

## 2.4 GEOGRAPHY, NATURE AND NATIONAL SYMBOLS OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES: THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND

### OBJECTIVES

This unit provides factual information and assignments on the geography, nature and cultural symbols of the English-speaking countries in the southern hemisphere. It also sheds light on the history of Australia and New Zealand through the history of their place-names.

### IN THIS UNIT, YOU WILL LEARN

- about the origin of some place-names in Australia and New Zealand;
- what national symbols and emblems are used to represent Australia and New Zealand.

### OUTLINE

- Geography of Australia.
- Geography of New Zealand.
- National symbols and emblems of Australia.
- National symbols and emblems of New Zealand.



### COMMENTARIES

(From: *Meanings and origins of Australian words*. ANDC, 2017)

Why is **Australia** (/v'streɪljə, ə'straɪljə/ AuE; /v'streɪlɪə/ RP) called *Australia*? From the early 16<sup>th</sup> century, European philosophers and mapmakers assumed a great southern continent existed south of Asia. They called this hypothetical place *Terra Australis* (Latin for *Southern Land*).

The first European contact with Australia was in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, when Dutch explorers touched on parts of the Australian continent. As a result of their explorations, that part of the mainland lying west of the meridian which passes through Torres Strait was named *Nova Hollandia* (Latin for *New Holland*).

In April 1770 Captain James Cook and the crew of the *Endeavour* reached the southern land. Cook entered the word *Australia* (misspelt thus) in his journal the following August. However, he did so only in reference to an earlier seeker of the southern land, the Portuguese-born navigator

Pedro Fernandez de Quiros /ki'ros/, who in 1606 named the New Hebrides *Austrialis de Spiritu Santo*. Cook says:

*The Islands discover'd by Quiros call'd by him Astralia del Espiritu Santo lays in this parallel but how far to the East is hard to say.*

Cook himself called the new continent *New Holland*, a name that acknowledges the early Dutch exploration; the eastern coast he claimed for Britain and called *New South Wales*. The first written record of *Australia* (an anglicised form of *Terra Australis*) as a name for the known continent did not occur until 1794. George Shaw in his *Zoology of New Holland* refers to:

*the vast Island or rather Continent of Australia, Australasia, or New Holland, which has so lately attracted ... particular attention.*

It was Matthew Flinders, English navigator (and the first person to circumnavigate and map Australia's coastline), who first expressed a strong preference for the name *Australia*. He gave his reasons in 1805:

*It is necessary, however, to geographical propriety, that the whole body of land should be designated under one general name; on this account, and under the circumstances of the discovery of the different parts, it seems best to refer back to the original Terra Australis, or Australia; which being descriptive of its situation, having antiquity to recommend it, and no reference to either of the two claiming nations, is perhaps the least objectionable that could have been chosen; for it is little to apprehended, that any considerable body of land, in a more southern situation, will be hereafter discovered.*

To these geographical, historical and political reasons for preferring the name, he adds in his 1814 account of his voyages that *Australia* is *agreeable to the ear, and an assimilation to the names of the other great portions of the earth.*

*Australia* was championed too by Lachlan Macquarie, Governor of New South Wales from 1810, who was aware of Flinders' preference and popularised the name by using it in official dispatches to London. He writes in 1817 of:

*the Continent of Australia, which I hope will be the Name given to this country in future, instead of the very erroneous and misapplied name, hitherto given it, of 'New Holland', which*

*properly speaking only applies to a part of this immense Continent.*

With Macquarie's kickstart *Australia* eventually proved to be the popular choice. Although the name *New Holland* continued alongside it for some time, by 1861 William Westgarth noted that

*the old term New Holland may now be regarded as supplanted by that happier and fitter one of Australia.*

Australia has been called “*the Oldest Continent*”, “*the Last of Lands*”, and “*the Last Frontier*”. These descriptions typify the fascination with Australia overseas since World War II, but they are somewhat unsatisfactory.

The capital of Australia started as a small squatters' settlement of stockmen called *Canberry*, or *Canbury* (a derivation of an Aboriginal term meaning “meeting place”), was made there as early as 1824. By 1836 the name had evolved to **Canberra** (/ˈkɑnbərə/ AuE; /ˈkænbərə/ RP).

