A STUDY of the period of the Lord Edward’s lordship of Chester between 1254 and 1272 illustrates some of the considerable difficulties involved in an investigation of the county’s medieval past. As has often been pointed out, the special status of Cheshire during the middle ages means that it all too infrequently appears in the records of the royal administration while few records of any kind of the local administration survive for the period before about 1350.

Seigneurial records, such as the Lord Edward’s have, for a whole range of reasons, a much poorer chance of survival than royal records. In fact, it would probably be no overestimate to say that at least eighty-five per cent of all the acta produced by Edward’s administration relating to Cheshire have, consequently, long since disappeared. Of almost eleven hundred acts of the Lord Edward known to survive and dealing, as one would expect of the heir to the throne, with the widest possible range of subjects, only fifty or so (less than one twentieth of the total surviving) relate specifically to Chester.\(^1\)

Edward’s chancery was closely modelled upon that of his father, although it was much less complex. As in the royal chancery, therefore, copies of Edward’s writs were enrolled; but, whereas we have a nearly complete series of rolls, in their several manifestations, for the whole of Henry III’s reign, only four of the Lord Edward’s chancery rolls, three of patents and one of letters close, are extant. They are now preserved in the Public Record Office as Gascon Rolls 1–4. This is an erroneous classification which they seem to have acquired because of the number of writs they contain which relate to Gascony and because they date from the period before the creation of separate rolls for his Gascon administration by Edward as king. From internal evidence, it can be shewn that these four rolls were among materials produced to
Elias de Jonestone and John de Hildesle in 1318, after Edward II had ordered that transcription of documents relating to the duchy should be made to rectify the lack of legal precedents and records of titles to land, which made the task of governing in Aquitaine so difficult at the beginning of the fourteenth century, following the destruction of the records of the Gascon administration in the Anglo-French war of 1294. None of these rolls, however, contains exclusively Gascon material. Each has information relating to other parts of Edwards appanage, including Chester. Gascon Roll 4, for instance, contains a group of twenty-two writs issued during a visit that the Lord Edward made to Cheshire in August and September 1260, and sixteen of these have material specifically relating to Cheshire and North Wales.

It is unfortunate that these are the only chancery rolls of the Lord Edward’s administration to survive. It means that his remaining acta relating to his lordship of Chester are now widely dispersed although they include a small number of engrossments which, in a few instances, preserve fragments of his seal. Among these are a charter of October 1259, preserved at Warrington and bearing a fine fragment of Edward’s seal, granting the men of Lyme licence to assart their woodland, and the Macclesfield borough charter of 1261, wanting its seal, but with its medieval seal bag intact. Other acts are preserved among the Chester corporation archives, the Moore manuscripts in the Record Office, Liverpool and at the Public Record Office in London. Still more survive as transcripts, some made in the middle ages, as for instance on what are now the fly leaves of the British Library’s Additional Manuscript 35179, others by later antiquarian historians.

For the rest, it is necessary to rely upon inspeximuses and confirmations by King Henry III and his successors so that, in sum, the number of acts relating to Chester from Edward’s chancery known to survive in any form is disappointingly small. Fortunately, as is well known, the records of the royal administration are very full for the period 1254–72. A great deal of supplementary information relating to Edward’s lordship can be gleaned from these. The Lord Edward, as the king’s elder son and heir, was a person of such considerable political stature in his own right and held such an extensive appanage that his affairs figure prominently in the royal records of the period. References to his administration in Chester and North Wales occur almost as frequently as entries relating to the much more turbulent, troublesome and valuable parts of the appanage such as Gascony and Ireland.

The story is a similar one for records produced by the local
administrations of Edward’s appanage but, for his lordship of Chester during this period, the survival of documents is even more haphazard than elsewhere. There are, for instance, no records of the financial administration of his Cheshire lordship except for the audited account of the justiciar, Reginald de Grey, for the period 1270–4, an account which was rendered after Edward’s accession so that it is preserved on the Pipe Roll.6 During the period of the Lord Edward’s lordship the audited accounts of the Cheshire officials ceased to be entered on the Pipe Rolls, as they were when the lordship of Chester was wholly in the king’s hands, and after 1254 the justiciar and chamberlain answered, not at the local Chester exchequer, as they had done in the time of the earls,7 but at Edward’s exchequer at Bristol. Here, regrettably, Edward does not appear to have had the kind of facilities possessed by the king to ensure the systematic preservation of the records of his administration.

What we know of the administration of justice during Edward’s lordship of Chester is largely due to the chance survival of a plea roll of the county court for the year 1259–60.8 This important roll, which contains several acts of the Lord Edward, is unique, since it is the only record produced by any of the courts of Edward’s appanage known to survive. As such, it has an importance beyond the confines of the lordship of Chester itself. It makes plain, for example, the role of Edward’s council in the process of law within the appanage and provides evidence of the care with which local custom had to be accommodated. What is unfortunate is that it is unsupported by other rolls of the period of Edward’s lordship of Chester so that comparisons are not possible.

Thus the sources available for the study of Edward’s lordship of Chester are not very numerous and are of a fragmentary nature in date and range.

II

In most works dealing with the period of the Lord Edward’s lordship of Chester Edward is called, quite unequivocally, ‘earl of Chester’. Helsby, Ormerod’s editor, is largely responsible for this in spite of Sir Peter Leycester’s assertion that in a Cheshire connection Edward “useth onely the title of Edwardus illustris regis Angliae primogenitus and not at all the title of comes Cestriae”.9 Helsby considered it too much of a nicety to distinguish between Edward’s use of the title and ‘the actual possession of the feudal rights of a Palatine earldom’.10 Others since have shewn equal lack of scruple. To T. F. Tout the grant of Chester ‘gave the new Earl of Chester means to make good the vaguer grant of
Dr Margaret Sharp has argued that ‘although no formal grant was made of the position of earl of Chester, it is certain both then and later, that a grant of the county carried with it the position and title of earl’. Writing in 1962, Canon Burne accepted, without demur, the notion that Edward was created earl of Chester during the abbacy of Thomas Capenhurst, and, as relatively recently as 1967, Dr Hewitt could speak of the Lord Edward taking ‘formal possession of the earldom’.

But was the Lord Edward earl of Chester in the period before his accession? What was his authority in the county in the period between February 1254 and November 1272?

Some evidence to support the view that Edward was styled earl of Chester in the period before his accession comes from the chronicles produced by the Benedictine monks of St Werburgh’s, Chester, and by the Cistercians of Dieulacres. Both chronicles, from abbeys founded by earls of Chester, have helped to colour the attitude of historians of the county to the period of Edward’s lordship. That from Chester has been especially influential, so that it is worth considering somewhat further their accounts of this time.

