

Reviews

INTRODUCTION TO BRITISH PREHISTORY. by *J.V.S. Megaw and D.D.A. Simpson.*
Leicester University Press, 1979, 560 pp. £7.95 paperback, £19 cased.

This splendidly produced book from Leicester University Press has been edited by two members of the University's department of Archaeology who have themselves made sizeable contributions. Four other authors have written chapters to produce a good *Introduction to British Prehistory* — 'from the arrival of *Homo Sapiens* to the Claudian Invasion'. The paperback edition at £7.95 is extremely good value containing 562 pages and 225 illustrations, many of which have been superbly drawn by Morna MacGregor. There is an extensive bibliography covering 42 pages, which offers anybody wishing to pursue a topic further a choice of reading matter.

Basically the authors have stuck to the traditional Three Age system, which is of some comfort to this reviewer who, not being as fully conversant with the prehistoric period as he should be, finds the book very readable and a really good introduction to the subject. The statement on page 421 'that by the end of the iron age there was in southern and eastern Britain a complex urban society. . . ' may cause a few eyebrows to be raised, especially amongst those who specialise in the archaeology of Roman towns and claim them to be the earliest urban settlements in Britain. It would have been useful to see the evidence for this statement discussed more fully.

This is an excellent book and a first class introduction for the non-specialist to British prehistory, but it should also appeal to those who already know their way around the subject. Above all, Leicester University Press are to be congratulated for the quality of the book and for fixing the price of the paperback edition within the range of most pockets. At £7.95 for 562 pages, everybody interested in archaeology should have their own copy.

Alan McWhirr