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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name EAKIN, SPENCER, FARM

other names/site number SPRINGHILL FARM

2. Location

street & number 201 Nashville Dirt Road N/A not for publication

city or town Shelbyville vicinity

state Tennessee code TN county Bedford code _____ zip code 37160

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
Herbert L. Hays 5/20/93
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:
 entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Delores Byers Date of Action 6/24/93
Entered in the National Register

Eakin, Spencer, Farm
Name of Property

Bedford Co., TN
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	0	buildings
		sites
1	1	structures
		objects
7	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE: agricultural field; animal facility; horticultural facility; agricultural outbuilding

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

AGRICULTURE: agricultural field; animal facility; horticultural facility; agricultural outbuilding

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

MIXED: Classical Revival, Eastlake, Craftsman, Queen Anne, and Italianate influences

foundation STONE; WOOD

walls WEATHERBOARD

roof ASPHALT SHINGLE

other WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheets

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is: N/A

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1903-1943

Significant Dates

1903

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Eakin, Spencer; Corbridge, Henry; Davidson, George; Castlemon, J. H.; Morrison, J. S.; Starn, R.; and Nelson, W., builders.

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

Eakin, Spencer, Farm
Name of Property

Bedford Co., TN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 113 acres

UTM References Murfreesboro 78SW
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Carroll Van West and Meredith Fiske

organization MTSU Center for Historic Preservation date 1/22/93

street & number Box 80, MTSU telephone 615-898-2947

city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37132

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Margaret Eakin

street & number 201 Nashville Dirt Road telephone 615-684-7305

city or town Shelbyville state TN zip code 37160

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Eakin, Spencer, Farm, Bedford County, TN

VII. Architectural Description

The Spencer Eakin Farm is a 113-acre property that lies along the Nashville Dirt Road, two miles north of Shelbyville, in Bedford County, Tennessee. The farmscape includes an early twentieth century dwelling and various farm outbuildings of the early 1900s. A historic spring lies about one hundred yards in front of the dwelling. Fields once contained a variety of crops, from corn, cotton, and small grains in the nineteenth century to a variety of truck garden crops, sugar beets, and other progressive agricultural crops in the early twentieth century. Like many farms in northern Bedford County, the fields are no longer dominated by row crops. Rather they are used for pasture, except for a small garden plot near the house. The historic fields of the Eakin Farm are well defined by fences and tree lines, with the house lot clearly set apart from the surrounding agricultural fields.

The dwelling (1902-3) is a two-story frame building that exhibits several different stylistic influences. The wrap around porch, for example, is supported by Classical Revival columns. An Eastlake-influenced sunburst rests in the center gable, while the general asymmetric appearance, windows, central chimney and porch form suggest a Queen Anne stylistic influence. The side Palladian windows suggest an Italianate influence. But the wooden eaves and the dark floor-to-ceiling panelled interior is much more in keeping with the Craftsman style then becoming popular throughout the eastern states.

The east front elevation looks toward the Nashville Dirt Road. Five brick steps lead up to a wooden wrap around porch set on a limestone pier foundation with plywood in-fill. The porch roof is supported by eight Doric columns. The first story facade is weatherboard with three bays. The bays consist of two 1:1 double hung sash windows, with lattice muntins on the top sash, on either side of a sash door. Molding surrounds all three bays. The original light fixture hangs from the porch ceiling which is covered with bead board. The roof is a complex hip and gable with dormers. The roof is covered in asphalt shingles and extends over the porch which wraps all the way around the

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home. The porch roof has a pedimented gable supported by four of the Doric columns, with molding and an Eastlake sunburst in the typanum. Above the central porch gable, three weatherboard dormers extend from the hipped section of the roof. They are symmetrically placed with the two smaller dormers, containing a 1:1 double hung sash window with lattice work on the top sash, on either side of a central weatherboard dormer with a larger window of 1:1 double hung sash window with lattice work on the top sash. The outer windows are narrower than the central window in the central dormer. Above the central window is a bull's eye window. All the dormers have molding underneath the gable roof line. There are two projecting interior central brick chimneys. Craftsman eaves are visible underneath the roof overhang.

