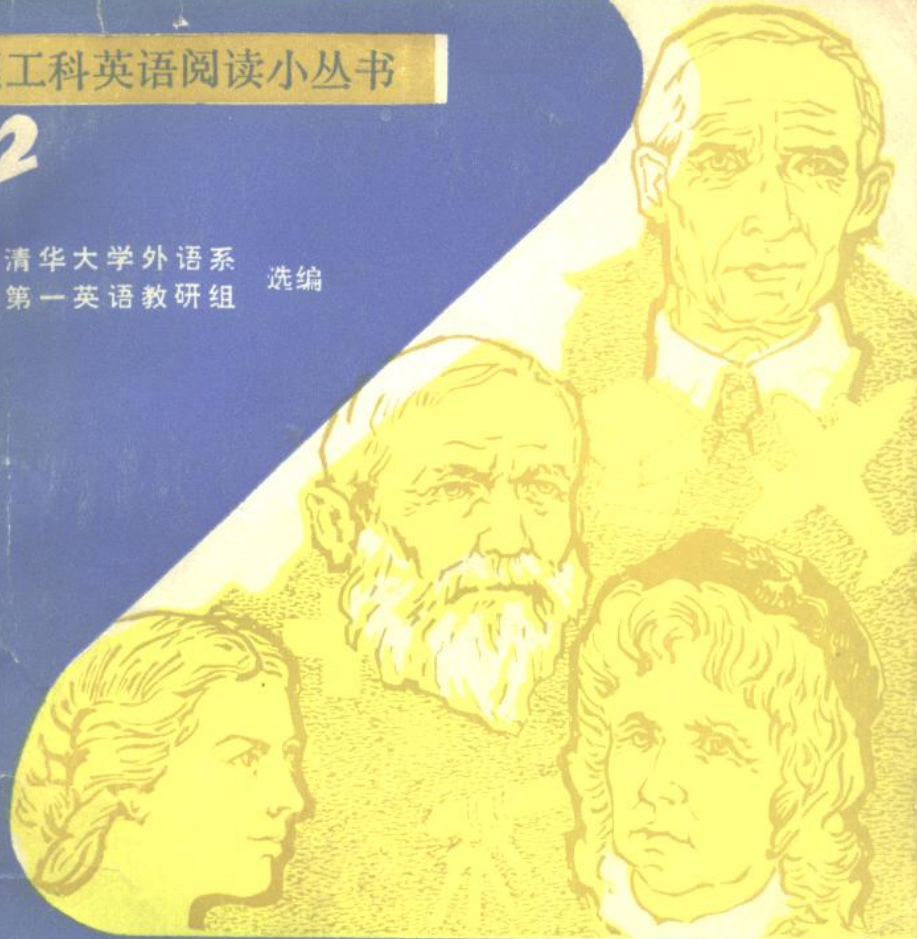


理工科英语阅读小丛书

2

清华大学外语系
第一英语教研组

选编



BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES

名人传略

清华大学出版社

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内 容 提 要

本丛书第二集选自欧美各国十一位从事科学、医学、文学、体育等各方面的著名人士的传略。概述他们的生平及所从事的活动。

书中难懂之处，酌作注释。适合高校理工科学生及科技人员阅读。书后附有词汇表。

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名 人 传 略

清华大学外语系第一英语教研组编

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前 言

在理工科大学的英语教学中，我们常常感到如何提高学生的阅读能力是一个不太容易解决的难题。现有的精读教材，由于篇幅和内容的限制，词汇量往往偏窄，各种语言现象的出现和重复受到极大的影响，这样就不利于培养学生的阅读能力。

学习外语必须通过实践，而阅读能力的培养和提高就更有必要通过大量的阅读实践；有了这种实践，才能积累和扩大词汇量，巩固已掌握的语言知识，并在此基础上进一步学习一些新的习惯表示法，从而提高阅读速度，增强理解力。为此，我们编选了一套理工科大学生英语阅读小丛书。在选材方面尽量考虑到内容的知识性、科学性和趣味性；力求语言生动活泼，清新明快，简洁易懂。每本书后附有总词汇表，以利查阅和记忆。对疑难之处作了适量的注释。本丛书总共有十册。内容有传记、小品、科普文选、工程技术等方面的文章。