The Polynesian navigator Kupe /ˈkupe/ discovered New Zealand in 950 A.D. He named it **Aotearoa** (/ˈæɪlʊtiəˈrɒʊə, ˌæɪlʊtæɪəˈrɒʊə/ NZE; /ˈæpˌtiəˌrɔːə/ RP) (Maori for “the Land of Long White Cloud”). The Maori remained isolated in New Zealand (/ˌnuːˈzɪlənd/ NZE; /ˌnjuːˈziːlənd/ RP) until the arrival of European explorers, the first of whom was the Dutchman Abel Janszoon Tasman (1642). They had no name for themselves but eventually adopted the name *Maori* (meaning “normal”) to distinguish themselves from the Europeans, who, after the voyages of the Englishman Capt. James Cook (1769 – 1777), began to come with greater frequency. Tasman sailed from Batavia (modern-day Jakarta, Indonesia), sailed up the west coast of New Zealand but didn't stay long after his only attempt at landing resulted in several of his crew being killed and eaten. He christened the land *New Zealand* from the Dutch *Nieuw Zeeland*, which translates to “new sea land” and was a reference to the Dutch province of Zeeland. So the European powers then knew of Aotearoa's existence.

The capital of New Zealand **Wellington** (/ˈwelɪŋtən/) started as the settlement, named in 1840 in recognition of the aid given the company by the 1st Duke of *Wellington*. The city's nickname is *Windy Wellington*, as it really gets windy, particularly as winter starts to come.



## RECOMMENDED READING

- Ощепкова В. В. Язык и культура Великобритании, США, Канады, Австралии, Новой Зеландии. – М., СПб : ГЛОССА, 2006. – Р. 165-168, 241-246, 318-320.

- Рыбкина Е. А. Новая Зеландия. – СПб : Каро, 2001. – С. 3-27, 36-37, 89-141.
- Timanovskaya N. English-Speaking Countries. – Тула : Автограф, 1998. – С. 277-290, 293, 298-299, 343-354, 357, 359-360, 370-376.

**Assignment 1.** Fill in the fact files:

The Commonwealth of Australia

washed by	
the most important river/s	
the largest lake/s	
the longest mountain range/s	
the highest peak	
the key representatives of flora	
the key representatives of fauna	
natural disasters	

New Zealand

washed by	
the most important river/s	
the largest lake/s	
the longest mountain range/s	
the highest peak	
the key representatives of flora	
the key representatives of fauna	
natural disasters	

**Assignment 2.** What historical and cultural forces motivated the following place-names, their poetic and jocular equivalents?

Australia: The Never-Never Land, the Land of the Southern Cross, the Down Under, the Land of the Antipodes; the Kangaroo Land, the Lag Land, the Old Lagdom;

New Zealand: the Shaky Isles, the Shivery Isles, the Quaky Isles, the Fernleaf Country, the Kiwiland; the Pigs' Isles, the Godzone.

**Assignment 3.** Answer the following questions:

- What does the name *the Southern Cross* refer to?
- What is *the Fernleaf*?
- What are the symbolic meanings of the stars on the Australian and New Zealand flags?

- What elements are included into the flag and coat of arms of Australia? What are their symbolic meanings?
- What elements are included into the flag and coat of arms of New Zealand? What are their symbolic meanings?
- What floral and faunal emblems represent Australia?
- What do you know about the floral and faunal emblems of New Zealand?

**Assignment 4.** Read the lyrics of the Australian anthem and do the tasks.

### *Advance Australia Fair*

#### Verse 1

Australians all let us rejoice,  
 For we are young and free;  
 We've golden soil and wealth for toil;  
 Our home is girt by sea;  
 Our land abounds in nature's gifts  
 Of beauty rich and rare;  
 In history's page, let every stage  
 Advance Australia Fair.  
 In joyful strains then let us sing,  
 Advance Australia Fair.

#### Verse 2

Beneath our radiant Southern Cross  
 We'll toil with hearts and hands;  
 To make this Commonwealth of ours  
 Renowned of all the lands;  
 For those who've come across the seas  
 We've boundless plains to share;  
 With courage let us all combine  
 To Advance Australia Fair.  
 In joyful strains then let us sing,  
 Advance Australia Fair.

