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**THE CORNER OF ANN ST. & FOURTH AVE. WITH A GREEK REVIVAL BUILDING ON ANN ST. AND A COLORED WELFARE LEAGUE SIGN ON THE KAYSER BLOCK, CA. 1930**



REVEREND RALPH M. GILBERT, PASTOR OF THE SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH, FOUNDED THE DUNBAR CENTER IN 1923.

**A MEETING PLACE FOR ANN ARBOR'S BLACK COMMUNITY**

In 1921 the Colored Welfare League bought the Kayser Block on North Fourth Ave. (above right) and used it as a center to help settle black workers who migrated to Ann Arbor in the 1920s. It gradually became an African American community center and a gathering place for social and fraternal groups. It was also used for commercial undertakings and as a residence.

The Greek Revival building on the northwest corner of Ann St. and Fourth Ave. (above center) was Ann Arbor's fourth post office from 1841 to 1853. Early abolitionist meetings were held on the second floor. It later served as a flour and seed store, a bakery, and a confectionery before being demolished in 1930 to make way for a gas station.



BUILT IN 1899, THE KAYSER BLOCK WAS USED AS A HOTEL THROUGH WORLD WAR I, OFTEN WITH BLACK MANAGEMENT. USED BY THE COLORED WELFARE LEAGUE, IT WAS THE FIRST HOME FOR THE DUNBAR CENTER (1923-26), WHICH LATER EVOLVED INTO THE ANN ARBOR COMMUNITY CENTER ON MAIN ST. JOHN RAGLAND, A 1938 U-M LAW GRAD ACTIVE IN THE NAACP, WAS A LAWYER FOR THE COLORED WELFARE LEAGUE.

HE HAD HIS OFFICE ON THE SECOND FLOOR. FOR A TIME HE WAS THE ONLY AFRICAN AMERICAN ATTORNEY IN TOWN. WASHTENAW COUNTY'S FIRST BLACK ATTORNEY WAS U-M GRAD JOHN FOX, WHO BEGAN PRACTICING IN YPSILANTI IN 1878—THE YEAR THE NEW COURTHOUSE OPENED.

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