

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Nomination Form

APR 06 2010

OMB No. 1024-0018



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 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 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 Bicksler Block

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 101-103 W. Cherry Street not for publication N/A

city or town Salem vicinity N/A

state Iowa code IA county Henry code 087 zip code 52649

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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      nationally      statewide x locally. (      See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Baibara Mitchell DSHPO April 7 2010  
Signature of certifying official Date

**STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA**

State or 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 commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this 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 Keeper

Patricia Andrews

Date of Action

5/28/2010

Bicksler Block  
Name of Property

Henry County, Iowa  
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 count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	sites
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	structures
<u>      </u>	<u>      </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	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

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE / financial institution

COMMERCE/TRADE / business

COMMERCE/TRADE / professional

COMMERCE/TRADE / specialty store

COMMERCE/TRADE / restaurant

GOVERNMENT / post office

SOCIAL / meeting hall

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT / NOT IN USE

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN / Romanesque

LATE VICTORIAN / Italianate

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Brick

roof Metal

other

### Narrative Description

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



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**7. Narrative Description**

The Bicksler Block was built at the northwest corner across from the square in downtown Salem, Henry County, Iowa in 1886 by John Bicksler (Figures 1 and 2) (see Images section for all figures, starting on page 18). It is one of two remaining historic two-story commercial buildings in Salem, and the contrasting brickwork has marked it as unique since its construction. Salem was plagued by a series of fires in its commercial district from 1886 to 1933, destroying earlier structures. This building was constructed after the first major fire in 1886, and it is the oldest extant commercial building in Salem. Historic commercial buildings dating to the 1910s and 1920s are located across the street to the east and to the south of this building. These eight buildings on the west side and northwest corner of the square comprise the majority of the remaining historic commercial buildings in Salem. Changes have occurred to nearly all the buildings.

The Bicksler Block was designed as a "corner" building with a chamfered corner on the southeast, facing the square diagonally across the intersection. The south elevation is divided into two storefronts, with brick pilasters at each end and in the center. The pilasters provide decorative detail for the building with two courses of red brick alternating with a course of buff brick. The exposed top of the foundation is cut stone. Entry to the corner/east storefront is through the entry on the chamfered corner. The current door is non-historic, and historic photographs show a set of two wood doors with a transom window in this opening (Figures 5, 8-11). Two double-hung window openings are found on the first story of this east storefront, indicating the original use of the space as a bank rather than store. The windows retain their stone sill and a brick segmental arch lintel with stone keystone. The original one-over-one-light double-hung wood sashes have been replaced and the size of the windows reduced. The west storefront retains its original two metal columns in the center of the space, dividing the storefront into a central entry with a window on either side. The wood pilasters matching the columns on the brick walls on either side are also intact. The large storefront windows have been replaced with smaller windows, walls, and a non-historic entry. The second story of the south elevation has three one-over-one-light double-hung wood windows spaced on the west half and two one-over-one-light double-hung wood windows on the east half, which have been partially covered with siding. These windows also have stone sills and brick segmental arch lintels with stone keystones. A brick belt course with dentils is found under the second story windows on the east half. Additional brick details are also found on the parapet. Three courses of projected brick mark the lower portion of the parapet with an additional projected course with buff-colored dentils near the top. The window on the chamfered southeast corner also has a stone sill and one-over-one-light double-hung wood sashes partially covered with siding. The brick segmental arch lintel is more detailed, with alternating red and buff bricks on either side of the stone keystone. Likewise, the parapet is more elaborate. In addition to the belt courses and dentils found on the south and east elevation, a course of buff-colored bricks is found above the window and a course of sawtooth bricks is found between the two sets of belt courses on the parapet. The end of a square metal tie-rod is visible to the west of the top of the second story window, anchoring this corner.

The east elevation is decorative similar to the south elevation. Four pilasters divide the elevation into three parts. The two center pilasters also serve as chimneys for the building. The pilasters on this elevation also have two courses of red brick followed by a course of buff brick, though the north pilaster has been clad in stucco extending around from the north elevation. A square metal tie-rod plate is secured near the middle of the south



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pilaster. The first (south) bay has a one-over-one-light double-hung wood window on each story, with the top half covered by siding. The windows retain their stone sill and a brick segmental arch lintel with stone keystone. The middle bay has similar windows on the south half of each story, with an upper entry on the north half of the second story. This entry is accessed by metal stairs attached to the exterior of the building. These stairs appear to have been used historically to access the second story. The entry has a non-historic door, though a historic wood transom window remains. The entry has a brick segmental arch lintel with stone keystone similar to the windows. The north bay has similar windows on the south half of each story, with a window above a first story entry on the north half. The windows and entry share similar details as the other openings on this elevation. The entry has a non-historic door, though the wood transom window remains intact, visible on the interior. The brick detailing on the parapet continues across this elevation, with three courses of projected brick on the lower portion of the parapet and an additional projected course with buff-colored dentils near the top.

The west elevation may have originally been anticipated to face an adjoining building, as it has minimal openings. A set of metal stairs extends along the elevation up to a second story entry. The entry retains a paneled wood door and brick segmental arch lintel. The only other opening on this elevation is a double-hung window opening with brick segmental arch lintel on the west side of the small one-story rear section. Wood paneling covers the opening. This rear section also has a small chimney. The west elevation has three star ends for tie-rods on the level of the first story ceiling and three at the level of the second story ceiling.

Each half of the rear (north) elevation has been treated differently over the years. The east half was covered with stucco in the last 10 to 15 years to secure the bricks. A one-over-one-light double-hung wood window is found on the west half of each story of this side. The windows have stone sills and brick segmental arch lintels clad in stucco. The second story window is clad in siding, and the top half of the first story window is also clad in siding. A second window historically on the second story is indicated on the east half by the presence of a stone sill. The west half has a one-story rear section that covers the rear of the two-story building. This section appears to be an early addition. It is not shown on the 1899 fire insurance map, but it does appear by the 1931 fire insurance map (Figures 6 and 12). The rear addition has a single-door entry with a brick segmental arch on the north, leading into the building. A single-door entry with a brick segmental arch lintel is found on the first story of the rear of the two-story building, accessed through this addition. The addition has a window on the west as noted above and a second single-door entry with a brick segmental arch lintel on the east. This entry has a historic paneled wood door and now leads into the small metal side addition. A first story window with brick segmental arch lintel on this west half is located immediately east of the rear addition, above the side metal addition. It is covered with wood paneling. The second story of the west half has two one-over-one-light double-hung wood windows with brick segmental arch lintels and stone sills. The west one is covered with wood paneling and the east one is open with sashes in poor condition.

Few historic features are found on the interior of the first story of either half (Figure 3). The east storefront was remodeled for use by the American Legion in 1969 and then for a residence in the 1990s. Paneling was installed on the walls and a drop ceiling was also installed. The space is currently divided into a large front room (Room 1A) with a closet, a large middle room (Room 1B) with the bath (Room 1C) access from this space, and a rear kitchen (Room 1D). A shower was added to the bath with the vestibule addition to the south of the older door. The drop ceiling is missing in several areas, revealing the deteriorating tin ceiling and the top of the wood



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moldings for the exterior openings. The tin ceiling in Room 1B has an alternating "striped" pattern with a row of straight lines followed by a row of decorative details (Photograph 8). The wood moldings are simple flat wood trim pieces with a small cornice at the top. The deteriorating condition of the west storefront (1E) has damaged all historic features and materials. With the roof failure several years ago and progressive deterioration, the second story ceiling, floor, and joists have collapsed into the first story, which has then partially collapsed into the basement. The ceiling and floor of the rear addition (1F) are also partially collapsed due to exposure to weather.

More historic features are intact on the second story (Figure 4). The east stairs lead to a hallway that extends across the east half to a door accessing the west half. The hall has a wood floor with wide boards. The tin ceiling over the wood ceiling boards is partially intact at the east end. It has a quatrefoil design in squares. The south room (2A) is larger than the north room (2C). Both retain historic four-panel wood doors with two-light transom windows from the hall into the rooms. The window retains simple flat historic wood trim on the sides and top and a simple wood sill. The wide wood floor in the south room (2A) is exposed, as well as the wood ceiling. A wide opening cut in the south half of the west wall has been filled with concrete blocks. The bathroom (2B) and adjacent closet were added in the northwest corner of this room. The walls are built with wood paneling rather than framed. Two small windows on the north wall look into the hall. The north room (2C) retains a historic tin ceiling in fair condition. It features a quatrefoil design within squares. The floor is covered with carpet. The bathroom (2D) was added in the northwest corner with similar paneled walls as the south room. The two windows historically on the north wall have been covered on the interior. The second story ceiling and floor on the west half (2E) is progressively collapsing, as noted previously. The wood ceiling boards are peeling off the joists and the wide wood floor boards are bent down into the first story with the collapsed and collapsing joists. The simple wood trim on the south windows appears to be intact. A framed addition across the rear of the space is partially visible as it is falling into the first story. Though some window sashes remain in the opening, they appear significantly deteriorated.

A gable-roof frame building sits on the northeast corner of the property. The 14 by 12 foot building was moved to this location from the property to the west in 2007. It is a non-contributing building on the property.

The Bicksler Block retains sufficient integrity to convey its historical and architectural significance. The building retains integrity of location and setting, sitting northwest of the town square. The remaining historic commercial buildings in Salem are located to the south and east of this building, creating a relationship between this building and the historic commercial district in Salem. The integrity of design, workmanship, and materials is most significant and intact on the exterior. The overall design, brick details, segmental arch window openings with keystones, and chamfered corner that define that unique and significant architecture of the building remain intact. The exterior details continue to reflect characteristics of the Romanesque and Italianate styles. A handful of interior architecture features remain on the east half of the interior, such as pieces of the tin ceiling above the dropped ceiling, the second story layout with the hall to the west side and a room on either side, and the simple trim details of the doors and windows. The deterioration of the west half of the interior has destroyed the architectural details on this side. The overall feeling and association of the building as a significant commercial building anchoring the northwest corner of the square remains intact.

