

INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH READERS



英语国家概况



中级英语读物丛书

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*A General Survey
of English-speaking Nations*

英语国家概况

陈景民 朱小棣 选注

江苏教育出版社

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编 者 的 话

为了帮助高中学生以及具有同等英语程度的读者较快地学好英语，我们特编辑《中级英语读物》丛书，由江苏教育出版社分辑出版。这套书包括：《世界优秀故事选》、《英语幽默及语言游戏》、《英美名诗选》、《英语现代散文选》、《国外英语课文选》、《外国寓言童话选》、《外国神话与传说》、《英语科普小品选》以及《英语国家概况》等。选材不求系统、全面，主要是向读者提供一些英语注释读物，作为学习英语的辅导材料。

本书选收国外出版的介绍美国、英国、澳大利亚、新西兰及加拿大等英语国家概况的文章共三十六篇。这些文章简要地描述了主要英语国家的地理环境、自然条件、物产矿藏、风景名胜、民族特性、文化教育、体育娱乐、衣食住行、风俗习惯等情况。选文内容丰富，题材广泛，语言规范。为了便于读者理解文章内容，我们对文中出现的难点及某些语言现象作了较详细的译注，并提供了一些背景性知识。

我们水平有限，本书注释中可能有欠妥或错讹之处，希望读者批评指正。

编 者

一九八四年五月

CONTENTS

目 录

The United States of America

1. U. S. A. (3)
美 国
2. The Land of America (6)
美国的土地
3. The 'Melting Pot' (11)
“熔炉”
4. The Climate of the United States (17)
美国的气候
5. Washington D. C. (20)
华盛顿特区
6. New York City (25)
纽约市
7. Chicago (32)
芝加哥
8. San Francisco (38)
旧金山

9.	Los Angeles	(44)
	洛杉矶	
10.	U. S. Natural Resources	(51)
	美国的自然资源	
11.	U. S. Agriculture	(57)
	美国农业	
12.	Manufacturing Industries of America	(59)
	美国制造业	
13.	U. S. Communications	(64)
	美国通讯系统	
14.	U. S. Transportation	(69)
	美国交通运输	
15.	The Professions of Americans	(74)
	美国人的职业	
16.	U. S. Music and Literature	(79)
	美国音乐和文学	
17.	Food and Housing of Americans	(84)
	美国人的食物和住房	
18.	Education in the United States	(86)
	美国教育	
19.	Youth in the United States	(91)
	美国青年	
20.	The Recreation of Americans	(95)
	美国人的娱乐	

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

21. Great Britain and Ireland (103)
大不列颠及爱尔兰
22. What Is the Weather Like in England (107)
英格兰的气候
23. The Peoples of Britain (110)
不列颠各民族
24. London (114)
伦敦
25. London's Parks (119)
伦敦的公园
26. Sport in Britain (123)
英国体育运动
27. Sketches of College Life in England (127)
英国大学生活简介
28. Christmas in England (131)
英国的圣诞节
29. Manchester—One of the Largest Cities in
England (134)
曼彻斯特——英国最大的城市之一
30. Brighton — the Coast Resort of England (137)
布赖顿——英国的海滨游览胜地

The Commonwealth of Australia

31. Australia, the Continent of Sunshine (1) (141)
阳光灿烂的大陆——澳大利亚(一)
32. Australia, the Continent of Sunshine (2) (146)
阳光灿烂的大陆——澳大利亚(二)

New Zealand

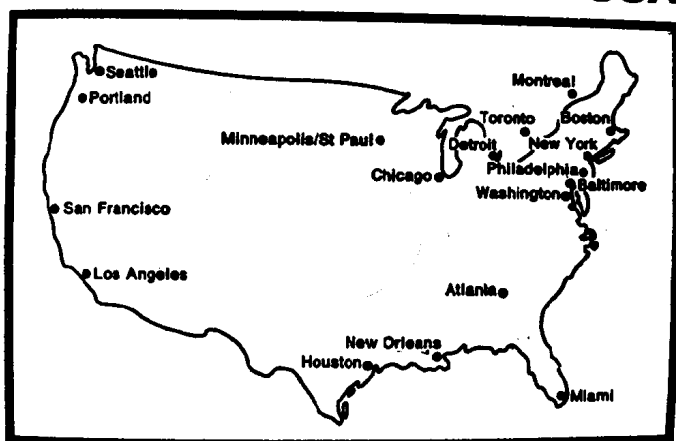
33. New Zealand — the Green Precious Stone in
the South Pacific Ocean (1) (153)
南太平洋的绿宝石——新西兰(一)
34. New Zealand — the Green Precious Stone in
the South Pacific Ocean (2) (158)
南太平洋的绿宝石——新西兰(二)

