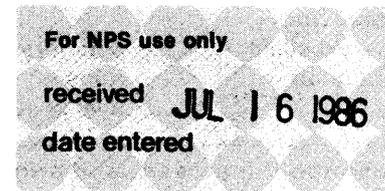


**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



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

1. Name

historic John M. Spicer Summer House and Farm

and/or common Spicer Castle

2. Location

street & number 600 Lake Avenue South

N/A not for publication

city, town Green Lake Township X vicinity of Spicer

state Minnesota code 22 county Kandiyohi code 067

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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input checked="" 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 William and Allen Latham

Latham Farms Inc.

street & number P. O. Box 306

city, town Spicer N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota 56288

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kandiyohi County Courthouse

street & number Becker Avenue W.

city, town Willmar

state Minnesota 56201

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Minnesota Statewide Historic

Sites Survey

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1984-85

federal state county local

depository for survey records Fort Snelling History Center, State Historic Preservation Office

city, town St. Paul

state Minnesota 55111

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	N/A
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The John M. Spicer Summer House and Farm is located on the wooded southeast shore of Green Lake, in Green Lake Township, Kandiyohi County. The farmstead buildings are situated on an elevated site on the southeast side of County Road 95 (also called Lake Avenue) and the summer house complex stands between the road and the lakeshore. The site is surrounded by modest cottages and houses built circa 1920-1970.

The Farmstead grouping includes three extant structures:

Farmhouse (late 1880's). Two stories; clapboard siding; hip roof with central chimney and large, ornamented dormers; symmetrical fenestration of double hung, rectangular windows; three-sided bay window on south facade; garage addition at rear.

Granary (late 1880's). One and one half stories; clapboard siding; gable roof; recently remodeled into housing. (Non-contributing)

Dairy Barn (foundation late 1880's, upper portion 1937). Original barn destroyed by fire in 1936; present upper portion is a low, gable roofed frame structure on original foundation. (Non-contributing)

A Horse Barn, Corn Crib and Milk House have been removed from this grouping because they do not date within the period of significance.

The Summer House grouping includes:

Summer House (1893, 1913). The summer house was originally constructed as a Queen Anne dwelling in 1893. In 1913, Spicer and his daughter Jessie employed Minneapolis architect J. E. Mason, who drew plans for expansion of the house to the north and remodeling of the exterior into the English Tudor style. The rambling structure now features an irregular gable roofline and a stuccoed wall surface with mock half-timbering. The lakeside facade features a three story octagonal tower with an open lookout on the third level and a crenelated parapet at the top. A concrete stair leads up the steep incline from the lake to the house. Fenestration on the house is irregular, with ground level porches on three sides and second story sleeping porches on the south and east facades. A porte cochere with intact buggy stoop is situated beneath the sleeping porch. The interior of the house, which is virtually intact, includes six bedrooms, sleeping porches, and two bathrooms on the second floor; entry porch, reception room, living room, dining room, dining room porch, kitchen, and kitchen porch on the first floor; and a basement with wood burning furnace and lighting generator.

Lodge (1913). One story, hip roof, stucco exterior, large paired and single double hung windows situated symmetrically on facades. Utilized as an office by John Spicer.

Log Cabin (c. 1902). One story, gable roof with large overhang at front, massive stone chimney and fireplace on east facade. The log cabin was built for Spicer's son, Raymond, who suffered from a debilitating bone disease.

Also in this area are an Ice House (c. 1890), a Wood Shed (c. 1910), and a Boat House (c. 1905, moved in 1944). A lagoon situated to the southwest of the Lodge provided mooring for a launch used for access to and from the town of Spicer, located on the southwest shore of the lake.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1880 - 1913

Builder/Architect J. E. Mason (1913 remodeling)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

John M. Spicer Summer House and Farm is significant for its association with a prominent figure in the development of central Minnesota and as an extremely well-preserved early twentieth century summer home complex in the popular resort area of Green Lake.

