BOARD OF EXAMINERS

1850 - 1859

VOL. I

1850

Vol. No.	Description	Dates of Vol.	Contents	Date of Meeting	
1	Board of Examiners of Candidates for Government Service	Febr. 1850 - Jan 1859	Minutes of meetings and Letters	Meeting 9 Febr. 1850.	1
				Meeting 29 January 1850	3
				Meeting 12 February 1850	
				Meeting 13 February 1850	
				Meeting 16 February 1850	
				Meeting 19 February 1850	
				Meeting 20 February 1850	
				Meeting 22 February 1850	
				Meeting 23 Febr. 1850	
				Meeting 25 Febr. 1850	
				Meeting 27 Febr. 1850	
				Meeting 26 Febr. 1850	
				Meeting 1 March 1850	
				Meeting 2 March 1850	
				Meeting 4 March 1850	
				Meeting 7 March 1850	

Dates of Vol.	Contents.
Febr. 1850 - Jan 1859	Minutes of Meetings and Letters

Date of Meeting	Page
Meeting 9 Febr. 1850.	1 - 2.
Meeting 29 January 1850	3 - 7
Meeting 12 February 1850	8
Meeting 13 February 1850	9 - 11
Meeting 16 February 1850	12.
Meeting 19 February 1850	13
Meeting 20 February 1850	13
Meeting 22 February 1850	14
Meeting 23 Febr. 1850	15
Meeting 25 Febr. 1850	15
Meeting 27 Febr. 1850	16
Meeting 26 Febr. 1850	17 - 23.
Meeting 1 March 1850	24
Meeting 2 March 1850	24
Meeting 4 March 1850	25
Meeting 7 March 1850	26 - 27

Date of Meeting	Page
Meeting 15 March 1850	28 - 29
Meeting 16 July 1850	30 - 33.
Meeting 24 July 1850	34

52 Letters

24 July 1850 to 31 July 1859

1851

Vol. No	Date.	Page	
1	Letter, for information of His Excellency the Governor, re candidates in Exams. 24 February 1851	38	3 Meetings in 1851
	Report on Candidates Examined. 11 Aug 1851	39-40.	
	Letter of request re Dec. examinations and fees. 11 November 1851	41	
Vol. No 1 1852.	Letter to report on Examinations 14 January 1852.	41-42.	2 Meetings in 1852.
	Letter to Secretary to Government. 19 January 1852.	43.	
Vol. No 1 1853	Report on Examination results to Acting Secretary 9 July 1853.	44	2 Meetings in 1853.
	Report to acting Secretary to Govt. 19 December 1853	45	
Vol. No. 1 1854	Report to Acting Secretary to Government January 1854	46	

Vol. No	Date	Page
1 1854	Report to acting Secretary to Govt.	
	14 February 1854	47
	Correspondence with Acting Secr. to Govt.	
	24 February 1854	48.
	Correspondence with Acting Secretary to Govt.	
	24 Feb 1854	48.

Examination Room
9th February 1850

The Board assembled at 11½ A.M.

Present
Mr Hope Mr Stewart & Dr Innes

Mr Hope laid before the Board a letter of Instructions from the Secretary to Government dated 19th January 1850

Dr Innes submitted to the Board a series of 12 Questions which he proposed the Candidates to be examined upon — which were approved of by the Board

It was decided that every Candidate must be first examined for the 3d Class, after passing which he might, if sent up by the Government be examined for the 2nd Class, and in the same manner for the 1st Class, but that each Examination must be separate and reported on separately.

It was Resolved that after the Examination papers had been decided upon by the Board a red ink number should be attached to each Candidate's

name

name to express the degree of merit belonging to his appearance before the Board - thus a red ink 0 would express - that the Candidate had not passed for the Class examined - a red 3 the lowest degree of merit entitling a Candidate to pass and the numbers rising in proportion to merit thus - 3. 5 & 7 the highest -

At 12 O'Clock the Board proceeded with the Examination of the following Candidates - viz.

1 Anthing . L
2 Auret - W. H.
3 Barclay . R
4 Bergh - O. M.
5 Buyskes - P. J.
6 Moder . J
7 Wolfe - R
8 Wrench - J. A. J

At 3 O'Clock the Examination was adjourned to Tuesday next at 12 O'clock

Appg.
W. Wolfe

To

The Honorable The Auditor General
The Master & The Supreme Court &
The Superintendent General of Education

Colonial Office
Cape Town
29th January 1850

Gentlemen

You are aware that for some time past the attention both of His Excellency the Governor and of Her Majesty's Government has been engaged in devising, under a higher grade of qualification, a more liberal system of remuneration to the Clerks employed in the Public Departments of this Government.

