

Activities Attended and Value of Conference

During the week of August 1-5, 2022, I was on a research trip to the Library of Virginia in Richmond, Virginia. I had a scenic drive down to Richmond and was impressed by the pockets of still rural living.

At the Library, I began my research on:

Land Tax, Personal Property Tax and Miscellaneous Separated Records of the Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts, 1782-1922 (bulk 1782-1856).

These records are useful because they list taxable assets of citizens in Staunton and Augusta County, Virginia which I am researching for an article and eventual book. The collection is housed in the Archives area on modern microfilm machines. After getting a Library card and some initiation to the records and microfilm machines, I began my search. I was interested in Frank Rossell, 1878-1961 who was arguably the most successful African American in August County during the Jim Crow era. I found the personal property records for his nuclear family in 1880 and unsurprisingly the family owned no taxable assets. The parents had been slaves and the tax records showed a lack of upward mobility following Emancipation. Following Frank, by 1910/1916 the PPT records show a young businessman (Tinsmith) on the rise and my biographical study for publication.

I gathered PPT records through 1928 when the microfilmed collection ends. This work was slow and tedious as it involved searching through city and county records (separate) as the African American community tended to live in liminal areas that were in the county, but eventually subsumed by city growth. Worse, after 1890, signaling the rise of Jim Crow, records became segregated into white/colored sections, which made the work more difficult. I plan to use these records in an analytical exercise for my 20th Century America course.

While at the Library, I took advantage of access to rare non-circulating books such as:
ACGS., African American Marriages, 1900-1925. (2012).
ACGS., African American Marriages, 1865-1899 (2010)
Augusta County Heritage Book, 1732-1998

I also worked in the Archives department on:

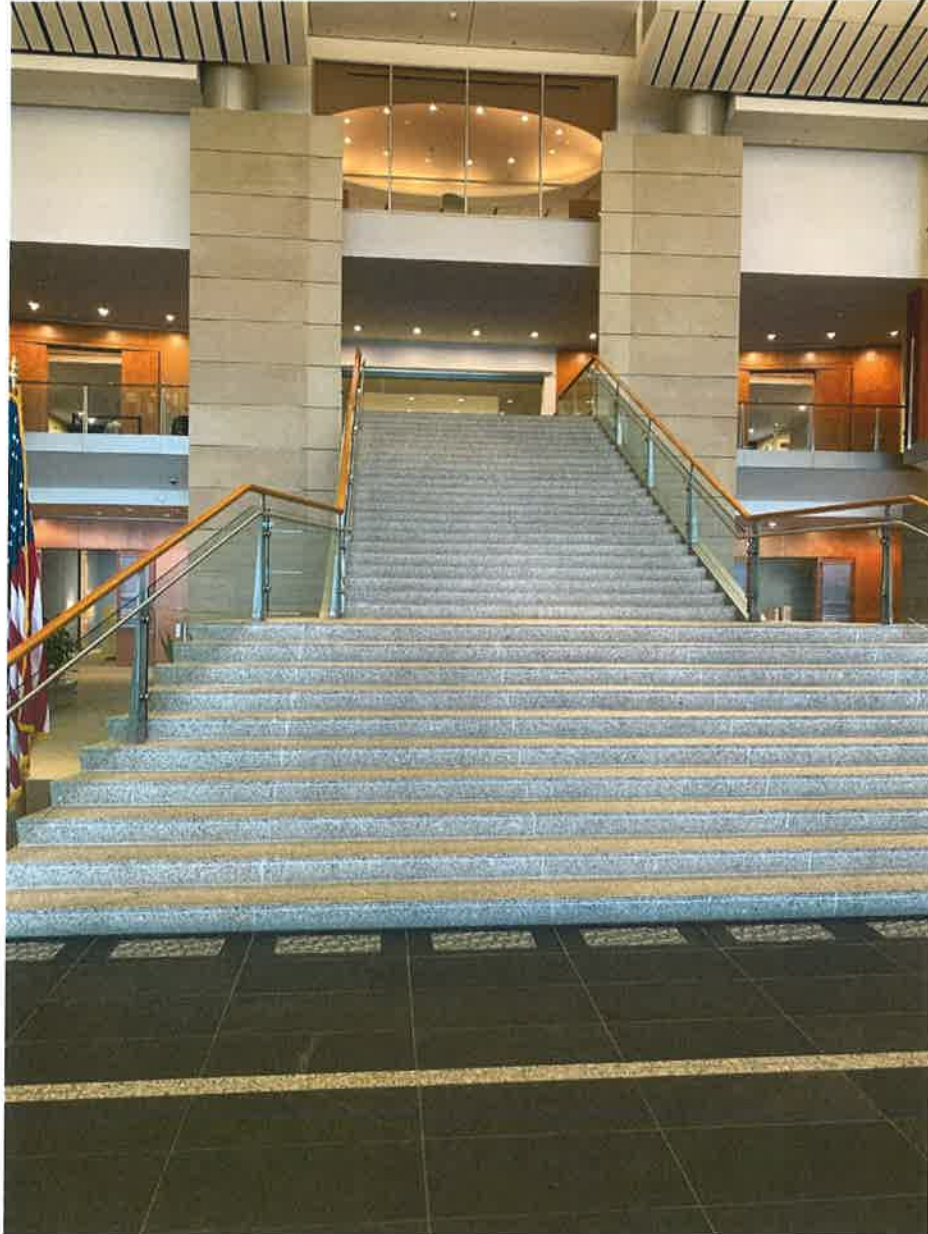
Independent Order of St. Luke Records, 1897-1945
Independent Order of St. Luke (Richmond, Va.)

