

# 商业是苍黎命脉

孙士鼎与总商会的关系  
清朝驻新加坡总领事

## COMMERCE IS THE LIFEBLOOD OF THE MASSES

SUN SHI DING,  
QING DYNASTY'S  
CONSUL GENERAL IN  
SINGAPORE AND HIS  
RELATIONSHIPS WITH  
THE CHAMBER

商业是苍黎命脉 喜见  
人材聚会 愿同输爱力  
支持故国大江流

*Commerce is the lifeblood of the masses, so I am pleased to see this gathering of talents, whom I hope to work with to contribute patriotic effort in supporting our motherland to flourish like the continuous flow of the Yangtze River.*

毫末茫茫大陆商战方新  
窃愿诸君共勉之 泉唐孙士  
鼎撰并书

*The vast comes from the minute. China has newly got into the trade competition. It's my private hope to be mutual motivation with all of you gentlemen. Composed and penned by Sun Shi Ding of Quantang.*



1906年清朝驻新加坡总领事孙士鼎赠予新加坡中华商务总会之木刻对联。(新加坡中华总商会珍藏)  
The couplet enclaved on the two wooden blocks given by Sun Shi Ding, Qing Dynasty's Consul General in Singapore to the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce, in 1906. (SCCCI Collection)

中原为天府膏腴 改良  
物产精华 好共挽利权  
组织殖民新世界

*As China is a blessed land endowed with abundance, let us improve the essence of our products so that we could together recover our rights and work out a new world for the colonised.*

龙飞光绪三十有二年岁次  
丙午 新嘉坡中华商会告成  
书此持赠 我愧不才无勋

*On the 32nd year since the accession of Emperor Guangxu, which falls on the Chinese calendar year of Bingwu (1906). This is written to be gifted to the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce following its establishment. From one who feels unworthy with no meritorious achievements.*

**你** 知道吗？1906年新加坡华商  
首创商务总会时，清朝总领事  
赠送的木刻对联上写了什么？

这幅木刻对联是清朝驻新加坡总领事孙  
士鼎于1906年赠予新加坡中华商务总会，祝  
贺本地华商首创商务总会，扮演及发挥“团  
结内部、开创商机、为民请命”的角色与功  
能。贺词上下联对仗工整，言简意赅，内容  
则反映清朝政府对海外华商的期许。



**D**o you know what was written  
in the couplet engraved on  
two wooden blocks that the Consul  
General of the Qing government  
gifted to the Singapore Chinese  
Chamber of Commerce (SCCC, the  
original name of SCCC) upon its  
establishment – an unprecedented  
creation by the Chinese business  
community of Singapore?

This couplet was presented in 1906  
to the Singapore Chinese Chamber of  
Commerce by Sun Shi Ding, the Qing  
Court's Consul General in Singapore,  
to congratulate the establishment of  
the Singapore Chinese Chamber of  
Commerce. The association would  
perform and give full play to its roles  
and functions of “uniting all within  
it, creating business opportunities,  
and making representations for the  
people”. The two lines of the  
couplet are symmetrical and concise.  
Its content reflects the expectations of  
the Qing government for the overseas  
Chinese business community.

孙士鼎，生于1865年，浙江省杭州府钱塘县人，曾任广东候补知县，1905年8月底经出使英国大臣汪大燮推荐，派充新加坡领事署随员。1906年新加坡总领事凤仪准备卸任时，汪大燮本要奏调广东后补知府汪大钧继任总领事，惟其因尚有政务在身无法离粤赴叻，遂改委孙士鼎出任新加坡兼海门等处总领事，任期自光绪31年12月始至33年9月止(1906年1月至1907年10月)。

清政府自光绪3年(1877年)始在新加坡设立领事馆，至辛亥革命被推翻为止，先后任命了11位领事。驻新领事的任务主要是传达朝廷政策与讯息、反映海外华人需求、处理捐官鬻爵、负责招商投资、接待到访官员、庆祝皇室大典，以及推动文化教育等。1900年以来，维新及革命派分别到本地宣传各自的政治理念，驻新领事也不时拍电报上奏朝廷有关康有为、孙中山等人的政治活动，并告诫侨民勿涉足支持或资助革命的活动。

1906年总商会成立之际，时任驻新领事的孙士鼎与总商会关系密切。他不但在任内见证总商会的创设，协助呈请中国农工商部备案，同时也与总商会鼎力合作，在英国人要求淇漳山检疫站裸体检验和消毒时，抗议这种不平等待遇和歧视政策，并成功促其取消，同时也争取改良检疫站环境。孙士鼎鼓吹戒鸦片烟，并交由总商会来协助办理。此外，孙士鼎也关注华工出洋情形，曾调查南洋地区华工是否有被拐骗逼勒之事，并协助被拐卖的华工返乡。

