This book examines the making of the March of Wales and the crucial role its lords played in the politics of medieval Britain between the Norman conquest of England of 1066 and the English conquest of Wales in 1283. Max Lieberman argues that the Welsh borders of Shropshire, which were first, from c. 1165, referred to as *Marchia Wallie*, provide a paradigm for the creation of the March. He reassesses the role of William the Conqueror's tenurial settlement in the making of the March and sheds new light on the ways in which seigneurial administrations worked in a cross-cultural context. Finally, he explains why, from c. 1300, the March of Wales included the conquest territories in south Wales as well as the highly autonomous border lordships. This book makes a significant and original contribution to frontier studies, investigating both the creation and the changing perception of a medieval borderland.

**Max Lieberman** is a post-doctoral researcher at the Historical Seminar of the University of Zurich.
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THE MEDIEVAL MARCH OF WALES

The Creation and Perception of a Frontier, 1066–1283

MAX LIEBERMAN
In memory of Rees Davies
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This book sets out to solve a puzzle. It focuses on the period between the beginning of the Norman conquest of England (1066) and the English conquest of Wales (1283). This was when Norman and English knights and barons, having established themselves in England, encroached upon Welsh territory. It was also when the phrase ‘the March of Wales’ (Marchia Wallie) came to be widely used. However, that phrase appears not, at first, to have referred to the territories conquered in Wales (the territories known as the ‘Marcher lordships’ to modern-day historians of medieval Britain). Rather, the first ‘March of Wales’ seems to have been the Welsh border of the English county of Shropshire. It was only after a century and a half, from c. 1300, that all ‘Marcher lordships’, even those in south Wales, were normally included within the medieval March of Wales, the region known to contemporaries as Marchia Wallie.

This puzzle, along with some of the many others posed by the medieval March of Wales, has intrigued me for a number of years now. During that time I have benefited enormously from the help of others. I am very pleased to have the opportunity to record my thanks to them. This book is based on my Oxford DPhil. thesis, which was examined by Professor Thomas Charles-Edwards and Professor Huw Pryce. I am grateful to both for making my viva such a constructive occasion. Moreover, I found their corrections, comments and suggestions very helpful as I applied myself to revising my thesis for publication. Dr David Stephenson also read and commented on my thesis. Further, I thank Professor Christine Carpenter and Professor Rosamond McKitterick for their comments on my manuscript. Dr David Stephenson, Dr John Reuben Davies and Mr John Davies kindly sent me drafts and offprints of their articles. I am grateful to Mr M. D. Watson of the Shropshire County Council Archaeology Service, Mr C. J. Spurgeon and Mr J. R. Kenyon for their advice on castle-studies.
Preface

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I am very grateful to have been able to work on this book in Oxford and in Cambridge. For providing environments greatly conducive to study, I thank the Warden and Scholars of Merton College, Oxford, and the President and Fellows of Wolfson College, Cambridge.

Finally, I would like to record my gratitude to the late Professor Sir Rees Davies, who supervised my D.Phil. thesis. The debt I owe to his work will be evident from the pages that follow. I also owe a great debt to his teaching and guidance.
ABBREVIATIONS


Annales Cambriae   Annales Cambriae, ed. J. Williams ab Ithel (RS, 1866).

Arch. Camb.   Archaeologia Cambrensis.

BBCS   Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies.

Brenhinedd y Saesson   Brenhinedd y Saesson: or, The Kings of the Saxons, ed. T. Jones (Cardiff, 1971).


Brut, Peniarth 20   Brut y Tywysogion, or the Chronicle of the Princes, Peniarth MS. 20 Version, ed. T. Jones (Cardiff, 1952). (All references to the Red Book of Hergest version have been checked against Peniarth 20, and any significant divergences are noted.)


Cal. Close R.   Calendar of Close Rolls.

List of abbreviations

Cartae
Cartae et Alia Munimenta Quae ad Dominium de Glamorgancia Pertinent, ed. G. T. Clark, 6 vols. (Cardiff, 1910).

Matthew Paris,

CIPM
Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem.

Comp. Peerage

DB
Domesday Book (Phillimore edn).

DNB

EHD
English Historical Documents.

EHR
The English Historical Review.

Eyton

Giraldus

Haughmond Cart.

John of Worcester

Lilleshall Cart.
The Cartulary of Lilleshall Abbey, ed. U. Rees (Shrewsbury, 1997).

Littere Wallie
Littere Wallie, ed. J. G. Edwards (Cardiff, 1940).

Mon. Angl.

Mont. Coll.
Montgomeryshire Collections.

Orderic

ODNB (2004)

Parl. Writs.
List of abbreviations


**RS** Rolls Series.


**SA** Shropshire Archives, Shrewsbury.

**TNA** The National Archives (formerly the Public Record Office), Kew.

**TRHS** Transactions of the Royal Historical Society.

**TSAS** Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society.


**WHR** Welsh History Review.