The north elevation is supported by limestone piers with plywood in-fill. Six Doric columns support the wooden wrap around porch. The seventh Doric column is engaged into the side of an extending ell with a solid limestone foundation. The first story is weatherboard with six bays. The first (most easterly) bay is a tall 1:1 double hung sash window with lattice work on the top sash. The second and third bays are the same size 1:1 double hung sash windows with lattice work on the top sash. The fourth bay is a sash door with screen and a plain transom. All four bays have molding.

The ell contains two bays, both 1:1 double hung sash windows symmetrically placed in the facade. Above the center of the windows, underneath the gable, is a bull's eye-vent that matches the bull's eye window on the east elevation). The ell has three concrete steps leading up to a ghost of a door that was removed circa 1950. A wide chimney with corbelling is on the west side (back) of the ell.

A massive weatherboard gable extends out over the porch, with central paired 1:1 double hung sash windows with lattice work on the top sash. Above the windows, underneath the gable is a small Palladian ornamental window with two

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vents on either side. Wooden Craftsman eaves are visible underneath the overhang of the roof which is covered in asphalt shingle.

The west elevation is supported by limestone piers with concrete block and plywood in-fill. Two bays are on the west elevation, the first is a storm door next to the brick chimney on the ell which leads to an enclosed, plastic over wood framed, porch. The plastic was added in the late 1980s for insulation purposes. There are three concrete steps leading to the storm door. The next bay is also a door, in this case a sash door with screen. There is plain molding around the door. Three concrete steps lead up to the porch in front of the door.

Five Doric columns support the roof over the porch on the west elevation. The roof ceiling is bead board and the roof on this side of the house is asymmetrical hip. One weatherboard dormer extends from the center of the hip roof. The dormer has paired 1:1 double hung sash windows with lattice work on the top sash. The roof is asphalt shingle and Craftsman eaves are visible underneath the overhang.

The south elevation is almost identical to the north elevation except for the ell addition to the north side. The south elevation is supported by limestone piers with plywood in-fill. Eight Doric columns support the asphalt shingle porch roof. The porch floor is wooden and the ceiling is bead board. Four bays are on the first story weatherboard elevation. The first (most westerly) is a 1:1 double hung sash window with lattice work on the top sash. The next bay is a sash door with a screen. The third bay has paired 1:1 double hung sash windows with lattice work on the top sash. The fourth bay is also a 1:1 double hung sash window with lattice work on the top sash. All of the bays have molding.

From the gable end of the home on the south elevation, extends a massive weatherboard gable with central paired 1:1 double hung sash windows with lattice work on the top sash. Above the windows, underneath the gable, is a small Palladian ornamental window with vents on either side. There are two 1:1 double hung sash windows, with lattice

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work on the top sash, on either side of the extending gable. Craftsman eaves are visible underneath the overhang of the roof.

The primary entrance of the Eakin dwelling opens into a large room now used as the living room, that extends across the front of the building. There are no base boards and a thin rose pattern carpet covers the original wooden pine flooring. The walls are covered in dark stained paneled pine that end just below the top of the door frames. Above the panels are dark stained diagonal bead boards which are placed at opposing angles to create a sense of movement throughout the room. There is wooden plate rail around the room. The ceilings are coffered with diagonal bead board covering the interior spaces of the squares. The east wall has three bays which consist of two 1:1 double hung sash windows with lattice work on the top sash, on either side of the sash front door. The south and north walls are the same with one bay each which consist of a large vertical 1:1 double hung sash window with lattice work on the top sash. The west wall has three bays. There are two panelled doors on either side of a fireplace. The doors have molding around them. The fireplace is brick, covered in small tile, there is a wooden mantle held up by two Ionic columns.

