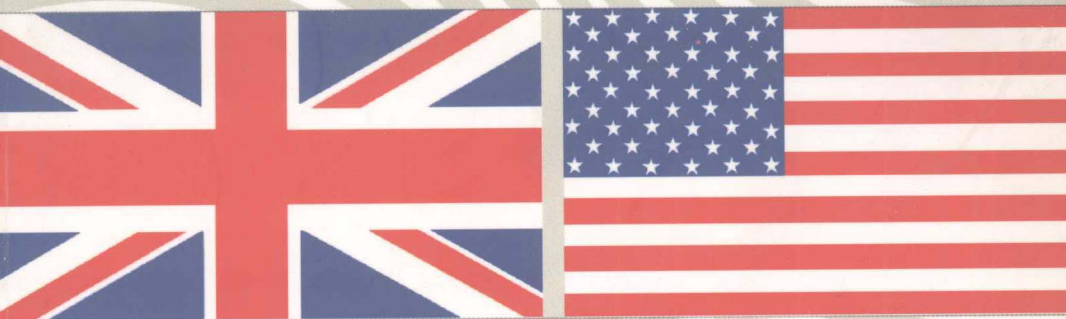


高等学校教材

张奎武 / 主编



*SURVEY OF
BRITAIN & AMERICA*

英美概况

(第三版)

(下)

吉林科学技术出版社

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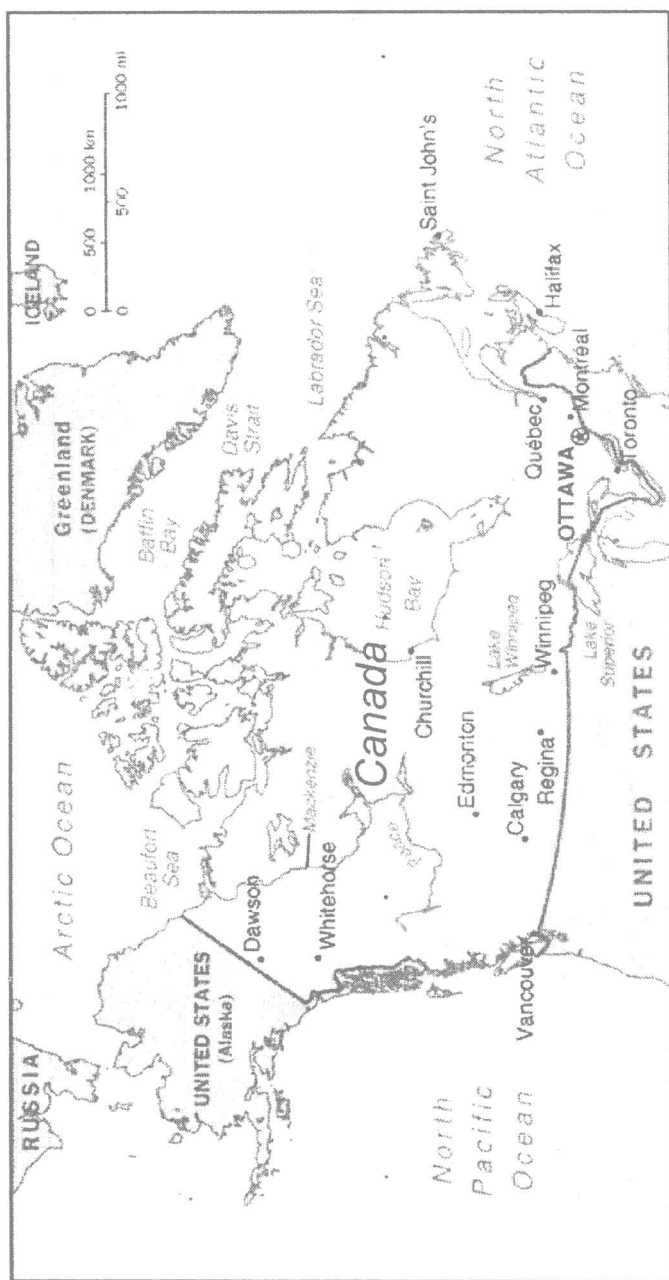
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America