Bicksler Block  
Name of Property

Henry County, Iowa  
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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.

### 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 a 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)

- ☐ 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)

Architecture

Commerce

Social History

### Period of Significance

1886-1960

### Significant Dates

1886

1904

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Bicksler, John

### Cultural Affiliation

### Architect/Builder

Whitmore & Levett

#### Primary Location of Additional Data:

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

Name of repository:



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**8. Narrative Statement of Significance**

The Bicksler Block is locally significant for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with the commercial, public, and social history of Salem, under Criterion B for its association with John Bicksler, and under Criterion C for its architecture. The period of significance spans from the construction of the building in 1886 to 1960, the 50-year cut-off for the National Register of Historic Places. The period may be expanded at a later date to 1967, the date that the post office moved out of this building. Significant dates include the construction of the building in 1886 and the opening of the post office in this location in 1904.

The Bicksler Block is significant under Criterion C for its late Victorian architecture and as the largest extant commercial building in Salem. The building is a significant design of a commercial building within the local community, historically and currently. The building was constructed by prominent and wealthy local citizen John Bicksler in 1886, after a fire that destroyed several buildings on the west side of the square. The architecture was noted to be "one of the finest buildings" in Salem at the time. The building utilized contrasting red and buff colored bricks on the pilasters and lintels, reflecting the Victorian Romanesque style. The arch windows, pilasters, decorative brick and stone work, belt courses, and corbels draw from the Italianate style as well as the Romanesque style. The segmental arch lintels of the windows have stone keystones, and the parapet has decorative brickwork. The angled corner of the building facing the square to the southwest was unique at the time, and the building continues to stand as the only commercial building with this detail in Salem. The second storefront to the west continues to retain its metal columns.

The Bicksler Block is also significant under Criterion B for its association with John Bicksler, a prominent and successful Salem resident. John Bicksler arrived in Salem in 1856 at age 24 and started a blacksmith and wagon business. With business success, he purchased a farm northwest of Salem, where the first drain tile laid in Salem Township was installed in fall 1877. He launched his private bank in the early 1880s, which moved into this new building in 1886. The bank continued to operate through the 1890s, continued by his wife in the early 1900s as his health began to fail. Through these endeavors, John Bicksler made a significant impact on the community of Salem. Upon his death in 1914, his estate was estimated to be worth at least \$125,000. The Bicksler family continued to own this building until 1950. This is the only identified extant building associated with John Bicksler in Salem Township, as his home and earlier business buildings are non-extant.

Finally, the Bicksler Block is significant under Criterion A for its association with the commercial, public, and social history of Salem. It is the last extant building that was constructed after the major fire in downtown Salem on June 2, 1886, and it is significant for its association with this key local event. John Bicksler's bank operated in the first story of the east half (101) from 1886 into the early 1900s, and the design of the east half with small windows reflects this original use. The block also immediately housed three other businesses displaced by the fire, including the local newspaper, a clothing store, and a dentist. The *Salem Weekly News* operated and was published on the east half of the second story from 1886 to 1923, and it was the only newspaper in Salem through this period. After Bicksler retired from banking, the post office operated on the east half of the first story from 1904 to 1967, and the building was prominent within the local community for this public use through this period. The Salem Women's Club and their associated library also utilized space on the second story from 1911 through the 1940s. Through this uses, the building served as a community building throughout the first half of



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the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It also played an important role within the commercial history of Salem with businesses in the west storefront (103) including clothing stores, millinery stores, restaurants, and pool halls, and with the offices of a series of local dentists found on the second story. In 1950, the Bicksler family transferred the building to the Salem Post No. 94 of the American Legion. The American Legion and American Legion Auxiliary met on the second story from the late 1940s to 1969 and on the first story of the east half from 1969 to 1992. Through these notable commercial, public, and social uses of the Bicksler Block, it is significant within the history of Salem from its construction in 1886 through at least 1960.

***John Bicksler, construction of the building, and banking in Salem***

John Bicksler was an early resident of Salem, though arriving 20 years after the initial settlement. Settlers first arrived in this area in 1835, and Salem grew as the first Society of Friends (Quaker) settlement west of the Mississippi River. By 1840, Salem was one of the larger towns in Iowa, with a population around 300. In the first decade of the community, Friends composed the majority of the local residents. The first industries included brickmaking, tanning, and milling. Wagon and blacksmith shops served local settlers as well as those moving through town. Other settlers looking for a good community were also attracted to Salem, demonstrated by the founding of Congregational, Methodist, and Baptist churches in town around 1854. John Bicksler was born in Virginia on May 17, 1832. He worked as a blacksmith in Virginia and then moved to Iowa City in the early 1850s. After working as an apprentice in a carriage and wagon factory, he moved to Salem in 1856, with \$.50 in his pocket after buying a set of tools for \$25. Through hard work, he built a successful business and educated himself in mathematics to transact business. He married Sarah Ann Buffington on March 23, 1859, and their son W. Scott was born on March 4, 1861 ("John Bicksler," *Mt. Pleasant Free Press*, March 12, 1914, 1).

John Bicksler worked as a blacksmith, manufactured carriages, wagons, and harness, and ran a livery business for 27 years. Reportedly, he built and sold 500 carriages and wagons in his first 14 years, leading him to being one of the wealthiest men in Salem (SHBC 1996: 160; Jaynes 1977: 51). The population of Salem reached 636 in 1859, perhaps the peak of the community's growth. The town was described as a thriving and prosperous community with seven dry goods and grocery stores, two stove and tin stores, two shoe shops, two hotels, one drug store, two saddle and harness shops, three carriage and wagon shops, one wool carding machine, five blacksmith shops, and one furniture store. Four primary schools and a high school operated in town, with seven schools in the rest of the township (Bowron 1859: 106-108). This thriving community supported the success of Bicksler's business. John Bicksler was highlighted in the 1879 *History of Henry County* as the manufacturer of wagons, carriages, harnesses, etc. He also owned a farm northwest of Salem, where he installed 1000 rods of drain tile in the spring of 1878 – the first laid in Salem Township (*History of Henry County* 1879: 599).

Banking did not start in Salem until nearly 50 years after the initial settlement of the community. With the railroad arriving in town in 1881, the Bank of Salem was formed, the first bank in the community. The bank was organized by W. H. Bliss and H. L. Bacon, who came here from Mapleton, Iowa. H. L. Bacon was president and W. H. Bliss was cashier, though George W. Tyner soon took over as president of the bank. The bank started with a capital of \$10,000 ("Moved into New Home," *Salem Weekly News*, November 13, 1924, 1). In 1883, John Bicksler decided to organize his private bank as well, a venture he continued until health problems limited his

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activities in the early 1900s ("John Bicksler," *Mt. Pleasant Free Press*), March 12, 1914, 1). A later biography of son W. Scott Bicksler notes: "In 1883 he then returned to Salem and for two years was cashier of his father's bank. The father had established this bank for the express purpose of keeping his son at home. While cashier of the bank, he also developed some law business, serving as attorney for the St. Louis, Keokuk, and Northwestern Railroad" (McGroarty 1921: 287). Businesses in Salem in 1883 included John Bicksler, farm wagons and open top buggies; and John Bicksler Bank, W.S. Bicksler as cashier (SHBC 1996: 33). The 1885 Iowa census lists John Bicksler, age 51, as a banker. His wife Sarah was 41, and son Winfield Scott was 23 and an attorney. W. Scott married Nettie Hampton in Mt. Pleasant on June 9, 1885. Sarah also died in 1885. It appears that upon her death W. Scott moved his law practice to Boone, Iowa with his new wife. He later moved to Denver, Colorado, in 1891, and then to Los Angeles in 1912 (McGroarty 1921: 287).

On June 2, 1886, a large fire destroyed at least twelve buildings on the northwest and west side of the square in Salem. It started in the hardware store at the rear of the post office, spread through the five stores of Union Block on the northwest corner, ignited the barn before the Kittle House, and continued onto adjacent buildings on the west side. As the *Mt. Pleasant Journal* reported on June 3, this included "the business houses of Messrs. Tomlinson, Triplett, Reeves, Donnellson, Collett, Fisher, the hotel property of Wm. Kittle, the News office, Dr. Evans' residence and the entire Union Block with the business firms of D. Burden, Albert Banta, A. N. Hagan, the Post-office and others whom we can not name." John Bicksler's loss of a small building was valued at \$500, and he had no insurance. The fire also destroyed the building of clothing merchant W.A. Bartlett, valued at \$1,400 with \$1,000 in insurance. Dentist Dr. Rolla Rogers also reportedly had a loss of \$1,000. By June 10, the *Mt. Pleasant Free Press* reported that Mr. Bicksler intended to rebuild, a 24 by 70 foot building. Among others, W.A. Bartlett was also thinking of resuming business (*History of Henry County, Iowa* 1888: 684-85; "Salem Burned - Union Block and the Entire West Side Gone!" *Mt. Pleasant Journal*, June 3, 1886, 1; "The Salem Fire," *Mt. Pleasant Free Press*, June 10, 1886, 3).

