

选民名册的信息

新加坡人口在 1871 年还不到 10 万人，但到了 1921 年却增长到超出 40 万人。

由于这时期的人口剧增，为更好地管理市镇卫生，殖民地政府屡屡修改法案，陆续增加新加坡本市的自治治理权。1856 年市政法令设置了地方专委 (Municipal Commission)。这个时段的地方专委选举举行到 1912 年后终止。原因之一就是经过检讨，一般市民对它毫无兴趣，每年出来投票的选民很少。市政会议辩论时更有不受薪的专委指出，每回选举前整理出来的选民名册根本难求完整与准确，工作耗时费力。

曾祖楊本铭的名字 1887 年第一次出现在选民名册里，一直到 1912 年。

Name of Voter.	Place of Abode.	Nature of Qualification.	Description of Qualifying Property.
Yap Ho Jan	33 Market Street	Occupation	33 Market Street
" Kai Chye	76 Cecil Street	"	76 Cecil Street
" Kiam Seng	19 Phillip Street	"	19 Phillip Street
" Kiu Wah	26-14 Orchard Rd.	"	26-14 Orchard Road
" Leong Hin	37 Pekin Street	"	37 Pekin Street
" Leong Seng	34 Church Street	"	34 Church Street
" Lian Sam	59 Church Street	"	59 Church Street
" Soon Guan	18 Synagogue St.	Payment of Rates	18 Synagogue Street
" Yew Teck	172 Armenian St.	Occupation	172 Armenian Street
Yeo Koh Seng	59 Church Street	"	59 Church Street
" Lee Seng	24 Pekin Street	"	24 Pekin Street
" Lian	9 Church Street	"	9 Church Street
" Leong Seng	13 Church Street	"	13 Church Street
" Quee Hoon	1 Cross Street	"	1 Cross Street
" Seng	51 Pekin Street	"	51 Pekin Street
Yee Hup	1 Pekin Street	"	1 Pekin Street
Yeo Ah Chew	128 New Bridge Rd.	"	128 New Bridge Road
" Ah Leng	19 Omar Road	"	19 Omar Road
" Ah Leng	4 Havelock Road	Payment of Rates	4 Havelock Street
" Bun Keng	10 Alagar Street	Payment of Rates	10 Alagar Street
" Boon Watt	26 Angkor Street	Payment of Rates	26 Angkor Street
" Chia Bok	50 China Street	Occupation	50 China Street
" Cheng Hai	128 Cecil Street	Payment of Rates	128 Cecil Street
" Chin Sang	4 Coleman Street	Occupation	4 Coleman Street
" Chiu Mah	27 Synagogue Street	"	27 Synagogue Street
" Choo Lan	5 St. Gregory Place	"	5 St. Gregory Place
" Hock Hoe	5 Tong What Road	Payment of Rates	5 Tong What Road
" Hock Joo	23-3 Coleman Street	Occupation	23-3 Coleman Street
" Kwah Hee	13 South Bridge Rd.	Payment of Rates	13 South Bridge Road
" Keng Chuan	13 Upr. Nankin St.	"	13 Upr. Nankin Street
" Kiu Eng	30 Upr. Chinchow St.	"	30 Upr. Chinchow Street
" Leong Chuan	21 Niven Road	Occupation	21 Niven Road
" Liang Watt	83 Circular Road	"	83 Circular Road
" Lock It	"	Payment of Rates	"
" Peng	18 Boat Quay	Occupation	18 Boat Quay
" Peng Ho	50 Circular Road	"	50 Circular Road
" Phang	18 Boat Quay	Payment of Rates	18 Boat Quay
" Poon Meah	18 Boat Quay	"	18 Boat Quay
" Poon Seng	2 Stanley Street	"	2 Stanley Street
" Say Chye	32-4 Killiney Road	Occupation	32-4 Killiney Road
" See Long	35 Circular Road	Payment of Rates	35 Circular Road
" Soo Tiam	31 Kling Street	"	31 Kling Street
" Soon	6 Phillip Street	Occupation	6 Phillip Street
" Suee Keong	"	Payment of Rates	"
" Yam Chew	107 Boat Quay	Occupation	107 Boat Quay
" Yam Seng	31 Upr. Circular Rd.	"	31 Upr. Circular Road
Yeoh Yeow	107 New Edge Rd.	"	107 New Edge Road
Yeong Ah Yew	28 Chinchow Street	"	28 Chinchow Street
" Bun Cheng	20 St. Canal Road	"	20 St. Canal Road
" Yew Nam	"	Payment of Rates	"
Yeow Hong Yeow	44-7 Upr. Cross St.	"	44-7 Upr. Cross Street
Young David	6 Leonie Hill	It. Payment of Rates	6 Leonie Hill
Young J. B.	20-A Tanjong	Joint P. of Rates	20-A Tanjong
Young R. H.	0 River Valley Road	Occupation	0 River Valley Road

