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The Cherokee Syllabary: Writing the People's Perseverance

By University Ellen Cushman

University of Oklahoma Press, United States, 2013. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 206 x 137 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. In 1821, Sequoyah, a Cherokee metalworker and inventor, introduced a writing system that he had been developing for more than a decade. His creation the Cherokee syllabary helped his people learn to read and write within five years and became a principal part of their identity. This groundbreaking study traces the creation, dissemination, and evolution of Sequoyah's syllabary from script to print to digital forms. Breaking with conventional understanding, author Ellen Cushman shows that the syllabary was not based on alphabetic writing, as is often thought, but rather on Cherokee syllables and, more importantly, on Cherokee meanings. Employing an engaging narrative approach, Cushman relates how Sequoyah created the syllabary apart from Western alphabetic models. But he called it an alphabet because he anticipated the Western assumption that only alphabetic writing is legitimate. Calling the syllabary an alphabet, though, has led to our current misunderstanding of just what it is and of the genius behind it until now. In her opening chapters, Cushman traces the history of Sequoyah's invention and explains the logic of the syllabary's structure and the...



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