The newspapers reported on the progress of rebuilding the business district in Salem over the next few months. The news from Salem on June 15 noted that "before the fire had died completely out, work of clearing way preparatory to rebuilding had commenced." I.C. Reeves was first to start, rebuilding his drug store on the west side. John Bicksler was rebuilding on the northwest corner of the square, with 70,000 bricks ordered for his substantial building. He would occupy the corner room with his bank. The *Salem News* would be located over the bank, and dentist Dr. Rogers would occupy the second story over the west half. Significant rebuilding was anticipated to be complete within three months ("Salem Fire Notes," *Mt. Pleasant Journal*, June 17, 1886). A few days later, the *Mt. Pleasant Free Press* also reported that "Our businessmen with a courage and energy... are now engaged in rebuilding and in making preparations for the commencement of the new structures not yet begun." As a start, "Messrs Triplette, Reeves, Collatte, and Bicksler have contracted with Messrs Whitmore & Levet of Bonaparte, Iowa, for the erection of brick buildings, at once, and the contractors are now making brick on the yard of S. Maddock for that purpose" ("Salem Items," *Mt. Pleasant Free Press*, June 21, 1886, 3). The Salem news the following week noted that "John Bicksler has contracted for the brick with which to erect a two-story building on the northwest corner of the square. It will be one of the finest buildings in town, and a decided improvement over the old hen's nest that formerly stood on the corner" ("Salem News," *Mt. Pleasant Journal*, June 25, 1886). Work was progressing ahead of schedule in July. The new Salem House was almost complete, and Bicksler's and Triplett's buildings were well underway: "John Bicksler is arranging for his new bank building



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on the corner where the old meat market stood, which will probably be the finest business house in town when completed" (*Salem Items*, *Mt. Pleasant Free Press*, July 15, 1886, 3).

With the building complete, the first occupants moved in. John Bicksler's bank occupied the east storefront, with W.A. Bartlett's clothing store in the west storefront. The *Salem News* moved into the space above the bank, and dentist Dr. Rolla Rogers moved into another second story office space. These latter three businesses were previously located in buildings that were destroyed in the fire. E.J. Keller, undertaker, relocated to Bicksler's Old Bank per his advertisements, apparently not impacted by the fire. Advertisements for John Bicksler, banker, appear through the remainder of the 1880s and through the 1890s. For a period of time after the completion of the building, a woodcut of the building also appeared with Bicksler's banking advertisement (Figure 5). An account book from the period was labeled "Banking House of John Bicksler, Salem, Iowa" (Thelma Foss scrapbook, Lewelling House). In October 1889, John Bicksler married Josephine Belle Coppock.

John Bicksler was profiled by the *Mt. Pleasant Journal* in their article on Salem and Oakland on October 26, 1893. The newspaper wrote:

When John Bicksler came to Salem he came through the country, had no money, nor anything that would bring money, except his half interest in a kit of blacksmith tools, and when he was married had but fifty cents saved up. He now owns the Bank known as Bickslers bank, on the north-west corner of the square, and the whole block the bank is located in. Besides this he has one of the nicest stock farms in the county. To show what a good sound institution his bank is, he loaned money while the banks over the country were going under. While in Salem we had the pleasure of staying at the elegant home of Mr. and Mrs. Bicksler, and to say we were royally entertained doesn't half express it. His excellent wife and charming little daughter, Miss Francis, made our stay in the city delightful.

The Bank of Salem and John Bicksler's private bank continued to provide the only banking options for Salem residents through the end of the century. George W. Tyner served as president of the Bank of Salem until his death in 1896. In 1899, it incorporated as the Savings Bank of Salem under state law, with Robert Dinsmore, president; R. S. Pease, vice-president; W. H. Bliss, cashier; and Oliver H. Tyner, assistant cashier ("Moved into New Home," *Salem Weekly News*, November 13, 1924, 1; "A Good Man Gone," *Salem Weekly News*, August 27, 1986).

The 1900 census records John Bicksler, banker, age 67 with wife Josephine B., age 38. They had two children: adopted daughter Frances M., age 12, born in October 1887 in New York, and daughter Anna Florence, age 4, born in June 1895 in Iowa. In July 1900, John Bicksler began to suffer health problems, struck by apoplexy per his obituary. His wife, known locally as Belle, took over his business matters though he continued to stay involved. An advertisement in the *Salem Weekly News* on June 12, 1902 noted that John Bicksler would do a small loan business, with office hours from 10-12 and 1-3. In 1904, the post office moved into this location, with the bank no longer occupying the corner (east) storefront. John Bicksler was gone several months in 1904 for treatments at sanitariums and springs. From April to July, he resided at the Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan, after spending the previous summer in Colorado (*Salem Weekly News*, August 4, 1904). On September 1, 1904, John Bicksler placed a note in the *Salem Weekly News* that "I have moved into my old office north of the P. O. and am prepared to make some loans of small amounts." However, health problems continued to plague



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him. In October, he traveled to the Mud Lithia Springs in Kramer, Indiana (*Salem Weekly News*, October 27, 1904). In 1907, he reportedly retired, with Belle continuing to manage his business matters ("John Bicksler," *Mt. Pleasant Free Press*, March 12, 1914, 1; McGroarty 1921: 287). The 1910 census records John Bicksler, age 76, with his own income. His household includes wife Belle, age 50, daughter Frances, age 21, and daughter Florence, age 14.

On March 2, 1914, John Bicksler died in Salem. His obituary outlined the end of his life and his success over the years:

July 1900, he was stricken with apoplexy and for nearly 14 years was a patient sufferer during which time he kept in touch with his business, as he was one of the wealthiest men in this community. While his wife looked after all his business besides her home work and caring for him he knew every dollar that was due him and every item of his great financial operations and often expressed himself satisfied with the way Mrs. Bicksler managed his business. His speech was greatly impaired and the loss of the use of his hands prevented him from continuing his own work. His charitable offerings were left at her disposal to give as she thought best. In the last few years of his life, he often spoke of this work as finished and expressed himself as ready to meet his Maker, taking a retrospective view of his life, his financial success and the successful business career of his son. He stated to this writer that his son, while inheriting his father's business qualities had the most important faculty for a business man and that was promptness. He never put off anything. When he had any thing to do he did it at once and it was then done.

His funeral was held at the Congregational Church, and he left his wife Belle, son W. Scott Bicksler, daughter Frances Monta Power, and daughter Anna Florence Bicksler ("John Bicksler," *Mt. Pleasant Free Press*, March 12, 1914, 1).

With a controversial will, the estate of John Bicksler was settled over a period of months and a lawsuit that contested the will. The lawsuit was on behalf of Frances, who was left only \$1,000, and included claims of Frances as the actual rather than adopted daughter of John and Belle Bicksler, which was disproven in court. Finally, it was agreed that wife Belle, son W. Scott, and daughter Florence each receive one-third of the net estate, around \$40,000 each. Frances Bicksler Power received \$12,400 ("Muscatine Woman Big Case Witness," *Muscatine Journal*, May 20, 1914, 6; "Bicksler Will Case is Settled," *Salem News*, May 28, 1914). In June 1914, W. Scott Bicksler, A. Florence Bicksler, and Frances Power transferred all interest in the Bicksler Block as well as surrounding property to J. Belle Bicksler (Deed records).

***Additional significant commercial, public, and social history associated with Bicksler Block***

John Bicksler's bank building at the northwest corner of the square provided a new home for several local businesses in 1886. The bank occupied the east/corner storefront, with W.A. Bartlett's clothing store in the west storefront. The *Salem News* moved into the space above the bank, and dentist Dr. Rolla Rogers moved into another second story office space ("Salem Fire Notes," *Mt. Pleasant Journal*, June 17, 1886). These businesses moved into these new spaces after being displaced by the fire in June. Additional businesses and organizations would move into these spaces over the next 80 years.

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A series of clothing stores operated in the west half of the first story in the first two decades. The first tenant was the clothing business of William A. Bartlett. His advertisements in 1887 note a wide selection of men's, boys', and youth clothing. He was located at the "northwest corner of the square, Bicksler's Block, Salem, Iowa" (*Salem Weekly News*, May 28, 1887). William A. Bartlett was born in Indiana in 1835, and he moved to near Salem in 1854. According to his obituary: "In 1883, finding the duties of farm life too arduous for his condition of health, he moved to Salem, engaging in the clothing business, which he conducted successfully until 1892, when he disposed of his mercantile interests and removed to Portland, Oregon, where he engaged in the sewing machine business" (Obituary, William A. Bartlett, *Salem Weekly News*, July 14, 1898). Around 1892, the Tyner Brothers opened a clothing store in the west half of the building. James Tyner, son of banker George W. Tyner, appears to have been the manager of the operations. They operated here until 1897. On July 15, 1897, their advertisement in the *Salem Weekly News* noted that they had moved their stock of "clothing and gent's furnishing goods" to the Donaldson building on the west side of the park. By September 23, 1897, "The Boston" – one price clothing house – was advertising as located in Bicksler Block. They had branches in Mt. Pleasant and Salem. W. Melcher was the proprietor, with Fred J. Peifer and W.W. Reed as managers.

The business in the west storefront soon turned over again with The Globe Clothing Company advertising as located in Bicksler's Block on May 18, 1899. Their focus appears to have continued on clothing for gentlemen and boys. Ike Hirschfeld was the proprietor and Ray McChord was listed as salesman (*Salem Weekly News*, May 18, 1899). By 1901, Miss Carrie M. Saint moved her millinery store to this location. The 1900 census lists her as a dressmaker at age 26, living with her parents. Her advertisement for her store – Bazar - Headquarters for Fancy Goods – in the northwest corner of the square in Bicksler's Block included fancy material, linens, lace, ladies' and children's golf gloves, ladies' and children's underwear, and hats (*Salem Weekly News*, December 25, 1902). On April 1904, she had to vacate her location, with a close out on all millinery and dry goods (*Salem Weekly News*, April 14, 1904; *Salem Weekly News*, June 30, 1904). On September 8, 1904, the *Salem Weekly News* reported that Mr. Clauson, who had lost his space in a recent fire on the north side, was moving into the room in Bicksler's block formerly used by Miss Carrie Saint, which he had rented for two years. He was a man who "perfectly understands the restaurant fussiness, and Salem is fortunate in getting him back again" (*Salem Weekly News*, September 8, 1904). In January 1905, M. & M. Clauson advertised the European Restaurant in the Bicksler Block, northwest corner of park. They had meals at all hours, candies, pies, bread, cakes, and fruit (*Salem Weekly News*, January 12, 1905).