- Is *Advance Australia Fair* the only anthem performed at the official ceremonies in Australia?

- It is a well-known fact that the lyrics and melody of *Advance Australia Fair* have been criticized as being boring and unendearing to the Australian people. Some criticism was given to the song for its archaic words, for instance, the one in the fourth line of the lyrics, “*Our home is girt by sea*”. Consult *Online Etymology Dictionary* at <http://www.etymonline.com/> for the meaning of the word *girt*. Like other archaisms, *girt* is used as an excessively poetic element. Why might it have caused critical remarks? Do you agree that it is a way to acknowledge the point that Australia is, in fact, an island?

- What is referred to by “*our radiant Southern Cross*”, “*this Commonwealth of ours*”, “*those who've come across the seas*”?

- What effect is produced by the repetitive usage of the imperative structure with *let* – “*let us rejoice*”, “*let every stage advance*”, “*let us sing*”, “*let us all combine*”? Do the structures express a suggestion involving both the speaker and the addressee? How does such repetition contribute to the manifestation of the concept of Unity?

- What does the national anthem *Advance Australia Fair* imply about the national character and values of the Australian people?

**Assignment 5.** Read these internet commentaries to *Waltzing Matilda*. What do you think has made it so popular that more Australians know its lyrics than even their national anthem?

Luke Stubbs

This should be our national anthem! Or when there's a grand final for NRL or AFL, everyone should sing this

RoyL\_iZack

The Australian haka

chromusic ibra

For those of you who don't know: "Waltzing" refers to walking across Australia, not dancing. He's walking with all his belongings wrapped up in a blanket attached to a long stick he carries across his shoulder - this is his "swag," hence the term "swag-man." His swag he affectionately calls "Matilda"

The song was written by Banjo Paterson, an Australian bush poet. Before you go further, listen to the song at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwvazMc5EfE> to find out if you understand it. The poem contains a lot of terminology specific to Australian culture. That makes the song a bit confusing, sometimes even for Australians:

isawhimonce

im australian and i have no idea what the hell he is saying

(Source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CwvazMc5EfE> )

- Read the song and fill in the gaps with the names of Australia's realia – *billabong, billy, coolibah, jumbuck, Matilda, squatter, swagman, trooper, tucker.*

You can find some help with the extracts from the Concise Australian National Dictionary (CAND), 1992 below:

### *Waltzing Matilda*

Once a jolly \_\_\_\_\_ camped by a \_\_\_\_\_

Under the shade of a \_\_\_\_\_ tree

And he sang as he watched and waited 'til his \_\_\_\_\_ boiled

Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?

Chorus;  
 Waltzing Matilda, Matilda my darling  
 You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me  
 And he sang as he watched and waited 'til his \_\_\_\_\_ boiled  
 Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me?

Down came a \_\_\_\_\_ to drink at the \_\_\_\_\_  
 Up jumped the \_\_\_\_\_ and grabbed him with glee  
 And he sang as he shoved that \_\_\_\_\_ in his \_\_\_\_\_  
 bag  
 You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me

(Chorus)

Down came the \_\_\_\_\_, mounted on his thoroughbred  
 Down came the \_\_\_\_\_s, one, two, three  
 'Whose is that \_\_\_\_\_ that you've got in your  
 \_\_\_\_\_ bag?  
 You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me!

(Chorus)

Up jumped the \_\_\_\_\_ and jumped into the \_\_\_\_\_  
 'You'll never take me alive!' said he  
 And his ghost may be heard as you pass by that \_\_\_\_\_  
 You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me

(Chorus)

- Do you agree that this very simple story evokes the unique feel of the country?

