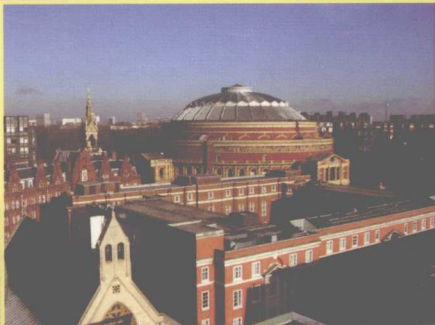


A Course of British and American Culture (1)

英美文化 教程(上)

主 审: 张绍杰
主 编: 姜毓锋
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前言

《英美文化教程（上）》是一本关于英国社会与文化的教科书，旨在帮助读者了解英国社会与文化概貌，如地理、历史、政治、宗教、经济、教育、风俗和人物等。读者可通过课文学习和练习训练，丰富其目标语国家的文化背景知识，最终提高跨文化交际能力。本教程凝聚了哈尔滨理工大学、哈尔滨工业大学、北京语言大学、广州大学、湖南大学、哈尔滨医科大学和哈尔滨商业大学的专家、学者以及长期从事英美文化教学教师的辛勤汗水，特别要感谢的是，本教程还得到了东北师范大学副校长、英语博士生导师张绍杰教授的审阅以及英国专家的具体指导。本教程语言地道、原汁原味，内容新颖、通俗易懂，版式设计独特、图片丰富，可作为高校英语专业学生及非英语专业高年级学生英美文化课程教材，也可供具有同等英语水平的自学者使用。

为了帮助读者全面深入了解英国文化，增强整体观察和综合研究的能力，本教程讲述的基本内容采用了树状结构组合，横向展开，拓宽视野讨论英国社会的方方面面；纵向探索，追溯其运动轨迹和因果关系。本教程纵深和广度结合以相互补充，控制篇幅的同时保证信息量，达到兼容并蓄，提高本教程的可教性、可读性和参考性，满足多层次、多方位的不同需求。

本教程具有以下特点：

- 兼顾教学需求与自学需要，各章节配有要点提示；
- 各章生词当页标注，方便学生自主学习；各章注释以背景知识为主，复杂语法为辅；
- 各章配有精选练习题，提示本章复习要点；
- 设“名人”专章，凸显人文气息；
- 独有的大事年表以及所附的国旗、国歌、国花等知识为学习者提供方便。

诚然，一个民族的文化范畴包罗万象，大到政治、文化、经济、军事、历史、地理、

宗教、民俗，小到民众的衣食住行，因此，一本教程很难详尽地细数英国文化的林林总总，只能择主干而弃枝叶。但编者希望，借此教程，将以往片面零星、散状分布的材料百川归海、上下贯串，呈献给读者一部脉络分明、内容全面、“整体性”强的英国文化教程。为此，编者力求做到尽善尽美、恰到好处，但定有不足和局限，望研究英美文化与国家概况的专家和读者批评指正。

编 者

2008年12月于哈尔滨

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Chapter 1

Geography

HIGHLIGHTS

different names — position on earth — physiographic features — climate, weather, and water — seasons and May Day

I. Name of the Country

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland 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 kilometers (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 20th 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** (仿效) 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 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, and the World Trade Organization, 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** (卓越的) in the arts, sciences and technology.



Map of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

1. England

England is the largest, most populous and wealthiest division of the United Kingdom. It makes up 130,281 square kilometers (53.7%) of the country's total area. In mid 2006, 50,762,900 or 83.8% 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, center 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

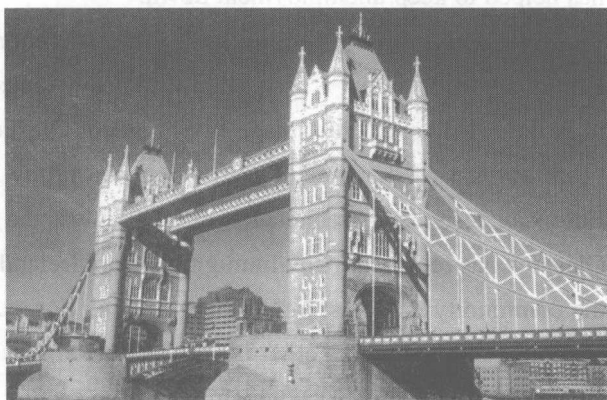
represents the whole nation when the other three nations of the UK enjoy separate political status in one way or another.