本丛书第二册由陆慈、王文佳同志审阅。

参加第二册注释工作的有：刘亚文、过浩川、栾诚明、邹詠华、徐琳钧、李家卿、汪礼瑞等同志。

由于我们水平有限，时间紧迫，缺乏经验，缺点和错误在所难免，热切希望得到广大读者的批评和指正。

清华大学外语系
第一英语教研组

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1 Maria Mitchell¹

In the early years of the nineteenth century, the island of Nantucket², in the Atlantic Ocean about thirty miles off Cape Cod, Massachusetts³, was a prosperous whaling center. The main street of the town of Nantucket was lined with handsome houses belonging to shipowners and rich^⑤ fishermen. One of Nantucket's leading citizens was William Mitchell, who was a mapmaker by profession and also made, sold, and repaired instruments used by sailors for judging distances at sea. In most cases, Mitchell had to give his customers some instruction in astronomy so that they would^⑩ be able to use his instruments properly. Thus, he was not only a businessman, but also a scientist and a teacher. Naturally, in a community like Nantucket, where almost everybody made his living⁴ from the sea, a man with Mitchell's knowledge and skills would be very highly regarded. ^⑮

A daughter named Maria was born into William Mitchell's family in 1818. As a child⁵ she went to small schools in Nantucket. Her father believed in⁶ giving his daughter a good education, even though at that time few women went to school, and there were no women at all in^{②①} colleges and universities. If women learned to cook, sew, take care of children, and to behave like ladies, it was felt

that they had learned enough. There were a few women teachers, but there were no women scientists. Maria Mitchell, like many other women scientists, helped show the world that women were as capable as men of using their ⑤minds⁷.

Maria finished school, and then became the librarian of the Nantucket Athenaeum⁸, an institution that kept a scientific library and held meetings on scientific subjects. She kept the job for twenty years. She loved this kind of work ⑩because there she could read everything in the library on mathematics and astronomy. When she had the time she watched the stars.

Even as a small child, Maria had loved mathematics. She had followed her father around his shop, helping him ⑮with simple problems while he made his fine maps. It must have been surprising to see a little girl working at a high table, surrounded by maps and all kinds of instruments⁹. By the time she was twelve years old, Maria was helping her father draw his maps. These showed all the bays, ⑳harbors, and waters of New England and Canada, guiding men who made their living from the sea. Maria's father gave her a small telescope with which to study the stars and their movements, and placed it on the roof of their house. Every night she and her father would spend some ㉓time watching the heavens.

On the night of October 1, 1847, Maria made an important discovery. There were guests in the Mitchell house,



but their presence did not prevent Maria from excusing herself and going up to the roof to look through her telescope, as she did every night when the sky was clear. Usually she stayed only a short time, but on this occasion
⑤ she waited on the roof for more than an hour. When she finally came back downstairs, she went to her father and whispered a few words to him. She seemed to be quite excited. Mr. Mitchell left his guests quietly and went back to the roof with Maria. There, she asked him to look
⑩ through the telescope, and, when he did so, he saw an unfamiliar bright object in the sky with a shower of light trailing behind it. It was a comet, and Maria had been the first person to see it and report on it.

She sent news of the new comet at once to Harvard
⑮ University¹⁰ in Cambridge¹¹. The university had a large telescope, and the Harvard astronomers were able to see the comet, too. From them, the news was sent to the whole world. On October 3, two days after Maria had seen the comet, an English astronomer saw and reported it. Since
⑳ there was no radio or cable communication, he did not know that Maria had already seen it. Later on, when there was time for the reports to be published, the young American woman of Nantucket, Massachusetts, was recognized as the discoverer of the new comet by the scientists of the
㉓ world.

Some time before this, the King of Denmark¹² had offered a gold medal to anyone who discovered a new heavenly body

through the use of the telescope. The medal was given to Maria Mitchell for her discovery of the comet of 1847. This honor made Maria's name famous throughout the entire world.

