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## Talking Stone: Cherokee Syllabary Inscriptions in Dark Zone Caves

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Beau Duke Carroll entitled "Talking Stone: Cherokee Syllabary Inscriptions in Dark Zone Caves." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Anthropology.

Jan Simek, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

David G. Anderson, Julie L. Reed

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Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

# Talking Stone: Cherokee Syllabary Inscriptions in Dark Zone Caves

A Thesis Presented for the  
Master of Arts  
Degree  
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Beau Duke Carroll  
December 2017

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## ABSTRACT

Caves have offered the Cherokee people concealment before and after contact with Europeans. With the invention of Sequoyah's Syllabary a way to record these hidden activities became available. A number of caves in the southeastern United States contain such historical inscriptions and interpreting these can tell archaeologists about who made them and when they were made. This paper considers several such inscription caves, located in the area of north Alabama, north Georgia, and southeastern Tennessee, with Sequoyan Syllabary on the walls. They offer us a better understanding of the Chickamauga Cherokee, the Lower town Cherokee, and the birth of the Cherokee Nation. On the surface, the Cherokee were compliant with the demands of the overwhelming American Governments policy, but traditions were kept alive by concealment. The writing in caves in the southeastern United States can provide missing links to historical accounts and provide new archaeological research avenues for the future.



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## INTRODUCTION

The Cherokee have called southeastern North America home for thousands of years, and they and their ancestors have provided a rich material record for research in the field of archaeology. In addition to habitation sites, villages, hunting camps, etc., the areas where the Cherokees lived also contain extensive cave systems that were utilized for different purposes. These caves sometimes contain pre-historic and historic art, the only dark zone cave art tradition in North America, and they provide graphic documents for a large window of time, perhaps 6000 years. In the 19th Century, a Cherokee scholar named Sequoyah famously invented a syllabic writing system, the Cherokee Syllabary, and as will be discussed in this thesis, Cherokee Syllabary also shows up in cave in specific and historically important locations. To translate and understand this writing, we must look at who the Cherokee are at different points in time, how the Cherokee belief systems interacted with the world around them, and how different beliefs and environmental factors influenced different writings in caves. First and foremost, researchers studying the significance of Cherokee writings in caves must understand the world from a Cherokee point of view.

The Cherokee belief system is fundamentally based on the idea of keeping balance between three existing worlds. These three worlds are: the above world, the below world, and the world we all live in. These worlds and the things that exist within them are important because they relate to both the spiritual location and the physical world. Understanding the concept of the three worlds along with the uses and meaning of caves in Cherokee culture are important when

studying Cherokee cave writings. Equally important is understanding Cherokee history and the Cherokee relationship with European invaders at different time periods.

It is widely accepted that at the time of contact the Cherokee governed themselves using a complex clan system. The clan system consisted of familial roles, and understanding how this system works provides vital insight into the Cherokee world. Cherokee life is governed by the belief that when something or someone is taken away it must be replaced in order to maintain balance. This concept greatly affects all aspects of Cherokee life. It is evident in a variety of sources concerning the Cherokee, but none more predominant than clan law. Clan law or blood law requires the clan of a murdered Cherokee(s) to seek revenge by murdering an equal number of persons from the clan or tribe of the murderer. Afterwards, balance is restored and the matter considered closed. The clan structure also shows how the Cherokees interact with each other and different people outside of the tribe. The differences between Cherokee culture and government are important to know in order to understand and compare to their European counterparts.

The relationship between Cherokee people and European invaders is extremely complicated and is a separate research topic in and of itself. Varying pressures throughout different time periods in history affected every aspect of Cherokee life, especially when they had to deal with state pressures, from Georgia for example, and European land usurpations. Though the Cherokees adapted to the United States civilization policies at a fast rate, they hid aspects of their culture for fear of repercussions from both missionaries and the governing states surrounding them. Furthermore, the introduction of a new religion was forced into Cherokee lives and they struggled to survive, adapt, or accept their role in this new world.

Christian missions moved into Cherokee country in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, and it is difficult to generalize the relationships Cherokee people had with missionaries and Christianity because there are so many variables to consider. However, it is clear that accepting missionaries into Cherokee communities and adopting Christianity was a strategic move made by the Cherokee people. Even though on the surface it seemed as if Cherokee people were converting to Christianity many would also continue traditional religious practices. Oftentimes, Christian missionaries would discourage or even ban traditional Cherokee religious practices, and this often pressured the Cherokee into hiding to practice their traditional religion. Caves were utilized by Cherokee people before European contact and continue to be used through present day. Researchers can see cave use in different mythical and historical accounts. All of these aspects coupled with an understanding of the Cherokee worldview will show how different pressures throughout history influenced both cave art and writing. This is especially evident when Cherokee Syllabary is found in caves. The Cherokee are the only indigenous tribe in North America to have their own written language. In order to study and interpret Cherokee Syllabary cave writings, one must understand the history behind the invention and inventor of this writing system. Furthermore, since the Cherokee language is still spoken, written, and read by Cherokee people today, it is imperative researchers consult Cherokee language speakers when translating the Cherokee syllabary found in caves.

In order to understand Cherokee Syllabary we must look at the creator Sequoyah and his history. Unfortunately, not much is known about the man himself. There are many stories about his origins and his life but not many are corroborated and widely accepted. Nonetheless, his invention of a written language is not debated and that invention clearly impacted

communication options for Cherokee speakers. After Sequoyah's success with the Cherokee Syllabary, he worked to create writing systems for other tribes. The Cherokee Syllabary is still used as a form of communication by Cherokee speakers today and can be found abundantly within the territories of the three federally recognized Cherokee tribes. Syllabary writing in caves was discovered recently, so this thesis is some of the first research on the meaning and significance of Cherokee Syllabary that is found in caves. As we will see, the Cherokee writings found in Manitou Cave (Alabama) and Howard's Waterfall Cave (Georgia) gives us insight into pre-removal Cherokee activity after the invention of the Cherokee Syllabary.

The present-day area of Fort Payne, Alabama has a long history of Cherokee occupation; Fort Payne was a Cherokee settlement, before its European occupation, known as Willstown. Willstown was a major political town for the Cherokee, and it is where Sequoyah is believed to have invented the Syllabary. The area has a large cave known as Manitou Cave located not far from the center of town. The cave has its own history and was utilized over time by Cherokees for different purposes. Cherokee Syllabary is recorded in different places throughout this cave and when translated proves when and why Cherokee people were using Manitou Cave. It also shows what they were doing during a time period of great pressure from different groups of people. When the panels are translated, it becomes evident that Cherokee people chose to be secluded within the cave in order to undertake very specific traditional activities. Through consultation with members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians fluent Cherokee speakers, translations of different syllabary panels throughout Manitou Cave were performed. The interpretation of these different cave panels shows correlations with groups of Cherokees who

inhabited the area surrounding the cave. The translations also offer a glimpse into what groups of Cherokees were doing in and around the cave at the time it was inscribed.

Through this study of panels of Cherokee Syllabary in key areas of known Cherokee occupation, a picture of what life was like outside of the cave emerges. Key aspects of Cherokee life, such as the Cherokee stickball ballgame and the ritual surrounding preparation for this game, are reflected in the cave inscriptions. Signatures alongside the cave writing can be traced back to individuals who utilized the cave and for certain purposes. Unlike prehistoric cave art, the ability to track these individuals through historical record by name is what makes this study so interesting and finding evidence of them living around the cave is unique.

Another Syllabary inscription cave roughly fifty miles from Manitou Cave, just across the modern Alabama-Georgia border, gives another written view into Cherokee lifeways and the people in the surrounding area. The translations in this cave, Howards Waterfall Cave, require the same method of deciphering; however the message is different than in Manitou and offers a rare glimpse into Cherokee clan law. The Cherokee idea of balance continues to play a role in how they viewed the world and how these historic messages must be understood. Clan law was a concept used from initial European contact to after the Cherokee removal from their ancestral homeland, and the importance of this is shown in Howard's Waterfall Cave. Through these different translations we can see how the Cherokees at first glance can seem to be abandoning their traditional ways in order to survive. We can also see which traditions they chose to continue to practice in hiding and how long they continued to keep those traditions alive.

Chapter one discusses how the Cherokee viewed the world and briefly explains their belief systems. It also touches on the strains that affected them through outside influence and

how this restructured many aspects of their culture. Chapter two focuses on Sequoyah the inventor of the Cherokee Syllabary and how this invention has been utilized since its creation. Chapter three looks at Manitou Cave near Willstown, now modern Fort Payne Alabama where syllabary inscriptions have been found. These inscriptions were translated and explained through different Cherokee practices and beliefs. Chapter four looks at Howards Waterfall Cave near present day Trenton, Georgia that also contains syllabary inscriptions that were translated. This includes a regional history and shows the strained relationships the Cherokee had with the surrounding States.



## CHAPTER ONE GENERAL INFORMATION

The Cherokee are one of the most studied and written about North American Indian tribes. There are so many aspects of Cherokee history, culture, heritage, and language that scholars and history buffs write about. They can write hundreds of pages only covering a minuscule amount of the above subjects. One subject, however, that lacks academic scholarship is Cherokee Syllabary writing in caves in the southeast, the original Cherokee territory going back perhaps one thousand years. These caves have been known and explored for thousands of years by numerous groups of people. A recent discovery within these caves shows a small but critical time within the historical record, a shift within Cherokee life, often hidden from view. Cherokee Syllabary was developed and used years before it was adopted by the Council as the official written language of the Cherokee in 1825.

In order to fully understand and appreciate the Cherokee writing in caves we must first explore and understand the Cherokee language itself, along with the life of Sequoyah, the man credited with the invention of the Syllabary that bestowed literacy upon an entire nation of people almost overnight. The significance of the Syllabary's creation to Cherokee people is vast and covers a lot of ground, considering that in Cherokee culture all things are connected. Being able to write in their own language during the culmination of Indian removal however benefitted the Cherokee in many ways.

There is some debate on when the Cherokee first arrived in the southeastern United States, but for my purposes, Cherokees have been here since the beginning of time. As an enrolled member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, the use of first person is used to

include myself when talking generally about Cherokee information. The Cherokee were the first people to be made by the Creator and placed in western North Carolina. “The proper name by which the Cherokee call themselves is *Yunwiya* or *Ani yun wiya* in the third person, signifying ‘real people,’ or ‘principal people’ ”(Mooney 2006:15). Cherokees refer to themselves as *Ani-kituwah* or “the people of Kituwah,” which is where the creation story of the Cherokee takes place. The name “Cherokee” has no meaning within our language, but we have accepted the usage of the name *Tsa la gi* which first shows up as “*Chalaque*” in the Gentleman of Elvas’s account of the De Soto Expedition. When the Spanish explorers asked the Cherokee what they were called so “*Chalaque*” would have been their interpretation of the answer, “*Tsalagi*,” and that is how the Spanish referred to them” (Mooney 2006:15).

At Spanish contact Cherokee territory covered almost 40,000 square miles and included portions of Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama. Cherokee people were divided into seven clans. Each clan was known by a different name and each lived on a shared tract of land in the same town. The Cherokee believe that they have always been within their ancestral homeland, and that they were the first people to be put onto this earth by the Creator. Since then, they have called parts of Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama home. Prehistoric Cherokee life was simple where men hunted and went to war to protect and provide for their family. Women took care of household duties and tended the fields. Cherokee people were matrilineal, and women held a large majority of power and authority over decisions made by the tribe. Prehistoric Cherokee towns were divided into mostly autonomous settlements including lower, middle, and upper settlements. Though the Cherokee were viewed as one large nation they

tended to operate within a town based on an individual political system with an emphasis on self-reliance. Cherokee lands consisted of seventy to eighty towns with anywhere from twelve to two hundred houses. The Cherokees had no *written* laws, courts, or police, so it was concluded by the English that they had no laws. “The Cherokee belief system imposed both a ridged personal morality and an intense communal ethic. It integrated their lives into a clear, cohesive, and meaningful order” (McLoughlin 1986:14; Reid 2006:41). It was believed that the Cherokee had no system of religion due to the fact that they had no churches, idols, shrines, or state priesthood. On the outside, Cherokee life looked this way but it was actually full of ritual, myths, ceremonies, symbols, and laws. These aspects were imbedded into everyday Cherokee life so that one could not exist without the other; they could not be separated.

Since all things were and are connected in Cherokee culture, it is important to also research and take into account the significance of caves in Cherokee society. This helps Cherokee translators decipher what their hidden writings mean and translate that to English. If one is unfamiliar with all of the above, the translations can easily be misinterpreted. By attempting to separate and define Cherokee actions and beliefs many aspects could be lost in translation. This outlook provides a means of interpretation that is crucial but somehow underutilized within many different fields of research.

The writing preserved on the cave walls offers insight into what Cherokee people were thinking about and writing about in the early-19<sup>th</sup> century prior to removal. This evidence teaches us a great deal about what they thought was significant at the time they wrote it in the caves. We can learn a great deal about the people writing in the caves and work to interpret what they wrote and its significance to the larger culture of the time when the writing was completed. Locations

and people that are not well known within the anthropological or historical record receive new light and an opportunity to be better understood. All things Cherokee are connected and by developing a better understanding of these areas more research questions can be addressed.

Based on recent translations of the Syllabary writings in Manitou Cave, Howard's Waterfall Cave, we also learn that scholars should definitely consult with tribes, in this case the Cherokees, in order to get an accurate translation and interpretation of Cherokee writing. Finally, writing in Manitou Cave that may have been done by one of Sequoyah's sons adds to the scholarship and research on Sequoyah.

## CHAPTER TWO MYTHOLOGY AND HISTORY

### *The Cherokee Underworld*

The Cherokees viewed the earth as flat and suspended from the dome of heaven with four cardinal points all floating within a large body of water. There is another world just like ours that exists below the earth, but the seasons are backwards. “The streams that come down from the mountains are the trails by which we reach this underworld, and the springs at their heads are the doorways by which we enter it, but to do this one must fast and go to water and have one of the underground people for a guide” (Mooney 2006:240). We know that entrances underground provide portals or doorways into this world, and this would include caves; this is a key element in my paper. Cherokees know that seasons are backwards in this world because in the summer months, water and caves are cooler than the outside air. In the winter they are always warmer than the cold air outside. “Wicked spirits crept from the underworld through caves, springs and deep lakes” (McLoughlin 1986:14).

### *Clans and Structure*

“Although there may have been other clans in earlier times, the Cherokees of the historic era had seven clans: *Aniwahiya* or Wolf; *Anikawai* or Deer; *Anidjiskwa* or Bird; *Aniwodi* or Paint; *Anisahoni*, perhaps meaning Blue; *Anigotigewi*, perhaps Wild Potato; and *Anigilohi*, perhaps Twister” (Perdue 1998:42). Clan membership within Cherokee society was essential for protection and this is how a person knew his or her role in society. “Kinship, through the law of

clans, governed social relationships, dictated possible marriage partners, designated friends, designated enemies, and regulated behavior through the system such as which kinsmen had to be respected and with which kinsmen one could be intimate”(Reed 1993:14). Each clan appointed a clan council and one delegate from each clan was sent to the national council as a representative. The entire clan did not live together and was spread out over different villages. The only people that permanently occupied a house were women, and the husbands were considered outsiders because they were not part of the clan. The men who held a permanent connection to the household were the male members of the clan (Reid 2006:39).

