ical such that his introduction will become an essential reference point for future work: he reasserts, for example, the likely Peterborough provenance of the Missal of Robert of Jumièges (1:61); he reinforces the argument for attributing the Benedictional of Archbishop Robert to Æthelgar, bishop of Selsey (980–88, 1:70–71); he reassigns the Lanalet Pontifical to Lyfing, bishop of Crediton (1027–46, 1:76); he assigns the so-called Ramsey Pontifical to North Elmham (1:140–41), and so on.

Inevitably, with volumes of this size and complexity, there are slips and misprints. Most are trivial, but a few will cause confusion: the “twenty-one new gatherings” mentioned as constituting C (1:10) cannot be right (compare 1:13–14, where C amounts to ten gatherings); in the discussion of the Exeter additions to the calendar “11 Nov.” should read “12 Nov.” (1:222, line 12); and London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius C.I was written in the mid-eleventh, not the “mid twelfth century” (1:229). There is, more seriously, a printing error across pages 71 and 72 of volume 1, which has resulted in the duplication of some text and the loss of footnotes 145 to 147. But as far as volume 2—the edition itself—is concerned, the present reviewer checked twenty or so major items against the fine photographs of the entire manuscript that can now be accessed via the Web site Early Manuscripts at Oxford University (http://www.image.ox.ac.uk) and found no oddities, excepting a general policy of rendering Old English ash as “ae”—strange because eth, thorn, and, in the Latin, e-caudata are retained.

The great strengths of this book derive from Orchard’s command of the liturgical and historical contexts. Though the identification of scripts and hands is crucial to distinguishing the contents of A, B, and C, he does not push the paleographical evidence too hard: he uses it to establish a broad overview of how the book developed, eschewing theories that put too much store by tendentious analyses of hands and codicological features. Rather, his argument rests chiefly on a close reading of the missal’s texts and their comparison with the services found in other liturgical books, and here he deploys his superlative knowledge of the book’s insular and Continental counterparts to telling effect. Orchard succeeds, furthermore, in finding explanations for peculiarities in the book’s contents in the historical context in which it developed. He explains, for example, the presence of interlined plural forms in the order for the consecration of bishops (items 2348–52) by reference to the plural consecration ceremonies that Plegmund is alleged to have performed as part of a general reorganization of the West Saxon episcopate that took place around 909. He suggests, likewise, that the insertion of a rather idiosyncratic mass for St. Denis and his companions may be connected with an event reported in Goscelin’s Life of St. Edith—namely, Archbishop Dunstan’s dedication of an oratory to St. Denis at Wilton in the 980s. Pleasing examples such as these could be multiplied at length. In sum, these volumes constitute a work of tremendous intelligence and discrimination. Though he is generous in identifying questions that remain, Nicholas Orchard is to be praised for having provided an excellent edition and an extremely persuasive account of a complex but central document.

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In 1983 I wanted to write a book like this on this topic; now, twenty years later, I get to read it. And reading it is more profitable to me than if I had tried to write it. Nicholas Orme has written here the best book yet in any language on medieval children and childhood. Not only that, but Medieval Children is so profusely illustrated and the illustrations are so well discussed throughout the text that Orme has really created two texts for the price of one. He presents a well-researched and well-written narrative about and analysis
of English children and childhood from the high to late Middle Ages, which depends very heavily on primary sources; he also presents an informed art-history essay on the social history of children and childhood drawn from the illustrations of the period. Yale University Press is to be commended on a very handsome volume indeed.

Orme begins this work where all historians of children and childhood must begin—with the historiography. As most readers will know, Philippe Ariès's *Centuries of Childhood* (1962) launched a spate of research on children and childhood, which generated a heated and sometimes vicious historiographical argument regarding children and childhood in the past. We all know the contours of this argument: In the distant past children were neglected, unloved, and unrecognized even as children, but at some point closer in time to us, children were cared for, loved, and treated as special entities with special needs and wants. Premodern childhood became modern. So Ariès and others thought. Medievalists and other historians disagreed, and in a series of detailed monographic studies they concluded that premodern childhood was more modern and affective than we had thought and that considerable continuity existed in attitudes toward and practices regarding children between then and now. At the moment few, if any, historians support the old Ariès position of a medieval childhood that was truly a dark age for children, but in the popular perception and imagination that viewpoint continues still. A recent article in the *New Yorker* (18 and 25 August 2003) on past childhood that reviews Yale University Press’s new series *The History of the European Family* waxes nostalgic for Ariès and company and is not quite convinced by the recent research surveyed in the series. So be it—debate and history continue. Orme, whose early work helped foster the revolt of the medievalists, discusses the main contours of this historiographical argument in workmanlike fashion. However, he quickly gets to his main point in the other nine chapters of his work—pure, unadulterated history.

