

SUMMARY: The document below is a letter dated 8 September 1597 from Oxford to Lord Burghley concerning a proposed marriage between Oxford's daughter, Bridget Vere (1584-1631), and William Herbert (1580-1630), 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Pembroke. For letters dated 16 August 1597 and 3 September 1597 from Henry Herbert (c.1538-1601), 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Pembroke, to Lord Burghley mentioning the proposed marriage, see TNA SP 12/264/84, f. 117 and TNA SP 12/264/106.

For a letter from Mary (nee Sidney) Herbert (1561-1621), Countess of Pembroke, concerning the marriage, see TNA SP 12/264/85.

For the letters from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Pembroke and the Countess, see also Young, Frances Berkeley, *Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke*, (London: David Nutt, 1912), pp. 62-6 at:

<https://archive.org/details/marysidneycounte00younuoft/page/62/mode/2up>

The extant letters indicate that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Pembroke and the Countess initiated the negotiations, and that their son, William Herbert, was agreeable to the marriage. It appears Lord Burghley entertained doubts because of Bridget Vere's youth. In any event, the marriage did not take place, and shortly after 28 April 1599, Bridget Vere married Francis Norris (1579-1622), 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Berkshire. See TNA SP 12/270/91, f. 159 and TNA SP 12/270/101, f. 176.

My very good Lord, I have perused these letters which, according to your Lordship's desire, I have returned. I do perceive how both my Lord and Lady do persevere, which doth greatly content me for Bridget's sake, whom always I have wished a good husband such as your Lordship and myself may take comfort by. And as for the articles which I perceive have been moved between your Lordship and them, referring all to your Lordship's wisdom and good liking I will freely set down mine opinion, according to your Lordship's desire.

My Lord of Pembroke is a man sickly, and therefore it is to be gathered he desireth in his lifetime to see his son bestowed to his liking, to compass which methinks his offers very honourable, his desires very reasonable; again, being a thing agreeable to your Lordship's fatherly care and love to my daughter, a thing which, for the honour, friendship and liking I have to the match, very agreeable to me, so that all parties desire but the same thing. I know no reason to delay it but, according to their desires, to accomplish it with convenient speed. And I do not doubt but your Lordship and myself shall receive great comfort thereby, for the young gentleman, as I understand, hath been well brought up, fair conditioned, and hath many good parts in him. Thus, to satisfice your Lordship I have, as shortly as I can, set down my opinion to my Lord's desires; notwithstanding, I refer theirs, and mine own, which is all one with theirs, to your Lordship's wisdom. I am sorry that I have not an able body which might have served to attend on her Majesty in the place where she is, being especially

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there, whither without any other occasion than to see your Lordship, I would always willingly go. September 8<sup>th</sup>, 1597.

Your Lordship's most assured,

Edward Oxenford

Endorsed: To the right honourable, my very good Lord, the Lord Treasurer of England;  
(2) 1597.