

THE STORY OF MY LIFE

BY HELEN KELLER

英语学习读物丛书

我的青少年时代

杨芳林 注释

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外语教学与研究出版社

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《英语学习》读物丛书

出版说明

英语是世界上广泛使用的语言，在联合国和其他重要国际场合它是主要工作语言之一。我们在社会主义新长征中，需要学习外国的先进经验，以便加速实现四个现代化。在这方面，英语能起相当大的作用。目前，随着我国对外关系、科技交流、旅行游览活动的蓬勃开展，对英语的需要越来越紧迫。通过广播英语和电视英语的教学，英语学习已经普及到了祖国各地，学习人数空前增多。这种形势要求我们出版更多更好的英语读物。

学习外语，在有了一定的语音、语法和词汇知识的基础上，尽可能多读一些书会大有助于迅速提高外语水平。对于自学者来说，阅读尤为重要。坚持阅读可以逐渐学会通过外语这个工具来学知识、学专业，为四化建设多作贡献。

为了帮助广大读者学习和提高英语水平，同时也为了弥补《英语学习》杂志目前篇幅之不足，我们特编辑出版《英语学习》读物丛书。这套丛书以初级和中级水平的读者为对象，可供自学或课堂教学使用。读物体裁多样，包括小说（中篇和短篇）、传记、历史、地理、戏剧、童话、游记、回忆录、电影脚本、民间故事、科普作品、幽默小品和描写英美等国风土人情的作品。

为了便利读者，丛书各册均配有汉语注释，解释语言难点，提供背景知识；对作家和作品本身也作了简要介绍。对于人名、地名和较难读的词语，一律用国际音标注明读音。

由于我们水平有限，又缺少经验，错误不当之处，欢迎读者批评指正，使这套丛书能更好地为读者服务。

编者

一九八〇年元月

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INTRODUCTION¹

Helen Keller² is one of the most remarkable persons born in the nineteenth century. She managed to overcome the double handicap of blindness and deafness,³ and to take an active part in the life of the world. Of course, she could never have accomplished this alone.⁴ Just as remarkable as Miss Keller was her teacher,⁵ Anne Sullivan, the young woman who undertook to lead her out of the darkness and enable her to have a normal life.

Helen Keller was born in 1880 into a middle-class Southern family.⁶ Her father was a newspaper editor. They lived in a comfortable house on a farm in Alabama.⁷ From the time she lost her eyesight and hearing, at about 19 months, until she was nearly seven, she was cared for by her loving family, who allowed her uncontrolled freedom around the home place.⁸ She had

1. introduction[ˌɪntrəˈdʌkʃən]: 介绍; 书的引言. 2. Helen Keller[ˈhelənˈkelə]: 海伦·凯勒(人名, 即本书作者, 1880—1968). 3. double handicap of blindness and deafness: 眼瞎和耳聋的双重障碍. 4. Of course, she... alone. 当然, 她是绝不可能单靠自己取得这么大的成就的。(这句谓语用的是虚拟语气。) 5. Just as remarkable as Miss Keller was her teacher... 和凯勒小姐同样超群出众的, 还有她的老师... (为行文方便, 原句用倒装结构, 因 her teacher 之后还有较多的修饰成分。) 6. a mid-class Southern family: (美国)一个南方中产阶级家庭. 7. Alabama [ˌæləˈbæmə]: 亚拉巴马(美国州名). 8. who allowed her uncontrolled freedom around the home place: 他们允许她在家庭范围内随心所欲.

the servants' children for playmates, and she ruled them like a little queen. She was not made to sit at the table at meal-times, but wandered around helping herself to food from other people's plates. Without any discipline, she grew up to be a little wild animal, pretty, healthy, energetic, and spoiled.¹ She behaved very badly if anyone prevented her from doing or having exactly what she wanted, and she destroyed dolls, toys, clothes, and other things in fits of temper. She knew about fifty signs with which she could communicate,² and her mother could make her understand a number of things, but as she grew older she became more and more difficult to manage.³ Her inability to share ideas with others drove her into terrible fits of anger.⁴ The dark and silent world in which her brilliant mind was imprisoned became increasingly unbearable. It is no wonder that she later called the day Miss Sullivan came to be her teacher "the most important day in my life."

