

*New Reading
Skill Builder*

新编循序渐进美国英语

BOOK FIVE, PART TWO

CONTENTS

The Opal Miners of Lightning	<i>Ben Lucien Burman</i>	4
Jeannette Gives Judo a Fling	<i>Jeannette Bruce</i>	13
Indian Words All Around US	<i>Bernard DeVoto</i>	21
The Sky Is Their Limit	<i>Robert N. Buck</i>	28
The Patriot	<i>Jared C. Lobdell</i>	39
Jerry's Black Lamb	<i>Sterling North</i>	43
Big Changes in the Big Woods	<i>Paul Friggens</i>	56
The Owls in Our House	<i>Farley Mowat</i>	65
The Wreck of the <i>Guineveré</i>	<i>Rodney Strulo</i>	72
What's So Tough About a Dog's Life?	<i>John Gould</i>	81
She Makes a Joyful Music	<i>Alex Haley</i>	86
Gaucha on a Gas Tank	<i>George Obligado</i>	92
The Sixth Diamond	<i>Nora Piper</i>	99
We Discovered Our Town	<i>Jhan and June Robbins</i>	106
Mystery of the Firefly	<i>Robert Gannon</i>	113
Casey Jones, Engineer of the Cannonball Express	<i>Tom Mahoney</i>	120
The Day the Bears Go to Bed	<i>Jean George</i>	129
Wheels in His Head	<i>M. M. Musselman</i>	137

目录

闪电岭的采蛋白石人	本·卢西恩·伯曼	145
珍妮特小试柔道记	珍妮特·布鲁斯	148
我们常见的印第安词汇	伯纳特·德沃托	150
天空是他们的极限	罗伯特·N·巴克	153
爱国者	贾雷德·C·洛布德尔	156
杰里的黑色羊羔	斯特林·诺思	157
大森林的巨大变迁	保罗·弗里根斯	162
我们家里的猫头鹰	法利·莫瓦特	164
圭尼维尔号的失事	罗德尼·斯特鲁洛	167
狗的生活里有什么为难事?	约翰·古尔德	170
她创造了一种快乐音乐	亚利克斯·哈利	172
油罐上的牧人	乔治·奥布里加多	174
第六块钻石	诺·派珀	176
我们“发现了”我们的城市	杰汉·罗宾斯及琼·罗宾斯	178
萤火虫的秘密	罗伯特·甘农	181
炮弹号快车的司机,凯西·琼斯	汤姆·马奥尼	184
熊开始睡觉的日子	琼·乔治	187
他脑中主意在飞转	M·M·马塞尔曼	189

*New Reading
Skill Builder*

新编循序渐进美国英语

BOOK FIVE, PART TWO

CONTENTS

The Opal Miners of Lightning	<i>Ben Lucien Burman</i>	4
Jeannette Gives Judo a Fling	<i>Jeannette Bruce</i>	13
Indian Words All Around US	<i>Bernard DeVoto</i>	21
The Sky Is Their Limit	<i>Robert N. Buck</i>	28
The Patriot	<i>Jared C. Lobdell</i>	39
Jerry's Black Lamb	<i>Sterling North</i>	43
Big Changes in the Big Woods	<i>Paul Friggens</i>	56
The Owls in Our House	<i>Farley Mowat</i>	65
The Wreck of the <i>Guineveré</i>	<i>Rodney Strulo</i>	72
What's So Tough About a Dog's Life?	<i>John Gould</i>	81
She Makes a Joyful Music	<i>Alex Haley</i>	86
Gaucha on a Gas Tank	<i>George Obligado</i>	92
The Sixth Diamond	<i>Nora Piper</i>	99
We Discovered Our Town	<i>Jhan and June Robbins</i>	106
Mystery of the Firefly	<i>Robert Gannon</i>	113
Casey Jones, Engineer of the Cannonball Express	<i>Tom Mahoney</i>	120
The Day the Bears Go to Bed	<i>Jean George</i>	129
Wheels in His Head	<i>M. M. Musselman</i>	137

