

# HISTORY<sup>1</sup>

## History

The Borough of St. Marys was settled in 1842 by a group of German Bavarian Catholics intent on establishing a religiously and ethnically homogeneous colony in America. A site was chosen and land purchased in the wilderness of north central Pennsylvania. After clearing the area, the new settlement was founded on December 8, 1842, which was the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. In honor of the Blessed Mother, the colony was named Sanot Marien Stadt (or St. Marys). The Borough of St. Marys was incorporated on March 3, 1848, from portions of Ridgway Township. The ordinances of the Borough were originally codified by Penns Valley Publishers in 1958 and recodified in 1976.

The Township of Benzinger was also originally settled in 1842 and formally created on December 18, 1845, by the Elk County Commissioners. The ordinances of the Township were originally codified in 1987 by Penns Valley Publishers.

In July 1989, the elected officials of St. Marys Borough and Benzinger Township appointed a Joint Study Commission charged with assembling and studying all data pertinent to consolidation or other forms of cooperation between the communities. After careful analysis, the Commission presented its findings and recommendations at a joint meeting of the Borough Council and the Township Supervisors. Following the recommendations of the Joint Study Commission, the citizens of St. Marys Borough and Benzinger Township circulated petitions to have the question of consolidation placed on the November 5, 1991 ballot. The citizens overwhelmingly approved the consolidation of the Borough of St. Marys and the Township of Benzinger into a third class city to be known as the "City of St. Marys," the first municipal government consolidation in Pennsylvania since 1956.

Once the consolidation was approved, a Transition Committee was created to develop operational plans for consolidation of services, ordinances, assets and budgets. The City of St. Marys, a city of the third class, was officially created by charter granted by the Governor of Pennsylvania on June 18, 1992. On November 3, 1992, the citizens of St. Marys approved a home rule charter with a council-manager form of government. The first elected Council of the City first sat on January 3, 1994.

The St. Marys City Code was prepared by Penns Valley Publishers, a division of Fry Communications, Inc., and adopted by the City Council on January 31, 1994 by Ordinance No. 4.

## Organization

The Code contains four parts which are (1) the valid current ordinances of the City contained in Chapters 1 through 27, (2) the Appendix, which lists by abstracted title all ordinances of a temporary or "one time" nature, (3) the Key to the disposition of each ordi-

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<sup>1</sup> Adopted from "St. Marys/Benzinger Consolidation Project, Final Report," October 1993.

nance ever enacted by the Borough, Township and City and (4) the Index, which is an alphabetical arrangement of subjects.

In the Code each Chapter is separated by a divider tab, and specific ordinances can be located by subject on the contents page at the beginning of each Chapter. The Index may also be used to search for a subject when one is looking for general information on a particular subject, or if it is not known in which Chapter the subject might be found. The Appendix consists of several general categories containing a chronological listing of short subject descriptions along with a reference to the original ordinance and its date of enactment, if known.

The Key to disposition indicates what action has been taken by the Borough Council with regard to every ordinance ever enacted. An ordinance has either been (1) specifically repealed, (2) superseded by another ordinance, (3) is located in a Chapter of the Code, or (4) is located in the Appendix. Annual tax rate and budget ordinances are located only in the Key. The Key is a cross reference to the original ordinance books of the Borough and to the location within the Code of each ordinance by number.

Certification of Boundaries

TO: THE SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH:

We, the undersigned, pursuant to resolutions duly adopted by our respective governing bodies, and in compliance with Article 2, Section 207 of the Third Class City Code, Act of June 23, 1931, P.L. 932, herewith submit a description of the boundaries of the new City of St. Marys:

BEGINNING at the northeast corner of Warrant No. 2374 (also the southeast corner of Jones Township) in the common boundary between Elk County and Cameron County;

THENCE, along the said County line, the following courses and distances:

- A) South 960 rods, more or less, to a point;
- B) East 19.7 rods, more or less, to a point;
- C) South 1600 rods, more or less, to a point which is the southeast corner of Warrant No. 4993 (and also the northeast corner of Jay Township);

THENCE, along the north line of Jay Township, the following courses and distances:

- A) West 1049.4 rods, more or less, to a point;
- B) South 10 rods, more or less, to the southeast corner of Warrant No. 4887;
- C) West 868 rods, more or less, to a point which is the northwest corner of Jay Township and the northeast corner of Fox Township;

THENCE, along the North line of Fox Township, by the following courses and distances:

- A) Westerly, along the southern boundary of Warrants No. 4099, 4086 and 4408, 1302 rods, more or less, to the southwest corner of Warrant No. 4408;
- B) South 83 rods, more or less, to the southeast corner of Warrant No. 4076;
- C) West 516 rods, more or less, to the southwestern corner of Warrant No. 4076 (a corner of Fox Township in the eastern line of Ridgway Township);

THENCE, along the eastern line of Ridgway Township, the following courses and distances:

- A) North 1155 rods, more or less, to a point;
- B) East 82 rods, more or less, to a point;
- C) North 1585 rods, more or less, to the northwestern corner of Warrant No. 4111 (also in the southern line of Jones Township);

THENCE, along the southern line of Jones Township, the following courses and distances:

- A) East 2623.5 rods, more or less, to the northeastern corner of Warrant No. 4905;
- B) South 53 rods, more or less, to the northwestern corner of Warrant No. 2357;
- C) East 1029.7 rods, more or less, to the point and place of beginning.

The foregoing description is intended to conform to the existing, exterior boundaries of the former Township of Benzinger and is intended to include all of the lands which formerly comprised the Borough of St. Marys and the Township of Benzinger.

TOWNSHIP OF BENZINGER

BOROUGH OF ST. MARYS

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
President, Borough Council

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Township Secretary

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Borough Secretary

(SEAL)

(SEAL)