

英汉对照注释读物

# 美国历史传奇

*Stories of American History*



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美国历史传奇  
STORIES OF AMERICAN  
HISTORY

Stephen Vincent Benet 著

夏祖堃 译注

林 易 审校

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## 本书简介

本书收七个传奇性故事，作者用浪漫夸张的艺术手法，描写美国草创建国、南北战争、开拓西部等历史时期的商人、农民、工人、黑奴、政治家等的生活经历和思想感情。取材新颖，构思巧妙，笔调诙谐，行文流畅。

每个故事都附有参考译文和详细注释，可供大专院校学生及有相当英语程度的读者阅读。

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## 1. Jacob and the Indians

It goes back to the early days — may God profit all who lived then — and the ancestors.

Well, America, you understand, in those days was different. It was a nice place, but you wouldn't believe it if you saw it today. Without busses, without trains, without states, without Presidents, nothing!

With nothing but colonists and Indians and wild woods all over the country and wild animals to live in the wild woods. Imagine such a place! In these days, you children don't even think about it; you read about it in the school-books, but what is that? And I put in a call to my daughter, in California, and in three minutes I am saying "Hello, Rosie," and there it is Rosie and she is telling me about the weather, as if I wanted to know! But things were not always that way. I remember my own days, and they were different. And in the times of my grandfather's grandfather, they were different still. Listen to the story.

My grandfather's grandfather was Jacob Stein, and he came from Rettelsheim, in Germany. To Philadelphia<sup>1</sup> he came, an orphan in a sailing ship, but not a common man. He had learning — he had been to the *cheder*<sup>2</sup> — he could have been a scholar among the scholars. Well, that is the way things happen in this bad world. There was a plague and a new grand duke — things are always so. He would say little of it afterward — they had left his teeth in his mouth, but he would say little of it<sup>3</sup>. He did not have to say — we are children of the Dispersion<sup>4</sup> — we know a black day when it comes.

## 1. 雅各和印第安人

讲这个故事可得回溯到古老的年代和我们的祖先——愿上帝降恩于所有生活在那个时代的人吧。

嗯，你们都明白，美国那时候和现在可不一样。那是一个好地方，不过今天你们看见它，准不会相信的。没有公共汽车，没有火车，没有各州，没有总统，什么也没有。

除了殖民者和印第安人，还有遍布各地的原始森林和林中的野兽，别的什么都没有。你们想一下这块地方吧！如今，你们这些孩子连想都不想这些事，你们在课本里会读到的，可那又算得了什么呢？我给住在加利福尼亚州的女儿挂个电话，不到三分钟，我就说：“喂，露西，”露西就在那儿，她就跟我谈起天气来了，好象我想知道天气怎么样似的！可是，情况并不一直是这样的。我还记得我年轻的时候，那就跟现在很不一样。在我爷爷的爷爷年轻的时候，那就更不一样了。你们听听我讲这个故事吧！

我爷爷的爷爷叫雅各·斯坦因，他是从德国莱特尔斯汉姆来的。他是个孤儿，一个人搭帆船来到费拉德尔菲亚，不过他不是一个普通人。他有学问——他上过犹太教的学堂——可能成为学者当中拔尖儿的学者。嗯，在我们这个邪恶的世界里，事情总是这样的。老家发生鼠疫，一位新大公登基——事情总是这样的。后来，他不愿多谈这些事——他们总算把牙齿给他留在嘴里了，可是他不愿意多谈这些事，也没有必要谈——我们都是被逐出家园的孩子——大难临头时，我们会知道的。



Yet imagine — a young man with fine dreams and learning, a scholar with a pale face and narrow shoulders, set down in those early days in such a new country. Well, he must work, and he did. It was very fine, his learning, but it did not fill his mouth. He must carry a pack on his back and go from door to door with it. That was no disgrace; it was so that many began. But it was not expounding the Law,<sup>5</sup> and at first he was very homesick. He would sit in his room at night, with the one candle, and read the preacher Koheleth,<sup>6</sup> till the bitterness of the preacher rose in his mouth. Myself, I am sure that Koheleth was a great preacher, but if he had had a good wife he would have been a more cheerful man. They had too many wives in those old days<sup>7</sup> — it confused them. But Jacob was young.