就参阅到的十五年 (1887-1912) 的选民名册中，在只是比较关注的几个人名里，真的存在着不少疑问。名册中每个合格选民都有个居住地址，和资格要求还过税的产业住址。1905 年开始到 1912 年，就有出现在中央选区的 Yeo Poon Meah，其居住地址就跟每年出现在丹戎巴葛选区的 Yeo Poon Miah 同样是 18 Boat Quay。Yeo Poon Miah，Yeo Poon Meah，加上 Arnold Wright 书中的 Yeo Poon Myah，从穿串于其中同样的恒茂号、集茂号等商号看起来，这些名字应该都是楊本铭的英文名字的拼音。同样地在选民名册中，楊清海也以两个英文名字出现：Yeo Cheng Hai，和 Yeo Cheng Hye。此外，名人宋旺相岳父楊本盛 Yeo Poon Seng，在不下四个选区都有同样的房产资料，却是断断续续出现的-这表示楊本盛没有每年准时交税吗？

然而，还好有这十五年 (1887-1912) 的选民名册，才肯定了曾祖楊本铭在新加坡的行踪，加上前述【见《从“行”单说起》】的“行”单

(Hang list, 1879)，主要商号名列 (Principal Firms, 1886, 1887)-- 恒茂号、楊恒茂号，反映着的商业活动，还有铭刻在 1879 年恒山亭、1887 年崇文阁、1896 年萃英书院的捐献记录等等意味着的人脉网络，多少奠定了日后祖父楊昭固和合伙人楊清海的楊集茂的生意基础，也让父亲楊章煌在 1930 年代疾苦贫困的家乡霞阳，思索如何筹谋家庭生计时，提供了可以寄望的前景，从而选择离乡南渡，以后落地生根新加坡，养育了我们这些子女。

之前，我们姐妹一直以为我们是很单纯的第二代移民。

LIST OF PRINCIPAL CHINESE FIRMS IN SINGAPORE. 1421

NAME OF FIRM.	ADDRESS.	Trade in which engaged.
Seng Watt & Co. ...	South Bridge Rd.	Silk Merchants
Seng Lee Guan ...	Boat Quay ...	Merchant
Soh Hong Chuan ...	Robinson Road ...	"
Song Kee Chuan & Co. ...	Market St. ...	Ship Chandlers
Song Nee Koh ...	Market St. ...	Merchant
Soon Ho Tye ...	Cross Street ...	"
Soon Guan Chan ...	Canal Road ...	"
Swee Cheng & Co. ...	Market St. ...	Ship Chandlers
Tan Kim Tian & Son ...	Princes St. ...	Merchants & Steam-ship Owners
Tan Lee Kee ...	South Canal Rd. ...	Ship Chandler
Tan Choe ...	" ...	"
Tan Tye & Co. ...	Beach Road ...	Timber Merchants
Tian Yean ...	South Bridge Rd. ...	Merchant
Tiang Seng ...	Canal Road ...	Crockery Dealer
Tiang Bee ...	Market St. ...	Merchant
Teng Seng Guan ...	Teluk Ayer St. ...	"
Tong Teck ...	Market St. ...	"
Tong Sang ...	South Bridge Rd. ...	"
Ung Say Beng ...	Sunni Goojoo ...	Sago Manufacturer
Wee Bin & Co. ...	Market St. ...	Merchants, Sago Manufacturers and Steam-ship Owners
Wee Teng Cheow & Co. ...	High St. ...	Sago Manufacturers
Yeap Eng Teong & Co. ...	Teluk Ayer St. ...	Merchants
Yeo Seng Chong & Co. ...	Boat Quay ...	"
Yeo Heng Moh & Co. ...	Synagogue St. ...	"
Yeo Tian Lye & Co. ...	Malacca St. ...	"
Yeo Tian Watt ...	Kling St. ...	Pearl Dealer
Yiap Heng Moh ...	Teluk Ayer ...	Merchant
Yiap Pye & Co. ...	Market St. ...	Merchants
Yiap Choo Puan & Co. ...	Teluk Ayer ...	"