The *Salem Weekly News* moved to their new home above the bank on the east side in 1886, published here until 1923. Hiram Armstrong began the newspaper in September 1880, and it was subsequently sold to W.S. Withrow. He sold it to D.F. Jones & Son on January 1, 1883. At this point, it was enlarged from a six-column folio to a seven-column folio. In 1888, it was a well-respected newspaper in the county: "The paper is doing a prosperous business, its circulation having steadily increased since it came into the hands of its present proprietors. A good job office is attached, also doing a remunerative business. The *News* is well worthy of the support of the citizens of Salem and vicinity" (*Portrait and Biographical Album of Henry County, Iowa* 1888: 657). In 1899, Milo A. Kirkpatrick and son Mark Kirkpatrick took over the *Salem Weekly News*. They had published the *Danville News* in Des Moines County for the previous 13 years. The family was members of the Society of

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Friends. A photograph was taken of the operations prior to Milo's death on August 27, 1909, showing the set-up in the space on the east side of the second story (Figure 7). Milo's obituary noted:

The deceased exercised great tact and discretion in the conduct of his newspaper. His gifts were peculiar and they were especially adapted to the calling which he had selected. He published a good newspaper, that was read and talked about, without giving offense. Few weekly newspapers in Iowa have been better known or regarded with a greater degree of public approval than the Danville News and the SALEM NEWS during the time when they were published by Mr. Kirkpatrick. He believed in good printing as well as in good editing, and his papers always were creditable mechanically. As a newspaper publisher he takes ranks with the best of the profession in Iowa - while so great was his modesty that it is only when he is dead and gone to another world that we come to fully appreciate the magnitude and the true worth of his character.

("Milo A. Kirkpatrick," *Salem Weekly News*, Sept 2, 1909).

Upon his death, son Mark Kirkpatrick continued to publish the *Salem Weekly News* from this location in the Bicksler Block. The 1911-12 county directory listed Mark Kirkpatrick, editor and publisher *Salem News*. On September 18, 1919, the newspaper announced that Andrew C. Gault of Charlotte, Iowa, had bought the newspaper, would move to Salem, and would begin publishing on October 1. Mark Kirkpatrick bid his readers farewell in the September 25, 1919 issue, having enjoyed his 20 years of publishing the newspaper. On October 2, Andrew Gault reported on his arrival in Salem and apologized for any deficiencies in the newspaper as he settled in. He noted that the Salem people hoped that Mark Kirkpatrick and his family would continue to reside in town ("New Publisher is Here," *Salem Weekly News*, October 2, 1919). Mark Kirkpatrick took back over control of the newspaper two years later ("Announcement," *Salem Weekly News*, October 6, 1921). On October 25, 1923, the *Salem Weekly News* noted that no newspaper would be published next week, as the printing office was moving to the southeast corner of the square. It had been on the second story of the Bicksler Block for nearly 40 years ("No News Next Week," *Salem Weekly News*, October 25, 1923).

Office space was located on the second story of the Bicksler Block. Dentist Rolla W. Rogers was one of the first tenants in the space. He advertised on May 28, 1887 in the *Salem Weekly News* that he had office hours from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in "rooms in Bicksler's New Building." He moved to Salem in June 1881 at age 19, and his office on the west side of the square burned in the June 2, 1886 fire. With the completion of the Bicksler Block, he moved to this location. It is unknown how many rooms were originally on the second story of the building, but Edmond's Tonsorial Room advertised on June 23, 1887 as in the southwest room of the second story of Bicksler's New Bank Building (*Salem News*, July 23, 1887). Rolla W. Rogers, age 38, continues to be listed as a dentist in Salem in the 1900 census. He suffered health problems at a young age, dying on July 25, 1901 ("Obituary," *Salem Weekly News*, August 1, 1901). It appears that with the declining health of Dr. Rogers, dentist Dr. G.E. Rizer moved to Salem in fall 1900. By August 1901, he was quite busy in Salem and also spent two days a week in Donnellson (*Salem Weekly News*, August 22, 1901). In June 1902, he continued the same schedule, seeing patients in Salem in Bicksler's Block (*Salem Weekly News*, June 12, 1902). When he moved to Burlington in September 1904, Salem was left without a dentist for a period of time (*Salem Weekly News*, September 15, 1904, September 29, 1904). However, dentist C.D. Rawhouser, doctor of dental surgery, operated in an office in the Bicksler Block over the post office by January 12, 1905 (*Salem Weekly News*,



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January 12, 1905). The 1920 census continues to list Charles D. Rawhouser, age 38, as a dentist in Salem, and he continued to advertise an office in the Bicksler Block over the post office here until early 1921.

John Bicksler originally operated his bank in the east/corner storefront of the building upon completion in 1886, continuing until his health problems required him to reduce his involvement. The June 2, 1886 fire also destroyed the space occupied by the post office, which found a new location in the rear of a store. In 1904, the post office was ready for its own space, and they made arrangements to move to this half of the Bicksler Block. On June 16, 1904, the *Salem Weekly News* reported that the woodwork on the John Bicksler bank building had been treated to a coat of paint. On June 30, 1904, they noted that the post office would soon be moved into the Bicksler Block, northwest corner of the square. Alfred S. Crew had resigned his position as postmaster in late April to move to Nebraska, so the move of the post office coincided with the arrival of new postmaster Charles A. Stevens (*Salem Weekly News*, April 28, 1904). On July 12, 1904, Alfred Crew and Charles Stevens moved the post office, and it was open for business in the Bicksler Block by the 10:35 mail. Postmaster Stevens placed an iron drop-box in front of the building, a welcome convenience for residents (*Salem Weekly News*, July 14, 1904).

A series of postcards and views of this block was published after the move of the post office to this location (Figures 8-10). Stevens served as postmaster until Owen Hourihan was appointed on August 19, 1913. He was followed by W.L. Hoggatt, appointed on March 16, 1917, and William W. Simkin, appointed on October 20, 1921. A photograph of Simkin in front of the post office shows the details of the corner (Figure 11). He served as postmaster until 1934. The post office continued to operate here until 1967.

The west half of the first story continued to serve a series of businesses. One exception was the basketball club organized by young men of Salem who rented the room in the Bicksler Block formerly occupied by Clauson's Restaurant in December 1909 (*Salem Weekly News*, December 9, 1909). On April 18, 1918, the *Salem Weekly News* announced that a branch of the Farmers Cooperative store of Mt. Pleasant was planned to open in the Bicksler Block, with F. H. Becker as manager. On July 17, 1919, the *Salem Weekly News* reported that "Mrs. Zoe Turner has moved her millinery store from the Triplett building into the lower west room of the Bicksler Block, where she intends to add pianos to her stock." Her advertisement noted that she was now located one door west of the post office. Local history notes that the A.S. Jenson Pool Hall operated here, followed by the Recreational Parlor from 1930 to 1950 (SHBC 1996: 57). The 1931 Sanborn map shows the corner as post office and a store in the west half (Figure 12).

The Salem Women's Club moved to the second story of the Bicksler building in 1911, and they continued to meet here until 1950 (Salem Women's Club typed history, Crew Public Library files). Josephine Belle Bicksler Fisher (married to Jephtha C. Fisher in 1917) and daughter Anna Florence Bicksler Lee (married to Albert Lee in 1919) were members of the Salem Women's Club. They were reported in 1914 as quite active, having started a library which had grown and increased until they had more than 766 books ("Activities of Clubs in Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs," *Waterloo Reporter*, January 10, 1914, 5). Library support was an important function of the club, with boxes in the club rooms and local news office for collection of donations. This book collection later found a home in the new Crew Public Library in 1940. Once the new library opened, members continued to serve as library trustees, including Florence Lee (SHBC 1996: 98; "Library Opened," *Salem Weekly News*, January 11, 1940, 1). Older local residents recall the library located on the west half of the second story

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prior to 1940. Access was up the stairs on the east side and west down the hall to the west side (Dale Cammack, per Larry Cammack).

The second story also continued to be used for a series of office spaces from the 1920s through the 1940s. On April 28, 1921, the *Salem Weekly News* reported that Charles McNeeley opened a real estate office in the rooms formerly occupied by Dr. Rawhouser. He does not appear to have stayed here long, as the newspaper then noted on September 21, 1922 that "Salem is at last to have a dentist, Dr. W. H. Johnson of Burlington having rented the Fisher rooms formerly occupied by Dr. Rawhouser."

The Bicksler Block was owned by Josephine Belle (Bicksler) Fisher until her death on September 2, 1948. Her second husband Jeptha C. Fisher died within the week ("Josephine Belle Fisher, Jeptha Fisher," *Salem Weekly News*, September 9, 1948). The property transferred through the heirs to Albert and A. Florence Bicksler in February 1950. On August 15, 1950, they conveyed the property to Salem Post 94, American Legion. Albert J. Lee was one of 15 charter members of the American Legion, Salem Post 94, upon his return from World War I in 1919. The group originally met in the Charles Foss building on the southeast corner of the square. In 1921, Florence Lee was one of six charter members of the American Legion Auxiliary, the complementary women's group. They met in Morrow's store and later Farmers Savings Bank. In 1945, they began to occupy rooms with the American Legion in the Charles Foss Building. With additional veterans home after World War II, the American Legion post looked for larger accommodations. With the auxiliary, they bought the Bicksler Block, and they met in the upstairs room of the east half (SHBC 1996: 93; "American Legion Post," *Salem Weekly News*, August 7, 1919).

