

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name PALMER, EBEN & CYNTHIA, FARMSTEAD

other names/site number Palmer-Abbeal-Sprague Farmstead

2. Location

street & number 6616 E. Orchard Road not for publication

city or town Spokane vicinity

state Washington code WA county Spokane code 063 zip code 99212

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,
I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
 national statewide X local
Applicable National Register Criteria
X A B X C D

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

WASHINGTON SHPO
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register
 other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

PALMER, EBEN & CYNTHIA, FARMSTEAD

Spokane County, WA

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box.)

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

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|--------------|
| 2 | | buildings |
| | | district |
| 1 | | site |
| | 1 | structure |
| | | object |
| 3 | 1 | Total |

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

AGRICULTURE: agricultural outbuilding

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

ARGRICULTURE: agricultural outbuilding

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID 19th CENTURY: Greek Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE: basalt

walls: WOOD: clapboard

roof: ASPHALT

other:

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Narrative Description

Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a summary paragraph that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Summary Statement

The Eben & Cynthia Palmer Farmstead is located seven miles northeast of Spokane on Orchard Prairie in Spokane County, Washington. Built in 1891 and expanded in 1895, the Palmer farmhouse is a 1.5-story Upright-and-Wing type home embellished in a vernacular expression of the Greek Revival and Folk Victorian styles. The home is distinguished by a large covered front porch which warps around the main façade of the home, horizontal wood drop siding, tall narrow 2/2 double-hung windows, deep cornice returns, and inset wall dormers. Also on site is a hand-dug fieldstone root cellar, a wood frame barn, and a historic fruit orchard (located northeast of the farmhouse). Although the farmhouse, root cellar, and barn have undergone repairs and modifications, the overall complex retains good integrity in location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

CURRENT APPEARANCE & CONDITION

Site

The Palmer Farmstead is located on the south 1/2 of the southeast 1/4 of the northwest 1/4 of Section 24, Township 26 North, Range 43 of the Willamette Meridian. The farmstead cluster is situated on the southwest corner of the intersection of East Orchard Road and North Orchard Prairie Road. The property measures 403.83 feet wide and 660 feet deep for a total of 6.09 contiguous acres.¹ The acreage includes cultivated farmland, manicured lawn, fruit trees, wild grasses, and the farmhouse, barn, and fieldstone root cellar. Orchard Road abuts the property's north border, Orchard Prairie Road abuts the property's east border, and farmstead cluster is located at the property's northeast corner. The property is surrounded by rural agricultural farmland developed with farms, farmhouses, barns, and outbuildings built mostly in the late 1890s and the first half of the 20th century.

Farmhouse Exterior (built in 1891, expanded in 1895) - Contributing

The wood frame Palmer farmhouse is 1.5 stories, follows a simple gable-front-and-wing plan, and is 44 feet wide and 24 feet deep. At the rear is a single-story family room addition (12 feet wide and 10 feet deep) built in 1964. The gable front of the house faces east and was built in 1891. Four years later a 1.5 story wing was added to the north to accommodate the growing family.² At the ridge of the wing is a small brick chimney with a corbelled brick chimney cap. A cultured stone chimney was built on the south face of the house in the 1970s replacing a bay window. Covered with composition shingles, the roof is steeply pitched with overhanging boxed eaves, and is embellished with a deep cornice returns and a wide frieze board. The frieze boards are twelve inches tall and are made of solid wood. The house is clad with horizontal wood drop siding. Wood corner boards protect the ends of the wood siding. Original windows in the house are placed in a symmetrical pattern and are tall 2/2 wood-sash double-hung units with wood window sills and simple square-cut wood trim. The foundation of the house is composed of indigenous fieldstone culled from the area.

The east wall of the farmhouse is considered the home's primary façade, and well depicts the home's gable-ell design. A covered front porch is attached to the house at the first story and has a low-pitched hip roof. The covered porch extends nearly the full width of the house and is supported by square wood replacement posts.

¹ Spokane County Tax Assessor records. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

² Spokane County Tax Assessor records. The following resources list the Palmer Farmhouse built in 1891: *Spokane Historic Preservation Office Cultural Resource Inventory 1980*, Spokane County Assessor records, *Orchard Prairie: The First Hundred Years 1879-1979*, and Sprague family oral history. A view of the north exterior gable peak on the 1891 house can be viewed from the attic where a wing addition was constructed in 1895, and reveals drop siding that matches the drop siding on the 1891 house. Interior woodwork on the second floor in the 1891 house is square cut and plain while the interior woodwork in the 1895 wing addition is similar but has an ogee profile with incised details. Sprague family oral history claims the north wing addition was built in 1895 because homeowners, Eben & Cynthia Palmer, needed room for their growing family (six children).

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Above the front porch at the second story are tall narrow 2/2 windows. A small louvered attic vent is located above the windows in the gable. The east façade of the 1895 wing features two symmetrically placed inset gabled wall dormers. Each dormer has a tall 2/2 window. At the first floor shaded by the covered porch is a center entrance with sliding glass doors. A small horizontal sliding metal window flanks the sliding glass and metal doors to the north, and a large glazed picture window is located south of the sliding doors replacing the original entry door.

The north face of the house features the gable end of the 1895 wing, is clad with a continuation of the home's horizontal wood drop siding, and features cornice returns that match those at the east façade. A small louvered vent is located in the top of the gable peak, a tall 2/2 original window is located just beneath the louvered vent at the second floor, and a large picture window and an enclosed cellar entrance are located at the first floor. The enclosed cellar entrance has a gable front roof and is attached to the house at the west end of the north face. An entrance door opens to a flight of stairs that descend to a basement cellar with a fieldstone foundation.

