

## MINNESOTA HISTORIC PROPERTIES INVENTORY FORM

APR 8 1980

HISTORIC NAME: Wakefield, James B., House

COUNTY: Faribault

CURRENT NAME: Faribault County Historical Society Museum

CITY/TWP.: Blue Earth, MN 56013

LEGAL DESC.: Lot six (6) and west half of lot seven (7) in Block seventy-eight (78) - excepting therefrom the north 40 feet. Located in North  $\frac{1}{2}$  of Sec. 17 in Township one hundred two (102) North of range twenty-seven (27) west of the Fifth principle Meridian in the County of Faribault and

ADDRESS: 405 E. 6th Street  
Blue Earth, MN 56013

CLASSIFICATION:	CONDITION:	SIGNIFICANCE:	THEME/S:
Building <u>X</u>	Excellent _____	Local _____	state of Minnesota. Politics/Government
Structure _____	Good <u>X</u>	State <u>X</u>	Primary _____
Object _____	Fair _____	National _____	Secondary Exploration/ settlement
District _____	Deteriorated _____		Others _____

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_ Restricted X

PRESENT USE:

VISIBLE FROM THE ROAD: Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

Museum

OCCUPIED: Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_

DATE CONSTRUCTED: 1868

ORIGINAL USE: Residence

ORIGINAL OWNER: James B. Wakefield

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: James B. Wakefield

OWNER'S NAME AND ADDRESS: Faribault County Historical Society 405 E. 6th Street Blue Earth, MN 56013	ACREAGE: Less than one acre <u>X</u>
--	--------------------------------------

LOCAL CONTACT/ORG.: Faribault County Historical Society  
405 E. 6th Street, Blue Earth, MN 56013UTM REFERENCE:  
Blue Earth Quad. 7.5

FORM PREPARED BY: Susan Roth

UTM References  
15 / 411470 / 4832130

DATE: November 1979

## DESCRIPTION:

The James B. Wakefield House is located on a wooded residential lot in Blue Earth. The Blue Earth Public High School is located at the north and west side of the property. The house is an "el" shaped, two story brick Italianate residence with semi-circular arched windows. Two one-story full front porches are capped by a low pitched truncated hipped roof. Because of its style, it is possible that the front porch is a later addition; the side porch has been enclosed. Devoid of brackets and other applied ornamentation, the primary design emphasis of the house is placed on the front entry, which consists of a narrow central door flanked by side lights and a semi-circular transom. The house is owned by the Faribault County Historical Society and is used for their museum.

## SIGNIFICANCE:

The James B. Wakefield House is significant for its association with James Wakefield, one of Blue Earth's original founders, principal organizer of Faribault County, and state politician. Wakefield was born and educated in Connecticut and admitted to the Indiana Bar in 1851. He moved to Shakopee, Minnesota in 1854 and two years later, with several other persons, founded the city of Blue Earth. He was the principal force behind the organization of Faribault County and served in many county offices. In 1857 he was elected to the House of Representatives in the Last Territorial Legislature and the First State Legislature. In 1861 he was appointed Deputy Agent at the Lower Sioux Indian Agency. He returned to the Legislature in 1863, became speaker of the House in 1866, and later served in the State Senate for two years. He was elected Republican Lt. Governor under John Pillsbury and served two terms. In 1883 he was elected to Congress and served two terms. After his retirement from political office in 1887, he returned to his home in Blue Earth and looked after his farming interests. The Wakefield house, built in 1868, remains the most visible link with the founding of Faribault County and the City of Blue Earth. Because of Wakefield's political accomplishments it is one of the most historically significant houses in the county.