London dominates Britain. It is home for the headquarters of all government departments, Parliament, the major legal institutions and the monarch. It is the country's business and banking center and the center of its transport network. It contains the headquarters of the national television networks and of all the national newspapers. It is about seven times larger than any other city in the country. About a fifth of the total population of the UK lives in the Greater London area.

The original walled city of London was quite small. It is known colloquially today as the square mile. It did not contain Parliament or the royal court, since this would have interfered with the autonomy of the merchants and traders who lived and worked there. It was in Westminster, another "city" outside London's walls, that these national institutions met. Today, both "city" are just two areas of central London. The square mile is home to the country's main financial organizations, the territory of the stereotypical English "city gent". During the daytime, nearly a million people work there, but less than 8,000 people actually live there.

Two other well-known areas of London are the West End and the East End. The former is known for its many theatres, cinemas and expensive shops. The latter is known as the poorer residential area of central London. It is the home of the **Cockney** (伦敦佬) and in the 20th century large numbers of immigrants settled there.

There are many other parts of central London which have their own distinctive characters, and central London itself makes up only a very small part of Greater London. In common with many other European cities, the population in the central area has decreased in the second half of the 20th century. The majority of "Londoners" live in its suburbs, millions of them traveling into the center each day to work. These suburbs cover a



Tower Bridge

vast area of land. Like many large cities, London is in some ways untypical of the rest of the country in that it is so **cosmopolitan** (来自世界各地的). Although all of Britain's cities have some degree of cultural and racial variety, the variety is by far the greatest in London. A survey carried out in the 1980s found that 137 different languages were spoken in the homes of just one district.

In recent years it has been claimed that London is in decline. It is losing its place as one of the world's biggest financial centers and in comparison with many other western European cities; it looks rather dirty and neglected. Nevertheless, its popularity as a tourist destination is still growing. And it is not only tourists who like visiting London — the readers of *Business Traveler* magazine often vote it their favorite city in the world in which to do business. This popularity is probably the result of its combination of apparently infinite cultural variety and a long history which has left many visible signs of its richness and drama.

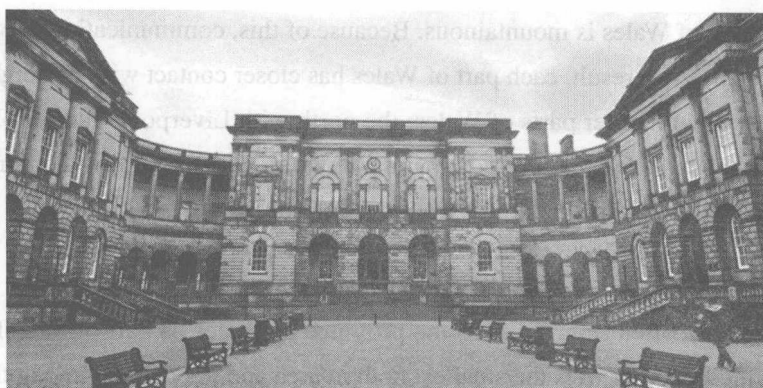
2. Scotland

Scotland has three fairly clearly-marked regions. Just north of the border with England are the southern uplands, an area of small towns, quite far apart from each other, whose economy depends to a large extent on sheep farming. Further north, there is the central plain. Finally, there are the Highlands, consisting of mountains and deep valleys and including numerous small islands off the west coast. This area of spectacular natural beauty occupies the same land area as southern England but fewer than a million people live there. Tourism is important in the local economy, and so is the production of whisky.

