

THE ASHGATE  
RESEARCH COMPANION *to*  
**THE SIDNEYS,  
1500–1700**



Volume 2: Literature



Edited by

**MARGARET P. HANNAY,  
MARY ELLEN LAMB AND  
MICHAEL G. BRENNAN**

THE ASHGATE RESEARCH COMPANION TO  
THE SIDNEYS, 1500–1700

VOLUME 2

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The Ashgate Research  
Companion to The Sidneys,  
1500–1700  
Volume 2: Literature

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**Garth Bond** is Associate Professor of English at Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin. He has recently published on the circulation of poetry between Mary Wroth and William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke, and is currently co-editing an edition of William Herbert's poetry with Mary Ellen Lamb and Steven May. He has also written about Ben Jonson's representation of manuscript poetry, part of a larger project on the cultural meaning of manuscript circulation after the advent of print.

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1 <http://plre.folger.edu/>.

**Kenneth Borris** is Professor of English at McGill University, and currently serves on the Editorial Board at *Spenser Studies*. A former Canada Research Fellow and winner of the MacCaffrey Award, he has authored *Spenser's Poetics of Prophecy in "The Faerie Queene" V* (1990) and *Allegory and Epic in Renaissance English Literature: Heroic Form in Spenser, Sidney, and Milton* (2000). His numerous essays have appeared in scholarly journals and collections, including *Renaissance Quarterly*, *Milton Studies*, *Spenser Studies*, *Emblematica*, and *The Oxford Handbook of Edmund Spenser*. He edited *Same-sex Desire in the English Renaissance: A Sourcebook of Texts, 1470–1650* (2004), and co-edited *The Affectionate Shepherd: Celebrating Richard Barnfield* (with George Klawitter, 2001), *The Sciences of Homosexuality in Early Modern Europe* (with George Rousseau, 2008), and *Spenser and Platonism, Spenser Studies XXIV* (with Jon Quitslund and Carol Kaske, 2009).

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The late **Noel J. Kinnamon** (1943–2012) was Professor Emeritus at Mars Hill College, North Carolina, and an outstanding textual scholar of early modern literature. His textual studies of the Sidney Psalms appeared in journals including *English Manuscript Studies* and the *National Library of Wales Journal*. He was the lead manuscript transcriber and co-textual editor of seven volumes with Margaret P. Hannay and Michael G. Brennan, including *The Collected Works of Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke* (1998), the modern-spelling *Selected Works*, and *The Sidney Psalter: The Psalms of Sir Philip and Mary Sidney* (also with Hannibal Hamlin, 2009). Noel also transcribed the letters of Robert Sidney to his wife for *Domestic Politics and Family Absence* (2005), *The Correspondence (c. 1626–1659) of Dorothy Percy Sidney, Countess of Leicester* (2010), and most recently *The Letters (1595–1608) of Rowland Whyte* (2013) to Robert Sidney and to Gilbert Talbot, seventh Earl of Shrewsbury. Noel's publications on the Sidneys will stand as a lasting monument to the enduring value and integrity of his textual scholarship.

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2 <http://www.manifoldgreatness.org/>.

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3 <http://wroth.latrobe.edu.au/>.

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4 <http://www.ies.sas.ac.uk/research/current-projects/catalogue-english-literary-manuscripts-1450-1700-celm>.

5 <http://www.e-enlightenment.com/>.



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## Preface: Volume 2

Volume 1 of the *Ashgate Research Companion to the Sidneys* describes the considerable role played by numerous members of the Sidney family, male as well as female, in the cultural and political spheres of early modern England. This second volume extends that discussion into the topic of literature. The productivity of the Sidney family as writers is remarkable. Once centered primarily around Sir Philip Sidney, scholarship has now established his sister Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, and his niece Lady Mary Wroth (the daughter of their brother Robert Sidney) as significant authors in their own right. Further research has also located manuscript writings by other Sidneys as well, in poems by Robert Sidney and by William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke (the son of Mary Sidney Herbert). The table of contents reveals the impressive number of their writings as well as the diversity of genres in which they chose to write. It is appropriate here to summarize their individual contributions.

