



普通高等教育“十一五”国家级规划教材

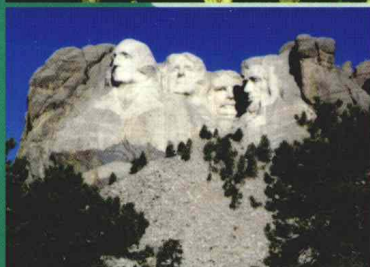
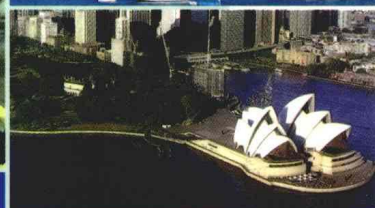
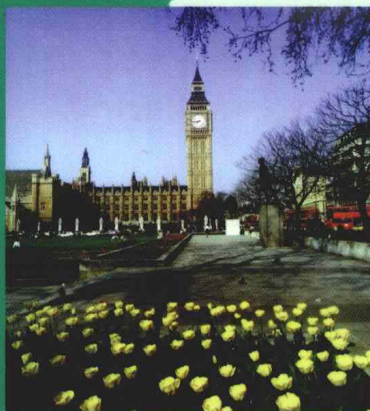
新世纪高等院校英语专业本科生系列教材（修订版）

总主编 戴炜栋

# 英语国家概况

*Major English-Speaking Countries:  
A Survey*

主编 王恩铭





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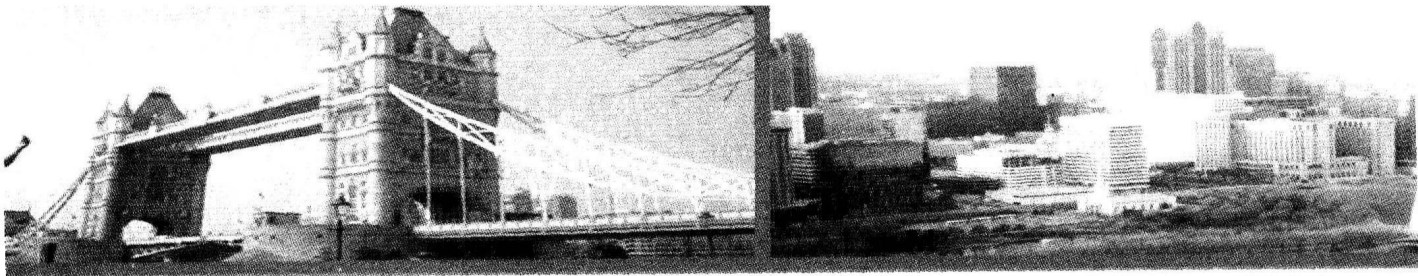
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## 总序

我国英语专业本科教学与学科建设,伴随着我国改革开放的步伐,得到了长足的发展和提升。回顾这30多年英语专业教学改革和发展的历程,无论是英语专业教学大纲的制订、颁布、实施和修订,还是四、六级考试的开发与推行,以及多项英语教学改革项目的开拓,无不是围绕英语专业的学科建设和人才培养而进行的,正如《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》提出的英语专业的培养目标,即培养“具有扎实的英语语言基础和广博的文化知识并能熟练地运用英语在外事、教育、经贸、文化、科技、军事等部门从事翻译、教学、管理、研究等工作的复合型英语人才”。为促进英语专业本科建设的发展和教学质量的提高,外语专业教学指导委员会还实施了“新世纪教育质量改革工程”,包括推行“十五”、“十一五”国家级教材规划和外语专业国家精品课程评审,从各个教学环节加强对外语教学质量的宏观监控,从而确保为我国的经济建设输送大量的优秀人才。