目录

闪电岭的采蛋白石人	本·卢西恩·伯曼	145
珍妮特小试柔道记	珍妮特·布鲁斯	148
我们常见的印第安词汇	伯纳特·德沃托	150
天空是他们的极限	罗伯特·N·巴克	153
爱国者	贾雷德·C·洛布德尔	156
杰里的黑色羊羔	斯特林·诺思	157
大森林的巨大变迁	保罗·弗里根斯	162
我们家里的猫头鹰	法利·莫瓦特	164
圭尼维尔号的失事	罗德尼·斯特鲁洛	167
狗的生活里有什么为难事?	约翰·古尔德	170
她创造了一种快乐的音乐	亚利克斯·哈利	172
油罐上的牧人	乔治·奥布里加多	174
第六块钻石	诺·派珀	176
我们“发现了”我们的城市	杰汉·罗宾斯及琼·罗宾斯	178
萤火虫的秘密	罗伯特·甘农	181
炮弹号快车的司机,凯西·琼斯	汤姆·马奥尼	184
熊开始睡觉的日子	琼·乔治	187
他脑中主意在飞转	M·M·马塞尔曼	189

The Opal Miners



A visit to a mining camp at
the edge of wild back country

of Lightning Ridge

Ben Lucien Burman

This place is as full of crazy characters as it is of opals," said the tall Australian who went by the nickname of Kangaroo Jack. "I guess opal miners are the craziest men in the world."

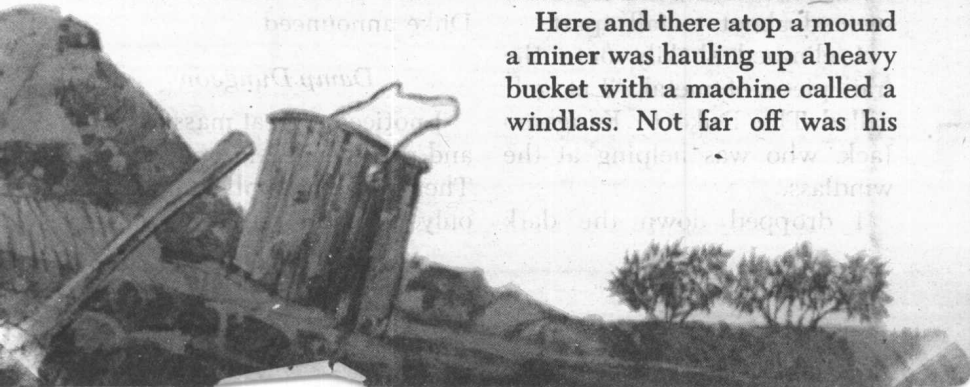
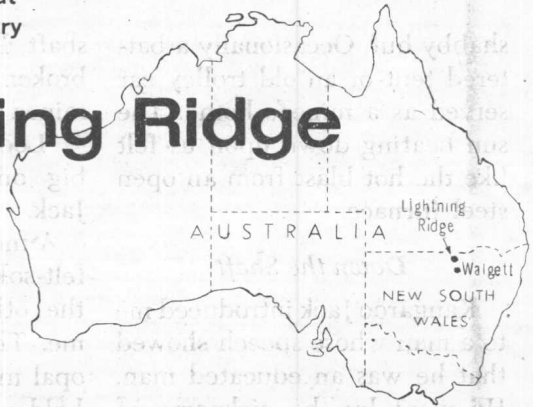
We were at Lightning Ridge, a little settlement in New South Wales, Australia. The miners here, called "gougers," dig the precious black opal from the yellow earth. From these rich mines

have come some of the most famous opals ever discovered.

The men in this wilderness of sand, stone and scrubby gum trees are a strange group. They come from everywhere — drawn by the fascination of the beautiful gems and the chance of great wealth overnight.

All around me were whitish-yellow mounds from eight to ten feet high. They were the heaps of dirt and gravel thrown out from the narrow mine shafts.

Here and there atop a mound a miner was hauling up a heavy bucket with a machine called a windlass. Not far off was his



shabby hut. Occasionally a battered tent or an old trolley car served as a miner's home. The sun beating down upon us felt like the hot blast from an open steel furnace.

Down the Shaft

Kangaroo Jack introduced me to a man whose speech showed that he was an educated man. He went by the nickname of Harry the Duke.

