

Sean Campbell, *Hill-Forts of the Cotswolds* (Stroud, Amberley Publishing 2016).
96pp, b/w & col illus. Cardcovers, £15.00 [ISBN: 9781445660028] **Reviewed 09.2017**

In recent decades, the study of later prehistoric Britain has increasingly moved outside of the traditional Wessex heartlands. *Hill-forts of the Cotswolds* represents a recent, and welcome, addition to this trend. This book is composed of a brief overview detailing architectural variations within the author's dataset, with most the rest of the book dedicated to specific topographical and archaeological discussions of the hill-forts within the Cotswolds region. Throughout this book, the author's enthusiasm for the subject matter is apparent, with accounts of the Cotswold hill-forts imbued with phrases such as "I really enjoyed" and "I was impressed by". That this work was undertaken by first-hand examination also enables the author to comment on the landscape context of the sites, something often overlooked by desk-based studies. Indeed in many instances the author offers his own insight as to what advantages the location of different sites could have afforded; an approach which has much to offer when attempting to consider these sites within their broader environment. What follows is an informative gazetteer, complete with site-specific literature and all important grid coordinates of the hill-forts of this region. Lavishly illustrated with photographs and simplified diagrams, it provides an accessible and engaging account of these sites. Additionally, the author notes the existence of hitherto unknown hill-forts. Where critique can be justifiably made is within the first section of this work, 'Overview: a background to hill-forts', with none of the sources cited having been published within the last thirty years. Indeed, all bar one are works published in the 1960s and 70s. Likewise, although the author notes that hill-forts likely had multiple functions, he discusses them in primarily defensive terms. That said, this book does not pretend to be an exhaustive study of hill-forts, for which a plethora of academic and non-academic publications already exists. Furthermore, at six pages long, the author can be forgiven for the brevity of this overview. Continental readers may likewise struggle with this book, as all measurements contained within are in imperial units, whilst the chronology stated for the Late Bronze Age to Iron Age (700-100BC) has been revised considerably. These critiques aside, this publication offers an engaging, personal study, and useful gazetteer for fieldwalking, surveying or as an aide to those studying this region. In a period when there are increased calls for a less Wessex-centric view of later prehistoric Britain, and greater emphasis on other region, *Hill-forts of the Cotswolds* offers a welcome addition to the literature available for the west of the country.

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