While perceived by his contemporaries (and probably by himself as well) as primarily a statesman and soldier more than an author, Sir Philip Sidney influenced the course of early modern literature, and arguably of English literature. His posthumously published *Astrophil and Stella* raised the social capital of printed secular lyrics, launching a new vogue for sonnet sequences by such poets as Samuel Daniel, Michael Drayton, and William Shakespeare. At a time when the status of what we would now call fiction was dubious, his witty *Defence of Poesy* mounted a serious vindication of a “golden world” made possible through the agency of the imagination. The impact of his epic romance *The Countess of Pembroke’s Arcadia* cannot be overstated. In addition to numerous imitations, the *Arcadia* inaugurated a spate of romances in prose and drama, contributing to the genre of the novel centuries later. Sir Philip Sidney’s translation of the Psalms represented a sophisticated experiment in meter, syntax, and metaphor. These translations, as well as a revised version of his *Arcadia*, were left unfinished at his death from a wound incurred on a battlefield defending the Protestants of the Low Countries. His elaborate state funeral established his posthumous status as a national war hero. The subsequent outpouring of elegies mourning his death assured his legacy as the literary precursor of such poets as Spenser, Jonson, and Milton.

Once portrayed primarily as a helpmate to a celebrity brother, Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, has come into her own within current scholarship. In 1592 she published two translations from the French under her own name: *A Discourse of Life and Death* (from a tract by Duplessis-Mornay) with *Antonius* (from a play by Robert Garnier). The political as well as literary significance of these translations has been well demonstrated. Duplessis-Mornay was a prominent Huguenot leader; Garnier used his plays to comment on the dangers of the French civil wars. The countess’s collaboration in Philip’s translation of the Psalms, completed after his death, is at once an act of poetic virtuosity, religious devotion, and political advice. Prefacing a presentation manuscript of the Psalms, her poem “Even Now that Care” exhorts her monarch to defend the true (Protestant) faith. In such an admonition, her identity as the mourning sister of a national war hero who gave his life for the Protestant cause only enhanced the power of her voice. Similarly, Mary Sidney Herbert’s editions of Philip’s revised *Arcadia* in 1593 and of his collected works

in 1598 did more than merely make Sidney's works accessible to an appreciative public. One of her motives was to salvage Sidney's works from previously printed versions: Fulke Greville's 1590 edition of the *Arcadia* and Thomas Newman's pirated 1591 edition including some Sidney poems. From today's vantage point, the boldness of this act requires some explanation. The countess's elegant folios, with their elaborate frontispieces and expensive paper, accomplished more than recovery. Enhancing the status of Philip upheld the prestige of the Sidney family, affirming their proper role in the literary and political culture of the time. In promoting the *Arcadia* as an elite text, her editions likewise elevated the prestige of contemporary authorship of fictional works, anticipating and to some extent enabling the high status of authorship produced through later folio editions such as Jonson's *Works* in 1616 and Shakespeare's folio *Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies* in 1623.

Mary Wroth has achieved recent and deserved prominence as the first Englishwoman to write an extended romance (*The Countess of Montgomery's Urania*), a secular sonnet sequence (*Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*), and one of the first to write an original play (*Love's Victory*). Her remarkable authorship was undoubtedly encouraged by her identity as a Sidney, explicitly invoked, for example, in the echo of her uncle's romance in the title of the portion of her romance published in 1621. The cartouche at the top of her frontispiece foregrounds her family affiliation: "Lady Mary Wroath, daughter to the right Noble Robert Earle of Leicester. And Neece to the ever famous, and renowned Sr Phillips [*sic*] Sidney knight. And to the most excellent Lady Mary Countesse of Pembroke late deceased." The explicit topicality of her romance evident, for example, in near-anagrams of family members (Rosindy for Robert Sidney) creates this work as, from one angle, a family romance and, like Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella*, the appended sonnet sequence *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* fictionalizes a personal relationship with a beloved, in this case with her cousin William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke. Apparently anticipating coterie performance, her play *Love's Victory* similarly presents parallels between her characters and two generations of Sidneys. Topical allusions obviously do not present the only (or perhaps necessarily even the best) way to read Wroth's writings. And Wroth's insistence on her Sidneian identity may initially raise concerns about her secondariness to Philip Sidney, much as once was the case for Mary Sidney Herbert. The opposite is in fact true. For Mary Wroth, as for her aunt, the Sidney family affiliation provided a platform from which to speak with a power not otherwise available to them or to any individual.

