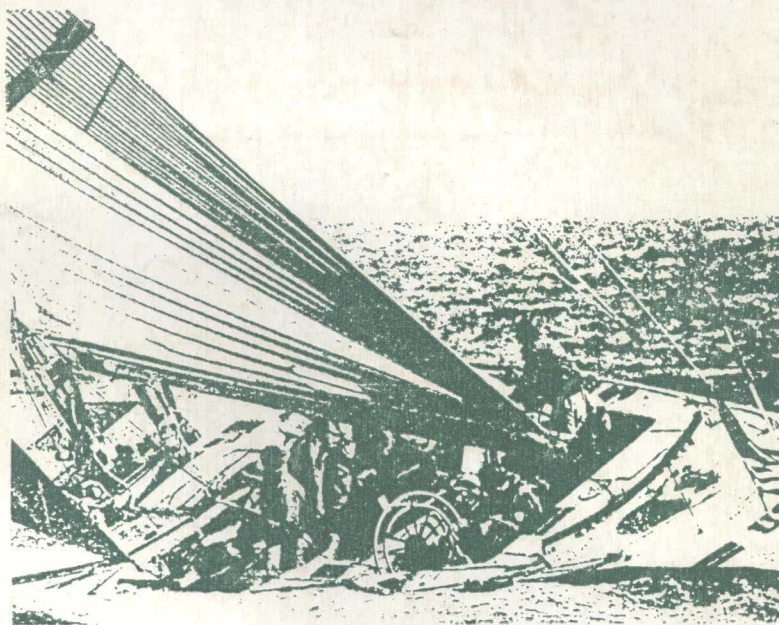


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# 探险者的足迹



Going It Alone

武汉测绘科技大学出版社

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藏书章

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# 1 *Walking the length of South America*

Walking, says Sebastian Snow, is a hobby which everyone can enjoy. There are 'no companions to let you down ...no engine to fail'. He makes it seem very simple. But how many people could finish, or even begin, the walk that he made?

In February 1973, he set out from the city of Ushuaia at the bottom of South America, farther south than any other city in the world, and walked north—through seven countries, in all weathers, in all temperatures, along main roads, along narrow tracks, along no tracks at all. He walked the length of South America as far as Panama City. He walked for a year and a half.

And he walked the whole way. If cars and lorries offered him a lift, he answered 'No thank you', and pointed to his head to show that he was mad. When he stayed in a city and roed in a bus or car, he carefully continued his walk from the exact point where he had entered the city. 'I was always, always honest about walking through it from end to end ...I never cheated over this,' he writes.

As this odd Englishman walked through their countries, the South Americans called him 'the rucksack man'. A big problem before he started was what to put in his rucksack. He had to take a tent and a sleeping-bag, his glasses and contact lenses, medicines and maps, and—most important—several pairs of boots. His answer to the clothes problem was to wear wool in all temperatures; he never much minded being uncomfortable. His answer to the food problem was to carry a few things like

bread, but mainly to eat at local restaurants. He took a plastic cup so that he could drink from streams. He never much minded dirty water and often got ill.

And so on 5 February 1973, carrying a rucksack with a weight of sixty pounds, he began his journey. He had not trained very much, and the first day he only walked a few miles before making his first camp. He took one and a half hours to put up his tent (again, he had not practised!) and it fell on top of him in the night. Soon, however, he got used to walking with a heavy load. But he was not trying to walk South America in the fastest possible time, so he often stopped to stay with friends or kind strangers.

The first part of the journey was across the Argentinian part of the island of Tierra del Fuego. He walked through valleys, over mountains and through forests. He was entertained on big sheep farms. And once three friendly policeman took his rucksack to day's journey up the road for him while he continued on foot.

A three-hour boat trip took him to Chile. Again, people were kind and generous, and he stayed on farms and with men working on the roads. He wished he could continue north through Chile, but there was ice on the mountains, so he crossed into Argentina again.

Argentina is big. Snow took seven months to walk it. The early part of his journey was in the winter. The days were short, the nights in his tent were long and freezing. The worst winds he had ever known threw him from one side of the road to the other and knocked him to the ground. Then he was told that it was impossible in winter to walk over the high mountain track in front of him. But he crossed it with a guide, in deep snow. After this the walking was 'easy', but for three days he

was without water, except rain water from the road. He came to a town where he was surprised to see German and Swiss tourist shops. But it was raining hard, and Sebastian Snow was NOT a tourist. He walked on .

