

During the year the average working-depth on the bar at high water was 22 ft. 8 in. This is a substantial increase on 20 ft. 10 in. for the preceding comparative period and 20 ft. for 1934-35.

The average working-depth in the river at high water was 24 ft. 6 in., as against 23 ft. 6 in. for 1935-36 and 24 ft. for 1934-35. This increase in depth followed the general trend of improved bar conditions for the first half of the year, but whereas definite shoaling occurred on the bars, the improvement in the fairway was maintained. A factor of definite effect in this connection, however, was that 216,434 cubic yards of material was lifted during the year by the "Eileen Ward" from the lower river fairway—*i.e.*, from the crane wharf to the bar—as against 97, 277 for the preceding year, whilst the amount lifted during 1934-35 was 134,939 cubic yards.

Dredging operations were confined to the suction dredge "Eileen Ward," the bucket dredge "Maui" and the suction dredge "Rubi Seddon" still remaining out of commission.

The "Eileen Ward" worked on 158 days and dredged a total of 535,105 cubic yards, of which 267,687 were taken from the bar, 216,434 from the lower river, 38,073 from the berthages, and 12,911 from the floating basin.

The dredging was carried out at a cost of 4-83d. per cubic yard, which is less than the unit cost per yard for the previous two years.

The favourable cost of the dredging was accounted for by the fact that the dredger was not docked during the year, in which case there would have been increased costs and smaller output.

The "Eileen Ward" was well maintained throughout the year, and a large amount of reconditioning was carried out during the period the vessel was under survey and overhaul.

A comparison of the shipping entering the port during this year as against the previous two years shows very little difference, and amounted to 257,506 tons.

For the twelve months under review eighteen large overseas vessels worked the port, as against sixteen for the previous period and fourteen for 1934-35.

Rain fell on 229 days, an exceptionally large number, and 90-61 in. were recorded on the harbour gauge. This was the wettest year since 1931-32, when 114-55 in. fell.

The reticulation of the main beacons, signal-station, and the two signalmen's cottages was put in hand during the year, the work being completed shortly after the close of the period. This work involved erection of 3½ miles of transmission-line, nearly three of which is high-tension line.

All plant and buildings have been kept in good repair.

No major construction-work was carried out during the year, but repairs to the breakwater and river-protection work have been authorized. Preliminary work in the clearing of the Cape Foulwind line for the resumption of quarrying work and repairs to the Organ's Island Bridge have been put in hand.

The following statement shows the coal trade, shipping, and financial statistics of Westport Harbour for each year since the Department has had control of the port:—

Year.	Net Tonnage of Shipping entered.	Tonnage of Coal shipped.	Expenditure.			Revenue.			Financial Result.			
			£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
1921-22 ..	273,706	480,873	63,950	1	10	25,836	19	3	Deficit	38,113	2	7
1922-23 ..	332,401	573,487	50,738	17	5	38,700	8	1	„	12,038	9	4
1923-24 ..	275,762	442,070	46,619	1	11	42,285	7	4	„	4,333	14	7
1924-25 ..	334,827	556,669	44,666	14	0	50,378	11	0	Surplus	5,711	17	0
1925-26 ..	386,669	552,949	51,909	4	11	57,539	12	11	„	5,630	8	0
1926-27 ..	459,670	637,165	52,769	12	6	62,976	13	10	„	10,207	1	4
1927-28 ..	466,021	623,256	65,828	1	7	65,909	8	1	„	81	6	6
1928-29 ..	458,712	604,778	68,871	13	0	64,214	5	6	Deficit	4,657	7	6
1929-30 ..	479,623	625,835	64,877	10	5	66,274	17	3	Surplus	1,397	6	10
1930-31 ..	352,228	513,503	53,436	16	9	53,013	2	11	Deficit	423	13	10
1931-32 ..	234,936	336,873	46,803	2	4	34,602	12	9	„	12,200	9	7
1932-33 ..	223,936	282,163	40,974	8	9	30,516	6	1	„	10,458	2	8
1933-34 ..	240,132	280,080	39,783	7	4	30,886	13	9	„	8,896	13	7
1934-35 ..	253,041	291,449	39,011	8	8	30,773	2	5	„	8,238	6	3
1935-36 ..	260,111	295,067	41,480	16	9	30,891	0	7	„	10,589	16	2
1936-37 ..	257,506	345,507	41,785	2	7	34,300	11	1	„	7,484	11	6

The finances show an improvement of £3,000 over the previous year's figures in spite of increased expenditure due to restoration of salaries and wages and increased coal costs. It is interesting to note that the financial statement this year is the best presented for a six-year period, and the more satisfactory position is accounted for by increased coal shipments. The revenue at this port is sufficient to meet normal working-expenses, interest on loans, and interest on advances from the Consolidated Fund, but is still unable to provide for sinking fund.

The bunkering of vessels at Westport is encouraged as far as possible by reduced port dues on the vessels calling for bunkering purposes only, and this portion of the harbour trade continues to show