Each clan was made up of several different families and could be traced back to a lineage. “Lewis Morgan, historian and legal advisor to the Iroquois confederacy, in drawing a comparison between the Iroquois and Cherokee families, estimated that there were approximately one thousand families in the Cherokee nation which on an average would break down to about one hundred and thirty families in each of the seven clans.” (Dickson 1964:16). Each member of the clan owed unwavering loyalty to the others; and if a member was killed by someone outside the clan it was required that they take revenge in the form of blood for blood. Intermarriage within the clan was strictly prohibited and both blood law, and intermarriage laws, were enforced. “In actuality, the clan was too basic to Cherokee society to be discussed merely by legal concepts. It was “the family writ large”. More than a family, the clan was corporate entity based on kinship. More than a private cooperation, it was the arm of the government to which all policy power was entrusted” (Reid 2006:37).

Membership within the clan structure was more important than the Nation as a whole. To have status as a Cherokee citizen one had to belong to a clan and with it came full physical and

legal protection in life and death. “Without such a relationship, he would be an alien and a person without legal protection. In such capacity he had no rights and could enter on tribal land only at the pleasure of the clan or town” (Dickson 1964:20). These clans were based on maternal lineage, and focus was on the mother. The emphasis was on what rights the individual had and was not based on duties. The children belonged to the mother, and the husband had no legal claim over them. “Since clan membership was determined by birth, it was only natural that the child belonged to the clan of the mother since she was her birth child whereas the identity of the father might, in some cases, be less certain” (Reed 1993:15). Due to clan structure the duties of a typical Euro-American father would fall onto the maternal uncle. It was up to him to care for his clan and the children were members. The father did not belong to the clan of his son therefore was a legal stranger to him. “Should the father harm his son, he might be held accountable by the son’s clan. Should the father kill his son, the dead boy’s clan might kill him in return” (Reid 2006:40). It is important to understand how the Cherokee clan was structured and what legal duties rested with each individual and clan as a whole. The Cherokee divided societies into legally definable groups with clans, and then the relationships within those clans. When a marriage took place, the husband moved into the bride’s house but did not change clans. In the slant-eyed giant myth, the recently wed refused to practice traditional marriage customs. “A young woman married a giant despite her mother’s objections, and the giant took her to live in his house. The woman’s brother, who lived with his wife, tried in vain to convince his sister to return to her mother’s house. She persisted in her abnormal behavior, and in the end, she never saw her family again” (Perdue 1998:43). Marriage was dealt with between families, and normal encouragement would have taken place; forced marriage was not practiced.

The kinship system played an important role while choosing marriage partners because Cherokees could not marry within their own clan. “Clan affiliation was inherited through the mother’s line and marriage within a clan was strictly prohibited” (Reed 1993:10). These women would be considered family and were not considered suitable mates. A person generally married into their grandfather’s clan, and this would reflect certain relationships between the two. Multiple wives were a common practice and were often sisters of the first wife. “That way, he only had to reside in one household rather than divide his time between the lineages of unrelated wives” (Perdue 1998:44). If divorce was the outcome, the husband left the wife’s household and returned to his mother’s or sister’s. Although a husband might not want to leave the house, he was obligated to leave his children behind if the wife wanted him gone. He had no legal recourse. Children always remained with the mother’s kin. “The children were her relatives, not her husband’s. After all, they belonged to her clan, not to his” (Reid 2006:39). All property would remain within the woman’s house and clan.

### ***Clan Law and Balance***

The Cherokee had no main political systems; each town acted autonomous within but were linked together through clans. Each town made decisions through consensus in which they had leaders but these were elected representatives. Everyone could attend and speak at national councils as in town councils.

The Cherokees, regardless of government or clan, always strived for the common good, and criminal acts were a family affair rather than a state crime. Restitution for wrongdoing was up to the individual or clan, and this was more than enough deterrent for wrongdoing. “Indian



citizens were not, in Dickson's words "oppressed or perplexed with expensive litigation-They [were] not injured by legal robbery- They [had] no splendid villains that [made] themselves grand and great on other people's labor" (Dickson 1964:186). Every Cherokee was equal and each had an equal right of participation. General councils were called by the town to determine policies for public or town offenses. These were also used for foreign affairs. War councils were called when the town or the nation as a whole felt that a crime against them had taken place. According to Dickson, in 1760 the Cherokees declared war on the English and could be used as an example of how town decisions were made where tribal law was required for revenge. (Dickson 1964:112). If the crime was not rectified, then a war council was called into action.

On a larger scale, Cherokees sought to maintain balance within nation, towns, and clans. When one nation killed someone from another nation it was usually cause for war for the Cherokee but did not always end that way. "The victim's nation wanted revenge and in theory could be satisfied by taking the same number of lives as it had lost"(Reid 2006:168). Often Cherokee headmen would send word to the enemy that they planned on only killing as many as the lives that had been previously taken from them. "it was the sense of righteousness, perhaps a savage honor, that made them refrain from taking more lives than were owed (Reid 2006:169).

Tribal decisions were not binding on the towns. No national or town authorities were empowered to maintain police or court systems; the councils exercised no coercive power over individuals" (McLoughlin 1986:11). Common customs and traditions based on the clan system regulated every aspect of Cherokee life. This helped the Cherokees understand the world around them and how they fit into that world. Everyone had a sense of helping the community and cared about its wellbeing as a whole. This was at opposition to the new European outlook of self-

reliance that was being introduced. The outlook of community continued to play a role in future Cherokee decisions and feelings continued to remain a constant problem when dealing with European settlers.

### ***Dragging Canoe & Georgia***

In 1775, the British imposed taxes and trade barriers encouraged many Americans towards nationalism. As the American Revolution broke out colonists started to separate themselves from the rule of the British and looked westward to new Indian lands. The need to be free from British control drove many speculators onto land that was not owned by whites. “In 1775 Richard Henderson, a land speculator, appeared before the principal leaders of the Cherokee Nation desiring to purchase their hunting grounds” (Cox 1999: xi). The acquisition of this land was already in motion when a young Cherokee warrior, head warrior of the Overhill settlements, voiced his disagreement with selling Cherokee land. Cherokees were soon driven from their homes, and several hundred Cherokee warriors and their families relocated to the Chickamauga region near present day Tennessee Alabama state line. A British deputy lived near Chickamauga Creek and ran a trading post and was located on the hinterland of the Cherokee/Creek frontier. The presence of the British agent’s trading post offered the Chickamaugas a direct link to supplies and many Creeks chose to join Dragging Canoe later (Cox 1999:125). British Indian agents supplied the Chickamauga with food and supplies, and they gave resistance to the newly formed Americans. Dragging Canoe realized early on that the hunting grounds were the Cherokee’s and his family’s only means of survival and that they were worth fighting for. The more American settlers pushed west, the more Cherokee and Creeks

became displaced often moving more than once. Along the Chickamauga Creek, towns began to form. “Dragging Canoe and his people from the Great Island settled at the old town of Chickamauga, two miles from the mouth of the creek. His brother Little Owl chose a site farther up the stream, near present Graysville, Ga” (Brown 1986:165). With Dragging Canoe’s followers, he continued his attacks on American towns throughout the south. With each American killed by Dragging Canoe, a need for justice by the Americans forced an invasion on the Chickamauga towns. “Evan Shelby’s army, numbering nine hundred, left Big Creek on April 10 1779” (Brown 1986:173). Most of the Chickamauga warriors were out on raids, but the remaining put up enough fight for the women and children to escape. The town of the Chickamauga was destroyed, and all of their crops burned. No British aid was available. “The most serious feature of Shelby’s campaign for Dragging Canoe was that the white warriors found their way to his towns; but the Great Sprit had provided a remedy” (Brown 1986:174). The river that was above these towns was dangerous and impassable on boat. It provided protection from large numbers of people entering into the area of the town.

### ***Problems with State***

The Cherokee troubles with what would become the state of Georgia carried from the colonial period into the Revolutionary era. The Cherokee continued to be at odds with the settlers in the Georgia area because of increasing encroachment onto their lands. Moreover, in the winter of 1757, while still under British rule, Cherokee warriors killed four English traders, and acts like this continued thereafter. Cherokees resented the activities of land speculators and traders. “Entrepreneurs, explorers, and land speculators turned their eyes towards Indian land,

hoping to establish new colonies outside of the realm of imperialism” (Cox 1999:1). Many Cherokees were forced or tricked into selling large tracts of land, and many Cherokees did not agree with the selling of lands. American forces increasingly drove Cherokees from their lands and this formed a resistance to American rule.

The warrior, Dragging Canoe, stepped up to lead this revolt and formed the Chickamauga-Cherokee warriors. “Soon after, Dragging Canoe and several hundred Cherokee warriors with their families withdrew to the Chickamauga region, a safe haven located within modern Chattanooga city limits” (Cox 1999: xii). Dragging Canoe realized that without land and hunting grounds that the Cherokee would not be able to survive. The Chickamauga Cherokees included Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, northern tribes, adopted whites and blacks. The one thing everyone had in common was the idea of resistance to White expansion. The Chickamauga confederacy was the capitol of resistance in the south, and each group of people had the same idea: stop westward expansion on its borders. This caused an even larger split of Cherokees, some wanting to cede land for peace and others who wanted to fight to maintain it. By the treaty of Holston on July 2, 1791 most of the Chickamauga had been defeated and split up. “The treaty that had the greatest impact on the Cherokees and eventually led to their removal was one to which they were not a party” (Strickland 1975:21). The state of Georgia and the United States agreed to trade parts of Alabama and Mississippi for land that was within Georgia’s borders. Regardless of whether the Chickamauga disagreed with the decision to relinquish land, they were not going against the dominant group. “And just as the Chickamaugas did not force other Cherokees to join with them in their struggle, the majority did not compel the dissenters to lay down their arms” (Anderson 1991:58). As long as colonial resistance continued, the British

agreed to provide them with weapons and ammunition. It was different for the Overhill Cherokees; many of their treaties with the Americans didn't provide supplies and many people starved. Throughout the eighteenth century, the power of the headmen grew into a more politically based authority. Dragging Canoe resisted American imperialism and land grabbing for seventeen years until his death in 1792. "He led one of the boldest resistance movements ever experienced by a native population and the goals of his followers were unified" (Cox 1999:150). When it became apparent that western expansion was occurring at an increasing rate Dragging Canoe resisted with military tactics and elusiveness.

### *Civilized Life*

In 1801 U.S president Thomas Jefferson realized that a large portion of the remaining Indian land base was held by what he considered "uncivilized" Indians. In his view, the future of the United States depended on acquisition of land as quickly as possible. By withholding access to hunting grounds, Jefferson deprived Indians of their source of food and forced them to look towards the upcoming "civilization" policy to survive (Perdue and Green 2007: 31). This was particularly true for the state of Georgia where tensions were high and the settlers demand for more land continued to cause problems for the Cherokees. "Article 1, Section 4, of the Georgia Cessions of April 24, 1802 reads in part: "Fourthly, that the United States shall, at their own expense, extinguish, for the use of Georgia, as early as the same can be peacefully obtained, on reasonable terms, the Indian title to lands within the state of Georgia" (Strickland 1975:21). This land had been promised to and was already in the possession of the Cherokees, but Georgia also owned the same tract of lands. The federal government wanted the Cherokees to become

“civilized”, but they also wanted them to move west. This continued to be a problem for the Cherokees in the future. Some Cherokees chose to go west because the majority of hunting grounds were taken, but others chose to stay and become assimilated. In the mid-1830s, Anglo style farming replaced some Cherokees traditional way of life and they made great strides through in line with U.S. civilization policies. Livestock and grain were plentiful, and the Cherokee’s surplus grew along with their understanding of white agriculture techniques. At the end of the eighteenth century, war chiefs had been replaced by diplomatic chiefs that were willing to trade Cherokee lands for supplies. More of the traditional hunting grounds were sold, and the Cherokees moved more to an agricultural land need. Land was ceded at a high rate, and large amounts of land were given up. The state of Georgia held land claims that would later become Alabama and Mississippi. Georgia agreed to cede the land in exchange for a promise by the federal government to give them Indian lands that existed within Georgia borders

### ***Political Strife***

The remaining Cherokees formed a new tribal government when they adopted a set of laws and some embraced a new form of religion. This was apparent by many requests to build mission schools and churches. The Cherokee dressed like their white counterparts, learned English, and built churches and schools in an effort to prove that they were capable of advancement. The state of Georgia had a different view of the Cherokees that were in their borders. “Their [Cherokees] situation is precarious, and truly deplorable. They are the remnant of a once powerful race. What are they now? A debased, degraded, and still a savage tribe” (Strickland 1975:37). Georgia viewed the Cherokees the same way no matter how much they

advanced; they were still savages that didn't belong in the state of Georgia. In November of 1828, Andrew Jackson was elected president of the United States, and gold was discovered in Georgia near the Cherokee capitol of New Echota.

During this time two rival groups were formed within Cherokee politics. "The minority 'Treaty Party' knew the consequences of resisting Georgia and the Jackson administration" (Satz 2002:99). This group of men believed that removal was inevitable and thought that they could convince the Cherokees to agree. This would keep them in a favorable relationship with the federal government and they could maintain control of politics. "The majority 'National Party' led by the charismatic John Ross, the son of a Scottish Immigrant, exerted every effort to thwart removal and, should it become a necessity, to exact favorable terms possible for the Cherokees so that they might be able to purchase a new home somewhere beyond the territorial limits of the United States" (Satz 2002:100). The majority of Cherokees chose to ignore the request that they prepare for the journey and refused to leave. The Cherokees had been refusing to sell land and even avoiding treaty meetings. Georgia was anxious to buy every piece of Cherokee land, but policy of the government was that it could not be taken by force. The discovery of gold in Georgia was the final blow, and another treaty was broken. President Jackson had no intention of letting the "civilized" Cherokees stay regardless of their progress. Though the Cherokees did everything they could to become "civilized," including inventing an alphabet, they would never be equal to their white counterparts and would continue to be oppressed.

## *Missions*

Beginning in year 1799, missionaries began to introduce new religions to the Cherokees, and this would change their way of life forever. Others viewed them as teachers that could teach them and their children to survive in an acculturated world. The Cherokees in some instances gave of what little land they had left to these religious factions. “The United Brethren (or Moravians) took the first steps towards establishing a permanent mission station within the Cherokee borders in 1799, five years after the Cherokees had made permanent peace with the United States” (McLoughlin 1995:13). The Cherokees viewed reading and writing as a gift from the Creator that was given to the whites long ago. They understood that by admitting the missions that their children could learn to read and write. The Cherokees viewed the Bible as the source of all of the white man’s power and wisdom. These new missionaries were not like the surrounding settlers and showed less contempt towards the Cherokee. “The Cherokees are indeed very stupid [dull] and clumsy” when it came to learning new ideas of the whites. However they are willing to learn,” (McLoughlin 1986:73). It became the mission’s objective to break down these traditional autonomous towns and attempt to convert them to Christianity. This disrupted how the Cherokees viewed their family structure and completely switched the roles of women and men. This devastated both male and female Cherokees and created a void within their daily life. Men were no longer encouraged to be warriors, instead they were encouraged to farm. Missionaries encouraged women to give up farming and instead tend to domestic responsibilities. The idea of communal property ownership was removed and replaced by private ownership. Missionaries were only successful if the target group was already nearly wiped out. “But once a tribe reached this state of cultural disorientation and dysfunction,



Christianity did have something important to offer. Christianity was a religion of hope, of miracles, of divine support for the weak and oppressed” (McLoughlin 1995:17).

