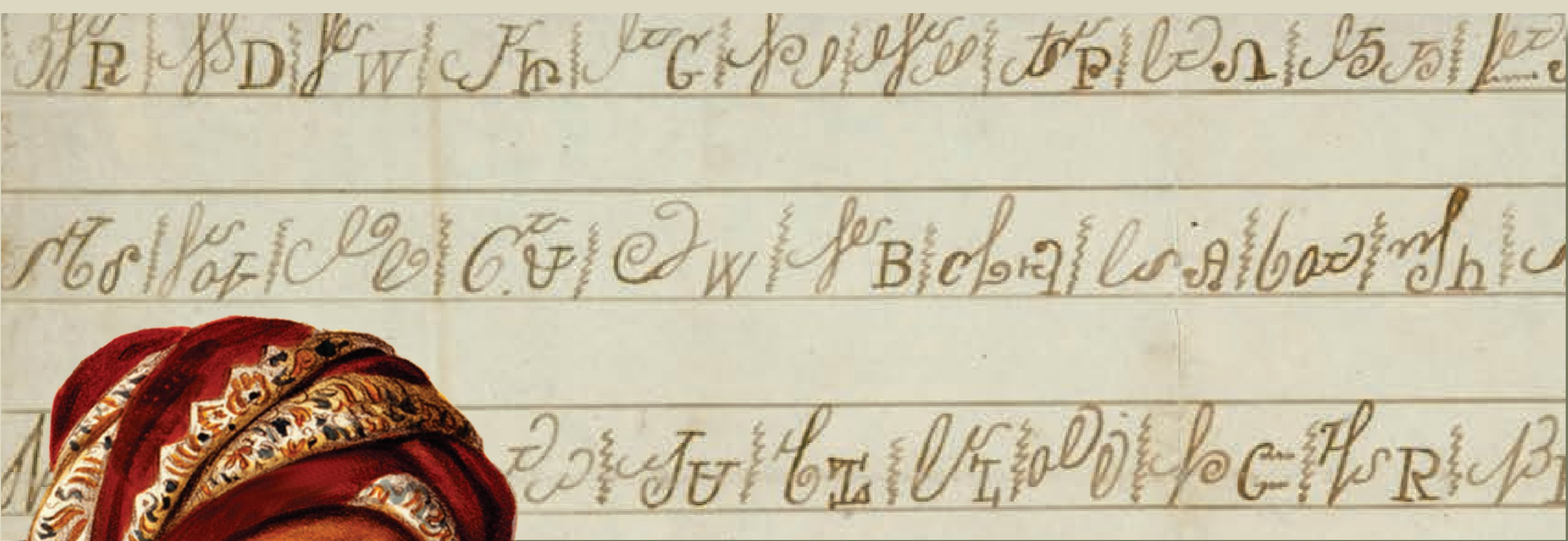


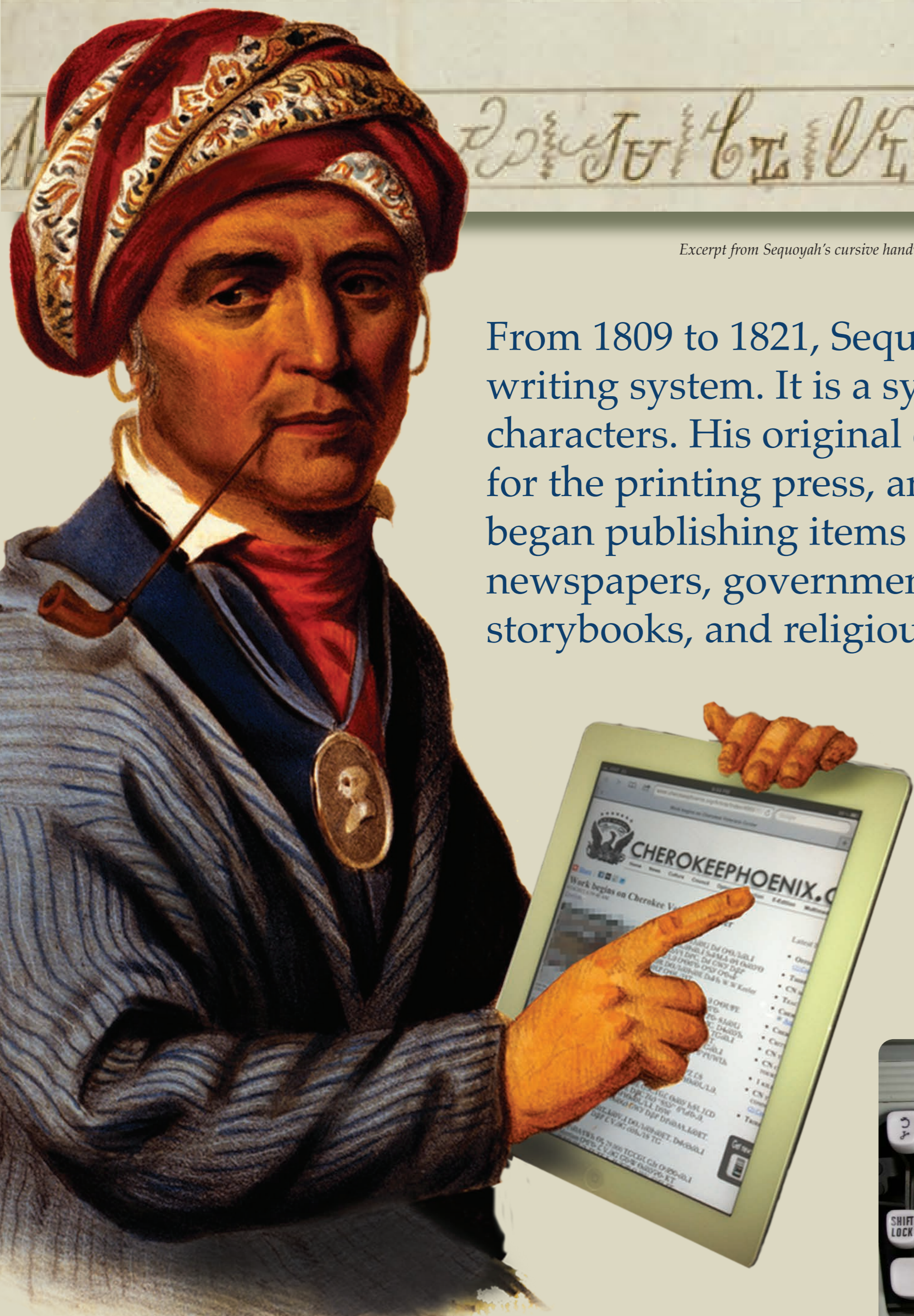
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From Talking Leaves to Pixels: the Evolution of the Cherokee Syllabary