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NAME OF FIRM.	ADDRESS.	Trade in which engaged.
Siang Hup ...	Market St. ...	Merchant
Sin Eng Tai ...	Phillip St. ...	Tim Dealer
Sin Tye Chan ...	Cecil St. ...	Cigar Dealer
Seng Watt & Co. ...	South Bridge Rd. ...	Silk Merchants
Seng Lee Guan ...	Boat Quay ...	Merchant
Soh Hong Chuan ...	Robinson Road ...	"
Song Kee Chuan & Co. ...	Market St. ...	Ship Chandlers
Song Nee Koh ...	Market St. ...	Merchant
Soon Ho Tye ...	Cross Street ...	"
Soon Guan Chan ...	Canal Road ...	"
Swee Cheng & Co. ...	Market St. ...	Ship Chandlers
Tan Kim Tian & Son ...	Princes St. ...	Merchants & Steam-ship Owners
Tan Lee Kee ...	South Canal Rd. ...	Ship Chandler
Tan Choe ...	" ...	"
Tan Tye & Co. ...	Beach Road ...	Timber Merchants
Tian Yean ...	South Bridge Rd. ...	Merchant
Tiang Bee ...	Market St. ...	Ship Chandler
Teng Seng Guan ...	Teluk Ayer St. ...	Merchant
Tong Teak ...	Market St. ...	"
Tong Sang ...	South Bridge Rd. ...	"
Ung Say Beng ...	Sunni Goojoo ...	Sago Manufacturer
Wee Bin & Co. ...	Market St. ...	Merchants, Sago Manufacturers, Steam-ship Owners & Bankers
Wee Kim Yam ...	Teluk Ayer St. ...	Merchant
Yeap Eng Teong & Co. ...	Teluk Ayer St. ...	Merchants
Yeo Seng Chong & Co. ...	Boat Quay ...	"
Yeo Tian Lye & Co. ...	Malacca St. ...	Merchants
Yeo Chip Moh ...	Synagogue St. ...	Rice Merchant
Yeo Tian Watt ...	Kling St. ...	Pearl Dealer
Yiap Heng Moh ...	Teluk Ayer ...	Merchant
Yiap Pye & Co. ...	Market St. ...	Merchants

Singapore and Straits Directory 1899

The population in Singapore grew from under 100,000 in 1871 to over 400,000 in 1921.

Due to this rapid rise in population before the turn into the 20th century, the Straits government saw the need to control the spread of diseases and improve the public health. As such, the municipality was granted increasingly higher autonomy to manage the local problems. 1856 started the appointment of Municipal Commissioners. Later locals were invited to elect some of these commissioners. This Municipal Commissioners' election was brought to a stop after 1912. Reviews had indicated a consistently low turnout - indicating that locals were simply not interested in voting. It was also too difficult to ensure that eligible voters' lists were too hard to keep complete or accurate before the election day, hence rendering the effort largely wasted.

Our great-grandfather Yeo Poon Miah's name first appeared in 1887 in the electoral rolls until 1912.

There were several dubious issues arising from the fifteen years (1887-1912) of entries in the voters' lists. Every entry consists of a name, a residential address and an address of the qualifying property, for which the qualified voters had either paid the rates or was an occupier. From 1905 to 1912, the name Yeo Poon Meah appeared in the Central constituency and was listed with a residential address, 18 Boat Quay. This turned out to be the same residential address under which Yeo Poon Miah in the Tanjong Pagar constituency was listed. Judging from their similar connections to Heng Moh, Chip Moh and the rests, Yeo Poon Miah, Yeo Poon Meah and Yeo Poon Myah (mentioned in Arnold Wright's book), are believed to be the different English names of our great-grandfather. Similarly, Yeo Cheng Hai was found to have a different spelling on the voters' list: Yeo Cheng Hye. Yeo Poon Seng, the father-in-law of the renowned Song Ong Siang, owned properties in no less than four

out of the five constituencies, yet had their addresses listed on and off over the years. Does that mean that Yeo Poon Seng did not pay his taxes on time every year?

Despite the inconsistencies, we are fortunate enough to have access to these 15 years of voters' lists, which confirmed that Yeo Poon Miah had indeed been in Singapore during this period of time. Furthermore, the various donations by him or his business partner, viz., to Hengshan Pavilion in 1879, Chongwen Pavilion in 1887, and Cui Eng Free School in 1896, were evidence of his entrepreneurial activities. All these information revealed that what he had built in those years - the network and the goodwills - must have inspired our father, Yeo Kheamp Joo, in the 1930's, to choose Singapore as the most promising place to raise his family instead of the poverty-stricken hometown of Xiayang.

Indeed, before these discoveries, we sisters thought we were just the second-generation Singaporeans, as straight and simple as many of our peers.

References:

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