As for the new country where he had come, it was to him a place of exile, large and frightening. He was glad to be out of the ship, but, at first, that was all. And when he saw his first real Indian in the street — well, that was a day! But the Indian, a tame one,<sup>8</sup> bought a ribbon from him by signs, and after that he felt better. Nevertheless, it seemed to him at times that the straps of the pack cut into his very soul, and he longed for the smell of the *cheder* and the quiet streets of Rettelsheim and the good smoked goose-breast pious housewives keep for the scholar. But there is no going back — there is never any going back.

All the same, he was a polite young man, and a hardworking.<sup>9</sup> And soon he had a stroke of luck — or at first it seemed so. It was from Simon Ettelsohn that he got the trinkets for his pack, and one day he found Simon Ettelsohn arguing a point of the Law with a friend, for Simon was a pious man and well thought of in the Congregation Mikveh Israel.<sup>10</sup> Our grandfather's grandfather stood by very modestly at first — he had come to replenish his pack and Simon was his employer. But finally his heart moved within him,

可是，想想看——一个有理想、有学问的年轻人，一个面色苍白、肩膀瘦削的读书人，在早先那个年头儿来到新的国土上，甭说别的，总得干活儿吧，他也就干了。他的学问固然很好，可是糊不了口，不得不背着货箱挨门挨户兜售。这也不算什么不体面的事，很多人就是这样开始创业的。可这究竟不同于阐明犹太教的法规，起初他很想家。他夜间坐在自己的房间里，点着一支蜡烛，念先知柯希列斯写的作品，直到柯希列斯的怨愤填满他的胸怀。至于我自己的看法嘛，我肯定柯希列斯是一位伟大的布道者，可是，如果他当初有个好老婆，他的性情就会乐观得多。在那年头儿，男人娶的老婆太多——把他们弄胡涂了。不过，当时雅各年纪还轻啊。

至于说他投奔的那个国度，对于他说，是个流放地，又辽阔，又可怕。他下船时心里挺高兴，可是，开头也只不过就是这样了。他头一次在街上看见一个真正的印第安人——嘿！那可是个了不起的时刻啊！但那是个开化的印第安人，他比划着向雅各买了一条缎带，此后，雅各才稍为放下心来。尽管如此，他有时感到那货箱的背带一直勒到他的灵魂深处，他怀念犹太学堂里的气息、莱特尔斯汉姆的安静的街道，和虔诚的主妇们专为学道的人留的美味的熏鹅脯子。可是他回不去了——走回头路从来就是不可能的。

尽管这样，他是个勤勉、肯干、有礼貌的年轻人，不久就交了好运——至少起初看来似乎是这样的。他那货箱里的零零碎碎的便宜货是从赛蒙·艾特尔松那儿批发来的。有一天，他发现赛蒙·艾特尔松在和一个朋友辩论关于犹太教规的一个问题，赛蒙是个虔诚的人，在以色列净沐教会里很有声望。我们爷爷的爷爷起初很谦虚地站着——他是来趸货的，赛蒙·艾特尔松是他的雇主。最后，他终于动了心，因为那两个人说的都

for both men were wrong, and he spoke and told them where they erred. For half an hour he spoke, with his pack still upon his shoulders, and never has a text been expounded with more complexity, not even by the great Reb Samuel.<sup>11</sup> Till, in the end, Simon Ettelsohn threw up his hands and called him a young David<sup>12</sup> and a candle of learning. Also, he allowed him a more profitable route of trade. But, best of all, he invited young Jacob to his house, and there Jacob ate well for the first time since he had come to Philadelphia. Also he laid eyes upon Miriam Ettelsohn for the first time, and she was Simon's youngest daughter and a rose of Sharon.<sup>13</sup>

After that, things went better for Jacob, for the protection of the strong is like a rock and a well. But yet things did not go altogether as he wished. For, at first, Simon Ettelsohn made much of him, and there was stuffed fish and raisin wine for the young scholar, though he was a peddler. But there is a look in a man's eyes that says "H'm? Son-in-law?" and that look Jacob did not see. He was modest—he did not expect to win the maiden overnight, though he longed for her. But gradually it was borne in upon him<sup>14</sup> what he was in the Ettelsohn house—a young scholar to be shown before Simon's friends, but a scholar whose learning did not fill his mouth. He did not blame Simon for it, but it was not what he had intended. He began to wonder if he would ever get on in the world at all, and that is not good for any man.

