

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections



**1. Name**

historic Emmanuel C. Bickel House

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number 614 Bower Street \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Elkhart \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district 3rd

state Indiana code 18 county Elkhart code 039

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Mrs. Chauncey B. Baldwin

street & number 403 Prospect

city, town Elkhart \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Indiana

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Elkhart County Courthouse

street & number Corner of Main and Lincoln Streets

city, town Goshen \_\_\_\_\_ state Indiana

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory, Elkhart County  
has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_\_\_ yes  no

date May, 1978 \_\_\_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Indiana Department of Natural Resources

city, town Indianapolis \_\_\_\_\_ state Indiana

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>1906, 1912</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The E. C. Bickel House (c. 1870) is a two-story residence of the Carpenter Gothic style popular at that time. It is of balloon frame construction with clapboard siding and sits on a "modern" cinderblock foundation. The flat roofed porch wraps the front (south) and west side of the building. Here it dies into the short leg of the T-shaped floor plan. The eave of the porch is decorated with ornate wood scrollwork and a dentil strip typical of the Carpenter style. The roof is supported by eight heavily bracketed square columns and the handrail is carried by short, vaselike spindles.

There is an abundant variety of detail around the exterior. This variety includes the leaded glass borrowed lights at each side of the front door, two over two double hung windows with gabled caps of the Greek Revival, three windows in the dining room wall with arched heads in the Italianate Mode and upstairs, six-foot high double hung windows that have their sills at the second floor level also have gabled caps.

Inside the front entrance is a simple, but elegant, open stairway of walnut. Most of the interior woodwork is the original, walnut stained and varnished.

This little house has been moved two times. Originally, it stood facing Prospect Street and east of its present location to what is now the northwest corner of Bower and Prospect. In 1906 it was moved to the north so that it would stand next door to the house Mr. Bickel built in 1907, which stands in its place today. It was moved again in 1912 to its present location. The house has then stood in three locations within the boundaries of Lot #1 of Bickel's First Addition, the original site.

In studying photographs of the house in 1899 and 1906, we find that several alterations have been made in the process of these moves. As the house originally stood at a corner, there were two sets of steps up to the porch and an additional secondary entrance at the point where the porch dies into the house. The handrails and spindles for the front steps are now being restored, using the old photos as a guide. The arched windows were originally part of a bay window which projected from the dining room. The bay had four of these windows, three of which were placed flat in the wall at the same location. Most likely, this was done to facilitate moving the house. On the other side of the house, a fireplace and chimney have been added, probably at the time of the last move.

Also evident in old photographs is a barn to the rear, and in a later picture a simple iron fence around the yard.

At this time, the owner is having the house cleaned and much general repair work done. She plans to repair the existing stiles and roof damage on the porch as well as to reconstruct the railing along the steps. The leaded glass around the door is also being restored.

The owner has demolished a structurally unsound garage which was a much later addition. This garage will be replaced with a new one located to the rear of the property. When repairs are complete, the owner plans to rent two apartments in the house.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** (c. 1870) **Builder/Architect** Unknown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Emmanuel C. Bickel, though he was a man of limited financial means, left Elkhart a legacy of community service and civic development. Lawyer, realtor, developer and more, he initiated many of the projects which moved Elkhart into its position as one of the major industrial cities of Northern Indiana.

Born to a farming family in 1850, E. C. Bickel was raised in a rural environment, educated at the district school and for five months attended the "Goshen Institute". The next three years were spent farming in the summer and teaching at the district school during winter months.

His family moved to Missouri in 1870 and he, again, in 1873, moved to the territory of Colorado. Returning to Elkhart in late autumn of 1873, he settled with his uncle, M. F. Shively, and began to study law. Later he formed a partnership with J. M. VanFleet and served as Deputy Prosecuting Attorney.

Mr. Bickel married Marietta Smith in 1876. Being 25 years of age, he vigorously applied himself to his studies and became involved in the social and semi-public works of the town. While working to establish literary and debating societies, he also established the Elkhart Lecture Association which was said to have brought more notoriety to Elkhart than all of the town's factories combined.

E. C. Bickel's first experience as a developer came when he became involved in a committee appointed to study the possibility of getting the Cincinnati, Wabash and Michigan Railroad extended from Goshen, through Elkhart and on to Lake Michigan. After a considerable local subsidy was raised and affirmative vote taken by the town, Mr. Bickel was given the task of securing the right-of-way. The acquisition was accomplished at two-thirds of its estimated cost.

This first experience in development must have whetted Mr. Bickel's appetite, for he drifted out of the law practice into more promotion and construction work.

Working to develop the Citizen's Street Railway in the early 1880's, he went before an astonished Common Council and secured the franchise on the strength of a 100% pre-sold local subsidy. The citizens then reaffirmed their confidence in Mr. Bickel by electing him secretary and general manager. He held this post for a number of years.