From this front room, the floor plan is then divided by an original thin partition wall into two rooms. Doors in the west wall lead to a dining room on the north side and to a bedroom on the south side. Both the dining room and bedroom have their own door in the west wall that leads into four different rooms at the back of the first floor. The north door leads to the kitchen and pantry and provides access to the small sitting room where the staircase to the second floor is located. The south door leads to a small room where a telephone is located as well as a small bathroom. It also provides access to the sitting room.

The panelled door on the north side of the fireplace in the living room leads into the dining room. The floor is covered with the same thin rose carpet as the living room.

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There are ten inch baseboards that run around the room. Dark stained pine vertical bead board is broken by a wide band of diagonal bead board, with the vertical bead board continuing to the ceiling. A bracketed plate rail is found on the east and west walls. The walls angle into the ceiling with a wider width bead board. The ceiling is the same dark stained pine bead board. The ceiling has the original gas chandelier. There is a fireplace on the south wall. It is brick with small tile and has a beaded wooden mantle held up by two Doric columns. The shelving above the mantle has intricate mill work and carving. The north wall has one bay which consists of a 1:1 double hung sash window with lattice work on the top sash. The west wall has two bays, panelled doors with molding around them.

The south door on the west wall of the dining room leads to the sitting room with staircase, while the north door on the west wall of the dining room leads to a pantry and closet.

The pantry has a wooden floor with ten inch base boards. There is dark stained pine vertical bead board up to the ceiling which is only broken by a chair rail. There are diagonal bead boards around the tops of the walls below the bead board ceiling. Each wall has one bay which consists of panelled doors. The door on the west wall leads to a closet which has horizontal whitewashed bead board with built in shelves and cabinets. The door on the north wall leads outside to the porch, and the door on the south wall leads to the sitting room with staircase.

The kitchen is in the back northwest corner of the home. In 1965 a wall was removed, the porch filled in and a door was removed on the north wall and two windows put in. The kitchen floor is stone and linoleum with eight inch baseboards. The walls are wallpapered, and along the west wall runs a limestone and brick fireplace complete with oven and wooden mantle with brackets.

The sitting room with the staircase is located next to the pantry, off of the dining room. It has a panelled wainscotting up to a chair rail. Vertical bead board runs up to a diagonal bead board band around the tops of the

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walls. The southwest corner has built in Craftsman benches which contain the family's shrine to their southern heritage. The ceiling is also stained bead board. The stairs are wooden with a large square wooden newel post and wooden square balusters with a wide subsoil. The staircase is a dogleg. The west wall of the room has two bays. Paired 1:1 double hung sash windows with molding are on the first floor, with a 1:1 double hung sash window with lattice work on the top sash, behind the first flight of steps. The south wall has one bay which consists of a door that leads to a small hallway.

The hallway has ten inch base boards with stained horizontal bead board. Every wall has a door in it. The south wall has a sash panelled door which leads to the porch. The other three doors are panel with molding. The door on the east wall leads to the front bedroom.

The front bedroom floor is covered with the same thin rose carpet that covers the other front rooms. There are nine inch base boards around the room. Vertical bead board comes up to a chair rail. Above the chair rail is diagonal bead board set at opposing angles against each wall. There is a continuous band of vertical bead board around the tops of the walls. The ceiling is also stained bead board. The south wall has two bays which consist of 1:1 double hung sash windows with lattice work on the top sash. The west, north, and east walls each have panelled doors with molding.

From the top of the staircase, the second floor opens into a hallway. Off of the hallway are four bedrooms and a bath in the southwest corner.

The hallway has a painted wooden floor with ten inch base boards. Vertical bead board is separated in the center by a wide band of bead board which runs diagonally. A wide band of diagonal bead board also runs around the tops of the walls. The ceiling is also bead board. Five doorways, leading to bedrooms, are off of the hallway.

