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British and American Culture

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语言既是文化的一部分，又是文化的载体，语言与文化是统一的。二者相互依存。语言教学既有工具性，更有人文性和教育性；外语教学不仅包括语言知识的教学，还应当包括文化知识的教学。静止孤立地学习某种语言只能得语言知识的皮毛，不可能获得语言能力，不可能得体地运用该语言。因此，学习英语就应该了解英、美国家的地理、历史、政治、经济等方面的内容，通过学习，有助于学习者了解英美的思维方式、价值观念及生活方式，更好地掌握和运用英语语言，加深对语言和文体的理解，增强对文化差异的敏感性，达到巩固和提高英语水平之目的。

编著本书的主要目的是帮助非英语专业的大学生掌握英美文化的基础知识，并通过用英语学习文化知识，提高外语水平。

本书共分十六章，分别介绍了英美两国的概况、政治体制、经济、宗教、节假日、教育、文学等方面的基础知识。每章末尾有习题，习题分为术语解释和回答问题两种。书后还附有英国郡名、美国州名、历届英国首相及美国总统。

本书在编写过程中，山东轻工业学院外语系陈英教授阅读了全稿并提出了宝贵建议，谨在此表示感谢。

由于本书涉及内容较广，编者水平有限，编写中可能会出现不妥之处，恳请专家、读者批评指正。

Contents

Chapter 1	Outline of the United Kingdom	1
Chapter 2	Outline of the United States of America	9
Chapter 3	The Political System of United Kingdom	23
Chapter 4	The Political System of the United States of America	34
Chapter 5	The United Kingdom Economy	46
Chapter 6	American Economy	63
Chapter 7	Religion and Beliefs in Britain	84
Chapter 8	American Religion	92
Chapter 9	Holidays and Festivals in Britain	100
Chapter 10	Holidays in the United States	115
Chapter 11	British Education	124
Chapter 12	American Education	132
Chapter 13	Sports in Britain	142
Chapter 14	Sports in America	149
Chapter 15	British Literature	157

Chapter 16	American Literature	180
Appendix I	The Counties of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	206
Appendix II	The Fifty States of the United States of America	210
Appendix III	The Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	213
Appendix IV	The President of the United States of America	217

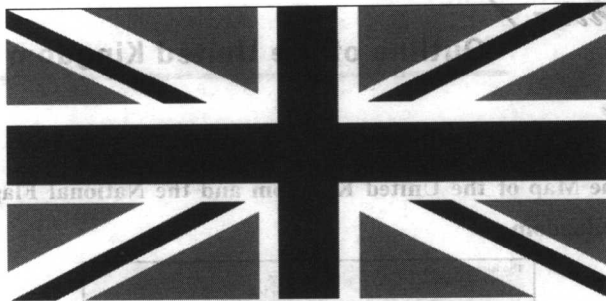
Chapter 1

Outline of the United Kingdom

1.1 The Map of the United Kingdom and the National Flag of the United Kingdom



The National Flag of the United Kingdom



The United Kingdom is the abbreviation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, which is located in Western Europe, between the North Atlantic Ocean and the North Sea, northwest of France, and composed of 4 countries: England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. It is a founding member of NATO, of the Commonwealth, and a member state of the European Union.

* * *

1.2 Geography

Britain constitutes the greater part of the British Isles. The largest of the islands is Great British Isles. The largest of the islands is Great Britain. The next largest comprises Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. Western Scotland is fringed by the large archipelago known as the Hebrides and to the north east of the Scottish mainland are Orkney and Shetland. All these have administrative ties with the mainland, but the Isle of Man in the Irish Sea and the Channel Islands between Great Britain and France are largely self-governing, and are not part of the United Kingdom.

With an area of some 242,500 sq km (93,600 sq miles), Britain is just under 1,000km (some 600 miles) from the south coast to the extreme north of Scotland and just under 500km (some 300 miles) across in the widest part.

* * *

1.3 Population

According to preliminary results of the April 1991 census, Britain's population was 55.5 million, which ranked seventeenth in the world. On the latest projections, its population is expected to reach 60,441,457 in July 2005.

* * *

1.4 History

The word "Britain" derives from Greek and Latin names probably stemming from a Celtic original. Although in the prehistoric time-scale the Celts were relatively late arrivals in the British Isles (following cultures which had produced such notable monuments as the stone circles of Avebury and Stonehenge), only with them does Britain emerge into recorded history. The term "Celtic" is often used rather generally to distinguish the early inhabitants of the British Isles from the later Anglo-Saxon invaders.

Roman rule lasted for over 300 years from AD 43. The final Roman withdrawal in 408 followed a period of increasing disorder during which the island began to be raided by Angles, Saxons and Jutes from northern Europe. It is from the Angles that the name "England" derives. In the next two centuries the raids turned into settlement and a number of small kingdoms were established. The Britons maintained an independent existence in the areas now

known as Wales and Cornwall. Among these kingdoms, more powerful ones emerged, claiming overlordship over the whole country, first in the north (Northumbria), then in the midlands (Mercia) and finally in the south (Wessex). However, further raids and settlement by the Vikings from Scandinavia occurred, although in the tenth century the Wessex dynasty defeated the invading Danes and established a wide-ranging authority in England.

