

# Rencana-Rencana/Articles

## Biographical Sketches in Local English Papers

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**Abstrak:** *Kajian biografi tidak menjadi suatu ciri yang biasa dalam pengajian sejarah Malaysia. Oleh itu untuk mengatasi masalah kekurangan data, perhatian ditumpukan kepada kegunaan bahan dalam bentuk sketsa biografi yang sering dikeluarkan di akhbar Bahasa Inggeris tempatan, terutama sekali akhbar sebelum Perang Dunia Kedua. Sepuluh contoh biografi diberi di sini. Para tokoh dipilih dari segenap lapisan masyarakat Malaysia. Dari segi bidang mereka ini terdiri dari berbagai kedudukan. Melalui kareer individu-individu, para penyelidik sejarah boleh memperoleh perspektif yang lebih tepat bagi masa lampau.*

**Abstract:** *Because biographical studies are not a common feature of Malaysian historiography, there is a need to supplement the lack of such data by a greater use of material in the form of biographical sketches which frequently appeared in the local English newspapers, especially before World War II. Ten examples of such biographical sketches are given here. The personalities selected derived from a cross-section of the Malaysian society and, occupationally, stemmed from various walks of life. Often it is through the careers of individuals that the student of history is able to obtain a better perspective of the past.*

Biographical studies are, comparatively, an uncommon aspect of Malaysian historiography. The few that exist, however, do deal with both Europeans and local personalities. In the case of Europeans, attention, until more recently, was focused on primarily the administrators, including persons such as Stamford Raffles and James Brooke. Those who belonged to the commercial sector have hardly been studied, whether pioneers of the rubber industry (such as E.V. Carey of Carey Island fame) or leaders of the tin mining industry (such as F.D. Osborne of Osborne & Chappel, a well-known company based in the Kinta District). Studies on non-European personalities have been even fewer except in the case of graduation exercises/theses, many of which have yet to be published.

But, after having said all that, it is important to mention that some useful contributions have been made by a few persons, largely resident in Singapore, who produced, within a space of about a decade, three tomes giving invaluable biographical sketches of prominent Malayan (in fact, mostly Singaporean) personalities. The first of these, *Twentieth Century Impressions of British Malaya* (edited by Arnold Wright and H.A. Cartwright) -- is so comprehensive that almost all those who mattered, among members of the official and business communities in Malaya, found

a niche in the book. But, since the book was published in the early part of the 20th century, the subsequent years have hitherto been neglected except for the Singapore scenario, up to about 1919, which is covered in Song Ong Siang's *One Hundred Years of the Chinese in Singapore* and *One Hundred Years of Singapore* (editors: Walter Makepeace, Dr. Gilbert E. Brooke, and Roland St. J. Braddell).

In more recent years there has been a tendency in Malaysian historiography, firstly, to ignore individuals and to concentrate on class formation, and, secondly, to elevate the common people (workers in particular) to greater prominence instead of the elite groups. But a proper understanding of any society requires, indeed, a more balanced perception of the total society.

Major changes occurred in Peninsular Malaysia beginning from about the turn of the 19th century. Commercial development marked the beginning of this process of change. Mining and commercial agriculture followed. There was massive immigration as a result, followed by the establishment of British administration which led to even greater economic development, transforming radically the landscape of the country. The society became very complex by the beginning of the 20th century.

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What happened in the 19th century is now, generally, well-known. But the history of the 20th century, especially the years 1900-1945, remains relatively vague. The broad pattern of development may not be *terra incognita*, but, for those who live in Malaysia, a much more intimate view of the past is necessary if only because the present generation is descended from those who played pioneering roles in the development of the country. And there is also the need to understand cultural contact, accommodation as well as conflict, the very ingredients of which the Malaysian society is composed.