The chronicle from St Werburgh’s, known as Annales Cestrienses, refers to the Lord Edward in various ways. Sometimes he is styled ‘the first-born son of the king’ (primogenitus regis), less often as ‘the son of King Henry’ (filius regis Henrici). Most commonly, the chronicle refers to him simply as the Lord Edward (dominus Edwardus). Twice, however, Edward is given the title ‘earl of Chester’ first, in connection with the receipt of seisin of the county, in March 1254, by his representative, Bartholomew Pecche and second, in the entry for the year 1256 which states that ‘dominus Edwardus comes’ came to Chester for the first time on the feast of St Kenelm (17 July) and that he was received there with due deference by clergy and laity alike.

The chronicle informs us that Edward stayed for three days in the city on this occasion in order to receive the homage and fealty of the men of Cheshire and of Wales before passing on to view his lands and castles over the Dee. It then records that he returned through Chester at the beginning of August and that he left the county by way of Darnhall. Thus the chronicler took the opportunity to establish, at least by implication, the earliest possible connection between Edward and the site chosen initially for the Cistercian house he founded fourteen years later. Nevertheless, it is interesting and probably significant that on no occasion after the record of Edward’s visit in 1256 does the chronicle refer to Edward as earl of Chester, not even in connection with his recovery of seisin of the county after the Barons’ wars.
But how much value can be placed on these two entries? When it was edited in 1886 the principal manuscript of the chronicle belonged to Lord Mostyn, while a second, briefer version, in an early eighteenth century hand, was said to exist in the volume known as Bishop Gastrell’s *Notitia Cestriensis*. The Mostyn manuscript was claimed by its editor to consist of ‘forty-eight leaves of paper’, to be ‘written in various handwritings . . . of the end of the fifteenth or early part of the sixteenth century’ and to be full of imperfections. 21 The exact status of these two manuscripts and their dependence upon one another is unclear although it is believed that they were derived from a common thirteenth-century source. The Mostyn manuscript is at best a straightforward copy of this earlier original and of other lost material, but, most probably is an interpolated and therefore extended version of that source. The edition from which the late-fifteenth-century version was copied, and probably the common source too, was almost certainly compiled during the abbacy of Simon Whitchurch between 1265 and 1291 to fulfil at St Werburgh’s a commonly felt thirteenth-century monastic need to have a domestic chronicle. Almost certainly this means that it was written in the period after the Lord Edward had become earl of Chester as King Edward I and at a time when it was not unknown for men to refer to Edward as earl even when speaking of the period before his accession. 22

The entries in the chronicle styling Edward ‘earl’ cannot therefore be accepted as conclusive evidence that he was created earl of Chester by his father in 1254 and would, at best, seem to represent, since Edward was given the title ‘earl’ in both extant versions of the chronicle, a certain confusion in the mind of the chronicler responsible for the common source as to the exact nature of Edward’s status in the county at this time. That is not surprising. Edward himself was preoccupied with Gascon affairs until the end of 1255 and was unable to visit the county in person until the summer of 1256. During this time the former royal administration of the county was allowed to continue to operate much as before, but in the Lord Edward’s name rather than the king’s. Alan la Zuche was maintained in office as justiciar until Michaelmas 1255 and the same escheator that Henry III had employed was appointed to the office by Edward. 23 The men of Cheshire would have little cause to be aware of the implications of the terms of the king’s grant of his appanage to Edward before his visit to receive their homages in the summer of 1256. Indeed, an indication of Edward’s lack of involvement in Cheshire affairs between February 1254 and July 1256 is provided by the small number of his *acta*, seven, which concern Cheshire men and
matters, to survive for this period, although three of the four of Edward’s surviving chancery rolls belong to these two years and a total of 619 acts are known to have emanated from his chancery at this time. By 1256, or shortly thereafter the Chester chronicler is likely to have been made aware of the nature of Edward’s lordship, and this may well be why, in spite of many opportunities to do so, Edward was not again styled ‘earl’ in the chronicle in the period before his accession.

The Dieulacres chronicle is less reticent. Towards the end of that part of the chronicle which purports to be a history of the earls of Chester the chronicler has copied, under the entry for the year 1254, what is claimed to be the very instrument by which King Henry III conferred the earldom of Chester on the Lord Edward. The relevant passage is as follows:

‘In the same year King Henry King of England gave Edward his first-born son the county of Chester in these words: Henry by the grace of God King of England etc. Let it be known that I (sic) have given and by this our (sic) charter have confirmed to Edward our first-born son our county of Chester, of Rhuddlan and Flint and our lands there with all their appurtenances. To have and to hold to our same son and his heirs the kings of England with the knights fees, both foreign ones in England and others, and with the advowsons of churches, abbeys, priories, hospitals, chapels and whatsoever other religious houses, with the liberties, regalities, customary services, franchises, demesnes, hundreds, cantreds, fairs, markets, forests, chases, fisheries, woods, warrens and all other things pertaining to the same county, castles and lands both in England and Wales besides, fully and wholly and by the same means and conditions, as freely as we have ever held the same county, castles, lands and fees with their appurtenances without any reservation etc. And by the same means and conditions all the first-born sons of the Kings of the English thereafter were created earls of Chester’.

Even if one ignores the fact that the chronicler places the Treaty of Paris, ratified in December 1259, in the same year, 1254, to which he attributes this writ, this is a most curious passage.

Edward acquired his appanage by charter dated at Bazas, 14 February, 1254, issued under the small seal that the king had with him while in Gascony. Although this charter defines very precisely the conditions under which the Lord Edward was to hold his lands, it does not, like the Dieulacres instrument, recite the particulars of the extent of the grant being made. Moreover, the conditions stipulated in the Bazas charter, that Edward and his heirs should hold the lands in perpetuity but that none of them might be separated from the crown of England, are the very opposite of those cited in the Dieulacres document. It does not contain this pregnant and deliberate limitation.
referring to Cheshire, the Bazas charter gave to Edward ‘the whole county of Chester with its castles and towns, with the king’s conquests of Wales in these bounds, to wit Rothelan, Dissard and Gannoc and the other lands of Pervethelat’. Although Rhuddlan was mentioned by name, as one of the three northern Welsh castles Edward acquired by this grant, there is no mention of Flint in the charter and it is most unlikely that, in 1254, there would have been, since Flint itself was a new borough, with a new castle, founded by Edward I in 1277 and Flintshire, as an extended edition of the later county, was not created until 1284. When Edward I issued the Statute of Wales he provided for a sheriff of Flint with authority in Tegeingl, the easternmost of the four cantrefs of Perfeddwlad, in Maelor Saeasneg, in the lordship of Hope and in the lands belonging to the castle at Rhuddlan. Although the castle at Dyserth was situated in the cantred of Tegeingl and therefore within that part of Wales that became Flintshire after 1284, that at Degannwy, the third northern Welsh castle mentioned by name in the Bazas charter, stood in the cantred of Rhos which lay between the rivers Conwy and Clwyd. But the king’s conquests which Edward received, according to the Bazas charter, also included the cantred of Rhufoniog which, after the Welsh wars of Edward I became part of the honour of Denbigh and Dyffryn Clwyd which, by 1284, had become the barony of Ruthin. Neither of these last cantrefs was ever part of the county of Flint. Nor, conversely, does the Dieulacres instrument make reference to the castles at Dyserth and Degannwy, and not surprisingly, since both were destroyed by the Welsh in 1263 and neither was rebuilt after the Edwardian conquest of Wales. All of this indicates that the Dieulacres chronicle ‘charter’ could not have been composed before 1284 in spite of the pretence that it was issued by King Henry III thirty years before that time.