To write as a Sidney, perhaps even just to *be* a Sidney, evoked a potential for political interpretation. The death (some may say the martyrdom) of Philip Sidney while fighting Spain for the Protestant cause in the Netherlands was a defining moment for what it meant to be a Sidney. The Sidney-Herbert families persisted in their commitment to Protestant interests on the Continent and consistently advocated military intervention. In the later years of Elizabeth's reign Robert Sidney (Philip's brother) took on the Governorship of Flushing, engaging in active combat against the Spanish. It was there, separated from his family for long periods, that he wrote his poems, which exist in a single manuscript published in 1984. With the accession of James, Robert became Lord Chamberlain to Queen Anne. He formed a powerful alliance with his nephew William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke, Lord Chamberlain to James I, as the core of a political faction opposing the king's pro-Spanish policies and promoting efforts to restore the rule of King Frederick of Bohemia and his wife Elizabeth (James's daughter), overturned by Counter-Reformation forces. An influential figure in the courts both of James and Charles, Pembroke also wrote poems, one of which—an epitaph for Robert Cecil—was political. The content of most of the others, ostensibly at least, was not. Yet for Pembroke, too, the display of aristocratic language comprising a poem was a reminder—perhaps more accurately a demonstration—that he was a Sidney. This emphasis on the political nature of Sidney writings foregrounds the social aspect of what the

Sidney name had come to mean. While their writings reflected on their family name, their “Sidney-ness” was not the whole story. They also conducted their lives and relationships outside the political sphere. For Philip and Mary Sidney their metrical translation of the Psalms was also an act of religious devotion and artistic achievement. The immediate Sidney purpose for writing a love sonnet was more likely to move a beloved, to relieve passionate feelings, or to outdo a specific competitor (either in love or poetic composition). Rather than being isolated authors, the Sidneys lived and wrote in a variety of social spheres.

With the rise of book history, the importance of the sociality of texts, as well as their authors, has become newly understood, and it is for this reason that this volume distinguishes itself from others of its kind by beginning with an overview comprising the first chapter, “The Sidneys and Their Books,” and by including Part II, “The Sidneys and the Circulation of Their Works in Manuscript and Print.” Texts were consumed, as well as produced, in a social world. The Sidneys were continually and diversely influenced by the books they read. A renewed attention to the often complicated circulation of works balances the tendency of modern critical editions to convey a sense of an author’s works as aesthetic artifacts isolated from their own textual history. Early modern readers were typically less interested in the author’s intent—or, indeed, even in the author’s identity or originality—than in the use they could make of a text in their own lives; therefore, as writings circulated, they engaged additional ways of reading not anticipated by their authors. For printed works, prefatory letters, and typefaces, the size and expense of a volume encouraged certain kinds of readings. As manuscripts passed from hand to hand, portions were copied into miscellanies, often without dependable attribution—or any attribution at all—to an author, and copyists introduced changes by accident or with intent. Once dismissed as corrupt, variants now bear witness to alternative ways of reading or of using a text. Variants also reveal the networks through which manuscripts moved and the various contexts in which works gained new meanings. Which texts circulated widely? Among which groups: universities, the Inns of Court, recusant households? Were they transposed to musical settings, and if so, what emotions would the notes of a setting elicit? At a time when circulating manuscripts constituted a form of scribal publication, what was the relationship between print and manuscript? Detailed information about the circulation of Sidney writings contributes to this important critical discussion.