### ***Missionaries and Traditional Cherokee***

By 1819, Cherokee leaders began to realize that to survive they must adapt the most useful practices from EuroAmericans. Although at the time of removal only three percent of Cherokees had attended mission schools the Cherokee looked for ways to use them to their advantage. . “Remember the whites are near to us. With them we have constant intercourse, and you must be sensible that unless you could speak their language, read, and write as they do, they will be able to cheat you and trample your rights” (McLoughlin 1995:20). Cherokees were forced out of necessity to welcome missionaries into their community, although engagement with the missions was not widespread. The Cherokees advanced rapidly in education and adopting Christianity. With new educated leaders such as John Ridge, mission schools multiplied within the Cherokee nation “supported partially by a government fund for civilizing American aborigines and partially by religious funds of Presbyterian, Baptist, Moravian, and Methodist denominations and by the Cherokee themselves” (Woodward 1963:140). The ABCFM established branches off its main school, Brainerd, at Creek Path, Etowah, Candy’s Creek, Haweis, and Willstown. Missionaries dictated to Cherokee students and visitors how they were supposed to act and what they had to give up. There was more to being a Christian than asking Jesus for forgiveness and leading a spiritual life. Churches had behavioral codes, and they expected converts to adhere to the mission rules. “ The most common cause of censure (which in turn could lead to the disgrace of expulsion or excommunication from the church) were,

according to one missionary ‘drunkenness, fornication, Sabbath-breaking, gambling in various ways, fighting, conjuring, lying, cheating, faithlessness in fulfilling bargains, ingratitude for favors shown to them, and profane swearing’”(McLoughlin 1995:204). Not included on the list were ball play, any sports, and medicine.

The Cherokees had a hard time understanding why things such as the ball game were looked at as wrong. This meant that the Cherokees would have to give up everything that they were taught was right in order to be viewed as civilized. When white men needed rain for their crops, they prayed for it. When they needed medical assistance, they went to a doctor. “Missionaries spoke of ball plays, rain dances, and conjuring as ‘polluting customs’; the convert could see that drunkenness, lying, and stealing were sins, but he could not see the sinfulness in attending a Green Corn dance to thank God for a good harvest” (McLoughlin1994:204).

These misunderstandings only pushed traditional Cherokees deeper into hiding. The very things that make the Cherokee the Ani-Kituwah People were outlawed and they could no longer practice the traditions that were passed down from them by their own God. In one instance, a preacher preached that Christians were superior to pagans and divided his congregation, singling out the traditional Cherokees. “Furthermore, the Christian converts sang songs that taunted the traditionalists, songs with such refrains as ‘You will die, you will die.’ They meant that the pagans would roast in eternal hellfire, but some of them took it as a death threat” (McLoughlin 1995:24). An old Cherokee near Willstown had been conjuring and they started to wonder if it was right or not. But it was impossible to distinguish between the two in practice. Medicine required the use of spells, ceremonies, and divinations to diagnose the sickness, to find the remedy, and to drive out the evil spirits which caused it. The Cherokee could not separate the

two and the medicine would not be effective without the proper ritual. Traditional practices were not a want, they were a need for survival and held medicinal aspects within them. Other problems were taking place with the missions where church members were denounced in front of the entire congregation for being at a ball play, or dance. Cherokees were forced to refuse traditional medicine that was known to cure the ailment in order to be proper Christians. “Many...tried secretly to resort to traditional medicine, but if they were found out, the missionary called them publicly before the church and the other members to censure or expel them for their heathen practices” (McLoughlin 1995:25). Sometimes mission donations were the only source of food that the Cherokees had and to be expelled would mean starvation. The converted Cherokees looked as if they were giving up their traditional ways, but they only pushed them deeper into hiding. Today traditional Cherokee practices continue to be held but by invitation only and at a closed location. The Cherokees need to maintain balance, and to do that, thanks must be offered.

In the Cherokee Booger Dance where men create masks that represent whites and blacks, dancers come from a distant land and they are invited to perform. They soon represent intruders as the dance goes on. The problem people become a manageable category and the threat can be easily dismissed with laughter. “Such laughter, and the dance itself, was regenerative. Old men become revitalized as they danced and the preoccupation of young men with sexual conquest was on exhibit” (Hatley 1995:236). The dance was said to have originated before contact, when there were still mythical monsters. The Cherokees needed to continue with the dance, so the whites replaced the monsters in Cherokee tradition. They continued to do this regardless of the punishment because it was the only thing they had to cling to that was left from their broken

past. “Whether through communal dances, personal silences, or building backcountry big houses, Cherokee society masked its core against American society” (Hatley 1995: 236). The Cherokees were adamant about keeping these traditions alive, so they put them into hiding and they remain hidden today. They are still practiced in the same manner as they were when they went underground. It is because these were hidden that the Cherokee people are still Cherokee. Even when faced with extermination they managed to keep the core Cherokee beliefs alive.

Cherokee life encompasses all things, and Cherokee people believe that all things are connected. Therefore, in order to translate, interpret, and study Syllabary cave writing we must consider many different aspects of Cherokee culture: the significance of caves to Cherokee culture, the way behavior is affected by culture, what is going on, and what is important to the Cherokee at the time they are writing in the caves. It is important to keep in mind that Cherokee mindsets and actions will be affected by the pressures that are continuing around them. What is considered rational thought might not apply or could be distorted due to the influences of displacement, especially in regard to the cosmology or the mythical realm, where medicinal formulas are being altered to deal with new problems that are occurring. Cave use would be altered from medicinal uses to seclusion when needed.

### ***Historical Accounts***

The use of caves by the Cherokee has not been documented and is difficult to locate within the historical record, but it does occur frequently within myths. It is mentioned by Mooney when explaining the name Cherokee. “There is evidence that it is derived from the Choctaw word choluk or chiluk signifying a pit or cave” (Mooney 2006:15). Caves are also

mentioned in Mooney's creation story of the Cherokee, and to access these places you would need an underworld guide, possibly one of the medicine men who specialize in traversing the underworld. Cherokee continue to practice this in the present and it is required before any kind of dance or traditional medicine. McLoughlin states that when creatures from the underworld act up, a power from the upper world was called upon to restore balance (McLoughlin 1995:14). Caves were also explored by missionaries from Brainerd in the same area on August 28, 1823. They talk about going to a large "Citadel of rocks" that the Creek Indians used to inhabit. "We saw where they hung their meat and where they prepared their lodgings" (Walker 1993:222). Given the route these Brainerd missionaries took to reach the Lower Towns it is likely that these caves were on Lookout Mountain.

## Myths

Caves are often mentioned in Cherokee myths, and this is where many supernatural beings live. To go into a cave would mean a chance of disrespecting whatever deity lived there and would be very dangerous. Only the most skilled medicine men or warriors would risk an encounter with one of these creatures. Caves have always held mythical implications to the Cherokee; almost every place name has a story associated with it. Caves are also mentioned in different stories and myths throughout Cherokee folklore. The Great Yellow Jacket was said to reside in a large cave in the rocks built with tiers like a bees nest. *Kanati*, the first man, also kept game animals along with preying insects in a cave underground that were released by his sons (Mooney 1992:260). Another mention of caves comes from the Buttrick and Payne papers in which Creek Indians were trying to hide but were dragged out of their caves and forests to be

forced to the far west. (Payne 1973:106). It was mentioned that in the War of 1812, Great Britain destroyed most of the caves and stole most of the possessions that were hidden in them (Payne 1973:110). While preparing for the mining of saltpeter, they discovered a mummified body that had been dried by desiccating sediment chemistry inside the cave (Payne 1973:110). “Wherever on the rivers of Tennessee are perpendicular bluffs, on the sides, and especially if caves are near them, enclosed in entrenchments, with the sun and moon painted on the rocks and charcoal and ashes in the smaller mounds. These tokens seem evincive of a connexion between the mounds, the charcoal and ash, the paintings and the caves” (Payne 1973:110). Cherokees have been using these cave sites since the beginning of time for many different purposes. The power and concealment they held would be a useful tool. The writing in these caves show the change that Sequoyah’s Syllabary had on the way Cherokees viewed and participated in the world. The style of conveying messages changed but the use of cosmic power stayed the same.

On the north bank of the Tennessee River, near the mouth of Citico Creek in Blount County, Tennessee a large cliff face contains a cave with two openings. From the mouth of the cave to the water below are large white streaks running down to the bottom. This was called by “the Cherokees *Tla’nuwai* or the place of the *Tlanuwa*, or great mythical hawk” (Mooney 2006:315). These birds were very strong and would often fly off with dogs and children. A great medicine man found his way into the cave and dropped the baby birds out of the cave into a giant snake that lived at the bottom. Other stories exist of bears and panthers living in caves and having council houses just like people do. People usually live with them for certain reasons and usually begin to turn into them. “There is another race of spirits, the *Yunwi Tsunsi*, or little people, who live in rock caves on the mountain side” (Mooney 2006:333). There are stories of

these people who would find lost children and take them back to their village, which was in a cave deep underground. Long ago the Cherokees would hear voices from what they called the immortals warning them that they were in trouble. They promised that if they went with them that they could live without the troubles that were coming. Some felt that this was their home and they did not want to leave. The others were taken into a cave, the entrance was turned to solid stone, and they still live there. People say that the greatest regret of forced removal was that they had to leave their elders behind that live in the mountain. Caves are mentioned in many aspects of Cherokee life and they continue to be places of great importance and power.

### ***Tribal Archaeology***

Archaeology is a tool for understanding past groups of people especially if there is no written record of their history. It can help answer questions regarding inconsistencies in the historical record, but also provide indigenous people with important links to their pasts. Cave art is not new to archaeology but in recent years has grown popular in the southeastern United States. Numerous caves are being discovered on a monthly basis and due to the cultural affiliations that they have with surrounding tribal groups, they can provide important insight, not only to these tribal groups, but can contribute to the archaeological record for the southeast. Cherokee Syllabary is an important tool for the Cherokee tribe and is used to record messages, communicate, tools for civilization, and making historical records in the Cherokee language. By understanding this form of communication and its recent discovery inside of caves, it can create a new form of research with many ways of interpretation. By studying a particular panel in Manitou Cave, Alabama, we may be able to pinpoint specific important figures in Cherokee

history by location and sometimes signature. A better and more robust understanding of the practices of these hidden Cherokee writings can emerge, and with them, the other side of the historical record can appear that was once missing. This hidden record can possibly fill in the missing pieces of a people's history that are misrepresented and misunderstood. By using research done on this cave, the surrounding town, and people involved, archaeologists can corroborate past records of Cherokees and also arrive at new interpretations.



## CHAPTER THREE SEQUOYAH AND THE CHEROKEE SYLLABARY

### *History of the Language*

Scholars estimate that the Cherokee language is about 3,500 years old. It is characterized as being part of the Iroquoian language family (Duncan and Riggs 2003:9). Cherokee is a descriptive language, so context plays a large role in understanding what a Cherokee speaker is talking about with the syllabary writing. One must understand aspects of Cherokee culture in order to understand aspects of life that they deemed important enough to write about, especially on cave walls. Being able to speak and write Cherokee gave Cherokee people the ability to communicate openly even in front of non-Cherokees.

Sequoyah, the man credited with inventing the Cherokee Syllabary is also known as *Siqwaya*; or George Gist or Guess. He is considered a literary genius for inventing the Cherokee Syllabary. Aside from Cherokee, Sequoyah did not speak or write in any other languages. (Foreman 1938:3, McLoughlin 1995:39, Foster 1979:17)

### *Sequoyah's Early Life*

Even though Sequoyah is perhaps one of the most famous Native Americans in history, not a lot is known about his life, and the very little that we do know is uncertain. The time and place of Sequoyah's birth is unknown. There are several sources that contradict each other on these facts, and therefore, we will probably never know for sure. What we can determine is that Sequoyah was born in the late eighteenth century, between 1760-1776. The location of his birth

is accepted as being near Tuskegee Town in Tennessee, just outside of Fort Loudon. (Davis 2001: 149-152.)

Presently, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians operates The Sequoyah Birthplace Museum in Vonore, Tennessee.

Scholars and non-native people have been overly pre-occupied with Sequoyah's patrilineal line. According to numerous authors, Sequoyah was born in 1776 at the village of Tuskegee to Nathaniel Gist, a Virginia fur trader, and Wu-the, a Cherokee woman and daughter of a Cherokee Chief (Cox 1999:205) . Woodward asserts that Nathaniel Gist lived with the Cherokees and served as a liaison during and shortly after the French and Indian War, but this information may not be accurate (Woodward 1963:70; Foremen 1938:75).

Other theories posit that Sequoyah's father was a Dutch or German trader named Guest or a British soldier at Fort Loudon. If his father was a British soldier, Sequoyah would more than likely have been born in 1760 or before 1759, when the Cherokees laid siege to the fort. There is some debate on who Sequoyah's father was by non-Cherokee scholars and many people point to a non-Cherokee individual. This only serves to discredit Sequoyah's accomplishments and contributes to the Cherokee as being less in the eyes of their white counter parts. This claim diminishes the importance of the invention of the syllabary and continues to provide an ethnocentric bias.

Regardless of the location and year of Sequoyah's birth or who his biological father was, what is most important within Cherokee culture and to Cherokee people is that his mother was Cherokee. Since Sequoyah's mother was Cherokee, he had a clan, and because Sequoyah had a clan, he was considered Cherokee. Who his father was did not matter because the Cherokee are a

matrilineal society: lineage is passed down through women. This is a very significant part of Cherokee culture. According to the *Chronicles of Oklahoma* by John B. Davis, Sequoyah and his mother belonged to the Paint Clan (Davis 1930:4). More about the Cherokee clan system will be presented in Chapter 4 later when discussing some syllabary writing in Howard's Waterfall Cave

Sequoyah grew up with his mother. He helped her raise cows, cattle and horses. He also assisted her with her trading endeavors, often riding out to collect money or trade items owed to her. He became a very good rider and would later use this skill to help plough and raise a large garden and cornfields (Payne 1973:69-72).

Scholars estimate that Sequoyah's mother died around the beginning of the nineteenth century and that is when Sequoyah married and moved to Will's Valley, or Willstown, Alabama. He took over his mother's trade business and went on several trips bringing back furs in exchange for trade goods. As Sequoyah was growing up, it became the fashion among the Cherokee to adorn themselves with silver jewelry. Sequoyah, being good with his hands, took it upon himself to learn how to make the silver adornments and became an accomplished silversmith. It was told that he could sketch a number of animals and he was quite good at drawing these characters on paper. It is argued that this is how Sequoyah became interested in developing a way to read and write in the Cherokee language (Davis 2001:156 and Payne 1973:69-72).

Even explanations of Sequoyah's physical (dis)abilities contribute to his mythology. Numerous records discuss a physical disability in one leg, which hindered his ability to walk. In line with his unknown history, there are several arguments as to when he was afflicted with this injury and what caused it. Some argue that he developed the injury as a young child. Theories as

to the cause of this injury vary, from one of his legs being considerably shorter than the other, to a childhood illness, a hunting accident, and tuberculosis causing white swelling or hydrarthrosis. It is also possible that Sequoyah received the injury in the War of 1812. Whatever the cause, he must have been injured during military service or he developed the leg injury after his military service based on him meeting the physical requirements to enlist.

The myth of Sequoyah also feeds stereotypical representations of Indians as alcoholics. Documents suggest he developed a struggle with alcohol but was able to stop drinking after losing much of his business and friends because of this affliction. Once he quit drinking he became a blacksmith (Davis 1930:10; Hoig 1995:20). Another of Sequoyah's contemporaries, Tecumseh, was also said to have been addicted to alcohol for a time but managed to quit. Sugden suggests that although Tecumseh drank on occasion, he saw what was happening to his people due to its affects and disapproved but was powerless to intervene. (Sugden 1997:104). Even with the government's ban, the traders suppling alcohol near Indian tribes outnumbered the ones who dealt in goods and food.

### ***Syllabary***

Best estimates suggest Sequoyah started developing the Cherokee Syllabary around 1809. There are differing stories of why he wanted to develop a way to write Cherokee for his people (Hoig 1995:33). Initially, his efforts were delayed by war with the Red Stick Creek Indians.

