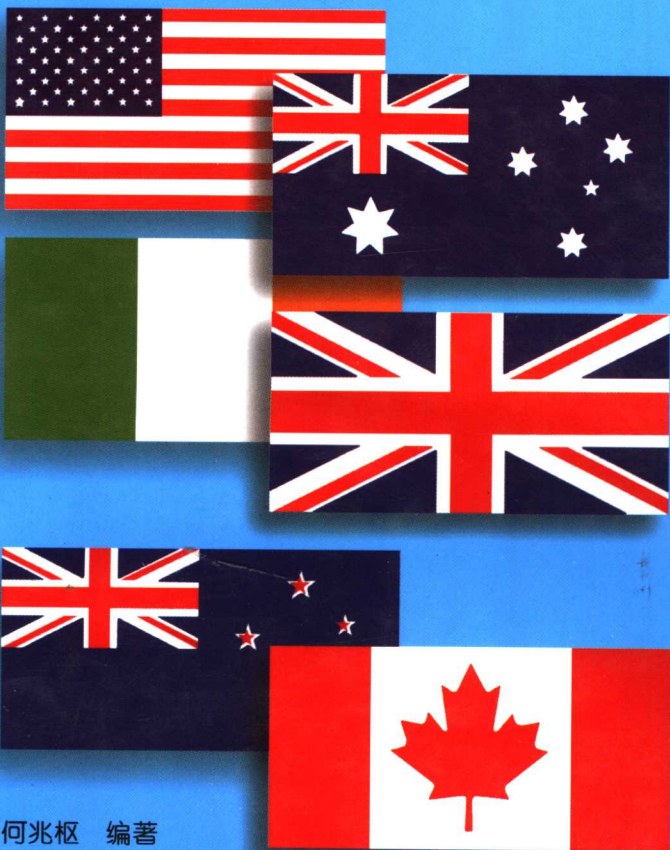


高等教育自学考试英语专业



何兆枢 编著

“英语国家概况” 应试必读

海军出版社

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外语教学与研究出版社

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前 言

本书《“英语国家概况”应试必读》是为适应“英语国家概况”课程的教学与考试的需要而编写的辅助教材。它以余志远主编的本课程指定教科书《英语国家概况》为蓝本,按照全国高等教育自学考试指导委员会于1996年10月10日颁布的《英语国家概况自学考试大纲》所规定的课程内容和考核目标编写。全书包括三部分:

A Brief Summary of the Course: 以简洁的英文概括该课程的各章、节的内容,便于学习者理解、掌握并记忆重点内容(划线部分)。

Key to the Exercises: 为学习者提供每章的练习答案,简明扼要,易懂好记。

Miscellanea: 为学习者提供知识性、趣味性、可读性俱佳的补充资料。

本书的目的是使该课程的学习者和应试者能系统地、全面地、有目的地、高效地学习、理解、记忆和运用本课程应知应会的知识,充满信心地参加高等教育自学考试,取得好成绩。任课教师可以把本书作为课堂教学的适用教材,在规定学时数内完成既定教学任务。

多年来,我担任“英美概况”授课工作。我在教材上花费的精力不亚于在教学上花费的精力。该课程三次更迭教材(《英语学习背景知识》,《英美文化基础教程》,《英语国家概况》),每种教材都有各自的内容和重点,写作风格迥异。因此,任课教师每次都要经历一次适应新教材的过程。不言而喻,

喻,考试命题范围和考核重点也相应地不同。我以前编写的《“英美概况”应试必读》和这次编写的《“英语国家概况”应试必读》都反映了我对教材内容和重点的理解与主观认识。但由于我不参与命题工作,我编写的书并不以猜题高命中率作为号召物,因此,学习者们不要把它们误作猜题、押题的参考书,谨此奉告。

为了帮助学习者和应试者学好本课程,我将编写《“英语国家概况”应试必读学习手册》,该书预期 1998 年 10 月出版。

祝您成功!