Discussing texts written by the Sidneys in two volumes entitled *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Sidneys (1500–1700)* necessarily imposes on them the context of the Sidney family, their relationship to each other, and their historical circumstances. We believe that this is an appropriate and significant context within which to think about the Sidneys—but, of course, we understand that it is not the only one. Many of the chapters acknowledge other contexts which bear further exploration. Several discuss Sidney texts in terms of contemporary authors, in particular Shakespeare. Several relate texts to other works in the same genre. Several engage in close reading. We are pleased by the expansion of geographical context to include Continental, as opposed to solely English, texts. We are confident that, as the field evolves, these contexts and others will provide additional perspectives and new approaches that will enrich the study of texts written by the Sidneys.

Margaret P. Hannay, Mary Ellen Lamb, and Michael G. Brennan



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# List of Abbreviations

Cross-references to chapters within this collection are cited in the format: author second name ARC volume number:chapter number (for example, Brennan ARC 1:1; Black ARC 2:1).

APC	<i>Acts of the Privy Council of England</i> . Ed. J. R. Dasent. London: HMSO, 1906.
BL	British Library
Bodl.	Bodleian Library, Oxford
CKS	Centre for Kentish Studies, Maidstone, Kent (now Kent History and Library Centre)
Collins	<i>Letters and Memorials of State</i> . Ed. Arthur Collins. 2 vols. London: T. Osborne, 1746.
<i>Correspondence DPS</i>	<i>The Correspondence (c. 1626–1659) of Dorothy Percy Sidney, Countess of Leicester</i> . Ed. Michael G. Brennan, Noel J. Kinnamon, and Margaret P. Hannay. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010.
<i>Correspondence SPS</i>	<i>The Correspondence of Sir Philip Sidney</i> . Ed. Roger Kuin. 2 vols. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2012.
CSP	<i>Calendar of State Papers</i>
CSPD	<i>Calendar of State Papers Domestic</i>
CSPF	<i>Calendar of State Papers French</i>
CSPS	<i>Calendar of State Papers Spain</i>
CSPV	<i>Calendar of State Papers Venetian</i>
DPFA	<i>Domestic Politics and Family Absence: The Correspondence (1588–1621) of Robert Sidney, First Earl of Leicester, and Barbara Gamage Sidney, Countess of Leicester</i> . Ed. Margaret P. Hannay, Noel J. Kinnamon, and Michael G. Brennan. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005.
ELH	<i>English Literary History</i>
ELR	<i>English Literary Renaissance</i>
<i>Gender and Authorship</i>	Mary Ellen Lamb, <i>Gender and Authorship in the Sidney Circle</i> . Madison, WI: U of Wisconsin P, 1990.
HLQ	<i>Huntington Library Quarterly</i>
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission

- HMC *De L'Isle and Dudley* HMC *Report on the Manuscripts of Lord De L'Isle and Dudley Preserved at Penshurst Place, 1925–66*. 6 vols. London: HMSO, 1925–66.
- HMC *Salisbury* HMC *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. The Marquis of Salisbury, K.G. ... Preserved at Hatfield House, Hertfordshire*. 24 vols. London: HMSO, 1883–1976.
- HMSO Her Majesty's Stationery Office
- Holinshed, *Chronicles* 1587 Raphael Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotlande, and Irelande*. 3 vols. London: Henry Denham et al., 1587.
- KHLC Kent History and Library Centre (formerly Centre for Kentish Studies), Maidstone, Kent
- MSH, *Collected Works* *The Collected Works of Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke*. Ed. Margaret P. Hannay, Noel J. Kinnamon, and Michael G. Brennan. 2 vols. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1998.
- MSLW Margaret P. Hannay, *Mary Sidney, Lady Wroth*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010.
- ODNB *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004–14. Web. <http://www.oxforddnb.com/>
- Philip's Phoenix* Margaret P. Hannay, *Philip's Phoenix: Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990.
- RQ *Renaissance Quarterly*
- Scott, *Algernon/Republic* Jonathan Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the English Republic, 1623–1677*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988 and 2004.
- Scott, *Algernon/Restoration* Jonathan Scott, *Algernon Sidney and the Restoration Crisis, 1677–1683*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991 and 2002.
- SEL *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900*
- Sidney Chronology* Michael G. Brennan and Noel J. Kinnamon, *A Sidney Chronology: 1554–1654*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- Sidney, New Arcadia* *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The New Arcadia)*. Ed. Victor Skretkovicz. Oxford: Clarendon P, 1987.
- Sidney, Old Arcadia* *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia (The Old Arcadia)*. Ed. Jean Robertson. Oxford: Clarendon P, 1973.
- Sidney, Poems* *The Poems of Sir Philip Sidney*. Ed. William A. Ringler, Jr. Oxford: Clarendon P, 1962.
- Sidney, Psalter* *The Sidney Psalter: The Psalms of Sir Philip and Mary Sidney*. Ed. Hannibal Hamlin, Michael G. Brennan, Margaret P. Hannay, and Noel J. Kinnamon. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009.
- Sidneys of Penshurst* Michael G. Brennan, *The Sidneys of Penshurst and the Monarchy, 1500–1700*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006.
- SJ *Sidney Journal*
- SP State Papers at TNA
- STC *A Short-title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, & Ireland and of English Books Printed Abroad, 1475–1640*. 1st ed.