The front bedroom has a panel door with molding, stained wooden floor, and no baseboards. The walls are horizontal bead board. The ceiling is also bead board. The east wall has three bays which consist of 1:1 double hung sash windows with lattice work on the top sash. The north wall has one

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bay, a 1:1 double hung sash window. The south wall is a solid interior wall and the west wall has two bays, both panel doors with molding. The northern most door leads into the northern side bedroom.

The northern side bedroom has a wooden floor with ten inch baseboards. The walls are diagonal bead board set at opposing angles on the wall, separated by a band of vertical bead board around the center of the room. A vertical band of bead board goes around the top of the walls, the ceiling is also bead board. The east wall has two bays, a panel door which leads to the front bedroom, and a 1:1 double hung sash window with lattice work on the top sash. The north wall has a pair of 1:1 double hung sash windows with lattice work on the top sash. The west wall has one bay, a panel door that leads to a horizontal bead board dressing room. The south wall has one bay, a panel door into the hallway.

Across the hallway from the back northern bedroom is another bedroom, the back southern bedroom. The floor is wooden with ten inch baseboards. The walls are diagonal bead board set at opposing angles on the wall, separated by a band of vertical bead board around the center of the room. A plate rail runs along the north wall. A vertical band of bead board goes around the top of the walls, the ceiling is also bead board, with a Craftsman molding that runs across the ceiling and crosses in the center. The north wall has one bay which consists of a panel door leading into the hallway. The west wall also has one bay, a panel door which leads to a bathroom with a linoleum floor, no baseboards, built in shelves, wallpapered walls, and drywall ceiling. The south wall has a pair of 1:1 double hung sash windows with lattice work on the top sash. The corner of the south and east wall has built in Craftsman benches. The south wall has two bays, a 1:1 double hung sash window with lattice work on the top sash and a panel door with molding which leads to another front southeast bedroom.

The southeast bedroom has a wood floor and no baseboards. The walls are horizontal bead board. The east wall has one bay which consists of a 1:1 double hung sash window with lattice work on the top sash. The south and north walls have no openings and the west wall has a panel door with molding that leads to the hallway.

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Eakin, Spencer, Farm, Bedford County, TN

The Eakin Farm contains six contributing and one non-contributing farm buildings and structures.

The barn was built in circa 1935 and is a three portal barn with a gambrel roof extending into two wings. The barn has a hay hood and enclosed barn yard. (C)

The storage shed was built in 1903. It is constructed of vertical flushboard on a wood foundation and has two bays (both doors) on the front. There is a door with a vent over it on the short end of the smokehouse. The tin roof slants up to a gable over the second bay, which is also a door. This door has two wooden steps leading up to it. (C)

The garage, covered with corrugated metal, dates to circa 1935. The foundation is concrete. It is two stories with the first story being open and the second story enclosed. Exterior wooden steps lead to a deck and the second story gable side entrance. There are also two 8:8 sash windows on the hip side above the open entrance to the garage. The roof is tin. (C)

The greenhouse is made of whitewashed limestone and dates to circa 1935. The roof is a shed roof covered with corrugated plastic. (C)

The shed, built in circa 1940, is open on one end with exposed framework. The enclosed end appears to be half a crib. The roof is tin. (C)

The spring dates to the farm's establishment in the 1830s. Bricks and limestone have been placed around it for better access to the water. (C)

The stone wall was built in circa 1945 and still stands as a divider between the yard for the dwelling and adjacent fields. (NC, due to date)

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VIII. SIGNIFICANCE

The Spencer Eakin Farm (or Springhill Farm), on the Nashville Dirt Road north of Shelbyville, in Bedford County, Tennessee, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places for its local significance in the history and development of agriculture in Bedford County (Criterion A) and for its local architectural significance in Bedford County (Criterion C).