According to military records Sequoyah was a soldier in the War of 1812 against the Red Stick Creeks (Kilpatrick 1965:60). He served as a private in the company of Mounted and Foot Cherokees, which were commanded by the Cherokee Captain John McLamore and formed part

of Colonel Gideon Morgan Jr.'s Regiment of Cherokee Indians. Sequoyah's three month service ended January 6, 1814, but he reenlisted three weeks later on. On March 27, 1814, his regiments took part in the famous Battle of Horseshoe Bend where they helped defeat the Creeks. Just over two weeks after this battle, Sequoyah was discharged at Hillabee, Alabama (Foreman 1938: 3-4).

Also included in his military records is the affidavit of Sequoyah's widow, Sally Waters, to whom he was married in 1815 through tribal custom, and who, in 1855, invoked the record of her deceased husband's service in support of her claim for bounty land authorized by a recent act of Congress (Foreman 1938:3-4). There are differing accounts of Sequoyah's marital life as well. It is argued that Sequoyah had four children with his first wife, Sally Waters, and there may have been a second wife, Utiyu, with whom he had three children (Starr 1917:29) and who was granted a pension from the Nation as his wife (Reed 2016).

What motivated Sequoyah to invent the syllabary, like much of his life, is contested. Many sources place the start of the Syllabary at 1809, and there are many stories of just how the idea came about. One story states that Sequoyah overheard some Cherokees talking about the white man's "talking leaves" and they wondered if it was witchcraft or a special gift. Many believed it was magic that allowed the white men to use this method of communication, but Sequoyah disagreed. He determined that if the white men could use symbols to represent words so could the Cherokee. Sequoyah would work at creating this system for the next twelve years (Foreman 1938:5). Others argue that when Sequoyah was in the War of 1812 also known as the Red Stick War he realized the importance of written language when the men captured an enemy soldier and found a letter on him (Hoig1995:32).

After his military service, Sequoyah again neglected his silversmith business, but this time it was to finish what he started in 1809, his work on the Syllabary. He was determined to achieve his goal of giving his people the ability to talk on paper. He made several attempts before settling on giving each sound in the Cherokee language its own unique character. He adopted some English characters after obtaining an old English book, because they were easier to write than some of the characters he had developed. Some sources argue that during the time he was developing his alphabet, Sequoyah was mocked by his people. Other sources argue that this is probably not the case, because during this time Sequoyah was very active in his tribe's public affairs (Foreman 1938:23). He was even part of a delegation that established treaties with the United States in 1816. It is doubtful that Sequoyah would have been allowed to sit on this delegation if he was considered crazy by his people (Davis 2001:156, Payne 1973:160-161).

It took about twelve years, but once Sequoyah was certain he had a character for all of the sounds in the Cherokee language, he set out to teach it to his fellow Cherokees. He first taught his daughter, Ahyoka, who was young but quickly learned to read and write using her father's alphabet. To show others that his writing system was not witchcraft and that anyone could do it, Sequoyah gave public demonstrations with his daughter. Staying true to the uncertainty of Sequoyah's life, the manner in which the public demonstrations took place—whether they were forced or voluntary—is unclear. Some basic information, however, is consistent. Sequoyah and his daughter were separated so they could not hear or see each other. Sequoyah wrote something down using his writing system, and his daughter was able to read it and understand the meaning. Next, Sequoyah taught a select group his writing system and completed a similar public demonstration. Once the Cherokee people were convinced of Sequoyah's invention, he began

teaching anyone who wanted to learn (Davis 1930:13). In 1821, he submitted his syllabary to a public test with the Cherokee headmen

The process took time. For more than a year, Sequoyah invented shaped signs for words until he had several thousand but failed remember them. “He next hit upon a plan for dividing words into syllables and he found he could apply the same character in different words, and that the number of characters would be a comparative few” (Foster 1979:65). He recorded all the words that he could think of and silently listened to strangers’ conversations in order to create new syllables. For his symbols he adopted English letters but sometimes turned them upside-down or backwards when writing them. Sequoyah discovered music within the sounds in what English call vowels and consonants.

As for the final product—the Cherokee Syllabary is made up of eighty–five characters or syllables. Each symbol represents a vowel, or consonant plus vowel. The characters are added to different syllables to make words or parts of words (Bender 2002:25); for example, the Cherokee word for “bird” is ᎠᎵᏍᎦ, spoken as *tsisgwa*. Each sound in the Cherokee language has a syllable on the Syllabary chart. The top row consists of the six vowels that are used in the language. Each column includes the syllables for the sounds that end with that vowel sound. Most charts today include the syllable and the phonetic sound, or how it is pronounced in English. (*Figure A-1*)

Because of its efficiency of use for Cherokee speakers, the written language spread rapidly. This started around 1821. Many Cherokees became literate in their own language in days. What is interesting is that accounts argue that it was the full-blooded Cherokees, or the more traditional Cherokees that most easily took to this method of writing. At this time many

Cherokees, especially mixed bloods, had already learned to speak and even write in English. This was pushed by both the Cherokees, who wanted the best for their children, and the missionaries, who used the tactic of superiority to teach Cherokee children English. “The Cherokee full-bloods took to the syllabary almost universally. Learning the system in two or three days, they began to write letters and even to erect signing along the roads” (Parins 2013:33-35). The Cherokee people now had the ability to communicate and preserve their culture and beliefs in their own language.

The invention enabled Cherokee people to communicate culturally specific ideas and knowledge to one another and with future generations. Regular communication was set up between Cherokees separated by distance. Cherokee people started writing in their own language anywhere and everywhere. The Syllabary was so significant to the Cherokee people that in 1824, the National Council awarded Sequoyah a medal and voted on October 15, 1825, to establish a printing press to print with the characters Sequoyah invented. Sequoyah did not receive his medal until January 12, 1832. It included a letter from Principal Chief John Ross. The letter expressed Ross’s and the Legislative Council of the Cherokee Nation’s respect and admiration for Sequoyah’s ingenuity in the invention of the Cherokee writing system. It explained that they were hoping Sequoyah would visit them and they would present him the medal, but when the inventor did not visit, Ross decided to deliver it to Sequoyah through a friend. The medal outlines the benefits of having a writing system and lists the accomplishments made to that point by the Cherokee using the Syllabary, including the creation of *Cherokee Phoenix* Newspaper, the translation of the New Testament, and the ability to write letters to distant friends and family (Payne 1973:81-82).



When the Syllabary became developed among the Cherokee people, it spread through the nation at a quick rate and it was common for people to use it in a matter of days after learning (Perdue 1996: 58). It was officially recognized by the United States Government in 1826. On February 21, 1828, in New Echota, Georgia, it became the basis for the first printing of a bilingual newspaper, known as the *Tsalagi Tsulehisanvhi* or *Cherokee Phoenix* (McLoughlin 1986:196). Furthermore, On March 6, 1828, the *Cherokee Phoenix* printed a copy of the Cherokee constitution, signed in New Echota in July 1827. On August 13, 1828, the newspaper published an article on the invention of the Cherokee Syllabary and how Sequoyah came up with the idea as an argument against those who believed that the Cherokee had white help in developing this writing system (G.C.:1828).

There is strong evidence that, by 1828, almost all the young and middle- aged men could read and write the Syllabary. Cherokee symbols were painted or cut on trees, fences, houses, and often on pieces of bark or board. Writing tools and paper were in great demand. Although it is not documented in Foreman’s report, we know Cherokees were writing in their own language on cave walls as well, as will be seen below. The use of Sequoyah’s Syllabary was widespread and tracked informally; therefore, there are many estimates at the number of Cherokees at the time who could read and write in their own language, ranging from fifty percent to ninety percent of the adult population (Parins 2013:36-37 and G.C. 1828).

### **Life after the Invention**

After the invention of the Syllabary, Sequoyah left the Cherokee Nation in present day Alabama to live in Arkansas Territory where he resumed trading and operating a salt works and

blacksmith shop. He helped several young men start up their own businesses, and he continued to teach the Cherokee writing system to all who would come to learn. In 1827-28, Sequoyah was part of a delegation that travelled to Washington to protest the encroachment of whites on Cherokee lands. This effort resulted in the Treaty of Washington, signed May 6, 1828. This treaty gave the Cherokee land in Indian Territory (present day Oklahoma) in exchange for their lands in Arkansas. It also contained a resolution that gave goods and monetary compensation to any Cherokee living in Georgia who chose to move west. The final document included a \$500 provision to George Guess (Sequoyah) for the great benefits he brought to his people by inventing the Cherokee Syllabary. According to some sources, during his time in Washington, Sequoyah decided to write a book about Indian culture and develop a universal writing system or alphabet for all Indians. After he returned home, he supposedly packed up and headed west toward the Plains tribes, and although he was welcomed among the other tribes he was never able to create the universal writing system (Davis 1930:25). Other sources argue that Sequoyah continued to live in Arkansas and did develop a writing system for the Choctaw tribe and taught them how to write in their language as well (Payne 1973:83).

In 1839, the Eastern and Western Cherokees were united by a special Act of Union. Each division elected a special council, and the headmen of each division were designated as president and vice president to distinguish them from chief and vice chief. George Lowrey was the President of the Eastern Cherokees, and Sequoyah was named the President of the Western Cherokees. Then in the spring of 1842, Sequoyah, accompanied by his son and a few other men set out for the Mexican possessions in the southwest to find bands of Cherokees who had made their way there and to induce them to return to the Nation. This was an unknown and dangerous

trip because Texas was hostile to Indians and had forbidden them from entering. Sequoyah was getting old at this time, and due to his handicap, was travelling more slowly than the others. At one point they had to leave him near a cave to get him help to travel. When the party returned with assistance from other Cherokees, Sequoyah was gone. They found a letter he had written for them saying that he was going to attempt to track them because he had lost all of his provisions. The men followed Sequoyah's tracks and found him at a camp where he explained he had met some Delaware Indians who wanted him to return with them to Indian Territory, but he refused. The men took Sequoyah to a nearby Cherokee village but Sequoyah was not able to convince the Cherokees there to return home with him. At this point, Sequoyah was so weak he was not able to immediately make the trip home. As summer approached, he grew weaker and died in July or August of 1843. Like so much of Sequoyah's history, the exact details of his death are unknown (Davis 2001:170-175).

### ***Present Day Use of the Syllabary***

The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is undergoing a cultural renaissance. With the help of monies from gaming, cultural preservation projects are funded like never before. One of the main initiatives for the past decade has been language preservation and perpetuation. This includes a Cherokee language immersion school, community language classes, funding for regional universities for Cherokee language courses, signage in the Cherokee Syllabary and English, and even fonts and apps for newer technology. Cherokee people are even getting tattoos in Cherokee Syllabary. Clearly, the Cherokee Syllabary is still relevant almost two centuries

after its birth. Its use today proves its significance to our culture and shows why it is important to study and translate the Syllabary writing in caves.

## CHAPTER FOUR MANITOU CAVE, FORT PAYNE, ALABAMA

### *Location*

Willstown is located in Wills Valley in the present town of Fort Payne in DeKalb County, Alabama. Fort Payne is located about 50 miles northwest of Chattanooga, Tennessee and, on the west part of Lookout Mountain. Fort Payne is the county seat for DeKalb County and is bounded by the states of Tennessee and Georgia. “Two great plateaus occupy most of this county, Sand or Raccoon, and Lookout Mountains. These two great plateaus are separated by the Great and Little Wills Valleys, which cut across the county from northeast to southwest” (Fort Payne Coal and Iron Company 1890:33). Fort Payne was built along the lines of the Mineral Railroad and was placed to form a link between the west and east line of the Tennessee River with the Atlantic Coast. The town was built to utilize the abundant mining resources of the area such as coal, iron, ore, timber and salt petre. “One of the natural curiosities of Fort Payne is its Manitou Cave, a wonderful formation in the limestone rocks on the side of Lookout Mountain. It was probably one of the natural fortresses of the Cherokee Indians, and from its rocks the Confederate government made salt petre” (Fort Payne Coal and Iron Company 1890:6). This town was once in the possession of the Cherokee and provided a haven for displaced Native Americans and a political strong hold. Manitou Cave is located about one mile from the center of town and is closed to the public.

## *Willstown History*

Manitou cave is located in northeast Alabama and is close to the town of Fort Payne. Not much exists on the early history of Manitou Cave, but it is suggested by the DeKalb County website that the Cherokee tribe named the cave after the Great Spirit. Manitou has no meaning in the Cherokee language but is said to be an Algonquian supernatural force that pervades the natural world ("Manitou." Merriam-Webster.com). The term Manitou has no translation into the Cherokee Language says Tom Belt, Professor of Cherokee Language and fluent Cherokee language speaker. ( Personal Communication on April 2, 2015) This website also suggests that during the Civil War this particular cave was used by Confederate soldiers as a source of salt petre. The DeKalb County community center suggests that the Fort Payne Coal Company first opened the cave in 1888 as a tourist destination, and it remained open through the early twentieth century. The Fort Payne Coal Company employed a man named Charles Landstreet who supervised the building of bridges and winding stairs that led to a huge ballroom where dancers could entertain. Later, electricity was installed throughout the cave and throughout the park outside.

More is known about the town of Fort Payne's history. In 1780, the area known as Fort Payne was referred to as Willstown. Sometime after 1809, the Cherokee Syllabary inventor, Sequoyah, was known to have lived there. (Walker 2013:72) Fort Payne was later used as a concentration camp during the forcible removal of the Cherokee from their lands (Walker 2013:79). Willstown shows up periodically throughout Cherokee historical records and as early as the July 1776 attacks on the Holston Colony when the retaliation of the Cherokee attack forced the Cherokee to flee their towns. "Though all Cherokee towns were damaged during the

war, the Lower towns received the most severe blow. These townspeople fled first to the middle towns, and some eventually took up the Creek invitation issued first at the end of the Cherokee War to establish a new town, called Willstown, a safe harbor in the Creek and Cherokee borderland” (Hatley 1995: 219). This town later became a town for refugee Cherokees who were displaced by state and federal governments because the number of settlers grew larger and the need for more Cherokee land became a problem. Invasions of numerous Cherokee settlements only further displaced these people. “In 1796, when United States Agent Benjamin Hawkins visited Willstown, a town settled by these refugees, he found that the ‘children were exceedingly alarmed at the sight of white men, and here a little boy of eight years old was excessively alarmed and could not be kept from screaming until he got out the door, and then he ran and hid himself”” (Hatley 1995:232).

By 1801, Willstown was the site for the Cherokee Lower Town’s council meetings and was considered the most important town in the Cherokee Nation; therefore, the bulk of the government’s economic assistance was aimed towards this region (McLoughlin 1986:60). It was this town where the majority of land acquisitions and meetings on treaties were held. Different treaties were signed, and meetings in Willstown took place including land claims with the Chickasaw. “The deputation of fifteen chiefs and warriors (including Sequoyah, not yet famous) which the Cherokees chose at Willstown on August 20 was instructed flatly to sell no land. But at the council in September Jackson hammered away at his contention that the Chickasaws, who disputed the Cherokees claim to the lands south of the Tennessee, were disposed to sell” (Wilkins 1986: 94). Between the 1820s and the 1830s, Cherokee leaders sought independence, tribal integrity, and land boundaries, proving that they could be civilized and assimilate into

white culture. The Cherokees made great advances in this regard including building missions to convert “heathens” to proper Christians. “But, ironically, the Cherokees phenomenal advancement—unparalleled between 1819-27 by any of the other American Aborigines—hastened, instead of deterred, enforcement of the Compact. For, upon perceiving the Cherokees’ advancement, which, in some respects, outpaced her own, Georgia flew into a mighty rage. Denouncing the Cherokees as savages, Georgia abandoned both dignity and ethics and through her government, press, and courts began a vicious attack on the Cherokee” (Woodward 1963:120). This continued to push Cherokees deeper into isolation while maintaining the façade of civilization and education. Most Cherokee were only interested in the education that the missionaries provided, and they intended to take full advantage of it. English soon became a second language to a number of Cherokees, and they used this as a tool to fight for what was left of their home. “Meanwhile in 1821, Sequoyah, a middle aged Cherokee of mixed blood who was born in the village of Tuskegee, in present day Monroe County Tennessee, astounded his people by showing them how they could read and write in their own language” (Satz 1975:74). Just like their white counterparts, they could pass messages from great distances and record their history.

