

Majors Creek gold deposits

Mineral Resources

The following information deals with the old Elrington or Majors Creek Goldfield about the township of Majors Creek and upper creek of the same name, plus the Shoalhaven basin from the Jembaicumbene Creek confluence to the head.

The whole area formerly constituted the Majors Creek Mining Division.

Alluvial mining

Alluvial gold production (ex. dredging) between 1875-1920 was, according to Registrars Returns, 36 979oz. This was largely derived from Long Flat in the Back Creek Basin, about 3.25km west of Majors Creek township, and from Majors Creek itself, at and below the township.

Gold was discovered in Majors Creek in 1851 and this appears to have been the scene of the first major 'rush' to the area. The principal means of working at first was cradling, giving way to ground sluicing when the richer patches of alluvium were exhausted.

Because of the elevation of the area and its inaccessibility from permanent water courses, working was severely hampered, except at times of good rainfall.

This factor extended the working life of the alluvials, which were of limited extent and only economically workable by ground sluicing. The gold in Majors Creek alluvials had been derived from the numerous, rich reefs of the area.

At Long Flat, auriferous gravels of Tertiary age, stranded in the Back Creek Valley by faulting carry gold apparently shed from the Majors Creek reefs when drainage from the same was to the west.

The ground worked here was up to three metres thick, clayey and generally carrying the best values on the bottom. Values to 12dwt/yd³ were obtained in places, and generally yields over a year's working were better than 1dwt/cu yd, even in old, worked ground.



Araluen Proprietary Company gold dredge, 1900

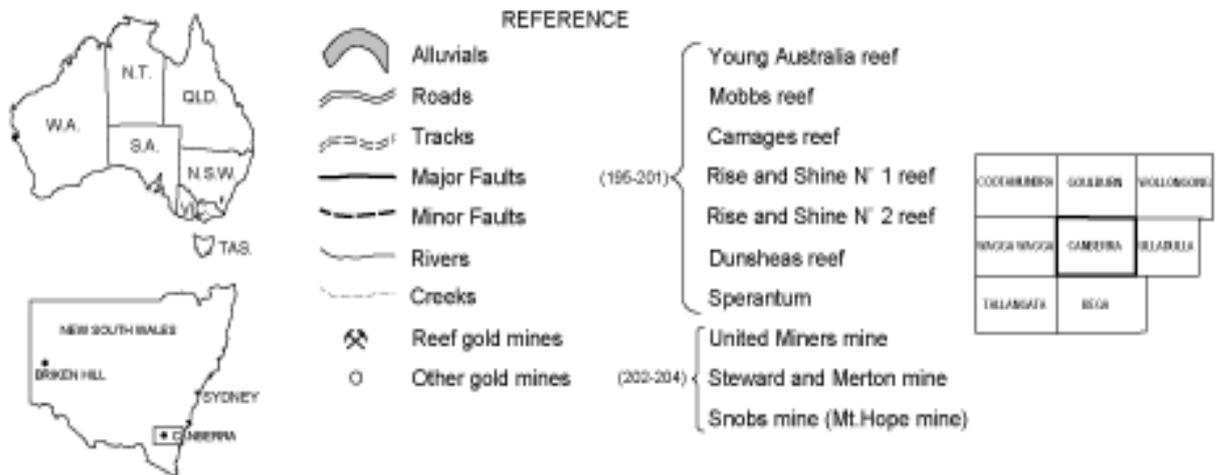
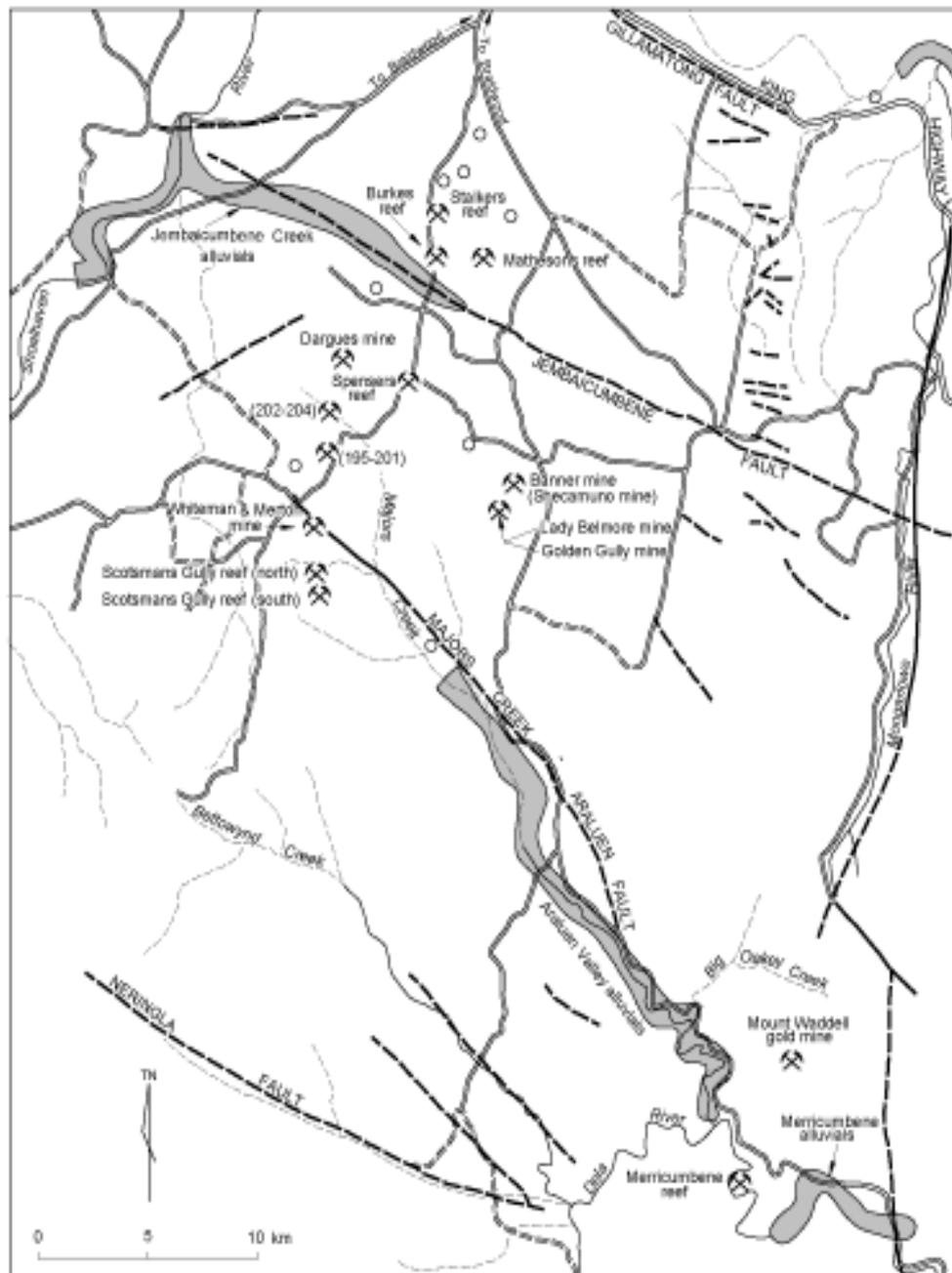