Each little area has its own, perhaps rather parochial, perception of the past. Unfortunately, even this is becoming more vague with the passage of time. But each settlement developed with the help of those who were more enterprising, sometimes simply more fortunate, than others. Successful businessmen, in general, were, however, more than just employers; so often they were also philanthropists; in particular, they kept the local schools (especially the non-Government-assisted ones) going. They invested in property and helped the towns to grow. But because there have been so few studies of the history of towns, students of Malaysian history have been little exposed to the history of entrepreneurs.

There were other personalities too, some accredited leaders of the local community: they sat in the local or state or federal councils; many of these were Justices of the Peace. Some were informal leaders (of a particular group or class); others played important roles within guilds and associations. Most of them normally donated liberally towards charity.

Those who served in the local councils (called sanitary boards in the Malay states before World War II) occasionally had their names commemorated: roads were named after them. But, with the history books silent on these persons, they were soon forgotten. In recent years, many of these names have been removed and replaced with, in some instances, the names of politicians. To some extent then the past has been obliterated.

Malaysian history, like the history of any other society, can be looked at in roughly two ways. One can take a bird's eye-view in which case one merely sees the broad outline or general pattern. For outsiders this is perhaps the more convenient approach. But for those who would like to have a deeper understanding of a society, there is a need to adopt a different approach, namely, to try to look at it 'with a

magnifying glass' in order that its peculiarities and uniqueness will become more evident. Biographical studies are extremely useful in this respect.

There are, of course, practical difficulties. In a society where major biographical studies are not that common for various reasons, among which is the unwillingness of the personality himself or his descendants to *expose* his private life to public scrutiny, perhaps part of this shortcoming can be overcome by falling back on information which is already available publicly. Malaysian historiography is somewhat fortunate in that, in the past, the local English newspapers offered very useful biographical sketches of various personalities. Such data are usually brief but they still enable the student of history to obtain a perspective which would otherwise be wanting if the information was totally unavailable.

Below are ten examples (arranged in alphabetical order) of such biographical sketches, all culled from past newspapers. The samples have not been chosen at random. For one thing, the subjects chosen represent a cross-section of the society: businessmen, community leaders, members of various official bodies as well as one Malay ruler. They derived from various ethnic groups; some of them were born overseas. All of them have an important bearing on Malaysian historiography in the sense that, through these biographical sketches, it is possible to understand a little more of the uniqueness of Malaysian history and society.

All of them are practically unknown in Malaysian historiography. But some of them, such as Goh Hock Huat and Yong Pak Kook were pioneers in certain fields. Others such as Capt. N.M. Hashim and S.M. Zainal Abidin are examples of the 'modern Malay' whose contribution to the upliftment and education of Malay society deserves to be better known in view of the tendency, in Malaysian historiography, hitherto, to highlight only the political activists. L.A. Chitty and S.D. Scully represent two of the more colourful groups of Malaysian society: the Melaka *chitty* (the Indian version of the Melaka *baba*) and the Eurasians. Sultan Badlishah (brother of Malaysia's first Prime Minister, Tunku Abdul Rahman) too had a unique career in that he had actually served in the Thai administration in his youth and was subsequently considered a financial officer of no mean repute. H.H. Abdool Cader (Sir) and R.E. Mohamed Kassim were two Indian Muslims whose careers help to provide a perspective of the extensive involvement of members of their community (though a distinct minority) in both public



and professional/commercial life. Dato Lee Kong Lam belonged to the second generation of Chinese leaders in Kuala Lumpur hitherto given scant attention in local history because succeeding generations of historians have continued to focus on the first generation, namely, Yap Ah Loy, Yap Ah Shak and Yap Kwan Seng.

Finally, it is important to note merely that these ten names are among at least a couple of hundred (some, of course, only very briefly) which are available in the English newspapers of earlier years. There was a time when they 'were giants' in the eyes of their own communities. Certainly it would be very difficult to study Malaysian history in any depth without a knowledge of the roles played by these personalities in various aspects of Malaysian life.

