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Ellerton, Nerida; Clements, M.A.

Rewriting the history of school mathematics in North America 1607–1861. The central role of cyphering books. Foreword by Jeremy Kilpatrick.

Berlin: Springer (ISBN 978-94-007-2638-3/hbk; 978-94-007-2639-0/ebook). xvii, 223 p. (2012).

In this book, Ellerton and Clements argue that, almost 200 years ago, the teaching in the new settlement of North America took place via a cyphering approach as in Western Europe. This approach was based on a tradition that had endured since the thirteenth century, and depended heavily on students who carefully wrote their mathematics in cyphering books. After 1840, schools were adopting more teacher-centered pedagogies for mathematics instruction, and by the beginning of the Civil War, in 1861, this mathematics instruction type was complete. This book provides interesting historical aspects from early North America school mathematics in which the intended curriculum, as seen in cipherying books, takes the central role on the stage, as evidenced in the textbook of this age, and provides contextual background for the main argument.

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