Jembaicumbene Gold Dredging Co. This dredge started operating in 1901. The company ceased operating in 1909 when the dredge was moved to the Shoalhaven River. Altogether, over 9000 oz of gold was recovered.

The alluvials were worked by puddling machines and by ground sluicing when there was sufficient water.

It appears to have been very difficult to obtain sufficient water to treat large yardages and it is possible that areas of unworked ground still remain, as well as worked ground carrying significant values.

Tertiary placers apparently were worked in other parts of the Back Creek Basin, although areas of recent alluvium in the creek are rather small.



SIMPLIFIED MAP OF THE MAJORS CREEK GOLDFIELD

Dredging

Between 1911 and 1916, 1 232oz of gold were recovered from the Majors Creek division by the United States Dredging Syndicate, using a 10 inch centrifugal pump dredge.

The lower operating costs of the small plant enabled the company to make a profit, despite low returns.

Reef mining

Much of the gold mineralisation in the Majors Creek field comprises easterly to northeasterly striking quartz veins, often less than 30cms in width, but quite rich in gold, in a somewhat siliceous harnblende- biotite granodiorite.

Mineralisation in the Majors Creek field shows a well developed zonation, with silver and gold tellurides passing successively into base metal-rich assemblages and lower gold-grade pyrite mineralisation, either laterally or at depth.

Recorded gold production from the reefs of this field totals 26 412 oz.

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Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (February 2007). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information upon which they rely is up to date and to check currency of the information with the appropriate officer of New South Wales Department of Primary Industries or the user's independent adviser.

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