The south face of the house is clad with a continuation of horizontal wood drop siding, and is dominated by a large chimney made of manufactured cultured stone (constructed in the 1970s). The chimney extends up and through the roof eave and is slightly tapered. A large, contemporary 1/1 window flanks the chimney to the west. An original inset wall dormer with a gabled roof and an original 2/2 window matches the two dormers at the east façade of the house, and is located above the contemporary window.

The rear of the house faces west and is dominated by a one-story addition built in 1964. The addition has a low-pitched gable roof with widely overhanging eaves that cover a side porch on the addition's north face. The gable field is clad with plywood, and the first floor is clad with wide horizontal wood siding. The foundation of the addition is constructed of concrete. Windows are a combination of fixed and aluminum sliding units with aluminum frames.

Farmhouse Interior

The original farmhouse has a total of 1,650 finished interior space on the first and second floors, and the 1964 single-story rear addition has an additional 120 square feet. Located under the north end of the house is a fieldstone cellar that measures 10 feet wide by 16 feet deep with 160 unfinished square feet of space.

Considered the home's front entry, aluminum-framed sliding glass doors at the east façade open to interior space used as a reception hall/dining room. The dining room opens north into the kitchen in the northeast corner of the house, and opens west into the 1964 family room addition at the west rear of the house. At the time the family room addition was constructed, the kitchen was remodeled with built-in casework, and all of the woodwork on the first floor was replaced with slender contemporary woodwork. From the sliding glass doors, the reception hall/dining room opens south into a living room in the southeast corner of the house. A bathroom is located in the southwest corner of the first floor.

A single flight of enclosed stairs is located on the west wall and rise south to the second floor. A long hall at the second floor parallels the stairs and opens to a bathroom, two bedrooms, and a sewing room. The second floor stairway is original and features a wood newel post, wood railing, and diagonally set plain 1.75 inch square wood balusters. The balustrade and hand rail are painted white (original finish). The second floor hallway and bedrooms retain original 8-inch deep wood floor molding, 4-inch deep window frames, and 4-panel wood doors with brass hardware and black opaque glass door knobs.

Flooring in the farmhouse on the first and second floors is made of fir planks currently covered with wall-to-wall carpet (except the kitchen and bathrooms with are covered with vinyl). The south wall of the living room is clad with manufactured stone that surrounds a contemporary fireplace while the rest of the house (except the family room addition) is finished with lathe and plaster. The family room addition is constructed with sheetrock. The ceiling height at the first floor is nine feet, and the ceiling height at the second floor is 8.5 feet.

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Barn (built in 1905) - Contributing

The Dutch style barn is located northwest of the farmhouse on the property's north border, and faces south. The barn has a rectangular footprint, and measures 46 feet wide and 42 feet deep.³ The roof is side-gabled with overhanging eaves and is covered with corrugated metal. Repaired and rehabilitated in 2012, the barn is clad with vertical board-and-batten wood siding that is painted dark brown, and is anchored to a fieldstone foundation. A wood water table course separates the foundation from the first floor of the barn. A large center inset gabled wall dormer distinguishes the south façade of the barn, and has a set of hay loft doors. At the first floor of the barn below the dormer, wide double board-and-batten-clad wood doors with exterior metal strap hinges. Secondary doors are located on the north face of the barn.

Fieldstone Root Cellar (built in 1905/2013) – Non-Contributing

Hand dug and dry stacked, a fieldstone root cellar was constructed in 1905 when the barn was erected. The root cellar is located west of the farmhouse and was built with fieldstone culled from the property. In 2013, a rectangular gable-front wood frame building colloquially called a “cabbage shed” was built on top the 1905 fieldstone root cellar. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles, and the building is clad with wood drop siding. A small gabled covered entry is located in the center of the building's north façade and is supported by square wood posts.⁴

Orchard – Contributing

To the northeast side of the home are dozen fruit trees ranging in variety from pears, apples, crab apples, Green Gage plums, Italian plums, cherries, and chokecherries as well as nutmeats, including filberts and walnuts. This small orchard was planted by the original owners of the farmstead.

ORIGINAL APPEARANCE & SUBSEQUENT MODIFICATIONS

The earliest known surviving photograph of the east façade of the Palmer farmhouse was taken in the 1940s. The photograph pictured the home's front-facing gable-front-and-wing plan which reveals the property's 1891-1895 construction. In the 1940s when the photograph was taken, the home's roof supported two original brick chimneys and was covered with wood shingles. The photograph pictured wood shingles that also covered the porch roof and a wood spindlework frieze band that hung from the porch ceiling at the porch eaves. The east façade front-facing gable peak featured decorative spindlework that projected outward from the planar wall surface of the house and was attached to the overhanging eaves of the roof (a remnant of the spindlework remains in the gable peak today). The photograph pictured a single door located on the south end of the east façade, and a single door located in the north end of the east façade. An outline on the north end of the east façade revealed the original location of a tall narrow 2/2 window that matched the original tall 2/2 windows that exist in the house; Sprague family oral history confirms an original 2/2 window was replaced with a horizontal window in the 1940s due to fire damage. Now replaced by a circa 1970s fireplace, a beveled bay window was located at the south face of the house at the first floor, and was distinguished with three 2/2 double-hung wood sash windows.

Modifications to the farmhouse include:

1940s Oil heat installed (replaced wood-burning stoves). A small horizontal window replaced an original tall, narrow, 2/2 window at the north end of the home's east façade.

³ Spokane County Assessor records. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.