WORD	ETYMOLOGY	MEANING, DERIVED WORDS AND PHRASEOLOGY
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<b><i>billabong</i></b>	[a. Wiradhuri <i>bila</i> 'river'+ <i>baŋ-</i> 'signifying a watercourse which runs only after rain']	“An arm of the river, made by water flowing from the main stream, usu. only in time of flood, to form a backwater, blind creek, anabranch, or, when the water level falls, a pool or lagoon (often of considerable extent); the dry bed of such a formation”; <b><i>billabonger</i></b> “A swagman” (CAND 1992, p. 41)
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- billy*** [f. Scot. dial. *billy-pot* ‘cooking utensil’] “A vessel for the boiling of water, making of tea, etc., over an open fire; a cylindrical container, usu. of tin, enamel ware, or aluminium, fitted with a lid and a wire handle”;  
***to boil the billy*** “To brew tea”; ***to sling (swing) the billy*** “To prepare to make tea, esp. as an act of hospitality” (CAND 1992, p. 42)
- coolibah*** [a. Yuwaaliyaay and related languages) *gulabaa*] “Any of several myrtaceous trees, esp. the bluish-leaved *Eucalyptus microtheca* of W.A., N.T., Qld., N.S.W., and S.A., a fibrous-barked tree yielding a heavy durable timber and occurring in seasonally inundated areas” (CAND 1992, p. 136)
- jumbuck*** [Of unknown origin: orig. in *Austral. pidgin* and poss. an alteration of an English word *jumpup*] “A sheep” (CAND 1992, p. 283)
- Matilda*** [Transf. but unexplained use of the female name] “A swag”;  
***to waltz Matilda*** “To carry one’s swag; to travel the road”; ***(with) Matilda up*** “Carrying a swag” (CAND 1992, p. 331)
- squatter*** [U.S. *squatter* ‘one setting on land with no legal title’] *Obs.* “One, esp. an ex-convict, who occupies Crown land without legal title”;  
***squatterdom*** “The squatters collectively”; ***squattocracy*** “The squatters as an interest group; the squatters as a socio-economic group” (CAND 1992, p. 537-538)



- swagman** [Transf. use of “One who carries a swag; an itinerant *swag* ‘a thief’s worker, esp. one in search of plunder or booty’] employment, who carries a swag; a tramp” (CAND 1992, p. 561-562)
- trooper** [Transf. use of *Hist.* “A mounted police officer” *trooper* ‘a cavalry soldier’] (CAND 1992, p. 596)
- tucker** [Br. slang *tuck* ‘to consume (food or drink)’] “A meal”; **tucker bag** “A provision bag, esp. as carried by a swagman” (CAND 1992, p. 598)

**Assignment 6.** Read the lyrics of New Zealand National song and do the tasks that follow. *You can find some help with these links:*

History of God Defend New Zealand. – Available at: <http://www.mch.govt.nz/nz-identity-heritage/national-anthems/history-god-defend-new-zealand>

MāoriLanguage.net – Available at: <http://www.maorilanguage.net/waiata/e-ihowa-atua-nz-national-anthem/>

### ***God Defend New Zealand***

God of Nations at Thy feet,  
 In the bonds of love we meet,  
 Hear our voices, we entreat,  
 God defend our free land.  
 Guard Pacific's triple star  
 From the shafts of strife and war,  
 Make her praises heard afar,  
 God defend New Zealand.

- Is *God Defend New Zealand* the only national anthem performed in New Zealand? What is another one? Are both songs of equal status as national anthems appropriate to the occasion?
- Is there a Maori version of *God Defend New Zealand*? Which of the versions is commonly heard before the other one at most national and international events now?

- What does *the Pacific's triple star* in the first verse refer to (“*Guard Pacific's triple star*”)?
- What does *Aotearoa* in the Maori version refer to (“*Manaakitia mai / Aotearoa*”)?
- What do *Ihowā* and *Atua* in the Maori version refer to (“*E Ihowā Atua*”)? Are they both of Maori origin?
- What effect is achieved by the use of capitalization in “*God of Nations at Thy feet*”?
- Is there any personification in the first verse? What role does it play?
- Does the song sound like a pray?
- What does the national anthem *God Defend New Zealand* imply about the national character and values of New Zealanders?

## **2.5 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF LIFE IN THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES: EDUCATION, WORK AND LEISURE**

### **OBJECTIVES**

This unit provides factual information and assignments aimed to cause discussions on different issues of social and cultural life in the English-speaking countries.

### **IN THIS UNIT, YOU WILL LEARN**

- about education in England and the USA;
- about the history of immigration to the USA, problems of economic immigration today.

### **OUTLINE**

- Education in England: public schools.
- American universities.
- Leisure and community life in Britain: English pubs today.
- Minority cultures in the USA and the history of immigration.
- American-Mexican border.