He appeared on Argentine television, and was asked—why was he walking? He said he liked to get to know the people whose country he was passing through; second, 'Walking taught me to accept and to live with loneliness'; and third, long-distance walking teaches that 'nothing in this world is so bad, or so good' as you first think.

Snow certainly needed this kind of courage. He suffered great pain from his contact lenses, because at least two pairs disappeared inside his eyes. He was also bitten by a dog. But he had good luck too. One morning a chicken laid an egg for his breakfast just outside his tent! And everywhere the people were kind. Men working on the roads gave him somewhere to sleep; restaurants and shops gave him food . Everyone was polite, although he was dirty and smelled awful. So awful, that some English people he stayed with made him have a bath—his second in eight months! At last he reached the frontier with Bolivia, He had walked 5600 kilometres.

He was surprised to find that he could wander across the frontier without his passport, and a friendly Bolivian policeman showed him round the town. The customs men were helpful too; they seemed to understand why he was walking, and carefully added up distances for him on the map. But farther on, the police took a rather unfriendly interest in him and followed him around.

Bolivia was difficult walking country. There were treeless, plantless mountains, where he could 'feel' the silence, a strange experience for a lonely traveller carrying a lot of money. In the

high flat country, he saw lots of llamas. Looking after them were South American Indian women in hard round hats, or little boys, or sometimes just a single big black dog. These Indian women threw stones at him if he tried to take photographs of them, but otherwise were friendly.

He walked well here. But he felt breathless, perhaps because of the great height, perhaps because he usually only had a hard piece of bread and strong black coffee for breakfast. When he reached La Paz, the capital, he felt awful. But he soon decided there was no need to worry—he was not really ill. But he had lost so much weight that his rucksack was too heavy.

If Argentina had the biggest of everything in the world as the Argentinians had told him—Snow decided that Bolivia had the highest. He visited Potosi, once famous for its silver, and probably the highest town of its size in the world (4280 metres). And he stopped at Guaqui on Lake Titicaca, one of the highest ports in the world.

At the frontier, there was nobody to look at his passport and let him leave Bolivia. It was Sunday. Snow sent three boys to find the guard, who arrived an hour and a half later saying he had been at church. Snow crossed into Peru.

Because he was entering Peru on foot, and not in the usual way by car or plane, Snow had been unable to get a tourist card. Instead he had letters from the British and Peruvian governments, and these helped him through no fewer than ten control points. As in Bolivia, he met many friendly Indians and smiling children in Peru, but at times he got fed up with the repeated question—‘Where have you come from?’, ‘Where are you going?’, and replied ‘From the moon to the moon’.

In November, Snow reached Cuzco, a city built by the Spanish on an older Inca city, but in 1973 full of German and

Japanese tourists—and two Australian women, Aunt Emma (aged 60) and her niece Anna (29). They quickly agreed to walk with him to Machu Picchu, the old Inca city high in the mountains, which had not been discovered until 1911. Not surprisingly, the two women were unable to walk all the way. They did the last, steep part of the five-day journey by train, while Snow walked determinedly along the railway line. The three of them spent a day looking at the ruins of the 'Lost City', and then the women said goodbye. Snow left his second pair of boots at Machu Picchu. He had worn them out.

A week later, Snow was sitting in a restaurant beside the road writing his notes. He had just written as a joke 'Met no one I knew' when a young Swiss couple drove up. 'Isn't your name Sebastian Snow?' they asked. They had heard about him from a schoolteacher who had met Snow in Argentina eight months before. Small world!

The next day was one of the hardest. Snow's legs felt weak, and for the first time he did not reach the place he was hoping to camp in. However, after two days' rest he went on again. Some days he walked through snow storms, some days he was hot and sticky. But he wanted to reach the capital, Lima, for Christmas. He did.

After Lima came the worst part of the whole journey—a main road through the desert. He was carrying his heavy rucksack, and always wore his thick jacket because it was too big to pack. All day his body was hot and wet, but his lips and mouth were dry. He had to choose between walking in the road, or walking in hot, soft sand. He chose the road, but a moment's mistake could mean death. Three times he had a narrow escape, when cars or lorries touched his jacket as they rushed past him. Every evening he rubbed his feet for two hours to remove the



pain.

