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# NINE MILE CREEK ALLUVIAL WORKINGS

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## Location

NINE MILE CREEK STANLEY, INDIGO SHIRE

## Municipality

INDIGO SHIRE

## Level of significance

Heritage Inventory Site

## Heritage Inventory (HI) Number

H8225-0034

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Inventory

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Hermes Number 10948

Property Number

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## History

Alluvial ground was worked along Nine-Mile Creek from early in the 1850s. The creek yielded coarse gold at Rocky Point and fine gold further down. Box-slucing was the principal mining method used during the 'fifties. By the end of the decade, the ground had been worked over and abandoned several times (as many as six times, in some instances), and parties of miners were beginning to work on a larger scale, by 'a greatly improved method' of ground sluicing. Thomson and party at Hurdle Flat were an example. In 1859, they cut a deep and expensive tail race or sluice from Europa Gully up to their claim, 'nearly the whole way through a reef which crops out between the claim and the gully'. Parts of the tail-race were cut through rock to a depth of 12 feet. Water was supplied to the claim from springs on Hurdle Flat itself. Thomson's was just one of many claims taken up for working in a similar fashion at that time. In addition to the new mode of working (deep tail races), re-working was given impetus by reduced wage levels and new mining regulations which allowed for the granting of larger claims. On Hurdle Flat in mid-1860, 'sluices are in full operation, and a great number of parties are busily engaged re-

working, on improved methods, the bed of the lower Nine Mile Creek'.

The Chinese population of the Nine Mile Division numbered over 1,000 in 1860. The Chinese, at that time, were principally engaged in 'dry sinking', unlike the Europeans who favoured sluicing, in spite of water shortages. Many European claimholders employed Chinese, mainly for throwing out tailings from the end of sluices.

The Ovens Water Co. took up a portion of Nine Mile Creek at Hurdle Flat, in 1860, for the formation of a reservoir, to supply water to sluicers on the lower Nine Mile (the Nine Mile/Stanley area was notoriously dry). Almost 150 men were employed on the works, which involved opening up the Hurdle Flat springs, driving a tunnel, and cutting a race from the mouth of the tunnel to the reservoir. The site of the reservoir was itself sluiced, 'a most remunerative method of getting rid of the soil', and, in the process, two quartz reefs were discovered. In 1864, more than 200 miners were at work on Hurdle Flat, most of them engaged in alluvial mining. Deep tailraces and tunnels were still the order of the day, and claims were being worked with success. From the mid-1860s, alluvial mining at Nine Mile Creek rarely rated a mention in mining records, being steadily overshadowed by the growth of quartz mining. Late in the 19th century, large-scale hydraulic sluicing and sand-pumping operations commenced in the Stanley area, and some of this activity undoubtedly extended along Nine Mile Creek to Hurdle Flat. Small parties were doing well on Nine Mile Creek just before the First World War, and the ground probably received renewed attention during the depression of the 1930s and possibly during the 1950s when Parkinson's Sluicing Co. worked ground in the Stanley vicinity.

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

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