⁴ “Cabbage sheds” were built as simple wood-frame structures sited on fieldstone root cellars. Used to store and process vegetables, the root cellars and cabbage sheds were built on farms across Orchard Prairie. The Palmer Farmstead root cellar supported a wood-frame cabbage shed from 1905 to the 1970s. In 2014, a new wood-frame cabbage shed was built on the 1905 root cellar (Sprague Family oral history).

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- 1964 Single-story addition built on west rear of house at first floor. Electric baseboard heat installed in addition and throughout house. Bathroom replaced original kitchen in southwest corner of first floor. Large square window replaced tall, narrow window at south end of house. Kitchen relocated and rebuilt in northeast corner of first floor. Large square window replaced tall original window on north kitchen wall. All original interior woodwork replaced with thin contemporary design woodwork on first floor when 1964 addition constructed. Sliding glass doors with metal frames replaced center single door on home's east façade. Wood shingle roof installed on roof and front porch. Insulation installed in attic.
- 1970s Bathroom constructed on 2nd floor. Center wall in south bedroom removed, forming one large bedroom. Manufactured cultured stone fireplace constructed on south wall of living room (replaced a bay window).
- 2006 Composition roof installed.
- 2009 Natural gas forced-air furnace installed.⁵
- 2013 New structure built above existing root cellar.

⁵ Modifications and dates confirmed by Rod Sprague, current owner of nominated property.

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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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1891-1905

Significant Dates

1891, 1895, 1905

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Palmer, Eben Ephraim (builder)

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary Statement

The Eben & Cynthia Palmer Farmstead is historically significant under criteria A as a property that is directly associated with the broad patterns of early settlement in the Spokane Valley. The Palmer's represent a distinct wave of settlers whom took advantage of the Homestead Act of 1862; which offered free land to those whom could "prove up" the property within a five year time period. The Act is recognized as one of the most revolutionary concepts for distributing public land in American history. In fact, in Washington State alone, 58,156 homesteads were established under the Act with a total acreage of nearly 8.5 million acres, some 20% of the state's land.

The farmstead is also eligible under Criterion C as a property that embodies the distinctive characteristics of its type and period of construction. As a vernacular expression of the Greek Revival and Folk Victorian styles, the Palmer farmhouse represents an early expression of agricultural related properties in the Spokane area. The home is the oldest existing farmhouse on Orchard Prairie and remains a highly visible and recognizable landmark at the intersection of North Orchard Prairie Road and East Orchard Road.

The period of significance for the property begins in 1891, the date when the first portion of the home was constructed, and ends in 1905, the construction date for the barn and the root cellar. During their 16 years of ownership, Eben & Cynthia Palmer cultivated 160 acres into a successful subsistence farm; planting wheat, a vegetable garden, and a fruit/nut orchard; as well as constructed a large home and barn. Their diligence and hard work to "prove up" (improve) their land was officially recognized in 1896 when Eben Palmer was awarded a Patent Deed for clear title and ownership of his property from the United States government.^{vi}

The second owners of the farmhouse were John & Rebecca Abbeal. The Abbeal's supplemented their income from the farm with a baking and dress-making business which operated directly from the nominated farmhouse. Rebecca's nephew, John Henry Sprague, purchased the farmstead in 1938. Preserved by the family for more than a century, the farmstead is currently owned by John Henry Sprague's son, John Roderick Sprague and his wife, Karen.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Spokane, Washington

By the late 1880s, the Spokane area was becoming one of the wealthiest and fastest growing communities in country and quickly gained popular attention as a railroad hub and center for mining, lumber, agriculture, and rail transport. The town and surrounding area attracted hundreds of pioneers, farmers, businessmen and women, trappers, and traders seeking their fortunes and a way to make a better life. The Spokane region experienced phenomenal growth with a population that surged from just under 20,000 in 1890, to 36,848 in 1900, and then to more than 100,000 by 1910.

Orchard Prairie

Northeast of the downtown core at the base of Mount Spokane, was a vast expanse of fertile grass lands; an area ripe for homesteading. Historian, Kathryn Highberg, described the prairie, called Orchard Prairie:

When the first homesteader saw this land in the Spring of 1879, he found a land undisturbed by the white man. The prairies were covered with lush bunchgrass, and Indian ponies by the hundreds grazed contentedly. In the forested areas along the edge of the bluffs were lofty pines, intermixed with Douglas fir and tamarack. The rich black soil was unbelievably fertile. Numerous creeks and springs flowed in the bottom lands. At many of the springs,

^{vi} United States Patent Deed #4689, application #6464, signed by U. S. President Grover Cleveland on March 4, 1896. Bureau of Land Management, Spokane, WA.

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campsites were already occupied by Indian families.

There was an abundance of food for all; wild game, deer, bear, rabbits and grouse. There were wild animals—cougar, wolves and coyotes, to provide an extra income to the trapper homesteaders. Among native plants which were in common use, were kause (wild carrot), which tasted like parsnips when eaten raw. The Indians ate this in several ways, but mostly made up into a biscuit and baked. Then there was wild celery...and numerous berries such as chokecherries, service berries, elderberries, and huckleberries.^{vii}

One of the first to settle on the prairie was Oren O. Palmer. As told by historian, Kathryn Treffry Highberg, in her book, *Orchard Prairie: The First Hundred Years*, Oren Palmer, had been a successful Minnesota farmer. However, after a series of reversals and brutal weather, he felt further "success could only be achieved elsewhere" and in 1881, he came to Spokane on a scouting mission. Impressed with Orchard Prairie, Palmer purchased 320 acres from the Northern Pacific Railroad (north half of Section 23, Township 26 North, Range 43 East) in the center of the prairie. The family moved to the property in 1883.