Willstown was an important place for Cherokee history, and since it’s founding, numerous figures have passed through it. Due to its close location and the numerous historical accounts and occupations, it is a significant component to moving towards understanding what was going on in and around the area of Manitou Cave, Fort Payne, Alabama.

The invention of the Cherokee Syllabary by Sequoyah was an important part of Cherokee history and can help explain some of the art found among these cave walls. It is important to note that Sequoyah was said to have lived in Willstown at the time he was constructing the Syllabary.



Cherokee uses of syllabary depending on geographical location. This particular style in Manitou Cave is used by the Lower Town Cherokee. (*Figure A-2*)

### ***Manitou Cave Inscriptions***

The first Syllabary panel I consider is located deep in the cave roughly six hundred and thirty meters from the entrance. This panel is located about four feet from the cave floor and on the right side of the passage. To the left, Manitou Cave Spring flows from the back of the cave and continues out of the opening. A good water source is key to practices within the cave and will be explained in detail later (see Ritual). (*Figure A-2*) shows this first panel, which I call the stickball panel.

In 2015, a photograph of this stickball panel was interpreted by Weeks and Tankersley in their publication *Talking Leaves and Rocks that Teach: The Archaeological Discovery of Sequoyah's Oldest Written Record* (Weeks and Tankersley 2015). Our subsequent work with this inscription indicates that their interpretation is incomplete and decontextualized. According to these authors, “The first line is a proper name *Aniyvli* which may be glossed over in English as “Screamer”. Further, on the third line and to the right of ‘1828’, one finds the word for April, or *Guwoni*. The comparison of the Red Bird River Shelter with the Unnamed Cave 63 site illustrates the developmental and completed stages of the Cherokee syllabary in the archaeological record” (Weeks and Tankersley 2015:4). Tom Belt, professor of Cherokee language at Western Carolina University and fluent Cherokee speaker, interprets this inscription differently. Belt makes the point that there are many different ways to write Cherokee— both individualized and regional; due to the style of the syllables used in this inscription it appears to

be an Overhill Cherokee Dialect, which changes its meaning. Moreover, “In the Cherokee language sentences are formed backwards from English sentences, for example to say I want water is *Ama agwoduliha*, literally translated is “water, I am wanting.” Naturally dates would be used in the same method” (Belt: personal communication April 2 2015). This observation changes the necessary interpretation of this inscription.

The first line reads *Aniyvli*. Weeks and Tankersley translate this erroneously as “screamer.” However *Aniyvli* here should be translated as “leaders” or “the ones who lead” (DhBP). According to Belt, this is not a glossed-over word for “Screamer” (Personal Communication April 2 2015). (*Figure A-3*) The second line is not translated in Weeks and Tankersley but is key to the understanding of this message. *Tquaneetso* (ᏧᏊᏚᏗᏓ) is a term used for the Cherokee Stickball game, so it can be interpreted as “the leaders of the stickball team.” Weeks and Tankersley continue on to the third line, which is correctly labeled “1828.” They find the word April, *Guwoni* (ᏐᏍᏗ) but only half the syllables are translated. In addition we identify the word *Guwinikalv* (ᏐᏍᏗᏚᏗᏓ), translated as “in their month,” and what looks like an illegible syllable but is actually an English number thirty with *E ga* (ᏅᏍ) or “day.” Weeks and Tankersley continue on to the third line, which is correctly labeled “1828.” (*Figure A-4*) So in this particular picture, the words “leaders” or “you will lead”; “stickball”; “1828”; “in their month”; and “the 30 day” appear. The complete translation is “leaders or you will lead the stickball team in their month the 30<sup>th</sup> day of 1828”. (*Figure A-5*)

This inscription refers to a specific stickball game on the date listed above and serves as a record of that game. As we shall see, the stickball game is itself an important religious ceremony.

This interpretation takes into account an understanding of Cherokee worldviews and gives insight others do not possess.

### *New Manitou Translations*

In the context of our recent work in Manitou Cave, a number of previously unrecognized Syllabary inscriptions have been rediscovered. The second inscription I will consider was found in a 2016 visit to the cave. This panel is closer to the cave entrance, located about three hundred and fifteen meters inside the cave. The inscriptions were written high on the ceiling of the passage. They were previously overlooked due to their remote placement. The meaning of these inscriptions are culturally sensitive, so I will not provide direct translations.

I can say that these inscriptions refer to the “Old Ones, “ancestors from the past and mythical beings who inhabited the world before the Cherokee. The Old Ones would be invoked in prayer or medicinal formulas (Tom Belt: personal com April 2 2015). The writing occurs thirty-five to forty feet up and is above a small ledge that is at least ten feet from the writing. This location is very difficult to access directly today. When trying to assess the difficulty and seemingly impossible placement of the artwork, experienced caver Alan Cressler said, “I don’t know how they could have gotten up there.” Tom Belt has suggested an explanation of placement from a Cherokee perspective. “A long time ago people could do things that other people today could not. These people would have been extremely powerful and able to perform seemingly impossible feats such as flying. If we couldn’t get up there, that doesn’t mean that they couldn’t.” (Tom Belt: personal communication April 2 2015).

There are two inscriptions with identical content; one is written directly on the ceiling in black charcoal (*Figure A-6*) and the other nearby was scorched with a torch or lantern and scratched over to show a clear inscription with black background. Although translation is both difficult and sensitive for these panels, they seemingly refer to *Gu-ga-su-s-go* “Smoker,” a person’s name that would have been the designated medicinal “smudger” or “cleanser.” (*Figure A-8*)

Other inscriptions are written backwards, like writing that could be held up in a mirror. Another ceiling panel in this group shows =SA SA, the signature of someone named Goose, along with other reversed syllables. (Goose is likely the same person who wrote in Howards Waterfall Cave in the same geographical area, as discussed in the following chapter). The inscription on written as D B Ъ P W oᎠ, translates to *a-yv-si-li-ta-s* “I am your Grandson”: This inscription is an example of a way of writing that was focused on the “Old Ones” (though it is not a literal translation). (*Figure A-7*)

The backwards writing on the ceiling in Manitou Cave can be explained by viewing the cave as a portal to the underworld, where everything in the present world exists, but in reverse, so that the words or phrases would be written backwards. Certain types of prehistoric Cherokee art in caves depict animals upside down as if you were looking up at them (Simek et al. 2013). This translation has more to offer as far as insight into the Cherokee mind and life, and with continued study could provide more key components of Cherokee cosmology and lifeways. The last Manitou inscription I consider is very difficult to see because it was very lightly engraved into the bare rock wall. It might have been missed if the other syllabary in Manitou had not been discovered first. This inscription was found in 2016 close to the first stickball panel

deep within the cave's stream passage. A signature followed by syllables is incised into the rock. The characters are very small, close to half of an inch in size, and they consist of both Cherokee Syllabary and English alphabet. The panel was scratched into the rock surface exposing the white color underneath. It begins with the English word Mister and the initials RG and following in Cherokee Syllabary are two long sentences. (Figure A-9)

These inscriptions are as follows. The first line reads “*J Y ∞ ∟ ∞ ∫ ∞ J ∫ F P Y.*” This translates as *di-ge-ya-ne-s-ga-wo-di-ga-ho-dv-ge-a-ya* (We who are those that have blood come out of their nose and mouth). The second line reads, “*D B R ∞ ∫ B E ∞.*” This line translates as *a-yv-s-ge-yv-gv-s* (I am a respectable man or man of authority). The entire inscription is signed below by Richard Guess. We believe that this was the English language name of Sequoyah's son. Taken together this last inscription reads, “Mister RG, we are those that have blood coming out of their nose and mouth, I am a respectable man, Richard Guess.”(Figure A-10) What is the context of this and of the nearby stickball panel?

### **Ball Play**

To the Cherokee, the ballgame represents much more than an athletic event. This game was woven deep into Cherokee life, and it still remains a part of it today. The game is essentially a war game, and in fact, the translation of the Cherokee name *danawah usdi*, is little war. The phrase, “play ball against them,” was used interchangeably when referring to battle. “Life Magazine has described Cherokee stickball as, the world's roughest game, and an article on the game appeared in True Magazine bearing the ominous title, ‘Homicide: a sport’. These accolades

are not completely undeserved. Serious injuries and occasional deaths resulting from the game are frequent” (Fogelson 1962: 59).

Cherokee stickball is comparable to the present day game lacrosse, and many religious connotations exist in this game. Players carry webbed sticks and wear no protective gear. Players go to the middle of the field and toss a deerskin ball, about the size of a golf ball, straight up in the air. The jump ball at the beginning of a basketball game is a good idea of what this part of the game is like. Players crash together like in the game rugby, trying to pick up the ball with their sticks. It is not allowed to pick up the ball with your hands and you must use the stick. The players are allowed to do anything they can to keep an opponent from scoring; that includes using the stick as a weapon. The only thing that keeps the game in check are the elderly men with long switches that referee and switch you when fights break out. The idea that you do not do something to someone that you would not want done to you also keeps the game less violent.

### ***Ritual***

In order to understand this particular panel in Manitou Cave, a look at the preparation for and religion surrounding the game is needed. During the early or middle part of the summer, men began deciding whom they want to challenge to a ballgame. Challenges are based on disagreements with other tribes, often concerning land, and as an alternative to war, but also within the tribe for entertainment and as training for battle. A medicine man or conjurer is contacted, and he is in charge of making medicine and doing magic for the team. Players are subject to many taboos that begin three to four weeks before the game, and this has a connection

with the syllabary that is present in Manitou Cave. “During the weeks before a ball game, players had to exercise great caution in disposing of their spittle. As Olbrechts states, ‘The Cherokee believe that the saliva is of capital importance in human physiology; as a matter of fact, the physiological role they ascribe to the saliva would lead us to believe they consider it important as the blood and the gall’” (Fogelson 1962: 75). If any body fluids are captured by a conjurer, it can make you helpless and not able to play to full potential. People are employed to trick you into giving up some of your spit by many different methods including sharing tobacco. Often players would be confined to a secret location that was greatly protected; this would certainly include caves.

No contact with women is also very important, especially if a woman is on her menstrual cycle. “Menstrual blood is considered a very dangerous and debilitating substance by Cherokee men” (Fogelson 1962:78). It is common to avoid women on their menstrual cycles even today, especially when medicinal practice is involved. Abstinence is also very important in the game of stickball. It was strictly forbidden to have sexual intercourse at least seven days before the game, as it is thought to weaken a person and rob him of his power, so that he will not be able to play to his full potential. If the game was a very important one, players were to abstain for up to a month and were sometimes segregated in a secret location. Caves might well have served as secret locations. The picture below shows the doctor in the far left sitting down preparing for the upcoming game. (*Figure A-11*)

While men avoided others and protected themselves from contamination, a chosen medicine man performed different magical rituals on the ball players to prepare them for the game. “The custom of drawing blood by scratching the surface of the skin with a native surgical

instrument was widely practiced in the southeast as a means of punishment, as a means to build stamina and relieve excess fatigue in running and as a ceremonial procedure followed in preparing players for the ball game” (Fogelson 1962:65). The exact time of this procedure was not fixed; it was at the medicine man’s discretion. James Mooney reported that players were scratched upon entering and leaving the game, and some informants say two to four days before the game took place. Fogelson reports that the majority of the players were scratched as a group four to seven days prior to the game. There are many types of scratching tools, but the one usually employed for the stickball game is the turkey claw due to its symbolic significance. “The qualities of speed and long windedness attributed to this bird are supposedly imparted to the player by the use of this instrument” (Fogelson 1962:67).

Going to water is another ritual that is practiced throughout the cycle of preparation, play, and ending of the ballgame. *Amohi atsv:sdi*, “going to water,” is translated literally as “going to water” or “water place to go and return, one.” This is a ceremonial bathing practice of the Cherokee that includes washing, bathing and cleaning objects in a running body of water. “This ceremony of going to water is the most sacred and impressive in the whole Cherokee ritual” (Zogry 2010:125). During the ballgame the practice was used when applying medicine and throughout the process of the game. The medicine man takes the players to water to assess how they will play. The ball team goes to water twice a day up to a month prior to the game. The medicine man lined up each player on the river bank and recite formulas while examining beads. Red and black beads were often used to signify the team and opponents. By looking at the beads, the medicine man was able to identify the strongest players and then determine how the medicine should be administered. Often the medicine men could see the outcome of the games, even down



to the level of play-by-play. I will not elaborate further on step by step instructions regarding any form of ritual. Many Cherokees believe that the Creator chose to give this knowledge to the individual, and it is to be kept private and to one's self.

The twenty four hours leading up to the ballgame are somewhat of a continuation of the previous three to four weeks. Out of the four weeks, only seven days were recorded, and it is not supposed to be known what went on during the players' long preparation. A dance was required before each ballgame and this lasted for seven days. It is clearly stated in Fogelson (1962) and the Payne-Buttrick papers (1973) that no player was permitted to go near his wife during the seven days of the dance or four days after the game. On the first day of the dance, the ritualistic scratching took place, but what happened before or after was not shared. On the second day of the dance, a person was selected from the Bird Clan to kill a squirrel without shooting it. He was to take the squirrel, dress it, and fill it with deer hair, with the medicine man's beads. The remaining six nights of ritual were conducted just like the first, except for the last night, in which the players danced seven times instead of four. Seven women that were previously selected also danced all night, apart from the men.

At daybreak, on the eighth day, the medicine man took players to the creek. When the sun began to rise, the signal to start was given by the "whooper". The players dipped themselves in the river seven times and returned to their secret location. They then stood in a cluster facing the direction of the ball ground. The war whoop was raised again. The players responded, and proceeded in a single file line toward the ball ground. After a short time, they halted. The medicine man lay down his deerskin, and the players placed the articles they wish to bet on top. People would come for miles to wager on the outcome of the game, and the items would include

anything that had value. The players stripped off their clothes and took a root the medicine man offered them and rubbed the juices over their body. They were given feathers which they tied in their hair, and they painted their faces red (Payne-Buttrick 2008).

### ***Seclusion by Ball Players***

Cherokee stickball players were segregated from others both before and after the game to protect themselves from possible contamination. It is interesting why they chose to go deeper into seclusion and to keep the preparations more private. If you look at the time period of these cave writings and the history of the Cherokee Indians, you can see what would have made them become so private. Up until the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Cherokee Nation rejected the “white man’s religion,” including education and changes to the government structure. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, attitudes underwent drastic changes, which included the establishment of Moravian Missions within Cherokee territory. The United States’ civilization policy was well underway at the start of the nineteenth century and missions could soon be found throughout Cherokee country. Many members of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions believed that Indians should be stripped of all past beliefs and practices and recreated into a more “civilized” image:

“It is not to be disguised, that many things still remain among the Cherokees, are greatly to be deplored. Much poverty and wretchedness, several gross vices, particularly drunkenness, and an almost total ignorance of God, his law, and the plan of salvation, need to be chased away, before the people generally can reach the proper standard of rational and immortal beings”

(Andrew 2007:120). Cherokees were forced to abandon their religious beliefs, language, customs

and practices in order to be civilized and most did so in order to keep what little land they still possessed. Oftentimes they were subjected to physical punishment for breaking the missionaries' rules, and this forced them to remain hidden. Nearly all the missionaries disapproved of the Cherokee ballgame, and many practices regarding it were considered heathen and even satanic.