Through this period, the post office continued to operate on the east half of the first story of the Bicksler Block. Max Barton took over as postmaster on July 28, 1937, and he served into the 1950s. A photograph shows the building in this period (Figure 13). On May 25, 1965, Oliver Goldsmith took over as postmaster (SHBC 1996: 53). The west half continued to be used as a business, with the American Legion rooms above the post office.

In the late 1960s, a series of changes impacted the Bicksler Block. In 1967, the post office moved two buildings to the south, vacating this space. The American Legion completed renovations on the east half of the first story for use as a meeting hall and kitchen in 1969. A tavern and pool hall continued to operate in the west half of the first story, with apartments on the second story of both sides. The Salem Post No. 94, American Legion, sold the west half of the building on contract in 1986 and sold the east half of the building in 1991, moving their meetings one building south to the old Farmers Savings Bank (SHBC 1996: 93). The east half was used as residential apartments for several years. Currently, the east half of the building is used as storage.

There are no future plans for the building at this time. The condition of the building will continue to deteriorate as it stands, and it is hoped that listing it on the National Register of Historic Places may spur interest in rehabilitation of the building.

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Research assistance provided locally by Larry Cammack and Faye Heartsill.



Bicksler Block  
Name of Property

Henry County, Iowa  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	15	616179	4523568
2			

	Zone	Easting	Northing
3			
4			

☐ 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 Rebecca Lawin McCarley, Architectural Historian

organization SPARK Consulting date March 31, 2010

street & number 17 Oak Lane telephone 563-324-9767

city or town Davenport state Iowa zip code 52803

## 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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name see continuation sheet

street & number telephone

city or town state zip code

**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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**10. Geographical Data**

***Verbal boundary description***

The boundary for the property encompasses the south 100 feet of Lot 8 in Block 7 in the Original Town plat of Salem, Henry County, Iowa. The property measures approximately 74 feet by 100 feet six inches deep. The boundary is depicted on Figure 2.

***Boundary justification***

The boundary includes the parcel currently associated with the property and historically associated with this building since the sale of the building by the Bicksler family to the American Legion in 1950.

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**Owners**

*101 W. Cherry:*  
MRD Entertainment, Inc.  
c/o Marjorie Newman  
PO Box 87  
Salem, IA 52649

*103 W. Cherry:*  
Bernice N. Clark  
2442 335th St  
Keokuk, IA 52632



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**Photographs**

The photographs of the Bicksler Block in Salem, Henry County, Iowa, were taken by Rebecca Lawin McCarley, SPARK Consulting, on September 3, 14, and 15, 2009. The digital photographs were printed with HP 100 photo gray Viverra ink on HP Premium Plus Photo Paper (high gloss). The photographs were also submitted digitally, per current guidelines. A sketch map depicting the location of the photographs is found on the following page.

1. Setting of Bicksler Block, looking northwest.
2. South elevation, looking north.
3. East elevation, looking west.
4. Detail of brick work on corner and east elevation, looking northwest.
5. West elevation, looking east.
6. North elevation, looking south.
7. South room on east half of first story (Room 1A), looking south.
8. Detail of deteriorating metal ceiling on east half of first story (Room 1B).
9. South room on west half of first story (Room 1E), looking south.
10. Rear room on west half of first story (Room 1F), looking south.
11. Hall on second story, looking west.
12. South room on east half of second story (Room 2A), looking southeast.
13. South room on east half of second story (Room 2A), looking north.
14. North room on east half of second story (Room 2C), looking northwest.
15. West half of the second story (Room 2E), looking southwest.
16. West half of the second story (Room 2E), looking northwest.

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Bicksler Building  
September 2009

1/20" = 1' (general layout sketch)  
R.L. McCarley, SPARK Consulting



Photograph key

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Location Map (Figure 1)



(2008 aerial photograph courtesy of Planning Department, Henry County, Iowa)



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Site plan (Figure 2)



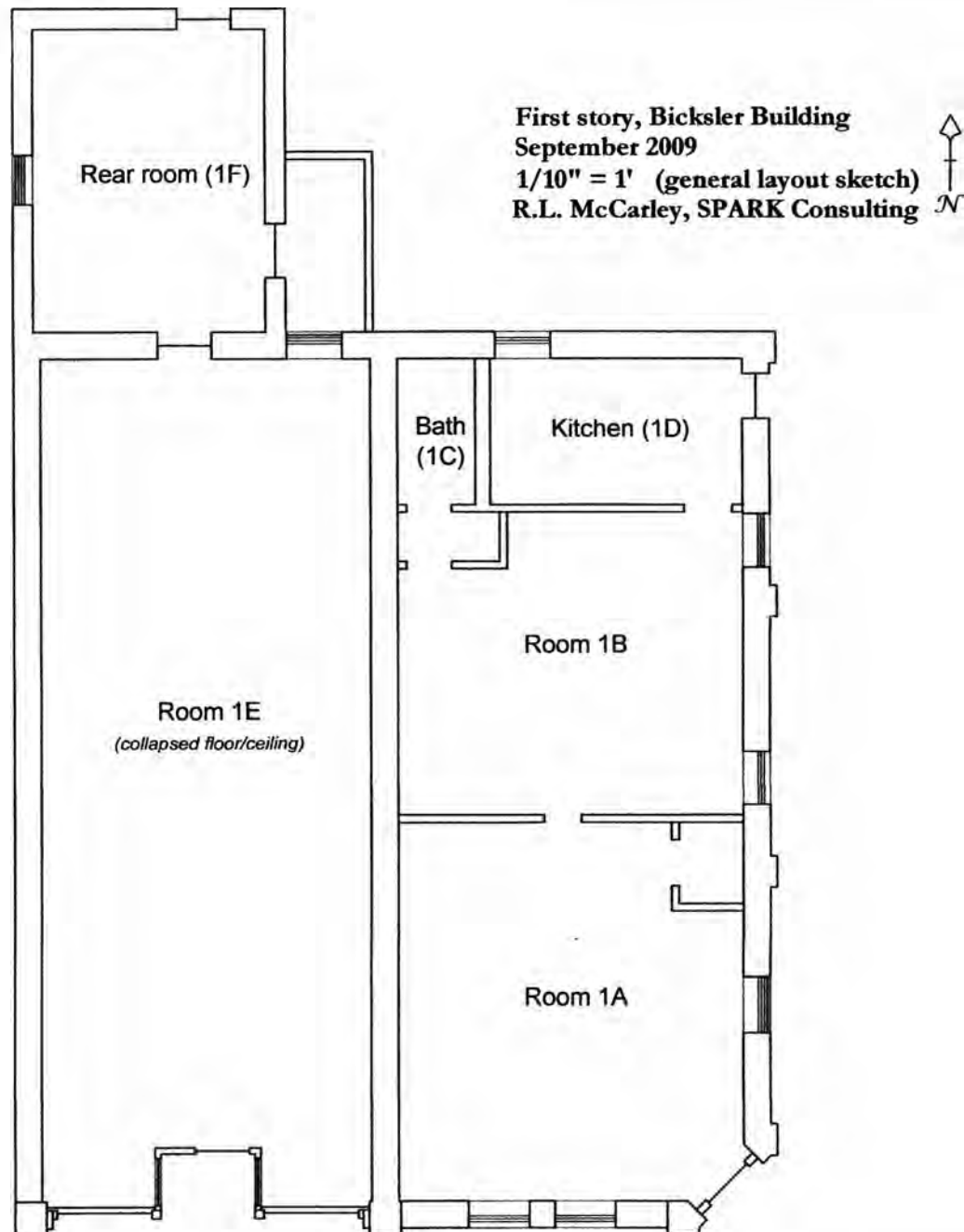
(2008 aerial photograph courtesy of Planning Department, Henry County, Iowa)

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Plan – First story (Figure 3)

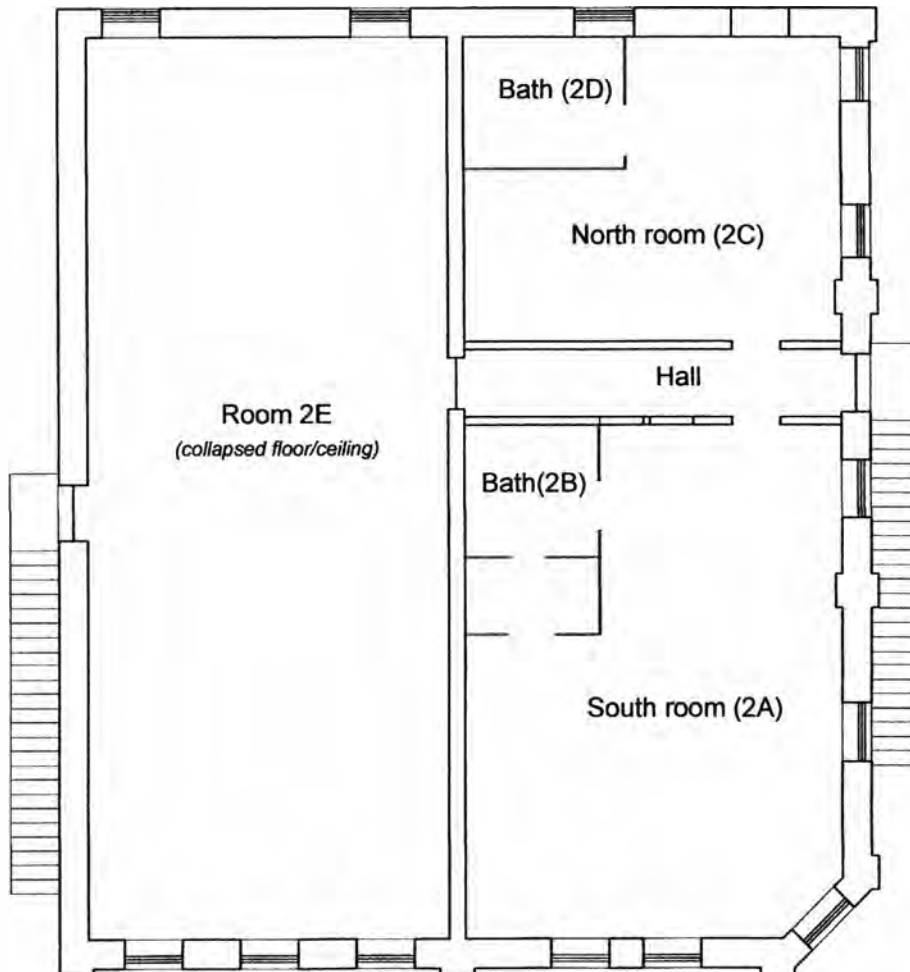


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Plan – Second story (Figure 4)



Second story, Bicksler Building  
September 2009

1/10" = 1' (general layout sketch)  
R.L. McCarley, SPARK Consulting





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Historic maps and photographs

...sold has given relief in  
One man took six bot-  
tles of rheumatism of  
nding." Abraham Hare,  
elaware, Ohio, affirms:  
"This medicine I ever  
y twenty years experi-  
ence Bitters." Thous-  
s have added their testi-  
t the verdict is unani-  
ectric Bitters do cure  
f the liver, kidneys or  
a half dollar a bottle at  
drug store.