Others were lured to the area by the Homestead Act of 1862 which provided free land to those who made a commitment to buy or "prove up" acreage. A homesteader had only to be the head of a household or at least 21 years of age to claim a 160 acre parcel of land. Settlers from all walks of life including newly arrived immigrants, farmers without land of their own from the East, single women and former slaves came to meet the challenge of "proving up" and keeping this "free land". Each homesteader had to live on the land, build a home, make improvements and farm for 5 years before they were eligible to "prove up". A total filing fee of \$18 was the only money required, but sacrifice and hard work exacted a different price from the hopeful settlers. Nationwide between 1862 and 1950, two hundred and seventy million acres, or 10% of the area of the United States was claimed and settled under this act.

Eben Ephraim Palmer (1868-1950)

It was under the Homestead Act that Eben E. Palmer, Oren & Harriet Palmer's son, laid claim to one quarter section (160 acres) of Orchard Prairie in 1891. Located adjacent to his father's acreage, the land was sited in the northwest quarter of Section 24 at the intersection of East Orchard Road and North Orchard Prairie Road.

In 1880, government survey notes gave the following "general description" of Section 24:

The land in this township rises from level in [the] west half to broken on [the] north tier. The east half is generally high rolling land, about equally divided between timber and prairie. The soil is generally first rate in prairie, and second and third rate in timber. Nearly all the timber is small pine, rarely larger than 15 inches diameter except near brooks and water courses.^{viii}

When he applied for and received his right to homestead, Eben Palmer had the option to 1) "prove up" (improve) his land by the end of five years in order to receive free title to the acreage, or 2) choose to pay cash for the land before the end of five years at market rates (from 25-cents to \$5 per acre).^{ix} Palmer chose to improve his land.

In 1891, he began by building a wood-frame farmhouse for himself and his new bride, Wisconsin native Cynthia M. Jones, who at that time resided in Post Falls, Idaho. In 1895, he added a north wing (ell) to the house to accommodate his growing family. True to the requirements of the Homestead Act, Eben and Cynthia

^{vii} Highberg, Kathryn Treffry. *Orchard Prairie: The First Hundred Years 1879-1979*. Spokane: 1979. Eben Palmer's daughter, Estella Palmer Olsen, who was born and raised in the Palmer Farmhouse, remembered in 1979 that Orchard Prairie was "just as beautiful as it must have been when the early settlers first came, seemingly untouched by urban problems. The view of Mt. Spokane in the distance, and the good living the land has given to all, makes it a blessed place to recall as once my home."

^{viii} United States Federal Government, Department of the Interior, Federal Archive. 1880 Survey, 1896 Patent Deed. Bureau of Land Management, Spokane, WA.

^{ix} Muhn, James and Hanson R. Stuart. *Opportunity and Challenge: The Story of BLM*. United States Federal Government, Dept of the Interior: 1988.

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planted and cultivated wheat, grew vegetables and established a small orchard of fruit trees (many of which remain today). The trees continue to produce pears, apples, crab apples, Green Gage plums, Italian plums, cherries, and chokecherries as well as nutmeats, including filberts and walnuts. By 1896, Eben Palmer had completed his commitment to "prove up" his land and was awarded title to his 160 acres free and clear, recorded as a U.S.A. Patent Deed, signed by United States President Grover Cleveland.^x

The Palmers continued to live on the acreage, and farm the land for another 16 years. Together they raised six children: Clay, Raymond, Lelia, Pearl, Estella, and Oren K.. The Palmers planted lilacs in front of their farmhouse, enlarged and prospered the fruit/nut orchard, and built a hay barn and a vegetable root cellar in 1905. In addition to hundreds of bushels of winter wheat, they grew and sold cabbage and other vegetables. To process and store vegetables, the Palmers built a rectangular wood frame building (colloquially called a "cabbage shed") atop the 1905 dry-stack fieldstone root cellar. To protect the farmhouse and provide shade, the Palmers also planted trees around the home in the 1890s. A poplar tree planted 120 years ago at the northeast corner of the farmhouse is still growing today. Its bulk and enormous proportions are tangible reminders of the Palmer's zeal, diligence, patience, and perseverance in developing, improving, and maintaining the Palmer Farmstead. After 16 years in 1907, Eben & Cynthia Palmer sold their farmstead to neighboring farmers, and moved to Hillyard (annexed to Spokane in the 1920s), a community in northeast Spokane where Eben ran a hay market and grocery store.^{xi} In 1909, two years after relocating to Hillyard, Eben's wife, Cynthia, died.

A short time later, Eben married Karen "Carrie" Everson from Gulbrandedalen, Norway. They raised three children: Edwin, Frank, and James. In 1918, Eben & Carrie returned to Orchard Prairie, renting a house just south of the nominated property, and farmed part of Eben's original homestead land, which he leased for a year. They eventually settled east of the nominated property on the east side of North Orchard Prairie Road, and lived in the Orchard Prairie area until their deaths; Eben died on November 21, 1950, and Carrie died in 1957 (both are buried at Orchard Prairie Cemetery in Hillyard).

John & Rebecca Abbeal

A friend of the Palmers, John Abbeal bought part of Eben Palmer's homestead in 1907.^{xii} Born in New York in 1856 and raised on a Minnesota farm, John Abbeal came to Spokane in the 1890s. He applied for a 160-acre homestead (northeast quarter, Section 24) just east of the Palmer Farmstead. After five years, John Abbeal was awarded a clear title and patent deed for his homestead, and married his childhood sweetheart, Rebecca Sprague. The Abbeals had no children of their own but helped raise a number of nieces and nephews. As told by Orchard Prairie historian, Kathryn Highberg, Rebecca helped her husband, supplement family finances by operating a dress-making business in the nominated property, and making/baking and selling homemade pies during the Depression in the 1930s.