On 5 January 1974, when staying in a small hotel, he was woken up in the middle of the night by an odd movement. The bed, the walls, everything shook. He ran to the hotel manager's room, but the man had gone to sleep again. Peruvians are not frightened by earthquakes! A few days later Snow decided to have a rest. It was his forty-fifth birthday.

Snow had walked for over a year when he reached Ecuador and, not for the first time, slept at a frontier police station. Several days farther along the road he met Chris Bonington, the mountain climber, who had flown out from England to join him. After 383 days of walking, it was good to have an old friend to talk to. But Bonington found the endless road boring and preferred to climb over rough ground. Once he accepted a lift. Snow, of course, did not. Walking was his life now; he had no wish to cheat. Bonington spent ten days with Snow, and his company made Snow see the risks he was taking. He might be knocked down by a car, or killed for his money, or he might catch some serious illness.

But on he walked alone. One day he felt very ill and feared he was suffering from 'mountain sickness'. But he soon recovered. And at 1 : 10 a. m. on 14 March he arrived in Quito, the capital, having walked 100 kilometres in eighteen hours at a height of 2600 metres. For the last part of this walk he had been in the dark with heavy traffic, and nearly blind because his contact lenses had fallen out of his eyes. He meant to rest in Quito, but did not. He was even woken up one night to help rescue a friend who had got lost while climbing a mountain.

By the time Snow reached Colombia he looked so poor and dirty that people were offering him money. It was a change from being asked for money, and it made him feel safer. Now

he started making preparations for the last, most difficult part of the journey—the wet, almost trackless jungle of the Darien Gap. First, he had to get himself in better condition. A doctor said he would lose all his toenails if he was not careful. A dentist took out five of his teeth ; they were bad because he had not eaten the right food . He got a new light-weight tent and sleeping-bag, new boots, sharp knives for cutting a path through the jungle, a gun and more medicines.

By now he had walked nearly 13 000 kilometres and reached the farthest point north in South America. But he did not want to stop here . He was told that the Darien Gap, difficult in the dry season, was impossible in the rainy season. But this news did not stop him. With a twenty-year-old Canadian, Wade Davis, various Indian guides and with mules to carry the heavy luggage, he disappeared into the jungle.

The rains had started. They walked through sticky mud, and crossed rivers with water up to their necks. Sometimes they found sticks in the ground, marking the future main road which will one day join North and South America . But often there were no tracks, no people. After a week they reached the Panamanian frontier. The Colombian guides with their mules said goodbye, and Sebastian and Wade went on with three new guides. Then Snow hurt his ankle, and for the next three weeks every step was painful.

The jungle was full of wild animals, but one of the villages was even more dangerous for them. The police emptied the contents of their rucksacks on the floor, and put Snow's money in piles on a desk. Soon everyone in the village knew about this 'rich' Englishman, and some very unpleasant men followed them. At this point Snow hurt his other ankle. But they managed to find some trustworthy guides, who helped them through

the next bit of jungle. Three times they camped out in heavy rain. And then, with very little food left they ... were lost. They met some Indians, who said it would take them two more weeks to cross the Gap. But next day Wade suddenly gave a cry of happiness: 'Sebastoan, we are through...we are through the Darien Gap! Here's the road. 'And indeed it was. They were on a wide dirt road. They shot a bird and ate it. Poor Wade was so hungry that he ate the bones too.

Even this was not the end of the journey. They had several more days of road walking, and then there was another seventy kilometres of jungle. Snow thought it would be easy. He was wrong. Those seventy kilometres took him five days. By now Wade Davis had returned to Colombia. Sebastian Snow walked into Panama City alone.

He had intended to walk up through North America. But his body had suffered enough. He had lost seventy pounds in weight and five teeth. He was covered with bites and spots and blood. The skin was coming off his feet. He was told that if he continued, he would lose all his teeth and all his hair. He decided that 14 000 kilometres was enough. 'It had been a good walk'.

