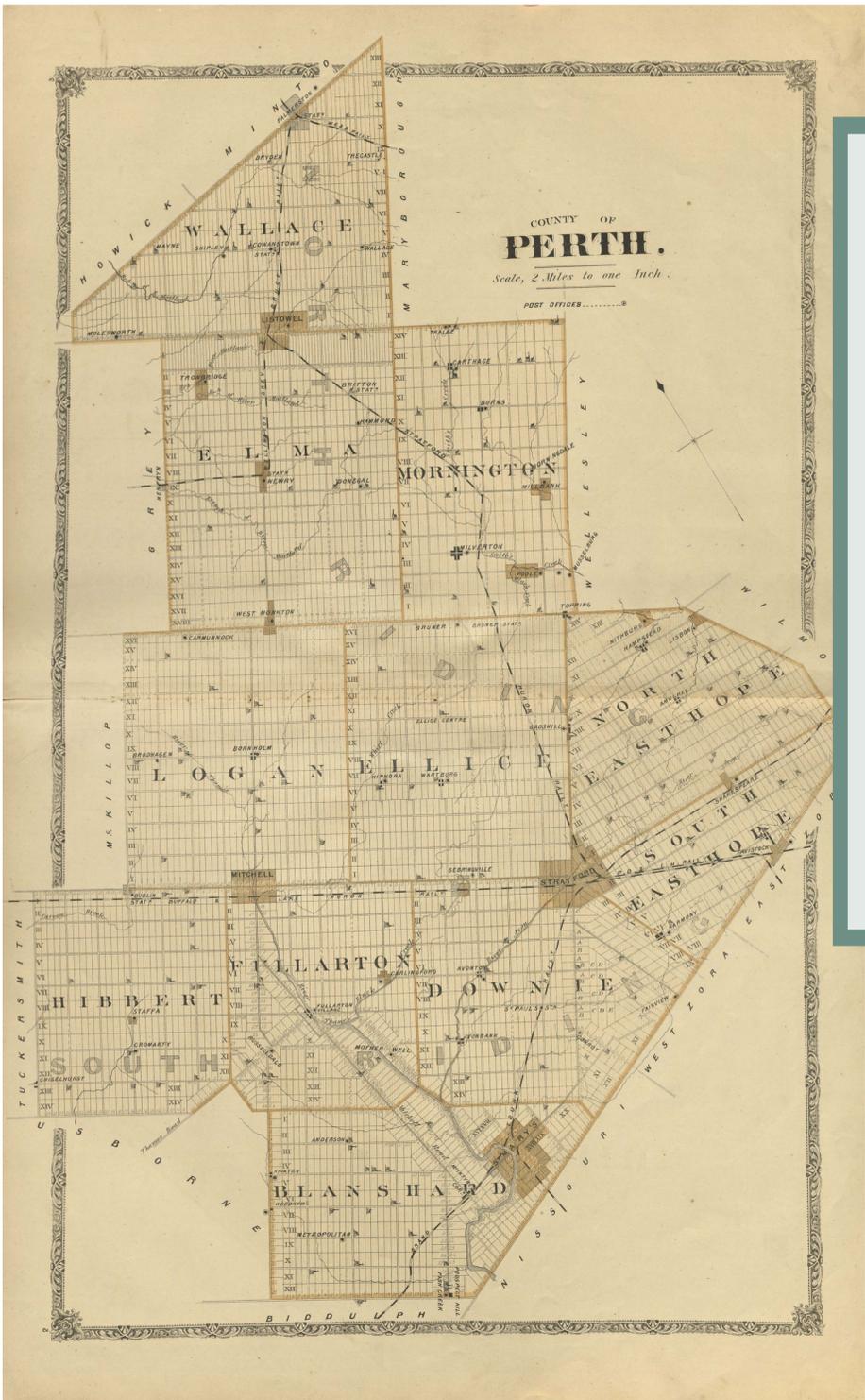
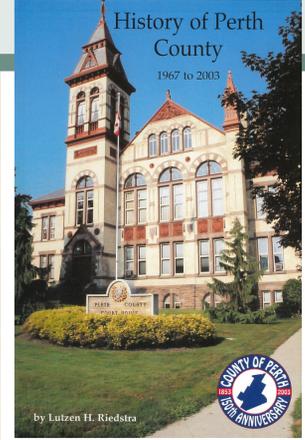