Sprague Family

In 1938, John & Rebecca Abbeal sold the farmhouse, barn, root cellar, and a portion of the farm to Rebecca nephews, George Vernon Sprague and John Henry Sprague. In 2009, John R. Sprague, son of John Henry Sprague, purchased the farmstead, now reduced to 6.09 acres after numerous land sales from the time the land was homesteaded.^{xiii} Since then Rod Sprague and his wife, Karen, have repaired/rehabilitated the 1905 barn, built a new cabbage shed atop the original 1905 fieldstone root cellar, and continue to organically cultivate and prosper the 120-year-old fruit and nut orchard.

^x USA Patent Deed, document deed 4689, dated 4 March 1896. Bureau of Land Management, Spokane, WA.

^{xi} Highberg, p. 107.

^{xii} Abbeal family records confirm a purchase date of 1907, but Spokane County did not record the transaction until 1914 (it was not uncommon for real estate transactions to be recorded months and sometimes years after the date of conveyance).

^{xiii} Sprague Family oral history.

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ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The overall form of the Palmer farmhouse can be classified as an "Upright-and-Wing" design (sometimes referred to as Temple-and-Wing or Gable-Front-and-Wing). This is a common type of building form which can be found across the United States. While the type was developed for the rural settings, it enjoyed wide usage in both rural and urban settings. To the building form, a variety of ornamentation was applied ranging from Greek Revival, Italianate and Queen Anne. Many such as the Palmer Farmhouse had a mix or blending of the stylistic elements.

The Upright-and-Wing house form consists of a one-and-a-half to two-story wing with a front facing gable roof, and a side wing set at a right angle to it (sometimes known as the kitchen wing or ell). This side wing is typically lower than the upright. However many examples, such as the Palmer House, have a wing which equals the height of the upright portion of the home.

As a type of non-stylistic folk architecture, Upright-and-Wing houses were generally designed and built by tradesmen as opposed to the owners of the house, but at this point is unclear if Eben Palmer built the home himself, or hired a builder. Upright-and-Wing houses were laid out in either an L-plan or T-plan. The wing/ell usually held bedrooms and the kitchen, while the "upright" held a parlor, staircase, and additional bedrooms. Early examples (c.1830-50) have the main entry on the upright portion of the house. Post-1850 examples usually shifted the entryway to the wing portion of the house. In the case of the Palmer farmhouse, which was built in two phases, the entry door was originally on the upright portion of the building and then an additional door was added in the wing.

The Upright and Wing enjoyed a lengthy and nationwide period of popularity. Although a systematic survey of Upright-and-Wing houses in Washington State has not been conducted, numerous examples are known to exist throughout the state in a variety of locations. Most Upright-and-Wing houses bear some evidence of a Greek Revival architectural vocabulary, whether in ornamentation, squat massing of the upright, or a shallow pitched roof. Such elements, like deep cornice returns and a wide frieze board, can be found on the Palmer House even though the house dates to the 1890s.

The Greek Revival style was an adaptation of the classic Greek temple front employing details of Doric, Ionic or Corinthian order. To the popular mind, the Greek temple was associated with the origins of American democracy in ancient Greece. Greece's involvement in a war for independence (1821-30) aroused much sympathy in the newly independent United States. Furthermore the War of 1812 fought against England had diminished American affection for British influence in all aspect of life including architecture.

The popularity of Greek Revival led it to be called the National Style. Newly established towns throughout the country even took names such as Athens, Sparta, and Ithaca. While the style generally falls out of favor nationwide by the 1870s, it remained in use on a limited basis in the Pacific Northwest for another ten to twenty years. In Washington State the earliest examples appear in the late 1870s, when the vast regions of the area were first being settled. Like many early styles, the execution of the style in Washington State was a watered down version with elements of the style being attached to a variety of building forms. Typical features included wide, deep cornice returns; simply detailed porticos; low pitched gable roofs; entry doors highlighted by side lights and/or transom windows. Better examples have hooded windows and large cornice lines representing a classical entablature. Inside extra wide moldings are found on doors and windows, often with a "Greek key" theme; and simple four panel doors. The Palmer House boasts many of these elements and serves as a good example of how the style remained in Washington State into the 1890s.

Coupled with the Greek Revival details on the Palmer House were ornate fretwork of the Queen Anne style. Most likely ordered out of a catalogue, such Folk Victorian embellishments were readily available to fashion-conscious homeowners and builders who wanted to add or update simple building forms. Such details are found especially at porches, cornice lines, and gable peaks. The Palmer House utilized an ornate cut fretwork in the gable end of the main façade and turned-wood porch posts and balusters (now removed). Additional detailing was provided by a row of spindle work as a header across the full width of the porch.

