

In the Nevis Valley, mining operations have been carried on actively during the working season.

Williamson Mine, Stone Huts, Upper Nevis.—Sluicing and elevating operations are being carried out on the northern end of the auriferous lead downstream from the Stone Huts.

Jones' Mine, Whitton's Creek.—Jones and Sutherland are sluicing and elevating in the Whitton's Creek area and are now opening up a new area to the south of the creek.

McLean Mine, Old Township Workings, Mid-Nevis.—Sluicing and elevating operations have been carried out, and a new area at the upstream end of the old township workings is to be opened up in 1946.

D. Adie is ground sluicing in the downstream section of the old township workings.

There has been very little alluvial mining in the Vincent and other counties on account of the prevailing labour conditions.

DREDGING

Vincent County

Austral New Zealand Mining, Ltd.—This large electrically operated dredge has continued to dredge the river flats upstream from the Lowburn Hotel. At the end of the year dredging operations were being carried out in the island section between the channels of the Clutha River about one mile upstream from the Lowburn Bridge. During the year ending 31st December the area worked totalled 30.27 acres, yielding 2,301,000 cubic yards, for a recovery of 8,127 oz. of bullion. The average dredging depth was 49 ft. This dredge is now in good dredging trim, as the bucket-line has a full complement of buckets and other spares are also coming to hand. During the war period there was a shortage of spares and replacements and dredging companies had many difficulties to contend with.

The Clutha River Gold Dredging, Ltd.—This electrically operated paddock dredge continued to dredge the Alexandra Flat, continuing its first cut in a south-easterly direction along the south-western boundary of the Alexandra Flat area. During the year 11.5 acres were dredged for a yardage of 1,602,000 cubic yards, yielding 6,138 oz. of bullion. The average dredging depth was 30 ft. below water-level, with from 30 ft. to 50 ft. of gravels above water-level. The dredge ceased operations at the end of November for the purpose of undergoing alterations and improvements to the tailings stackers and for general repairs. When operating, the fines are deposited on top of the coarser material, and this is a great improvement on the old method of tailings disposal, but it increases the wear-and-tear on the stacker equipment.

The dredge of the Molyneux Gold Dredging Co., Ltd., has been tied up in the Kawarau River near Scotland's Point.

The Nevis Crossing dredge has been sold for dismantling.

The Bendigo Goldlight dredge has been dismantled.

Southland

The dredge operated by the Rainbow Dredging Co. at Maitland, Waikaka Valley, has been tied up during the year on account of the shortage of labour due to war conditions.

ACCIDENTS

I regret to report that one fatal accident occurred during the year, on the 10th April, 1945. One of the tributaries at the Groves' Scheelite-mine in the Bonnie Jean Basin, Glenorchy, William Stafford Northcote, was killed by a heavy fall of earth when prospecting the surface outcrop of the reef.

QUARRIES ACCIDENTS

I am pleased to report that no fatal accidents occurred during the year.

There were two accidents of a serious nature:—

At the Brown's Lime Quarry on the 31st January, 1945, John Silke, a quarry worker, was hit by the bucket of a power shovel when assisting to replace one of the caterpillar tracks. He suffered a triple fracture of the jaw.

At the Cave Quarry, operated by the Timaru Lime Co., on the 7th November L. McDonald, quarry worker, was hit in the small of the back by a piece of stone falling from the loaded bucket of the power shovel. He suffered fracture of five lumbar transverse processes.