In addition the ‘charter’ is diplomatically questionable. The clerk responsible for the transcript seems to have been copying from something like a register in which, in order to save space, certain abbreviated forms were adopted which would not have been followed by Henry III’s chancery. For instance, the king’s title is here unreasonably curtailed. He is styled solely ‘king of England’ as if the clerk were unsure of the precise titles he bore in 1254. Though largely redundant by the thirteenth century, there is no *quare volumus* clause; there is no list of witnesses; and, most significantly, there is no dating clause. The resort to the use
of 'etc.' in the address clause and in place of the final protocol means that, as it stands in the chronicle, the instrument is diplomatically indeterminate as if, once again, the clerk was unsure whether the act should be cast in the form of a charter or as letters patent. In short, the Dieulacres 'charter' appears to be, what it almost certainly is, a fiction.

The Grays Inn manuscript of the Dieulacres chronicle is very largely an early-fifteenth-century compilation by a scribe using the work of three earlier chroniclers. The latter two sections comprise a history of England from 1337 to 1403 and contain the well-known contradictory accounts of the political crisis of 1399. The first part of the chronicle, a history of the earls of Chester to 1354, appears to be more completely the work of the fifteenth-century compiler although an earlier domestic chronicle of Dieulacres was used extensively as the source for the period of Ranulph III's earldom. It is not a remarkably original section. The chronicler relied heavily upon the work of Henry of Huntingdon for the period down to 1148 and upon that of Ranulph Higden for his accounts of the earls Ranulph I, Ranulph II and Hugh II. This part of the chronicle draws to an abrupt close after the death of Ranulph III. All that the chronicler has to say of John the Scot and of the acquisition of the county by the crown is drawn directly from Polychronicon. A brief entry for the year 1253, culled, presumably, from the lost domestic chronicle of the house, records the death of earl Ranulph's widow and her burial at Dieulacres and the section concludes with the entry for 1254. Clearly, the fifteenth-century chronicler had no other source to hand to enable him to deal adequately with the period after 1232. Yet he had already committed himself to establishing, probably in celebration of Henry of Monmouth's creation as earl of Chester, that ever since 1254 the eldest sons of the kings of England had been invested with the earldom of Chester. The chronicle's history of the earls of Chester begins with a list of them headed Comites Cestrie Fundatores de Deulencres which ends with the statement that 'In the year 1254 the aforesaid king of England gave Edward his first-born son the County of Chester, and thus all first-born sons of the Kings of England thereafter were created earls of Chester'. There then follows a narrative account of the earls and of the earldom with the following heading and couplet:

Descripcio Genealogie Comitum Cestrie et qua de cause Comitatus Cestrie devenit ad manus primogenitorum Regum Anglie unde versus,

Dicuntur vere Rex ut sua iura tenere
Et possedere quod vi gladii tenuere.
But if the fifteenth century compiler of the chronicle did not have to hand material for the history of the earldom between 1232 and 1254, from where did he acquire his edition of the instrument by which he claimed the Lord Edward was given the earldom in 1254? By 1399, the structure and content of the royal charter granting the earldom of Chester seems to have become a matter of custom so that it is probable that the Dieulacres chronicler simply adopted the terminology of Henry IV's grant to Henry of Monmouth to suit the circumstances, as he believed them to be, of 1254. Since Richard of Bordeaux, in 1376, and Edward of Woodstock, in 1333, received similar grants of the earldom, together with grants of Rhuddlan and Flint, it is likely that the chronicler rather naively assumed that, ever since Chester had first formed part of the endowment of the king's eldest son, a grant of the county had taken this form. But the earlier fourteenth century grants varied considerably from the later ones. Although, in 1312, when the future Edward III was created earl, the terminology of the grant was similar to that employed subsequently, the extent of the grant was not. Amongst other things, the manors of Macclesfield and Shotwick were excepted and the county of Flint and the castle at Rhuddlan were conferred by a separate charter which also lists a number of exceptions. The grant of the county to Edward of Carnarvon, in February 1301, is different again, for it was made as part of the creation of an appanage for Edward I's heir. Chester, with the manors of Macclesfield and Overton specifically named as part of the grant, was granted with the clear intention that the county was to be administered as a single political unit with Maelor Saesneg. But, as Prince of Wales, Edward also received extensive lands in the principality, including all the king's lands in North Wales, Hope, Anglesey and the Four Cantreds. The terminology adopted for the Dieulacres chronicler charter purporting to grant the Lord Edward the earldom of Chester is, therefore certainly no older than 1312 and appears to have been taken from one of the later fourteenth century grants of that earldom. Neither the terms nor the contents fit the situation of 1254 so that it is necessary to conclude that the charter is entirely spurious. It cannot, therefore, be considered as evidence for the Lord Edward's having been created earl of Chester in 1254.

Edward acquired the lordship of Chester in February 1254 when Henry III constituted an appanage for his elder son. That appanage included, besides Chester, the king's conquests in Wales (principally, that is, the Four Cantreds of Perfeddwlad ceded to the crown by the terms of the Treaty of Woodstock in 1247), Ireland, the towns of Bristol, Stamford and Grantham, a series of
further Welsh Marcher lordships, the Honour of the Peak and the English lands of the countess of Eu, which were *Terrae Normannorum*. On the other side of the Channel, Jersey, Guernsey and the other Channel Islands were conferred on Edward, while an earlier grant of Gascony and of the island of Oléron was confirmed; and all these lands were conveyed on condition that they should never be alienated from the English crown.