PALMER, EBEN & CYNTHIA, FARMSTEAD

Name of Property

Spokane County, WA

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The Palmer Farmhouse

Despite alterations, the Palmer farmhouse still reflects a simple, traditional Upright-and-Wing house form. The vernacular farmhouse reflection a form commonly built by and for farmers and their families who lived on Orchard Prairie in the 1880s and 1890s. The pioneers and people who settled Orchard Prairie were a blend of Americans and first and second-generation immigrants from Scandinavia, Europe, and the British Isles—including the Norwegian Palmer family. Most of the families took advantage of the Homestead Act. To meet the five year time period allotted by the Federal Government to receive ownership and patent rights for their land, the homesteaders worked hard and fast to “prove up” (improve) their homesteads. This included building farmhouses, sometimes without the additional time and cost needed to add decorative style embellishment. Many families may have been constrained by time, money, and other duties, and built their own homes without fancy embellishment and without the aid of architects or professional builders. As described and pictured in the book, *Orchard Prairie: The First Hundred Years 1879-1979*, other neighboring farmhouses were built in a similar vein as the Palmer farmhouse. These include the Uhlig, Doak, and Curryer houses, which were constructed in the late 1890s when the Palmer farmhouse was erected. Images of the homes reveal Upright-and-Wing building forms and plain, unadorned vernacular expressions of rural structures. The Uhlig, Doak, and Curryer homes were all destroyed at different times by fire, leaving the Palmer farmhouse the oldest surviving preserved farmhouse on Orchard Prairie.

Today, the Palmer farmhouse serves as an expression of a typical homesteading era farm in the Spokane area. With styling derived from its Upright-and-Wing form and then embellished with Greek Revival and Queen Anne detailing, the home is an excellent example of vernacular traditions which were migrated to the Pacific Northwest from other areas of the country.

PALMER, EBEN & CYNTHIA, FARMSTEAD

Spokane County, WA

Name of Property

County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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 Highberg, Kathryn Treffrey. *Orchard Prairie: The First Hundred Years 1879-1979*. Spokane, WA: 1998.
 Leffingwell, Randy. *The American Barn*. Wisconsin: Motorbooks International Publishers, 1997.
 Massengale, Dixie. *Spokane County Cultural Resource Survey, 1978*. Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, Spokane City Hall, Spokane, WA.
 McAlester, Lee and Virginia. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Knopf, 1989
 Muhn, James and Hanson R. Stuart. *Opportunity and Challenge: The Story of BLM*. United States Federal Government, Dept of the Interior, 1988.
 Palmer, Eben, Obituary. *Spokesman-Review*, 23 & 25 Nov. 1950.
 Spokane County public records. Spokane County Courthouse, Spokane, WA.
 Sprague Family Records, Oral History, and Personal Interview, 2013. John Roderick Sprague. Spokane, WA.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Spokane City/County Office of Historic Pres.

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): 32-434/24658 (Spokane Community Cultural Resource Survey, Sept 1980)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 6.09 acres.

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

Or Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

| | | | | | |
|---|------------------|--------------------|---|------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | <u>47.738313</u> | <u>-117.314705</u> | 3 | <u>47.736495</u> | <u>-117.316357</u> |
| | Latitude | Longitude | | Latitude | Longitude |
| 2 | <u>47.738313</u> | <u>-117.316335</u> | 4 | <u>47.736495</u> | <u>-117.314683</u> |
| | Latitude | Longitude | | Latitude | Longitude |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property)

The nominated property's rural legal address is Section 24, Township 26, Range 43 East, south 1/2 of southeast 1/4 of northwest 1/4 excluding the west 877 feet (source: Spokane County Assessor records). The nomination property is further identified by Spokane County tax parcel number 36424.9022.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected)

The nominated property includes all of the current tax parcel and entire rural legal description as referenced above.

PALMER, EBEN & CYNTHIA, FARMSTEAD

Name of Property

Spokane County, WA

County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Linda Yeomans, Preservation Consultant (Edited by DAHP Staff)
organization Historic Preservation Planning & Design date July 26, 2014
street & number 501 West 27th Avenue telephone 509-456-3828
city or town Spokane State WA zip code 99203
e-mail lindayeomans@comcast.net

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: **PALMER, EBEN & CYNTHIA, FARMSTEAD**
City or Vicinity: **Spokane**
County: **Spokane**
State: **WA**

Photographer: Linda Yeomans, preservation consultant and nomination author/photographer

Date Photographed: 2013-2014

Description of Photographs and corresponding numbers:

- 1 of 17: east façade of farmhouse in 2013
- 2 of 17: detail of east façade of farmhouse in 2013
- 3 of 17: north face of farmhouse in 2013
- 4 of 17: northwest rear corner of farmhouse in 2013
- 5 of 17: west rear of farmhouse in 2013
- 6 of 17: south face of farmhouse in 2013
- 7 of 17: fruit orchard east in front of farmhouse in 2013
- 8 of 17: first floor of farmhouse, looking south from dining room into living room in 2013
- 9 of 17: kitchen and front entrance on first floor, looking east in 2014
- 10 of 17: family room on first floor, looking west in 2014
- 11 of 17: stairs to second floor, looking south in 2013
- 12 of 17: stair balustrade and hallway on second floor, looking north in 2014
- 13 of 17: second floor bedrooms in 2014, looking north
- 14 of 17: Palmer Farmstead, looking east in 2014 at barn, farmhouse, and root cellar/cabbage shed
- 15 of 17: Palmer barn in 2013, looking northwest
- 16 of 17: Palmer cabbage shed built on top of root cellar, looking southwest in 2014
- 17 of 17: hand-dug fieldstone root cellar in 2014

PALMER, EBEN & CYNTHIA, FARMSTEAD

Spokane County, WA

Name of Property

County and State

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

name John R. & Karen M Sprague

street & number P.O. Box 6211 telephone 509-981-4420

city or town Spokane state WA zip code 99217

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.460 et seq.).