It is in the central plain and the **strip** (一块狭长的土地) of east coast extending northwards from it that more than 80% of the population of Scotland lives. In recent times, this region has had many of the same difficulties as the industrial north of England, although the North Sea oil industry has helped to keep unemployment down.

Scotland's two major cities have very different reputations. **Glasgow** (格拉斯哥) is the third largest city in Britain. It is associated with heavy industry and some of the worst housing conditions in Britain. However, this image is one-sided. Glasgow has a strong artistic heritage. A hundred years ago the work of the Glasgow School (led by Mackintosh) put the city at the forefront of European design and architecture. In 1990, it was the European City of culture. Over the centuries, Glasgow has received many immigrants from Ireland and in some ways it reflects the divisions in the community that exist in Northern Ireland. For example, of its two rival football teams, one is Catholic (Celtic) and the other is Protestant (Rangers).

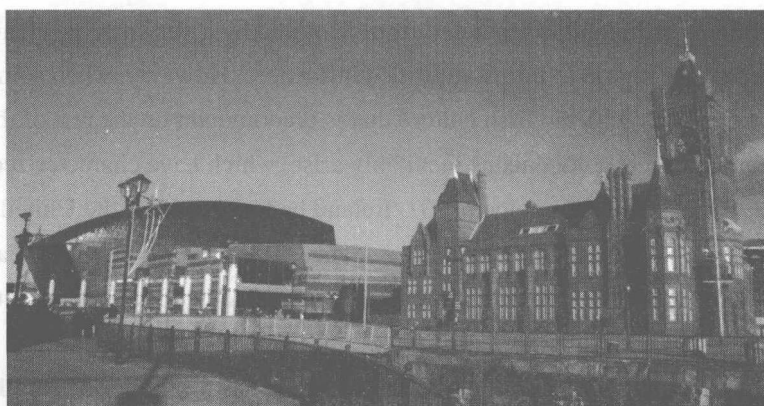
Edinburgh (爱丁堡), which is half the size of Glasgow, has a comparatively middle-class image (although class differences between the two cities are not really very great). It is the capital of Scotland and is associated with scholarship, the law and administration. This reputation, together with its many fine historic buildings, and also perhaps its **topography** (地形, 地势) has led to its being called "the Athens of the north". The annual Edinburgh Festival of the arts is internationally famous.



Edinburgh University

3. Wales

As in Scotland, most people in Wales live in one small part of it. In the Welsh case, it is the southeast of the country that is most heavily populated. Coal has been mined in many parts of Britain, but just as British people would locate the prototype factory of the industrial revolution in the north of England, so they would locate its prototype coal mine in south Wales. Despite its industry, no really large cities have grown up in this area. **Cardiff** (加的夫), the capital of Wales, has a population of about a quarter of a million. It is the only part of Britain with a high proportion of industrial villages. The city has undergone an enormous amount of urban **regeneration** (重建) and restoration and has recently become one of the most fashionable cities in Britain. With modern shopping centers, historic Victorian shopping **arcades** (拱廊), an impressive selection of hotels, world-class restaurants and a trendy **waterfront** (滨水地区) area. Cardiff has become a popular city attracting thousands of visitors each year from home and abroad. Coal mining in south Wales has now ceased and, as elsewhere, the transition to other forms of employment has been slow and painful.

