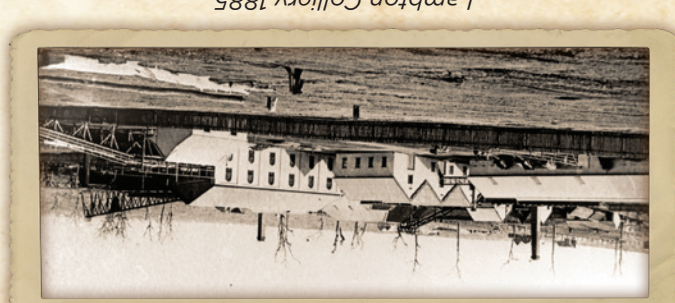


The area bounded by Newcastle Road and Morehead, Howe and Croudace streets was surveyed in 1869. It was intended that Grainger Street be the commercial hub of the town. This was a narrow street and businessmen preferred to establish their commercial ventures in the wider Elder Street.

Lambton Colliery 1885
University of Newcastle, Bert Lovett Collection,
part of Norm Barney Collection



The suburb of Lambton is named after the Lambton Colliery which commenced operations in 1863. The mine manager was Thomas Croudace, who was responsible for naming the mine after a family friend Lord Lambton, Earl of Durham. The mine was located near the boundary between Lambton and New Lambton, in the vicinity of Lewis Oval. Millions of tons of coal were mined over a 74 year period. The mine closed in 1936 after the coal seam had been mined out.

Lambton was the first municipality in Newcastle to install electric lights. Isabella Dent, the Mayoress, switched on the lights at a ceremony on September 9, 1890. Most of the residents of Lambton gathered on a high vantage point in North Lambton to witness 160 street lights and lights in some hotels, shops and private dwellings illuminate the town. Residents were impressed with the street lights but did not want electric lights in their homes due to safety concerns. This impacted on the viability of the scheme – there was a shortfall in council income and repayments could not be made. After a nine year struggle the aldermen resigned when the creditors foreclosed and took possession of the plant.

Mechanics' and Miners' Institute, Elder Street 1898
Newcastle Region Library, Ralph Snowball Collection



Lambton Municipality was proclaimed in 1871 and the first council meeting was held in the Mechanics' Institute. Then located in Howe Street, part of this original structure is now sitting at the back of the Mechanics' Institute, built 1894 opposite the park.



Above the front porch is an engraving in Welsh which reads Bethel capel annibynol adeliadwyd. A.D. 1868. This translates as "Bethel Independent Chapel, built A.D. 1868".

The oldest church building in Lambton is the Bethel Congregational Church. It was built in 1868 from stone transported from a quarry in High Street to Dickson Street. The parishioners worked in the mine during the day and after completing their shift went to work on the church. The first minister was Rev Evan Lewis who opened a drapery store in Elder Street around 1867.

Crowd at Lambton Electric Light Station, 1890
Newcastle Region Library, Ralph Snowball Collection



George Smith's Commercial Hotel
University of Newcastle, Ralph Snowball Collection,
part of Norm Barney Collection

The Commercial Hotel (Snake Gully) operated from the corner of Elder and Grainger streets from 1880 to 2018. A complex containing shops on ground level and residential units above is planned for the site.



Gold Miners' Home Hotel
University of Newcastle, Ralph Snowball Collection,
part of Norm Barney Collection

Celebrating
150
YEARS
OF RETAIL HISTORY

ELDER
STREET
LAMBTON
Celebrating
150
YEARS
OF RETAIL HISTORY



Elder Street Lambton c1906 by Ralph Snowball
Looking westwards along Elder St, with Northumberland Hotel on left and D'Este Boots and Shoes on right.
Photo courtesy Ken Shilling

In the 1890s one of the largest commercial ventures was the Steam Printing Works operated by J Hutton. Other services provided at the site were book binding and the supply of paper, bags, twine and ink.



Hutton's Printing and Paper Company, 1897
University of Newcastle, part of Norm Barney Collection

The butcher shop owned by the Payne family traded for over 120 years. Arthur Lydney Payne opened the Lambton shop in 1870 on the southern side of Elder Street. He took the opportunity to move the business across the street in 1914. The business was sold by the family in 1993 and still trades on the site.

The oldest family business still operating is Simpson's Shoes. Steve Simpson started work as a shoe maker in 1930, operating from a shed at the back of the Northumberland Hotel. He moved the business to Elder Street in 1944 and his grandson, Craig Simpson, continues the business from the same premises.



Steve Simpson, original owner of Simpson's Shoes
Simpson Family collection, courtesy Craig Simpson



G Bell & Sons, 1896
University of Newcastle, Ralph Snowball Collection, part of Norm Barney Collection

The grocery and drapery business managed by the Bell Family traded for 80 years. G Bell & Sons opened in 1881 and the family residence was built on the western side of the shop.