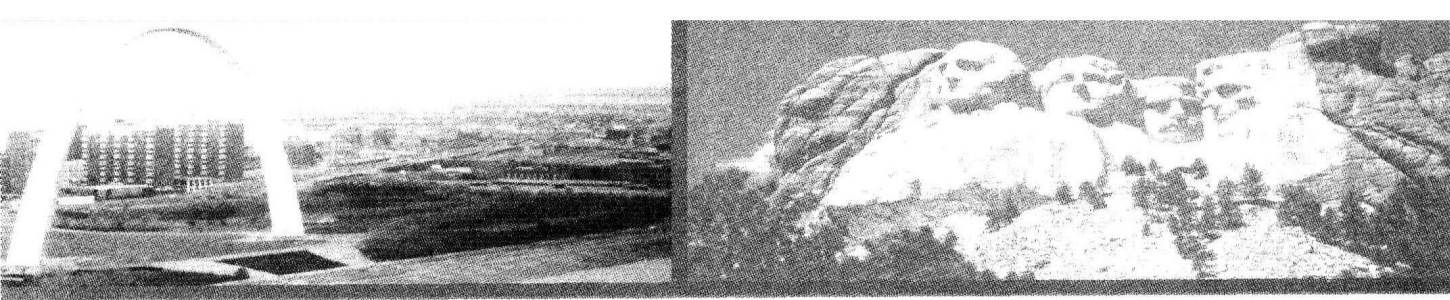
跨入新世纪,英语专业的建设面临新的形势和任务:经济全球化、科技一体化、文化多元化、信息网络化的发展趋势加快,世界各国之间的竞争日趋激烈,这对我国英语专业本科教学理念和培养目标提出了新的挑战;大学英语教学改革如火如荼;数字化、网络化等多媒体教学辅助手段在外语教学中广泛应用和不断发展;英语专业本科教育的改革和学科建设也呈现出多样化的趋势,翻译专业、商务英语专业相继诞生——这些变化和发展无疑对英语专业的学科定位、人才培养以及教材建设提出了新的、更高的要求。

上海外语教育出版社(简称外教社)在新世纪之初约请了全国30余所著名高校百余位英语教育专家,对面向新世纪的英语专业本科生教材建设进行了深入、全面、广泛和具有前瞻性的研讨,成功地推出了理念新颖、特色明显、体系完备的“新世纪高等院校英语专业本科生系列教材”,并被列入“十五”国家级规划教材,以其前瞻性、先进性和创新性等特点受到全国众多使用院校的广泛好评。

面对快速发展的英语专业本科教育,如何保证专业的教学质量,培养具有国际视野和创新能力的英语专业人才,是国家、社会、高校教师共同关注的问题,也是教材编撰者和教材出版者关心和重视的问题。

作为教学改革的一个重要组成部分,优质教材的编写和出版对学科建设的推动和人才培养的作用是有目共睹的。外教社为满足教学和学科发展的需要,与教材编写者们一起,力图全方位、大幅度修订并扩充原有的“新世纪高等院校英语专业本科生系列教材”,以打造英语专业教材建设完整的学科体系。为此,外教社邀请了全国几十所知名高校40余位著名





英语教育专家，根据英语专业学科发展的新趋势，围绕梳理现有课程、优化教材品种和结构、改进教学方法和手段、强化学生自主学习能力的培养、有效提高教学质量等问题开展了专题研究，并在教材编写与出版中予以体现。

修订后的教材仍保持原有的专业技能、专业知识、文化知识和相关专业知识的四大板块，品种包括基础技能、语言学、文学、文化、人文科学、测试、教学法等，总数逾200种，几乎涵盖了当前我国高校英语专业所开设的全部课程，并充分考虑到我国英语教育的地区差异和不同院校英语专业的特点，提供更多的选择。教材编写深入浅出，内容反映了各个学科领域的最新研究成果；在编写宗旨上，除了帮助学生打下扎实的语言基本功外，着力培养学生分析问题、解决问题的能力，提高学生的思辨能力和人文、科学素养，培养健康向上的人生观，使学生真正成为我国新时代所需要的英语专门人才。

系列教材修订版编写委员会仍由我国英语界的知名专家学者组成，其中多数是在各个领域颇有建树的专家，不少是高等学校外语专业教学指导委员会的委员，总体上代表了中国英语教育的发展方向和水平。