In 1066, the last successful invasion of England took place. Duke William of Normandy defeated the English at the Battle of Hastings. Normans and others from France came to settle. French became the language of the nobility for the next three centuries and the legal and, to some extent, social structure was influenced by that prevailing across the Channel.

Wales had remained a Celtic stronghold, although often within the English sphere of influence. However, with the death in battle in 1282 of Prince Llywelyn, Edward I launched a successful campaign to bring Wales under English rule. Continued strong Welsh national feeling was indicated by the rising led by Owain Glyndwr at the beginning of the fifteenth century. The Acts of Union of 1536 and 1542 united England and Wales administratively, politically and legally.

Scotland was mainly inhabited by the Picts. In the sixth century, the Scots from Ireland (or "Scotia") settled in what is now Argyll. Lothian was populated by the English, while Welsh Britons moved north to Strathclyde. During the ninth century, the various parts of Scotland united in defence against the Vikings. The powerful monarchy which now existed in England threatened

Scottish independence throughout the Middle Ages.

The eventual unification of England and Scotland showed that religious differences were now more important than old national antagonisms. In England, Elizabeth I was succeeded in 1603 by James VI of Scotland (James I of England). Even so, England and Scotland remained separate during the seventeenth century, apart from an enforced period of unification under Oliver Cromwell. In 1707, both countries, realizing the benefits of closer political and economic union, agreed on a single parliament for Great Britain. Scotland retained its own system of law and church settlement. The Union became strained during the reigns of the Protestant Hanoverians George I and George II, when two Jacobite risings attempted to restore the Catholic Stuarts.

A number of kingdoms had emerged in Ireland before the Christian era. Ireland, however, did not escape the incursions of the Vikings, who dominated the country during the tenth century.

In 1169 Henry II of England launched an invasion of Ireland. He had been granted its overlordship by the English Pope Adrian IV, who was anxious to bring the Irish church into full obedience to Rome. Although a large part of the country came under the control of Anglo-Norman magnates, little direct authority was exercised from England during the Middle Ages.

The Tudor monarchs showed a much greater tendency to intervene in Ireland. During the reign of Elizabeth I, a series of campaigns was waged against Irish insurgents. The main focus of resistance was the northern province of Ulster. With the collapse of this resistance and the flight of its leaders in 1670, Ulster became an area of settlement by immigrants from Scotland and

England.

The English civil wars (1642—1652) led to further risings in Ireland, which were crushed by Cromwell. There was more fighting after the deposition of James II in 1688.

During most of the eighteenth century there was an uneasy peace; towards its end various efforts were made by British governments to achieve stability. In 1782 the Irish Parliament (dating from medieval times) was given legislative independence; the only constitutional tie with Great Britain was the Crown. The Parliament represented, however, only the privileged Anglo-Irish minority and Catholics were excluded from it. An abortive rebellion took place in 1789 and in 1801 Ireland was unified with Great Britain.

Although a nationalist rising in Dublin in 1916 was suppressed, a guerrilla force known as the Irish Republican Army (IRA) began operations against the British administration at the end of the First World War. The Government of Ireland Act 1920 provided for the establishment of two home rule parliaments, one in Dublin and the other in Belfast. The Act was implemented in 1921 in Northern Ireland, when six of the nine counties of the province of Ulster received their own Parliament and remained represented in, and subject to the supreme authority of, the British administration. After the signature of a truce in June, the Anglo-Irish Treaty of December 1921 established the Irish Free State, which became a republic in 1949.

Although the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man are not part of the United Kingdom, they have a special relationship with it. The Channel Islands were part of the Duchy of Normandy in the

tenth and eleventh centuries. The Isle of Man was under the nominal sovereignty of Norway until 1266, and eventually came under the direct administration of the Crown in 1765. Today the territories have their own legislative assemblies and systems of law. The British Government is responsible for their international relation.