Unfortunately, this collection was undergoing some conservation work by archivists and the earlier material I was hoping for (1897-1920) was not available. I did work through the parts of the collection available and noted in particular the fine insurance records which included information about customers, benefits and fees paid and the operations of the Independent Order of St. Luke in the 1930s and 40s. In addition, I visited the Maggie Lena Walker Historical House Museum. Walker was the first African American woman to be president of a bank and the leader of the Independent Order of St. Luke an African American mutual aid society.

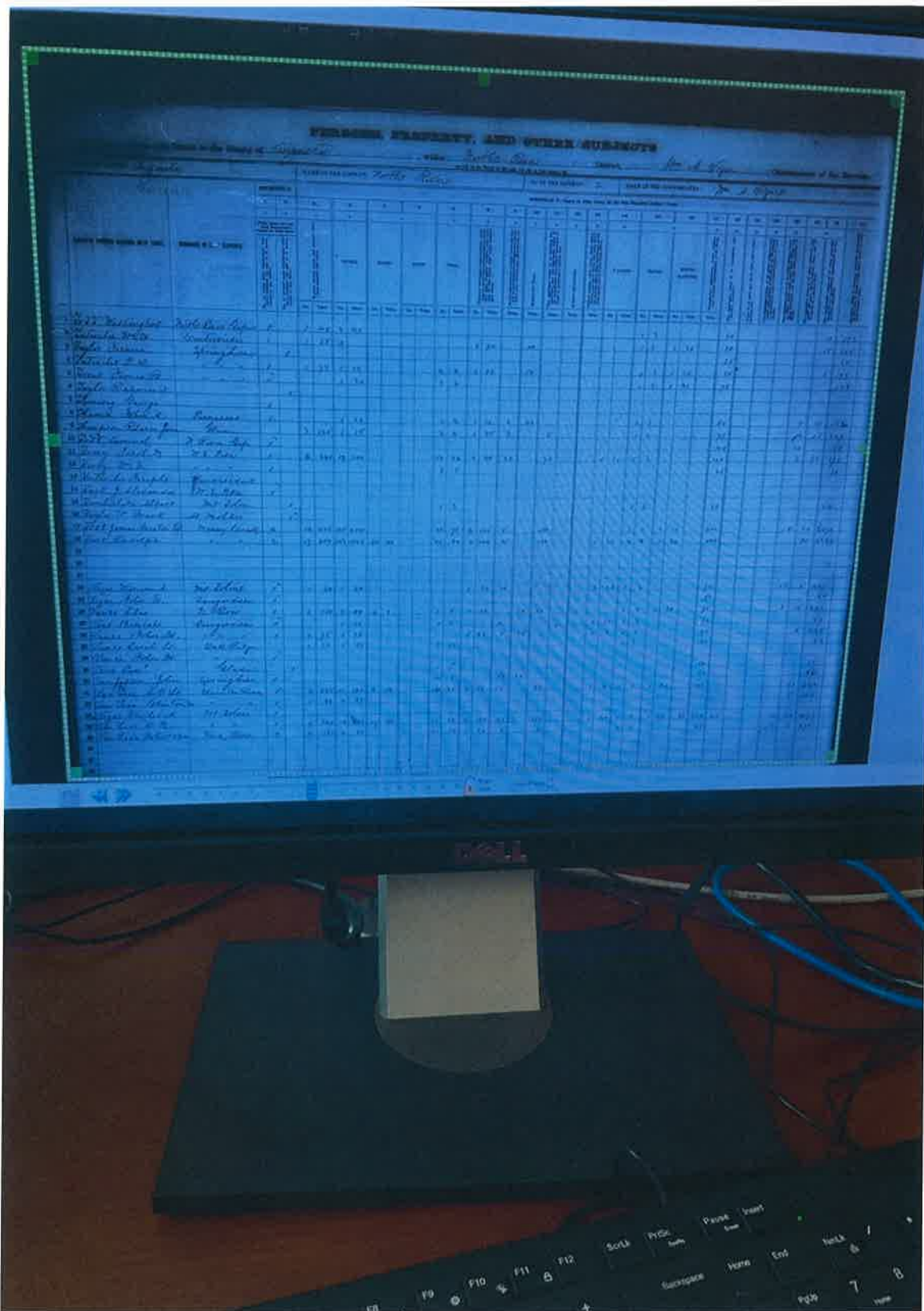
The tour of her house gave insight into Mrs. Walker's character, values and family life/business. The house remains essentially unchanged since her death in 1934. While at the museum, I enjoyed networking with the park docents and purchased a unique video, which I will be using in my classes. I plan on building a module on Maggie Lena Walker and the Independent Order of Saint Luke for my History of American Women courses. I have the insurance card documents and I will combine them with other sources to build a small collection for students to analyze the IOSL.

All told, it was a successful Research Trip. I learned the work routines within the Library of Virginia (every archive is different) and was able to find the main documents I needed. In addition, I was able to identify other areas in the Library collection where I will want to work on in the future. Sometimes digital databases do not compare to browsing through a collection or speaking to archivists. Finally, it was nice interacting with other historians, archivists, librarians, museum docents and staff. Trips like these help to keep a historian rooted in their discipline, research, and scholarship. Thanks!