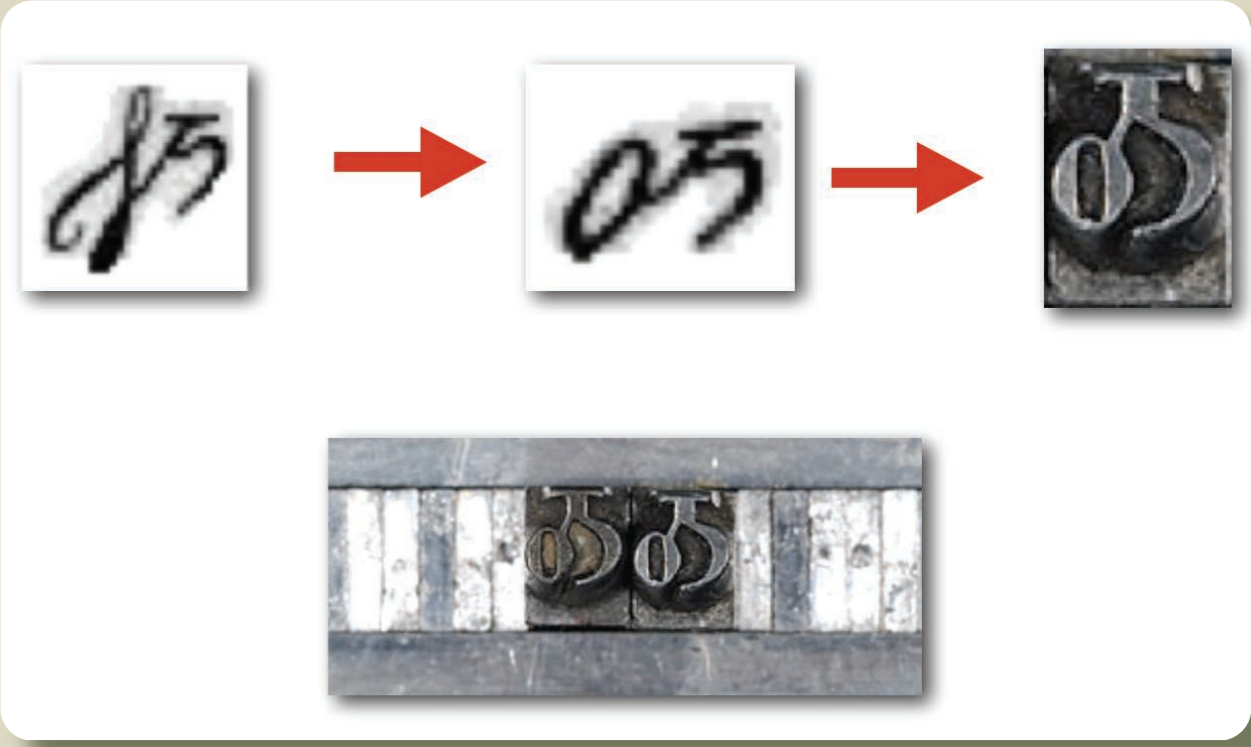


Excerpt from Sequoyah's cursive handwritten syllabary chart. Image courtesy of the Gilcrease Museum, Tulsa, OK, USA.

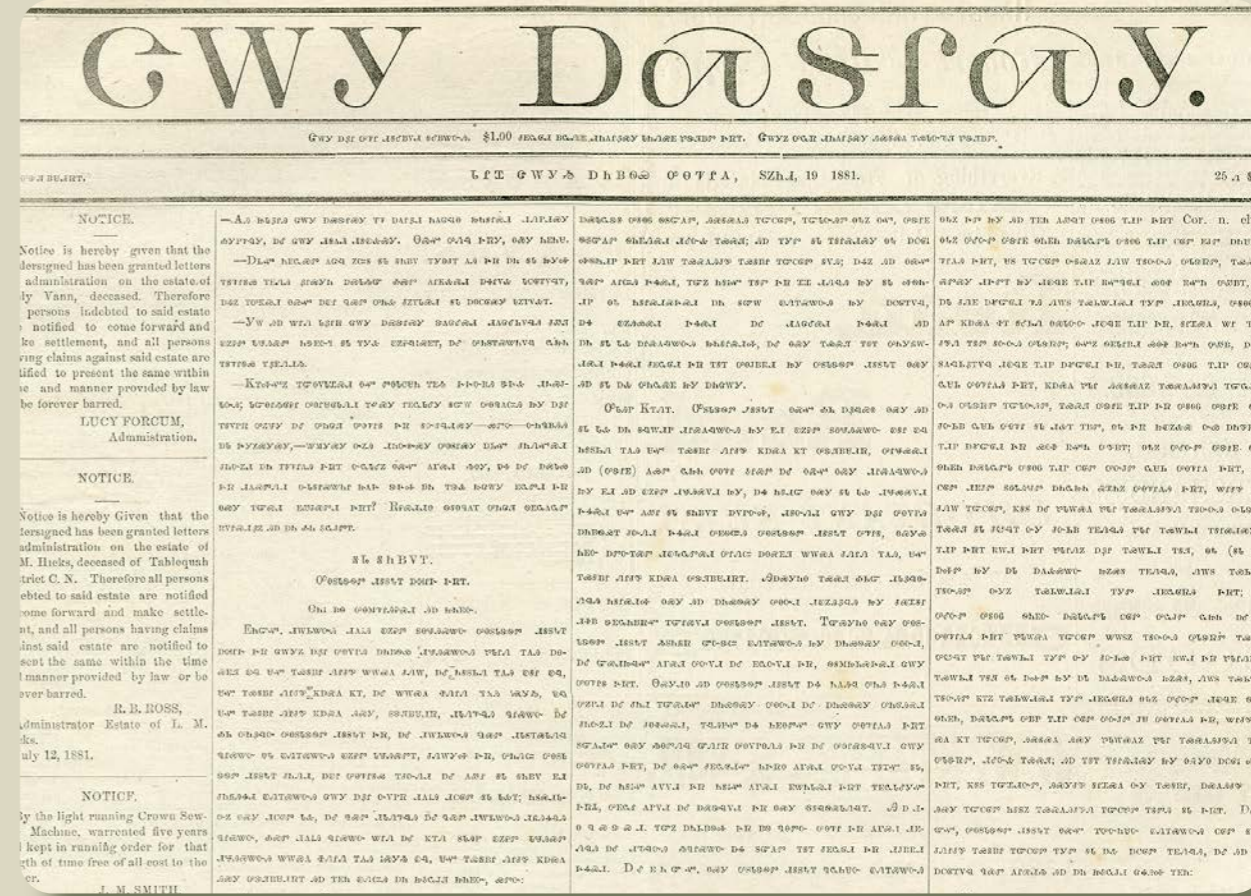
From 1809 to 1821, Sequoyah developed a Cherokee writing system. It is a syllabary composed of 86 characters. His original cursive design was modified for the printing press, and in 1828 Cherokee Nation began publishing items in the syllabary such as newspapers, government proclamations, storybooks, and religious texts.



