

INTERMEDIATE ENGLISH SERIES

中级英语学习丛书

A BRIEF HISTORY
OF
THE UNITED STATES

美国简史

丁白 编著

人民教育出版社

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《中级英语学习丛书》简介

目前, 在我国现代化的进程中, 全国大学和中学生以及许多已经走上工作岗位的青年同志都在努力学习外语, 这是十分可喜的现象。为了帮助已有中等程度的英语学习者进一步学习英语, 我们将有计划地编写和出版一些书籍, 向他们提供读物, 介绍有关英语的知识, 总称《中级英语学习丛书》。

这套丛书还有一个重要目的: 供广大的中学英语教师选作进修和教学的辅助材料。中学英语教师的工作是光荣的, 因为他们为面向现代化、面向世界、面向未来的教育事业作出直接贡献。他们的工作又是艰巨的, 因为在非英语的环境中, 要使学生从完全不懂英语到打下一定的英语基础, 确非易事。我们希望这套丛书能对他们的工作和进修略有帮助。

从内容上说, 丛书分两大类: 背景知识类和语言知识类。前者用平易的英语编写, 介绍历史、地理、人物、名著等方面的知识, 既可用作读物, 又可供教师用作课堂上讲解有关知识的参考资料。后者用中文编写, 联系教与学的实际需要, 讨论语音、语法、基本词汇等方面的问题。

热忱希望全国各地的读者, 尤其是中学英语教师同志们, 关心、支持和协助这套丛书的编辑出版工作, 欢迎你们提出建议和批评。让我们共同努力, 把这项工作做好。

《中级英语学习丛书》编写组

前 言

这本《美国简史》主要根据威廉·泽布伦·福斯特 (William Zebulon Foster, 1881 — 1961) 所著《美洲政治史纲》(Outline Political History of the Americas, 1951) 一书改写的。福斯特是美国和国际工人运动活动家, 曾任美国共产党主席。除《美洲政治史纲》外, 还著有《三个国际的历史》、《美国共产党史》、《世界资本主义的末日》等书。

《美洲政治史纲》论述整个西半球, 也就是北美洲、中美洲和南美洲各国的历史。我们将其中有关美国历史部分择出, 予以简化、改写, 并参照其他美国史著作, 把原书中省略的而我们认为是重要的史实补充进去。补充的部分在全书的篇幅中所占比例很小, 只有十分之一左右。

可以看出, 福斯特大体上是用历史唯物主义的观点来分析和评论美国历史事件的。但我们知道, 以马克思主义为指导的历史学家也会对具体历史问题有不同的看法和评价, 这本来是正常的情况。阅读本书的同志, 如对美国历史有兴趣, 可参阅其他较详细的中文和英文的美国史, 以比较各书对史实的叙述和评论。这本小册子十分简略, 只能提供最基本的材料。

感谢人民教育出版社历史室邓利群同志, 外语室英语组刘锦芳同志为本书作了相当详细的注释。邓利群同志还提供了本书中的全部图片, 由视听教材室窦希如同志予以复制, 在此一并致谢。

书末附有索引, 将本书中出现的专有名词(人名、地名)按

英文字母次序排列，以便读者在正文中查找。名词后的数字表示页码。

热忱地希望读者对本书的内容和语言提出批评和意见。

编著者

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1. THE INDIANS' AND THE AMERICAS

From time immemorial,² the western hemisphere was the home of the Indian peoples. They lived all over the two continents from Alaska to Cape Horn.³ The numbers of the Indians in the fifteenth century, when Columbus "discovered" America,⁴ have been estimated at from 14 million to 40 million. In what are the United States and Canada today⁵ there were about a million Indians at that time. They were divided into a great number of tribes who spoke different languages and dialects. The tribes varied in color⁶ from almost black, through copper colored, to pale olive.

The Indians' economies differed as widely as their languages and colors. They ranged from nomadic tribesmen⁷ to highly developed village Indians. But on the whole their social system was that of tribal communalism. Its basis was common ownership of the land, whether the tribe made its living by hunting,

fishing, herding, farming, or by a combination of all these occupations.

The Indians did not grow wheat or rice; they grew maize, or Indian corn.⁸

The Indians had a strong sense of honor and were fair in dealing with one another and with outsiders.⁹ There was none of the frightful poverty, neglect of the aged, exploitation of children, and general misery that have been the Indians' lot since their land was conquered by the capitalist nations which were supposed to be more "civilized".

There is much dispute as to where the Indians originally came from. Some scholars hold that mankind itself originated in the Americas. This is an unlikely supposition, as remains of pre-human "man" have never been found in this hemisphere as in Asia, Africa and Europe.¹⁰ The prevailing view has it that the Indians came from Asia about 25,000 years ago. It has been estimated that the sea level was then about 225 feet lower than it is today. So the Indians could have crossed on solid land from Siberia¹¹ to Alaska. From the latter area the newcomers are supposed to have gradually fanned out all over the western hemisphere.¹²

Separated by two great oceans, the Indians and

the people of the other hemisphere knew nothing about each other and had no contact whatever with each other until the day Christopher Columbus sighted land after a long, adventurous voyage across the Atlantic.¹³

On October 12, 1492, Columbus stepped ashore on the island he later named San Salvador,¹⁴ in the Bahamas.¹⁵ It was one of the great moments in world history. The discovery of America gave an enormous stimulus to the advance of history. It helped to undermine decaying feudalism and speed up the growth of capitalism in Europe. It widely expanded man's economic and political concepts and gave him a greatly changed outlook upon the world he lived in.