Built from October 1902 to September 1903 by a group of local carpenters and craftsman, the dwelling appears to have followed a design by its owner, Spencer Eakin. An official of the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad, Eakin managed freight operations for the NC & St.L. He kept detailed records on the construction of the house, noting every major step in its erection, beginning with the demolition of the family's earlier dwelling that dated to the 1830s, to its completion in the fall of 1903. He also noted the amount of money spent for materials and carpentry work in his diary. For example, he paid the carpenters \$768.29 "for their work in full." This account also listed the names of the some of the craftsmen who worked on the house. Henry L. Corbridge did the brick glazing along with "priming and painting," for instance, while George Davidson did most of the stone masonry work. Typically four carpenters would work on the home on a given day. For most of the project, these were: J. H. Castlemon, J. S. Morrison, R. Staturm, and W. Nelson. They were paid different amounts, with Castlemon receiving \$2.50 a day, Morrison, \$1.50 a day, Nelson, \$1.50 a day, and Staturm, \$1.40 a day.

The two-story frame house is a very interesting composite of different architectural styles and elements popular at the turn of the century. This mixing together of different architectural motifs truly fits the meaning of the word eclectic. The house, for example, features a Classical Revival porch, with Doric columns. It has an Eastlake-influenced subburst in its center gable while Palladian-styled windows are located on two elevations. Craftsman-style eaves are found on all four elevations and the general assymetrical look of the dwelling is reminiscent of the picturesque period of Victorian architecture.

The most significant architectural feature, however, is the dark stained Georgia pine bead board interior, in different geometric configurations, that you find in almost every room of the house. The built-in benches in the staircase room, the plate rail, and the dark-stained exposed woodwork

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certainly fits into the Craftsman decorative arts tradition which began to take shape in the United States during the early twentieth century. Similar interiors have been documented in Tennessee dating to the 1880s, most notably the Bruno Gernt house in Allardt, Fentress County (NR 3/6/87) and the Colonel A. M. Shook house in Tracy City, Grundy County (NR 4/1/87). But the precedent for the Eakin farmhouse most likely lies with railroad architecture of the period. The interior is reminiscent of the dark thin paneling found in many railroad stations from that same period. In Tennessee, for example, a strong similarity exists between the interior of the Eakin house and that of the passenger station and company office of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad in Etowah, built in 1904-1906. More interestingly, a strong similarity exists between the house and the interior of the NC&St.L depot built in Shelbyville in 1905-6. This building has already been listed in the National Register (3/24/88), in part for its architectural significance. Here Spencer Eakin could come and check on freight operations when he was at his Shelbyville farm.

The farm complex itself is significant under Criterion A for agriculture. This farm is a recently registered Century Farm in Bedford, first established by Alexander Eakin in circa 1836. Interestingly, the date of its founding was typical for historic family farms in Bedford County; the average date of establishment for Century Farms in this county was 1834. In 1836 Eakin and two brothers acquired a large portion of a Revolutionary War land grant that had belonged to John McQuistian. Three brothers operated separate farms in the nineteenth century, but today only the Spencer Eakin farm has remained in family hands and has operated as a productive farm for the last 157 years. The 113 acres in this nomination was part of the original acquisition of 1836 and has remained as productive agricultural land, belonging to different generations of the Eakin family, ever since.

The theme of continuity is not the only contribution this farm makes to the history of Tennessee agriculture. Its true significance lies in its connection to experiments in "progressive agriculture," especially those associated with railroad boosterism, that took place at the turn of the century.