FROM IT MAY CONCERN.  
PROOF OF WILL.  
In the District Court, Au-  
gust Term, 1887.  
Where given that on the 11th  
of August, 1887, an instrument in writing,  
the last will and testament of  
JOHN SPRAYS,  
deceased, was brought  
before the Clerk of the District  
Court, who read the same, and  
the same being read, the  
Clerk of the Court, on the  
11th day of August, A. D. 1887,  
did day of the regular August  
term thereof, as the time pre-  
scribed before said Court, of the  
said will.

**JOHN BICKSLER,**  
**BANKER,**  
**SALEM, IOWA.**  
Conventions a specialty.

G. W. Tyler, Pres. STOCKHOLDERS  
Samuel Hill, V. Pres. G. W. Tyler, M. F. Clawson  
W. H. Bick, Cashier. Saml Hill, W. H. Bick  
W. S. Whitrow.

**BANK OF SALEM,**  
**Salem, Henry county, Iowa.**  
TRANSACTS AGENT BANKING BUSINESS

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Figure 5. Advertisement with woodcut for John Bicksler, banker (Salem News, July 23, 1887, 3).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section Images Page 23 Property name Bicksler Block  
County and State Henry County, Iowa

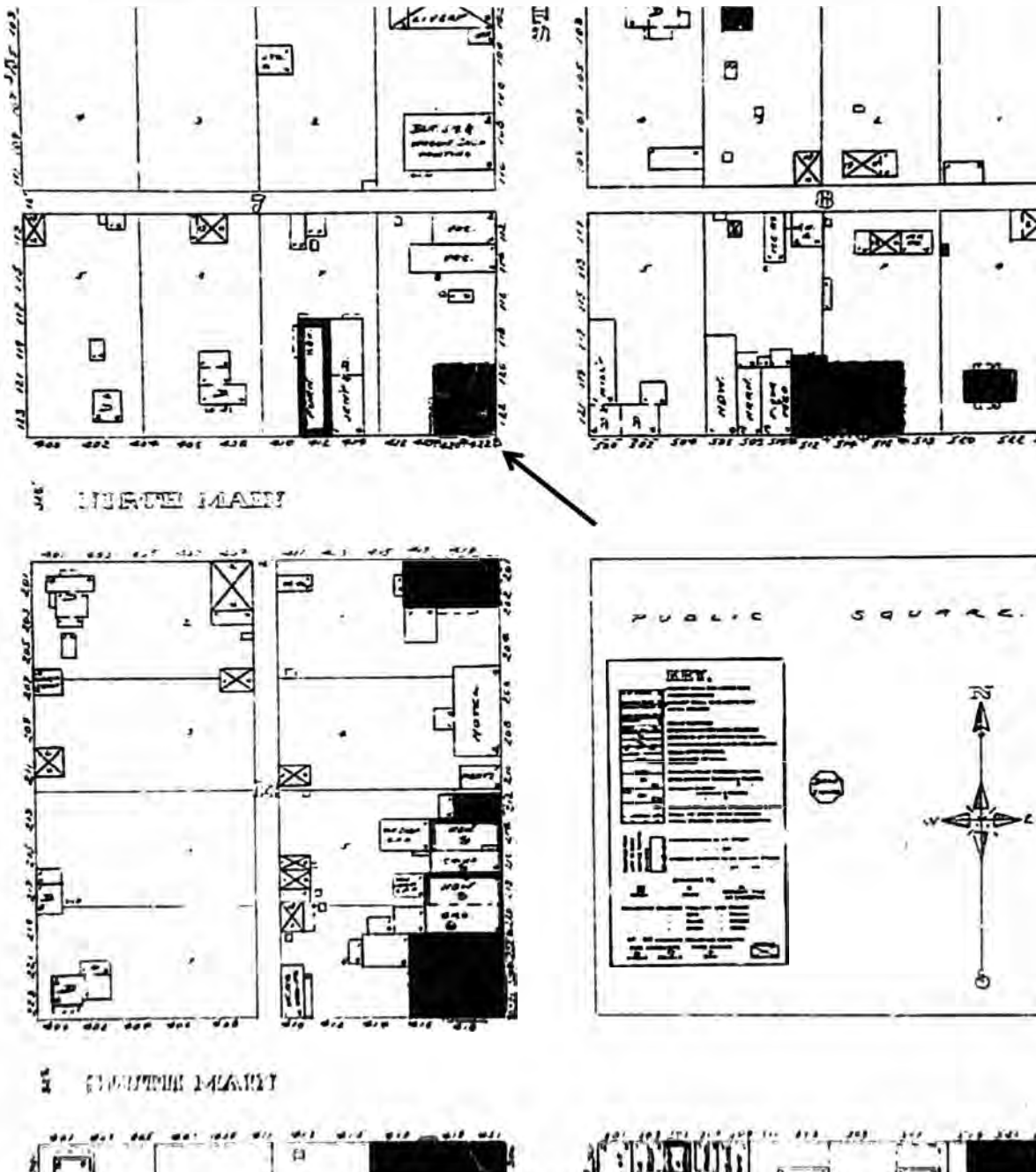


Figure 6. Fire insurance map of downtown Salem in 1899, with location indicated (Bennett Insurance Company 1899).

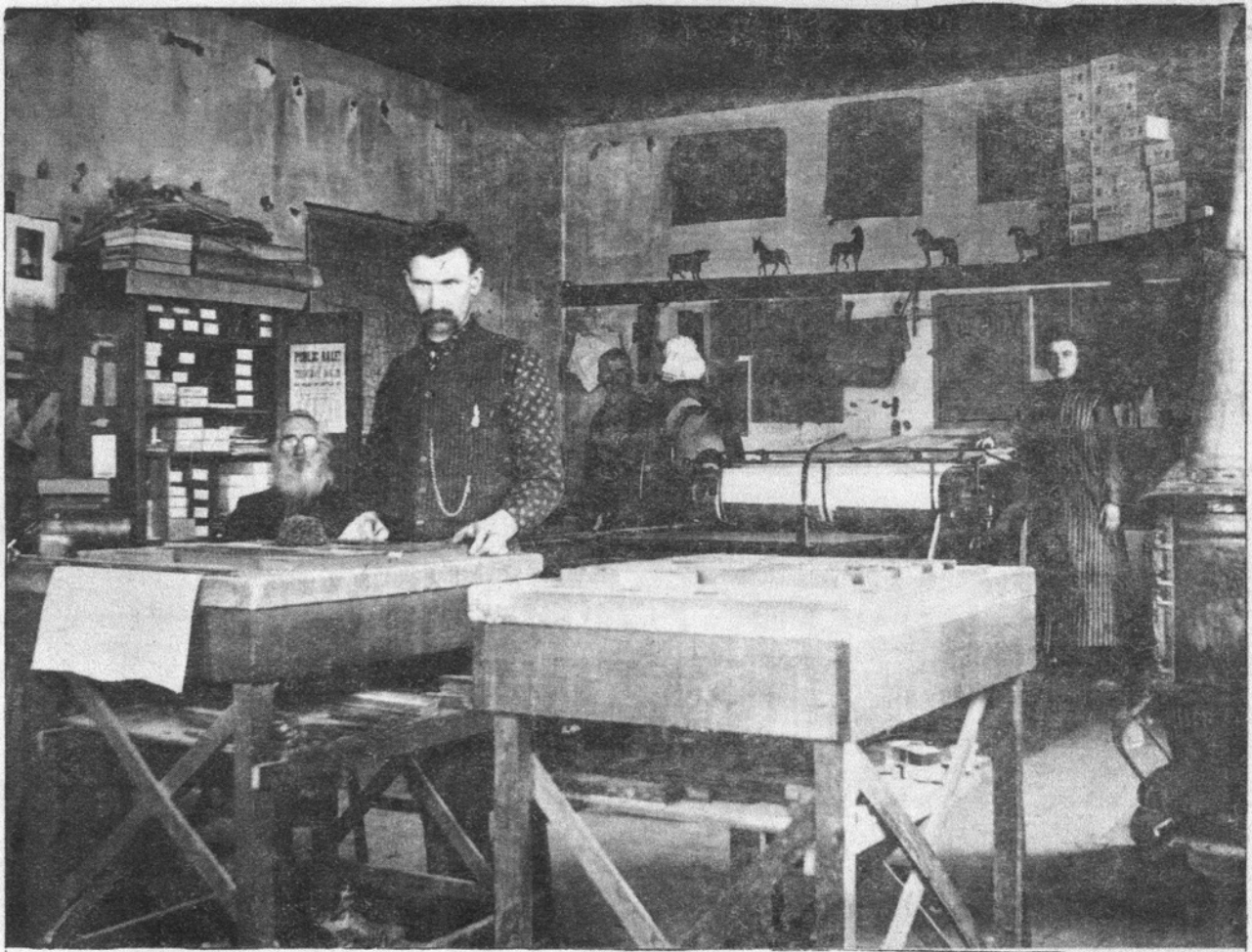
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section Images Page 24 Property name Bicksler Block  
County and State Henry County, Iowa

"The Salem (Iowa) News"

Thursday, September 2, 1971



"OUT OF THE PAST"

The picture above of the Salem News belongs to Mrs. Norene Garmoe of Salem, Mrs. Garmoe owns a large collection of pictures of Salem and the surrounding area and is allowing us to publish several of these during the coming months. The picture above was taken when the News office was still above the old Post Office, which is now the American Legion's building. In the picture above are Mr. Milo A. Kirtpatrick, Mark Kirtpatrick, Ethel (Foss) Pullen and Frank Lewis.