☆ New Words ☆

⑤ fringe *n.* 边缘

⑤ archipelago *n.* 群岛

⑤ preliminary *a.* 初步的

⑤ raid *v./n.* 袭击

⑤ monarchy *n.* 君主政体

⑤ antagonism *n.* 敌对

⑤ Jacobite *n.* 二世党人

⑤ incursion *n.* 入侵

⑤ abortive *a.* 流产的, 未成功的

⑤ nominal *a.* 名义上的

⑤ sovereignty *n.* 主权

⑤ intervene *v.* 介入其间; 干预

☆ Exercises ☆

I. Explain each of the following terms in English:

1. the United Kingdom
2. the Isle of Man
3. Norman invasion
4. Celtic

II. Answer the following questions

1. What countries is the United Kingdom composed of?

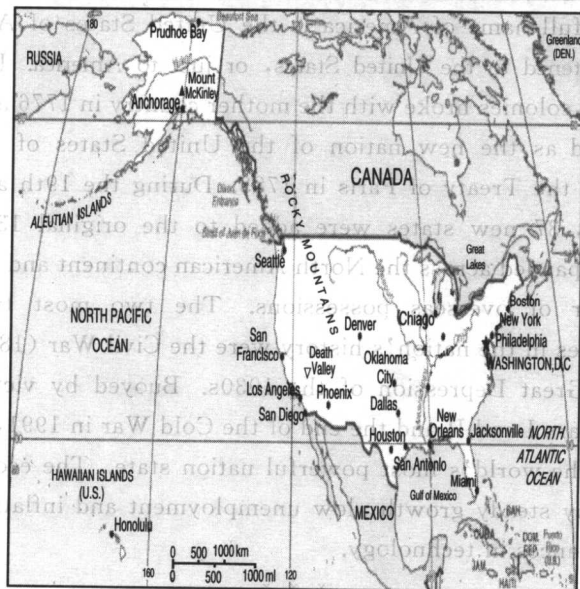
British and American Culture

2. Briefly state about British geography.
3. How was England united with the other countries?
4. How are the Channel Islands and Isle of Man administered by British government?

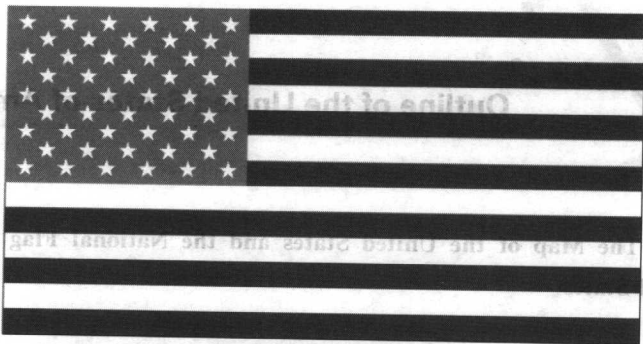
Chapter 2

Outline of the United States of America

2.1 The Map of the United States and the National Flag of the United States



The National Flag of the United States



The full name of America is the United States of America, often shortened to the United States, or just to America. Britain's American colonies broke with the mother country in 1776 and were recognized as the new nation of the United States of America following the Treaty of Paris in 1783. During the 19th and 20th centuries, 37 new states were added to the original 13 as the nation expanded across the North American continent and acquired a number of overseas possessions. The two most traumatic experiences in the nation's history were the Civil War (1861—65) and the Great Depression of the 1930s. Buoyed by victories in World Wars I and II and the end of the Cold War in 1991, the US remains the world's most powerful nation state. The economy is marked by steady growth, low unemployment and inflation, and rapid advances in technology.

2.2 Geography

The United States is situated in the South of North America and its southern tip reaches the subtropical zone. On the north the country shares more than 6,000 kilometers of land boundary with

Canada, which runs approximately along the 49th parallel in the west part and then across the four of the five Great Lakes before turning to the northeast. The boundary between the United States and Canada is open and undefended. America's southern land neighbor is Mexico with which it shares a common boundary of some 3,000 kilometers. The coast area of the Gulf of Mexico is the most important oil-producing region in the United States. To the west of mainland America is the Pacific across which the United States trades its products for goods from the Far East. To the east of the country lies the Atlantic which witnesses large numbers of European immigrants sailing to their American colonies. The Atlantic is still the most important sea route from America to Europe and the Middle East.

The total area of America is some 9.4 million square kilometers, which makes it the fourth largest country in the world. Its mainland covers a distance of some 5,000 kilometers from east to west, and about 2,500 kilometers from south to north. Bounded by three oceans and the Gulf of Mexico, the United States of America has a long coastline of about 20,000 kilometers, which makes it one of the countries with the longest coastline in the world.

America's location on the earth and its vast extent of territory provide much advantage for the country in its development. Its large area contains rich natural resources and the different climate in different parts of the country gives variety to farm products. The long coastline with many harbors and inlets not only facilitates foreign trade and fishing but also brings much of the country within the influence of the oceanic climate. The fact that

there is no land neighbor strong enough to pose a serious threat to the security of the country makes it unnecessary for America to station a large frontier army along its border. It is true that the United States guards its border with Mexico, rather loosely in most cases for lack of personnel, but its purpose is to stop drug trafficking and prevent Mexicans from stealing into the United States. As a matter of fact, America traditionally regards the Western Hemisphere as its backyard from which foreign intrusion must be excluded.

* * *

2.3 Population

America has a population of about 220 million, which is not very large against the size of the country. The earliest settlers in America are those who were misnamed Indians by Columbus. They are said to come to the continent by way of the Bering Straight which used to be land at that time. But the real immigrating tides had arisen since late 16th and early 17th centuries. Some Europeans were "pushed out" of West Europe by religious persecution or impoverishment and went to America, before 1860, to start a new life in a wild world. Most of them experienced the hardships of the frontier life and cultivated a deep-rooted love for their new haven. They are called the "old immigrants". The "new immigrants", in contrast, refer to those who were said to have been "pulled to" the United States by the prospect of good jobs and a happy life after 1860. Most of them were unskilled, but they swarmed to big cities. The large influx of "new immigrations" was one of the factors that finally prompted the American government to pass the Immigration Quota Law.