Miss Sullivan was only a girl of eighteen when she undertook the job of breaking open this child's prison. As a child, Anne Sullivan had known none of the comforts the Kellers had. She had spent her childhood in a poorhouse,⁵ where she was very badly treated,

1. spoiled: 被惯坏了 (spoiled是spoil 的过去分词). 2. communicate [kə'mju:nikeit]: 通话; 交谈; 表达思想. 3. she became more and more difficult to manage: 她变得越来越难以管教了. 4. fits of anger: 一阵阵勃然大怒(fit在这里是名词,指感情的“突发”或病的“发作”). 5. poorhouse: 贫民院.

and had almost died of sickness and neglect. She had nearly lost her own eyesight, but had later recovered enough to be able to read. Because of her half-blindness, she had been sent at fourteen to the Perkins Institution for the Blind, in Boston. There she learned to use the manual alphabet¹, and to read Braille². But aside from this experience, she had no special preparation for teaching a deaf-blind person. Indeed, at that time there was none to be had. There was no experienced person to whom she could turn for advice, and few even to encourage what many thought would be a fruitless effort³. In this educational experiment she had to depend entirely on her own native intelligence, inventiveness, courage, and strength of character.

Miss Sullivan's first problem was to establish her authority over Helen⁴. First she had a struggle with Helen's parents who could not bear to see their child disciplined. But they wanted their child to be taught, and, realizing that training was impossible without discipline, they gave the teacher a chance to work without interference. Once that was agreed upon, Miss Sullivan had some real battles with the wild little girl.

1. manual alphabet ['mænjuəl 'ælfəbit]: (盲人使用的) 手语字母.

2. Braille [breil]: 布莱叶盲文。(法国人 Louis Braille 创制的用凸点符号供盲人书写、摸读的文字符号体系, 后来这一体系即以 Braille 的名字命名。)

3. There was ... effort. 她缺少有经验的人可以请教, 而且因为很多人认为那将劳而无功, 因此连鼓励她这样做的人也很少。(few 前省去了 there were.)

4. to establish her authority over Helen: 在海伦的心目中树立她的威信。

After a few stormy scenes, however, Miss Sullivan's patience and good sense were rewarded¹. Once she had succeeded in controlling Helen, she could proceed to teach her. Once having gained her respect, she could rule with love and not with fear.

Miss Sullivan invented her own methods to suit the situation, since she had no examples to follow. It is remarkable that she discovered many of the methods used today in teaching foreign languages². She observed that ordinary small children learn their own language, not in the classroom, but at home, unconsciously, from hearing people around them talk³. They learn the names of things by asking questions. They gradually learn to form sentences by copying the grown-ups' patterns of speech. When they finally get to school, they are taught a lot of rules for what they have been doing unconsciously right along, communicating correctly in their native tongue⁴.

Anne Sullivan tried to introduce Helen Keller to language in the same manner, by means of the manual alphabet. You will read Miss Keller's account of her first awakening to the *idea* of language, when she finally realized the connection between the sensations⁵

1. were rewarded: 得到了报答; 取得了成功。 2. It is... languages: 她发现了许多今天教授外语所采取的方法, 这是很不寻常的。 3. from hearing people around them talk: 在听他们周围人们的谈话中 (学习语言)。 4. native tongue: 本族语; 母语。 5. sensations: 知觉; 感觉。

in her hands and the real things in the world, and understood that the signs W-A-T-E-R, spelled into one hand, represented the cool liquid that was flowing over her other hand. From that moment, Helen eagerly asked the names for everything she touched, and her mind took in knowledge so fast that her teacher could hardly keep up with her¹. But at no time did Miss Sullivan talk to Helen in a simplified, unnatural manner. She always talked to her in complete, correct sentences, and she asked everyone in the family to do the same, even though² she knew Helen would not consciously understand all the words being spelled into her hand. Helen, like any other child, understood what interested her at the moment. The rest went into some unconscious level of her mind, to reappear when she was ready to use it³. Nine months after learning her first word, Helen was able to write complete sentences in her letters⁴. Seldom has a devoted teacher been so splendidly rewarded⁵. It is true that Helen Keller was an unusually gifted, eager pupil⁶. But the accomplishment

1. her mind took in knowledge ... with her: 她的脑筋吸收知识那样迅速, 老师很难跟得上她。(so ... that 是个句型, 意为“这样(或那样)……以致……”, that 后是结果状语从句, 修饰 so 后的副词或形容词。) 2. even though: 虽说。 3. The rest went ... it. 其他知识, 她虽学了, 却并不清楚, 不过, 将来她一旦要用时, 这些知识便会显示出它们的作用。 4. in her letters: 用她的字母(这里指盲人手语字母)。 5. Seldom has a devoted teacher been so splendidly rewarded. 很少有一个热心的教师得到过这样高的报答。 6. It is true ... pupil. 确实, 海伦·凯勒是个天赋非凡的、求知欲极强的学生。

of releasing this child's mind was Anne Sullivan's¹.