## I . Vocabulary

**hobby**['hɒbi] *n.* what you like to do when you are not working 业余爱好

**companion**[kəm'pæniən] *n.* a person who spends time with another because he is a friend or by chance 同伴

**track**[træk] *n.* rough, narrow road in the country 小道; rough marks that people, animals, cars, etc. make when they go along 足迹

**lorry**['lɒri] *n.* big vehicle that carries heavy loads; truck 载重货车; 卡车

**offer**[ˈɒlə] *v.* say that you will give, do or pay something if the other person wants it 提供

**lift**[lɪft] *n.* journey in another person's car 搭便车

**cheat**[tʃi:t] *v.* do something that is not honest 欺骗

**odd**[ɒd] *adj.* strang 奇怪的

**rucksack**[ˈrʌksæk] *n.* bag for food, clothes, ect. that you carry on your bag 大背包

**contact lens**[ˈkɒntækt lenz] very small thin lens specially shaped to fit closely over the eye to improve eyesight 隐形眼睛

**wool**[wul] *n.* soft hair of sheep 羊毛; wear wool 穿毛衣

**mind**[maɪnd] *v.* having a feeling against something 介意

**local**[ˈləʊkl] *adj.* of that place 当地的

**plastic**[ˈplæstɪk] *adj.* 塑料的

**stream**[stri:m] *n.* small river 溪流

**entertain**[ˌentəˈteɪn] *v.* give food and drink to visitors;招待

**generous**[ˈdʒenərəs] *adj.* liking to give things to people 大方的;慷慨的

**lonely**[ˈlʌnli] *adj.* sad because you are alone, with no friends 孤独的,寂寞的 loneliness *n.*

**bite**[baɪt] *v.* (past part. bitten, past tense bit)cut something with the teeth 咬

**awful**[ˈɔ:fl] *adj.* making you very afraid, very sad, or shocked 可怕的  
very bad 糟糕的

**customs**[ˈkʌstəmz] *n.* people who collect taxon things that you bring into the country 海关

**frontier**[ˈfrʌntiə] *n.* border;where one country meets another country 边界;国界

**steep**[sti:p] *adj.* with a sharp slope 陡峭的

**ruins**[ru:ns] *n.* building, etc. that has been broken, etc. 废墟

**sticky**[ˈstɪki] *adj.* difficult 极不愉快的

**desert**[ˈdezət] *n.* sandy country with little water and few plants 沙漠

**narrow escape**[ˈnæərə ɪsˈkeɪp] a case of only just avoiding evil 九死一生

**rescue**[ˈreskjʊ:] *v. n.* to save from harm or danger 营救

**earthquake**[ˈə:θkweɪk] *n.* sudden strong shaking of the ground 地震

**toenail**[təuneɪl] *n.* 脚趾甲

**jungle**[ˈdʒʌŋgl] *n.* thick forest in hot countries 热带丛林

**contents**['kɒntents] *n.* what is inside a thing or place 里面的东西

**trustworthy**['trʌst.wə:ði] *adj.* worthy of trust 值得信任的

## I . Phrases and Expressions

1. let someone down, break a promise 使失望

William let his parents down by not accepting the scholarship.

2. set out, start a journey, race, etc. 出发

We now set out to climb the hill.

3. at the bottom of, at the lowest part of 在下端

4. point to (at), to hold out a finger, a stick, etc. towards someone or something in order to cause someone to look 指向

She pointed to the house on the corner and said, 'That's where I live'

5. make one's camp, to set up or live in a camp 野营;

The scouts(侦察兵)made camp by the river.

6. get used to (sth. or doing sth.) knowing something well because you have seen, heard, tasted, done it, etc. a lot 习惯于

He got used to hard work.

7. get to (do), to succeed in (doing)成功;

When you get to know him you find he's quite different from how you imagined.

8. at least, no more than 至少

9. add up, to add (numbers) together to get a total 加起来

Every time I add these figures up, I get a different answer.

10. take an interest in... 对...感兴趣

11. throw at, to direct(words, looks, etc.) to a particular person 投向, 向...掷;

She threw me an angry look.

12. at times, sometimes 有时

13. get fed up with, be unhappy, tired and discontented, esp. about sth. dull one has had too much of 厌烦了

I'm fed up with your complaints.

14. take a risk, to do dangerous things 冒险;

You have to take a lot of risks in my job.

15. knock down, to strike to the ground with a car, bus, etc. 撞倒在地.

Alec was knocked down by a bus yesterday.

16. suffer from, to experience (something unpleasant, such as an illness)

esp. over a period of time: 受痛苦; 患

She suffers from headaches.

17. make preparations for, make an arrangement (for a future event) 作准备:

She is making preparations for her marriage.