# History of Perth County Council

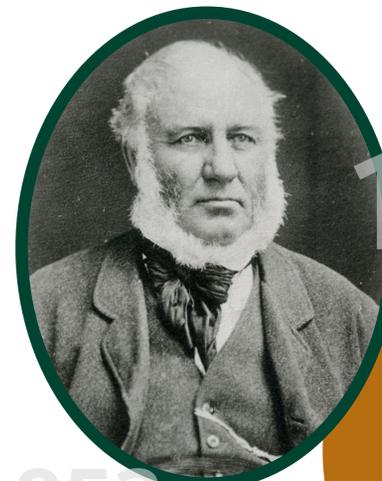


“Municipal government in Perth County began with...township meetings in four townships around Stratford in January 1836 under the authority of the London District Court of Quarter Sessions... Democracy only arrived at the upper tier in 1842 with the establishment of District Councils which were made up of councillors directly elected from each township. These took over the power to make local bylaws from the local Court magistrates. The head of these new councils was appointed by the Governor-General and called the Warden. Councils were granted the right to elect their Warden in 1847. The full municipal system that we know today, with its two tiers of local government, was created in 1850 with the Baldwin Act, the first municipal act. This gave the townships and cities, towns and villages, their own incorporated municipal councils headed by Reeves or mayors...When the new Perth County Council met for the first time in the...new Court House at Stratford on January 24, 1853, at 12 noon, the council consisted of eight Reeves and two deputy Reeves representing all eleven townships...The first Warden of the new county was William Smith of Downie Township who had also been Warden of the provisional county in 1850 and 1852.”

History of Perth County, 2003



History of Perth County, 2003



1850  
William Smith of Downie Township was Perth County's first Warden. For more information about Perth County's history and a complete list of Wardens since 1850, scan the QR Code below

“The development of the county proceeded very quickly, with the incorporation of Stratford (1854), St. Marys (1855), Mitchell (1857) and Listowel (1867) as villages. These took their own seats on county council. However, the first two later separated from the County government – Stratford when it became a city in 1885 and St. Marys after it became a town in 1864. In the 1870s, Listowel and Mitchell became towns within the county and were joined by the village of Milverton in 1881. So from 1885 to 1997, the county consisted of fourteen municipalities – eleven townships, two towns and one village.”

Ancient Atlas, Found by Perth Clerk-Treasurer, Shows First Warden Was Appointed 100 Years Ago



**Free Press Stratford Bureau**  
STRATFORD, April 4 — An atlas containing historical data of Perth County describes the Canada Company as the "most unscrupulous and unscrupulous class of land grabbers which this country has any knowledge of."  
The atlas was dug out of a Perth County vault by County Clerk-Treasurer Fred Armstrong this week when County Warden William O. Gaffney, of Logan Township, told county councillors in session here that it was just 100 years ago this April that Perth's first warden was appointed.  
The warden's casual mentioning of the century-ago appointment — not an election — roused a momentary wave of local patriotism among councillors who suggested that Perth should have some sort of compiled history for reference and something to which future developments could be added.  
**Women Doing Job**  
Clerk-Treasurer Armstrong said the Perth County Women's Institute organization had taken upon itself the compiling of a county history. It's a long and tedious task, but the women are getting material together.  
But after the brief discussion in county council chambers Mr. Armstrong remembered that he had seen an old book, left by his father, the late Robert Armstrong, which contained a history of Perth in its early days.  
The book, published in the early 1850's, lists the first appointed "provisional" Perth County Council, consisting of nine members met in the old Union Hotel at Stratford. The Union Hotel was on what is now Ontario street just west of Waterloo street.  
The nine members of the first appointed provisional council were: Thomas B. Gouat, representing Blanshard Township; William Smith and Andrew Monteith, Downie Township; Alec Hamilton, North Easthope Township; Sebastian Fryfoegel, South Easthope Township, who was named warden; Andrew Gouaty, representing Elm and Mornington townships; James Hill, Fullarton Township; Robert Donkin, Hibbert Township; John Hinks, representing Logan, Elms and Wallace townships.  
There is a brief mention of "Perth at that time was part of the Huron-Brace-Perth combined governing jurisdiction" in the 1851 census showed Perth's total population 46,538 of whom there were 444 male and 472 female adults who could not read and 727 male and 952 females who could not write.  
The atlas publisher takes a sly "stand" according to the atlas publisher. Some years later Perth County paid the Town of Stratford \$7,000 for the Milverton road, the county to look after maintenance.  
Members of this year's county council are: Warden William O. Gaffney, Logan Township; Reeve Lincoln J. White, Blanshard; Reeve James Hindes, Downie; Reeve D. W. Hyde, North Easthope; Reeve J. J. Krug, South Easthope; Reeve James R. Smith, Elm; Reeve J. W. Brown, Fullarton; Reeve Frank Allan, Hibbert; Reeve Roy Walker, Mornington; Reeve Harold Cross, Wallace; Reeve Lawson Cross and Deputy Lloyd E. Bean, Listowel; Reeve J. J. Vosper, Mitchell; Reeve Clarence Mogk, Milverton.



Scan the QR Code for an in-depth look!