The book’s narrative proceeds in a fairly logical order, tracking the experiences of children in high- and late-medieval England from birth through adolescence. Thus we have strong and informative chapters on “arriving,” “family life,” “danger and death,” and “play,” and we have interesting and detailed subsections in each chapter, such as on baptism and names for “arriving,” baby care and weaning for “family life,” infanticide, abandonment, and abuse for “danger and death,” and games and playing at war for “play.” Perhaps a little quibble here, but despite the promise of the title the book is narrowly focused on England from about 1100 to 1600. Nevertheless, this chronological and geographical scope gives Orme the best access to the most sources available for a project like this and also gives his work considerable more authority than the more narrowly focused recent studies on children and childhood such as my own. Orme’s book provides way more than just a case study or a monographic treatment of the subject. It is authoritative.

A real strength of this book throughout is the care and attention Ormelavishes on the education of children and the place of children’s learning in their daily discourse and life: what tales were told to children, what tales children told, what was read to children, what children read. His excursion into the oral culture (since so much of reading was out loud) of children and childhood is just marvelous. If nothing else, Orme shows conclusively that there was a real children’s literature and oral culture in medieval England. Of course, this focus is what we should have expected from Orme, as the bulk of his own research over the years has examined education in medieval and early-modern England (his bibliography lists sixteen of his monographs and articles). *Medieval Children* is the type of book that only a serious senior scholar, who has spent his life immersed in the sources (both printed and archival), analyzing and then writing about them, could produce.

And such sources. Upon receipt of this book I expected to read a synthetic work heavily dependent on recent scholarship on medieval children and childhood in England. The excellent studies by Barbara Hanawalt come to mind. While Orme has certainly taken his
cues from those works and scholars, he has delved deeply—very deeply—into the relevant primary sources regarding children in the medieval English past. Again, this is the fruit of a lifetime’s experience. From manuscripts to printed sources, from coroners’ records to theologians’ treatises, from prescriptive manuals to belles lettres, they are all here. I was stunned at the wealth of source materials Orme used and marveled at his command of them. And they support and illustrate his analysis and interpretations well. Moreover, he is at considerable pains to let his sources speak for themselves—he quotes often and at length. By doing this he follows Marc Bloch’s dictum that the historian should seek the smell of humanity in the sources and let the narrative of the book be alive.

Another focal point for Orme’s book, and it is one that tends to be neglected in studies of children and childhood in the past, is the relationship between the church and children. From birth—sometimes just minutes after birth—the child was brought into the Christian community. Throughout childhood a child grew into Christianity, not only through ritual but also via education and learning. So much of a child’s education carried with it a Christian flavor; hackneyed but true, the Middle Ages was an age of faith. While Orme provides a good examination of the church, its rites of passage, and children, he could have made more of these rituals in an anthropological sense, along the lines of Arnold van Gennep’s theories and others’, as David Cressy did in Birth, Marriage and Death: Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England (1997). Nevertheless, Orme shows conclusively that the church consistently was interested in children and was child-centered during the Middle Ages.

Despite my contention that Orme tends to ignore historiographical debate in the body of his work, he still writes in Ariès’s shadow, as most of us do; it is just that powerful and influential of a thesis. Throughout Orme reminds his reader about this debate as well as how modern or familiar medieval parents and children were. After recounting how an Italian merchant had decried England’s apprenticeship system, he observes, “Ariès would have liked this passage, with its apparent endorsement of his views about the coldness of parents and the brevity of childhood” (p. 309). He then warns that a “modern reader will be wise to weigh it cautiously” (p. 309). On observing that few English children were tried as adults, he concludes that these examples “do not point to a regular practice of treating the young like the elders” (p. 325). Medieval England, therefore, had the concept of juvenile justice; it is no modern Progressive impulse. Throughout the book we can see ourselves in these medieval parents and children and their actions and attitudes—or at least see what we think we should be like. And we understand, then, that at a certain level—that of family affection—the Middle Ages, while different, is not alien to us and our feelings and sensibilities.

ouis Haas, Middle Tennessee State University


In a study exemplary in its scholarly detail and the care taken in the presentation of the evidence Professor Patterson presents the richly rewarding results of his paleographic examination of a large and exceptionally important group of original charters of Margam Abbey, a Cistercian house in Glamorgan in the march of Wales. Meticulous calligraphic study, taking account of criteria that include the angle and style of letters, abbreviation marks, and “characteristic mannerisms,” has enabled the author to make a paleographic identification of over fifty secretarial scribes or archival clerks at work at Margam in the