18. get oneself in better condition, make oneself healthier 使自己更健康

19. manage to (do), be able to do something that is difficult 设法应付:

The box was heavy but he managed to carry it.

20. be covered with, have something all over yourself or itself 为...所覆盖:

A bear is covered with fur.

21. come off, to become unfastened or disconnected; A button came off as I was climbing over the wall.

### III. Reading Comprehension

Read the text and do the followed exercises. Each question is following by four alternatives, you are to choose the one best answer to each question from the four choices given.

1. Sebastian snow was called 'the rucksack man' because \_\_\_\_\_  
A. he looked like a rucksack  
B. he need a rucksack  
C. he had a rucksack on his back  
D. he lost a rucksack
2. Why did Snow walk north through Argentina instead of Chile?  
A. He could take a short cut (走捷径) if he walked through Argentina.  
B. The Argentinian people were more kind and generous than the Chilian people.  
C. In Argentina Snow could enjoy a tourist life.  
D. In Chile, ice-covered mountains were in the way
3. How did Snow feel when he reached Bolivia?  
A. He felt uncomfortable because of the awful weather.  
B. He was scared (害怕) because he carried a lot of money with him

while walking in a lonely place.

C. He felt at home for the people there were friendly.

D. He felt sick because he had lost much weight.

4. What was the 'Lost City' Snow visited?

A. a city which had been lost and whose ruins was found in 1911.

B. a city which had not been lost.

C. a city in which Snow lost his way.

D. a city in which Snow lost much money.

5. What did Chris Bonington, a mountain climber, feel about Snow's long walk?

A. It was boring and dangerous.

B. It was pleasant and interesting.

C. It was foolish of him to have a long walk.

D. It was no use to take a long distance walk.

## 2 *Flying over the North Pole*

One Sunday morning in 1959 a group of friends met for lunch, after a late party the night before. They were pretending to watch television, but most of them were half asleep. To wake the others up, one of them suddenly said, 'I'm going to learn to fly'. The speaker was Sheila Scott. She was already over thirty and her marriage had failed. She had been a nurse in the Second World War; now she was working in films and the theatre, but she did not feel very successful. She had even failed her driving test twice. Her friends laughed. Sheila could not drive a car; She would never be able to fly a plane. What a joke!

'Just you wait and see.' she told them. She wrote to several flying schools, and booked a first lesson for one pound. When the day came, she was so frightened that she got on the wrong train and had to take a taxi. But when she told the taxi-man that she was late for a flying lesson, he gave her such an admiring look that she felt better.

She took more lessons...and won her pilot's licence. She bought her own plane. It wasn't new, but it was hers. She entered a race and won. She was determined to make flying her life. She learned to fly at night. In thirty-six hours in 1964, she made fifteen flying records. She bought another plane—still with only one engine—and flew round the world alone. She flew in an England-to-Australia race and got lost in terrible weather.

And she dreamed of flying alone over the North Pole. No one had ever flown a light plane over the Pole, from the Equator to the Equator (which was the rule of the international flying or-



ganisation). And no woman had ever tried to 'go it alone'. Why did she want to? Air records are only, she says, a 'public reason'. More important is the wish to explore life. It is only in the air that she finds the deeper experiences of mind and body. In the air, she begins to understand what life means; on the ground, she likes comfort and 'long lazy mornings in bed'.

To do what she planned, she needed a plane with two engines, and for this she needed money. At the end of 1970 she was offered the money. Here was her chance. She began making preparations. She wrote thousands of letters. She studied the maps. She learned more about flying. Then suddenly—bad news. There was no money after all. But she was not going to be stopped now. She borrowed the money, and got the plane. Altering it for flying in icy conditions was a big job. Another problem was to make space for all the petrol she would need. Another question was how to keep the plane—and Sheila—warm. But lots of people now began to be interested. Pilots in England and members of the American Space Programme (the people who send men into space and up to the moon) all gave Sheila help.

Because she first had to fly to the Equator, Sheila Scott flew down over Africa in May 1971. Her old plane had been a friend; in this new one, she felt strange and lonely. She crossed the Equator; then she returned to London, ready for the Pole. Back in London, she found that thieves had been in her flat and taken everything of value—her jewellery, all the silver cups she had won for flying, hundreds of presents from people all over the world. Worse, some of her extra warm clothes and her camera had been stolen. But there was no time to worry about it. The weather was far more worrying. If she waited any longer, she would not be able to go that season.