One Moravian states "Satan is being served very diligently in our neighborhood. Almost all Saturday nights are spent dancing by Negros, and Indians, and Sundays are used for ballgames and other things of the kind. And even though we are not really molested by all that, it still hurts us to see that these poor people close their hearts and ears to the Gospel and want to remain Satan's servants" (Starbuck and Crews 2012:1952). The records of the Moravians reflect what they considered important and moral, often judging many Cherokee people for practices such as participation in ball games. "Times of spiritual revival are usually marked, likewise, by special activity on the part of the powers of darkness. Around Springplace Mission in northwest Georgia, the evils in connection with the frequent ball-playing among the Cherokees were especially marked" (Fogelson 1962:31). This view of Cherokee traditional practice forced the Cherokees to continue their way of life underground, hidden from outsiders' view. Caves were the perfect place to remain hidden and practice what needed to be practiced in order to maintain the different beliefs and traditions. "Thus the Cherokees adopted many aspects of white culture, but a marked tendency to cling to older customs existed in some areas" (Satz 1979:81).

### ***Georgia Problems***

As Georgia continued in its acquisition of Cherokees lands, many states began to follow suit. (Georgia is used as an example in this report; many of the same problems existed for

Cherokees in Alabama, North Carolina, and Tennessee). The United States had already purchased twenty-four thousand square miles of Cherokee and Creek Land in the state of Georgia, which was three-fifths of the Indian claims. “But Georgia denounced them as “savage,” condemned them to second-class citizenship if they entered its society, and demanded with unbridled passion that they surrender their landed wealth. The Removal Act embodied Georgia’s assertion that there was no place for Indians in American society and sealed the fate of the Cherokee nation in two ways” (Purdue and Green 2007:66-67). In December 1828, an act was passed that made all Cherokee customs and traditions null and void, and they could not be called as a witness in court or make any legal claims. In order to play the part of a civilized tribe, the Cherokees produced a written constitution that made it even more apparent that traditional customs were not to be shown publicly. This document was modeled after the United States Constitution and had many of the same regulations. It gave the right to suffrage to all males; ministers could not hold the seat of the Cherokee Chief; and it gave term limits of elected officials. “Persons denying the existence of God, or future state of reward or punishment, were made ineligible for any city office” (Cherokee Phoenix 1828). Reading between the lines, we can understand from this that the Cherokees had taken their traditional cultural practices to an underground setting, both literally and figuratively, and caves were changing from religious locations to private ones, places for personal isolation.

While some Cherokees were struggling to make advances towards becoming what they thought the federal government wanted them to be, traditional ways were continuing underground out of sight. Every aspect of traditional Cherokee life was looked at as an obligation, and it was up to them to continue to do these things regardless of the consequences. It

was expected that the Cherokees would not remain on their ancestral homelands, and one year after the message was recorded in Manitou Cave, the final blow was thrown. “Jackson’s first message was read to Congress in December, 1829. He advocated the scheme of removal on the ground that the rights of southern states were being interfered with. Alabama and Mississippi were involved in controversy similar to that which had become so acute in Georgia” (Anderson 1991:76). The removal bill was passed in 1830, and the mass ejection of Cherokees from their homelands was complete by 1839. The Cherokees who had made unbelievable concessions in religion, civilization, agriculture; who had formed governments, invented language, and endured unspeakable hardships; were only forced to endure more at the hands of the United States government: “the round up and capture of approximately fifteen thousand helpless and unarmed civilized Cherokees and their subsequent imprisonment in rude stockades by Scotts troops were accompanied by rape, robbery, murder, and acts of bestiality on the part of some of the soldiers” (Woodward 1963:205). In the early winter of 1838, the Cherokees were forced to leave the only land they knew and make the slow, deadly march to the west. Despite everything the Cherokees had given up and the struggle they endured, it would never be enough. “One can never forget the sadness and solemnity of that morning. I saw helpless Cherokees arrested and dragged from their homes, and driven by bayonets to stockades. And in the chill of a drizzling rain on an October morning I saw them loaded like cattle and sheep into six-hundred and forty-five wagons and started to the west” (Woodward 1963:215). No one knows the exact death toll of the Trail of Tears and the events leading up to it, but some estimate four thousand, nearly one-fifth of the entire Cherokee population, died. The Cherokee people adapted and survived in the face of unspeakable odds, and in the process created hidden practices that can be found throughout the

southeast. The story of the Cherokee can give us a better insight on things that, at first glance, do not make sense. For untold years, caves had been a secluded place for all people and viewed as very powerful. They were places where one could be hidden and protected from outside forces, and they provided the Cherokees with a way to continue on with what the Cherokee were taught thousands of years before European contact.

### *Cherokee Authors*

This particular Manitou Cave panel gives us a great amount of information in regard to the people surrounding the cave and the purpose for which the cave was used. With the information from the stickball panel, it is assumed that “the ones who would bleed from the nose and mouth” would be stickball players that had suffered a defeat. This interpretation aligns directly with some of the other writing in Manitou Cave and points to the possibility that the cave was one of the secret locations used for game preparations and medicinal rituals. Then, as they do today, Cherokee doctors specialized in certain things such as headaches, physical mobility, love spells and stickball. Each team had a designated medicine man that specialized in stickball medicine to help them prepare for the game. “Usually they proclaim to be proficient in all ailments, whatever their nature, but in some cases an individual may acquire quite a representation for his skill” (Mooney 2006:85). When medicine men were concerned, the people who play the game were not important— it was a contest between the strength of the two doctors of each team, and whoever won the battle, won the game. “It is he, the medicine man, not the chief of the settlement, who addresses the team before they leave home to meet their opponents. It is he who for the last few days has been working to spoil the strength and the magic power of

the medicine man who is conjuring for the rival team” (Mooney 2006:92). Richard Guess could have been the medicine man for a ball team from Willstown and could have written this on the cave wall after a particularly important, tough game. The fact that he signed his name and that he wrote the inscription in first person points to Richard Guess, Sequoyah’s son, being the author of this particular panel. Richard Guess can be found in the areas surrounding Willstown in the 1835 census living on Raccoon Creek in Georgia. Raccoon Creek is about fifty miles southeast of Willstown. All over the cave is graffiti dating back to the 1800s, and, Richard like everyone else, just wanted people to know that he had been there and had suffered a loss.

The panels in Manitou Cave, Alabama, can be interpreted in many different ways. The historical significance of the location is worthy of study within itself. Willstown, after 1830 known as Fort Payne, was a refuge to Cherokees who were oppressed and robbed of land and homes. The fact that Cherokees faced so much pressure to become civilized in the eyes of surrounding white’s shows how much they sacrificed. It also shows how religion had to become hidden within everyday life and offers explanations of why we find historical evidence of events in unexpected places. The invention of the Syllabary was one of the greatest leaps the Cherokees made towards becoming civilized; it also provided a way of documentation. This documentation allowed the Cherokee to communicate clearly about events that would have otherwise been forgotten. Despite the discouragement of traditional practices such as stickball, the Cherokee continued the practices they were taught and that their ancestors have always conducted. To ignore these “jobs” would mean the extinction of Cherokee people, and the sacrifices they had made in the past would be in vain.

This paper advocates taking on indigenous views of the archaeological record since I believe that creates insight into the Cherokee mindset and will open up dialogues for future researchers. The questions that researchers continue to have can be answered; it is a matter of consulting the people who still practice these traditions. Cherokee traditional practices are still practiced in the old way and not much different, than they have been for thousands of years. The traditions have survived because they remain hidden from public view, but they do, in fact, remain and continue to be practiced at this very moment. Manitou Cave was a place where such traditions were hidden, and in order fully understand something, one must be familiar with its history. Such is the case of all things that are Cherokee. As far as understanding the Syllabary writing in Manitou Cave, researchers must make an effort to understand the significance of the place, the time period, the culture and the people in order to be successful.

Willstown and Manitou Cave should be studied more in-depth in the future. They hold important historical accounts and can offer up some remnants of history that we knew existed. Cherokees had to hide their beliefs and traditions in the past and they still do it to this day. Important Cherokee figures, each with a story of his own have lived or passed through Willstown. Beginning with Dragging Canoe and the Chickamaugas, Willstown was home to many displaced Native Americans. Sequoyah created an alphabet that was so intricate that to this day no one has been able to replicate it. Manitou Cave was used by the Cherokees for seclusion to practice medicine for a stickball game. It also offered seclusion for the team to get ready to play and kept them from pollutants that could affect them during the game. The Cherokees in this area were moving around constantly, writing their names on walls in impossible places. They also were recording the past for the future generations using the newly formed method of



reading and writing. Any Cherokees that entered this cave would understand the symbols and would be able to piece together what had happened, something that was so important that they would risk their lives to write. They would remember the very important stickball game that was played “in their month the 30th day” and who won and lost. It is not surprising that Sequoyah’s son would be one of the authors at Manitou Cave in Willstown. What is surprising is that it was discovered.

Manitou Cave has been used by the Cherokee for centuries and it is being used by Cherokees today. The surrounding area was a hub for different important members of the Cherokee Tribe and was the place that important decisions were made. No one believed that the Cherokee were capable of the level of advancement that they accomplished, and Georgia used this as justification for robbery. The Cherokees advanced faster than any other tribe in regard to civilization, and with the creation of the Syllabary, surpassed the state and federal governments. The Cherokees developed a newspaper that printed in their own language, something no other tribe had done, and they used this as proof of civilization but also to pass messages in code. In studying the Cherokee Syllabary and the time period in which it was created, the need for seclusion is even more apparent and the messages they left seem more personal. Tribal consultation was the key to understanding this particular cave, and there are many examples of what could happen when this is not taken into account. Regardless of the translation, Cherokee Language is a lifestyle, a feeling, a religion, and an art; to be able to truly understand something for what it is, you need to understand this concept. Researchers have and continue to ignore the very people they choose to study and their research lacks certain key points. There are researchers out there that could be practicing the same traditions that you are currently studying,

and Cherokee people are more than happy to help. All they ask for in return are voices and for someone to listen. By understanding taboos and rituals associated with the Cherokee Ballgame we can begin to piece together a clearer picture of Cherokee life. By doing this we understand how Cherokee practices, religion, and traditions are intertwined and cannot be separated. When the broader picture develops of past Cherokees we get introduced to figures such as Richard Guess who was considered a man of authority, we begin to hear the voices of the past that were once silenced by history. Almost two hundred years have passed since these inscriptions were placed on the walls of Manitou Cave, but to a Cherokee archaeologist it seems like only days.

## CHAPTER FIVE HOWARD’S WATERFALL, TRENTON, GEORGIA

### *Introduction*

Howard’s Waterfall Cave is located in modern Dade County Georgia. In the nineteenth century it was known as Lookout Mountain Town. This town was located on Lookout Mountain Creek and it is said to have contained eighty huts, situated in a three mile wide valley next to Lookout Mountain. (Thornton 1992:39). The cave is located right off a residential road in Trenton, Ga, and the opening can be seen from the road. The entrance to the cave is wide but only about three feet tall. To get through the entrance, you must crawl through this narrow space for about fifteen to twenty meters until it opens up enough to stand. There are numerous paths to take, but for our purposes, we stayed to the left. The cave starts to narrow again. The syllabary panel is located about four feet up and on the left of the cave wall. Modern graffiti with names and dates is littered around and over top of the syllabary. The charcoal that was used to write this syllabary is faded but surprisingly readable considering how long it has been there. Some of the syllables are still being interpreted with different experimental software to make them legible.

### *Regional History*

The town of Trenton was once a Cherokee town and was one of the five lower towns of the Chickamauga Chief Dragging Canoe. “The village was located at the present-day Town of Trenton in Dade County, Georgia about 15 miles south of Running Water Town” (Walker

2013:55). This town was located on the east side of Lookout Mountain close to present-day Fort Payne, Alabama.

Howard's Waterfall Cave comes up briefly in Dade County history. Dade County was established in 1837. This county was very much isolated from the rest of the state of Georgia, and road access was limited. It is believed that to access Dade County by road you had to leave Georgia through Alabama or Tennessee. This route would have been traveled by Cherokees for hundreds of years and could establish a connection with Goose that was mentioned in my earlier Willstown Chapter (see chapter three). Trenton, Georgia was the location of Lookout Mountain Town and was one of the five lower towns of the Chickamauga (Cox 1999:185). It was also the location of one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War, the Battle of Chickamauga. The original town was named Salem, but coal businessmen from Trenton, New Jersey, chose to change the name due to their interest remaining in the area to mine coal and saltpeter.

A cave, believed to be Howard's Waterfall Cave, was used periodically throughout the Civil War by both Native Americans and a group called Trenton Cave Works. In 1960 the first map of the cave was produced and contained 7,700 feet of passage. The cave was made famous on April, 16, 1966 when a group of boy scouts visiting the cave were killed when vapors from a nearby gas station filled the cave with fumes and ignited. Guided trips that are open to the public continue presently, but the site is in the process of installing a protective gate.

The panel in Howard's Waterfall Cave brings up different aspects of Cherokee life and shows an outlook that is rarely seen. Even though clan law was not being practiced legally, Cherokees continued to maintain it and enforce it. The clan system is not something that is easily forgotten, and it seems that it worked better than the laws of the United States government. If we

look at the history of Trenton, Georgia, and the surrounding area, we can see why Cherokees chose to explore and utilize caves. It also gives us a picture of what life was like for the Cherokee, how they were forced to adapt and what they sacrificed to survive. This brings up discussions on Cherokee cosmology and how they were put on the earth. It shows how the Cherokee viewed balance and how they strived to maintain it through impossible odds. Cherokees did everything that they could to remain within their homeland and that included revolt and war. Regardless of the different paths each Cherokee chose to take, it would have ended as bloody as the next decision. No matter how much the Cherokees resisted or complied, it would never be enough; and Cherokees were stripped of everything. It seemed that they lost everything that it was to be Cherokee in the eyes of the state and federal government. Through this research, we can get a clearer picture of how and why the Cherokee traditions went into hiding and how they remain hidden today.

### ***Howards Waterfall Cave Inscriptions***

Howard's Waterfall Cave also contains several panels of Cherokee Syllabary. I will focus on the main panel in the cave. On the far left of this panel are the syllables, "ᵂᵂ." This translates as *sa sa*, meaning Goose. This is the same name written in the same way as we saw on the ceiling in Manitou Cave. As was the case there we believe this is the name of a person involved in creating the inspiration.



the clan structure. “We found them and divide equally between the three of us.” Cherokee followed blood for blood laws, and this matter is not settled until the balance is restored.

“Perhaps the Cherokees felt that retaliatory killings were justified, for the records of the headmen who sent the enemy word they had taken only as many lives as were owed” (Reid 2006:169).

Cherokees would not enter such a sacred and powerful place to place graffiti of losing and finding things. There is an importance to the panel, and it seems that three Cherokees were killed or captured. Three individuals that fit the Cherokee versions of blood law or clan ties were found and executed. This would serve as a reminder to both the authors and the people who choose to explore Howard’s Waterfall Cave. A look at clan law as mentioned in chapter one is needed. “If the crime of murder was committed, whether accidental or deliberate, the family or clan against whom the homicide had been perpetrated was required under the primitive law of their ancestors to retaliate in kind against the offender” (Dickson 1964:189). Just the fact that they recorded this inside a cosmic place shows its importance and why it was left. Howard’s Waterfall opens up doors of research that might have never been studied. The people that lived in that area were from an important time in history and their actions merit research. As previously stated, caves are doorways to the underworld, and Cherokees used these portals to do things that were not possible in the outside. Anything that you do while inside would contain great power when brought back out. Only the most powerful of people would have dared to venture inside places like Howard’s Waterfall Cave. The Goose chose to write his name for other people to know he had been there. It is comparable to modern graffiti that already fills this cave, but the story behind the name is what’s so interesting. The panel in Howard’s Waterfall Cave the three that were taken had a clan and that clan has a set of rules that you obey. To maintain balance in the

Cherokee world these lives had to be replaced by that clan. “We have covered the scalps of our women and children. Shall we go home now like cowards or shall we raise the war whoop and let the Seneca know we are men” (Reid 2006:169). Clan law was still being practiced well into the 18th century and a balance must always be maintained. The Cherokee were forced to hide the only thing that they knew to survive. Caves offered a place for concealment to practice these traditions away from the watchful eye of military or missionaries.