## Biographical Sketches

### H.H. Abdool Cader (Sir, after World War II)

... Husein Hasanally Abdool Cader -- to give his full name -- was born on September 1, 1890, in the historic town of Surat -- the first English settlement in India and at one time the seat of a Presidency of the East India Company, which in time developed into the Presidency of Bombay and of the British Empire in India. He is the eldest son of Mr. Hasanally Abdool Cader, a Justice of the Peace of the Settlement of Penang, a prominent businessman and leader of the Bombay Mohammedan community in, and for several years a resident of, that island. He has, besides the subject of this article, another son, and five daughters. It will be gratifying to know that the new Indian member [of the Straits Legislative Council] received his early scholastic training locally -- in the Raffles School, Singapore, and in the Penang Free School. In May, 1905, he proceeded to England for higher education, joining the County High School in Ilford. Having an aptitude for the law, Mr. Abdool Cader, after his matriculation in 1908, joined Lincoln's Inn, London, and Christ's College, Cambridge University. He took up the Law Tripos, and in 1912, he was called to the Bar. It is interesting to note that on March 11 of the same year, he had the honour of being presented to His Majesty King George V. Whilst in England, Mr. Abdool Cader was a member of the National Indian Association, London -- an organisation in whose activities he took a great interest. April, 1912, saw him back in Penang and in November of that year, he was admitted to the Straits Settlements Bar; in 1915 he was admitted to the F.M.S. bar, so that

he is an advocate and solicitor of the Supreme Courts in the Straits and States. Professionally, he commands an extensive practice in Penang and in the Province. Socially, he is well-known in the northern settlement: he is the President of the United Indian Association, Penang. A man of versatile attainments having travelled extensively on the Continent and in India, holding a certificate for French from that distinguished body, the Royal Society of Arts, London, a keen tennis player and at one time an ardent soccerite, while rowing forms yet another hobby of his -- his appointment to the Colony's Legislature ... is a stroke of wise statesmanship. [*The Malaya Tribune*, 24 July, 1928]

### Sultan Badlishah

H.H. Tunku Badlishah, K.B.E., C.M.G. was made K.C.M.G. in the New Year Honours. He was 53 on July 29, 1947 [official birthday]. The seventh son of Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah, he was born at Alor Star on 10th Ramadhan (March 17, 1894).

He received his early education at the Jalan Bahru Vernacular School, Alor Star. At a very tender age he was adopted by H.M. King Rama VI (then Crown Prince) and proceeded to Bangkok where he entered the King's College.

He soon made a name for himself in the field of sports and played as the right wing in the College Soccer XI.

After having completed his studies in Siam, he was sent to England (in 1912) at the King's own expense. He later entered Wadham College, Oxford (in 1916) and took an active part in sports, particularly tennis.

He also spent a few years in France and on returning to Siam was posted to the Privy Purse Department. In a short time he had won several decorations including the title of Phra Srirurindra-vigengs.

He married Tengku Sepiah a daughter of H.H. the late Tunku Mahmud K.B.E., C.M.G., in 1924 in Alor Star.

In 1926 at the request of his father he was allowed to return to Kedah where he took up the appointment of State Treasurer, Kedah, on December 23, 1936.



On March 10, 1934, his wife who, travelling with him, was killed in a motor accident.

On March 7, 1935, on the demise of his brother Tunku Mohamed, he succeeded to the title of Raja Muda ... and in the same year was married to H.H. Tunku Asma, a daughter of H.H. the late Sultan Sulaiman of Trengganu.

In 1936, he was made C.M.G. On November 5, 1937, Tunku Mahmud K.B.E., C.M.G., Regent of Kedah, died and he was proclaimed Regent. He was made a K.B.E. on July 11, 1941.

On the demise of Sultan Abdul Hamid Halim Shah on May 13, 1943, he succeeded to the throne on May 15, 1943.

It has been said of him that 'his greatest asset as a ruler is his understanding'. To this must be added his proved ability as an administrator and high sense of duty. A man with profound religious leanings he has the confidence, love and reverence of his people. [*Times of Malaya*, 1 January 1948]

#### L.A. Chitty

He is a Trustee of the Hindu Temple, the Vice-President of the Malacca Indian Club and the Honorary Treasurer of the Straits Settlements (Malacca) Association. He was born in Malacca in 1878.

