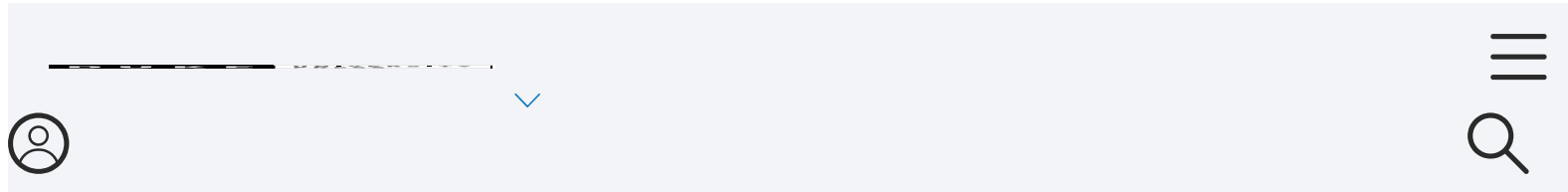


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# Cofitachequi. A Distinctive Culture, Its Identity, and Its Location

[Gene Waddell](#)

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In the 1540s, one of the highest levels of material culture encountered in

the Southeast by the de Soto expedition was in a province called Cofitachequi. For two centuries, Cofitachequi was mentioned frequently in Spanish and English documents. The location of the main town was shown on maps as being near the center of South Carolina. In the 1680s, the references to Cofitachequi ceased without explanation. There have been numerous attempts to determine who the Indians of Cofitachequi were and why they seem to have disappeared, and different sets of assumptions have produced different interpretations of the evidence. Theories have sometimes been used to discount inconvenient facts, but the available information can be reconciled. This article summarizes the evidence available on the material culture, language, identity, and location. The evidence as a whole indicates that the Cofitachequi were one of a number of tribes that spoke Catawban, and that the Catawba were an equal and integral part of a linguistic community rather than a subject people.

American Society for Ethnohistory

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