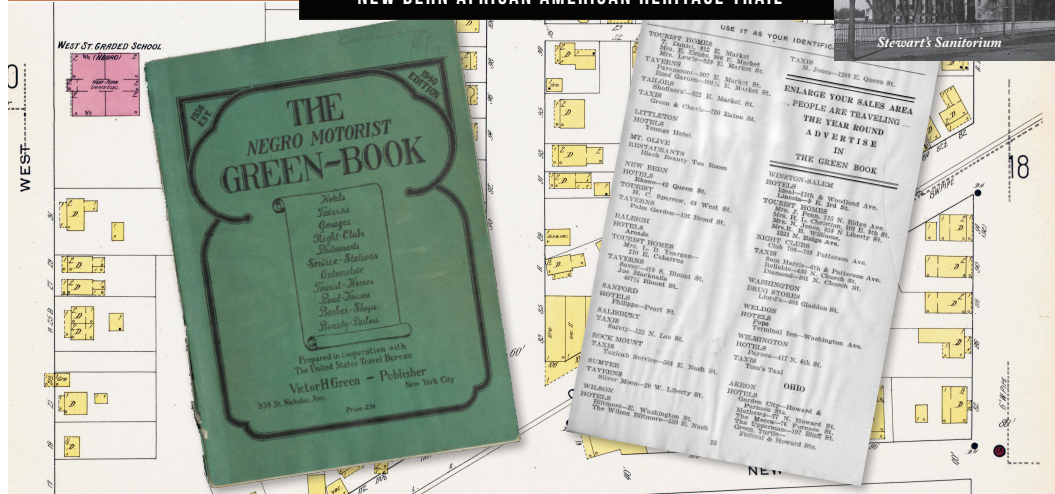


# Queen Street

## NEW BERN AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE TRAIL



At the turn of the twentieth century, Queen Street was recognized as an unspoken dividing line between the town's Black and White communities. The corridor from Five Points to the Neuse River was filled with homes, tenement houses, grocery stores, churches, shops, a hotel, and the Dixie Theatre—almost all catering to the Black community

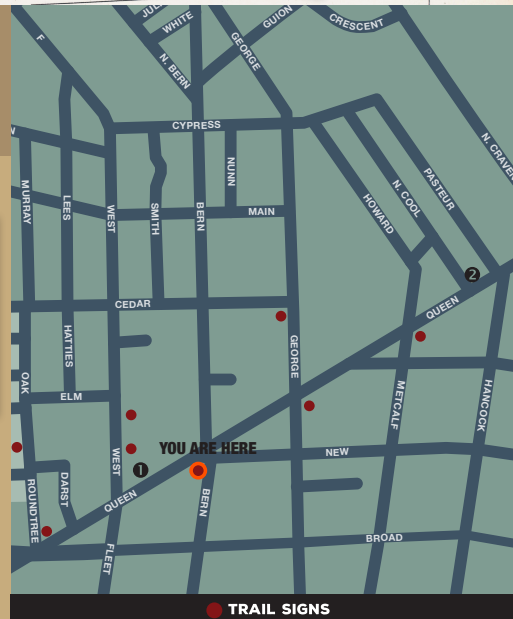
### Dr. Hunter Fisher

In 1911, four of New Bern's six Black physicians had offices located on Queen Street. Restricted from working in segregated hospitals or in White-owned office buildings, a degree in medicine was seen as a ticket out of the South, a way to escape the poverty and the lack of opportunity in the era of Jim Crow. Doctors who established a practice in the region often competed with midwives, folk healers, patent medicines, and White doctors for African American patients.



In 1905, Hunter Fisher moved to New Bern. Born in nearby Beaufort, the young physician boarded on George Street. Within a few years he opened his medical practice in a small, wood-framed office building at 830 Queen Street.

Finding success, Fisher married Carrie Roach, a teacher at the West Street School and daughter of Christopher C. Roach, founder of the Mutual Aid Banking Company, the first Black-owned bank in North Carolina. He remained on Queen Street until he retired in 1947. The building, constructed sometime between 1905 and 1908, was spared during the Great Fire in 1922. Today, it's considered the oldest commercial structure in Dryborough's Black business corridor.



- 1 Dr. Fisher's Office
- 2 Rhone Hotel



Images: Everett Interpretive Designs, Library of Congress, National Archives, New Bern Historical Society, State Archives of North Carolina

### The Rhone Sisters

Caroline (b. 1872), Charlotte (b. 1874), Amy (b. 1883), and Henrietta (b. 1888) Rhone left a lasting impact on New Bern. Charlotte, a graduate of the North Carolina Normal College (later North Carolina Central University) and the Freedmen's Hospital School of Nursing in Washington, D.C., was the first Black registered nurse in the state in 1903, and later, the first Black social worker in Craven County. Her older sister, Caroline, married Isaac H. Smith, one of North Carolina's wealthiest Black businessmen, in 1898. Her leadership in the Dryborough community in the 1930s and 1940s, was instrumental in building both the Good Shepherd Hospital and the West Street Colored Library.

### Rhone Hotel

Three of the Rhone sisters—Henrietta, Amy, and Charlotte Rhone—opened the first Black-owned hotel in New Bern in 1923. Catering specifically to African Americans who were not welcome in White establishments, the hotel was listed in the *Negro Motorist Green Book*, one of only two in New Bern. Black travelers and porters from Union Station, located down the street, frequented the Rhone, which operated until the 1950s. The next two decades the building was used as a real estate office. Today, the Rhone Hotel houses apartments.

Rhone Hotel