2 - The Regulations which have been adopted for the attainment of this end, are inserted in detail in the Government Notice of the 23rd Instant which was published in the Gazette of the 24th

3 - Among other arrangements it is therein provided that in future upon the nomination of an individual to a Clerkship the person so nominated is to be examined by a Board, consisting of certain Heads of Departments, appointed to ascertain the fitness of the individual for conducting the routine of Clerical duty, which his proposed appointment may require him to discharge.

4

4 - I am now instructed by His Excellency the Governor to state that he has been pleased to constitute you a Board of Examiners for carrying this important Regulation into effect.

5 - In the Government Notice referred to it is proposed that, for the purpose of ascertaining the fitness of the individual whom His Excellency may have nominated for the discharge of mere clerical duty, the examination be limited to a knowledge of the theory and practice of common arithmetic, including vulgar and decimal fractions, and the drafting of abstracts of official documents to test the intelligence of the party, and to show that he is able to write and compose with facility and accuracy in the English language.

6 - If the object of the Government were merely to satisfy itself that the young men thus entering its service are capable of discharging the clerical duties of its respective Departments the course of examination here laid down would undoubtedly be an adequate test. But His Excellency is strongly of opinion that it would be far short of securing what he conceives to be of paramount interest to the Public Service, viz:- a body of well-educated young men prepared to serve in the lowest grade of office, provided a reasonable prospect is held out of

advancement

advancement eventually to places of honor and trust should their qualifications and acquirements, as well as their length of service entitle them to a fair claim to consideration when such become vacant.

7 - Considering at the same time the liberal and comprehensive system of education that has been for some time introduced into the Colony at the public expense and the facility of attaining on the most reasonable terms, instruction both in Classics and the sciences, by means of the first-class schools established in the principal towns and villages His Excellency conceives that the Government is justly entitled to exact higher qualifications even for clerkships, than the mere discharge of clerical duty would require

8 - Holding these views, and at the same time anxious to ensure to this body of Public Officers, by their qualifications as well as length of service, a fair claim to promotion, when such offices as Stipendiary Commissioner, President Magistrate or Clerk of the Peace become vacant, His Excellency desires me to communicate to you the following instructions for your guidance in conducting the examinations for which your Board has been appointed.

9 - All candidates for employment in the Public Service, whom His Excellency may require to qualify before your Board, are to be divided into three classes.

10

10 - The third or lowest class in point of qualification, to consist of those who have qualified exclusively for clerical duty, by showing to the Board a competent knowledge of the theory and practice of the common rules of arithmetic including vulgar and decimal fractions, and of English Grammar and Composition.

11 - The second class to consist of those who, to the qualifications required of the third class, add a creditable knowledge of Geography and History, and some acquaintance with English literature.

12 - The first or highest class in point of qualification, to be formed of those who, in addition to the subjects discussed by those constituting the second and third classes, have also been examined by the Board in Classics, Mathematics and the Elements of Physical Science.

13 - The examinations will be conducted by the Board entirely in writing, and the papers drawn up by the several Candidates, filed in this Office, without correction or amendment, for the purpose of future reference if required.

14 - The Questions and Exercises submitted to the Candidates must be solved by them without reference to Books, or any other means of information. In order to this, their answers must be drawn up in presence of some Member

of the Board, or other confidential individual whom they may appoint, and no questions or copy of questions can be taken from the room during examination, by the Candidate, or any other person.

15. It will be for the Board to assign for each question or exercise a certain amount of time for preparing the answers.

I have the honor to be,
Gentlemen,
Your most obedient and humble servant
(signed) John Montague

A true Copy
Wm. Hope

Tuesday 12th February 1850

The Board assembled at 12 o'clock

Present

Mr Hope and Dr Innes

The Board proceeded with the adjourned examination of the eight Candidates who appeared on the 9th Instant - and also of Mr Dirk Hopeling, who had been ordered by the Government to attend and who took up the examination with the others at the point left off on Saturday last.

The Board adjourned at ½ to 3 o'clock to tomorrow at 11. A.M.