Figure 7. Second story of east side of Bicksler Block when *Salem News* located here (photo between 1899 and 1909) (Lewelling House scrapbook collection).



United States Department of the Interior  
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Continuation Sheet

Section Images Page 25 Property name Bicksler Block  
County and State Henry County, Iowa



Figure 8. Looking west on Depot (Cherry), with Bicksler Block at right, c.1910 (Lewelling House collections).

*(Evans Building at left burned in 1915, post office moved into Bicksler Block at right in 1904)*

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section** Images **Page** 26 **Property name** Bicksler Block  
**County and State** Henry County, Iowa



**Figure 9. Looking west on N. Main Street (Cherry), with Bicksler Block at right, c.1910  
(Anthony Kramer collection).**

*(Evans Building at left burned in 1915, post office moved into Bicksler Block at right in 1904)*

*(see enlarged section on following page)*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section Images Page 27 Property name Bicksler Block  
County and State Henry County, Iowa

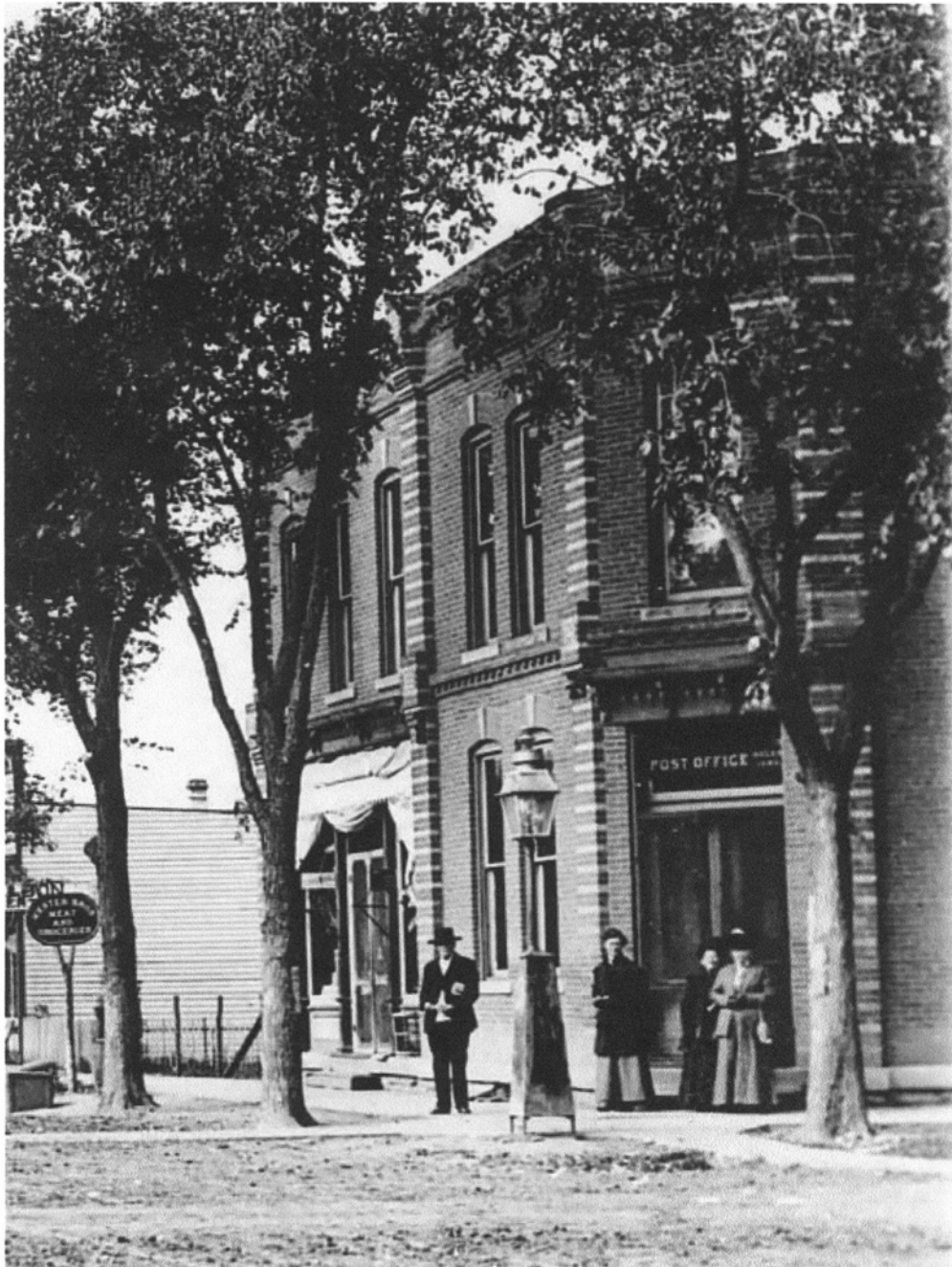


Figure 10. Enlarged section with Bicksler Block, c.1910 (Anthony Kramer collection).



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

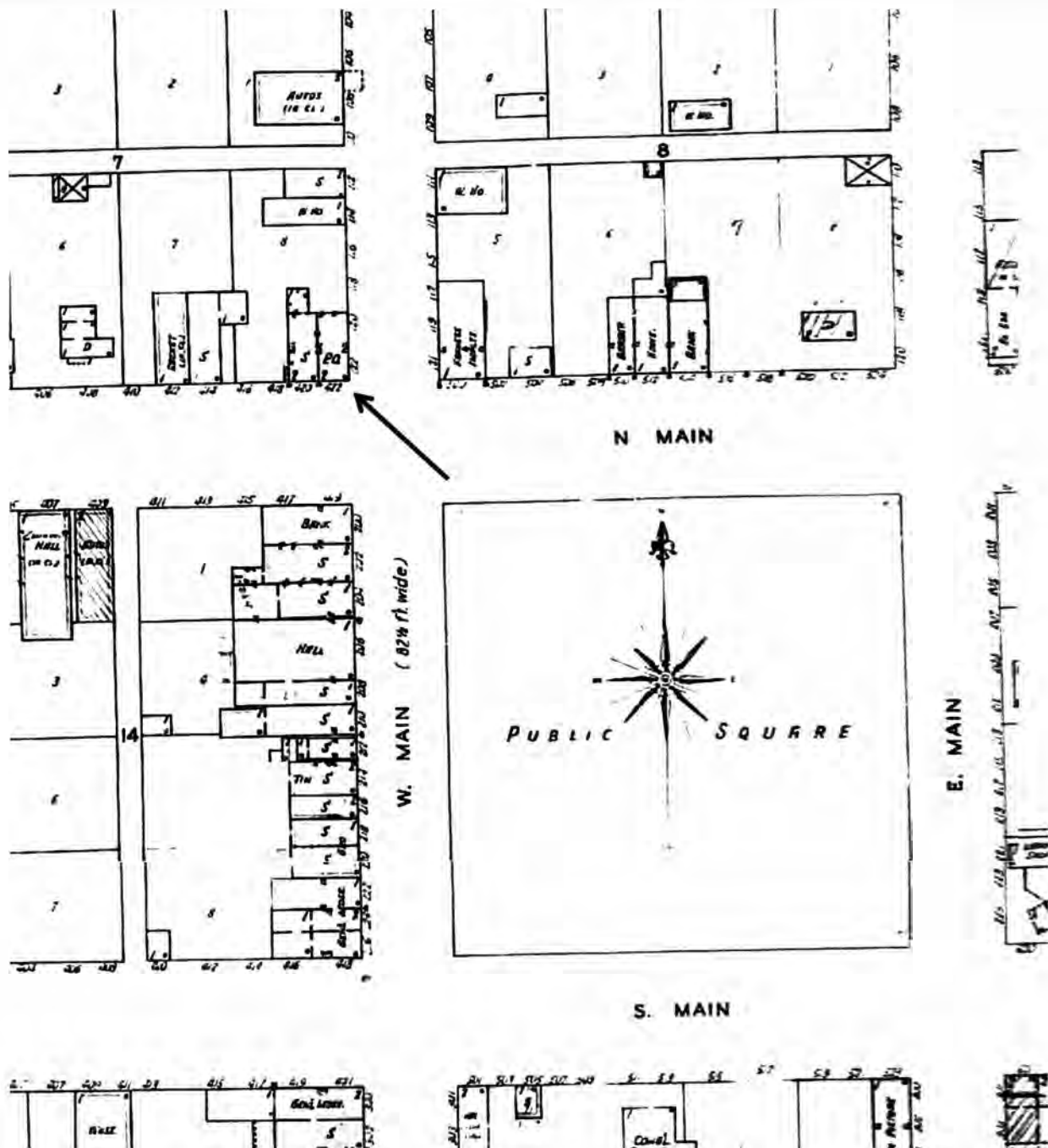
Section Images Page 28 Property name Bicksler Block  
County and State Henry County, Iowa



Figure 11. Bill Simkin, postmaster, in front of post office corner, c.1925 (Lewelling House collections).

