

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received **JUL 9 1986**
date entered **AUG 13 1986**

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

1. Name

historic John M. Spicer House

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 515 Seventh St. NW N/A not for publication

city, town Willmar N/A vicinity of

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 type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Alan R. and Barry Guptill

street & number Route 2

city, town New London N/A vicinity of state Minnesota 56273

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kandiyohi County Courthouse

street & number Becker Ave. 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 State Historic Preservation Office, Fort Snelling History Center

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	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u> N/A </u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The John M. Spicer House is located on Seventh St. NW in one of Willmar's oldest residential neighborhoods. The house was apparently originally entered from the south side, but now conforms to neighboring buildings with an east facade main entrance. It is set back farther on the lot than neighboring buildings (and once stood on a six acre site) and is surrounded by late nineteenth and early twentieth century woodframe houses, most of which postdate the Spicer House.

The Spicer House, built circa 1873, is a 1 1/2 story clapboard-covered building with a steeply pitched gabled roof and complex design typical of Queen Anne-inspired Victorian architecture. The south facade of the house (the original main facade) has an open intact hipped roofed porch with very narrow square columns with entablature-like capitals, and a two story polygonal bay window at a projecting gable end, a gabled wall dormer, and a second porch, now enclosed. The present main (east) facade has two prominent roof gables, a one story polygonal bay window, and an open shed roofed porch with turned columns and perforated, curving fretwork. Within the porch is a large rectangular window with a stained glass transom.

The design of the present Spicer House represents at least one major enlargement of the circa 1873 house which was expanded to the north and east circa 1885-95. Subsequent exterior alterations have included enclosing the southeast porch and reroofing the house with asphalt shingles. Despite these changes, the house retains its late nineteenth century character. It is in fair condition.

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Circa 1873 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The John M. Spicer House in Willmar is historically significant as the home of John M. Spicer, a figure important to the early development of Kandiyohi County and a prominent local businessman and railroad official.

John Spicer was born in 1841 in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, grew up in Illinois, and moved to St. Paul in 1860. After living in St. Paul and for a short time in Belle Plaine, he moved to Willmar in 1870. He arrived in Willmar soon after the city received its first rail service, the St. Paul and Pacific Railroad built to Willmar from St. Paul, and a year after the city was platted. Spicer was married to Eliza Frances Deming (1851-1909) in 1869 in Belle Plaine. The couple had seven children. In Willmar, Spicer first established a mercantile business with partner Andrew M. Larson, and was active in establishing the Kandiyohi County Bank (1879) and the First National Bank of Willmar.

Spicer was an important force in the development of north-south railway connections (to supplement east-west St. Paul and Pacific) through Kandiyohi County. In an arrangement made between Spicer and James J. Hill, Hill would provide a railway link between St. Cloud and Willmar if Spicer would arrange for the construction of a southern line from Willmar to Sioux Falls. Through connections to Hill's Great Northern System, these two lines would provide a link between the agricultural areas of central and southwestern Minnesota and the port facilities of Duluth to the north and stockyards of Sioux City, Iowa, to the south. The Willmar and Sioux Falls Railway Company, founded and headed by Spicer and financed by a group of Kandiyohi County investors, was incorporated in March of 1886. The company built the line leading south from Willmar and eventually expanded by purchasing the Sioux Falls, Yankton and South Western Railroad in 1893, the Sioux City and Northern Railroad in 1900, the Sioux City and Western Railroad in 1900, and the Sioux Falls Terminal Railroad in 1900. Spicer was president of the system until it was sold to the Great Northern in 1907.

Spicer was reportedly the largest land owner in Kandiyohi County and an 1889 biographer reported that he "has probably done more to aid in the settlement and development of Kandiyohi County than any other man."¹ He was president and principal owner of the Willmar and Sioux Falls Townsite Company which owned and developed several townsites in the 1880's along the Willmar and Sioux Falls line including Spicer, Raymond, Russell, and Ruthton (named after Spicer's children). Another firm, the Spicer Land Company, owned and developed thousands of areas of farmland in Kandiyohi County, and Spicer owned several commercial buildings in Willmar and other towns. In addition to his business career, Spicer was active in Democratic politics and was involved in debates and county, state, and national Democratic conventions. He was instrumental in educational, social, religious, and political organizations, serving as president of the City Council, president of the School Board, and a member of the Episcopal church and several fraternal orders.

The John M. Spicer House, was built circa 1873 in one of Willmar's oldest residential neighborhoods, northwest of downtown. It predates nearly all surrounding buildings, and once stood on a six acre site surrounded by shade and ornamental trees. The house served as the Spicer's primary residence until 1893 when he built a summer house on Green Lake,

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

9. Major Bibliographical References

Willmar Tribune, May 23 and May 20, 1928.

Latham, Eunice Spicer. Sunset Tales from Medayto. 1929.

Illustrated Album of Biography of the Famous Red Reiver Valley of the North and the Park Regions. Chicago: Alden, Olge, and Co., 1889.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Solomon Lake

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	5	3	3	8	4	4	0	4	9	9	8	7	5	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

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D

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 5 and 6, Lot 3, Nelson's Addition to Willmar.

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/Contract Historian

organization State Historic Preservation Office
Minnesota Historical Society

date June 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

Russell W. Fridley

title State Historic Preservation Office

date 6/30/86

For NPS use only

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

Shelores Byer
National Register

date 8-13-86

Keeper of the National Register

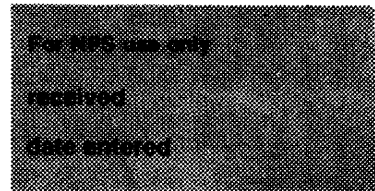
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

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Continuation sheet John M. Spicer House, Willmar, Kandiyohi County, MN
Item number 8

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Item #8 (Significance) continued:

north of Willmar near the town of Spicer. After 1893 his house in Willmar served as his winter residence, although during the 1920's he often spent some winter months in California. Spicer died May 19, 1928 in Minneapolis and is buried in the Spicer, Minnesota, cemetery.

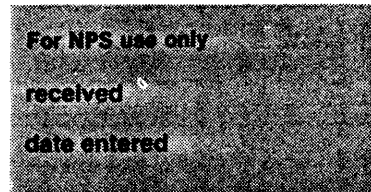
The John M. Spicer House was included in a recent eight month historic sites survey of Kandiyohi County conducted by the State Historic Preservation Office. The Spicer House is also an important representative of the "Agricultural Development and Railroad Construction" context unit of the Resource Protection Planning Process (RP3) program developed recently by the State Historic Preservation office to assist in the study and assessment of the state's historic sites.

Illustrated Album of Biography of the Famous Red River Valley of the North and the Park Regions. Chicago: Alden, Olge, and Co., 1889.

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Continuation sheet

Resource Count

Item number

8

Page

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The John M. Spicer House Nomination contains 1 contributing building.