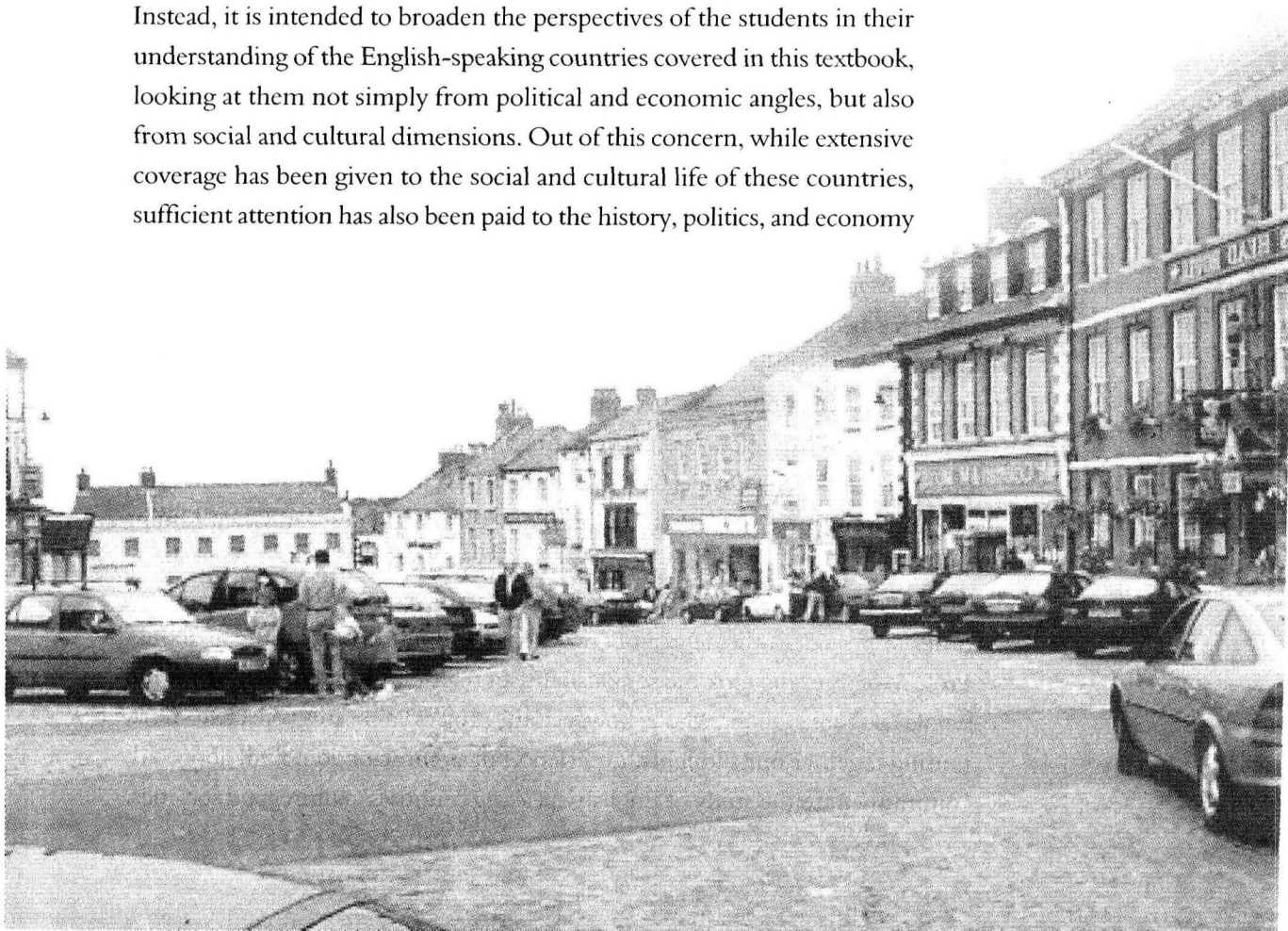
系列教材完整的学科体系、先进的编写理念、权威的编者队伍，再次得到教育部的认可，荣列“普通高等教育‘十一五’国家级规划教材”。我深信，这套教材一定会促进学生语言技能、专业知识、学科素养和创新能力的培养，填补现行教材某些空白，为培养高素质的英语专业人才奠定坚实的基础。

**戴炜栋**

教育部高校外语专业教学指导委员会主任委员  
国务院学位委员会外语学科评议组组长

# Preface

*Major English-Speaking Countries: A Survey* is a textbook designed for English majors in Chinese colleges and universities. As indicated by its title, the textbook provides a brief survey of the major English-speaking countries in the world, including Great Britain, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Unlike many other similar survey textbooks that tend to emphasize the history, politics, economy, diplomacy and even the military of the countries involved, this one gives priority to such issues as ethnicity, race, gender, immigration, labour, religion, education, social services, and private life, all relating to the social and cultural aspects of these countries. Such a deliberate effort is not meant to deemphasize the importance of politics, economy and history in the making of a nation. Instead, it is intended to broaden the perspectives of the students in their understanding of the English-speaking countries covered in this textbook, looking at them not simply from political and economic angles, but also from social and cultural dimensions. Out of this concern, while extensive coverage has been given to the social and cultural life of these countries, sufficient attention has also been paid to the history, politics, and economy





## Major English-Speaking Countries: A Survey

of these major English-speaking countries. In short, this textbook aims to provide a balanced, well-proportioned, multi-dimensional, and close-to-life survey.