W. Hope

Wednesday 13th February 1850

The Board assembled at 11 A.M.
Present
Mr Bosc: Mr Stewart and Dr Innes

The Board proceeded with the examination of the same nine Candidates.

After the 12 Questions were finished, a Memorial which had been presented to the Governor was dictated to the Candidates who were required to make a Precis of it. A short answer to the prayer of the Memorial was then dictated, which the Candidates were required to put in the form of an official answer.

Before closing the Examination the Candidates were asked if they wished to appear again for a new examination, as some of them did not appear before the commencement to have understood the nature of it. Mr Barclay and Mr Burgher requested a fresh examination. The others wished to abide by the present one.
As Mr Aspeling had only appeared after the others had been examined one whole day he was desired to attend on Friday next to finish with the other Candidates then to be examined

The remainder were informed that the Board would report to Government the result of

the

the examination and that they would receive intimation from Government whether they had passed or not.

The Board resolved to call the attention of the Government to the fact that some of the Candidates did not appear to them to have arrived at the minimum age fixed for admission viz:- 18 and that some appeared to be over the maximum age of 25.

The Board resolved to suggest that the Government should examine all testimonials of character, and certificates of age, and decide if applicants are eligible in these respects to be examined that no testimonials should be sent to the Board who cannot and ought not to be influenced by them, but must decide upon the examination alone - and that a open nominal list of Candidates for examination should be forwarded to the Board.

The Board resolved that the attention of Government be directed to the disadvantage young men of 16 or 17 labour under in being examined with those of 22 or 23 years besides that the examination papers are prepared for young men of 18 at least -

The

The Board adjourned to Friday the 15th
at 12 o. Clock

W. Hope

Friday 15th February 1850

The Board assembled at 12 noon.

Present.

Wm Hope. Mr Stuart & Dr Simes

Dr Simes submitted 12 new questions as
Examination papers which were approved
of - and the Board proceeded to examine
the following Gentlemen

1 - Mr Barclay
2 - Mr Hopkins } who requested a second examination
3 - Mr Aspeling - who has been partly examined with the first Candidates
4 - Mr Clark - for the first time

Mr Aspeling finished four new questions of today - which completed his examination -

The other Candidates finished 12 Questions when they were dismissed and desired to attend tomorrow at 11 A.M. for the purpose of being examined in writing and Composition

The

The Board adjourned till tomorrow at 11 A. M.

Wm Hope

Saturday 16th February 1850

The Board assembled at 11 A.M. and proceeded with the examination

Present

Mr Hope. Mr Stuart & Dr Innes

Mr Clock. Mr Barclay and Mr Burgess appeared before the Board and were examined in English Composition and writing in four additional Questions

These having been completed the Board adjourned to Tuesday next the 19th Instant at 12 o. clock.

Wm Hope

Tuesday 19th February 1850

The Board assembled at 12 o'clock

Present

Mr Hope. Mr Stuart. & Dr Innes

The Board proceeded to examine the different papers of the several Candidates

The Board adjourned at ½ to 3 o'clock

Wm Hope

Wednesday 20th February 1850

The Board assembled at 11 A.M.

Present

All the Members

The Board continued and finished the examination of the Papers. and agreed upon the nature of their Report which Dr Innes was requested to draw up.

The Board adjourned at 2½ P.M.

Wm Hope

22nd February 1850

The Board assembled at 11 A. M.

Present

Wm Hope Wm Stewart & Dr Sinnes.

Dr Sinnes laid on the table papers to be proposed for the examination of to-day - which were approved of -

The following candidates presented themselves for examination viz:

Edward Irving
J. Fountain &
A Rous

Upon the Questions being given out to these candidates Mr Rous begged to decline the Examination as he did not feel himself qualified

The Board adjourned at 4 P. M. till tomorrow at 11 O. Clock.

Wm Hope

23d February 1850

The Board met at 11. A. M.

Present.
Mr Hope. Mr Stewart & D. Jones

The Board continued the examination of Mr. Irving and Mr Fountain in Composition

The Board adjourned at 3½ O. Clock

W. Hope

25th February 1850

The Board assembled at 2 O. Clock

Present
Mr Hope and D. Jones.

The Board examined the papers of Messrs. Irving and Fountain and wrote a draft of their Report.

The Board adjourned at 4 O. Clock

W. Hope

24th February 1860

The Board assembled at 11 A.M.