Together the lands granted to the Lord Edward comprised the largest appanage ever created by an English king. Not surprisingly, Henry III’s generosity towards his son had its adverse critics. Matthew Paris, who was usually antipathetic towards the king and his family, was predictably hostile. In the *Chronica Majora*, he misrepresented what the king had done. In spite of the chronicler’s claim, however, in no instance was the Lord Edward given a formal title by his father to any of the lands which went to make up the appanage. The king himself retained his titles to the duchy of Aquitaine and the lordship of Ireland as part of his royal style although the administration of these lands was given to Edward. In creating Edward’s appanage, King Henry III chose, in effect, to share the government of the lands concerned with his son in the way that thirteenth-century kings of France shared the government of France with those members of their family for whom they constituted appanages. Consequently, neither Edward himself, nor his officials, nor his subjects in the lands of his appanage ever used a style to describe his position in them other than ‘lord’/‘seigneur’ (*dominus*). In short, King Henry III at all times between February 1254 and his death in November 1272, remained suzerain in these lands while his son and heir exercised the lordship.

As has been stated elsewhere, Cheshire was no exception to this pattern. Henry III did not confer the dignity of the earldom upon him and neither Edward and his officials in the county nor his Cheshire subjects referred to him as earl of Chester during the period 1254–72, or in any terms other than as the Lord Edward. If Edward had possessed a more precise title we can be sure that he would have used it, at least when dealing with Cheshire affairs; and it is equally certain that his contemporaries would have used it of him, and especially his Cheshire subjects. There is, however, evidence to suggest that the men of Cheshire knew precisely what was Edward’s status in the county in the years before his accession and therefore always refrained from calling him ‘earl’.

That unique Cheshire record, known as the Domesday Roll, on which, it appears, the most solemn transactions of the county
court and many charters were enrolled, is one place where one could expect Edward to be given his full title. Yet an entry, which specifically refers to the Lord Edward, on one of the two fragments which are thought to be the only extant portions of the roll, fails to give him any title to Chester other than dominus. The entry, a memorandum of a charter of Nicholas de Verdun, which was formally read in a full session of the county court at Chester, states that this sitting took place on St Chad’s day (2 March) anno domini Edwardi i.43

This memorandum follows the practice of dating entries according to the comital year as if Edward was, indeed, earl, although it carefully avoids that appellation. The phrase used seems to reflect a certain confusion which, as we have already seen, appears to have surrounded Edward’s novel position in the county in 1254. Regrettably, this reference is a unique survival so that it is not now possible to know whether this was the usual way of addressing Edward on the Domesday Roll in the period before his accession. It should however, be noted that, in failing to award Edward any comital title, and by referring to him explicitly as ‘lord’ the entry adopts a formula significantly different from that followed before June 1237 for, whenever John the Scot or Ranulph III were referred to in the roll they were accorded their full comital style.44

An undated quitclaim from the Chester Abbey cartulary belonging to the period 1272–81 provides further evidence that the men of Cheshire were fully cognizant of Edward’s position in the county before his accession.45 Alice Blay, widow of Gilbert Blay of Little Saughall, quitclaimed, amongst other things, a moiety of her assarts made since the time when the Lord Edward first became lord of Cheshire (a tempore prime dominacionis domini Edwardi, filii regis Henrici in Cestrisiria). It is clear that the Cheshire clerks responsible for composing this document were conscious of two distinct phases in Edward’s lordship of Chester, one before his accession to the throne and a second as king. Had Edward been created earl of Chester in 1254 it would not have been necessary for Alice, or the clerks, who drew up the quitclaim, to distinguish between the two periods at all or to imply that before his accession Edward exercised authority of a different and clearly lesser degree than after it. For, why, if Edward had been created earl in 1254, did the clerks not call him so on this occasion? It would have been much easier and much less ambiguous to have done so, and it would have avoided the necessity of resorting to the somewhat tortuous terminology used to describe Edward’s lordship in the county in the period 1254–72.

The attitude of the king to Edward’s lordship also indicates
that his son’s authority in the county during the entire period before his accession was less than he might have been expected to have as earl. Henry III went to some pains to ensure that the earldom of Chester was annexed to the crown after the death in June 1237, of the last earl, John the Scot, taking measures which ‘go far beyond what would have been necessary if only a temporary custody ... had been contemplated’ and which ‘disclose the king’s intention to assume effective, if not permanent, control of the county’. When, therefore, King Henry granted his appanage to the Lord Edward in February 1254, it is not surprising that he stipulated that all the lands comprising that appanage, including Chester and the Four Cantreds, were to be regarded henceforth as inalienable from the English crown. In seeking to define the theoretical future relationship between Edward as lord of his appanage and the crown, the king was not making an empty gesture. The charter conferring the appanage on his son is emphatic, asserting that ‘no one by reason of this grant made to the said Edward, may have any rights or claims to the aforesaid lands and castles at any time, but that they should remain to the kings of England in their entirety for ever’. It is clear that, by this, Henry III quite deliberately intended, as he was obliged by oaths to his subjects on both sides of the Channel to do, to reserve his suzerainty whilst conferring on his son a subordinate authority in the lands of the appanage.

In practice, the terms of the royal grant gave the king a great deal of scope to intervene in his son’s administration whenever he wished. In a Cheshire connection, there were at least three occasions before 1272 when Henry III did exercise his authority as superior lord to do things that he would not have been able to do had his son possessed the dignity of the earldom.

In August 1261 the justiciar, Fulk de Orreby, died in office while Edward was away in Gascony. The king did not wait for his son’s return as neither conditions in the Welsh Marches nor in the realm at large were conducive to delay. Thomas de Orreby was named to the vacant office by the king ‘on behalf of his son, until his son with the king’s counsel see fit to provide more fully in respect to the said Thomas or some other fit person for this’.

At the end of the following year during another period when Edward was absent overseas and after the defeat, in late November, of a Marcher army, led by Humphrey de Bohun and Roger Mortimer, and the destruction of the latter’s castle at Cefnyllys, the king sent Alan la Zuche, the former justiciar, to attend to the defence of the northern March and appointed Alan’s brother, Eudes, to take immediate charge of the principal castles of the county, at Chester, Beeston and Shotwick, until Alan’s arrival.
In both these instances the king was acting as suzerain in the absence of the lord of the county in much the same way that he would act to protect the lands of an absent crusader or of a minor in royal custody.

