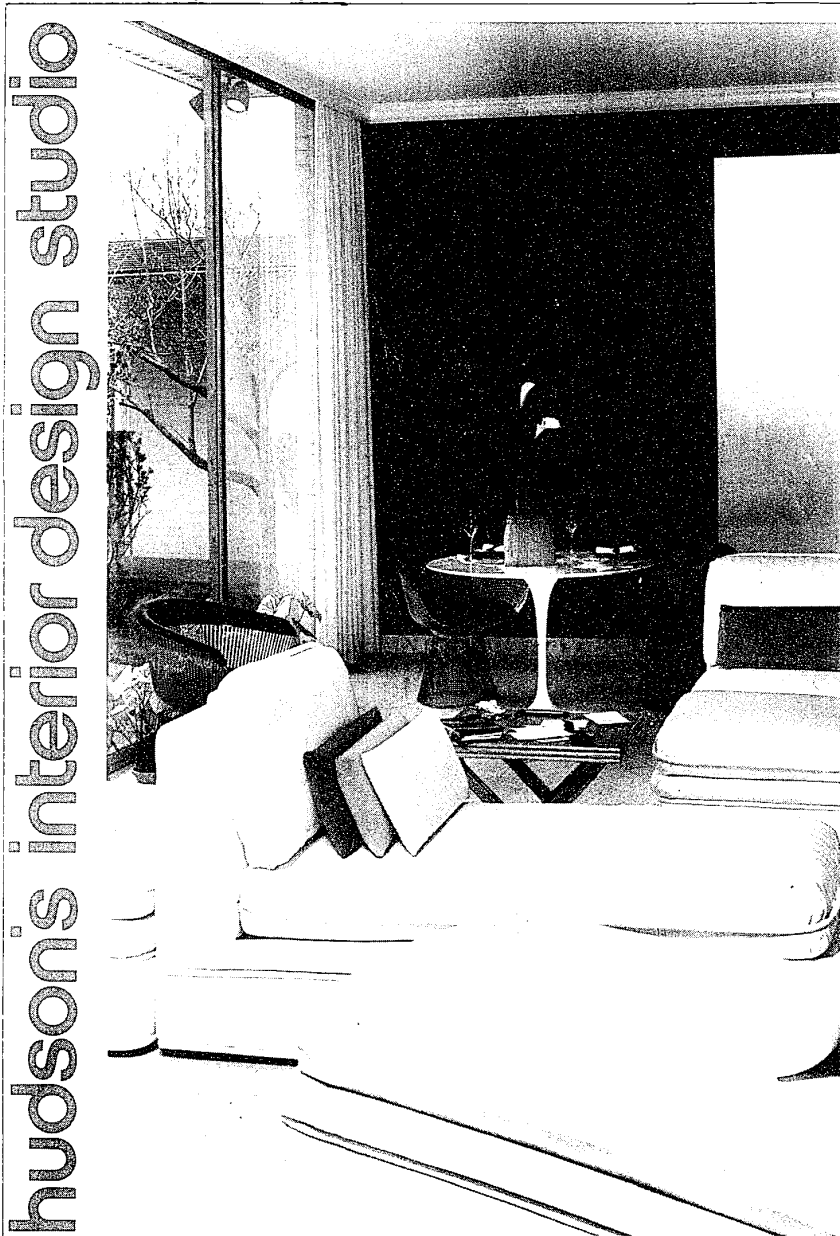




Corner lot on Lakeside in Birmingham is an ideal site for the New England saltbox style house. It turned up at the last minute just when the owner-builders were sure they couldn't find the perfect site.



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Tradition

Story: CORINNE ABATT
Photos: DICK KELLEY

Sue Prowse smiles when she sees people staring at her house.

When it was being built last summer, she used to hear the sidewalk watchers speculate on what it was going to be, a school or a strange house of some kind.

And this home for Mrs. Prowse, her husband, Jim, and son, Matthew, 8, is still a steady attention-getter. For although, it was completed last July, this New England saltbox style house looks for all the world like it belongs in Williamsburg or Boston rather than on the corner of Lakeside and Raynole in Birmingham.

But, then, that was the idea from the very beginning — to build an authentic early American house and furnish it with antiques and very good reproductions.

The original saltbox houses were named after the household product they resembled. They were straight up, no-frills structures with a center chimney. As the size of the family increased, a lean-to addition often was built on the back.

"I've studied these houses, and I know how they go together," said Mrs. Prowse who has training in design.

"I came to the architect with working drawings, and I worked on the actual plan myself for almost a year.

During the nine months that the house was being built, Mrs. Prowse was on the job site three hours a day. She knew what she wanted, and she had spent long hours doing research at Greenfield Village and visiting similar houses in Colonial Williamsburg and New England.

She had researched hardware, the type of construction, materials and finish carpentry, so she became the resource person as well as contractor for the crews on the project.



Bull's eye glass over the front door was ordered and made just like the original historic glass.

to be allowed in deference to 20th century living. But, Mrs. Prowse did her best as she planned to keep such things as appliances, TV and stereo out of sight.

She modified the upstairs floor plan so each of the three bedrooms opens onto a hallway. In the original saltbox, the third bedroom was reached by going through another.

Plenty of closet space was also planned for this modern version, something else which, along with bathrooms, the originals didn't have. In the early saltbox houses, the library behind the Prowse's living room would have been called a burning room and the back staircase might or might not have been there.

(Continued on Page 3A)

CERTAIN MODIFICATIONS HAD

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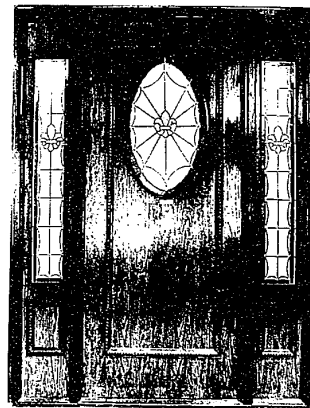
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Front cover

Furnishings in the front color photograph are from Wiggs, 4080 Telegraph, Bloomfield Hills. The wing chair, sofa, coffee table and end table are all from Ethan Allen. The Oriental chair is by Century and the Chinese rug by Classical. (Color photo by Stephen Cantrell)



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