Present - All the members

The Board finished and signed their Report to Government and decided upon a certain Notice to be inserted in the Gazette relative to future examinations.

W. Hope

Report-

Report.

The Honble
The Secretary to
Government

Council Chamber
26th February 1850

Aspeling of George
Auret of Cape Town
Aubting do
Bergh Stellenbosch
Mader do
Wolfe Wynberg
Wrensch Rondebosch

Sir
We have the honor to report that on the 9th instant we placed before the Candidates for employment in the Public Service noted in the Margin the examination paper which forms Appendix A to this Report.

Before the candidates proceeded to the Solution of the Exercises we were careful to explain to them any term that might appear ambiguous or of unusual occurrence and during the three days occupied by the Candidates in discussing the Paper we afforded every information which did not suggest the method of solving, or process by which the method being known, the solution might be effected.

The Papers marked B. are those sent in by the

the several Candidates, as their answers to the exercises contained in the Papers. X On these Papers are noted in pencil the remarks of a member of the Board to whom was entrusted the personal inspection of every answer in regard to the method of solution adopted by the Candidate, the accuracy of his calculations, and the neatness and intelligence with which it has been effected.

After the personal inspection of the several Papers, the Board proceeded to determine the comparative merits of the Candidates, and their fitness for entering the Public Service as Clerks of the third Class.

In order to arrive at such a determination on clear and impartial grounds, the Board adopted the plan of

dividing

deciding on every occasion
determinately by means of
a system of Arbitrary, or
Conventional Numbers,
which would enable them
to indicate with precision,
either merit, or demerit, in
regard to the method of
solution, the accuracy of
the result, or the correctness
evinced in handling the
details of the solution.

This being done an average
was taken of the numbers
thus affixed to the several
specimens, and the comparative
merit and standing of the
several candidates thereby
determined.

The arbitrary numbers
employed in this process
ranged between 0 & 4:-
And the result of the
averages was disposed of
as follows:-

Any average lying between
1 and 2 but nearer to 2
than either of these numbers
was marked 2. This number
the Board regarded as
indicating the lowest
point in the scale at
which the Candidate could

be

be considered qualified
to enter the Service.
2d. In like manner
all answers between
3 & 7 than 3 or 7
were marked 5 – a number
which entitles the
Candidate to be considered
as having passed the
Board with credit.
3 Any answer entitled
by the same mode of
Procedure to the number
5 would mark the
Candidate as having
passed his Examination
with the highest degree
of merit.
Applying the above-
described powers to the
Papers sent in by the
Candidates referred to
in the margin, the
Board has come to
the following decision
1st The Candidate Appleby
passed examination
with credit and had
assigned to his name
the number 5
2d. The Candidate

Arithmetic and Pugh passed in the lowest grade of qualification and received the number 3

3rd The candidates Auret Brader Wolfe & Wendt, not being entitled even to this number by their respective averages, were rejected.

Barclay	Cape Town
Buyskes	D°
Cloete	Stellenbosch

On the 15th Instant the Board laid before the Candidates named in the margin the examination Paper which forms Appendix C to this Report. The Papers marked D contain the replies of the respective Candidates after being subjected to the same process as those already referred to.

The following is the result arrived at by the Board.

The Candidate Barclay passed with credit and received the number 5

Buyskes received 3 but barely passed examination, being the worst in qualification of any that the Board have yet passed

The

The Candidate Clocks was rejected.

On the 22d Instant the Board held a third examination when the Paper marked E was laid before the Candidates named in the margin.

Fountain Cape Town
Irving — Do —
Rous — Do —

Upon an inspection of the Paper by the Candidates Mr Rous declined to enter ~~the~~ on examination, as he did not find himself competent to discuss its contents. The Papers marked F are the answers given by the other two candidates. The result of the Board's decision upon these papers was the passing of Mr Irving with credit having the number 3 affixed to his name and the rejection of Mr Fountain.

The Board have now to place before the Government the names of

the

the names of the success-
ful Candidates in the
order of merit in which
they passed Examination

5 Mr Uppleby George
5 Mr Barclay Cape Town
3 Mr Irving Do
3 Mr Antting Do
3 Mr Bergh Stellenbosch
3 Mr Buyskes Cape Town

We have the honor to be
Sir
Your obedt servants

(Sgd) Wm Hope
J. Clement
J Rose Innes