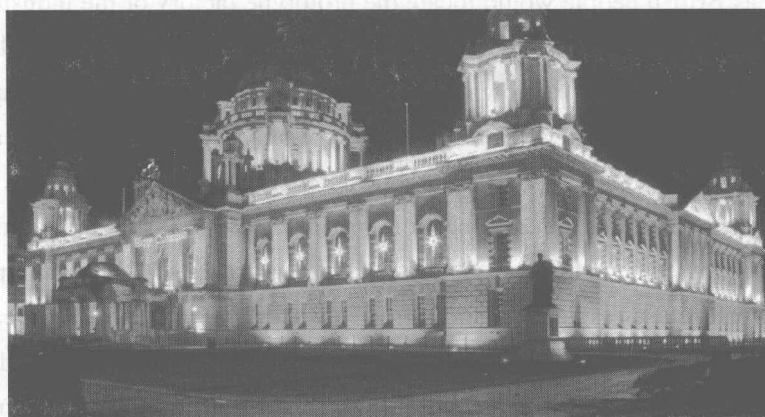


Cardiff Millenium Centre and Pierhead Building

Most of the rest of Wales is mountainous. Because of this, communication between south and north is very difficult. As a result, each part of Wales has closer contact with its neighboring part of England than it does with other parts of Wales: the north with Liverpool, and mid-Wales with the English west midlands. The area around Mount **Snowdon** (斯诺登峰) in the north-west of the country is very beautiful and is the largest National Park in Britain.

4. 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 sq km (5.7% of the UK and one sixth of the Island of Ireland) and had a population of 1,741,600 (2.9%) in mid-2006. The capital, Belfast, a seaport on the east coast, is a center of shipbuilding and linen textiles. As an important, historic city, it is crammed full of spectacular **landmarks** (里程碑) and monuments, most of which **date back** (追溯) many hundreds of years and are in remarkable condition.



Belfast City Hall

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 characterized 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** (怀特岛), **Anglesey** (安格尔西岛), the **Isles of Scilly** (锡

利群岛), the **Hebrides archipelago** (赫布里底群岛), the **Orkney Islands** (奥克尼群岛), and the **Shetland Islands** (设得兰群岛). 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** (直布罗陀), **Saint Helena** (圣赫勒拿) and the **Falkland Islands** (福克兰群岛). These overseas territories are remains of the former British Empire.

II. Physiographic Features

Great Britain has been traditionally divided into two major natural regions — a Highland (高地的) zone in the north and west and a Lowland (低地的) 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.

1. 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. They are the chief range in the Highlands, reaching as high as 1,343 meters (4,406 feet) above sea level. The highest point here as well in Britain is Ben Nevis at 1,343 meters (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 centers 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 meters (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** (湖) or large lakes.

Starting at the **Cheviot Hills** (切维厄特丘) on England's border with Scotland and ending in the Midlands of central England lies the **Pennine Chain** (奔宁山脉), known as the "backbone of England". It is a massive plateau belt, extending 260 kilometers (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** (侧面) of the Pennines. Located to the west of the northern Pennines are the Cambrian 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 meters (3,560 feet) above sea level. In southern Wales, lower and less rugged mountains, the **Brecon Beacons** (布莱肯比肯斯), 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 center of the valley is **Lough Neagh** (内伊湖), the largest lake in the British Isles, which is 29km (18 miles) long and 18km (11 miles) wide. The highest part of Northern Ireland is the Mourne Mountains in the southeast, with a maximum elevation of 852 meters (2,796 feet) above sea level.

(1) The Pennines

The Pennines form the “backbone” of central northern England, extending from the Scottish border almost as far south as Birmingham. With their north eastern extension, the Cheviots and their near neighbor, the Hills of **Cumberland** (坎伯兰), are known as the Lake District. The Pennines block north-south ground travel in Britain. The range of hills consists of an uplifted block of **porous** (渗水的) sandstone and limestone, and that is divided into three sections by major gaps or water flows: northern, central and southern. The northern section reflects conditions at the end of the glacial retreat. The grit-covered, **Carboniferous** (石炭纪的) limestone rocks, combined with a bleak rainy and windy climate, produce one of England’s most desolate moorland landscapes. One section, the Northern Yorkshire Dales, is known for sheep rearing. These windswept, treeless regions are covered either with wide expanses of tall coarse grasses or with heather interspersed with peat or bogs. Even more important, the northern Pennines are known for rare mountain plant species, surviving from the time of glacial retreat.

