

Archaeology in South Carolina

Exploring the Hidden Heritage of the Palmetto State

EDITED BY Adam King

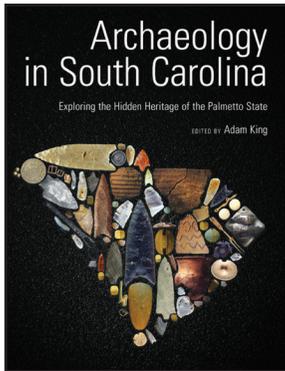


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Archaeology in South Carolina: Exploring the Hidden Heritage of the Palmetto State

Adam King. 2016. University of South Carolina Press. xviii+243 pp., 103 figures, 38 plates, 4 tables, references. \$39.99 (hardcover or ebook).

Reviewed by Sarah A. Stephens, Tower Engineering Professionals, Inc.

Archaeology in South Carolina is a much needed compilation of South Carolina's prehistoric and historic archaeological research and stories. Previous publications have touched on certain regions and time periods, but none have quite painted the complexity of South Carolina's past as this volume does. Adam King has compiled 13 chapters from many of the state's leading archaeologists in a way that is not only interesting to the professional community, but also to the general public.

King begins the book with an introduction covering what archaeology is, methods, ethics, along with some theoretical background. This allows the reader a good overview of archaeology that is easy to understand regardless of prior knowledge. What follows is a step back in time, with the chapters organized in chronological order, starting with the earliest known human occupation in South Carolina.

Chapters one through three focus on prehistoric periods with overviews of different cultures and significant archaeological sites in South Carolina, such as Topper, Fig Island, and Hollywood. The first chapter, written by Albert C. Goodyear III, touches on Clovis and pre-Clovis. Goodyear provides a summary of the time period and previous research, with a focus on his work at the Topper site. Next is Kenneth E. Sassaman's discussion on the Archaic cultures throughout the state. Using previous research, Sassaman explains the different cultures during the Archaic period and their complexities. King and Keith Stephenson's chapter on Woodland and Mississippian periods picks up where Sassaman left off. Their research at the Savannah River Site in western South Carolina provides a nice data set illustrating the later prehistoric periods in the state.

Chapters four and five touch on the transitional protohistoric period. Charles R. Cobb and Chester B. DePratter discuss the impact of European settlements and traders on the indigenous world socially, culturally, and economically. They also provide a few good examples illustrating what protohistoric sites look like in the archaeological record. Alex Y. Sweeney and Eric C. Poplin continue the topic with a discussion of the Yamasee Indians, a tribe that played an important role in colonial South Carolina. Sweeney and Poplin explain the Yamasee's background, migration, and interactions with both the English and Spanish. Examples of archaeological evidence provide details about the cultural identity and life-ways during this time.

Since South Carolina's historic period is not only important to the state itself, but also greatly impacted the United States, it is no surprise that five chapters are devoted to the 17th–19th centuries. An array of topics are covered, from rural to city life. Tammy Forehand Herron and Robert Moon discuss country living in western South Carolina through

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background research and archaeological investigations at the Galphin site. Leland Ferguson's chapter touches on the Middleburg Plantation located in the low country, which has been the subject of numerous excavations. And finally a macro view of the historic period is provided by Martha A. Zierden with her chapter on the city of Charleston's excavations. By using data from multiple sites throughout the city, she is able to paint a picture of what daily life was like. All three chapters provide a good example of not only the histories of the sites, but also the background research and archaeological methods involved in such investigations.

Chapters nine and ten focus on maritime history, highlighting the state's previous and ongoing research efforts. Steven D. Smith provides readers with an interesting look at the issues and politics of raising and caring for the H. L. Hunley submarine. In addition to the Civil War, Christopher F. Amer and James D. Spirek also discuss in their chapter other U.S. naval vessels found in the state's waters and how their discovery and documentation takes place.

Carl Steen, Christopher Judge, and Sean Taylor's chapter is on the Johannes Kolb Site, a multi-component site which has been an instrumental part in public education and outreach in the state for years. The numerous field seasons provide excellent data on the prehistoric and historic eras for the region, including lithic sourcing. The following chapter by Jonathan Leader discusses the different non-invasive archaeological methods that technology has provided. He describes the different tools and applications, giving the reader a sense of what options outside of excavation are available to learn about the past.

The final chapter in the book is appropriately written by Stanley South, who conducted so much important research in the state for decades. South's chapter discusses his 40 years of work, highlighting different projects along the way. Each example is short, about a paragraph, but allows the reader to understand the evolution of archaeological research in the state.

This book is an easy read and is full of wonderful illustrations. The chapters are independent of one another, yet are organized in a way that allows the reader to easily read one to the next. Even though some of the chapters may touch on topics readers might already be familiar with, they provide new insight and perspectives. *Archaeology in South Carolina* highlights many of the state's important archaeological sites, techniques, and research without getting too bogged down in the details. This book is useful for the professional archaeologist or general public interested in learning about the region's past.