

Buckets of gold

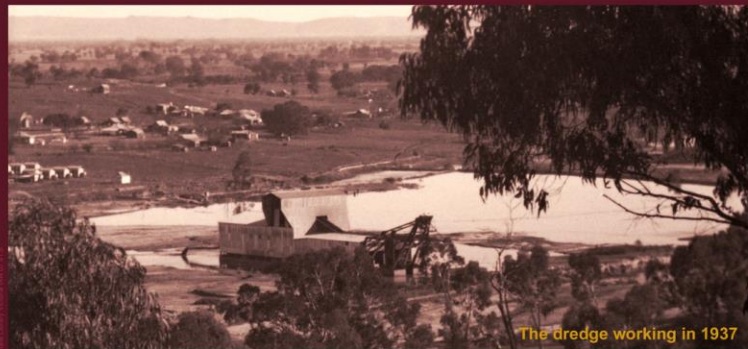
When it was built in 1936, the Eldorado dredge was the biggest in the Southern Hemisphere.



The Argus newspaper compared the huge size of the dredge with Parliament House in Spring Street – it was 100 metres long and nearly 20 metres tall

The Eldorado dredge worked like a slow-moving chain saw, each of the 110 buckets in the chain gouging a third of a cubic metre of earth from the pond – hopefully containing gold. The buckets and booms were operated by 14 electric motors totalling 670 kilowatts.

The massive steel-framed machine was made in Castlemaine by Thompson & Co and assembled on site in 1936. It operated until 1954 by which time it had recovered 2.2 tonnes of gold.



The dredge working in 1937



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