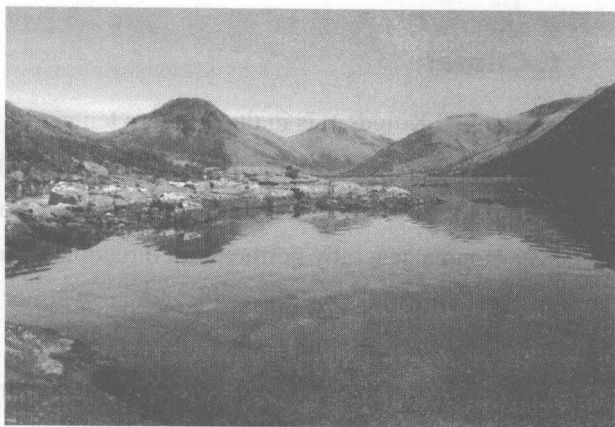
The central Pennines are known for their “**karst**” (喀斯特地形) plateaus, which harbor interesting plants. Karsts are grooves of the bare limestone caused by erosion. Since the limestone provides good nourishment and the grooves protect plants from wind, many unusual, low growing species of plants survive here.

The southern Pennines have suffered from human activity. Five centuries of overgrazing by sheep and two centuries of industrial pollution have greatly reduced plant diversity, affecting even the resistant sphagnum moss and heather. Furthermore, the southern Pennines are home to the Peak District Park, the first national park in Britain. These hills are heavily trampled by tourists.

(2) The Lake District

The Lake District of northwestern England is one of the most famous tourist regions in Britain because of its natural beauty. Located in **Cumbria** (坎布里亚郡) and northern **Lancashire** (兰开

夏郡), the Lake District consists of several geological types. In the south is moorland, and in the north are weathered slate and **mudstone** (泥岩) hills, forming gently rounded mountains. The central section consists of the Lakeland Dome, a mixture of rock types through which glaciers have carved deep, steep-sided valleys, radiating out like spokes of a wheel. Many of the valleys contain long, narrow lakes which give the district its name. Although



The Lake District

the hills in the district are not high, every year hikers are either injured or killed because they are unprepared for the dangers hidden by the beauty of the Lake District.

2. Lowland Zone

The lowland zone, which lies in the south and east of Great Britain and occupies most of England, consists mostly of rolling plains broken up by chains of low hills. Most of the area is less than 150m (500ft) above sea level, and the hills rarely reach more than 300m (1,000ft). To the south of the Pennine Chain is the broad, rolling Midland Plain. Northwest of this plain, on the western side of the Pennines, is the Lancashire — Cheshire plain. Another plain extends from the eastern slope of the Pennines to the sea. Most of Britain's population live densely — packed in the largest towns and cities in the lowland zone, such as London and in southeast England generally; the West Midlands region around Birmingham; the Yorkshire cities of Leeds, **Bradford** (布拉德福) and **Sheffield** (谢菲尔德); the northwestern industrial area around Liverpool and Manchester; and the northeast region comprising **Newcastle** (纽卡斯尔) and **Sunderland** (森德兰).

III. Climate, Weather and Water

It has been claimed that the British love of compromise is the result of the country's physical geography. This may or may not be true, but it is certainly true that the land and climate in Britain have a notable lack of extremes. Britain has mountains, but none of them are very high; it also has flat land, but you cannot travel far without encountering hills; it has no really big rivers; it does not usually get very cold in the winter or very hot in the summer; it has no active volcanoes, and an earth **tremor** (小地震) which does no more than rattle teacups in a few houses is reported in the national news media.

1. Climate

The United Kingdom is in the northern temperate zone. Although its latitude is as far north as that of **Siberia** (西伯利亚), the United Kingdom enjoys a very mild climate due to the North Atlantic Drift which is a continuation of a warm current that flows from the **Straits of Florida** (佛罗里达海峡) in a generally northeastern direction. It flows past Britain and the various rivers carry the warm water inland. This makes the climate warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer than countries at the same **latitude** (纬度).

Generally speaking, it is colder in the north than in the south and the western coast tends to be warmer than the east. The hottest months are from June to August. In these three months the days are very long, with the sun rising at 4:00 a.m. and setting at about 8:00 p.m. Even at about 10:00 p.m. there is still twilight. Summer temperature is usually around 20°C, with the highest not exceeding 32°C. Autumn, like other regions in the world, is a season of harvest.