Columbus, of course, was not the first to "discover" America. There were the Indians there at the time of his arrival. Moreover, there were many stories about earlier navigators who had "discovered" the western hemisphere before Columbus. Among these supposed discoverers were a group of Chinese priests who are said to have landed on the Pacific coast of North America about the year 458.¹⁶ It was Columbus' discovery, however, that ended the isolation of the western hemisphere, and linked it econo-



Christopher Columbus

mically, politically and culturally with the rest of the world.

In Columbus' time there were many forces at work which made the discovery of America inevitable. The most important factor was the rapid growth of mercantile capitalism in Europe. The European merchants went all over the known world to develop trade. No adventure was too risky for them. With their robberies and wars, they were hardly to be distinguished from pirates.

In 1453 the Turks¹⁷ captured Constantinople.¹⁸ This event shut off the trade route from Europe to the Middle and Far East.¹⁹ To find a new route to India,²⁰ Cathay²¹ (China) and Cipango²² (Japan) became an urgent need for the merchants and traders of western Europe.

Columbus, who was an Italian²³ navigator, thought it possible to reach Cathay by sailing due west.²⁴ After failing to get financial help from Italy,²⁵ England and Portugal,²⁶ he went to Spain, where he won the support of the Spanish²⁷ king and queen, and the merchants of Palos.²⁸ He was equipped with three ships, the biggest of which was only about 111 feet long and of 100 tons burden.²⁹ The total cost of his first voyage has been estimated at from \$5,000 to

\$7,000. He made four voyages to the West Indies.³⁰ But until the day of his death, he believed firmly that he had found the route to the Indies or the lands of the east, and the people he had seen there were Indians.

He was followed by many navigators, not only Spanish and Portuguese,³¹ but also Italian, French, English and Dutch.³² It was after Amerigo Vespucci, an Italian sailing in the interests of Spain, that the two continents were named.³³ In 1507 a German professor published a map of the New World on the basis of Vespucci's voyage and called it "America"³⁴.

It was indeed a great and rich world that Columbus and those who followed him discovered and explored. North America and South America, stretching about 10,000 miles from the Arctic³⁵ to the Antarctic,³⁶ cover 8,000,000 and 6,800,000 square miles respectively. Together they make up an area almost as large as that of Africa and Europe combined.³⁷ In the Americas there are all those resources necessary for agricultural and industrial development: fertile lands, seas teeming with fish, great forests, all the essential metals and minerals, huge coal and oil deposits, and rivers rich in water-power resources.

Sword and cross in hand, the ruling classes of Europe fell upon this rich world greedily.³⁸ Only fifty years after Columbus' first voyage, the Spanish and Portuguese had overrun the vast land of what is now called Latin America.³⁹ The colonization of North America by the English and French went somewhat slower, but with the same barbarity.⁴⁰ Indian society and culture were destroyed. Whole Indian tribes were slaughtered. Negroes were shipped from Africa to the New World and forced to be slaves. Working people of all races were ruthlessly exploited and oppressed.

Beginning with the arrival of Columbus, American history is a long and horrible story of the enslavement and exploitation of the laboring people by the landowners and capitalists.⁴¹ It is also a record of an endless and indomitable struggle of the toiling masses against this ruthless exploitation and oppression.

2. THE THIRTEEN ENGLISH COLONIES

In 1606, about a hundred people left England in

three ships for North America. They were sent by the Virginia Company⁴² (a trading company). The company had got from the English King a charter which gave it powers to set up and manage a colony in North America. In 1607 these people landed at the mouth of the James River⁴³ and established a settlement called Jamestown. More settlers arrived later, and the colony expanded. Tobacco was the main crop. The few tobacco planters exploited and ruled over the large number of workers who worked their plantations. This was the origin of the colony of Virginia.⁴⁴

In 1620 a group of Puritans and other people sailed in the since famous *Mayflower* to North America.⁴⁵ They landed at Cape Cod,⁴⁶ several hundred miles to the north of Virginia, and founded a settlement which they called Plymouth.⁴⁷ Taught by friendly Indians, they grew corn. They also trapped beavers. Later, many more Puritans came, as they were not tolerated in England. Four colonies grew up around Cape Cod: Massachusetts⁴⁸ (including Plymouth), Rhode Island,⁴⁹ Connecticut⁵⁰ and New Hampshire,⁵¹ collectively known as the New England colonies. Climate and soil in New England made it impossible to develop plantation farming. There each family

had its own small farm. As a result there were no aristocratic planters like those in Virginia, but a great many farmers. The colonists also went in for ship-building, navigation, trading with Europe and fishing.

These were the first English colonies on the Atlantic coast of North America. Later, other settlers came to found new colonies. New colonies were also established by people from the older ones. The Dutch had founded a colony west of New England and called it New Amsterdam.⁵² But the English seized it in 1664 when a war was going on between England and Holland.⁵³ It was renamed New York.

By the end of the seventeenth century twelve English colonies had been founded in North America. Their population in 1715 is reckoned to have been about 450,000, of whom 60,000 were Negroes.⁵⁴ In 1733 Georgia⁵⁵ was founded. Thus there were all together thirteen colonies. They were, from north to south: New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania,⁵⁶ New Jersey,⁵⁷ Delaware,⁵⁸ Maryland,⁵⁹ Virginia, North Carolina,⁶⁰ South Carolina⁶¹ and Georgia.

These colonies occupied a long and narrow strip of land along the Atlantic coast. West of this strip



Landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, Massachusetts, 1620