## CONCLUSION

By understanding how the Cherokees view place as an intricate piece of traditional belief systems and how the world was created, we can develop a better understanding of how they fit within the historical and archaeological record. Language is essential for any indigenous group, and the Cherokee are no different. When Sequoyah introduced the syllabary, people who could speak Cherokee could write in that same language. Although little is known about the life of Sequoyah, enough documentation exists for an accurate assumption. Sequoyah is found in the record as living in Willstown, Alabama, and this is where he worked on his creation. Sequoyah had an interesting life where he taught himself how to be both a blacksmith and a silversmith and was a part of private company in a mounted military regiment. A good deal of information exists of his many children and we can ascertain who his wives were and what location he was in at a given time. With the introduction of Sequoyah's syllabary, people could now communicate across great distances and record important aspects of culture.

We know that caves were utilized for thousands of years by Native American people in the southeast and they were an intricate part of their belief system. Caves were places that mythical creatures resided and were regarded as quite dangerous. Only with the right type of protection would anyone venture into these portals. Caves were also wound into traditional histories of the Cherokees, and only through understanding the traditional narratives and legends, can an accurate understanding of the historical record emerge. The syllabary found in Manitou Cave in Fort Payne, Alabama, is an example of how not consulting with Native tribes can lead to

incomplete or wrong data. Consulting with the decedents of the authors in these caves can lead to a better understanding of archaeology of the surrounding areas, and can add to the historical record by taking different research avenues than previously tried. Most importantly, it strengthens archeologist's relationships with Native American tribes and creates a dialogue for future research. Willstown was an important political town for the Cherokee, and looking at its residents throughout different time periods allows us to put historical records together in new ways. The Ball Game to the Cherokee was and still is an important part of their culture and has been the focus of numerous studies by different people. The game itself has been studied, but the places that the men go in order to prepare themselves and remain hidden has not. These were private places that extremely important to keep secretive. Looking at traditional Cherokee customs and cross referencing different historical accounts, we can began to piece together why certain actions were taken. The Cherokees were told if they "civilize" and assimilate and adopt white culture they could keep their lands. They accepted this and took a great loss in regards to their traditional beliefs only to discover that it would never be enough. Cherokee religious practice went underground where it remains hidden today. The writing inside Manitou Cave was meant to be understood at a later date and the authors were sending messages to anyone that could read them. Howard's Waterfall Cave also conveys a message, and by employing the same ethnohistorical mode of research coupled with tribal consultations, another interesting message was revealed. By researching this panel, another aspect of traditional Cherokee culture was explored. How the Cherokee viewed their clan system and how that system functioned was needed to translate this panel. It also forced a better understanding of the Chickamauga settlements and the contentious relationships that they had with the state of Georgia. History was

written with a great deal of bias, and by doing projects like this a truer historical record will emerge.

Missions within Cherokee country offered assistance in the civilization process, but too often they alienated the same Cherokees they were supposed to help. In my view, they forced the Cherokees to adapt to their perspectives which often led to mistrust, misunderstandings, and frustration. There are countless accounts of Cherokees being ridiculed or punished for practicing cultural traditions. Under the watchful eyes of missionaries, the Cherokees were forced to hide their traditions and beliefs.

It should be clear from this study that early Cherokee Syllabary can be found archaeologically and therefore, it is up to us to find it and do our best to interpret it. In this case early Syllabary inscriptions were placed deep in caves near to historic Cherokee communities. This suggests that caves were seen as appropriate places for certain kinds of written statements. Even today caves hold great power to the Cherokee people; thus, writings on these cave walls were and are powerful messages. Now that a dialogue has been established between Cherokee people and the archaeologists and cavers that explore these caves, more will certainly be found. This is an exciting prospect for the future.

This paper has shown that with this research we can develop new questions and provide answers for the Old Ones. This gives us a glimpses of what the Cherokee were doing in a given area at a given time. It provides us with pictures of the Cherokee political structures and how they were formed. It also reveals aspects of traditions that were misinterpreted or unknown and that require understanding for future research. Collaboration with living ancestors of the study group when possible is key to a more accurate portrayal. This work will continue by locating and

documenting new and remaining syllabary within caves in the southeast United States, keeping an ongoing relationship with the Cherokee Tribes through an open dialogue.

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## APPENDIX

Cherokee Alphabet.					
D <sub>a</sub>	R <sub>e</sub>	T <sub>i</sub>	Ꭰ <sub>o</sub>	Ꭱ <sub>u</sub>	i <sub>v</sub>
S <sub>ga</sub> Ꭰ <sub>ku</sub>	F <sub>ge</sub>	Y <sub>gi</sub>	A <sub>go</sub>	J <sub>gu</sub>	E <sub>gv</sub>
V <sub>ha</sub>	P <sub>he</sub>	A <sub>hi</sub>	F <sub>ho</sub>	Γ <sub>hu</sub>	Ꭲ <sub>hv</sub>
W <sub>ta</sub>	Ꭳ <sub>te</sub>	P <sub>ti</sub>	G <sub>to</sub>	M <sub>tu</sub>	A <sub>tv</sub>
Ꭶ <sub>ma</sub>	Ꭰ <sub>me</sub>	H <sub>mi</sub>	Ꭹ <sub>mo</sub>	Y <sub>mu</sub>	
Ꭱ <sub>na</sub> Ꭲ <sub>na</sub> Ꭳ <sub>na</sub>	Ꭰ <sub>ne</sub>	H <sub>ni</sub>	Z <sub>no</sub>	Ꭰ <sub>nu</sub>	Ꭳ <sub>nv</sub>
E <sub>qua</sub>	Ꭱ <sub>que</sub>	P <sub>qui</sub>	V <sub>quo</sub>	Ꭱ <sub>quu</sub>	E <sub>quv</sub>
U <sub>sa</sub> Ꭱ <sub>s</sub>	A <sub>se</sub>	B <sub>si</sub>	T <sub>so</sub>	Ꭲ <sub>su</sub>	R <sub>sv</sub>
L <sub>da</sub> W <sub>ta</sub>	S <sub>de</sub> Ꭲ <sub>te</sub>	J <sub>di</sub> T <sub>ti</sub>	Ꭰ <sub>do</sub>	S <sub>du</sub>	Ꭲ <sub>dv</sub>
Ꭱ <sub>lla</sub> Ꭲ <sub>lla</sub>	L <sub>tle</sub>	C <sub>ti</sub>	Ꭲ <sub>do</sub>	Ꭱ <sub>du</sub>	P <sub>tlv</sub>
G <sub>tsa</sub>	V <sub>tse</sub>	K <sub>tsi</sub>	K <sub>tso</sub>	J <sub>tsu</sub>	C <sup>m</sup> <sub>tsv</sub>
G <sub>na</sub>	Ꭱ <sub>we</sub>	Ꭱ <sub>ni</sub>	Ꭱ <sub>wo</sub>	J <sub>wu</sub>	G <sub>wv</sub>
Ꭱ <sub>yu</sub>	B <sub>ye</sub>	Ꭲ <sub>yi</sub>	Ꭲ <sub>yo</sub>	G <sup>m</sup> <sub>yu</sub>	B <sub>yv</sub>
Sounds represented by Vowels					
<i>a</i> , as <i>a</i> in <i>father</i> , or short as <i>a</i> in <i>trial</i> <i>e</i> , as <i>e</i> in <i>real</i> , or short as <i>e</i> in <i>metal</i> <i>i</i> , as <i>i</i> in <i>prize</i> , or short as <i>i</i> in <i>pit</i>			<i>o</i> , as <i>or</i> in <i>law</i> , or short as <i>o</i> in <i>act</i> . <i>u</i> , as <i>oo</i> in <i>foot</i> , or short as <i>u</i> in <i>pull</i> . <i>v</i> , as <i>u</i> in <i>but</i> ; nasalized.		
Consonant Sounds					
<i>g</i> nearly as in English, but approaching to <i>k</i> ; <i>d</i> nearly as in English but approaching to <i>l</i> ; <i>h</i> , <i>k</i> , <i>lm</i> , <i>ng</i> , <i>st</i> , <i>ny</i> , as in English. Syllables beginning with <i>g</i> , except <i>S</i> have sometimes the power of <i>k</i> . <i>A</i> , <i>S</i> , <i>O</i> are sometimes sounded <i>ta</i> , <i>tu</i> , <i>to</i> ; and syllables written with <i>tl</i> except <i>G</i> sometimes vary to <i>dl</i> .					

Figure A-1 Sequoyah's Syllabary after the creation of the printing press. Illustration by Ellen Cushman, adapted by Mooney (2010)



*Figure A-2* Manitou Cave Stickball Panel. Photo by Alan Cressler





Figure A-3 First Line Interpretation: “leaders” or “the ones who lead” (DhBP). Photo by Alan Cressler



Figure A-4 Second Line Interpretation: *Tquaneetso* (TTLRK). Photo by Alan Cressler





Figure A-5 Third Line Interpretation: *Guwinikalv* (J0h0f). Photo by Alan Cressler

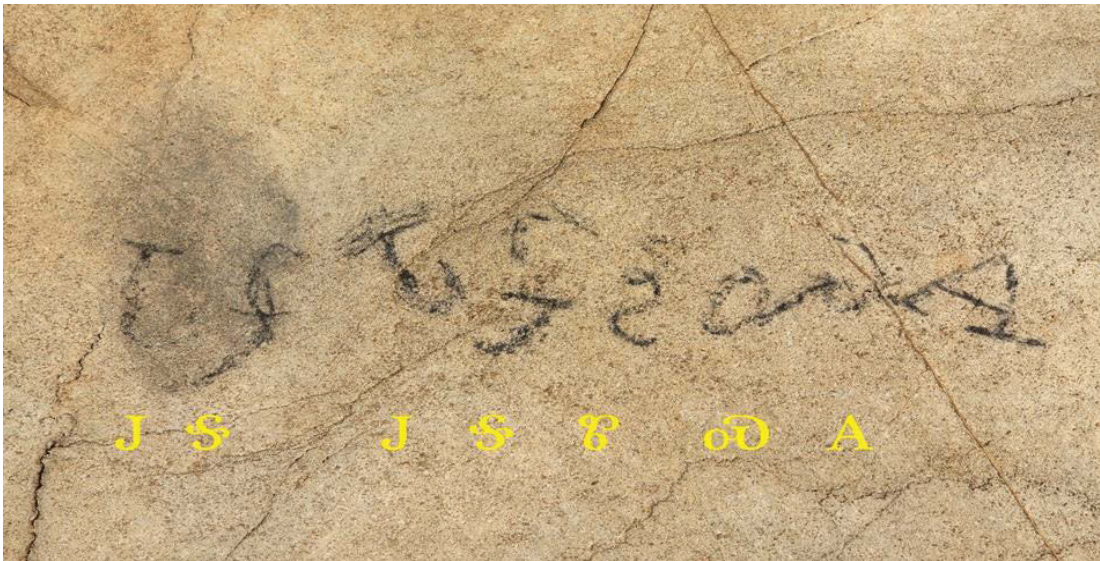


Figure A-6 Manitou Cave Ceiling: *Gu-ga-su-s-go*. Photo by Alan Cressler



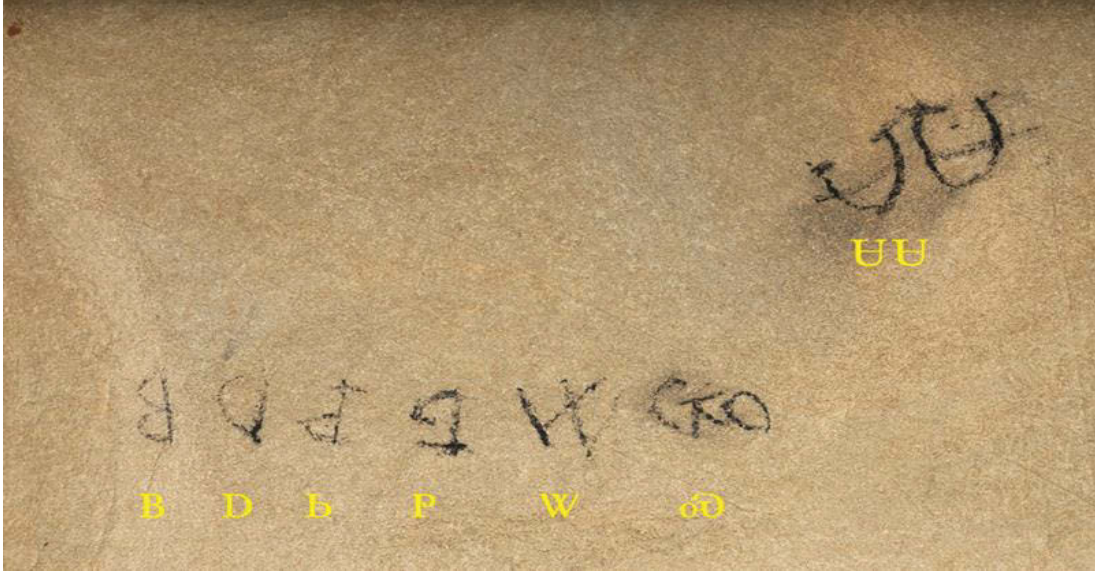


Figure A-7 Grandson Ceiling Panel. Photo by Alan Cressler

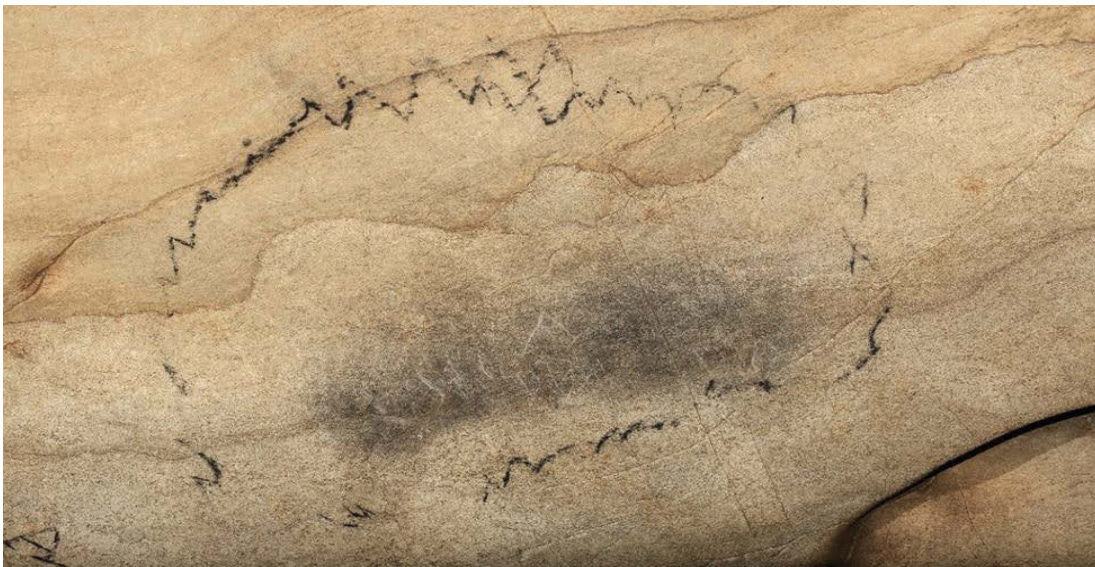


Figure A-8 Scorched and Scratched Over Syllabary: *Gu-ga-su-s-go*. Photo by Alan Cressler



