EVERY BOOK on the shelves of a library contains essentially combinations of the twenty-six letters of our alphabet. This points out the fact that the alphabet is one of the most sophisticated inventions of mankind. The mural presented here celebrates the history of the alphabet. From the first scratches man made on cave walls to the finished forms of the modern alphabets, the mural illustrates the more important attempts our ancestors have made toward a system of writing. While men have lived and died for perhaps a million years they learned to write only recently, about six thousand years ago. It should be remembered however that the attempts that preceded the final achievement covered an equally long time span.

To write meant to free an idea from the spoken word. To write meant that ideas could be preserved. To write meant that ideas were no longer confined to any particular locale. The written word led to the printed word, to books and to libraries.

J. T.

John Tatschi, who designed and executed the mural, is Professor of Art at the University of New Mexico. This sculptured wall painting is four stories high and is located in the stairwell of a new addition to the Zimmerman Library of the University. Photographic details of the work appear on the next page.
THE HISTORY OF WRITING

KEY:
1. Prehistoric wall scratches
2. Prehistoric geometric
   - Egypt
3. Prehistoric conventions
4. Prehistoric—Italian
5. Prehistoric—California
6. Azilian signary
7. Neolithic cave paintings
8. Prehistoric hand signatures
9. Aurignacian
10. Aurignacian ustiforms
11. Prehistoric conventionalized
12. Pottery marks—Crete
13. Proto Hebrew
14. Sumerian
15. Prehistoric Chinese
16. Pseudo Hieroglyphics
17. Egyptian Hieroglyphics
18. Cartouche
19. Tablet from Pylus
20. Old Persian cuneiform
21. Sumerian cuneiform
22. Demotic—Egyptian
23. Linear A
24. Earliest Greek—Byblos
25. Pseudo Hieroglyphic—Byblos
26. Mesopotamian clay tablet
27. Phaistos disc
28. Cretan
29. Ancient Chinese
30. Hebrew
31. Tibetan
32. Arabic
33. Rosetta Stone
34. Ionic Greek
35. Runic
36. Runic ogham
37. Graeco-Lycian
38. Early Greek inscription
39. Celtic ogham
40. Welsh ogham
41. Ogham
42. Japanese
43. Indian
44. Arabic calligraphy
45. Phoenician
46. Latin numericals
47. Early Latin
48. Cyrillic alphabet
49. The Greek alphabet
50. Byzantine Greek
51. Greek and Latin alphabets
52. Uncial
53. German Black Letter