In 1272 his intervention in Edward’s Cheshire administration was of a different order, designed to safeguard the rights of the crown in accordance with the stipulation that Cheshire, along with all the other lands comprising Edward’s appanage, were inalienable from it. Edward’s inability to reward loyal service by grants of land from his appanage was a constant source of friction between himself and his father throughout the period 1254–72. Edward quarrelled often, and sometimes bitterly, with the king on this score; but, throughout, the king never relented and, to the very end, made new grants of land to his son subject to a condition of inalienability from the crown. Edward’s position was a difficult one, for those who gave him service expected to be rewarded with grants of land in the traditional way and Edward himself certainly wished to do so. But, whenever he attempted to make such grants, Edward was reminded that his appanage had been granted on condition that ‘no one . . . may have any rights or claims to the aforesaid lands and castles at any time, but that they should remain to the kings of England in their entirety for ever’. Recipients of Edward’s grants were, consequently, always likely to find themselves ejected from whatever they received. The island of Oléron and the manor of Elham (Kent) were recovered in this way while, at other times, Edward was compelled to take steps to retrieve lands alienated from the honour of Monmouth and in Ireland and Gascony. Then, in July 1272, Henry III ordered his escheators, north and south of the Trent, to enquire into the Lord Edward’s alienation of fees belonging to the honours of the earldoms of Chester and Richmond, thus providing Edward with a stark reminder that, even during these last months of the reign, when the king was ill and ailing, he was prepared to act, even against his elder son and heir, in defence of his crown.

Finally, it should be noted that neither the Lord Edward himself, in his acta, nor his officials, ever described Edward as earl of Chester in the period before his accession. Had Edward possessed the title, there can be little doubt that he would have used it, especially on his seal. All the earls of Chester before 1237, who are known to have possessed seals, had seals bearing a legend describing their comital status. Likewise, Edward’s royal descendants, who were created earls of Chester, such as the Black Prince, also employed seals referring to their comital rank. That the Lord Edward did not use the style would seem to be strong evidence that he did not have it. Edward’s failure to
employ it on his seal is, however, all the more surprising if consideration is given to the practice of thirteenth century earls in general. With very few exceptions, however, it is apparent that, like the earls of Chester before 1237, they all inscribed their comital titles as part of the legend of their seals. By contrast, the Lord Edward’s seal bore the inscription + EDWARDUS: PRIMOGENITUS: ET: HERES: DOMINI: REGIS: ANGLIE on the obverse, and, on the reverse: + SIGILLUM: EDWARDI: FILII: HENRICI: ILLUSTRIS: REGIS: ANGLIE. There is no suggestion here that he bore a formal title to any of the lands that went to make up his appanage. It seems certain that his status in Gascony, Ireland, the Channel Islands, Bristol, Stamford and Grantham and in all his other English and Welsh lands was, as he was in Cheshire and Perfeddwlad, ‘lord’/‘seigneur’ (dominus), no more and no less.

III

It is one of the principal criticisms levelled at the Black Prince that, as earl of Chester, he neglected the county except in so far as it provided men and money for his French wars; he visited his earldom only twice in the more than forty years that he held the title. That same criticism cannot be made of the Lord Edward. The war with the Welsh that lasted from the summer of 1256 until the ratification of the Treaty of Montgomery in the autumn of 1267 and the English civil war of the 1260’s were largely responsible for that. Of the seven visits, averaging in length about a month at a time, that Edward made to his Cheshire lordship between 1254 and 1272 at least four were concerned with military matters. It was inevitable, since the behaviour of his officials in attempting to ‘shire’ Wales was accepted in the thirteenth century, as it was by later historians, as the chief cause of the Welsh rising of 1256, that Edward should be closely involved in the defence of his northern Welsh lands and of Chester itself. His visit in 1257 was as part of an abortive campaign, in the company of his father, the king, which attempted to raise the sieges of Degannwy and Dyserth but had to be abandoned when military and financial assistance from Ireland did not materialize. Before 8 September the king and his son were back in Chester, Edward going on to take seisin of his newly granted lordship of Monmouth and the king returning towards London. The campaign was a dismal failure not least because it gave such a boost to Llewelyn ap Gruffydd’s confidence. A second campaign on which Edward would have participated which is likely to have brought him to Chester once more, had to be abandoned the following year because of the political crisis in England; a truce was agreed
which lasted, rather uneasily, until early 1260. In January of that year, however, the Welsh seized Edward’s lordship of Builth and finally took the castle in July.62 Edward hastened to Cheshire in the second week of August presumably to recruit forces and to arrange supplies for the army which, with baronial assent, had been summoned to be at Chester on 8 September and which he was to lead with the earl of Leicester, Simon de Montfort.63 No fighting took place because, on 22 August, the Welsh agreed to extend the truce for a further two years. Edward, accordingly, took the opportunity to tour his lordship and to deal with several administrative matters locally which required his attention.64

When the war started again in November 1262, the king summoned his army to Ludlow and Hereford for the following February. Eventually, Edward was sent to Chester to defend the northern March, where he arrived before the end of April 1263.65 He spent the following month or so attempting to relieve the castles at Degannwy and Dyserth,66 but his campaign had to be curtailed largely because Roger de Leyburn, his former steward, had risen in rebellion in Kent.67 Edward had returned to London by the end of May and was in Kent by early June but, as a result, first, in August, Dyserth and then, in September, Degannwy were taken by the Welsh and razed to the ground.68

Because of the civil war, Edward was unable to return to Cheshire until August 1265. He was taken as a hostage after the battles of Lewes and kept a close prisoner in various English castles until, early in March 1265, peace terms were agreed between the royalist and baronial parties. Those peace terms were hard on Edward for he had already been compelled to surrender Bristol, the caput of his English estates, the honour of the Peak, the castle of Newcastle-under-Lyme and all his Cheshire lands to Simon de Montfort.69 In January 1265 Henry de Montfort, the earl’s son, took seisin of Cheshire on behalf of his father.70 Now, in March 1265, Edward was constrained not only to swear to keep the peace, to uphold the baronial form of government and to abide by the charters,71 but also had to agree, as a condition of his release, to purge his administration of persons unacceptable to the earl and to remain in England, and, therefore, away from Cheshire and the Marches, for the following three years.72 But, in the atmosphere of mutual distrust which prevailed in the spring of 1265, Edward was, in fact, allowed only a limited freedom and had to accompany the earl and the king. In May, defections from the baronial party, and the arrival from France of a royalist force in Pembroke, took de Montfort and the court to Hereford. There, as is well known, Edward escaped to join his supporters in the Marches.
The earl of Leicester had good cause to try to prohibit Edward's going to Cheshire and the Marches for, once his escape was known, the men of Cheshire, like those in the Marches further south, rose on Edward's behalf. In June, Beeston castle was taken in his name by James of Audley and Urian de Saint-Pierre, and Chester itself was besieged. There Luke de Tany, the baronial justiciar who had been installed by Henry de Montfort during his visit in the previous January, held out until he learned that Edward had arrived at Beeston, only nine days after his victory at Evesham, and intent upon recovering his lost lordship. Tany immediately surrendered Chester to Edward in person, and without a fight. That was on 13 August; but, this was a brief visit to the county by Edward designed to re-establish his lordship. New officials were appointed to the local administration. The work of pacification was begun in the area; Edward made his peace with Simon of Whitchurch, the abbot of St Werburgh's who had been de Montfort's nominee. Earl Ranulph III's celebrated charter of liberties for the Cheshire community was confirmed and its terms favourably extended, presumably in recognition of the support Edward had recently received from the county. But Edward had left Cheshire by the end of the month for he was at Winchester to attend the important session of the great council held in early September. Not until his war with Wales more than a decade later did Edward return with a military intent.