The Duke invited me to visit his mine. The entrance was a shaft only twice as wide as a man's body, dropping 45 feet into darkness. To take me down, he brought out a bosun's chair, which is usually a short board slung by ropes, used as a seat. I looked at this bosun's chair with horror. It was a strip of tin attached to two ragged pieces of twine. The whole thing hung from a rickety windlass which seemed about to fall apart.

I climbed shakily onto the frail piece of metal. "Let go!" called The Duke to Kangaroo Jack, who was helping at the windlass.

I dropped down the dark

shaft like an elevator with a broken cable. A number of rocks rained down on me.

"Look out! Some of 'em are big ones!" shouted Kangaroo Jack.

A moment later, to my joy, I felt solid earth under me. Soon the others were down beside me. The Duke handed me an opal miner's "spider" — a metal holder with a lighted candle. Then, carrying one himself, he led the way along a tunnel. We went up a narrow ladder to a ledge ten feet above. From there we entered a passage so low and narrow we could only crawl on our hands and knees.

Suddenly we entered a wide room dug out of solid earth. Passages led off in all directions. Above us a tiny square of light marked the top of a second shaft.

"The grand ballroom," The Duke announced.

Damp Dungeon

I noticed a great mass of clay and rock heaped in one corner. There were no timber supports, only narrow earthen pillars

holding up the roof. The Duke caught my glance. "That wall has been caving a bit. The pile there fell in yesterday — about 30 tons, I guess."

"But you needn't worry," said Kangaroo Jack. "There's a superstition that it will only cave in between midnight and one o'clock."

"It's because of the turning of the earth," said a miner named Woolly Will. "Some miners believe that the earth stops revolving every 24 hours for a billionth of a second. When it stops, at midnight, is when the cave-ins come."

Kangaroo Jack nodded. "You'll never see an opal gouger in his mine between midnight and one o'clock," he said.

Opal Fever

The Duke jabbed the sharp end of his spider into the earthen wall. Then he took out a matchbox to show me some prize opals. This is the usual way to carry even priceless stones — in a matchbox or an empty tobacco tin. They were beautiful: the famous black

opals of the Ridge, the most expensive opals in the world. They seemed curiously alive. Fires of many colors — red, green, purple, orange — danced deep within, in ever-changing rainbows.

The miners sat down and began to talk about opals. They told me that the stones are supposed to change color with the good or poor health of their owner. I learned that there are day stones that flash when the sun is up, and night stones that flash only after dark.

Then the miners talked about the men who steal opals. They are known as "ratters."

"The worst ratter I knew was when I first came to the Ridge," said The Duke. "One night a miner woke up and heard digging in his shaft. The miner ran out in his nightshirt and began shoveling dirt down the shaft. The dirt was up to the ratter's waist when the other miners heard the noise. They made the miner stop."

Ridgeman's Tongue

Suddenly The Duke took a small opal-pick. He began to

chop at one of the narrow earthen roof supports.

"You're cutting that pillar pretty thin, Duke," said Woolly Will. "It won't wait for a cave-in if you chop it any closer."

"Unless I'm wrong there's a fine opal in that pillar," The Duke answered cheerfully.

He picked up a piece of stone he had chopped out and licked it with his tongue to see if any color showed up. Then he tossed it into the bucket of opal dirt. "You can tell if a person comes from the Ridge by looking at his tongue," he said. "If he's a Ridgeman he'll have a hole worn in it from licking opal."

Later we followed The Duke as he dragged the filled bucket back to the main shaft. Hooking it onto the dangling rope, he signaled his partner above to haul it up.

The hook came down again, this time with the bosun's chair. I was jerked giddily upward into the open air. The others quickly followed.

The Duke's partner, Walkabout Johnny, was as skinny as a scarecrow. The two of them

emptied the bucket, picked out the larger stones and examined them.

Fickle Fate

That evening I took the local taxicab back to Walgett, a little town some 50 miles from the Ridge. The driver began to talk to me and his other passengers.

"Opal mining is the biggest gamble anywhere," he said.

"You're right," boomed the deep voice of a back-seat passenger. "Take those two men who came here two years ago with no money. One fellow thought he'd play a joke on them. He took them to a part of the Ridge where there wasn't a chance. 'Dig here,' he told them. They dug where he said — and found opals right away. They left here a few days ago carrying a suitcase filled with money."