To this end, the whole textbook is divided into five parts, each discussing one country in its social, political, cultural and historical context, beginning with Great Britain and concluding with New Zealand. For each chapter, the same organisational structure is applied uniformly, which includes *Focus In*, *Project*, *Content*, *Notes/Explanations*, *Simple Questions*, *Essay Questions*, and *Websites for Further Reading*. *Focus In* is designed to highlight the key information covered in the chapter, helping the students to get a quick idea of what the main points are in it. *Project* is meant to set the students thinking, thinking about the principal issues discussed in the chapter. As for *Content*, it is primarily descriptive, presenting facts and information for the most part, and offering analysis only when necessary. In *Notes/Explanations*, detailed information is provided for some of the important but difficult issues mentioned in the chapter. They are useful, necessary and informative. *Simple Questions* and *Essay Questions* serve a dual purpose. On the comprehension level, they help students consolidate their understanding of the particular chapter, and on the practical level, particularly the essay questions, they can be used as examination questions to test what the students have learned from the textbook. Finally, a *Websites for Further Reading* section is added to each chapter to facilitate the learning process for the students in case they want to explore the subject further on their own. At any rate, every possible effort has been made to assist the students in deepening their understanding of these major English-speaking countries.

The preparation of this survey textbook has been a collaborative undertaking, with altogether five scholars participating in the project, each responsible for one part. Prof. Geng Dianlei (耿殿磊) wrote Part One about Great Britain; Prof. Wang Enming (王恩铭), Part Two about the United States; Dr. Chen Huilin (陈慧麟), Part Three about Canada; Prof. Lin Ling (林玲), Part Four about Australia; and finally Ms. Wu Min (吴敏) Part Five about New Zealand. In order to provide some degree of consistency and uniformity to the textbook, Prof. Wang Enming took the responsibility of revision and proofreading for the whole textbook. On the whole, however, the project has been a collective effort, putting together our thoughts, experience, data, information, and, above all, commitment to the study of English-speaking countries' cultures and societies.

Indeed, over the past ten or twenty years or so, all of the five authors have been engaged in the teaching of survey courses of these English-speaking countries. In this sense, the textbook in the present form can be viewed as the product of their years of teaching experience and academic pursuit. With this in mind, we sincerely hope that the students will not only find the textbook informative and useful, but also share our joy and excitement in the exploration of the world of English-speaking countries.

*Wang Enming*

American Studies Centre, College of English  
Shanghai International Studies University

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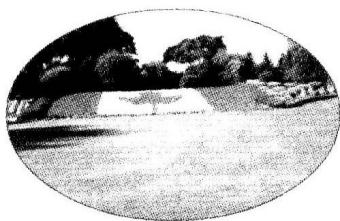
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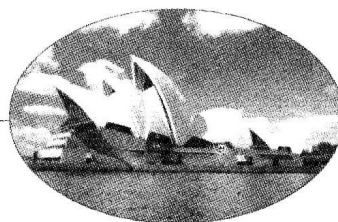
## Part Three

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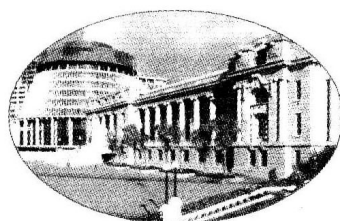
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Part One

# *The United Kingdom*



# Unit One

## The Country



### Focus in

British Isles

British Commonwealth

England

Scotland

Wales

Northern Ireland

Highland Zone

Lowland Zone



### Project

What role does the United Kingdom play in the modern world? What are its physical features?

