SUMMARY: The document below is a letter dated 16 August 1597 from Henry Herbert (c.1538-1601), 2nd Earl of Pembroke, to Lord Burghley mentioning a proposed match between Oxford's daughter, Bridget de Vere (1584-1631), and William Herbert (1580-1630), 3rd Earl of Pembroke. In the letter, the 2nd Earl mentions that he has received a letter from his wife, Mary (need Sidney) Herbert (1561-1621), Countess of Pembroke, brought to him by 'Massinger'. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, available online, this was Arthur Massinger (c.1550-1603), the father of the playwright, Philip Massinger:

Philip Massinger (1583–1640), playwright, was born in November 1583, probably in Salisbury, and baptized at St Thomas's, Salisbury, on 24 November 1583. He was the son of Arthur Massinger (c.1550–1603), fellow of Merton College, Oxford, MP, general agent for the earls of Pembroke, and examiner to the council in the marches of Wales, and of Anne Crompton (d. in or after 1614), whose father was a merchant of Stafford and London.

It is not known who initiated this proposed marriage, but it came to nothing. Shortly after 28 April 1599, Bridget de Vere married Francis Norris (1579-1622), Earl of Berkshire.

For other letters concerning this proposed marriage, see Young, Frances Berkeley, *Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke*, (London: David Nutt, 1912), pp. 62-6, available online.

My good Lord, Massinger is now returned by me with my wife's letters reporting my son's liking of your daughter. I do assure your Lordship I am not a little glad of that which I hear, and therefore now, as heretofore, I refer the proceeding herein to your Lordship. What you shall conceive best, that shall I best like of. Massinger hath already acquainted you with my meaning in some things, and of anything else your Lordship shall desire to be further informed, upon hearing thereof from your Lordship, I will speedily advertise you. In the meantime I wish to your Lordship as to myself, and rest,

Your Lordship's faithfully assured,
Pembroke.

Fallerston, 16 Augusti 1597

Endorsed: (1) To the right honourable my good Lord, the Lord Burghley, Lord High Treasurer of England etc.; (2) (in Lord Burghley's hand) 16 August 1597, Earl of Pembroke by Massinger.

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