Nevertheless, he could have borne it, and the aches and pains of his love, had it not been for Meyer Kappelhuist.<sup>15</sup> Now, there was a pushing man! I speak no ill of anyone, not even of your Aunt Cora, and she can keep the De Groot silver<sup>16</sup> if she finds it in her heart to do so; who lies down in the straw with a dog, gets up with fleas.<sup>17</sup> But this Meyer Kappelhuist! A big, red-faced fellow from Holland with shoulders the size of a barn door and red hair on the backs of his hands. A big mouth for eating and drinking and telling schnorrer stories<sup>18</sup>—and he talked about the Kappelhuists in

不对，他说了话，告诉他们错在什么地方。他肩上背着货箱，讲了半个钟头，从来没有人能把一段经文讲解得这么玄妙深奥，连伟大的经师撒母尔也没有做到过。最后，赛蒙·艾特尔松举起双手，称他为年轻的大卫王、学问的明灯。同时，他还把一条出息较大的售货路线派给他。但最妙的是，他还请年轻的雅各到他家去，雅各在那儿吃了一顿好饭，自从来到费拉德尔菲亚以后，这还是头一遭呢。他在那儿还头一次见到米丽亚姆·艾特尔松，她是赛蒙的最小的女儿，真是一朵莎伦的玫瑰花。

此后，雅各的情况好些了，因为有力者的庇护既象岩石，又若井泉。但并不完全如意。起初，赛蒙·艾特尔松待他不错，尽管他是个小贩，却总用塞馅儿的鱼和葡萄酒款待他。但有时一个人眼睛里会有一种表示“嗯？做女婿吧？”的神色。这种神色雅各没有看到过。他很谦虚——他并不指望一夜之间就能赢得这位姑娘，虽说他很爱慕她。他渐渐搞清楚自己在艾特尔松家所处的地位——他是可以在赛蒙的朋友们面前显摆的青年学者，但也是个有学问而不能糊口的学者。他并不因此责怪赛蒙，但这总归不是他所指望的。他开始怀疑自己究竟有没有前途，而任何人处于这种境地都是不好受的。

然而，要不是麦耶·卡普尔惠斯特来了的话，他本来可以忍受这种处境，忍受爱情的痛苦。啊，这个人可是个爱出风头、争强好胜的人。我从来不说别人的坏话，连你们的柯拉姑妈也不说，如果她能忍心独吞那套德·格鲁特银器，就让她这么干吧，谁跟狗睡在一个窝里，谁就会招上跳蚤。这位麦耶·卡普尔惠斯特！他是个从荷兰来的红脸大汉，肩膀象牲口棚的大门一样宽，手背上长满了红毛。他那一张大嘴，专会吃喝，还会讲蹭吃蹭喝的人讲的那种帮闲凑趣的故事——他会讲

Holland, till you'd think they were made of gold. The crane says, "I am really a peacock — at least on my mother's side." And yet, a thriving man — that could not be denied. He had started with a pack, like our grandfather's grandfather, and now he was trading with the Indians and making money hand over fist.<sup>19</sup> It seemed to Jacob that he could never go to the Ettelsohn house without meeting Meyer and hearing about those Indians. And it dried the words in Jacob's mouth and made his heart burn.