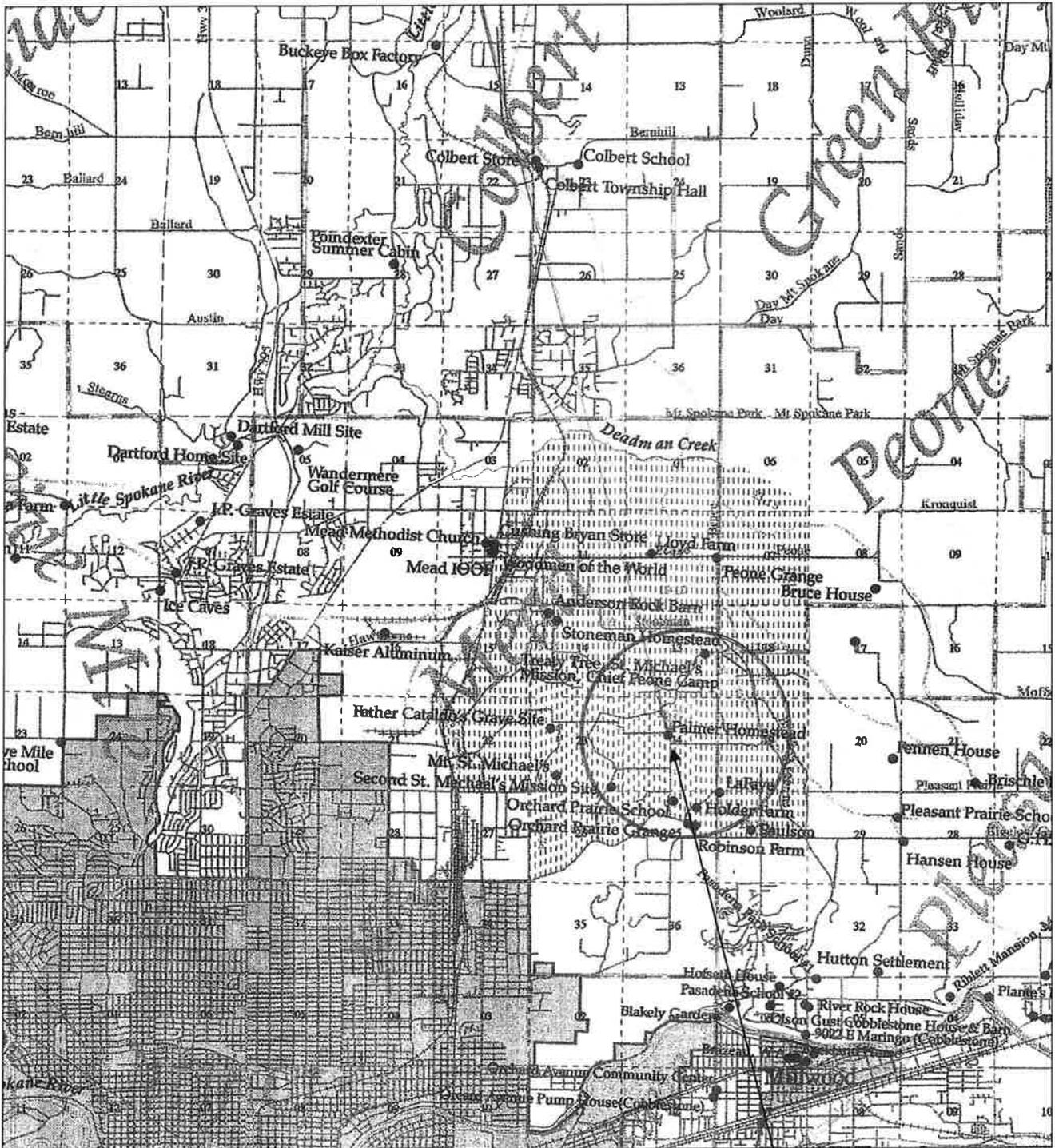
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

PALMER, EBEN & CYNTHIA, FARMSTEAD

Spokane County, WA

Name of Property

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1998 Spokane County Historic Resources Map