Sequoyah with iPad Digital Illustration by Roy Boney, Jr.



Evolution of the Cherokee Syllabary From Cursive Handwriting to Moveable Type c.1827-28. Image Composite by Cherokee Nation Language Program.



Cherokee Advocate 1881. Image Courtesy of the Cherokee Heritage Center, Tahlequah, OK, USA.

Throughout the decades, the Cherokee syllabary was adapted to nearly every form of writing technology from the printing press to smartphones. The Cherokee people and its leadership have constantly fought to ensure the survival of our language through innovation.



Cherokee Hermes Typewriter c. 1965. Image Courtesy of the Sequoyah Cabin Museum, Akins, OK, USA.



IBM Selectric Typewriter Element in Cherokee c. 1975. Image Courtesy of MaryEllen Meredith, Norman, OK, USA.



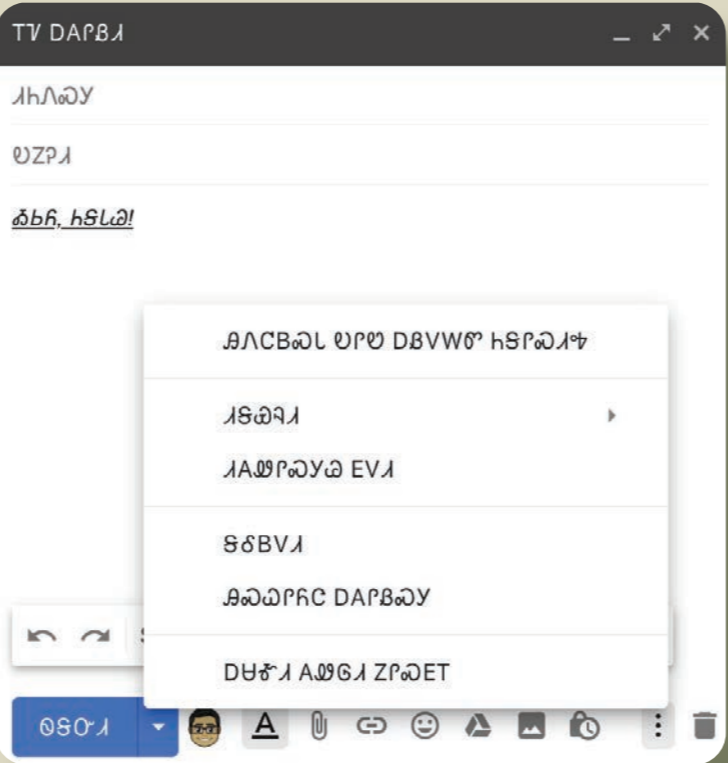
Cherokee Text Conversation on AppleWatch.



Cherokee Syllabary Keyboard on Android.



Cherokee Language Learning App.



Gmail Message Composition Panel.

Through partnerships with the technology industry, Cherokee Nation has been at the forefront of Indigenous language technology in the United States. The Cherokee syllabary is supported on all major operating systems. This allows our language to thrive in the digital era in many ways, including texting messaging, language apps, and wearable technologies. For nearly two hundred years, the Cherokee syllabary lives on in ways its inventor could have never imagined.

For more information & resources please visit language.cherokee.org

Poster Design by Roy Boney, Jr.