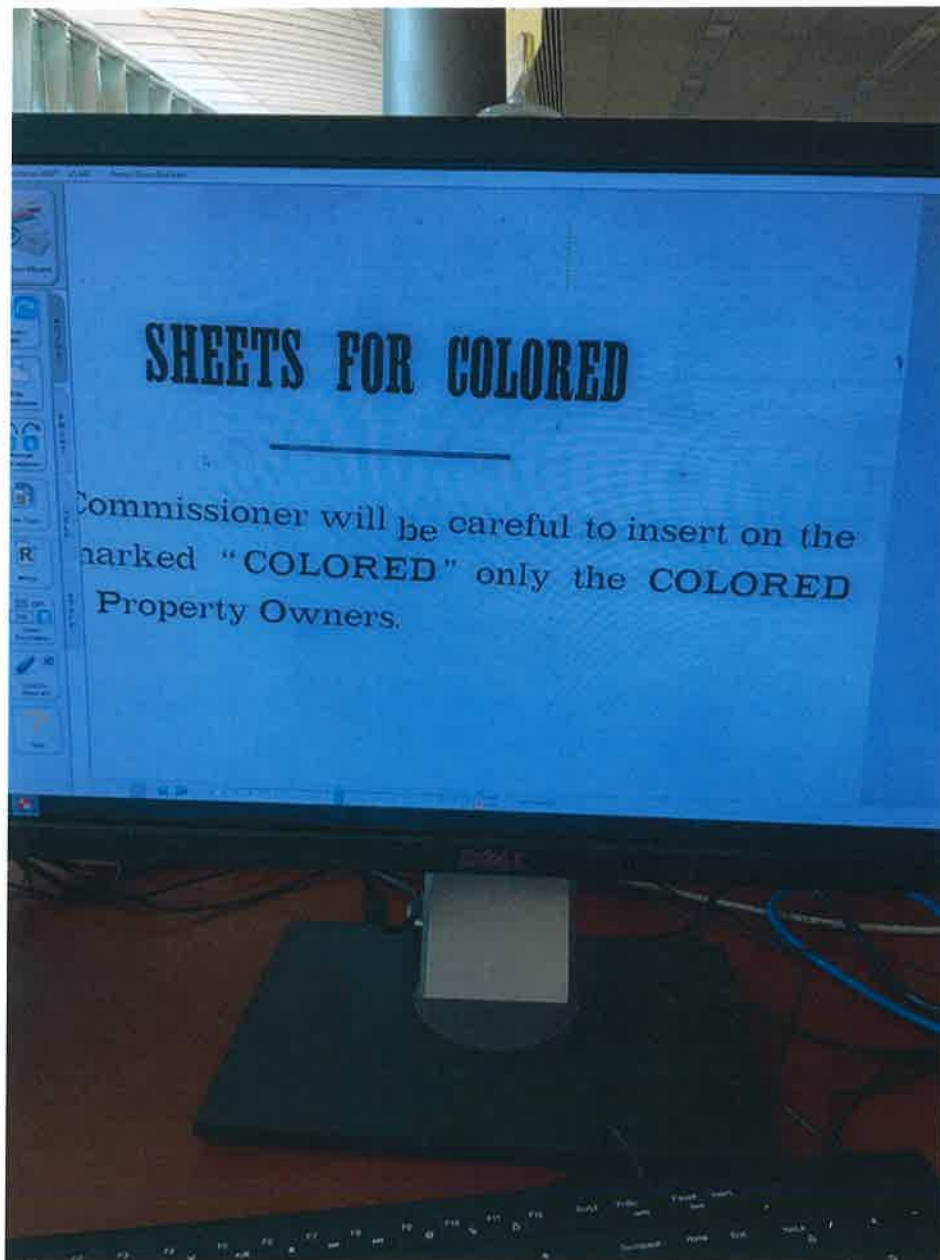
Maria Lee
Associate Professor of History
County College of Morris