compiled by A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave; 2nd revised and enlarged ed. begun by W. A. Jackson and F. S. Ferguson, completed by K. F. Pantzer. London: Bibliographical Society, 1976–91.

- TNA The National Archives, Kew
- Whyte *The Letters (1595–1608) of Rowland Whyte*. Ed. Michael G. Brennan, Noel J. Kinnamon, and Margaret P. Hannay. Philadelphia, PA: American Philosophical Society, 2013.
- Wroth, *Love's Victory* *Lady Mary Wroth's Love's Victory: The Penshurst Manuscript*. Ed. Michael G. Brennan. London: The Roxburghe Club, 1988.
- Wroth, *Poems* *The Poems of Lady Mary Wroth*. Ed. Josephine A. Roberts. 2nd ed. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State U, 1992.
- Wroth, *Urania 1* *The First Part of the Countess of Montgomery's Urania*. Ed. Josephine A. Roberts. Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1995.
- Wroth, *Urania 2* *The Second Part of the Countess of Montgomery's Urania*. Ed. Josephine A. Roberts, completed by Suzanne Gossett and Janel Mueller. Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1999.



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# Chronology

**Sidney family affairs are in roman; general historical information is in italics.**

- 1503 (8 Aug.) *King James IV (1488–1513) of Scotland marries Princess Margaret, sister of Henry VIII*
- 1509 (21 Apr.) *death of King Henry VII and accession of King Henry VIII*
- 1510 execution of Edmund Dudley (b. c. 1462), great-grandfather of Sir Philip Sidney (1554–86)
- 1511 William Sidney (c. 1482–1554) serves in the English expedition to Spain to assist Ferdinand, King of Aragon and Castile, against the Moors
- 1512 death of Nicholas Sidney (b. c. 1451), father of William Sidney who is then serving in the English navy during the war with France
- 1513 (18 Apr.) William Sidney knighted after a naval engagement off Brest (Mar.)  
(9 Sept.) *King James IV of Scotland killed at the Battle of Flodden; William Sidney fights there with distinction*
- 1514 (1 Feb.) Charles Brandon, friend and patron of Sir William Sidney, created Duke of Suffolk; Thomas Howard, Sir William's commander at Flodden, restored to the dukedom of Norfolk  
(Jul.) Sir William Sidney awarded a life annuity of 50 marks by Henry VIII
- 1515 (1 Jan.) death of King Louis XII of France; in Feb. Charles Brandon secretly marries his widow, Mary, sister of Henry VIII; their union publicly celebrated at Greenwich (May); at this period or later, the Sidneys appropriate the French king's personal emblem of the porcupine
- 1517 (?) Sir William Sidney marries Anne Pagenham (d. 1543)
- 1520 (Jun.) *"Field of the Cloth of Gold" meeting in the Plain of Ardres between Henry VIII and François I of France; Sir William Sidney prominent among the English jousters*
- 1523/24 Sir William Sidney joins Suffolk's military campaign in France
- 1529 (20 Jul.) birth of Henry Sidney (d. 1586) with Henry VIII as a godparent