His father was B.L. Chitty who came of an old Malacca Indian family known as 'Tamby Nagura'. L.A. received his education at the High School [Melaka] and leaving school began his career in the legal firm of Messrs. S.R. Groom & Co.; in 1894, he was transferred to another legal firm in Singapore known as Messrs. C.R. Hoffmeister. He severed his connections with this firm and joined a mercantile firm in Singapore known as Messrs. Ann Bee & Co. Leaving this firm, he returned to Malacca and joined the staff of the Malacca Municipality as a clerk in 1897. Having worked for two years, he left to serve the Education Department as a teacher in the Central School, Singapore. He returned to Malacca once more in 1902 and became a Bailiff in the Supreme Court, Malacca. After serving ten years in this capacity he finally said goodbye to subordinate duties when he started on his own business as an Auctioneer and Appraiser. He successfully managed this business until 1928 when it was merged into Messrs. Ching Keng Lee & Co. Ltd. of which he is the Managing Director in Malacca.

The subject of Indian representation in the Municipal Commission engaged the attention of Malacca Indians since a few years ago.

L.A. Chitty's ancestors arrived in Malacca several decades ago. [*Malacca Guardian*, 11 July, 1932]

#### Goh Hock Huat

The most successful men unfortunately do not reveal the secret of their success; and if we do not reject criticisms on paintings from men who themselves have never handled a brush, nor refused to follow directions of a guide-post though it has never hopped off upon its one leg and travelled the road it indicates, the writer offers the exemplary career of Mr. Goh Hock Huat as ample guidance to the aspiring and observing youth along his road to the goal of his wishes.

[Born in 1884], deprived of his parents a few years after his birth in Penang ... the little orphan, Goh Hock Huat, was placed as a boarder under the care of the Christian Brothers at that great Institution, the St. Xavier's, where his record was rather one of a dreamer dreaming day dreams than a scholar wit -- a flair for learning.

One of his admirable qualities was the record of excellent conduct in school, and he was so liked for his manners and his prowess in the field of sport, especially in football, that when he completed his Seventh Standard, then considered advanced learning, and intended to leave, he was offered and accepted the work of a clerk in the school. But Goh Hock Huat was not a boy content with a clerical position. His ambition was to do business. And so it began with the running of a confectioner's shop in the school, approved by the Christian Brothers as a distinct privilege to him. His grasp of the psychology of children, was proved by the phenomenal success of his trade in the school which in a few years earned him a profit, which he today confessed but few would believe, of not less than five thousand dollars. This, he explained, was made possible by the fact that he retailed the goods considerably cheaper than were obtainable at the provision stores in Penang, resulting in his attracting more customers from outside than from inside the school. The money he earned in school was his nucleus of a fortune that followed.

Mr. Goh Hock Huat was about twenty-five years of age when he joined the famous Chinese caterers of



those days, Messrs. Thean Chee Company, as assistant manager. Two years later, the firm went into liquidation. Mr. Hock Huat was appointed the liquidator of the firm.

He had, by this time, saved a little fortune, and was led by his ambitions to sally forth in search of greater affluence in the adventurous field of mining at Tronoh, Perak, where three years later, he discovered that tin was not a product that grows but was purely a speculation he did not relish.

It cost him a part of his small wealth, and he left for Klang and settled there as a rubber planter in a small way. A few years there, he became a popular member of the Chinese community and being recognized as a very trustworthy man of sound business ability, he was invited to the management of a large syndicate formed by Chinese capitalists engaged in opening up new estates and general rubber dealing, known as Chop Swee Heng Leong, which formerly owned the present well-known Ulu Benut Rubber Co. Ltd. His first ten years' connection with the firm marked a great success, profits aggregating over a million dollars to the partners who paid him handsomely by way of bonus from time to time, and admitted him as a partner. His admission, however, saw the reverse of fortune, for in the slump of 1921/1922, the firm of Swee Heng Leong was almost on the rocks with the loss of more than everything it had made in the preceding ten years. On its long list of creditors, thanks to three of them who came forward to the syndicate's rescue with an advance between them of fifty thousand dollars, the business was enabled to carry on. And the business more than carried on, for from the recovery of the slump up to the end of 1928, dividends exceeding two million dollars were paid to the partners; only to fall prey to more vicissitudes in the economic convulsion of the years 1930/1931.

