

Rimu Gold Dredging Co. bored seven holes, aggregating 548 ft. in depth, during the period of low gold price, chiefly for the purpose of eliminating ground that would be unprofitable to dredge before devaluation of the pound took place.

Two hydraulic sluicing claims will enter the producing stage next year, and it is possible that utilization of modern earth-moving machinery will play a prominent part in future winning of gold from alluvial mines where deposits are too limited in yardage for dredging.

There has been no actual recovery in quartz-mining, and if conditions existing prior to September had continued, this branch of mining would have become defunct, but plans for reopening mines are being discussed and the chief obstacle to their resumption is scarcity of suitable labour.

FATAL ACCIDENTS

Two fatal accidents occurred on dredges during 1949 :—

On 14th February, 1949, Alexander Jones, greaser, Rimu Dredge, accidentally fell into the dredge pond and was drowned. It is believed that he had been standing on the platform of the boat prior to casting off the mooring lines with the intention of greasing the pennant sheaves and that a disturbance of the boat caused him to lose his balance and fall overboard.

On 5th March, 1949, Frederick Tohuru, employee, Arahura Dredge, was drowned when the dredge suddenly capsized.

SERIOUS NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS

Dredges

Nil.

Metalliferous Mines

On 18th June, 1949, John Robertson, boilermaker-fitter, Blackwater Mine, sustained the loss of the thumb and index finger of left hand when his hand was caught in a motor-driven circular saw.

PROSECUTIONS UNDER THE MINING ACT, 1926

Nil.

SOUTHERN INSPECTION DISTRICT (T. McMILLAN and H. T. GORDON, Inspectors of Mines)

QUARTZ AND ALLUVIAL MINING

Waitaki County

Sluicing operations have been carried out in the auriferous gravels of the Maerewhenua Goldfield.

Waihemo County

The Callery Syndicate continued to operate in the Deep Dell area for scheelite-bearing ore during the first three months of the year, then as the markets for tungsten became unsettled the party transferred their operations to the Round Hill Mine, where development work and stoping operations have been carried out in the upper level and on a surface outcrop for gold-bearing ore.

Maniototo County

The alluvial mines at Naseby, Kyeburn, Cambrians, St. Bathans, and Patearoa have been operated when water has been available.

Tuapeka County

On account of the sale of the mining plant of the Sailors Gully Sluicing Co., Waitahuna Gully, the tribute party ceased operations on the 31st December, 1948, and mining operations, which have been carried on continuously since the "sixties" have ceased. A monument to the memory of the old pioneer miners has been erected at the upper end of the main gully.

Taiieri County

Prospecting and development work has been continued intermittently at the Mount Stoker antimony-mine. A total of 260 ft. of the Bottom Level has been retimbered. Five tons of ore have been sold for £209.

Southland County

Sluicing operations have been carried out in the Waikaia auriferous areas at Happy Valley and Chinaman's or Welshman's Gully. Some prospecting work has been carried out in the Piano Flat auriferous area.

Wallace County

Beach mining operations have been carried out intermittently on the Orepuki Beach.

During the year the Round Hill Gold Mining Co., Ltd., operating on the flats between the Ourawera Stream and Lake George have sluiced and elevated $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres to a depth of from 40 ft. to 45 ft. The ground worked during the year contained a large quantity of buried timber and hard lenses of clay.