In the several years following the formation of the Citizen's Street Railroad, Mr. Bickel exercised his talents by developing a 115 acre housing project known as "McNaughton Park". Also developed at this time period was the Highland Park Bridge, the "Beeline" Railroad and the Elkhart Building, Loan and Savings Association. Each of these developments was the direct result of efforts by E. C. Bickel.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

An Illustrated Historical Atlas of Elkhart County, Indiana. Higgins, Belden & Co., 1874  
 History of Elkhart County, Indiana. Chapman, 1881.  
 Standard History of Elkhart County, Indiana. Weaver, Abraham, 2 v., 1916

## 10. Geographical Data

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

Acreeage of nominated property 0.138 acres

Quadrangle name Elkhart

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A 

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4	16	1	15	5	1	15
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 Zone Easting Northing

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**Verbal boundary description and justification** A strip of land 44'-10" in width by parallel lines, from off the west end of lot #1 as the said lot is known and designated on the recorded plat Bickell's Addition to the City of Elkhart, said plat being recorded in Deed Record 63, Page 86, in the office of the Recorder of Elkhart County, Indiana.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NONE code county code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Phil Cartwright and Terry Herschberger

organization LeRoy Troyer and Associates date May 11, 1979

street & number 415 Lincolnway East telephone 219/259-9976

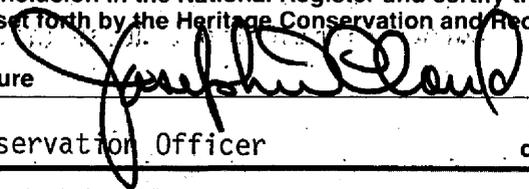
city or town Mishawaka state Indiana

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

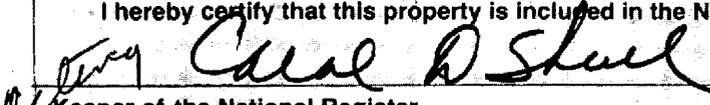
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date 9-17-79

### For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

 date 11-14-79  
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest: William H. Abraham date 11.8.79

Chief of Registration

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR HCRS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	SEP 26 1978
DATE ENTERED	NOV 14 1979

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At this time, Mr. Bickel formed an acquaintance with H. G. Bucklen. The teaming of Mr. Bucklen's money and Mr. Bickel's business experience and untiring drive would prove to be the City's major assets in its growth towards major importance.

To warm up the machinery, Mr. Bickel suggested that what Elkhart really needed to make it boom was a first class hotel. Bucklen responded by buying the "Clifton House Hotel" and rebuilding it in grand style.

The pattern was established, and the team of Bucklen and Bickel set out on their most ambitious undertaking, this being the formation of the Riverside Factory District. The initiative for this undertaking was the announcement by the Pratt Carriage Works that they would be leaving town to a location which promised more working capital and a more commodious working environment.

To summarize the agreement arbitrated by Mr. Bickel, the town made the following concessions to keep the Pratt Company in town:

- 1) Buy the existing carriage factory.
- 2) Donate a six acre site for the construction of a new factory.
- 3) Extend the existing Cincinnati, Wabash and Michigan Railroad and donate its free use as well as a good switching service.
- 4) Provide an additional \$10,000 incentive toward the new construction.

Of these four demands, Mr. Bucklen was persuaded to assume the financial responsibility for the first three; Mr. Bickel would donate the time required to raise the \$10,000 from the citizenry. This was accomplished on his donated time in a period of three months.

By 1894, the Bell Telephone Company had been in Elkhart for eleven years. Their rates, however, were twice the national average and there were only 100 possible connections and no night service. When a committee headed by Mr. Bickel requested lower rates and better service, they were insulted by the Bell Company. This served only to irritate Bickel, who promptly canvassed the town for subscribers to a new local telephone company. The resulting enthusiastic response led him to apply for a new franchise. Although the Bell Telephone Company cut their rates to one-quarter of their previous amount, the new company grew to the size of 5,000 connections and provided toll-free service throughout the county. Mr. Bickel was later to establish his phone company in three other Indiana cities as well as in Cleveland and Mansfield, Ohio.

From this brief summary of his life's accomplishments, we can see that Emmanuel C. Bickel was indeed a man who found pleasure in achieving something of service to his fellow citizens. And that largely due to his own efforts he effected major changes in the development of Elkhart, Indiana.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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RECEIVED	SEP 26 1979
DATE ENTERED	NOV 14 1979

Major Bibliographical  
Reference

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CONTINUATION SHEET      ITEM NUMBER      9      PAGE      2

Butler, George W., Manual of Elkhart, containing portraits of prominent business men with sketches of their lives. 1889.

Handwritten Manuscript, Record of One Elkhart Citizen, author unknown. Elkhart County Historical Society property.

Handwritten Manuscript from the personal papers of E. C. Bickel. Elkhart County Historical Society property.

Personal interviews with Mrs. Chauncey B. Baldwin.