PALMER, EBEN & CYNTHIA, FARMSTEAD

Spokane County, WA

Name of Property

County and State



**Palmer Farmstead
6616 E. Orchard Road
Spokane, WA 99212**

Circa 1970 Spokane County Assessor Plat Map

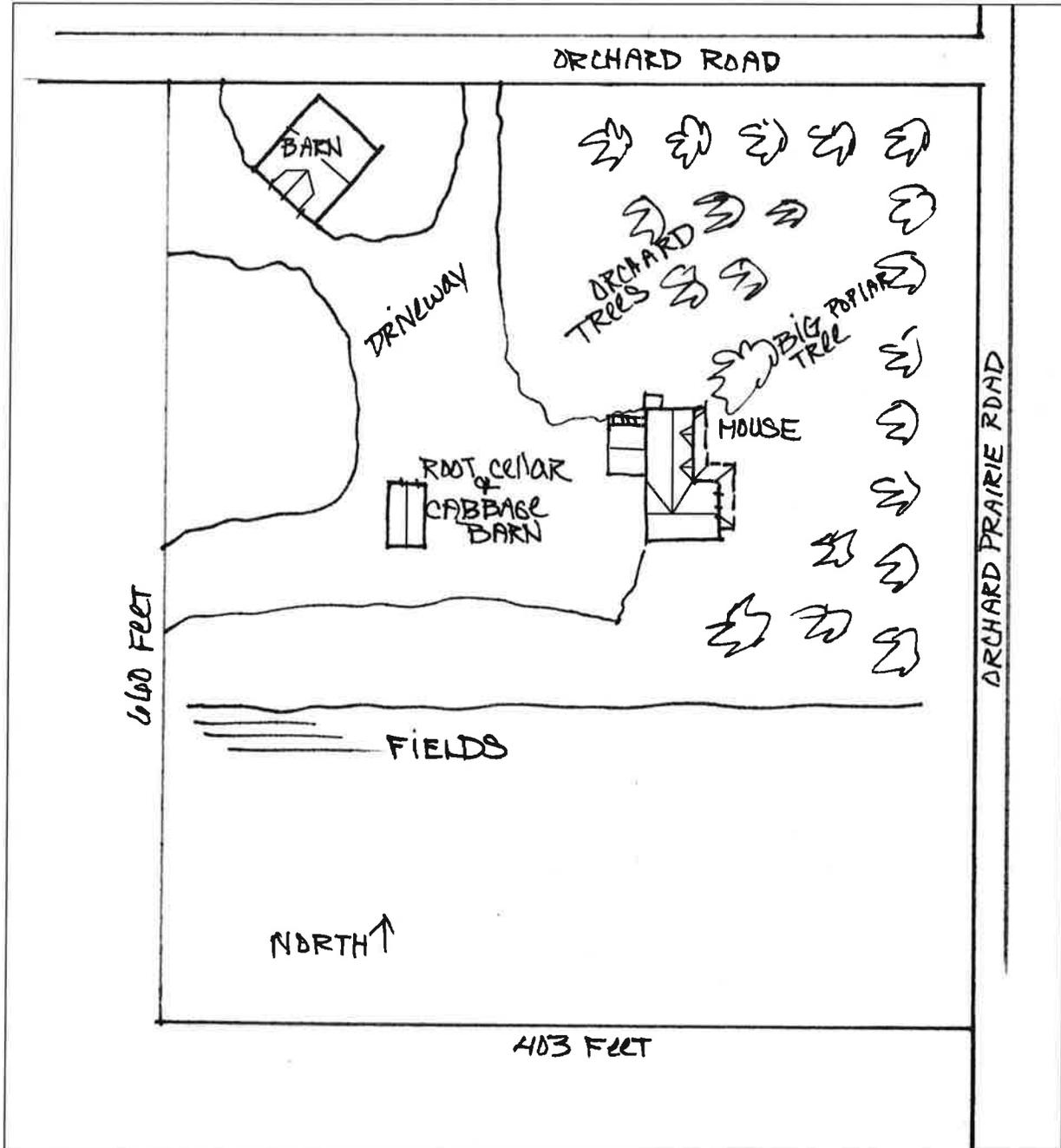


PALMER, EBEN & CYNTHIA, FARMSTEAD

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Spokane County, WA

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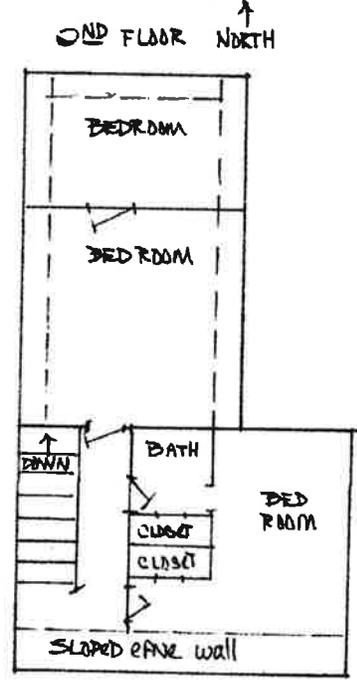
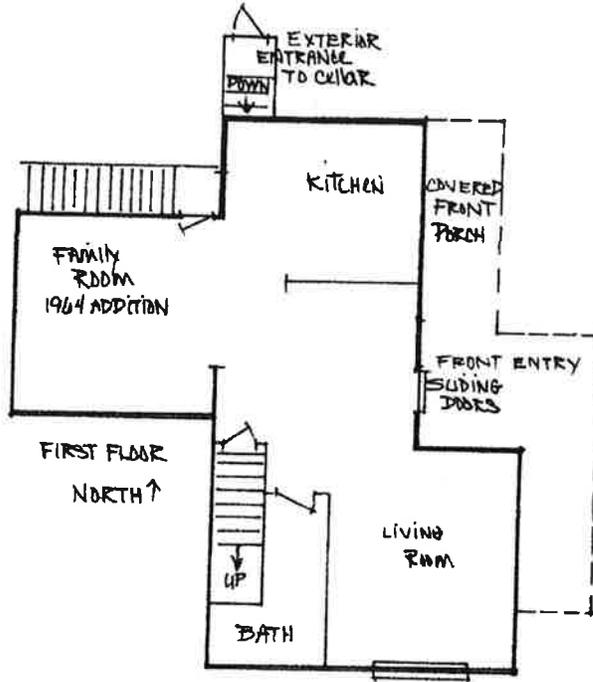
Drawing (not to scale) of Palmer Farmstead

PALMER, EBEN & CYNTHIA, FARMSTEAD

Name of Property

Spokane County, WA

County and State



Drawing (not to scale) of Palmer Farmhouse, first and second floors



PALMER, EBEN & CYNTHIA, FARMSTEAD

Name of Property

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1940 photograph of Palmer Farmhouse, east facade



1930 photograph of Palmer Farmhouse, northwest rear corner

PALMER, EBEN & CYNTHIA, FARMSTEAD

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Other Upright-and-Wing Designs in Spokane Area



Doak Farmhouse, Orchard Prairie



Curryer Farmhouse, Orchard Prairie



Uhlig Farmhouse, Orchard Prairie



Scribner House, Spokane Valley