The coldest months in the country are from December to February. The average daily low temperature in January is around 0°C and seldom gets below 10°C even in northern Scotland. There is sometimes snow in England, but not to the amount that it can gather on the ground. In the Highlands of Scotland, snow can be heavy enough for sports lovers to go skiing.

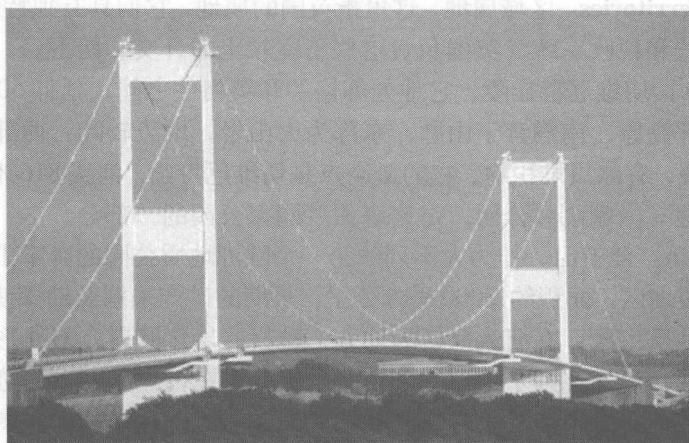
Spring includes March, April and May. The first day of May is a grand festival in England. Also called May Day but having nothing to do with labor, this day sees people going out from their homes to pick Mayflowers for decoration of their homes and enjoy themselves by dancing around May poles in daytime and bonfires at night.

Great Britain has plenty of rainfall because winds blowing off the Atlantic Ocean bring clouds and large amounts of moisture to the British Isles. Britain enjoys an average annual precipitation of more than 1,000 mm, which makes the country unusually green. On the whole, the east and south with an annual precipitation of less than 800 mm is drier than the north and west which has an annual rainfall of more than 1,600 mm. Generally speaking, the driest time of the year is March to June, but it rains all year round in the west. Great Britain has changeable weather. It is hard to predict the weather even by the most experienced **meteorologist** (气象学家). So, weather becomes a frequent topic of discussion among people.

2. Rivers, Lakes and Coastline

There are many rivers and lakes in the UK, but they are not very large. The longest river, the **Severn** (塞文河), is 338km (210 miles) in length, beginning in Wales, flowing through the Midlands of England, and emptying into the Atlantic Ocean near Bristol. The second largest but most important river is the Thames, which flows through Oxford and London and drains rainfall from

large areas of central England along with the Trent and Mersey rivers. In Scotland, the most important rivers are the **Clyde** (克莱德河) and the Forth, which are joined by a canal. The River Clyde originates in Dumfries in the southwest of Scotland, flows northwest, past Glasgow, and enters the Atlantic. The River Forth flows eastward into North Sea through Edinburgh. The most important rivers in Northern Ireland are the Lagan, the Ban, and the Foyle.



Severn Bridge Avon

Lough Neagh, the largest lake in the UK, is found in Northern Ireland, covering an area of 396 square kilometers. But most of the large lakes in the country are located in the deep valleys of the upland areas of Scotland, north England and north Wales. Loch Lomond, on the southwestern edge of the Highlands of Scotland, is the largest on the island of Great Britain, measuring 37km (23 miles) long and from 1.6 to 8km (1 to 5 miles) wide. Lake District, located in the Cambrian Mountains of northwest England, comprises 15 major beautiful lakes and has become a popular tourist destination. This district is attractive also because of its association with the Lake Poets, who settled there in the early 1800s.

The UK's coastline is very long, about 8,000km (about 5,000 miles). It is highly irregular with many bays, **inlets** (水湾), **peninsulas** (半岛) and **estuaries** (河口), which, however, provide harbors and shelters for ships and boats. Most places in Britain are less than 120km (75 miles) from some kind of tidal water. The coastline affords some of the best scenery in Britain. An example is the tall limestone or chalk cliffs on the southern and eastern coasts, the most famous of which are the White Cliffs of Dover.