For, no sooner would our grandfather's grandfather begin to expound a text or a proverb, than he would see Meyer Kappelhuist looking at the maiden. And when Jacob had finished his expounding, and there should have been a silence, Meyer Kappelhuist would take it upon himself to thank him,<sup>20</sup> but always in a tone that said: "The Law is the Law and the Prophets are the Prophets, but prime beaver is also prime beaver, my little scholar!" It took the pleasure from Jacob's learning and the joy of the maiden from his heart. Then he would sit silent and burning, while Meyer told a great tale of Indians, slapping his hands on his knees. And in the end he was always careful to ask Jacob how many needles and pins he had sold that day; and when Jacob told him, he would smile and say very smoothly that all things had small beginnings, till the maiden herself could not keep from a little smile. Then, desperately, Jacob would rack his brains<sup>21</sup> for more interesting matter. He would tell of the wars of the Maccabees and the glory of the Temple.<sup>22</sup> But even as he told them, he felt they were far away. Whereas Meyer and his accursed Indians were there, and the maiden's eyes shone at his words.

Finally he took his courage in both hands and went to Simon Ettelsohn. It took much for him to do it, for he had not been brought up to strive with men, but with words. But it seemed to him now that everywhere he went he heard of nothing but Meyer Kappelhuist and his trading with the Indians, till he thought it would drive him mad. So he went to Simon Ettelsohn in his shop.

荷兰卡普尔惠斯特一家的事，讲得你以为他们都是金子打的。长脖子鹤说：“我实际上是只孔雀——至少我姥姥家跟孔雀沾亲。”可是他是个买卖做得很兴旺的人——这是不能不承认的。他和我们爷爷的爷爷一样，也是背货箱子起家的。眼下正和印第安人做生意，钱赚得快。雅各觉得自己一到艾特尔松家去，就会碰见麦耶，听他谈那些印第安人的事。一听这些，雅各嘴里就没词儿了，心里也就酸得难受。

只要我们爷爷的爷爷讲起一篇经文或是一句格言，他就发现麦耶·卡普尔惠斯特朝那姑娘看。等雅各解释完了，大家应该肃静无言时，麦耶·卡普尔惠斯特就会自动向他致谢，不过那口气总象在说：“教规是教规，先知是先知，可是上好的海狸皮还是上好的海狸皮呀，我的小学者！”这使雅各无法从自己的博学多识里感到乐趣，也无法在心中由于和姑娘在一起而感到欢悦。随后他就会默默地坐着，生着闷气，而麦耶就会讲个关于印第安人的热闹故事，还不时拍拍膝盖。最后他总忘不了要问问雅各，那一天他卖了多少针线；雅各告诉他后，他就会笑笑，油嘴滑舌地说，万事都是从小地方开始的，连那姑娘也不免微微一笑。雅各没法子，只好冥思苦想，想找点比较有趣的话说说。他会谈起麦卡比人的战争和圣殿之光荣。但是他一边谈着，一边自己也感到这些都是遥远的、过去的事，而麦耶和他的那些该死的印第安人却就在眼前，麦耶一讲，那姑娘的眼睛就发光。

最后，他鼓起勇气去见赛蒙·艾特尔松。他是花了很大的劲儿才这样做的，因为他从小受到的教养是和文字打交道，不是和人打交道。可是现在他觉得，不论走到哪儿，都只听到麦耶·卡普尔惠斯特和他跟印第安人做买卖的事，他觉得这样下去真要被逼疯了。因此到店里去找赛蒙·艾特尔松。

"I am weary of this narrow trading in pins and needles," he said, without more words.

Simon Ettelsohn looked at him keenly; for while he was an ambitious man, he was kindly as well.

"Nu,"<sup>23</sup> he said. "A nice little trade you have and the people like you. I myself started in with less. What would you have more?"

"I would have much more," said our grandfather's grandfather stiffly. "I would have a wife and a home in this new country. But how shall I keep a wife? On needles and pins?"

"Nu, it has been done," said Simon Ettelsohn, smiling a little. "You are a good boy, Jacob, and we take an interest in you. Now, if it is a question of marriage, there are many worthy maidens. Asher Levy, the baker, has a daughter. It is true that she squints a little, but her heart is of gold." He folded his hands and smiled.

"It is not of Asher Levy's daughter I am thinking," said Jacob, taken aback. Simon Ettelsohn nodded his head and his face grew grave.