PART ONE GEOGRAPHY

内 容 提 要

美国是一个幅员辽阔,地理条件比较复杂的国家。在这一编里,我们只是简略地介绍一下美国地理的一般情况。

第一章扼要地介绍了美国大陆本土的自然地理轮廓。美国大陆自东向西形成三大自然区域——东部的阿巴拉契亚山地,中间的中部大平原和西部的科迪勒拉山系。这种自然环境构成了两侧高、中间低的地形特征。在这三大区域内分布着三大水系——大西洋水系、墨西哥湾水系和太平洋水系。重要的河流有密西西比河、哈得孙河、特拉华河、哥伦比亚河及科罗拉多河等。在美国东北部有世界最大的淡水湖群——五大湖和世界著名的尼亚加拉大瀑布。北美最大的咸水湖——大盐湖位于美国西部的犹他州。这一章还简要地介绍了美国大陆的气候类型和各个区域的气候特点,并谈到了美国丰富的矿物、森林和水力资源以及美国国土形成的历史。

第二章简单介绍了美国人口的构成和分布情况。美国总人口约二亿五千六百五十五万八千(1993),其中白种人占百分之八十以上,黑人约占百分之十一.六,余为其他少数民族,包括印第安人、墨西哥人、波多黎各人、中国人、日本人及菲律宾人等。美国人口的分布很不均匀,将近半数人口居住在两大洋沿岸地区、五大湖地区和墨西哥湾沿岸地区。

第三章介绍了构成美国全部国土的八大区域——新英格兰地区、大西洋中部地区、南部地区、中西部地区、大平原地区、西部地区、阿拉斯加地区与夏威夷地区。我们在本章内简述了各区的地理位置、自然

特点、经济特点及该区内的一个重要城市,如大西洋中部地区所属六州被看做是美国的经济中心和工业心脏,纽约市为美国的最大海港城市等。

第四章概要介绍了美国经济的发展。美国独立战争和内战为美国的资本主义发展扫清了道路。20 世纪初美国经济进入了垄断阶段。在两次世界大战中美国获得了巨大利益。在经济发展中,美国政府起着重要作用。由于美国农业机械化程度高,又采用先进的科学方法,农业发展很迅速。主要农产品有玉米,产量占世界总产量的一半;大米出口量占世界第二位。棉花、小麦等也是美国农业的重要产品。美国工业在 20 世纪处于领先地位。核工业、电子工业、飞机制造业发展迅猛。1975 年以 900 美元起家的微软公司,到 1994 年已有 9000 亿美元的资产。进入 90 年代以后,美国更加注意发展计算机和信息产业。1997 年美国进入了经济连续发展的第七个年头。

最后一章介绍了美国若干重要城市,并简述了各个城市的历史、地理位置、经济特点、风景名胜以及它们在美国人民生活中的作用。这些城市包括首都华盛顿,东北部的纽约、芝加哥、费城、底特律、波士顿、匹兹堡、圣路易斯,西部地区的洛杉矶与旧金山,南部地区的休斯敦。

Chapter I A General Introduction to Physical Geography

The United States is situated in the central part of North America with its two youngest states — Alaska in the northwestern part of North America and Hawaii in the central Pacific. The country is bounded by Canada on the north and by Mexico and the Gulf of Mexico on the south with the Atlantic Ocean on the east and Pacific Ocean on the west. The total area of the country is 9 372 614 square kilometers. The total population is about 256 558 000(1993). The whole country includes 50 states and a federal district, the District of Columbia, which is the seat of the Federal Government.

1. Three Geographical Divisions

The United States can be divided into three parts according to its geographical features: the eastern part, the western part, and the great central plain in between.

(1) The eastern part is made up of the highlands formed by the Appalachian Range. It holds one sixth of the national territory on the continent. These highlands are relatively low. The average altitude is only 800 meters above sea level. The range begins from north Maine and reaches to central Alabama, covering a distance of 1200 miles. The average width of the upland belt is not more than 300 miles. Three components make up this upland belt, the Piedmont Plateau in the east, the Appalachian Plateaus in the west and the Appalachian Range in the middle.

In the east of the upland belt lies the Atlantic Coastal Plain, which

begins south of New York City, includes southward the entire peninsula of Florida, and merges with the wide Gulf Plain. The Atlantic Coastal Plain is bounded on the west by the "Fall Line" creating the passage to the Piedmont lying beyond, where the rivers are marked by water-falls and rapids.

(2) The western part consists of high plateaus and mountains formed by the Great Cordillera Range, extending from Canada through the western part of the United States to Mexico and further south. From west to east, this mountain system is composed of the Coast Range, the Cascades and the Rocky Mountains. The whole area of this part holds one third of the country's territory on the continent.