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Spencer Eakin was freight manager for the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad and consequently had a considerable interest in increasing the amount of agricultural commodities shipped along the railroad's line in Middle Tennessee. As early as 1893, railroad executives made it company policy to encourage the introduction of new crops in Middle Tennessee agriculture. In that year, the company created the "Development Department," under the guidance of the famous New South booster and Tennessee agricultural promoter, Joseph B. Killebrew (a related Killebrew property is White Chapel in Montgomery County, NR 6/26/86). From 1893 to the turn of the century, both Killebrew and company president John W. Thomas spread the message for agricultural diversification at county fairs, agricultural meetings, and in railroad-produced pamphlets. In 1894, for example, Thomas spoke to a convention of Middle Tennessee farmers that was meeting in Shelbyville. His address emphasized that the key to future agricultural prosperity was diversification of crops rather than a dependence on such traditional nineteenth century products as corn, cotton, and wheat, which at that time were still the primary crops grown on most farms in Middle Tennessee in general and Bedford County in particular. Thomas suggested that farmers turn to more marketable crops like snap beans, Irish potatoes, cabbage, tomatoes, onions, sugar corn, and burley tobacco. He asserted that cultivating these crops naturally

would require more skill and care than the raising of our standard crops, cotton and corn and wheat, but would be far more profitable, and would result in the abandonment to a great extent of the old-style plantation farming and establish the new style of small farms with varied crops. (1)

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This was exactly the approach that Spencer Eakin took with the family farm when he gained control of it and built his new farm complex from 1902 to 1907. His agricultural experiments from 1906 to 1907 are well documented in his account books, valuable farm records that remain in the family's possession. As early as 1903 he recorded his first planting of snap beans and Irish potatoes. He also produced sorghum and produced his own sausage from his hogs. There is gap in his note-taking until 1906 when he begins to record a yearly pattern of agricultural activity. On April 5, he planted Val Beans, English Peas, Sugar Corn, Okra, and Sugar Beets. The inclusion of sugar beets is particularly interesting. The crop became popular in the late 1890s, particularly in the northern plains, because it could be produced in a harsh climate and the beets could be "refined" into sugar. The crop quickly became one of the most popular of the new crops. Southerners grew it both as a raw source of sugar but also as vegetable. The next day, April 6, Eakin planted sweet potatoes and stored his winter cabbage, tomatoes, and pepper. His agricultural production throughout the year would prove to be amazingly diverse and included stringless beans, turkeys, corn, grape wine, cattle, apple cider, oats, lettuce, onions, and cucumbers.

Thus in his first four years at the farm, Eakin used his fields to plant many of the crops--cabbage, tomatoes, Irish potatoes, snap beans, and sugar beets--suggested by railroad officials and agricultural boosters some ten years early. Compared to other Century Farmers in his county, he was at the forefront of the progressive agriculture movement in Bedford County, an association that is not surprising considering his own long relationship with the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railroad and that company's interest in promoting new crops on Tennessee's farms.

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Eakin, Spencer, Farm, Bedford County, TN

After his death in 1907, his wife Milbrey and son James Deery Eakin continued the farm's experiments in progressive agriculture, adding new farmbuildings in the 1920s and 1930s. From its auspicious beginnings in the early twentieth century, the Eakin Farm remained an agricultural leader in in Bedford County. The family continued to operate a mixed farm of diverse crops and livestock, serving much like a model demonstration farm, until the beginning of World War II. Recently the farm has been like many in Bedford County, producing hay, garden vegetables, and cattle.

Endnote:

1. Jesse C. Burt, Jr., "Railroad Promotion of Agriculture in Tennessee," Tennessee Historical Quarterly, X(1951): 327.

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Eakin, Spencer, Farm, Bedford County, TN

IX. Bibliography

Burt, Jesse C., Jr., "History of the Nashville, Chattanooga, and St. Louis Railway." Ph: D Dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1950.

Burt, Jesse C., Jr. "Railroad Promotion of Agriculture in Tennessee." Tennessee Historical Quarterly, X(1951):320-33.

Eakin Family Papers, Private Collection, Shelbyville, TN.