孙士鼎赠总商会的这幅贺联，背后带出的是一个时代的声音，亦即清政府对洋务运动、侨务及商务政策的立场与态度。贺词上联表现了清廷自1840年鸦片战争以来的政治处境，期望透过变法自强来收回利权和发展实业。清廷于1903年设立“商”部后，极力鼓励国内外实业家踊跃投资，利用中国地大物丰的优势来改良物产，开通商情，促进商业发展，同时也鼓吹海外华商广设商务总会，以此巩固和凝聚华社的在地力量，在殖民地社会形成新世界。而商业是百姓生存的命脉，是民生的根基、社会的动力，因此总商会的成立，是商界群英的结合，也是人才汇集、共同为中国的富强和现代化贡献力量量的表现，这亦是贺词下联所表达的寄语及意义。



Sun Shi Ding was born in 1865 and hailed from Qiantang county of Hangzhou prefecture in Zhejiang province. He was once a candidate for a county magistrate post in Guangdong. At the end of August 1905, on the recommendation by Wang Da Xie, the ambassador to Britain, he was posted to the consulate in Singapore to be an aide. In 1906, when the Consul General in Singapore Feng Yi was preparing to leave his post, Wang Da Xie initially wanted to submit a request for Wang Da Jun, a candidate for a prefectural governor post in Guangdong, to take over this position. But the latter, tied down by some administrative matters, could not leave Guangdong for Singapore. Therefore, a change was made with Sun Shi Ding assuming the post of Consul General in Singapore and for other locations of the Straits Settlements. His term lasted from the 12th month in the 31st year of the reign of Emperor Guangxu to the 9th month in the 33rd year (January 1906 to October 1907).

From the third year of the reign of Emperor Guangxu (1877) when it established its consulate in Singapore until it was overthrown in the 1911 Revolution, the Qing government altogether appointed 11 consuls.

The main roles of the consul in Singapore included conveying policies and messages of the Qing Court, communicating the needs of the overseas Chinese, checking on donations in exchange for official positions, taking charge of attracting businesses and investments, receiving visiting officials, celebrating royal events, and promoting culture and education. From 1900 on, the reformist and revolutionary parties separately came to Singapore to spread their respective political ideas. The consul in Singapore also regularly sent telegrams to the Court to report about political activities linked to people such as Kang You Wei and Sun Yat Sen. On top of that, it warned the overseas Chinese not to get involved in revolutionary activities by way of supporting or financing them.



In 1906 when SCCC was being established, the then consul in Singapore Sun Shi Ding developed a close relationship with the Chamber. Not only did he witness the creation of SCCC while in office, but also helped to request China's Ministry of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce to keep a file record on it. Meanwhile, as the British demanded complete stripping for inspection and disinfection at St John's Island quarantine station, Sun Shi Ding worked closely with SCCC to protest against the unequal treatment and discriminatory policy and successfully caused the requirement to be scrapped. At the same time, he fought for improvements of the environment in the quarantine station. An activist in helping opium smokers kick the addiction, he let SCCC lend a hand in the cause. In addition, Sun Shi Ding was concerned about the circumstances in which Chinese labourers came abroad to work. He once investigated whether there were cases of Chinese labourers being abducted and helped those who had been kidnapped and sold to return to their hometowns.



Underlying the couplet that Sun Shi Ding gifted to SCCC is a voice of the times. That is, one manifesting the stance and attitude of the Qing government in regard to its Westernisation Movement as well as policies on overseas Chinese and commerce. The first half of the couplet reflects the political situation of the Qing Court since the Opium War. It hoped to recover its rights and develop solid industries through reforms and by strengthening itself. Since setting up



the Ministry of Commerce in 1903, the Qing Court made utmost efforts to encourage domestic and foreign industrialists to actively invest and make use of China's vast territory and abundant resources to improve their products as well as drive commercial development by facilitating the flow of goods. At the same time, it also advocated widespread establishment of business associations by overseas Chinese businessmen, which would help consolidate and integrate the strengths of the local Chinese communities to form a new "world" within the colonial societies. Commerce was the lifeblood of survival for the general masses, the foundation of people's livelihood, and the driving force of society. Therefore, the establishment of SCCC was not only about gathering of the elites of the business community but also a statement about the combining of talents to collectively contribute their efforts to help China achieve prosperity and modernisation. This is the message and the meaning conveyed in the second half of the couplet.

## 总商会史料征集

新加坡中华总商会欢迎大家捐赠史料，一起与我们保存和传承总商会的历史。您可以透过以下途径提供有关总商会的文物资料(如旧照片、证件、佩章)给我们，我们会尽快与您联系。



## CALL FOR HISTORICAL ITEMS

Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry warmly invites you to donate historical documents to help preserve and perpetuate the historical heritage of SCCCI.

You may wish to provide us with more information about the Historical Documents (e.g. old photographs, certificates and badges) through the following contact:

Email: [history@sccci.org.sg](mailto:history@sccci.org.sg)

Contact: (65) 6430 8304

Address: Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce & Industry  
(Historical Items)

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