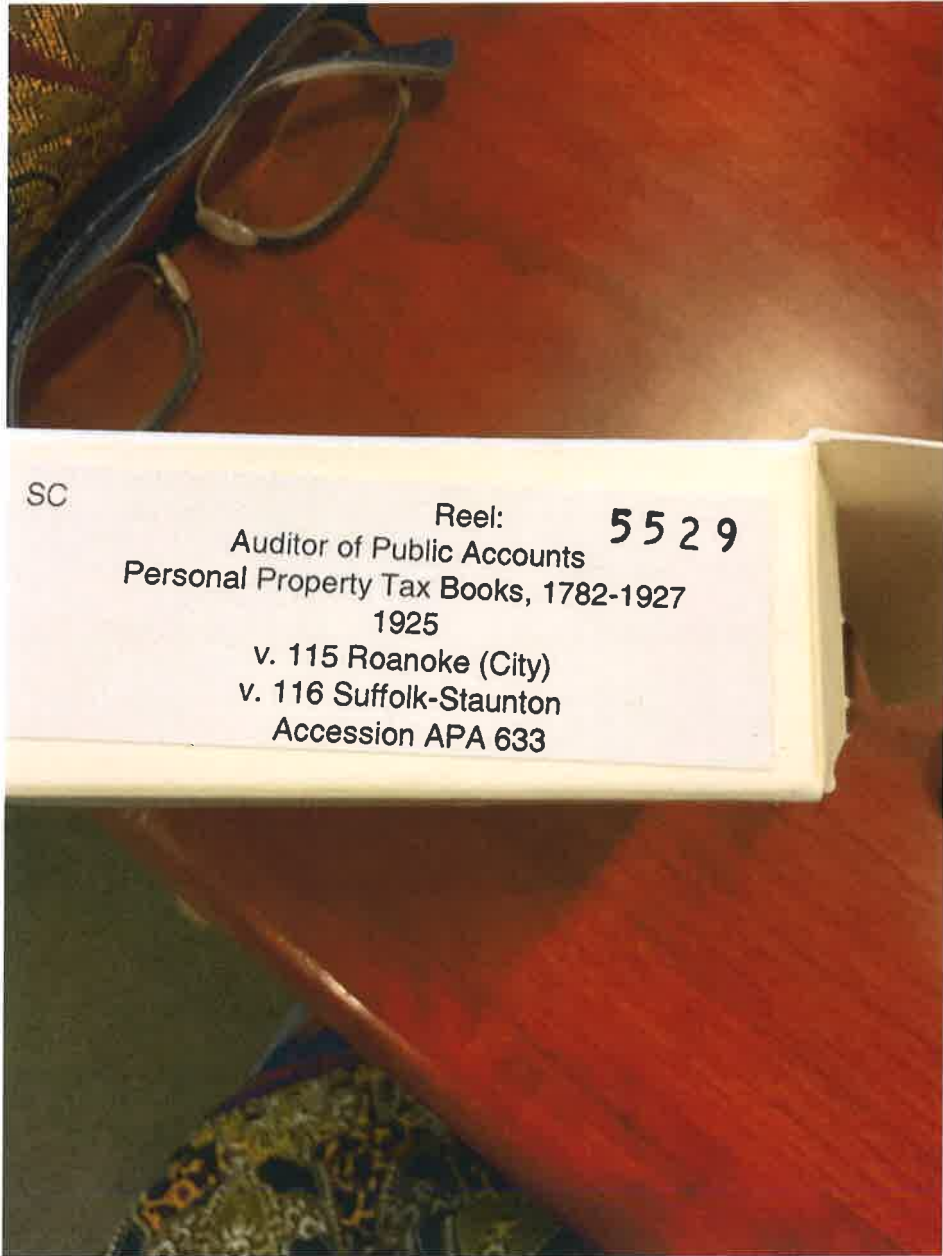
Foyer and Grand Staircase Library of Virginia



Personal Property Tax Records via Microfilm



Segregation



Microfilm: fun stuff!

APPROXIMATE COUNTY (cont.)

Reel 3080: 1906
 Reel 3170: 1907
 Reel 3280: 1908

AUGUSTA COUNTY

Reel 845: 1871
 Reel 879: 1872
 Reel 915: 1873
 Reel 949: 1874
 Reel 986: 1875
 Reel 1026: 1876
 Reel 1060: 1877, pt. 1
 Reel 1061: 1877, pt. 2
 Reel 1095: 1878
 Reel 1136: 1879
 Reel 1177: 1880, pt. 1
 Reel 1178: 1880, pt. 2
 Reel 1216: 1881
 Reel 1256: 1882
 Reel 1293: 1883
 Reel 1339: 1884
 Reel 1392: 1885
 Reel 1445: 1886
 Reel 1495: 1887
 Reel 1544: 1888
 Reel 1597: 1889
 Reel 1652: 1890
 Reel 1714: 1891
 Reel 1775: 1892
 Reel 1776: 1892
 Reel 1843: 1893
 Reel 1907: 1894
 Reel 1972: 1895
 Reel 1973: 1895
 Reel 2062: 1896
 Reel 2063: 1896
 Reel 2165: 1897
 Reel 2166: 1897
 Reel 2266: 1898
 Reel 2267: 1898
 Reel 2367: 1899
 Reel 2368: 1899
 Reel 2462: 1900
 Reel 2463: 1900
 Reel 2567: 1901
 Reel 2669: 1902
 Reel 2670: 1902
 Reel 2764: 1903
 Reel 2765: 1903
 Reel 2849: 1904

Reel 2850: 1904
 Reel 2951: 1905
 Reel 2952: 1905
 Reel 3061: 1906
 Reel 3062: 1906
 Reel 3171: 1907
 Reel 3172: 1907
 Reel 3281: 1908
 Reel 3282: 1908