- 1531 (?) birth of Mary Dudley Sidney (d. 1586), wife of Henry Sidney
- 1532 (15 May) *English Church supports King Henry VIII against the Papacy*
- 1532/33? birth of Robert Dudley (d. 1588), later Earl of Leicester, uncle of Sir Philip Sidney
- 1533 (25 Jan.) *King Henry VIII marries Anne Boleyn after divorcing Catherine of Aragon*
- 1536 (19 May) *Anne Boleyn executed*  
 (30 May) *King Henry VIII marries Jane Seymour*  
 (autumn) *Pilgrimage of Grace uprising against Henry VIII's break with the Roman Catholic Church*
- 1537 (12 Oct.) *Prince Edward born to King Henry VIII and Jane Seymour*  
 (24 Oct.) *Jane Seymour dies*
- 1538 Sir William Sidney appointed Chamberlain (until 1544) to Prince Edward, and his son Henry becomes one of Prince Edward's closest childhood companions
- 1543 death of Anne Pagenham Sidney, wife of Sir William Sidney
- 1546 (?) William Herbert (c. 1501–70), later first Earl of Pembroke, appointed Keeper of Baynard's Castle on the banks of the River Thames
- 1547 (28 Jan.) *death of King Henry VIII and accession of King Edward VI*
- 1549 (20 Jun.) *Norfolk Rebellion begins*
- 1550 (18 Apr.) Henry Sidney appointed a Gentleman of the Privy Chamber
- 1550–53 William Herbert, later first Earl of Pembroke, Lord President of the Council of Wales
- 1551 (29 Mar.) Henry Sidney marries at Asser Mary, daughter of John Dudley, Earl of Warwick and sister of Robert and Ambrose Dudley (later Earls of Leicester and Warwick)  
 (Jul.) Henry Sidney accompanies the Marquis of Northampton's embassy to France  
 (11 Oct.) Henry Sidney knighted, and John Dudley (d. 1553), Earl of Warwick, created Duke of Northumberland; William Herbert created first Earl of Pembroke
- 1552 (25 Apr.) King Edward VI grants the estate and manor of Penshurst Place, Kent, to Sir William Sidney
- 1553 (21 May) marriage of Lady Jane Grey and Lord Guildford Dudley, son of John Dudley, Earl of Warwick and Duke of Northumberland  
 (21 Jun.) Sir Henry Sidney witnesses King Edward VI's will