In between these years, Mr. Goh Hock Huat, not the man who keeps his eggs in one basket, had invested extensively after a vision of his own -- the planting of pineapples, of which he was one of the largest suppliers on contract to the famous Tan Kah Kee canning factories. He also owned extensive coconut estates.

From these sources, he raised the necessary capital with which he bought over the entire interests of Swee Heng Leong in the darkest period of its history towards the end of 1931.

Times changed again, and fortune has consistently smiled on him and his endeavours ever since, as

he goes on extending his planting activities in pineapples, rubber and coconut which today comprise an area of nearly ten thousand acres, well developed estates scattered in most parts of Selangor. The firm of Swee Heng Leong, of which he is now sole proprietor, has since developed into huge proportions, operating from its head office at Klang a number of branches in various centres of Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang.

The produce of his pine plantations are so enormous that he has wisely extended his operations to the canning industry, and he is now the owner of a number of factories under the name of Malayan Pineapple Co., exporting an annual supply of nearly half a million cases, containing in each case four dozen tins of canned pines of the famous 'Golden H' and 'M' brands, to many parts of the world: Europe, Canada and the U.S.A.

Mr. Goh Hock Huat, who is a Justice of the Peace for Selangor, is the proud father of five sons and four daughters. He was recently in Penang in connection with the marriage of his eldest son, and at the dinner he gave to his many friends here many admiring remarks were heard in reference to his character, his general simplicity, and his manners which are the quintessence of good breeding, under the great traditions of that famous institution. [*The Straits Echo*, 6 December, 1936]

#### **Haji R.E. Mohamed Kassim, J.P.**

Aged 54, he died at Klang on Friday 3 July last [from blackwater fever. He had been in Klang for about 30 years and] was the founder and sole proprietor of the firm trading under his name and of the Estate Supply Agency, Klang. He arrived in Malaya about 35 years ago and, after living in Penang for five years, went to Klang where he started business under his own name and took up residence. Klang remained his home.

His business increased considerably and in a very short time he found it necessary to open up a branch at Port Swettenham, with later extensions at Kuala Selangor, Singapore, Penang, Malacca and Kuala Lumpur where there are several shops. With the growing success of his business in Malaya, his mind turned to his birthplace, Rajaghiri, and during a visit to India, he opened branches there and at Calcutta, Madras, Pondicherry, Negapatam and Dindigul.



He was reported to be the wealthiest Indian in Malaya, and was always ready to help the cause of charity. Among the various benefactions are the founding of a school at Rajaghiri for the education of poor Muslim children and the Kassim Charitable Dispensary. These will perpetuate his memory.

Haji Mohamed Kassim was much respected and esteemed. In public life he had always at heart the interests of his community. He was the President of the Selangor Indian Merchants' Association and a J.P. for Selangor. [*The Malaya Tribune*, 6 September 1931]

### **Dato Lee Kong Lam, J.P.**

[Passed away on 6 February, 1931, at his residence 'Sentosa', Countryside Estate, New Petaling Road. He was 55 years old].

His illness had been of brief duration. Less than a week ago, internal trouble, which was found to be an infection of the kidneys, made itself felt, and his condition became gradually worse. All hope of recovery was given up yesterday. He died at 8.15 this morning [6 February], having been unconscious for a number of hours.

He was born in Singapore, his father being Lee Lam Sing, who carried on a tailoring business in High Street. He was educated at Raffles School, and for a time assisted his father in business. At the age of 19, he came to Selangor and two years later joined the service of Dr. Loke Yew, C.M.G. and held a general power of Attorney for Mr. Loke Choy [sic]. For many years, Dato Lee Kong Lam was confidential secretary to the late Dr. Loke Yew. This brought him into contact with the leading Europeans of the place, and they all liked him.