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (shortened to the United Kingdom, the UK or Britain) is a country situated in the British Isles, which lie off the northwest coast of the European continent. Politically, it is a union made up of four constituent countries: England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, plus several overseas territories. The United Kingdom covers 242,514 square kilometres (93,635 square miles) and claims a population of about 60,587,300 (estimated in mid-2006). It has London as its national capital, located on the bank of the river Thames in southeast England. The Union Flag, popularly known as the Union Jack, is the national flag and "God Save the King/Queen" is used as the national anthem.



By the turn of the twentieth century, the United Kingdom had built up a huge overseas empire that, for better or worse, had massive impact on the history of the world. In modern times, it retains links with parts of its former empire through the British Commonwealth, including sharing with some of them the same monarch — Queen Elizabeth II — as head of state. Its parliamentary and legal systems have also been emulated throughout the world. But more important today in Britain's international relations is the European Union, of which the UK has been a member since 1973. As one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and a founding member of NATO, the UK today pursues an active global approach to foreign policy, which invariably involves a close military and political relationship with the United States. A leading member of the Group of Eight, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the World Trade Organisation, the UK is a highly developed country with a US\$ 1.833 trillion economy and the fifth largest gross domestic product in the world. Socially, it is a highly prosperous and peaceful country and culturally, it is preeminent in the arts, sciences and technology.



### **Position and Borders**

The UK's geographical position is marked by latitude 50°N in Southern England and by latitude 60° across the Shetland Islands off the northwest coast of Scotland. The distance from the southern coast of England to the most northern point of the Scottish mainland is 955 km (around 600 miles), and the English east coast and Welsh west coast are 483 km (around 300 miles) apart. The UK is bordered on the south by the English Channel, which separates it from the continent of Europe. It is bordered on the east by the North Sea, separating it from Belgium and Holland. Its only land border with another nation is between Northern Ireland and Ireland on the Island of Ireland. The UK today is a small nation in terms of physical size. With an area of 242,514 square kilometres (93,635 square miles), it is roughly the size of Colorado in the US, or the Guangxi Autonomous Region of China. Most of its territory is land (about 240,880 square kilometres, or 93,004 square miles) and the rest comprises inland water such as lakes and rivers.



### **Components**

As afore-mentioned, England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, plus several overseas territories, constitute one nation-state, the United Kingdom. But geographically, culturally and politically, these constituent countries dem-

onstrate distinct features.

## **England**

England is the largest, most populous, and wealthiest division of the United Kingdom. It makes up 130,281 square kilometres (53.7 per cent) of the country's total area. In mid-2006, 50,762,900 or 83.8 per cent of the total population of the UK lived in England, making this region, particularly the capital London, the most densely populated part of the country. With the bulk of the most fertile lowlands and six of the country's seven conurbations, England has a higher proportion of wealth and natural resources than the rest of the UK. London, which is the seat of government, centre of business, and the heart of arts and culture, dominates England, just as England dominates Great Britain. This English dominance is such that many people use "England" to refer to the whole United Kingdom, the entire island of Great Britain, or the British Isles. This is not only incorrect, but may annoy people from other parts of the UK. Not surprisingly, the English themselves feel most British and least attached to a separate English identity. However, this also means that England no longer represents the whole nation when the other three nations of the UK enjoy separate political status in one way or another.

## **Scotland**

Scotland is the second largest of the four nations both in area and population. It has an area of 77,925 square kilometres (32.1 per cent) and a population of 5,116,900 (8.4 per cent) as reported in mid-2006. But its population density is the lowest in the country (only about 65 persons per square kilometre), due to most part of Scotland being rugged and unsuitable for people to live. Three-quarters of the population live in the lowland zone located between the two uplands in the north and south. It is the home of Glasgow in the West and Edinburgh on the east coast, respectively the largest city and the capital of the region.

Before Scotland formally joined the Union with England in 1707, it had been a unified state independent of the UK for a long time. Today, Scotland no longer has a separate legislature and executive, and its economy is integrated into that of the rest of Britain. But it does have a separate administration, different legal and educational systems as well as its Presbyterian national church. Above all, it has retained much of its distinct cultural identity.

## **Wales**

Wales, a peninsular jutting from England into the Irish Sea, is the smallest among the three nations on the island of Great Britain, with an area of 20,732 square kilometres (8.5 per cent). It has a population of 2,965,900 (4.9 per cent) as

reported in mid-2006, with a population density of 142 persons per square kilometre. Cardiff, the capital, is located in southern Wales, serving as an important seaport and industrial centre.