- (6 Jul.) *death of King Edward VI, reputedly cradled in the arms of Sir Henry Sidney; accession (9 Jul.) of Lady Jane Grey (executed 12 Feb. 1554), who reputedly was first told of her accession by Mary Dudley Sidney, wife of Sir Henry Sidney*
- (19 Jul.) *accession of Queen Mary*
- (22 Aug.) *execution on Tower Hill of John Dudley (b. 1504), Earl of Warwick and Duke of Northumberland, grandfather of Sir Philip Sidney*
- 1554 (7 Feb.) *rebellion against the Spanish marriage proposed for Queen Mary led by Sir Thomas Wyatt*
- (7 or 10 Feb.) *death of Sir William Sidney at Penshurst*
- (13 Mar.) *Sir Henry Sidney accompanies Earl of Bedford's embassy to Spain to accompany Philip of Spain back to England for his marriage (25 Jul.) with Queen Mary*
- (2–5 May) *Queen Mary's Second Parliament accepts terms for the Spanish marriage*
- (13 Jul.) *Sir Henry Sidney sails from La Coruña for England with Philip of Spain; royal marriage celebrated (25 Jul.)*
- (Nov.) *Queen Mary's Third Parliament restores Papal Supremacy to England*
- (30 Nov.) *birth of Philip Sidney (d. 1586), named in honor of his godfather, Philip of Spain, the husband of Queen Mary*
- 1555 (25 Oct.) *Emperor Charles V resigns the Netherlands in favor of Philip of Spain*
- 1555–58 *William Herbert, first Earl of Pembroke, Lord President of the Council of Wales*
- 1556 (Jan.) *Queen Mary's husband formally becomes Philip II of Spain following his father's abdication*
- (May) *Sir Henry Sidney leaves for Dublin to become Vice-Treasurer and General Governor of Revenues*
- 1557 (Apr.) *Sir Henry Sidney now informally serving as Lord Justice in Ireland*
- (10 Aug.) *English-Spanish victory over the French at St. Quentin; serving in the English forces are the brothers of Mary Dudley Sidney, Ambrose, Robert, and Henry, and Henry Herbert, later second Earl of Pembroke and husband of Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke*
- 1558 (7 Jan.) *loss of Calais, England's last French possession*
- (24 Apr.) *marriage of Mary Queen of Scots to the French Dauphin, later François II*
- (17 Nov.) *death of Queen Mary and accession of Queen Elizabeth I*
- (20 Nov.) *Sir William Cecil appointed Secretary of State and Queen Elizabeth's principal adviser*
- (12 Dec.) *Sir Henry Sidney promoted to Lord Justice in Ireland*
- 1559 (Feb.) *Philip II of Spain makes a tentative offer of marriage to Queen Elizabeth I; Treaty of Câteau-Cambrésis (3 Apr.) marks end of hostilities between France and Spain; accession (24 Apr.) of François II of France, husband of Mary Queen of Scots*
- 1560 (5 Dec.) *death of François II of France and accession of Charles IX*
- 1560–86 *Sir Henry Sidney, Lord President of the Council of Wales*

- 1561 (27 Oct.) birth of Mary Sidney (d. 1621), later Countess of Pembroke, at Tickenhall (Ticknell) near Bewdley, Worcestershire  
 (26 Dec.) Ambrose Dudley, uncle of Philip Sidney, created Earl of Warwick
- 1562 (Jul.) Sir Henry Sidney's mission to Scotland to meet with Mary Queen of Scots; meets John Knox while he is at Edinburgh  
 (Oct.) Queen Elizabeth, Mary Dudley Sidney and Philip Sidney catch smallpox; fears for the royal succession as the queen insists on Robert Dudley being named as Protector of the Realm; Mary Sidney is left with severe facial scars, as reflected in the tale of Argulus and Parthenia in the *New Arcadia*  
 (?) birth of Barbara Gamage (c. 1559–1621), later wife of Robert Sidney, first Earl of Leicester
- 1563 (19 Nov.) birth of Robert Sidney (d. 1626), later first Earl of Leicester, named in honor of his maternal uncle and godfather, Robert Dudley (d. 1588)
- 1564 (26 Apr.) *William Shakespeare baptized at Stratford-upon-Avon*  
 (14 May) Sir Henry Sidney installed as a Knight of the Garter, alongside King Charles IX of France  
 (29 Sept.) Robert Dudley (d. 1588) created Baron Denbigh and Earl of Leicester  
 (17 Oct.) Philip Sidney enters Shrewsbury School with his lifelong friend, Fulke Greville
- 1565 (22 Jun.) Sir Henry Sidney appointed as Lord Deputy of Ireland (serves until 1571)  
 (29 Jul.) *marriage of Mary Queen of Scots and Lord Darnley*
- 1566 (13 Jan.) Sir Henry and Lady Mary Sidney arrive in Dublin after losing much of their household possessions and jewels when one of their ships is wrecked  
 (Apr.) Sir Henry Sidney formulates a plan for each of the four provinces of Ireland to have a president and council  
 (19 Jun.) birth of James Stewart, later King James VI of Scotland and I of England  
 (Aug.) Philip Sidney visits Kenilworth, the residence of his uncle Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester; he then travels to Oxford for Queen Elizabeth's visit  
 (8 Sept.) Philip Sidney leaves Oxford
- 1567 (10 Feb.) *murder of Lord Darnley*  
 (15 May) *Mary Queen of Scots marries Earl of Bothwell*  
 (2 Jun.) Shane O'Neill is assassinated, and Sir Henry Sidney has his head placed on Dublin Castle  
 (24 Jul.) *abdication of Mary Queen of Scots and accession of King James VI (aged one year)*
- 1568 (Feb.) Philip Sidney begins his university studies at Christ Church, Oxford  
 (May) *Mary Queen of Scots escapes from captivity and flees to England*
- 1569 (Jan.) *English colonization of Ulster begins*  
 (Feb.) proposal for marriage (until Feb. 1570) between Philip Sidney and Anne, daughter of Sir William Cecil  
 (25 Mar.) birth of Thomas (d. 1595), son of Sir Henry and Mary Dudley Sidney  
 (summer) Sir Henry Sidney suppresses opposition in Munster, Connaught and Ulster and approves the Munster plantation (Jun.)