The Rocky Mountains reach from the Canadian border in Montana and Idaho, through Wyoming, Utah and Colorado, into New Mexico having an average altitude of more than 3000 meters above sea level. The worldknown Yellowstone National Park is located in the northwestern part of Wyoming. It is the oldest national park in the world and the largest wildlife preserve in the United States. It covers 2 219 785 acres. Established in 1872, the park got its name from the yellow rocks lining the Yellowstone River section north of it. Yellowstone has thousands of hot springs and over 200 geysers (hot springs that shoot steam and boiling water into the air). Old Faithful is the most famous geyser in the park, erupting more than 100 feet in the air about every 73 minutes.

In the west of the Rocky Mountains lie two plateaus; the Colorado Plateaus in the south along the Colorado River and the Columbia Plateau in the north, bearing the name of the Columbia River which runs through the plateau.

The Colorado Plateaus are threaded by many deep valleys or canyons among which the best known is Colorado Valley, also called Grand Canyon, in northern Arizona. It is one of the great natural wonders of the world. It measures about 277 miles long, up to 18 miles wide, and more than a mile deep. The walls of the Grand Canyon show layers that tell the

story of the formation of the earth. Visitors can hike or ride mules down to the Colorado River at the bottom of the canyon where the Havasupai Indians have lived for hundreds of years.

Between the two plateaus lies the Great Basin, including the whole of Nevada, a small section of Oregon and the southeastern part of California. It is the driest part of the country. Along the border between Oregon and Idaho is Hells Canyon, the deepest chasm in North America. The powerful Snake River has carved out depths of up to 2408 meters here. Much of southeastern California is desert. The Sierra Nevada, in eastern California, is the highest mountain range in the continental United States. Beautiful waterfalls and steep mountains in Yosemite National Park offer spectacular views. Farther north along the coastline are forests of beautiful redwoods. These trees grow to heights of 91 meters and are the tallest living things on earth.

Along the Pacific Coast Line is the Pacific Mountain System which contains two major chains of mountains. The first chain includes the Cascade Range in Oregon and Washington, lower and broader, stretching southward until it reaches the Sierra Nevada, which is high and deep. Along the Pacific border is the second chain, which includes the California Coast Range, the Oregon Coast Range, etc.

Between the two chains of mountains lies the broad and rich valley, the valley of California which is 450 miles long and 50 miles wide. In eastern California lies Death Valley, 85 meters below sea level. It is the lowest point in the whole of North America.

(3) Between the Rocky Mountains and the Appalachians lies the central plain which occupies one second of America's landmass on the continent. It stretches from the Great Lakes in the north to the Gulf of Mexico in the south. Drained by the Mississippi and its tributaries, it slopes towards the east where it merges with the Atlantic Coast Plain.

The western part of the central plain is also called the "Great Plains." This region stretches from central Texas to the Canadian border

with 1200 miles in length and 300 miles in width. The eastern part of the central plain is the central lowlands, which are the most important agricultural area in the United States. The Gulf Plains are a vast area of lowland, including all of Mississippi and Louisiana, the greater part of Florida, Alabama and Texas; and lesser areas in western Tennessee and Kentucky.

2. The Three Major River Systems

The three river systems in the United States are the system of the Gulf, the system of the Atlantic and the system of the Pacific.

The Rocky Mountains form the most important continental divide in North America, separating the system of the Atlantic and the system of the Pacific.

(1) The Mississippi River is the longest and the most important river in the system of the Gulf. It flows from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, having the length of 6262 kilometers and a drainage area of 3 225 000 square kilometers. It is of the greatest rivers in the world. The Mississippi has many tributaries, among which the Missouri and the Ohio are two of its largest ones. These rivers form an important inland navigation and irrigation system.

(2) There are no long rivers in the system of the Atlantic. The Hudson River, linked by canals with the five Great Lakes, flows through the state of New York, having a length of only 520 kilometers. It is, however, one of the main arteries for inland waterway traffic. The Delaware River forms the boundary of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Washington, the capital of the U.S.A., is on the Potomac River. The St. Lawrence River forms part of the boundary between Canada and the U.S.A., serving as an international river.

(3) In the system of the Pacific, there are two major rivers: the Columbia River and the Colorado River. They flow through the western plateaus and are rich in potential water power resources due to their swift