Due to its adjacency to England, Wales has been dominated by England for longer period of time than the other nations of the UK — officially, since its union with England in 1536. Nevertheless, it retains a unique cultural, social, and economic development, notably its national language, Welsh, and a devolved Welsh Assembly.

### **Northern Ireland**

Northern Ireland, often referred to as the province of Ulster, is part of the Island of Ireland located in its northeast corner. It is the smallest both in area and population among the four nations of the UK. It occupies an area of 13,576 square kilometres (5.7 per cent of the UK and one-six of the Island of Ireland) and had a population of 1,741,600 (2.9 per cent) in mid-2006. The capital, Belfast, a seaport on the east coast, is a centre of shipbuilding and linen textiles.

The northern part of Ireland is separated from Scotland by a very narrow channel, which has historically subjected the region to intrusive British influences. However, when some of the people try to maintain strong links with the Irish culture that is predominant on the rest of the island, deep-rooted religious and political antagonisms inevitably arise, which have characterised the history of Northern Ireland. For over a century since 1801, Ireland had been part of the United Kingdom. But in 1922, the Irish Free State declared its independence, leaving only six northeastern counties inside the Union to be called Northern Ireland. Under an accord in 1998, a semi-autonomous government was established in mid-2000 in this region.

In addition to the four constituent parts, the UK also has a number of small islands in the British Isles, including the Isle of Wight, Anglesey, the Isles of Scilly, the Hebrides archipelago, the Orkney Islands, and the Shetland Islands. But the Isle of Man in the Irish Sea and the Channel Islands off the French west coast are dependencies that are largely self-governing. In addition, the UK claims several other dependent territories throughout the world, including Gibraltar, Saint Helena and the Falkland Islands. These overseas territories are remains of the former British Empire.



Great Britain has been traditionally divided into two major natural regions — a Highland zone in the north and west and a Lowland zone in the



south and east. They are approximately divided by an imaginary line running through England from the River Exe on the southwest coast to the mouth of the River Tees on the northeast coast.

### **The highland zone**

The highland zone is a region of high hills and mountains in the north and west that are frequently broken by valleys and plains. Scotland, Wales and parts of England are located in this zone.

Situated farther north are the Scottish Highlands, which may be subdivided into three main areas. The first is the North-West and Central Highlands (the Grampians). They are the chief range in the Highlands, reaching as high as 1,343 metres (4,406 feet) above sea level. The highest point here as well in Britain is Ben Nevis at 1,343 metres (4,406 feet). The second is a broad valley known variously as the Central Lowlands, the Scottish Lowlands, or the Midland Valley. This valley contains most of Scotland's cultivated farmland and major industries and mines, particularly coalfields. It also contains Scotland's major urban centres (including the capital city of Edinburgh) and accommodates three-quarters of the Scottish population. The third is the Southern Uplands, an area of rounded hills and broad valleys. The maximum elevation here is 850 metres (2,800 feet), and much of the area consists of moorlands used for grazing sheep. The western portion of the Highlands contains most of Scotland's famous lochs or large lakes.

Starting at the Cheviot Hills on England's border with Scotland and ending in the Midlands of central England lies the Pennine Chain, known as the "backbone of England". It is a massive plateau belt, extending 260 km (160 miles) from north to south, made up of several broad and rolling moorlands. Many of England's major industrial areas such as coalfields are based on the flanks of the Pennines. Located to the west of the northern Pennines are the Cumbrian Mountains, a mountainous dome of ancient rocks deeply eroded by glaciers. This region contains the Lake District, an area of rivers and lakes that is famous for its scenic beauty.

Most of Wales is occupied by the Welsh Massif, an upland mass containing the Cambrian Mountains and descending eastwards into England. The highest peak in Wales is in Snowdon in the northwest, which rises to 1,085 metres (3,560 feet) above sea level. In southern Wales, lower and less rugged mountains, the Brecon Beacons, extend in a roughly east-west direction.

Not far across from the southern Scottish coast, Northern Ireland consists of hilly highlands similar to those of Scotland. In the centre of the valley is Lough Neagh, the largest lake in the British Isles, which is 29 km (18 miles) long and 18 km (11 miles) wide. The highest part of Northern Ireland is the Mourne Mountains in the southeast, with a maximum elevation of 852 metres