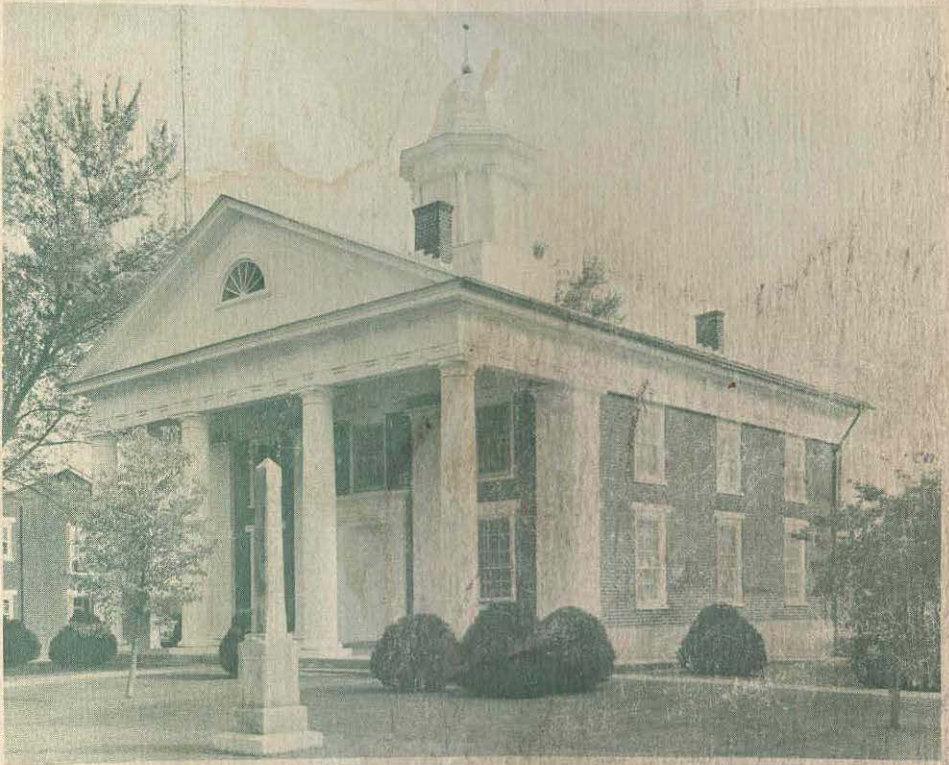


# Greene County

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**“Wakefield:” New England Saltbox in Greene**



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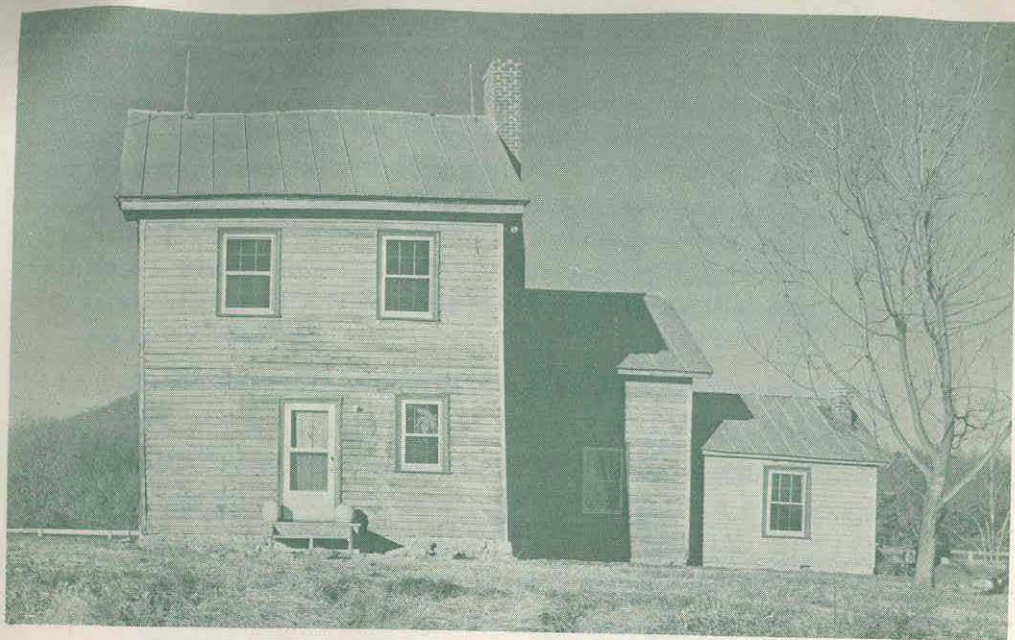


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"WAKEFIELD:" NEW ENGLAND SALTBOX IN GREENE\*  
By Woodie B. Parrott

Architecture in Greene County reflects the conservatism of its citizens, and the practicality of design and utility. The tendency toward conservatism and simple architectural lines is exemplified in antebellum homes, postbellum homes, graceful Victorian dwellings, and also in the contemporary ranch-style home.

Of the myriad styles found in the county, the early Saltbox is perhaps one of the more intriguing types of architecture represented in Greene County. "Wakefield," on Route 633 near the junction with Route 603 at Parrott's Ford, is a classic example of this architectural design.

The Saltbox home was popular in the mid- to late-18th century, and the design was used extensively in the North. The sharp incline of the roof, and the long slope

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of the rear roof extending over a lean-to in the back, made the design conducive to the bearing and removal of snow. Hence, the design was so prevalent in the North-East that this style is often called the "New England Saltbox."

"Wakefield" is situated on a farm which was part of a land grant made by the British Crown to George Taylor, Esquire, of Orange County on September 28, 1728. [1] The site was later a part of an 800-acre conveyance made by George Taylor, Esquire, to John Early on September 28, 1769. [2] John legated the farm to his son, Captain James Early, circa 1750-1822. It is an educated guess that either this veteran of the Revolutionary War, or a member of his immediate family, built "Wakefield."

Of its residents over the last two centuries, "Wakefield" is most readily identified with Bezaleel Brown Parrott, 1810-1908, who was a "county doctor," farmer, and carpenter. Parrott built the rooms on the east side of the house, and possibly it was he who added the second stairway which has since been removed.

During the Civil War, Union soldiers visited "Wakefield," and turned their horses into Parrott's fields of clover. Valuables were hid in mattresses and other such unlikely places from the onslaught of pilfering enemy troops.

Tobacco was a principal crop at "Wakefield" in the 19th century. After it was hung and dried in a tobacco house which still stands today, the tobacco was placed in large barrels which rolled on the ground when drawn by horses. It was carried to Richmond in this fashion, where it would be marketed.

After one hundred and twelve years in the Parrott family, "Wakefield" was sold to J. Wyatt Hamm on September 1, 1922. The farm then included two hundred and forty acres, but has since been reduced to about sixty acres.

"Wakefield" is now [1979] owned by Philip Sansone, M. D., who has recently restored the 18th-century home.

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REFERENCES

- [1] See Orange County deeds.
- [2] Ibid.