作 者

1998 年 5 月

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**A Brief Summary
of
the Course**

Part One

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Chapter One The Land and the People

I . Different Names for Britain and its Parts

1 The official name of the country is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. People often say the United Kingdom or simply UK, instead of such a long name. The land of the country is the Britain Isles, which are made up of two large islands and hundreds of small islands. The two large islands are Great Britain and Ireland. Geographically, England is a part of the Great Britain island. Northern Ireland is the northern part of the Ireland island. There is another country on the southern part of the Ireland island, the Republic of Ireland.

2 There are three administrative regions on the island of Great Britain: England, Scotland and Wales.

(1) **England**: England occupies the largest, southern part of Great Britain, bordering Wales to the west and Scotland to the north. It has an area of more than 130 000 square kilometres, about 60 % of the whole island. Most of the southwest and west are a plateau with rolling plains, downs and occasional

moorlands. The east of England is mainly an open cultivated plain. A range of hills Pennines runs from North Midlands to the Scottish border; its highest peak, Scafell, 978 metres high, is located in the Lake District in northwest England.

(2) **Scotland:** Scotland is situated in the north of Great Britain. It has an area of 78 760 square kilometres. There are three natural zones: the Highlands in the north, the central Lowlands, and the southern Uplands. The Highlands are a wild, rocky, mountainous plateau. The highest mountain in Britain, Ben Nevis, 1 343 metres high, is located here. The coastline is deeply indented, especially in the west. The central Lowlands is the most important area in Scotland, which contains most of the industry, coal and iron fields, dairy pastures, and the population. The southern Uplands, cut by small fertile river valleys, is a rolling moorland. Around Scotland, there are about 800 islands. Edinburgh is its capital.

(3) **Wales:** Wales, located in the west of Great Britain, has an area of 20 761 square kilometres, less than 9% of the whole island. Most of Wales is mountainous. The hills rise steeply from the sea and are rather flat on the top. 6% of the land is covered with forest, and much of the country is pasture. Snowdonia, 1 085 metres high, in the northwest, is the highest mountain in Wales. Its capital is Cardiff.

3 **Northern Ireland** is the fourth administrative region of the UK. It is located on the northern part of the Ireland island, and has an area of 14 147 square kilometres, about one fifth of the island. In the north, there is a rocky and wild coastline, with several deep indentations. The uplands of County Antrim lie in the northeast. Mountains in the southeast gradually give way to the central low-

lands of the Lough Neagh basin. Belfast is its capital.

I . Rivers and Lakes

4 Rivers in Britain do not freeze in winter. The great ports of London, Liverpool and Glasgow are all connected to the sea by rivers. On the east coast, the Tweed, the Tyne, the Tees and the Thames rivers empty into the North Sea. On the west coast, flow the Clyde, the Mersey and the Severn rivers. The longest river is the Severn River, only 338 kilometres long. The second largest and most important river in Britain is the Thames River, 336 kilometres long. It originates in the Cotswolds in southwest England and flows through the Midlands to London and out into the North Sea. River Clyde is the most important river in Scotland. It passes through Glasgow, playing the role of commercial waterway.

5 There are many lakes in Britain, especially in northern Scotland. The largest lake in Britain is the Lough Neagh in Northern Ireland. The Lake District includes 15 lakes, is well known for its wild and beautiful scenery, and thus becomes a popular tourist attraction.

II . Climate

6 A maritime type of climate. Britain has a favorable maritime climate—winters are mild, not too cold and summers are cool, not too hot, and it has a steady reliable rainfall throughout the whole year. The temperature varies within a small range.

7 Factors which influence the climate. Three factors influence the climate:

(1) The surrounding waters tend to balance the seasonal

differences as they bring warm air in winter and cool air in summer.

(2) The prevailing southwest winds blow over the country all the year round, bringing warm and wet air in winter and keeping the temperatures moderate.

(3) A warm current, the North Atlantic Drift, passes the western coast of the British Isles and warms them.