John Spicer was born in 1841 in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, grew up in Illinois, moved to St. Paul in 1860, and arrived in Willmar in 1870. In 1869 Spicer was married to Eliza Frances Deming, with whom he had seven children. He started a mercantile business in Willmar, was active in establishing the Kandiyohi County Bank and the First National Bank of Willmar, and was instrumental in educational, social, religious, and political organizations. Spicer was an important force in the development of north-south railway connections through Kandiyohi County, convincing James J. Hill to build a rail line between St. Cloud and Willmar (built 1886) and heading the Willmar and Sioux Falls Railroad company (incorporated 1886) which extended Hill's line southward from Willmar to Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Spicer was one of the county's largest real estate developers and the head of the Willmar and Sioux Falls Townsite Company which developed the townsites along the Willmar and Sioux Falls line, including the town of Spicer, platted on the west shore of Green Lake north of Willmar in 1886. In addition, farmlands in Kandiyohi County were developed and sold by the Spicer Land Company which owned over 100 farms in the Green Lake area alone.

Green Lake, which became the focus of Spicer's attention beginning in the 1880's, is an unusually clear and scenic lake in central Kandiyohi County which was the site of the first settlement in the county and eventually developed into one of southwestern and central Minnesota's most famous nineteenth century resort areas. Kandiyohi's first settler, E.T. Woodcock staked a claim on the west shore of the lake in 1856, and Green Lake was the site of two of the county's earliest platted townsites, Columbia and Irving, which were platted in 1856 and 1857 on the west and east shores respectively, but which were both abandoned at the outbreak of the Dakota War of 1862 and not reestablished. (John Spicer platted his town of Spicer on the former site of Columbia.) Beginning in 1886 when, thanks to John Spicer's efforts, the St. Cloud and Sioux Falls Railroad was built along the west shore of the lake and the townsite of Spicer was platted, Green Lake quickly developed into a well known resort area. The lake was served by excursion trains from Willmar, St. Cloud, and the Twin Cities, steam launches including the "Green Lake Belle" (formerly used on Lake Minnetonka as the "Minnetonka Star") ran tourists about on the lake, early tourists searched for relics in several Indian mounds on the lake shore, and the region became known as a prime hunting spot. A number of resort hotels were established, the most well known and earliest being the Interlachen Hotel, a 70 guest capacity resort built in 1890 at the northwest corner of the lake (razed in 1946), and the Hotel Teepeetonka, a hotel and cottage complex built 1894 for 100 guests on the north shore (razed in 1960). As tourists elected to become seasonal residents, summer houses were built along the lake shore. Most were modest in scale, but a few large summer estates were built by the region's wealthiest families. By World War I the lake was the site of many smaller resort cottage complexes catering to the middle class.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

9. Major Bibliographical References

Larson, Eunice Spicer. Sunset Tales From Medayto. Privately published, 1929.
Willmar Tribune, May 23 and May 30, 1928.
 "Tourists a Part of the County's Economy Since 1890." Kandi Express, June, 1982.
Centennial History of Kandiyohi County. Willmar, 1970.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 11.5 acres

Quadrangle name Spicer

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

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

B

1	5
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5	0	1	0	5	0	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C

1	5
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3	5	1	2	9	0
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5	0	1	0	3	0	0
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D

1	5
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3	5	1	1	9	0
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5	0	1	0	3	6	0
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E

1	5
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3	5	1	2	2	0
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5	0	1	0	5	0	0
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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet.

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan Granger and Dennis Gimmetad/State Historic Preservation Office

organization Minnesota Historical Society

date Feb. 1983, July 1985

street & number Fort Snelling History Center

telephone (612) 726-1171

city or town St. Paul

state Minnesota 55111

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

Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 7/9/86

For NPS use only

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

J. Beth Groves
 Keeper of the National Register

date 8/6/86

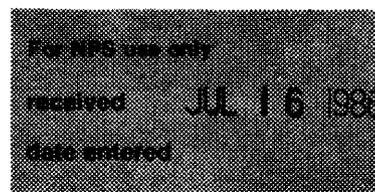
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



John M. Spicer Summer House

Continuation sheet

and Farm

Item number 8

Page 1

Item #8 (Significance) continued:

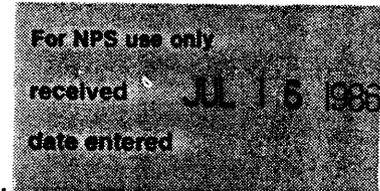
In 1886 Spicer acquired land on the southeast shore of Green Lake, across from the newly platted town of Spicer, and established a farm, naming it "Medayto" after the Chippewa name for the lake. His farm served as "model" farm on which he could pursue his interest in progressive farming practices. The farmstead, which included a farmhouse, dairy barn, milk house, horse barn, stock barn, granary, and corn crib, was subsequently expanded to include a summer home and support buildings on the lakeshore. The summer house was built in 1893 and remodelled in 1913 by Minneapolis architect J. E. Mason. It served as the Spicer family's residence for April through October from 1893-1928.

