

# Sequoyah Formed Alphabet to Include Each Sound in Cherokee Language

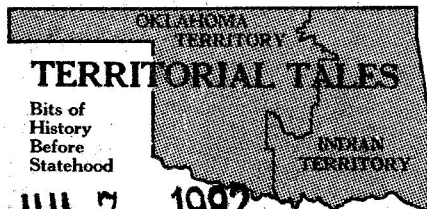
The Cherokees were a hardy race whose traditional home was in the mountainous area where Alabama, North and South Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee adjoin.

Their leadership among American Indians was established when Sequoyah invented a tribal alphabet, which was used in printing their books and newspapers.

Sequoyah was born about 1760, the son of a white man who gave him the name George Guess. He grew up without any schooling and without learning the English language, becoming a successful hunter and fur trader.

One day he met with an accident that crippled him. He then became a silversmith, and, in spite of the smiles of his friends, he undertook to devise an alphabet with a letter for each sound in the Cherokee language.

In 1821, while living in a log cabin in Georgia, Sequoyah showed his 85



letters to the Cherokee chiefs. They were impressed and approved it.

Gradually, both young and old Cherokees learned to read and write in their own language.

Sequoyah came to live among the Western Cherokees in Indian Territory, where he was recognized as a leader. He died in 1844 while on a hunting expedition in Mexico. An Oklahoma county bears his name.

The first newspaper published in what is now Oklahoma was the Cherokee Advocate, issued in 1843. Its publication in both Cherokee and English continued until the dissolution of the Cherokee Nation in 1906.