

Blackball Creek Dredge, Blackball.—Early in the year this dredge ceased operations and produced 300 fine oz. of gold, valued at £3,000, before the buckets were finally stopped. The dredge since commencing operations has produced gold to the value of £145,785 and paid dividends amounting to £23,400 on a modest capital. Dismantling of the dredge commenced immediately after the last cleanup, and it is understood that a great part of the plant and fittings has been sold at a satisfactory price.

Barrytown Dredge, Barrytown.—Dismantling of this dredge was completed and it is now ready for transhipment to its future destination, which has not yet been decided.

Westland County

Maori Gold-dredge, Callaghans.—Dredging operations were carried on intermittently during the year, the chief hindrance to continuous working being shortage of water during the early part of the year and the worn condition of bucket line. A total of 130,000 cubic yards of dirt, which yielded 492 oz. 6 dwt. 9 gr. fine gold, which realized £4,750 6s. 8d., were dredged from ground varying from 20 ft. to 25 ft. deep. The wash dirt was covered by a heavy layer of tough clay which rested on a cemented-gravel bottom that was difficult to dig and clean up. Nine men were kept in continuous employment, and the Westland Power Board staff serviced as required the electrical plant and power lines.

Rimu Dredge, Rimu.—This dredge worked 78.5 per cent. of the possible working-days of 304 and dug 1,917,013 cubic yards from 26.619 acres, which yielded 9,594.1 fine oz. gold, which realized £109,510, and 297.8 fine oz. silver, valued at £67. The normal turnover per day was 6,306 cubic yards and value of product was £360. The ground treated throughout the year averaged 13.72d. and the all-in costs were 8.48d., these including export taxes and realization costs. Thirty-nine men were kept in constant employment in operating the dredge, maintaining water-race, operating Kanieri power plant, and workshops. The only stoppage during the year was one of three weeks' duration due to power failure resulting from damage to fluming conveying water to the power-station.

Kanieri Dredge (Gold-mines (N.Z.), Ltd.), Kanieri.—This company during the year operated under somewhat difficult conditions on account of encountering a bed of quicksand overlying the wash and dredged 23,441 acres by working 75.59 per cent. out of 7,288 possible working-hours. Yardage treated was 2,908,000 cubic yards in addition to 7,612 cubic yards of tailings that had to be dug to complete the cut in payable ground. From this yardage 6,775 fine oz. 1 dwt. 19 gr. were recovered, which realized £72,554 1s. 9d., also 255 fine oz. 4 dwt. silver, valued at £45 16s. 11d. From an average depth of 76.9 ft. a recovery of 1.17 gr. per cubic yard was effected. A staff of 44 men ashore and afloat were employed by the company.

Arahura Dredge (Gold-mines (N.Z.), Ltd.), Arahura.—From ground averaging 88.8 ft. in depth the company recovered 11,396 oz. 12 dwt. 19 gr. fine gold, which realized £122,046 1s. 2d., also 389 oz. 19 dwt. fine silver, valued at £69 15s. 10d., from 3,157,000 cubic yards dug over 22.03 acres. Altogether, 79.5 per cent. was worked of the possible working-time of 7,288 hours. The ground treated yielded 1.8 gr. per cubic yard, which is somewhat lower than the usual run of values, due to dredging several acres of low-grade ground in order to reach a much more profitable area ahead of the dredge.

ALLUVIAL MINING

Buller County

Addison's Flat Gold-mining Co., Ltd., Addison's Flat.—This company operated for only a few weeks at the beginning of the year and then closed down after treating 18,300 cubic yards for a return of 44 oz. 17 dwt. fine gold, valued at £457 3s.

Operations were terminated on a long length of 7 ft. face averaging 5 ft. of clayey silt overburden covering a 2 ft. layer of wash consisting of cemented pebbles and blacksand. Since the commencement of operations gold to the value of £62,286 has been won and £8,970 paid in dividends from the lowest-grade ground in the district. The successful working of this claim is attributed to good management, a first-class water-supply, and continuous operations for twenty-four hours daily. When it became impossible to keep the water-supply in continuous use and treat a large yardage monthly, the margin of profit disappeared, and the company has gone into voluntary liquidation.

Inangahua County

Waitahu Sluicing Claim, Waitahu, Reefton.—Owing to the abnormally dry season at the beginning of the year, three months' sluicing-time was lost on account of shortage of water, and the four tributors employed spent the time in clearing bush, operating their stoning plant, and making alterations to pipe-lines that would enable them to work ground ahead of them varying from 16 ft. in depth at the side of the main gutter and the gutter itself being 30 ft. deep. The shallow ground was removed by ground sluicing, which presented no difficulties on account of the rapidly rising bottom. A hydraulic elevator had to be set up to work the deep ground and the tailings discharged through a sluice-box set on trestles. No attempt was made by the tributors to estimate the yardage treated. They won 304 oz. 3 dwt. 18 gr. fine gold, which realized £3,273 14s. 2d., bringing the total value of gold won since the claim was opened up to £50,044 13s. 1d., and before the claim was taken over by tributors shortly after peace was declared £4,000 had been paid in dividends when it was operated by the company.