The summer house complex, with a fifteen room house and lodge, boat house, ice house, and other structures, was the most extensive early summer complex built on Green Lake and one of the sites which best represents the area's significance as a popular resort. Today the Spicer complex, and the C. A. Rice Estate on the western shore of the lake, are the only two remaining pre-World War I estates on the lake. (In comparison, the Spicer is the most famous and has earlier roots and stronger links to the history of Green Lake and the city of Spicer, while the Rice Estate is the only extant site in the county which represents the Rice family who were important to the early history of Willmar.) Almost all other large summer homes have been altered beyond recognition or demolished, their supporting buildings razed, and their grounds subdivided and sold as land values on the shore continue to rise. Nearly all other remnants of Green Lake's early tourist trade, including more modest early summer homes and all early resort hotels, have been altered considerably or demolished. Today there are six resorts on Green Lake, some dating from the 1920's but all with modern (new or remodelled) facilities, and about 650 residences along the shore of Green Lake.

The Spicer Summer House and Farm complex, which remains virtually unchanged since its 1913 remodelling project, is known widely as a local landmark. The Spicer property is now owned and occupied by third generation family members. It was included in a recent eight month historic sites survey of Kandiyohi County conducted by the State Historic Preservation Office and is one of west central Minnesota's best examples of railroad-related tourism development.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



John M. Spicer Summer House and Farm, Green Lake Twp. (vic. of Spicer, MN)

Continuation sheet Resource Count Item number 8 Page 2

The John M. Spicer Summer House and Farm nomination contains:

7 contributing buildings

- Farm House
- Summer House
- Lodge
- Log Cabin
- Ice House
- Boat House
- Wood Shed

4 Non-contributing buildings

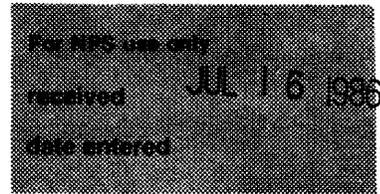
- Granary
- Dairy Barn
- Horse Barn
- Milk House