He drove one of the first motor-cars imported into this country. Later on, he met with a nasty accident in the Lake Club Gardens, when his car ran down a bank. It took him some years to recover from the shock.

Of a quiet, retiring disposition, he preferred agricultural pursuits to public life, but in spite of this inclination, he was sufficiently public-spirited to play an important part in the local life of Selangor. He was formerly a member of the Kuala Lumpur Sanitary Board, and was also a member of the Board of Visitors to the Lunatic Asylum, a trustee of the Victoria Institution, and a member of the Committee of Management

to the Public Gardens. As with many Chinese, he engaged in mining, planting, and land speculation with success.

From 1908 onwards, he served continuously on the State Council of Selangor, his services being rewarded in 1920 by H.H. the Sultan conferring upon him the title of Dato Yahya Kurnia Bakti on December 21. He was one of the oldest surviving Justices of the Peace for Selangor, the only Justices senior to him being Messrs. Wee Hap Lang and Choo Kia Peng, C.B.E. In 1928, he was awarded the Certificate of Honour (C.H.) by H.M. the King. He was a member of the Chinese Advisory Board and the Board of the Poh Leong Kuk (the Federal Home for Women) as well as being prominently identified with many Chinese societies.

He was a keen follower of the Turf at one time, and owned several horses. He was devoted to gardening, as the lay-out of the grounds around 'Sentosa' testify, while he was an artist of ability, and had more than a shadowy claim to be considered something of an architect, being responsible for the design of his charming residence.

He was married three times. His first wife was Miss Chung Poon, daughter of a well-known Chinese resident in Singapore, Mr. Boon Kee. There were two daughters of the marriage. After his first wife's death, he married in 1908 a niece of Madam Loke Yew, and cousin of Messrs. Alan Loke and Loke Wan Yat; she died in 1920, there being five sons and five daughters of the marriage. His third wife is a daughter of Mr. Lim Kek Chuan of Penang, and a sister of Mr. Lim Soo Jee. There are one son and two daughters of the marriage. There are also nine grandchildren. [*The Malaya Tribune*, 7 December 1931]

### **Capt. Nor Mohamed Hashim bin Mohd. Dali**

*The Malaya Tribune* understands that Capt. N.M. Hashim, M.C.S. (retired), has been appointed Malay member of the Straits Legislative Council in succession to Inche Mohamed Rouse bin Chee.

Capt. Hashim's appointment will give general satisfaction to the Malay community. He is popular both in the Colony and the Malay States.

Born in Penang, Capt. Hashim originally entered the Government Service as a Malay Student Inter-



preter, Police Courts, Penang, on August 15, 1896. Coming to Singapore a year later on transfer as Malay Interpreter, Police Courts, he associated himself with all matters pertaining to the community's progress and social welfare.

When he retired last year, after 37 years' meritorious service, it was considered that the Government had lost the services of a loyal Malay officer and the Malays a staunch advocate and supporter of their legitimate cause. His return to public service is generally welcomed.

Capt. Hashim was the first Malay in the service of the S.S. Government to be appointed to a post ordinarily held by Cadet officers, when he was promoted and appointed Acting D.O. Balek Pulau, Assistant District Judge and Magistrate, Penang and Assistant Food Controller, Penang, in 1919.

On January 1, 1922, he was transferred to the F.M.S. as Assistant Officer-in-Charge of Co-operative Societies and he retired when holding the appointment of Assistant Registrar, Co-operation Department, F.M.S. and S.S., in Class III of the Malayan Civil Service.

Capt. Hashim's communal and public services have been many and diverse. He was one of the founders of the Singapore Malay Volunteer Corps, being the first Malay to be appointed as a commissioner officer of the Corps. During the days of the Great War he rendered yeoman service to the Government in Singapore and in Kelantan, where he was sent as the head of a detachment of the Malay Volunteers to suppress the 'Kelantan Rising' [1915]. His valuable services there were recognised by the local Government, the Military authorities and the Secretary of State for the Colonies in London.