Once a gate had been opened on the world, Helen never again felt the urge to be angry or violent. She was naturally loving and responsive to other people. As the first deaf-blind person to receive a complete education, Helen was regarded as more than an individual. She was an educational event². The whole world read reports of her progress with interest, and her education was assisted by gifts of books and even money from well-wishers all over the world. Not only teachers, but writers and other people concerned with the life of the mind and the spirit took an interest in this brilliant girl and her skillful teacher³. When they met her, they were not only impressed by her brilliance, but charmed by her beauty and her warmth, and many became her life-long friends⁴.

Miss Keller wrote the book you are about to read⁵, telling of her early education, while she was still a college student. She graduated with honors from Radcliffe College in 1904. Since that time she has carried on a career that had really begun at the age of eleven,

1. But the accomplishment ... was Anne Sullivan's. 但是这个孩子的思想得以自由则是安妮·萨利文的成就。 2. She was an educational event. 她的经历成为教育界的一桩大事。 3. Not only teachers, ... teacher. 不但教师们, 而且作家们以及其他知识界人士都对这个聪明伶俐的女孩和她的教导有方的老师很感兴趣。 4. life-long friends: 终生朋友。 5. Miss Keller wrote the book you are about to read: 凯勒小姐写了你们就要读的这本书(指本书故事正文)。(to be about to do something 意为“即将或正要做某事”。)

6. *urge: "a strong wish or need"*

when she arranged a tea party at which she collected money to help the education of a smaller deaf-blind child. Now in her eighties, Miss Keller has spent her busy life in the service of other handicapped people¹. She has traveled widely and has friends all over the world. She has written a number of other books, including a biography of her beloved Miss Sullivan, called *Teacher, Anne Sullivan Macy*².

CHAPTER ONE

I was born on June 27, 1880, in Tuscumbia³, a little town in northern Alabama. The beginning of my life was simple and much like every other little life. I came, I saw, I conquered⁴, as the first baby in every family always does. There was the usual amount of discussion about a name for me. It was a very important matter. Everybody agreed about that. My father suggested the name of Mildred Campbell⁵, an ancestor⁶ whom he admired very much, and he refused to take any further part in the discussion. My mother wanted me to be called after her mother, whose maiden

1. in the service of other handicapped people: 为别的残废者服务。
2. Anne Sullivan Macy ['æn 'salivan 'meisi]: 安妮·萨利文·梅西(本书作者的老师的姓名)。3. Tuscumbia [təs'kambjə]: 塔斯堪培亚(美国地名)。
4. I came...conquered: 我来了, 我看见了, 我征服了。(这是引用恺撒的话, 表示一切如愿。)5. Mildred Campbell ['mildrid 'kæmbell]: 米尔德里德·贝尔(人名), 6. ancestor ['ænsistə]: 祖宗; 祖先。

name¹ was Helen Everett². But in the excitement of carrying me to church, my father lost the name on the way,³ very naturally, since it was not the one he had chosen. When the minister⁴ asked him for it, he just remembered that I was supposed to be called after my grandmother, and he gave her married name,⁵ Helen Adams.⁶

I am told that while I was still in long dresses I showed many signs of an eager, determined character. I insisted upon doing everything that I saw other people do. At six months I could say "hello," and one day I attracted everybody's attention by saying, "Tea, tea, tea," quite plainly. Even after the illness that took away my sight and hearing, I remembered one of the words that I had learned in those early months. It was the word *water*, and I continued to make some sound for that word after all other speech was lost.

They tell me I walked the day I was a year old. My mother had just taken me out of the bath and was holding me in her arms when I was suddenly attracted by the moving shadows of the leaves that danced in the sunlight on the smooth floor. I slipped from my mother's arms and almost ran toward them. Then I

1. maiden name: 出嫁前的名字。 2. Everett ['everit]: 埃弗雷特 (人名)。 3. my father lost the name on the way: 我的父亲在路上忘掉了那个字。 4. 'minister ('ministə): 牧师。 5. married name: (女人) 婚后。 6. Adams ['ædəmz]: 当亚斯 (人名)。

felt afraid and I fell down and cried for my mother to take me up in her arms.

Until the time of my illness, I lived in a tiny house which was just a few steps from the big house that belonged to my father's parents. Our little house was completely covered with vines,¹ climbing roses and honeysuckle.² It was a favorite place for hummingbirds³ and bees. The old-fashioned garden was like heaven for me.

