



The Romance of Writing: From Egyptian Hieroglyphics to Modern Letters, Numbers, and Signs

Keith Gordon Irwin

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From Egyptian picture writing to the modern alphabets, here is the story of the relayed word that touches the high spots in a manner that not only leads to a fascinating subject but to readable scholarship as well. Mr. Irwin has done field research as well as book research and has put the most important points of his material into a very cohesive text. He fully describes the evolution of Egyptian picture writing and Babylonian cuneiform with its vowel syllables, setting them in relation to the social and physical forces which created them and to recent archeological data that has illuminated their meaning for us. In this way something of ancient history emerges too. With a fine sense of transition, the story moves then to the Phoenician alphabet, the Greek and Roman as founded upon it, and the final slow establishment of modern letter symbols and the remarkable facility with which man can present ideas through them. At the last the emphasis is on printing and the eventual mass circulation of the printed word and, with sidelights on paper, numbers, scripts, music notation and the oriental languages, we have a satisfyingly complete survey of the romance of writing.

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