Canada

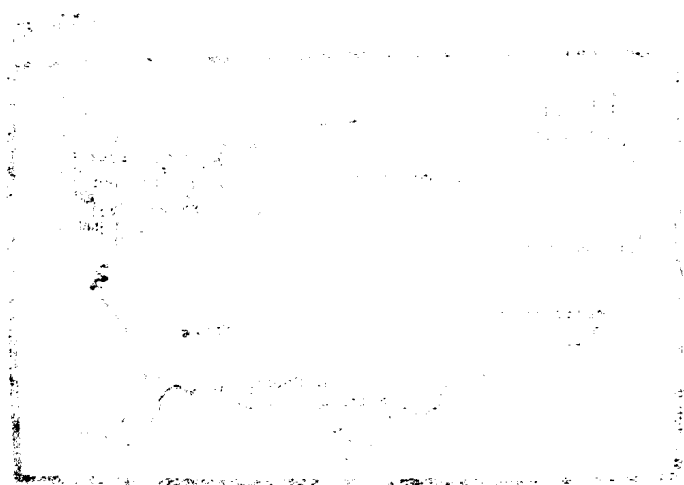
35. Canada, the Land “from Sea to Sea” (1) (165)
“两面濒海”的陆地——加拿大(一)
36. Canada, the Land “from Sea to Sea” (2) (169)
“两面濒海”的陆地——加拿大(二)

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

USA



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1. U. S. A.

The United States, or the United States of America, is a federal republic consisting of 50 states and the District of Columbia.¹ The country is called the USA or simply America. It covers the width of the north American continent between Canada and Mexico and also includes Alaska and the Hawaiian Islands.² The United States is the fourth largest nation in the world in terms of area and population.³ Its abundant natural resources⁴ have helped it to lead the world⁵ in industrial output and agricultural production.

The United States originated with the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.⁶ The Constitution creating the present federal system of government was written in 1787 and ratified by 1789.⁷ As Americans pushed westward, building settlements in the wilderness, new states were added to the original 13 on the Atlantic Coast.⁸ Alaska and Hawaii, the 49th and 50th states, respectively, were admitted to the Union⁹ in 1959. The frontier experience played an important role in shaping the American character and institutions.¹⁰

The U. S. Constitution, with its provisions for popular representation and its guarantee of individual freedoms, in-

spired revolutionaries throughout the world during the 19th century.¹¹ American influence became even more widespread in the 20th century, when the United States became a world economic and military power. Even the tastes of American consumers, from rock music to Coca-Cola, spread to people in every land¹².

【注 释】

1. a federal republic consisting of 50 states and the District of Columbia: 包括五十个州和哥伦比亚特区的联邦共和国。

2. It covers the width of ... and the Hawaiian Islands: 它包括加拿大和墨西哥之间广阔的北美洲, 还包括阿拉斯加和夏威夷群岛。Hawaiian Islands: 夏威夷群岛(构成美国夏威夷州的一群岛屿)。Hawaii: 夏威夷(美国的第五十州, 统辖整个夏威夷群岛, 首府为檀香山 Honolulu)。美国最大的海军基地珍珠港就在这个岛上。

3. in terms of area and population: 从面积和人口方面来说。

4. abundant natural resources: 丰富的自然资源。resource 常用复数。

5. to lead the world: 居世界首位。

6. The United States originated with the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776: 美国的建立起始于一七七六年七月四日签署的“独立宣言”。originate with: 开始于; 起源于。the Declaration of Independence: (美国)独立宣言。

7. The Constitution creating the present federal system of government was written in 1787 and ratified by 1789: 产生现行联邦政体的美国宪法于一七八七年写成, 一七八九年批准。the Constitution: 宪法, 这里特指美国宪法, 其前加定冠词, Constitution 开头大写。

8. As Americans pushed westward... on the Atlantic Coast: 随着

美国人向西方扩展并在荒野建立居留地之后，在大西洋沿岸原有十三个州的基础上又增加了新的州。 be added to the original: 在原有的基础上增加。美国五十个州(在行政上相当于我国的省、自治区)，除原来独立时十三个州之外，其余各州大多数是在十九世纪一一加入联邦政府的。除原来十三个州以外，许多州的界线都是按照整齐的经纬线画定的。这种划分州界的办法是由那些深受数学影响的组织者们制定的。

9. respectively, were admitted to the Union: 先后分别加入了联邦。

10. The frontier experience played an important role in shaping the American character and institutions: 边疆开拓在形成美国的特性和习俗方面起了重要作用。 play an important role in: 在...方面起重要作用。

11. The U.S. Constitution ... during the 19th century: 美国宪法以其普遍代表性的条款及其对个人自由的保障，鼓舞了十九世纪全世界的革命者。

12. Even the tastes of American consumers, from rock music to Coca-Cola, spread to people in every land: 甚至美国消费者的嗜好(从摇滚音乐到可口可乐)都遍及各国人民之中。

2. The Land of America

The United States is a varied land — of forests, deserts, mountains, high flat lands and fertile plains.¹ Almost every kind of climate may be found but the country lies mostly in the temperate zone.² The continental United States stretches 4,500 kilometers from the Atlantic Ocean on the east to the Pacific Ocean on the west.³ It borders Canada on the north, and reaches south to Mexico and the Gulf of Mexico.⁴ A fast railroad train, traveling 96 kilometers an hour, takes more than 48 hours to cross the country.