The three other visits that Edward made to Cheshire before his accession appear to have been for entirely peaceful purposes and two were certainly made in his capacity as lord. His first visit of all was made in July and August 1256 in order to receive the homage and fealty of his Cheshire subjects and to inspect his lands and castles in North Wales. In early October 1267 Edward passed briefly through the county, visiting Chester, after the ratification of the Treaty of Montgomery (29 September) had brought an end to the war with the Welsh. There is, however, no hint in the *acta* Edward issued at this time of any particular purpose to this visit. Before the end of the month Edward was at Monmouth and, in early November, he was present at that session of parliament at which the so-called statute of Marlborough was issued.

Edward's last visit to the county before his accession was in January 1270. Although the precise purpose of the visit is again unknown, it occurred at a time when he was much occupied with preparations for his crusade of a personal as well as a financial kind. Edward had sworn a vow after a particularly stormy crossing of the Channel in the winter of 1263/4 that he would found
The Lord Edward a religious house as a token of his gratitude for reaching safety. For the good of his soul, this had to be fulfilled before he could leave for the Holy Land, possibly never to return. It seems likely that not only was Darnhall, in Delamere Forest, selected as the site of the new abbey during this visit but that initial arrangements were made for its endowment and it is probably no coincidence that Edward shewed himself particularly well-disposed towards that other local Cistercian foundation of the earls of Chester at Dieulacres at this time. On 5 January he issued a charter, at Chester, confirming the monks of the abbey in the possession of all the lands and liberties they had acquired from earl Ranulph III and since, and, very shortly afterwards, they were also recipients of a licence permitting them to extend their cultivation of Rudheath. The foundation charter for Edward's new Cistercian house at Darnhall was issued at Winchester on 2 August following. On the same day, Edward issued letters patent detailing arrangements for the administration of his appanage in his absence overseas and appointing attorneys to act as guardians of his lands and children during that time. With these two acts his personal arrangements for his crusade were complete.

It may have been noted that when the Lord Edward came to Chester it was as often to deal with problems arising in his northern Welsh lands as in Cheshire itself. Indeed, it is clear from the terms of his grant of 1254 that Henry III meant to confer on his son an administrative unit considerably larger than the county of Chester itself. The grant comprised 'the whole of the county of Chester, with its castles and towns, with the king's conquests of Wales in these bounds, to wit Rothelan, Dissard and Gannoc and the land of Pervethelat' and, from the outset, Edward set out to administer them as a single integrated unit. On 10 May, 1254, Alan la Zuche, already justiciar of Chester for the king, was named as warden of the Lord Edward's lands in Cheshire and North Wales, and Fulk de Orreby was similarly appointed bailiff of the forest and escheator in Cheshire and North Wales. For as long as they were able Edward's Cheshire officials, the steward and chamberlain, as well as the justiciar and escheator, exercised authority throughout the region and were not confined to the area of the county of Chester itself.

This arrangement was not unlike that created by Richard II for his new principality of Chester in 1397, but, although it was probably welcomed by the men of the county, it was certainly resented by the Welsh. The Welsh rising of the summer of 1256, which marks the beginning of the war that lasted until 1267, is sometimes said to have been caused by Edward's attempt to shire the four cantreds of Perfeddwlad. The English chroniclers, how-
ever, speak of the oppression of the Welsh after the Treaty of Woodstock and, it is clear, they believed that not only the introduction of Anglo-Norman forms of administration but also of Anglo-Norman customs, laws and practices into the Four Cantreds was responsible for the rising. Matthew Paris, with some justification, argued that the Welsh rose in defence of their country and the preservation of their laws. Certainly Henry III, and, after 1254, the Lord Edward and his officials were attempting a political settlement in the northern March which ran counter to all that the thirteenth century princes of Wales were trying to do to create a quasi-independent feudal state.

From its conquest, in 1241, the cantred of Tegeingl was given to the justiciar of Chester to administer and when, as a result of the treaty of 1247, the other three, more thoroughly Welsh in character, came to the crown, they also were made subject to the justiciar of Chester’s authority. Not much, however, appears to have been done to integrate the administration of Cheshire and that of the Four Cantreds before 1254. After the grant of Chester and North Wales to the Lord Edward, a more serious attempt seems to have been made if only to effect the king’s plan and to establish, in practice, a unitary lordship in Cheshire and North Wales. The work was entrusted by Edward to Geoffrey Langley, the steward of his English lands, whose zeal was generally agreed to have been the immediate cause of the Welsh revolt. This attempt to annex the administration of his northern Welsh lands to those of the lordship of Chester was, however, probably the single most important innovation of the period of Edward’s lordship of the county although it was eventually brought to nothing by Welsh successes in the ensuing war.

As with his father’s succession to the Anglo-Norman earldom in 1237, few administrative changes were made in Cheshire after 1254. The Lord Edward’s council served the functions of the former comital curia. The Chester Exchequer continued in being, though now subordinate to Edward’s exchequer at Bristol. The county court was presided over by the justiciar as it had been ever since 1237. The justiciar and the other principal officers of the Cheshire administration were now appointed by the Lord Edward rather than by the king and, as a result, rather more men of local origin seem to have been employed than in the immediately preceding period. Like his father, Edward continued to experience opposition towards the office of escheator which had been introduced into the county’s pattern of government in 1249. As before, the men of the county complained that the office was novel and uncustomary as it had not existed in the time of the
last earl Ranulph. In that the Cheshire escheator was also bailiff of the forests of Cheshire and North Wales, his was bound to be a controversial position. The extent of the forest and the behaviour of forest officials were contentious matters throughout thirteenth-century England, and Cheshire was no exception. In September 1260, however, the county community came to an agreement with Edward whereby they accepted the necessity for the office and for its holder to be nominated by Edward. Edward, for his part, agreed that in future all pleas of the forest would be heard before the justiciar alone and in the full county court, and, a few days later, he nominated a commission of enquiry into the maladministration of the local forest officials. Thereafter the office of escheator appears to have been less of an irritant than it had been before.