BATH COUNTY

Reel 846: 1871
 Reel 879: 1872
 Reel 915: 1873
 Reel 949: 1874
 Reel 986: 1875
 Reel 1026: 1876
 Reel 1061: 1877
 Reel 1095: 1878
 Reel 1136: 1879
 Reel 1178: 1880
 Reel 1217: 1881
 Reel 1256: 1882
 Reel 1294: 1883
 Reel 1340: 1884
 Reel 1392: 1885
 Reel 1446: 1886
 Reel 1496: 1887
 Reel 1545: 1888
 Reel 1597: 1889
 Reel 1654: 1890
 Reel 1716: 1891
 Reel 1776: 1892
 Reel 1846: 1893
 Reel 1908: 1894
 Reel 1975: 1895
 Reel 2064: 1896
 Reel 2167: 1897
 Reel 2268: 1898
 Reel 2369: 1899
 Reel 2464: 1900
 Reel 2569: 1901
 Reel 2671: 1902
 Reel 2766: 1903
 Reel 2851: 1904
 Reel 2953: 1905
 Reel 3063: 1906
 Reel 3173: 1907
 Reel 3283: 1908

BEDFORD COUNTY

Reel 846: 1871
 Reel 880: 1872
 Reel 916: 1873
 Reel 950: 1874
 Reel 987: 1875
 Reel 1027: 1876
 Reel 1061: 1877
 Reel 1096: 1878
 Reel 1137: 1879
 Reel 1178: 1880
 Reel 1217: 1881
 Reel 1258: 1882, pt. 1
 Reel 1271: 1882, pt. 2
 Reel 1294: 1883
 Reel 1340: 1884
 Reel 1393: 1885
 Reel 1446: 1886
 Reel 1496: 1887
 Reel 1545: 1888
 Reel 1598: 1889
 Reel 1653: 1890
 Reel 1715: 1891
 Reel 1777: 1892
 Reel 1844: 1893
 Reel 1845: 1893
 Reel 1908: 1894
 Reel 1909: 1894
 Reel 1973a: 1895
 Reel 1974: 1895
 Reel 2065: 1896
 Reel 2066: 1896
 Reel 2067: 1896
 Reel 2168: 1897
 Reel 2169: 1897
 Reel 2170: 1897
 Reel 2269: 1898
 Reel 2270: 1898
 Reel 2271: 1898
 Reel 2369: 1899
 Reel 2370: 1899
 Reel 2371: 1899
 Reel 2465: 1900
 Reel 2466: 1900
 Reel 2467: 1900
 Reel 2570: 1901
 Reel 2571: 1901
 Reel 2572: 1901
 Reel 2672: 1902
 Reel 2673: 1902
 Reel 2674: 1902

Microfilm partial index



The masked Historian



Independent Order of St. Luke's archival box

T

Council No.	Certificate No.	Claim No.	Class	Amt. Pol.	Assessment
1385	169632	23291	A	100	57
Name of Deceased <i>Bornish William H</i>					State <i>Ma</i>
Date of Death	Mo. <i>6</i> Day <i>4</i> Year <i>43</i>	Age <i>79</i> yrs.	Notice Rec'd. <i>2/2/43</i>		
Date of Policy	Mo. <i>3</i> Day <i>19</i> Year <i>37</i>	Age <i>63</i> yrs.	Status from A.D.		
Length of Membership	Yrs. <i>1</i> Mos. <i>3</i> Days <i>3</i>	Died of <i>myocarditis</i>			
Date of Last Suspension	Mo. Day Yr.	Last Reinstated Mo. Day Yr.			
Beneficiary	<i>Susan Cornish</i>		Age	Rel. <i>wife</i>	
Reason for Reduced Benefits					
Remarks:			Status at Death		
At Age <i>71</i> Nov. 1, 1937 - <i>Cl.</i>			Due <i>7</i> Mos.		
No. Ass't <i>57</i> Value <i>100</i> Date <i>1/27/57</i>			Settlement		
Date of Payment <i>11</i> By			Ass't Ref. \$		
Mo. <i>18</i> Day <i>1943</i> Yr.			Am't Paid <i>52.78</i>		

Insurance Card from above