Maria was elected a Fellow of the Academy of Arts^⑤ and Sciences of the United States¹³. She was the first woman to be elected to this organization, and she knew it was a great honor. She was also elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science¹⁴. In 1852 Hanover College¹⁵ in Indiana¹⁶ made her an honorary Doctor^⑩ of Laws, the first woman in the United States to receive an honorary degree.

In 1857, the years after her famous discovery of the comet, Maria Mitchell made a trip to Europe. She went to England, Germany, and France. She met and talked^⑬ with all the famous mathematicians and astronomers of these countries.

While in Germany she met the famous scientist, Alexander von Humboldt¹⁷, who was eighty-nine years old at the time. He spent some time with Maria, talking with her^⑭ most earnestly about her work. He discussed with her the possibility of photographing distant stars, and he encouraged her to continue her study of astronomy. She told him how she had worked as librarian of the Nantucket Athenaeum in order to pay for her trip to Europe, and how she had^⑮ followed the stars with a telescope in her spare time. Humboldt was quite impressed. He suggested that she try

to get a position as teacher of astronomy in a college in the United States so that she could spend more time on her own studies. He had read with much interest the scientific papers she had published on sun spots, clouds of stars, and ⑤the planets, and he said that it was very important for her to continue to study and to become a true professional astronomer.

When Maria returned to the United States, she followed Humboldt's advice and asked all the colleges in the eastern ⑩part of the country for work as a teacher of astronomy. Each time she applied, her application was refused because she was a woman. Although many of the greatest scientists in the world had admired her writings, she was not welcome as a teacher at any university in the United States. Most ⑮of the colleges of the day received only men as pupils, and they did not think it proper for a woman to teach men students. Maria was very much hurt and discouraged, but she decided to continue her work in astronomy alone.

Maria's parents had now grown old, and they needed ②②her financial help. She was forced to go back to her old job as librarian, but she still worked on astronomy at home. She read all the new books on astronomy and bought the most important of them for the Nantucket Athenaeum library. She began to teach, also, but received as pupils ②⑤only those who came to ask her for help. The young sailors of the town needed to know something about astronomy in order to steer their fishing boats or to pass exam-

inations so that they could become masters of sailing ships. Maria taught them to use the sextant¹⁸, an instrument measuring the height of the sun from the horizon, and then to calculate the position of a ship through the use of mathematics and celestial navigation¹⁹. In this way, they⁵ could tell where they were, even if there were no visible landmarks.

Maria found that she liked to teach these young men. They profited from her teaching, and she learned that she had the ability to make astronomy simple and clear to¹⁰ others. She decided to try once again for work at a university. Meanwhile, she had continued to publish papers on astronomy, and her fame had grown. However, even as late as 1860, no university would agree to allow her to teach. ¹⁵

In 1861, Matthew Vassar²⁰ established Vassar College²¹, the first college for women in the United States. Maria's friends suggested that she ask for a position there. Surely, they said, a women's school would want a woman teacher. But Maria refused. Was she really qualified to teach in a²⁰ college? Now that²² she had the opportunity, she began to doubt her ability. And if she should become the first woman professor of astronomy and fail, other women scientists would find it even more difficult to become university teachers. The risk was too great for her to take,²⁵ she felt.

Finally, however, Maria Mitchell did become the first

professor of astronomy at Vassar, and was at the same time the first woman to teach astronomy in any American college. She taught at Vassar for twenty-three years, from 1865 to 1888. She need not have doubted her ability. She ⑤ was an excellent teacher and an honor to her profession. Even those who knew nothing about astronomy liked her and were impressed by her knowledge.

Now that she was teaching the subject that she loved, Maria was encouraged to go on with her own studies²³. She ⑩ discovered several groups of very distant stars, and she wrote important studies²³ of the planets Jupiter²⁴ and Saturn.²⁵ For many years she did mathematical work for the Nautical Almanac,²⁶ published annually for sailors. In 1887 she was given the honorary degree of Bachelor of Laws²⁷ by ⑮ Columbia University²⁸ in New York City.