In general, Edward's relations with the men of Cheshire was good throughout the period of his lordship. Citizens of Chester, as well as the monks of St Werburgh's seem quite prepared to make him loans of money in order to settle immediate debts and, in return for their benevolent disposition towards him, Edward conferred a wide range of privileges on the county community in general and upon individual persons and places within it. There are the usual licences, letters of protection, pardons, grants of deer, privileges and lands as rewards for service and, as a consequence of the Barons' Wars, several grants of compensation to citizens of Chester for land and houses taken from them to strengthen the defences of the city. In return, the men of Chester appear to have given Edward general support. Certainly, without the spontaneous assistance of the men of the county after his escape from captivity, Edward's victory over the earl of Leicester would have been more difficult to achieve. Already, in this period, there are signs that the county was becoming the kind of political power base that it became in the fourteenth century for Edward of Woodstock but, above all, for his son, Richard II. Considerable political advantage, it was already being realised, could attach to the exercise of lordship over a part of England that was not administered as part of the English kingdom. That perhaps is the main significance of the period of the Lord Edward's lordship of Chester.

NOTES

3 Warrington Borough Library, MS. 896.
5 For the provenance of this ms, see Margaret Sharp, 'Contributions to the History of the Earldom and County of Chester, 1237–1399', unpublished Manchester University Ph.D. thesis 1925, pp. 90–1.
8 P.R.O. Palatinate of Chester, Plea Roll 1, calendared R. Stewart-Brown in *Calendar of County, City Court and Eyre Rolls of Chester, 1259–1297*, Chetham Society, N.S., 84 (1925).
17 E.g. in entries for 1254 and 1270. *Ibid.* pp. 68–9, 100–1.
22 E.g. *Calendar of County Court Rolls* . . . ed. R. Stewart-Brown, *op. cit.* p. 231. The following extract is taken from Stewart-Brown's calendar of the Macclesfield Eyre Roll, 1287: 'Richard says that his father Robert de Stokeport purchased the right to have market and fair at Stokeport from the king while he was earl of Chester in the time of king Henry his father' (I am grateful to Mr P. H. W. Booth for pointing out this reference). But cf. *ibid.* p. 60 where in a dispute between the abbots of Chester and Basingwerk over the right of presentation to the church of West Kirby Edward is called 'lord'.
23 P.R.O. Gascon Roll I, m.4.
25 Grays Inn MS. no. 9.
26 *Ibid.* f. 140 v–141 r. This section of the chronicle has not been printed. I have relied upon the edition given by Michael J. C. Fisher in his unpublished University of Keele M.A. thesis 'Dieulacres Abbey' 1967, pp. 190–247. Mr Fisher also provides a history of the manuscript and a brief analysis of the contents of the chronicle, pp. 172–89.
27 Fisher, thesis, pp. 209–10, as follows: Eodem anno Henricus Rex Anglie dedit Edwardo filio suo primogenito Comitatum Cestrie in hec verba:

Henricus Dei gracia Rex Anglie etc. Sciatis me concessisse et hac
carta nostra confirmasse Edwardo filio nostro primogenito comitatum nostrum Cestrie, de Rothelond et Flyntes ac terras nostras ibidem cum omnibus pertinenciis suis. Habendum et tenendum eidem filio nostro et hereditibus suis regibus Anglie una cum feodis militum, tam forinensis in Anglia quam alii et advocacionibus ecclesiariarum abbatiarum prioratum hospitalium capellarum domorum religiosorum quaramcumque libertatibus regalibus liberis consuetudinibus, franchesii, dominis, hundredis, Tancredii (sic) Ferii Mercatiis Forestis Chaseriis, Piscariis, Boscis, Waireiis et omnibus alii ad eandem Comitalia Castra et terras tam in Anglia quam in Wallia et marchia Wallie qualitercumque spectantibus adeo plene et integre et eisdem modis et condicionibus, sicut nos eadem Comitalia Castra et teoda cum pertinenciis unquam liberius tenuimus sine ullo retenemento etc. Et eisdem modis et condicionibus omnes primogeniti Regum Anglorum deinceps facti sunt Comites Cestrie.

28 CPR, 1247-58, p. 270; Foedera, I, i, p. 297.
29 Cf. the habendum et tenendum clause of the instrument cited above with that of the Bazas charter: 'Habenda et tenenda eidem Edwardo et haeredibus suis de corpore suo legitime procreatis imperpetuum; ita tamen quod predictae terrae et castra omnia nunquam separantur a corona'. Ibid.
32 Henry III's full title was: Henricus Dei gracia rex Anglie, dominus Hibernie, dux Normannie, Aquitanie et comes Andegavie. As a result of the terms of the Treaty of Paris this was amended in 1259 as follows: Henricus Dei gracia rex Anglie, dominus Hibernie, dux Aquitanie. P. Chaplais, 'The Making of the Treaty of Paris and the Royal style', E.H.R. 67 (1952), p. 248.
33 See for example, H. Hall, Studies in English Official Historical Documents (1908), pp. 235-8.
36 Ibid., pp. 190-1, being a transcription of Grays Inn MS. no. 9, f. 137 v.
37 C Chart R, 1341-1417, p. 384, refers to Report from the Lords' committees ... for all matters touching the dignity of a peer (5 vols., 1820-1829), 5, p. 128.
38 Ibid., 5, pp. 56-8; C Chart R, 1327-41, p. 300. See also J. E. Powell and K. Wallis, The House of Lords in the Middle Ages (1968), pp. 327 and n, 374-5.
40 C Chart R, 1300-26, p. 6; H. Johnstone, Edward of Carnarvon, 1284-1307 (1946), pp. 54-60. Macclesfield, Overton and Maelor Saesneg had been dower lands of Edward's mother, Eleanor of Castile.
41 For a discussion of the implications of Beaumanoir's proposition that 'every baron is sovereign in his barony' and of the practical application of the concept of superioritas in thirteenth century France, see C. T. Wood, The French Apanages and the Capetian Monarchy, 1224-1328 (1966), ch. 4.
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43 P.R.O. Palatinate of Chester, Miscellanea 47/2 d. See also R. Stewart-Brown, 'The "Domesday" Roll of Chester', E.H.R. 37 (1922), p. 490.
44 Cf. the dating clauses to enrolments cited by Stewart-Brown, ibid. p. 500 where, amongst others, an enrolment from the period of John the Scot's tenure of the earldom is said to be dated: Anno quinto de tempore Comitis Iohannis (1236). The earliest document known to have been entered on the Domesday Roll dates from the period 1194–1208, which suggests that the institution of the roll was the work of Ranulph III (1181–1232). Ibid. pp. 496–7.
47 CPR, 1247–58, p. 270; Foedera, I, i, p. 297.
50 CPR, 1258–66, p. 238.
52 Ibid.
53 CPR, 1266–72, p. 705.
55 F. Taylor, op. cit. pp. 5–7, cites the examples of the Chester Exchequer seal of the Black Prince as earl of Chester, his privy seal and the great seal of Henry of Monmouth.
56 W. de G. Birch, op. cit. 2, pp. 282 (Arundel), 296 (Aumale), 338 (Cornwall), 279–81 (Derby), 268–9 (Gloucester and Hertford), 252 (Hereford and Essex), 267, 311–3 (Lincoln), 250–1 (Norfolk), 364–5 (Oxford), 319, 362, 382 (Pembroke), 317 (Salisbury), 368–9 (Surrey), 243–4 (Warwick), 342 (Wichester); Sir Christopher Hatton’s Book of Seals, ed. L. G. Lewis and D. M. Stenton (1950), pp. 44–5 (Kent), 288 and plate III (Wichester). See also Lord Howard de Walden, Some Feudal Lords and their Seals, 1301 (1904), pp. 3, 5, 9, 11, 15, 16, 21, 22. The exceptions to the pattern appear to be (i) Simon de Montfort, whose very beautiful seal, surprisingly, does not seem to have been amended to take note of the recognition of his claim to the earldom of Leicester; his seal merely bore the legend Sigillum Simonis de Monteforti. Birch, op. cit. 2, p. 323. It did not conform to the usual style of thirteenth century English baronial seals and may well have been made for him in France. (ii) William de Valence, King Henry III’s half-brother, who married Joan, heiress to the Marshal earldom of Pembroke. Sir Christopher Hatton’s Book of Seals, p. 28 and plate VII. The seals of the Marshal earls of Pembroke and of Aymer de Valence, as earl, did, however, bear a legend with the comital style (iii) Edmund Crouchback, younger brother of the Lord Edward, whose seal bore no reference to his tenure of the lands of the earldom of Leicester; the legend reads Sigillum Edmundi filii Regis Anglie R. Somerville, History of the Duchy of Lancaster (1953), p. 3 n. Like the Lord Edward, Edmund seems to have been granted the lordship as part of his appanage rather than the dignity of the earldom.
The Lord Edward