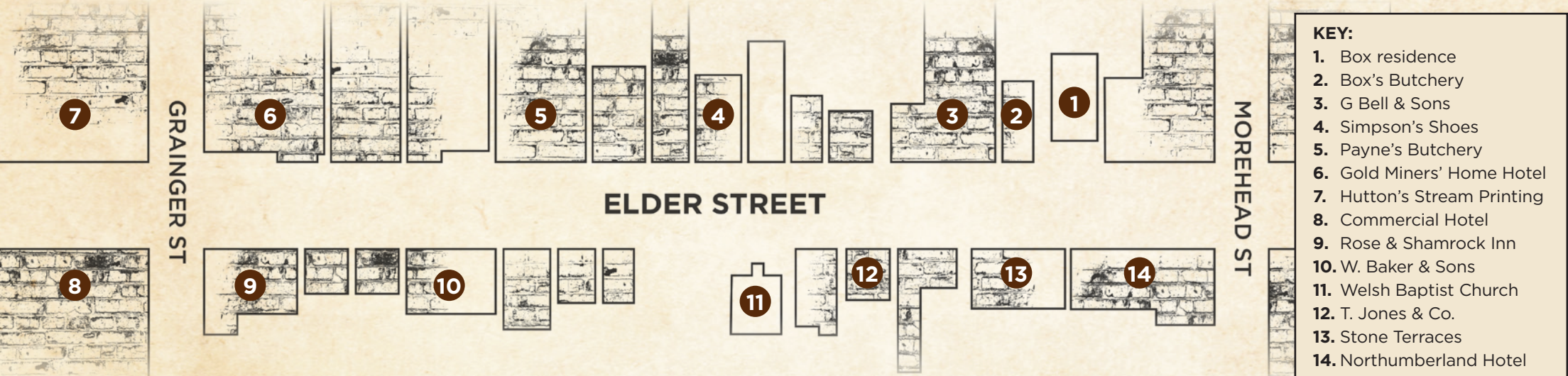
A new shop was built on the premises in 1907 by John R Bell and the business continued to trade until the 1960s

G. BELL & SONS,
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL
GROCCRS, DRAPERS, IRONGMONGERS & PRODUCE MERCHANTS
WESTERN MARKETS, NEWCASTLE,
AND
ELDER STREET, LAMBTON.

The substantial terrace at No 88 was the former Box family home. Their butchery business, operated by Edward Box, was located on the western side of the residence.



Mrs E Box and residence
Collection late Alfred Bates



- KEY:**
- 1. Box residence
 - 2. Box's Butchery
 - 3. G Bell & Sons
 - 4. Simpson's Shoes
 - 5. Payne's Butchery
 - 6. Gold Miners' Home Hotel
 - 7. Hutton's Stream Printing
 - 8. Commercial Hotel
 - 9. Rose & Shamrock Inn
 - 10. W. Baker & Sons
 - 11. Welsh Baptist Church
 - 12. T. Jones & Co.
 - 13. Stone Terraces
 - 14. Northumberland Hotel

The only hotel still trading is the Northumberland Hotel. It started trading in 1866 and continues to trade from its original site, under its original name. The current hotel was built around 1930.



Northumberland Hotel
Newcastle Region Library

The oldest building is the stone terrace (Nos 87-89) next to the Northumberland Hotel. This structure was initially used as the accommodation annex to the Northumberland Hotel and was built around 1867.

The walls are made of hand hewn stone blocks and some show the marks of pick axes. The stone has deteriorated over time and some remediation work has been carried out. In 1873 T M'Mullen informed residents that he had established a boot factory in the premises.

T Jones & Co was one of the few manufacturing businesses in Lambton in the 1890s. Baking power was manufactured in premises in Dickson Street and sold from retail premises in Elder Street.

The Universal BAKING POWDER,

Manufactured by

T. Jones & Co.,
LAMBTON,

IS pronounced by experts to be the MOST VALUABLE PREPARATION in the world. It needs no better recommendation than the following testimonials received from gentlemen well and favourably known in this district:—

T. JONES AND Co. Gentlemen,—I am pleased to learn since you advised me to give your Baking Powder a trial that it is turning out in first-class order, and I may unhesitatingly say that it is quite equal to any I have sold, and gives entire satisfaction to all my customers.—Yours faithfully, W. DAVIES AND SONS, Lambton, March 27, 1888.

Mr. T. JONES AND Co. Gentlemen,—I have sold your Universal Baking Powder to my shareholders, and they find it a first-class Baking Powder, and when it is given a further trial they will use no other.—I am, yours, &c., LAWSON CRITCHTON, Manager Lambton Co-operative Store. March 28, 1888.

Newcastle Morning Herald & Mining Advocate -
November 17, 1888

In 1868 the first church was built in Lambton for the Welsh Baptist Church. Their first service was conducted entirely in Welsh.

The longest operating bakery was managed by W Baker & Sons. Baker started the business in 1870 and expanded his premises over time. At one time three generations of the family worked in the bakery, which closed around 1955.



James Price and baker's cart
Collection of late Frank Baker

Hotels have played an important part in Lambton's commercial development. The Newcastle Directory and Almanac for 1880 lists these hotels trading in Elder Street:

The Northumberland Hotel was located opposite the park and council chambers.

The Royal Hotel, operated by Joseph Hunter, traded from 1875-1881.

The Rose, Shamrock and Thistle Inn operated from 1877. Prior to this it was known as The Rose and Shamrock Inn when it opened in 1868.

The Gold Miners' Home Hotel started trading in 1865. Three years later the weatherboard structure was extended to include a hall capable of seating 500 people.

The Race Horse Inn traded from 1878-1881.

Race-horse Inn.
ELDER-STREET, LAMBTON.

HENRY DOHERTY

DEGS to inform his numerous friends that he has OPENED the above Hotel with a choice stock of Liquors, Wines, Ales and Porter, &c., of the best brands.
Persons paying him a visit will meet with every accommodation and civility.

HENRY DOHERTY,
Proprietor.