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

**Section** Images **Page** 29 **Property name** Bicksler Block  
**County and State** Henry County, Iowa



**Figure 12. Salem, Iowa in 1931, with location indicated (Iowa Insurance Bureau 1931).**

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section** Images **Page** 30 **Property name** Bicksler Block  
**County and State** Henry County, Iowa

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**Figure 13. Bicksler Block in the 1950s, looking northwest  
(Lewelling House collection, per Larry Cammack).**





# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:

## SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 10000291

Date Listed: 5/28/10

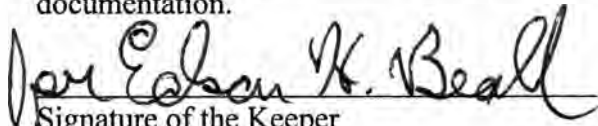
Property Name: BICKSLER BLOCK

Multiple Name:

County: HENRY

State: IOWA

-----  
This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

  
Signature of the Keeper

5.28.10  
Date of Action

-----  
Amended Items in Nomination:

The nominated property is listed in the National Register at the local level under Criteria A for its significance in Social History and Commerce, and under Criteria B for its association with Salem businessman John Bicksler. The documentation is amended to remove Criteria C-Architecture as a nominated Criterion due to loss of historic architectural features and insignificant justification of the area of significance.

### DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file

Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Bicksler Block  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: IOWA, Henry

DATE RECEIVED: 4/16/10  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/27/10  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/12/10  
DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/31/10

REFERENCE NUMBER: 10000291

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 5/28/2010 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Locally Listed under Criteria A - Social History and Commerce develop in the city of Salem and its association with significant businessman John Bicksler under Criteria B. Criterion C - Architecture was removed as a nominating criterion/area of significance. See SLR.

RECOM./CRITERIA A a B

REVIEWER Turkiya Howe

DISCIPLINE HISTORIAN

TELEPHONE 202-354-2266

DATE 5/27/10

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR ☒ Y ☐ N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

CLG NATIONAL REGISTER REVIEW

CLG Name Henry County Date of Public Meeting Jan 14 - 2010

Property Name Bicksler Block, 101-103 W. Cherry Street, Salem, Henry County

1. For Historic Preservation Commission:

- ☒ Recommendation of National Register eligibility  
☐ Recommendation of National Register ineligibility

Signature Donald E Young 1-14-10 Date

Print Name Donald E Young

Title Chairman

Reason(s) for recommendation:

See application

2. For Chief Elected Local Official:

- ☒ Recommendation of National Register eligibility  
☐ Recommendation of National Register ineligibility

Signature [Signature] Date 1-14-2010

Print Name GARY K SEE

Title CHAIR, HENRY COUNTY B.O. S.

Reason(s) for recommendation:

Concur with the recommending body that this proposal is appropriate for nomination

3. Professional Evaluation:

- ☒ Recommendation of National Register eligibility  
☐ Recommendation of National Register ineligibility

Signature [Signature] Date 1/26/10

Print Name RALPH J. CHRISTIAN

Title SHPO Historian

Reason(s) for recommendation:



Bicksler Block, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 1





Bicksler Block, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 2



Bicksler Building, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 3



Bicksler Block, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 4



Bickster Block, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 5





Bicksler Block, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 6



Bicksler Block, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 7



Bicksler Block, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 8



Bicksler Block, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 9





Bicksler Block, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 10



Bicksler Block, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 11



Bicksler Block, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 12



Bicksler Block, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 13





Bicksler Block, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 14



Bickler Block, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 15

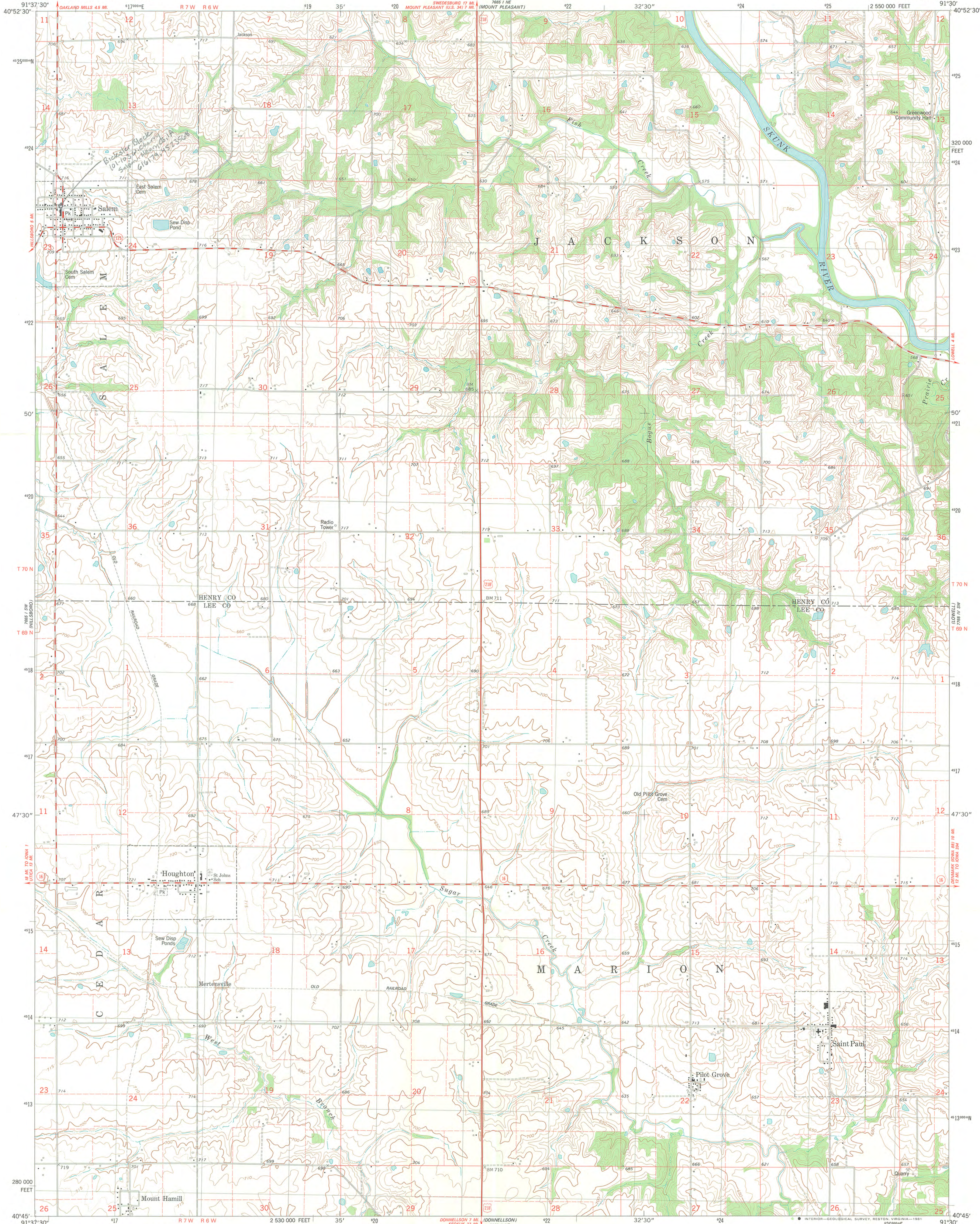


Bicksler Block, Salem, Henry County, Iowa, Photograph 16



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

SALEM QUADRANGLE  
IOWA  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1973. Field checked 1976. Map edited 1981

Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Iowa coordinate system, south zone (Lambert conformal conic)

1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 15

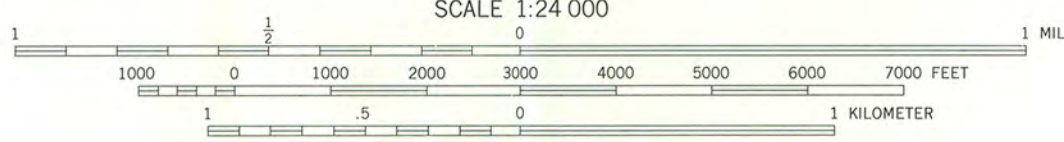
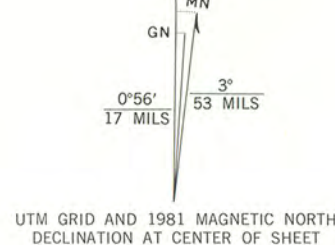
1927 North American Datum

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983

move the projection lines 1 meter north and

13 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
AND BY THE IOWA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, IOWA CITY, IOWA 52240  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



ROAD CLASSIFICATION	
Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

SALEM, IOWA  
N4045-W9130/7.5

1981

DMA 7665 I SE-SERIES V876





April 7, 2010

Carol Shull, Chief  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye Street, N.W.-- 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

The following National Register nomination(s) are enclosed for your review and listed if acceptable.

- Farmers Savings Bank, 101 S. Main Street, Salem, Henry County
- Bicksler Block, 101-103 W. Cherry Street, Salem, Henry County
- Cook-Johnson House, 3091 Franklin Avenue, Salem, Henry County
- Lamm-Pollmiller Farmstead District, 1584 – 335<sup>th</sup> Street, Salem, Henry County
- Best, Louis P. and Clara K., Residence and Auto House, 627 Ripley Street, Davenport, Scott County
- Pleasant Grove Community Church and Cemetery, 56971 – 170<sup>th</sup> Street, Ames vicinity, Story County

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Foster Hill  
Tax Incentive Programs Manager/  
National Register Coordinator