

234. You take £1,800 roughly as what we might call office-management?—Yes, and administration generally.

235. Can you tell us what the gold duty was last year?—£20,473.

236. It really fell off last year as compared with the year before?—Yes.

237. *The Chairman.*] What was the gold duty?—£1,680.

238. Please give us the figures for the year ending 31st March, 1910?—General rates and subsidy, £1,085; license fees, £107; other sources, £339; abattoirs, £785; gas, £4,184; water, £1,424; sanitary, £1,249. That makes £9,173.

239. The amount of £1,800—does that include bank interest?—No.

240. We have got to add bank interest—how much?—£1,119.

241. *Mr. Cotter.*] Do you keep any check on the monthly returns of the mining companies as against the money got from the Government?—Yes; I can supply those figures.

242. Is the only loan from the Government the £21,000?—Yes.

243. If we add £21,000 to the £23,000, we get the total liabilities of the borough?—Yes.

244. *Mr. Mueller.*] You said that the houses and buildings that have been recently erected in Waihi have been of a smaller character. Have not the houses that have been put up during the last two or three years been of a much more substantial character than those of previous years?—Yes.

245. Was not that to a very great extent on account of the Government lending the money on the Waihi titles under the Government Advances to Settlers and Workers Act?—I think probably it was.

246. Have you any idea of how much money has come into Waihi in the last two or three years in that way?—It is hardly two years since that started.

247. But has it affected the building operations, and to what extent?—I could not say.

248. You have no idea of the total amount of money that has been advanced by the Department?—Not the faintest.

249. A certain amount of money has been advanced by the Government on those titles?—Yes, but it is not being advanced now. It is very spasmodic.

250. Your borough found some difficulty in raising loans from private individuals?—They got a straight-out refusal. We got the waterworks loan prior to the time the bank put us in a hole.

251. What was the alleged reason?—They simply declined; they gave no reason.

252. So that a mining-township title is not looked upon as such a good security as a farming title?—No.

253. I suppose that is because farming is looked upon as more permanent than mining?—Yes.

254. You know that in the South Island they have rating on mining properties instead of the gold duty?—Yes.

255. If that were the case here, instead of your borough getting the gold duty, you would have the right to levy taxes on mining properties. You would then put a value on the mines, their batteries and works, and tax them accordingly?—Not the batteries or machinery—except for a waterworks loan.

256. You would value the mines, less the machinery?—Yes.

257. Provided you had mines within your boundary, you would be able to get a revenue from them before there was any gold produced, if it were a tax on mining property instead of the gold duty?—It is very hard to say what the value of a mine is that is producing no gold. As a matter of theory, of course, there would be something to be raised; but whether it would be material or not, that is another question.

258. If there were rating on mining properties, you would actually be getting your revenue earlier than if it were merely gold duty?—It all depends on circumstances, I think.

259. You get a large revenue just because your borough was formed at the time everything was in full swing?—Yes.

260. If your borough had been in existence as long as the county, you would have had very little gold duty for a long term of years?—Yes.

261. During that time you would have had some revenue from gold-mine rating?—Yes, if the mines were rated, but I cannot say what the extent of it would have been.

262. *Mr. McVeagh.*] I think you prepared a statement showing the contributions of your borough in respect of roads in the Ohinemuri County from 1904 on?—Yes, £24,227. [Exhibit No. 39.]

Waihi Borough Council.—Payments made to the Ohinemuri County Council under Award gazetted 19th March, 1903.

	Financial Adjustment.			Maintenance of Main Road.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Year ending 31st March, 1904	1,780	18	10	8,119	15	11
„ „ 1905	23	3	10	4,472	18	5
„ „ 1906	23	3	10	3,765	8	8
„ „ 1907	23	3	10	1,636	7	9
„ „ 1908	23	3	10	1,833	2	7
„ „ 1909	23	3	10	2,479	17	7
„ „ 1910	23	3	10	535	8	10
	£1,920	1	10	£22,307	9	11
				1,920	1	10
				£24,227	11	9