8 Britain's climate is very changeable; in some days, four seasons in the course of a single day may be observed.

9 **Rainfall.** Britain has a steady reliable rainfall throughout the whole year. The average annual rainfall is over 1 000 mm. In the west, there is as much as 1 250 mm to 2 000 mm of rainfall, and in some areas in the northwest, over 2 000 mm. The western winds blow over Britain all the year round, bringing warm and wet air from the Atlantic Ocean. The winds rise and climb the highlands and mountains in the west, causing heavy rainfall. The air then gets warmer and drier when it descends on the east and does not give much rain there (750 mm to 1 250 mm of rainfall along the coast in the east and south).

10 **Natural calamities.** Extremes of heat or cold, or of drought or prolonged rainfall are rare. But fog, smog, frost and severe gales are not uncommon and often cause great damage to crops and to people's life. Many areas are subjected to severe gales, especially in winter, which may cause flooding, shipwrecks and loss of life.

IV. The People

11 Britain has a population of 57 411 000 (1990). 90 % of the people live in cities and towns. There is a great concentration of population in England—47 million live there and 14 mil-

lion live in London and southeastern England. Scotland has a population of 5 million, most in Central Lowland. Wales has less than 3 million people. In Northern Ireland, 1.5 million people live, and half a million live in Belfast.

12 **The English.** The English are of Anglo-Saxon origin, while the Scots, Welsh and Irish are Celts. During the fifth century when the Roman Empire*¹ fell, the Germanic Angles and Saxons invaded and conquered Britain. From 450 A. D. to 600 A. D. they gradually took control of most of the country, became Christians, and settled down as farmers. Then in the 9th century, came the Viking raiders from Scandinavia. They plundered the coastlands and islands but eventually they too settled down, intermarried and fused with the local population (the Celts). In 1066, Duke William of Normandy (William the Conqueror) from France landed with a mighty armed force on the south coast and defeated the Saxon king Harold. French-speaking Norman conquerors set up a strong central government and made French the official language, and finally established feudal system there. Many aspects of England's social and cultural life became totally French.

13 **The Scots.** The earliest ancestors of Scots were the Picts, so called because of their "painted faces". The Scots called the Highlanders lived in the mountainous north. The Highlanders considered themselves the "true" Scots. They live mainly by farming sheep in the mountain areas. Others are the Lowlanders who live in towns and cities of southern Scotland. Today, though the Gaelic language is still heard in the Highlands, the English language is spoken all over Scotland because most of the people are not of Celtic origin and children on the islands have to go to secondary schools on the main-

land where they speak English.

14 **The Welsh.** The ancestors of the Welsh were the ancient Britons who escaped from the invading Angles and Saxons and found shelter in the wild mountains of Wales. The Celts of Wales defended themselves from the Anglo-Saxons for 1 000 years. Today, about a quarter of the Welsh population still speak Welsh, an ancient Celtic language. It was given equality with English for all official use in Wales in 1965. The Welsh are emotional and cheerful people. They are proud of their cultural heritage. Throughout the year, they have festivals of song, dance and poetry in Welsh form. A competition called the National Eisteddfod is a great event of the year, held for Welsh poetry, music, singing and art. In this way, the Welsh keep their language and culture alive.

15 **The Irish.** The whole of Ireland was colonized by the English in 1169, and from that time onwards there were constant uprisings by the native Irish. In the 16th century, the Irish refused to accept the Protestant Reformation^{*2} (they remained loyal to Catholic^{*3} faith) despite many cruel persecutions by the English. In the 17th century, Cromwell crushed various rebellions in Ireland and settled English and Scottish Protestants in Ireland. These immigrants sought to put down anti-British revolts. By the turn of this century, the Irish began to demand some kind of autonomy. But Ulster Protestants feared that an autonomous Ireland would be dominated by Catholics. Eventually in 1922, Ireland was partitioned, the 26 counties of southern Ireland became Irish Free State (later renamed the Republic of Eire), and the 6 counties of Ulster