A jet plane crosses the continental United States from east to west in about five hours. Taking off from an Atlantic coast airport, the plane is soon flying over the gentle slopes of the Appalachian Mountains.⁵ Then, for hundreds of kilometers it crosses the fertile fields of the farm belt⁶ of the great Middle West. To the north, on clear days, passengers may see the five Great Lakes⁷ located between the United States and Canada. Continuing into the West, the plane flies over vast prairies⁸ and rough cattle-grazing country.⁹ Soon the snow-topped Rocky Mountains appear in the distance. After crossing these high ranges, the plane can almost glide down into the rich valleys of California and,

finally, to a landing not far from the beaches of the Pacific Ocean.¹⁰

Including the states of Alaska and Hawaii, the United States covers an area of 9 million square kilometers. Alaska borders on northwestern Canada; Hawaii lies in the Pacific 3,200 kilometers from the mainland.¹¹ Alaska is the largest in area of the 50 states, and Texas,¹² in the southern part of the country, is second in size. Texas alone is larger than France, and Alaska is twice as big as Texas.

From the Appalachian Mountains in the East to the Rocky Mountains in the West, the center of the country is drained by the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers and their branches.¹³ These rivers form a 19,000-kilometer system of waterways¹⁴ that are connected to the Great Lakes in the north by a canal. The Mississippi is one of the world's great rivers; it was known to American Indians as the "father of waters."¹⁵ Water from the source of its main branch, the Missouri River, flows about 6,400 kilometers from the northern Rocky Mountains, to the mouth of the Mississippi in the Gulf of Mexico.¹⁶

Other important rivers are the Yukon¹⁷ in Alaska, about 3,000 kilometers long; the Rio Grande,¹⁸ which flows for some 3,200 kilometers and forms part of the United States-Mexico border; the Columbia,¹⁹ which rises in western Canada²⁰ and continues in the United States for about 1,900 kilometers west of the Rocky Mountains; and the

Colorado,²¹ which begins in the Rocky Mountains and flows southwest for some 2,300 kilometers. For 342 of these kilometers the Colorado flows through the magnificent Grand Canyon, carved through the ages by the river's waters.²² Other well-known rivers include the Hudson,²³ which meets the Atlantic Ocean at New York City; the Potomac,²⁴ bordering the national capital at Washington; and the Ohio,²⁵ a branch of the Mississippi that flows west from the Appalachian Mountains.

【注 释】

1. The United States is a varied land...and fertile plains: 美国是一个具有多种地形的国家,有森林、沙漠、山脉、平坦的高地和肥沃的平原。varied: 多种多样的。

2. but the country lies mostly in the temperate zone: 虽然这个国家的大部分位于温带。lie in: 位于。

3. The continental United States stretches...on the west: 美国的大陆部分从东面的大西洋向西延伸四千五百公里到太平洋。stretch: 伸展, 绵亘。the Atlantic Ocean: 大西洋。the Pacific Ocean: 太平洋。

4. It borders Canada ... the Gulf of Mexico: 美国北邻加拿大, 南接墨西哥和墨西哥湾。

5. the gentle slopes of the Appalachian Mountains: 阿巴拉契亚山脉并不陡峭的山坡。

6. the farm belt: 农业地带, 农业区。

7. the five Great Lakes: 五大湖, 位于美国与加拿大之间, 即苏必利尔湖 Lake Superior (世界第一大湖)、休伦湖 Lake Huron、密歇根湖 Lake Michigan、伊利湖 Lake Erie 和安大略湖 Lake Ontario,

是世界最大的淡水湖群,有“北美地中海”之称。

8. prairie (=grassland): [美]大草原。

9. rough cattle-grazing country: 崎岖不平的畜牧区。

10. After crossing these high ranges...to a landing not far from the beaches of the Pacific Ocean: 飞越这些高山峻岭之后,飞机几乎可以向加利福尼亚州的肥沃谷地滑翔而下,最后在离太平洋海滨不远的地方着陆。California: 加利福尼亚州,一八五〇年成为美国的第三十一个州,又称“黄金州”(The Golden State)。

11. mainland: 本土。

12. Texas: 得克萨斯州,一八四五年成为美国的第二十八个州。

13. From the Appalachian Mountains in the East...by the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers and their branches: 从美国东部的阿巴拉契亚山脉到西部的落基山脉为这个国家的中心地带,由密西西比河、密苏里河及其支流所灌溉。

14. waterway: 航道;水路。

15. the “father of waters”: “江河之父”。

16. Water from the source of its main branch...to the mouth of the Mississippi in the Gulf of Mexico: 密西西比河若从其发源于落基山脉北部的最大支流密苏里河的源头算起,至墨西哥湾的密西西比河口全长约六千四百公里。

17. the Yukon: 育空河。

18. the Rio Grande: 格兰河。

19. the Columbia: 哥伦比亚河。

20. rises in western Canada: 发源于加拿大西部。

21. the Colorado: 科罗拉多河。

22. For 342 of these kilometers the Colorado flows...by the river's waters. 这两千三百公里长的科罗拉多河有三百四十二公里流经壮观的大峡谷,这大峡谷是由河水经过长年冲刷而形成的。