I heard many good stories of the early days at the Ridge. The opal rush started about 60 years ago when a man noticed children at a sheep station playing with curious colored stones. A thousand tents sprang up almost overnight as word spread of the

rich find. Men came from everywhere to forget their troubles and start a new life.

At the Diggers' Rest

For some weeks I stayed in the area, each morning driving out to the Ridge. "I hope they find a big one before you leave," said Kangaroo Jack.

That evening at the Diggers' Rest, a hotel in Lightning Ridge, a young man was excitedly showing off something in his hand. Kangaroo Jack turned to me. "Looks like Ginger Joe's got a big one."

Woolly Will was doubtful. "Let's take it up to the cutter.

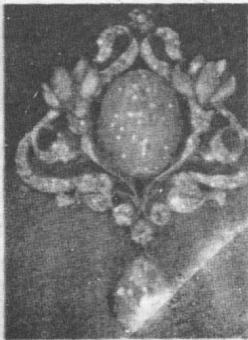
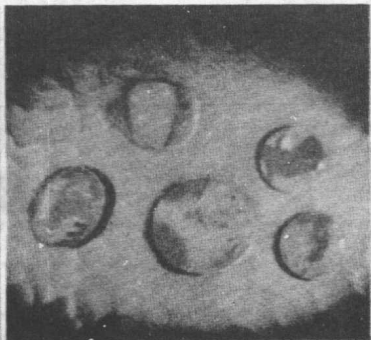
Artie can tell Ginger for sure."

I glanced with disappointment at the yellow, mud-stained rock. It was perhaps the size of a large walnut. I found it hard to believe that it was anything more than a dirty piece of stone.

Artie was as doubtful as Will. "You can't tell till the last second, Ginger," he said. "I'll put it on the wheel!"

The workshop was filled with grinding wheels of every kind. The cutter started up a wheel on which water sprayed gently. He set the stone to the gray surface of the wheel. For an hour he labored. The stone was now down to almost half its size.

LEFT, BELOW: Chunks from Lightning Ridge mines, showing thin layers of black opal. **CENTER:** Polished stones ready for setting, worth thousands of dollars. **RIGHT:** Opal and diamond brooch made around 1900.



"How's it look, Artie?" the young miner asked.

Artie's kindly eyes were worried. "There's a big streak of sand running through. If it lasts the opal won't be worth much." Ginger's face fell.

For another hour Artie worked expertly, moving to new wheels that grew ever finer and finer. The stone was now the width of an American quarter and the thickness of four such coins placed together. Carefully Artie put it on the final wheel. A moment later he laid it in Ginger Joe's trembling hand.

"It's a good one," he said. "Three thousand dollars if it's worth a penny."

I looked at the stone and gasped. The ugly yellow piece was now a beautiful gem filled with a thousand dancing fires.

It was fit for a king's crown.

We walked back to the Diggers' Rest to celebrate. Outside, a shabby figure came forward. "Lend me some money, will you, Jack?" he asked.

Jack answered quietly, "Show my friend here your opals, Charley."

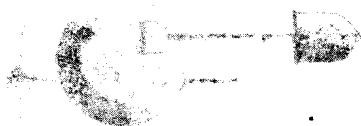
The shabby man fished in a pocket and brought out a couple of matchboxes. He showed me half a dozen opals that I could tell were worth a small fortune.

"Why don't you sell one of them, Charley?"

The voice of the shadowy figure was shocked. "I wouldn't sell even one opal at any price."

Jack put some coins into Charley's hand. Kangaroo Jack was right: Lightning Ridge is as full of odd characters as its mines are full of opals.

NUMBER OF WORDS: 1630 ÷ MINUTES READING TIME = RATE:



I. POOL YOUR OPINIONS ABOUT OPALS AND OPAL MINERS

1. Using the picture on page 9, explain why the opal is an especially fascinating gem. Is it one of your favorites? For what month is it the birthstone?
2. Would you enjoy visiting the mining camp at Lightning Ridge? Point out sentences and pictures that indicate what you would see and hear and how you might feel.
3. Why are opal miners a strange group? What problems must they face? How sure are their rewards?

II. MINE THE MAIN FACTS

Underline the right ending for each sentence.