West, Carroll V. Tennessee Agriculture: A Century Farms Perspective. Nashville: 1987

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Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 15 Eakin, Spencer, Farm, Bedford County, TN

X. Boundary Description

Verbal boundary description

The Tax Map for this nomination has the scale 1" = 400'. This scale tax map is prepared by the Tennessee State Board of Equalization for rural areas. In the past, the Tennessee Historical Commission has used this scale map for nominations and has found that the 1" = 400' adequately meets our office needs. The Tennessee Historical Commission does not have the facilities to prepare maps to the scale preferred by the National Park Service.

The nominated boundaries are those marked as parcel number 1, 113 acres, on the attached Bedford County Tax Map 78.

Boundary justification

The nominated property contains all of the original family farm acreage that is associated with Spencer Eakin and that has remained in family ownership.

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Section number PHOTOS Page 16 Eakin, Spencer, Farm, Bedford Co., TN

PHOTOGRAPHS

Eakin, Spencer, Farm
Nashville Dirt Road
Shelbyville, Bedford County, TN

Photos by: Carroll Van West
MTSU Center for Historic Preservation
Box 80, MTSU
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Date: November 1992

Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission
701 Broadway
Nashville, TN 37201

Farmscape, looking west toward dwelling
#1 of 31

Farmscape, looking southeast
#2 of 31

Farmscape, looking northeast
#3 of 31

Farmscape and spring, looking east
#4 of 31

Garden and rear fields, looking northwest
#5 of 31

Dwelling, facing west
#6 of 31

Dwelling, facing southwest
#7 of 31

Dwelling, facing south
#8 of 31

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Section number PHOTOS Page 17 Eakin, Spencer, Farm, Bedford County, TN

Dwelling, facing southeast
#9 of 31

Dwelling, facing east
#10 of 31

Dwelling, facing north
#11 of 31

Dwelling and greenhouse, facing north
#12 of 31

Garage, facing west
#13 of 31

Farm complex, with barns, facing north
#14 of 31

Barn, facing northwest
#15 of 31

Garden and domestic complex, facing southeast
#16 of 31

Living room, first floor, facing south
#17 of 31

Wall detail, living room, first floor, facing west
#18 of 31

Dining room, first floor, from living room, facing west
#19 of 31

Detail, plate rail, dining room, first floor, facing east
#20 of 31

Mantle, dining room, first floor, facing southeast
#21 of 31

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Section number PHOTOS Page 18 Eakin, Spencer, Farm, Bedford County, TN