"Nu, Jacob," he said. "I see what is in your heart. Well, you are a good boy, Jacob, and a fine scholar. And if it were in the old country, I am not saying.<sup>24</sup> But here, I have one daughter married to a Seixas and one to a Da Silva.<sup>25</sup> You must see that makes a difference." And he smiled the smile of a man well pleased with his world.

"And if I were such a one as Meyer Kappelhuist?" said Jacob bitterly.

"Now — well, that is a little different," said Simon Ettelsohn sensibly. "For Meyer trades with the Indians. It is true, he is a little rough. But he will die a rich man."

"I will trade with the Indians too," said Jacob, and trembled.

他直截了当地说：“我对这针头线脑的小买卖感到厌烦了。”

赛蒙·艾特尔松盯了他一眼；他虽是个有野心的人，但也是个心肠好的人。

“喏，”他说，“你的小买卖搞得不错嘛，人家也很喜欢你。我自己开始的时候，买卖还要小呢。你还想要什么呀？”

“我想要的多着呢，”我们的爷爷的爷爷生硬地说，“我要在这个新的国家里有个妻子，有个家。可我怎么养活妻子啊？用针头线脑吗？”

“喏，这事别人也干过，”赛蒙·艾特尔松微微一笑说，“你是个好小伙子，雅各，我们对你很关心。这么说吧，如果是为了要结婚，合适的姑娘也不少啊。面包师傅阿谢尔·莱维有个女儿。当然咯，她的眼睛有一点儿斜，可是她心肠好。”他合起双手笑了。

雅各慌了，他说：“我想的不是阿谢尔·莱维的女儿。”赛蒙·艾特尔松点点头，脸色严肃起来。

“喏，雅各，”他说，“我明白你的心事。嗯，你是个好小伙子，雅各，也是个好学者。要是在老家，我不能一口回绝你。可是在这儿嘛，我有一个女儿嫁给了赛哈斯家，还有一个女儿嫁给了达·西尔伐家。你应该明白，这样一来，情况就不同了。”他象一个对自己的家境很满意的人那样笑了。

“那么，如果我是麦耶·卡普尔惠斯特那样的人呢？”雅各愤愤地说。

“那样嘛，就有点儿不一样了，”赛蒙·艾特尔松通情达理地说，“因为麦耶是和印第安人做生意的。当然咯，他的确有点儿粗。可是到他死的时候，他会有一大笔财产的。”

“我也要跟印第安人做买卖。”雅各说着就哆嗦起来。



Simon Ettelsohn looked at him as if he had gone out of his mind.<sup>26</sup> He looked at his narrow shoulders and his scholar's hands.

"Now, Jacob," he said soothingly, "do not be foolish. A scholar you are, and learned, not an Indian trader. Perhaps in a store you would do better. I can speak to Aaron Copras. And sooner or later we will find you a nice maiden. But to trade with Indians — well, that takes a different sort of man. Leave that to Meyer Kappelhuist."

"And your daughter, that rose of Sharon? Shall I leave her, too, to Meyer Kappelhuist?" cried Jacob.

Simon Ettelsohn looked uncomfortable.

"Nu, Jacob," he said. "Well, it is not settled, of course, But —"

"I will go forth against him as David went against Goliath,"<sup>27</sup> said our grandfather's grandfather wildly. "I will go forth into the wilderness. And God should judge the better man!"

Then he flung his pack on the floor and strode from the shop. Simon Ettelsohn called out after him, but he did not stop for that. Nor was it in his heart to go and seek the maiden. Instead, when he was in the street, he counted the money he had. It was not much. He had meant to buy his trading goods on credit from Simon Ettelsohn, but now he could not do that. He stood in the sunlit street of Philadelphia, like a man bereft of hope.

Nevertheless, he was stubborn — though how stubborn he did not yet know. And though he was bereft of hope, he found his feet taking him to the house of Raphael Sanchez.

Now, Raphael Sanchez could have bought and sold Simon Ettelsohn twice over. An arrogant old man he was, with fierce black eyes and a beard that was whiter than snow. He lived apart, in