2 Non-contributing structures

- Silo
- Corn Crib

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



John M. Spicer Summer

Continuation sheet

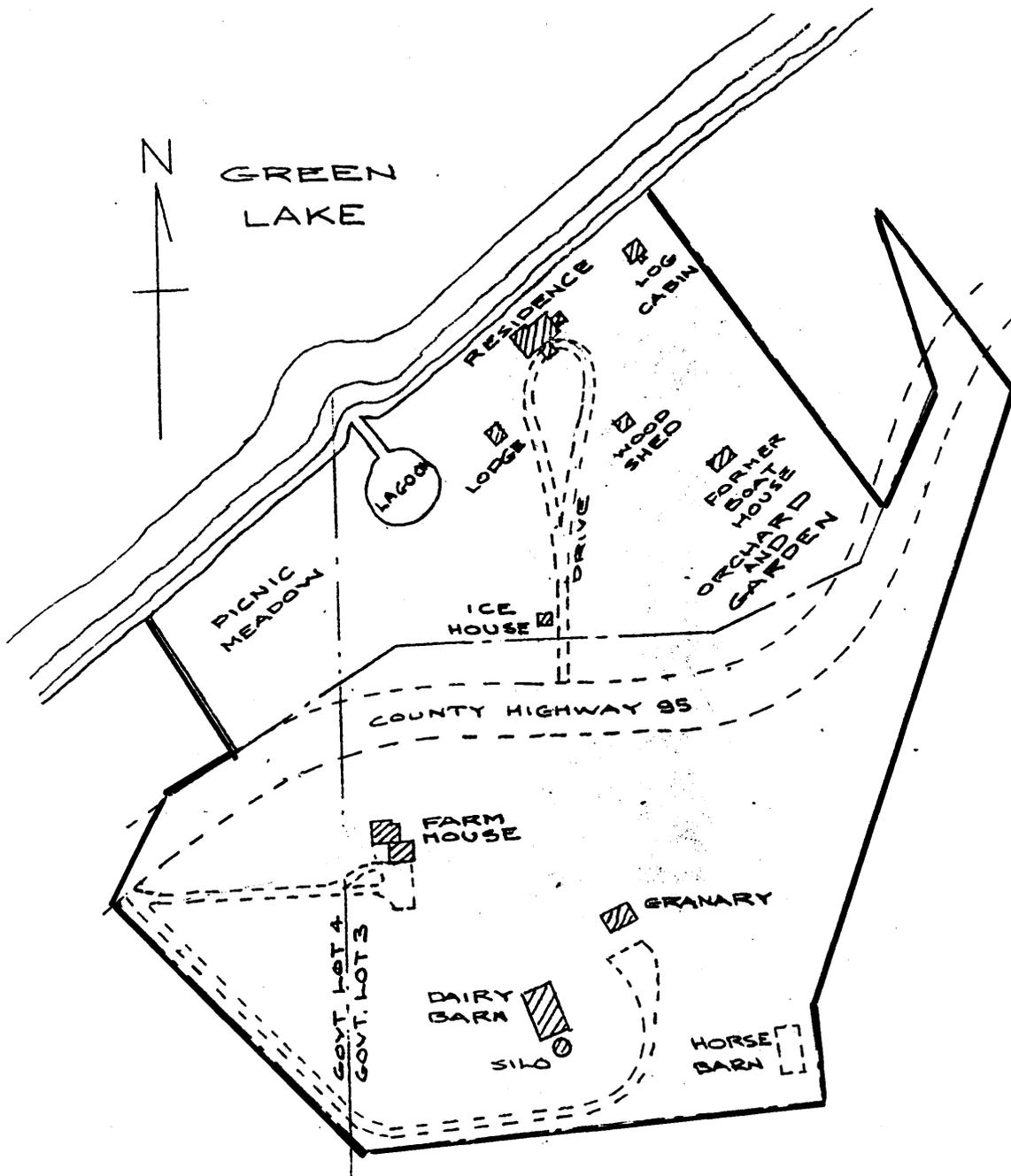
House and Farm

Item number 10

Page 1

Legal Description

Those parts of Government Lots Three (3) and Four (4), Section One (1), Township One Hundred Twenty (120) North, Range Thirty-four (34) West, Kandiyohi County, Minnesota, described as follows: Beginning at the Southeast corner of Pleasantwood Beach of Green Lake (the plat of which is now on file and of record in the Office of the Register of Deeds of said County); thence bearing South 25 14' West a distance of 139.1 feet to a point; thence bearing South 45 04' East a distance of 407.79 feet to a point; thence bearing North 84 35' East a distance of 314.25 feet to a point; thence bearing North 82 43' East a distance of 228.82 feet to a point; thence bearing North 6 17' West a distance of 105.98 feet to a point; thence bearing North 18 18' East a distance of 732.63 feet to a point; thence bearing North 35 45' West a distance of 265 feet, more or less, to a point; thence bearing South 16 45' East a distance of 220.6 feet to a point; thence South 19 45' West a distance of 154.7 feet to a point; thence North 35 45' West a distance of 420 feet, more or less, to a point on the bank of the southeast shore of Green Lake, thence Southwesterly along said bank to a point located a distance of 160 feet, more or less, North 30 20' West of a point 100 feet North 57 45' East of the point of beginning; thence from said point on said bank bearing South 30 20' East a distance of 160 feet, more or less, to a point; thence bearing South 57 45' West a distance of 100 feet to the point of beginning, containing 11.5 acres , more or less in all.



SITE SKETCH
 MEDAYTO FARM
 SEC 1, GREEN LAKE TOWNSHIP
 KANDIYOHI COUNTY, MINNESOTA
 SCALE (APPROX.) 1" = 200'
 Boundary =
 SUMMER RESIDENCE AND FARM
 OF JOHN M. SPICER