But these happy days did not last long. One brief spring, musical with the song of robins and mockingbirds,⁴ one summer, rich in fruit and roses, one autumn of red and gold, sped by and left their gifts⁵ at the feet of an eager, delighted child. Then, in the sad, dark month of February, the illness came which closed my eyes and ears and left me with no more consciousness than a baby who has just been born.⁶ The doctor thought I could not live. Early one morning, however, the fever left me as suddenly and mysteriously as it had come. There was great happiness in the family that morning. No one, not even the doctor, knew that I would never see or hear again.

1. vines: 藤; 蔓. 2. honeysuckle ['hanisakl]: 忍冬属植物. 3. hummingbirds: 蜂鸟 (一种个体小, 颜色鲜艳的小鸟, 飞行速度快, 飞时发出鸣声). 4. mockingbirds: 模仿鸟 (产于美国南部, 善于模仿别种鸟的叫声). 5. gifts: 礼物 (这里意为“益处”). 6. left me with no more consciousness than a baby who has just been born: (疾病) 给我留下的知觉并不多于初生的婴儿.

I have some confused memories of that illness. I remember my mother's kindness and love as she nursed me through those painful hours. I remember waking, after a restless sleep and turning my hot, dry eyes to the wall, away from the light which I had loved so much, and which now came to me less brightly every day.¹ Except for these few memories,² it all seems very unreal, like a bad dream. Gradually I got used to the darkness and silence that surrounded me and forgot that it had ever been any different, until she came—my teacher—who was to set my spirit free. But during the first nineteen months of my life I had seen broad green fields, a bright sky, trees, and flowers, which the darkness that followed could not completely take away from me.

I cannot remember what happened during the first months after my illness. I only know that I stayed in my mother's arms or held to her dress as she did her house work. My hands felt every object and observed every motion, and in this way I learned to know many things. Soon I felt the need of "talking" with others, and I began to make a few signs. A shake of the head

1. I remember waking ... every day: 我记得我从不安的昏睡中醒了过来, 并把发烫、枯涩的眼睛转向墙里, 躲开光亮, 这种光亮我曾那么喜爱, 而现在于我却是日渐黯淡了。(remember 有两个并列的宾语: waking 和 turning.) 2. except for these few memories: 除了这么很少几点还记得之外(意即别的都不记得了)。

meant "No," and a nod "Yes," a pull meant "Come," and a push "Go." When I wanted bread, I would go through the motions of cutting pieces and buttering them. If I wanted ice-cream¹ for dinner, I made the sign for working the freezer and shivered to indicate cold.² My mother succeeded in making me understand a good deal. I always knew when she wished me to bring her something, and I would run upstairs or anywhere else she indicated.

I understood a good deal of what was going on around me. At five I learned to fold and put away the clean clothes when they were brought in, and I distinguished my own from the rest. I knew when my mother and aunt were going out by the way they dressed, and I always begged to go with them. I was always sent for when there was company,³ and waved my hand to the guests when they left. I think I had some idea of what this meant. One day some gentlemen called on my mother, and I felt the shutting of the front door and other sounds that indicated their arrival. I ran upstairs before anyone could stop me, to put on my idea of⁴ a company dress. Standing in front of the mirror, as I knew other people did, I put oil on my hair

1. ice-cream: 冰淇淋。 2. shivered [ʃɪvəd] to indicate cold: 用颤抖表示“凉”的意思。 3. I was always sent for when there was company: 有客人来的时候, 总派人来把我叫去。(to send for somebody: 派人去叫某人。) 4. my idea of: 我喜爱的...

and covered my face with powder. Then I pinned a veil over my head so that it covered my face and fell in folds down to my shoulders, and tied a large bustle¹ around my small waist, so that it almost came down to the floor in back. Dressed like this, I went down to help entertain the company.

I do not remember when I first realized that I was different from other people, but I knew it before my teacher came to me. I had noticed that my mother and my friends did not use signs as I did when they wanted anything done, but talked with their mouths. Sometimes I stood between two persons who were having a conversation and touched their lips. I could not understand and was angry. I moved my lips and made wild movements with my arms without any result.² This made me so angry at times that I kicked and shouted until I was tired out. As the desire to express myself grew, this happened daily, sometimes several times a day.

My parents were sad and puzzled.³ They wanted me to be educated, but did not know how to do it. We lived a long way from any school for the blind or deaf,⁴ and it did not seem very likely that anyone would come to such a small, far away town as Tuscum

1. bustle ['bʌsl]: (十九世纪末流行的妇女用来撑背后的裙褶的) 腰垫, 裙撑. 2. without any result: 毫无结果. 3. puzzled: 为难; 不知怎么办才好. 4. the blind or deaf: 瞎子或聋子. (有些形容词前加 the 则表示这一类人.)