1. Lightning Ridge is in (Wales, Australia, England).
2. The mines at the Ridge are owned and worked by (one big company, the government, individual miners).
3. The special kind of opal found at Lightning Ridge is the (fire, black, milky) opal.
4. A person or a bucket is lowered into a mine or hauled up by means of a (trolley, windlass, motor).
5. The big mound near each shaft is (a shelter made for the miners, ore to be shipped, earth that has been searched for opals).
6. The roof of the underground room is supported by (heavy timbers, metal posts, earthen pillars).
7. The danger that the miners most often face is from (broken cables, cave-ins, fire).
8. "Ratters" are (swift-moving animals, candle holders, men who steal opals).

9. As it came from the mine, Ginger Joe's opal looked like a (yellow, mud-stained rock; smooth gem; chunk of black coal).
10. A miner licks stones he thinks may be opals to see if they show (cracks, colors, sand).

10 points for each correct answer

My score:

PERFECT TOTAL SCORE: 100

MY TOTAL SCORE:

III. DIG FOR DEEPER MEANINGS

Use the article, a dictionary and your own judgment to answer the questions below.

1. What does *opalescent* mean?
2. What has a rainbow to do with the word *iridescent*?
3. Why is an opal miner called a *gouger*? What does a gouger call his candle holder? Can you guess why?
4. What do miners use a windlass for? How is *windlass* pronounced?
5. What is a bosun's chair? What is the origin of the word?

IV. LOOK FOR GEMS OF KNOWLEDGE

1. In reference books, find out how opals form in the earth and why they reflect light in a special way.
2. How do certain ways of cutting and polishing gems bring out their beauty? Why are some gems so much more rare or expensive than others? Find answers in books such as *Wonders of Gems*, by Richard M. Pearl.
3. What is your birthstone? If you haven't seen it, look at its picture in a reference book. Find out about it.

Adapted from *The Opal Miners of Lightning Ridge*
The Reader's Digest, June '85

A pint-size tigress
tells all.



Jeannette Gives Judo a Fling

Jeannette Bruce

All I knew about judo until a few weeks ago was what I had seen on TV. I'd watched a demonstration in which two little girls about my size threw men built like King Kong right into the next channel.

"Anybody can do it," said the announcer. He put his arm around one girl. She smiled and said yes, anybody could do it.

"Just a matter of proper train-

ing, isn't it?" said the announcer. Yes, answered the girl, just a matter of proper training.

Interesting. I turned off the television and picked up the evening paper. It was full of stories about burglars and purse snatchers, all running loose in the streets. It set me thinking.

The thought of someone my size (5 feet, 107 pounds) being able to master something like

judo fascinated me. I got some books on the subject, and they all agreed that height and weight were unimportant. Judo, "the gentle way," is the art of overcoming force by yielding, by giving way. (I'd been doing that for years in subway rush hours.) I only had to get an opponent off balance, then kick his legs out from under him.

Once I make up my mind about something, I don't sit around swatting flies. I signed up for a course at Judo, Inc. Ray Gould, the manager, explained the program.

"Don't worry," he said. (A nerve-racking *whomp* had just echoed from the nearby *dojo*, or exercise room.) "It doesn't feel nearly as bad as it sounds when you hit the mat." *Crash!* He got up and closed the door.

"We consider our courses a form of life insurance," Mr. Gould said. "Once judo becomes a part of your life, you can walk down the darkest alley at night without fear."

By the time I got home, I was making up newspaper headlines. GIRL THROWS 205-

POUND THUG was one. My favorite: SHE FLIPS HIS LID.

Aarrgh! I was going to be a tiger!

My uniform didn't do much for the tiger impression. It came in three parts. The white cotton trousers are designed to cover the knees; on me they reached my ankles. The jacket, which should have ended just below my hips, hung to my knees. With the thick cotton belt looped twice around me and tied in a double knot, I looked like a Japanese laundry bag.

The *dojo* at Judo, Inc., is a cheerful room, furnished with a large mat made of grass and filled with rice-straw padding. *Rice straw?* Had no one told Japan about foam rubber? I was feeling the edge of the mat to see how thick it was when my first instructor came after me.

"I am Kanokogi Sensei," he said with a big smile. "That," he said, pointing to an instructor who was hurling a body to a mat, "is Eguchi Sensei." The word *sensei* means teacher.

"Come," said Kanokogi Sensei. "First we learn to bow."