Dining room, first floor, facing east
#22 of 31

Pantry, first floor, facing west
#23 of 31

Kitchen, first floor, facing north
#24 of 31

Staircase room, first floor, facing south
#25 of 31

Staircase, first floor, facing north
#26 of 31

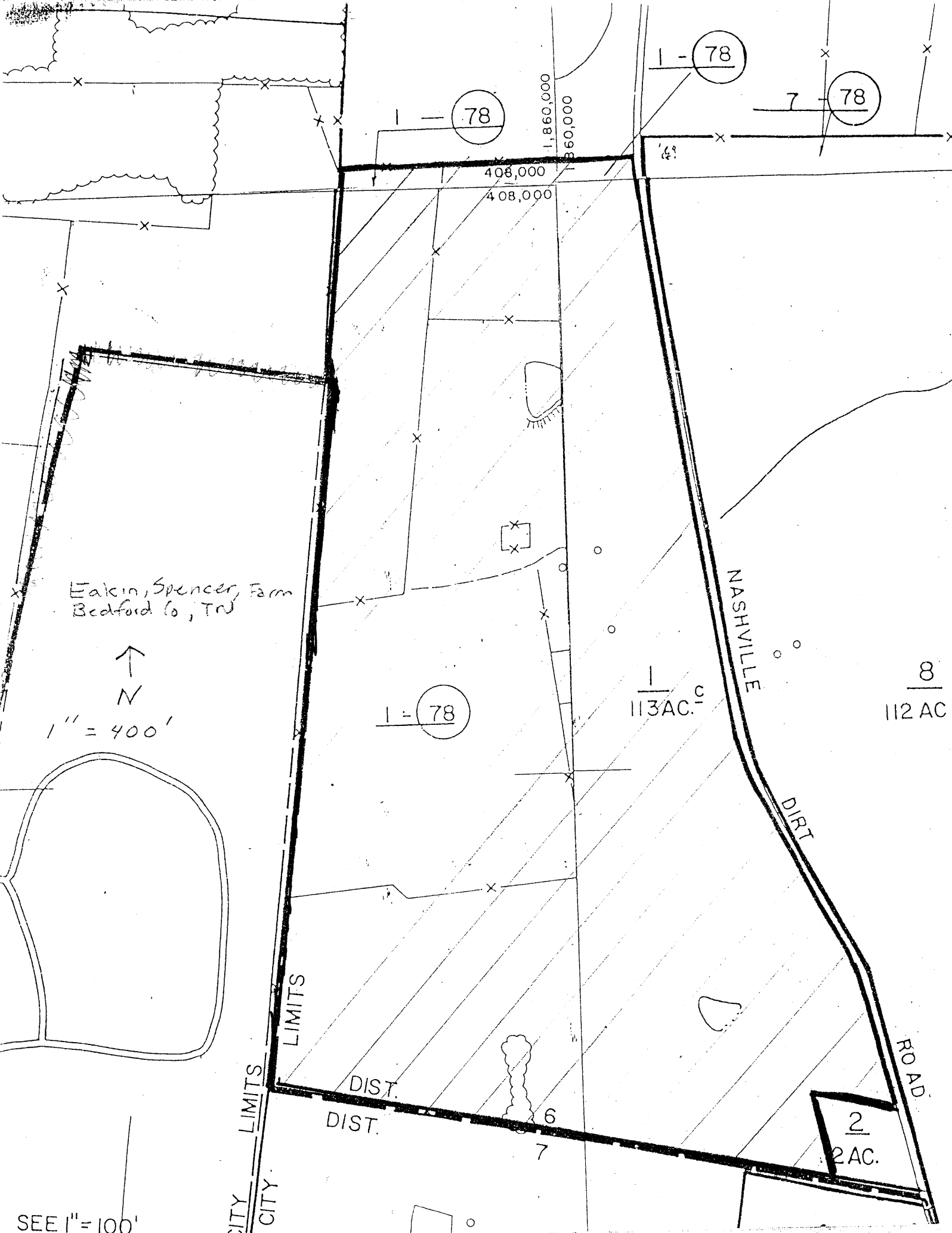
Bedroom, first floor, facing northeast
#27 of 31

Hallway, second floor, facing east
#28 of 31

Front bedroom, north side of second floor, facing northeast
#29 of 31

Rear bedroom, north side of second floor, facing northwest
#30 of 31

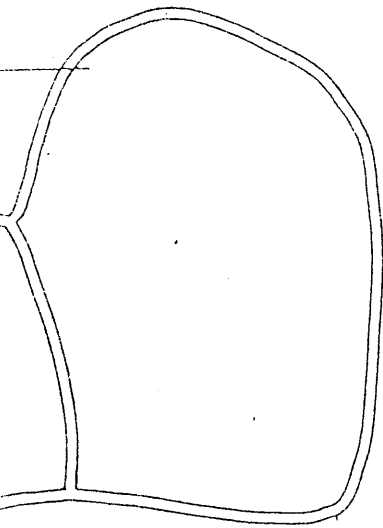
Bathroom, second floor, facing west
#31 of 31



Eakin, Spencer, Farm
Bedford Co., TN



1" = 400'



SEE 1" = 100'

CITY LIMITS
CITY

DIST.
DIST.

1 - 78

1 - 78

7 - 78

1 - 78

1
113 AC.

8
112 AC

2
2 AC.

6
7

408,000
408,000

1,860,000
860,000

NASHVILLE

DIRT

ROAD