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河南人民出版社

AN INTRODUCTION
TO BRITAIN AND AMERICA

A I T B A A

新 编

英美概况



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来安方 编著 责任编辑 朱崇平

河南人民出版社出版发行(郑州市农业路73号)

信阳市人民印刷厂印刷 新华书店经销

开本 787×1092 1/32 印张 14.375 字数 314000

1991年8月第1版 1997年4月第7次印刷 印数 46000—51000

ISBN7-215-01605-6/G·226 定价:12.00元

前 言

本书是为大专院校英文专业编写的英美概况教材，也适用于其他具有大专英语水平的读者。书中内容包括英美两国的政治、经济、法律、文化教育、历史演变、社会习俗及自然地理状况等各个方面。材料的选择和处理以中国学生的实际需要为宗旨，英文陈述力求简明准确，语言难易适中。

全书的整体结构着眼于教材用书的特点，依照授课时数和讲授量的需要划分章节。全书主体内容以时空关系为座标轴线贯通，借以增强各项内容的连贯性，为读者提供一个正确的透视角度，这也有利于表明所述内容之间的相互影响及因果关系。全书正文分为十八节，恰与一个学期十八周的授课时间相一致。

作者根据自己教学实践积累的经验，于一九八五年编写了一本《英美概况》，并邀请复旦大学、上海外院、南京大学和武汉大学等二十所大专院校的有关专家和教师出席了审稿会。与会者对如何修改原稿提出了很多宝贵意见，后又承蒙复旦大学索天章教授和吴延迪教授对修改稿做了校审，定稿后由河南教育出版社出版。在以后几年的使用过程中，逐渐发现有些内容需要修改，于是就对原书进行了修改增订。增订后的版本篇幅和份量都有较大的增加，不少院校反映很难在半学年之内授完，希望作者能编写一本更加切合教学需要的英美概况教材。

我在遵照同行们的建议编写这本《新编英美概况》时，吸收了前两本的优点，省去了过多的细节评述，在不影响内容完整性与准确性的前提下，尽量照顾本教程师生的需要，兼顾可讲性与可读性，力求简明实用，使读者既能够比较全面系统地了解英美两个国家，又便于用英语开展讨论和回答有关问题，这对学习英语和使用英语都是非常必要的。

英美概况复盖面很大，涉及内容很多，处理时不少技术问题需要商榷。因此，这个新编本恐还存在不妥之处，望有关专家学者指正，也希望读者提出宝贵意见，作者不胜感激。

本书定稿前美籍教师 Christen 和 Becky 做了全面校阅，并做了必要的订正，在此一并致谢。

作者 1991年5月

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Chapter One

Land and People

Section One

The British Isles and Great Britain

Names and Position

While Reading English books, one is likely to come across such names as

a) the British Isles;

b) Britain (or Great Britain);

c) England, Scotland, Wales;

d) Northern Ireland;

e) The United Kingdom — The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

To the west and off the European Continent, there are several thousands of islands on the continental shelf. They are generally called the British Isles. Of all the isles, the largest one is called Great Britain. For the convenience's sake, it is often shortened to Britain. But officially it is still called Great Britain. It runs neatly 1,000 kilometers from south to north and extends, at the widest part, about 500 kilometers from west to east. Its area is about 230,000 square kilometers while the total area of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is only a little more than 240,000 square kilometers with a population of some 56 million.

The island of Great Britain itself, however, is divided in—

to the three parts: England in the South, Scotland in the North, and Wales in the Southwest.

England is the largest and most developed of all the three. It has an area of more than 130,000 square kilometers which takes up nearly 60% of the whole island. Its population is more than 46 million and makes up 85% of the country's whole population. The importance of England is so great in Britain that some foreigners just say "England" when they mean Britain. The same is true of the custom of speaking of the British people as the English, who are the majority.

Scotland is the second largest both in area and population. It is about 78,760 square kilometers, less than 30% of the whole island, with a population of 5 million, less than one-tenth of the total population.

Wales is the smallest of the three both in area and population. Its area, 20,700 square kilometers, takes up less than 9%, while its population, 2.7 million, does not exceed 5% of the whole.

The name Great Britain was not applied to this large island until the 17th century. Its southern part adopted the name England in the 5th century when groups of invaders from Northern Europe, traditionally called the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, were taking possession of this area. Their language, the English language, spread far and wide and later became the official language of the nation. The "Engl-" part of the word comes from the word Angles while the "-ish" part means "belonging to". The word English means "the