60 J. E. Lloyd, A History of Wales, 2, pp. 717-22.


63 A second army under the earl of Gloucester was to move against the Welsh from Shrewsbury. Ibid. p. 728. Edward sent to Ireland for supplies of corn and wine for his Welsh castles in connection with this campaign. Cal. of Documents relating to Ireland, 1252-84, p. 604, no. 679.

64 E.g. the meeting with the Cheshire barons that took place at Shotwick on 5 September in order to discuss the administration of the Cheshire forests, P.R.O. Gascon Roll 4, m.1d.

65 Edward, who did not return from France until February 1263, was at Hereford on 1 April (Easter Sunday) and at Shrewsbury on 15 April.


70 Ibid. pp. 90-1.

71 Annales Cestrienses, pp. 94-7.

72 The story is related in one of the most important passages of Annales Cestrienses, pp. 94-7. Tany, who was imprisoned by Edward after his submission subsequently served him loyally as a fellow crusader, as seneschal of Gascony and as a military commander in the Welsh wars.

73 E.g. James of Audley was named justiciar.


75 Annales Cestrienses, pp. 72-3.

76 Two writs have survived from this short visit, a charter dated at Chester (11 October) and letters patent, also dated at Chester (15 October).


Ibid. 1327–41, p. 155: inspeximus and confirmation by Edward III, dated Eltham 30 January 1330. Though legally wasteland, Rudheath had the status of Forest.


...Sciatis nos commississe dilecto et fidelis nostro Alano la Zuch’, justiciario nostro Cestr’ omnes terras nostras de comitatu Cestr’ et Nortwall’, videlicet Ros, Ruwenniok, Defferenclort et Englefeud custodiendas a Pascha anno regni Regis patris nostri xxxviij usque ad festum Sancti Michaelis proximo futurum, et ab illo festo Sancti Michaelis in unum annum. P.R.O. Gascon Roll 1, m 4.

Ibid.

E.g. as steward, in 1259, Roger de Montalt had responsibility for munitioning the castles at Chester, Beeston, Shotwick, Dyserth and Degannwy P.R.O. Gascon Roll 4, m 5.


E.g. Ann.Mon., III, p. 200. John de Grey held the office of justiciar at a farm of 500 marks p.a. from 1247–51. When Alan la Zuche was appointed in succession the farm was raised to 1,000 marks to take account of the extended lordship of Chester and North Wales. Edward farmed the office to him for the same sum in 1254 P.R.O. Gascon Roll, 1, m 4; A. J. Roderick, ‘The Four Cantreds: A study in administration’, Bull. Board of Celtic Studies, 10, pt. 3 (1940), p. 252; the high level of the farm was also considered a cause of the Welsh revolt.


The constant preoccupation of Venedotian policy, certainly from the reign of Llewelyn ap Iorwerth (1194–1240) until the untimely death of Llewelyn ap Gruffudd in 1282, was to obtain for Pura Wallia an independent position, similar to that enjoyed by Scotland, in a ‘confederation of feudal states’. Ibid. p. 40.

Boroughs were encouraged to develop around the castles at Degannwy and Dyserth with burgesses enjoying the same privileges as those of Chester. In 1252 Henry III made Degannwy a free borough with the privileges of Montgomery. A. J. Roderick, op. cit. p. 250.

An idea of the role of Edward’s council in Cheshire affairs can be gained from P.R.O., Plea Roll (Palatinate of Chester),1, which was calendared by R. Stewart-Brown, Calendar of County Court Rolls... op. cit. In particular see pp. 30–2.

P.R.O. Gascon Roll 1, m 4.
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94 Calendar of County Court Rolls ... ed. R. Stewart-Brown, op. cit. pp. 1-34.
95 E.g. Fulk de Orreby was appointed bailiff of the forest and escheator in Cheshire and North Wales in May 1254. P.R.O. Gascon Roll 1, m 4.
96 P.R.O. Gascon Roll 4, m 1, 1d; M. Sharp, thesis, op. cit. appendix.
97 P.R.O. Gascon Roll 4, m 1; Cal. of Documents relating to Ireland, 1252-84, p. 110, no. 682.
98 E.g. to Macclesfield whose burgesses received a charter of liberties in May 1261 establishing the town as a free borough with a guild merchant. C. S. Davies, A History of Macclesfield (1961), p. 8.
99 E.g. G. Barraclough, 'The Earldom and County Palatine of Chester', T.H.S.L.C. 103 (1951), p. 34, prints a charter of the Lord Edward granting the men of Lyme a licence to assart and to dispose of their woodland in the customary manner. Several other grants of privileges etc. occur on P.R.O. Gascon Roll 4. P.R.O. Wards 2/14/53D/27 contains letters of pardon for a certain Geoffrey of Cheadle.