

113. What other rates have you?—The water-consumers' rate.
114. Is it not a fact that that water-consumers' rate gives a profit actually to the borough?
—Yes, a small one.
115. What other rates?—There is a sanitary charge which you could not call a rate.
116. *The Chairman.*] Is there any profit made out of that?—No; it is conducted at a loss.
117. *Mr. Cotter.*] Your general rate is 6d. in the pound: what is the sanitary rate?—You cannot compare it to a rate. It is 4s. 3d. per quarter per house. That is the average.
118. Do you not charge more for large premises?—They have more frequent services, and are charged at the same rate.
119. There is no other charge on the ratepayers?—No.
120. Do you know of any other borough in New Zealand that has such a low rating charged on the inhabitants as the Borough of Waihi?—My knowledge of other boroughs is very limited, but I do not know one.
121. Do you not know of your own knowledge that the whole idea of the formation of the Borough of Waihi was to get for spending there the gold duty produced by the returns from the Waihi Mines?—I tell you I was not in Waihi then. I know nothing about it.
122. You went immediately afterwards, and do you not know that was the idea and intention of those engaged in promoting the borough?—I never had any conversation with the promoters, and I have no knowledge of the matter at all. The borough was an accomplished fact when I got there.
123. *The Chairman.*] Had you any municipal experience before you went there?—None whatever.
124. *Mr. Cotter.*] During the whole period that Waihi has been receiving the gold duty, do you know whether they have ever spent a penny-piece outside their own boundaries except under compulsion?—Yes.
125. What?—Various grants to the Waikino people in the way of grants to the domain and library; also to the Katikati people.
126. For what?—To assist them in their domain.
127. How much to Katikati?—It is hard to remember the balance-sheet.
128. Was the amount worth remembering?—Yes; we will say £25 per year for Katikati, and about the same amount for Waikino.
129. Is it not a fact that a very large proportion of the reduction-work that brings you in the gold duty is carried on at Waikino?—Yes.
130. Is it not a fact that the County Council have to provide for all the requirements of the Waikino Township?—They are the local body concerned.
131. That is, they have no power to rate on the practically big establishment in that Waikino Township?—Meaning the battery—that is correct. I may say on that point that overtures have been made from time to time to get Waikino to join the borough; but they do not seem to care about it.
132. *The Chairman.*] Who made the overtures?—The Waihi Borough Council on two different occasions. There is a party at Waikino who would gladly come in; but the majority decided otherwise. I do not know why, but the county object to it also.
133. *Mr. Cotter.*] Why do you say that? Have you any official knowledge of it?—We asked them to use their influence in the matter, and they said they could not.
134. Do you mean to say you have written a letter?—No. I have not.
135. Did you get a written reply?—Yes.
136. What did the reply say?—I do not remember what it said, but the effect was that they were not agreeable.
137. Will you produce to-morrow the annual balance-sheets of the borough from the time of the incorporation of the borough?—I can produce them now.
138. Do I understand, so far as the gold duty is concerned, or from your own revenue, that you have paid nothing except under compulsion for the maintenance, repairs, or introduction of new roads or tracks, or anything of the kind, in the vicinity of Waihi?—Oh, yes!
139. What?—The Waihi Beach Road.
140. I think the Waihi Beach is a sort of sanatorium used by the inhabitants of Waihi principally?—No; it will be principally used by gold-mines when formed, because it leads primarily to several mines.
141. Do you mean to say you do not know as a fact that thousands of people from Waihi go to that beach every summer?—But not by that road.
142. Is that Waihi Beach Road constructed yet?—It is in course of construction.
143. When did you start that?—It has been hanging fire anyway nine months, awaiting negotiations with the county.
144. Then my question is correct up to nine months ago?—Well, I say we do not spend any money because it would be illegal.
145. How do you construct the Waihi Beach Road then?—Because it has become the subject of an award between the three local bodies—the Ohinemuri, and Tauranga, and Waihi Councils. We have power to do this under the Public Works Act, just as we have to contribute to the upkeep of the Main Road between Waihi and Paeroa. My remark that the expenditure would be illegal does not apply to the contributions to the domains at Katikati and Waikino, because we can contribute to certain objects outside the borough.
146. Can you name the objects?—Yes; that provide for the health and recreation of the people outside the borough.
147. Of your people?—Yes.
148. Then, you have done this because it assists or entertains your burgesses?—Yes.