Maria Mitchell died in 1889. Vassar honored her by establishing the Maria Mitchell Endowment Fund of \$50,000²⁹. The income from this fund has been used by the college to pay the salaries of later professors of astronomy. ⑳ In 1907, Maria Mitchell's name was added to the honor list in the Hall of Fame³⁰ in New York City. In 1922, she was further honored when her statue was added to those of the other especially famous Americans there. Thus the girl from Nantucket, who had been forced to learn mathematics without a teacher because there was no other way in her day for a girl to get a scientific education, and who had been refused teaching positions because she was a

woman, finally achieved recognition as the great scientist she was⁸¹.

Notes

1. Maria Mitchell; (1818—1889) 玛丽亚·米切尔, 美国天文学家。
2. Nantucket: 南塔克特岛 (位于美国马萨诸塞州东南)。
3. Cape Cod, Massachusetts: 马萨诸塞州科德角。
4. made (one's) living: 谋生。
5. As a child: = As she was a child.
6. believed in: 相信; 信仰。
7. helped show the world that women were as capable as men of using their minds: that 从句是 show 的宾语从句; be capable of: 有……能力的, 有……本领的; 此句可译成: 向全世界证明, 妇女能够象男人一样发挥她们的聪明才智。
8. the Nantucket Athenaeum: 南塔克特岛科学协会。
9. It must have been surprising ... and all kinds of instruments: 句中 must + 完成时, 表示对过去事件的推定或指具有较大的可能性。全句可译成: 看见一个小姑娘伏在高高的桌上工作, 四周堆满地图和各式各样的仪器, 这情景一定会叫人惊叹不已。
10. Harvard University: 哈佛大学。
11. Cambridge: 坎布里奇 (美国波士顿附近一城市, 哈佛大学所在地)。

12. Denmark; 丹麦 (位于北欧)。
13. a Fellow of the Academy of Arts and Sciences of the United States; 美国科学艺术研究院成员。
14. American Association for the Advancement of Science: 美国科学发展协会。
15. Hanover College; 汉诺威学院。
16. Indiana; 印第安纳州 (美国)。
17. Alexander von Humboldt; (1769—1859) 洪保德, 德国博物学家, 旅行家及政治家。
18. sextant; 六分仪 (用以测量高度角、水平角的仪器, 多用于航海和航空定位)。
19. celestial navigation; 天体导航法。
20. Matthew Vassar; (1792—1868) 马修·瓦萨。
21. Vassar College; 瓦萨学院。
22. now that; conj. 由于; 既然。
23. studies; 研究; 研究项目; 论文。
24. Jupiter; 木星。
25. Saturn; 土星。
26. Nautical Almanac; 天文年鉴 (航海、测量用)。
27. Bachelor of Laws; 法学士。
28. Columbia University; 哥伦比亚大学。
29. the Maria Mitchell Endowment Fund of \$ 50,000; 玛丽亚·米切尔捐赠基金 50,000 美元。
30. Hall of Fame; 名人遗物收藏馆。
31. Thus the girl from Nartucket, ... finally achieved recognition as the great scientist she was; the girl 是全句主语, 谓语为 achieved, she was 是定语从句, 修

饰 scientist。全句可译为：就这样，这位出身于南塔特克岛的女孩子，由于当时女子不能享受科学的教育而不得不自学数学，又因为是一位女子而被拒之于教学职业之外，但她终于赢得了她应享有的伟大科学家的声誉。

2 Clara Barton¹

The baby born to the Barton family in Oxford², Massachusetts, on Christmas Day, 1821, was named Clarissa Harlowe Barton, after³ the delicate girl of Samuel Richardson's novel, *Clarissa, Or The History Of A Young Lady*,
⑤ which was very popular at the time. But the family soon found the name too long for everyday use, and as the little girl grew up she was called Clara. This name suited her much better. Although she was a shy little thing, and she never grew very big or very strong, her spirit was mighty,
⑩ and she did not resemble the weak Clarissa of the eighteenth-century romance in any way.

The Barton family lived near Oxford, Massachusetts, on a farm. The five children had to work hard to help their parents, but they were never really very poor. Captain
⑮ Barton had fought in the American Revolutionary War⁴ (1775—1783), and he often liked to tell his children about his adventures during that time.

Clara Barton learned to ride horses almost before she could walk. Though she was a shy child, she had no fear
⑳ of animals. But people frightened her, and when she first went to school—away from her family—she was terrified. Her parents then decided to educate her at home. Her two