Capt. Hashim was responsible for the establishment of the Singapore Mohammedan Advisory Board of which he was for many years honorary secretary. He was thanked by the Government for his services as Secretary of the Board during the Great War.

Capt. Hashim's interest in sport is well known. He knows that healthy rivalry in sport is conducive to good citizenship and discipline, and, therefore, worked very hard to found the Malaya F.A. in 1909. To him, it may be said, is due, to a large extent the present high

standard of football and other branches of athletics among the Malays in Singapore.

It is expected that Capt. Hashim, who is now living in the F.M.S., will take up his residence in Singapore. [*The Malaya Tribune*, 7 March 1936]

### **J.D. Scully**

Grand Old Man of the Penang Eurasian community is celebrating his Golden Wedding on the 15th inst. In February, 1881, he married Rose, the youngest daughter of the late Dr. J.H. Ash, then the leading medical practitioner in Penang. Scully first joined the Municipality and served in various capacities until, five years prior to his retirement, he was promoted to the post of Assistant Registrar of Vehicles, which office he filled until he left service in 1903. He has ably served the interests of the Eurasian community. The Penang Recreation Club [P.R.C.], the Penang Eurasian Association and the Catholic Benevolent Association owe their origin to him, and he has always given them active support. The new P.R.C. clubhouse, now almost completed, is a monument of Mr. Scully's endeavours. He started the building fund four years ago, and he will have the pleasure of opening the new pavilion before the year is over. [*Malaya Tribune*, 7 February 1931]

### **Yong Pak Kook**

One of the first Chinese in this country to engage in rubber planting on a large scale, Mr. Yong Pak Kook, father of Mr. S.M. Yong, the well-known Kuala Lumpur lawyer, died yesterday.

He had been ailing for four years with cardiac trouble but, although more or less confined to the house, and taking only an occasional interest in his extensive business of estate supplies, his death came as a shock to his large circle of friends.

Mr. Yong Pak Kook was in very good spirits on Tuesday 28th, but late at night he became ill and he died at 9.50 a.m. surrounded by his family.

He came to this country 45 years ago from Kwangtung, China. After a few years' service in a Chinese firm he went to Tampin, where he started planting rubber and, like other pioneer Chinese, he made a fortune in the good old days.



He never considered mining a safe business and refused to invest any of his fortune from rubber in tin.

Thirty-five years ago he started his estate supplies business at Cross Street and is credited to be the first person to make latex cup-holders. He had large rubber interests in Selangor and elsewhere.

He was a trustee of the Yong Sze Kongsu and was a member of several Chinese associations.

He leaves behind his widow, four sons and three daughters, including Mrs. Lee Keat Seong, wife of Inspector Lee Keat Seong, and Mrs. Chang Hoey Chang, wife of the Assistant Health Officer, Teluk Anson, and a brother, Mr. Yong Pak Yin, a planter in Johore.

The funeral takes place on Sunday 2 April, the procession starting from 11 Cross Street at 11.00 a.m. for the private burial ground at Bukit Estate, Cheras. [The Malay Mail, 30 March 1939]

### S.M. Zainal Abidin

During the Japanese Occupation, he was Malay announcer at the local broadcasting station, and many will remember his amusing broadcasts which comforted many uneasy hearts.

Today he is chairman of the Penang Malay Association, the English School Teachers' Cooperative Union, a trustee of the Old Frees Association, Penang Teachers' Union, and a member of the Advisory Council of the Sultan Idris Training College, Tanjong Malim.

His wife is an active committee member of the Malay Women's Service League.

Zainal Abidin bin Sultan Maidin is the author of several standard works in Malay -- *Scouting in Malay Boys [sic]* and *Ilmu Dunia*, a geography book now used at the Malay Teachers' Training College. [Straits Echo, 28 March 1948]