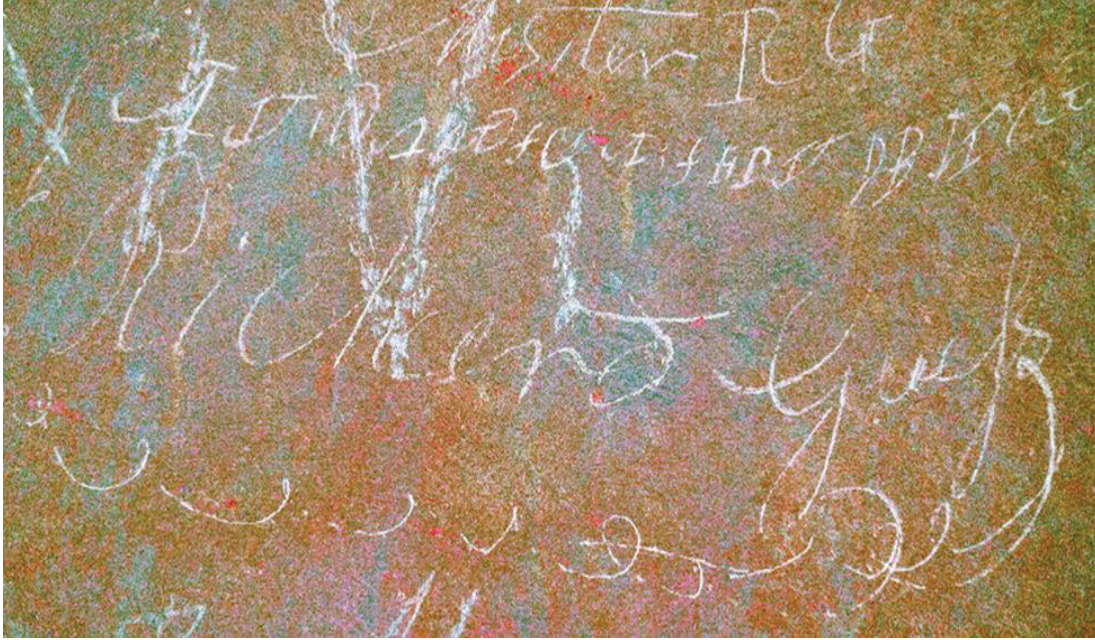
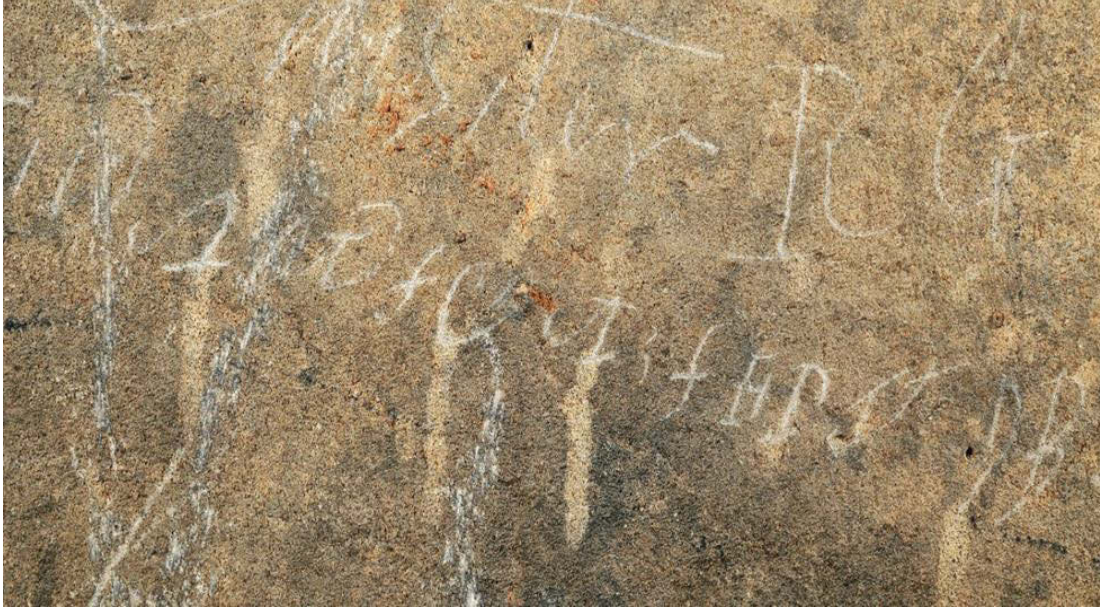


Figure A-9 Enhanced Richard Guess Signature. Photo by Alan Cressler



Figure A-10 Sketch of Syllabary. Drawing by Jan Simek



*Figure A-11* Close Up Of Syllabary. Photo by Alan Cressler



*Figure A-12* Men, Women, and Doctor Preparing for a Game. (Raymond Fogelson *The Cherokee Stickball Game*)





Figure B-1 Goose Interpretation. Photo by Alan Cressler

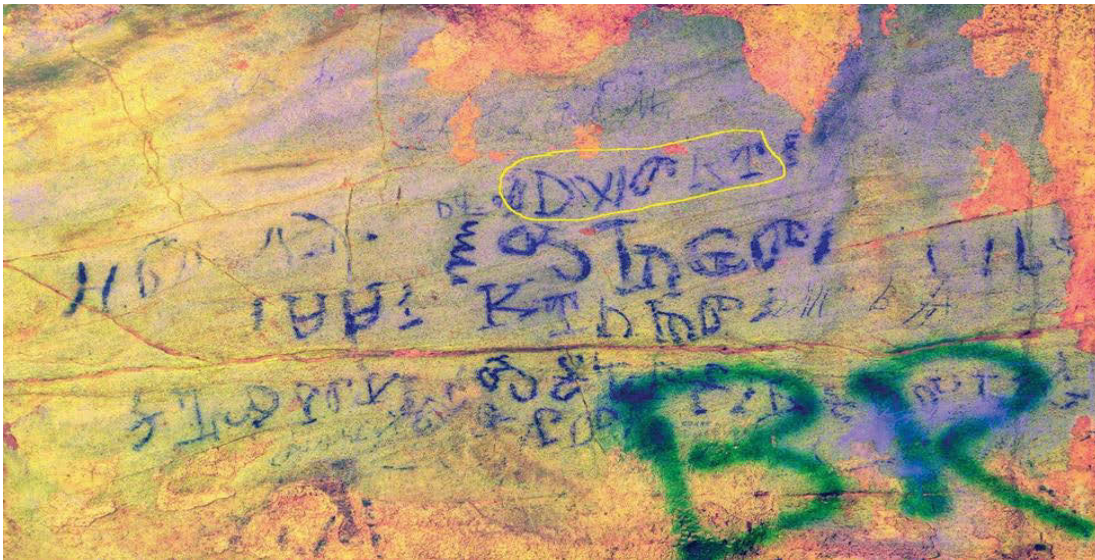


Figure B-2 First Line Interpretation. Photo by Alan Cressler



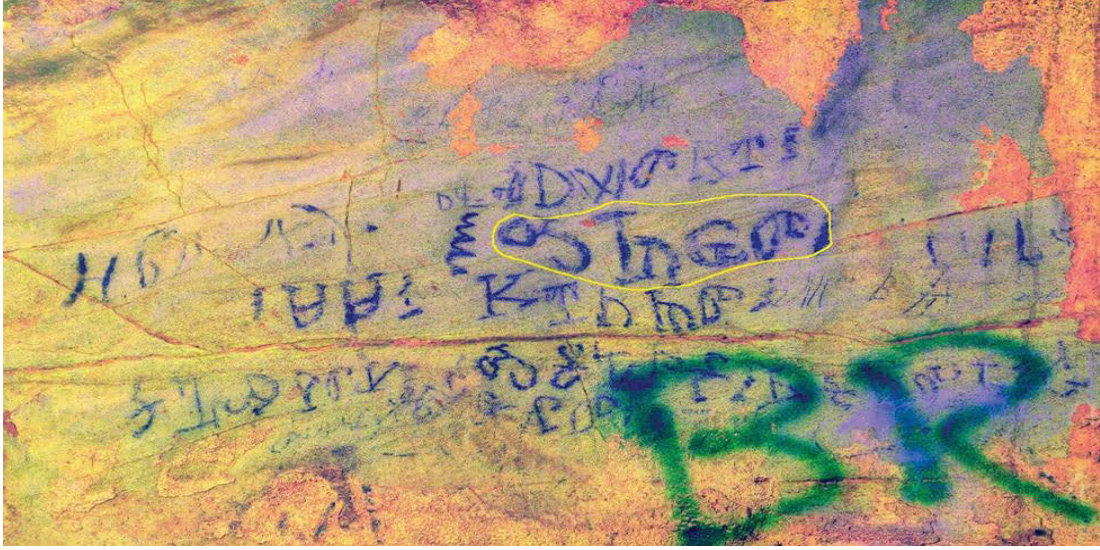


Figure B-3 Second Line Interpretation. Photo by Alan Cressler

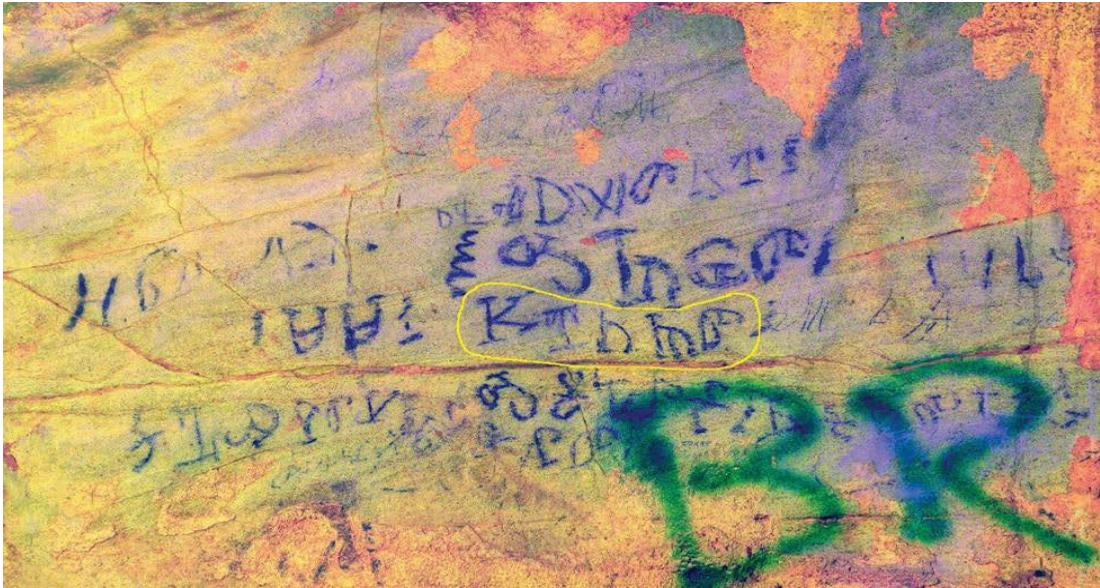


Figure B-4 Third Line Interpretation. Photo by Alan Cressler



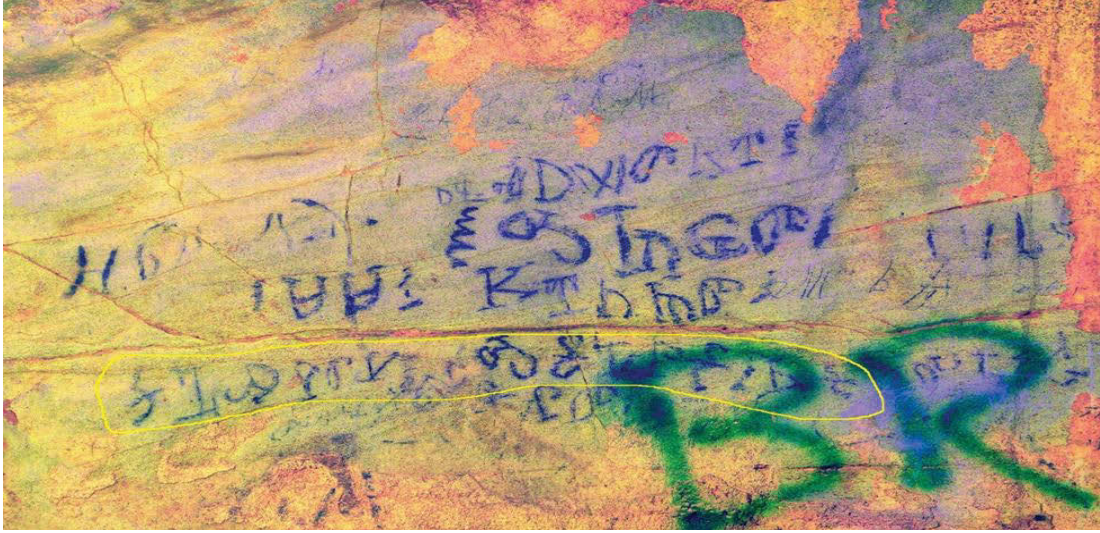


Figure B-5 Fourth Line Interpretation. Photo by Alan Cressler

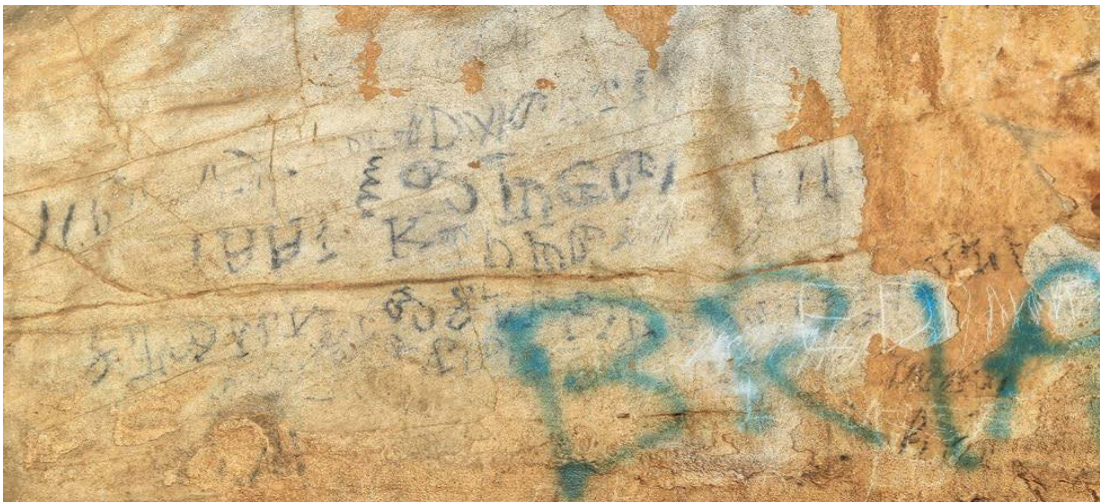


Figure B-6 Howard's Waterfall Cave Plain View. Photo by Alan Cressler

## VITA

Beau Carroll or \$\$\$ was born on July 16, 1980. He is an enrolled member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and resides in the Yellowhill Community on the Qualla Boundary also known as the Cherokee Indian Reservation in Cherokee, North Carolina. Beau and his wife Lori have three children Damon, Kasia and Haze.