- (Nov.) *Rebellion of the northern earls in support of Mary Queen of Scots*
- 1570 (25 Feb.) *Queen Elizabeth excommunicated by Pope Pius V's Papal Bull*  
 (17 Mar.) death of William Herbert, first Earl of Pembroke, succeeded by his son Henry Herbert (d. 1601) as second earl  
*negotiations between England and France for a marriage between Queen Elizabeth I and the Duc d'Alençon*
- 1571 (Jan.–Sept.) *Ridolfi Plot to depose Queen Elizabeth in favor of Mary Queen of Scots*  
 (25 Feb.) Sir William Cecil created Lord Burghley  
 (Mar.) Sir Henry Sidney's second term of office in Ireland concludes  
 (Apr.) Philip Sidney leaves Oxford because of an outbreak of plague
- 1572 (19 Apr.) *Treaty of Blois, providing a defensive alliance between England and France, agreed in draft*  
 (25 May) Philip Sidney granted a license to travel on the Continent for two years to study languages; joins entourage of Edward Fiennes de Clinton, who led the English delegation for the signing of the Treaty of Blois  
 (2 May) Sir Henry Sidney declines a barony in his wife's letter to William Cecil, due to its related expenses  
 (15 Jun.) *ratification of the Treaty of Blois*  
 (8 Jul.) *the Protestant Henri de Navarre arrives at Paris; marries Marguerite de Valois (18 Aug.)*  
 (9 Aug.) Philip Sidney created Baron de Sidenay at the French court  
 (24/25 Aug.) *St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre at Paris, leading to Philip Sidney's departure for Germany (mid-Sept.)*  
 (winter) Philip Sidney stays at Frankfurt under guidance of Hubert Languet
- 1573 (Mar.) Philip Sidney attends the Frankfurt book fair  
 (late May) Philip Sidney leaves Strasbourg to visit the court of the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian at Vienna  
 (early Sept.) Philip Sidney visits Bratislava in Hungary and then returns to Vienna (late Oct.)  
 (Nov.) Philip Sidney visits Italy and is based at Venice and Padua until Aug. 1574, and has his portrait painted by Veronese
- 1574 (Aug.) Philip Sidney leaves Venice and travels to Innsbruck and then the Imperial court of Emperor Maximilian II at Vienna  
 (Oct.) Philip Sidney visits Cracow, Poland and then returns to Vienna (Nov.)
- 1575 (7 Feb.) Philip Sidney leaves Vienna for Prague; heads homewards via Dresden, Leipzig and Frankfurt (Mar.)  
 (late Feb.) death of Ambrosia Sidney (b. c. 1564) leads to invitation to royal court of her elder sister Mary  
 (early May) Philip Sidney at Antwerp; sails (31 May) from there to England  
 (Jun.) Robert Sidney matriculates from Christ Church, Oxford; Philip Sidney in London and at court  
 (9–27 Jul.) Kenilworth royal entertainment, attended by Sir Henry and Lady Mary Sidney and their daughter, Mary; Philip, Mary, Robert, Thomas, and their mother also attend the queen at Woodstock (Sept.)

- 1575–78 Sir Henry Sidney, Lord Deputy of Ireland
- 1576 (Jul.) Philip Sidney visits Ireland; back in England by early Nov.  
 (12 Oct.) *death of Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian II; succeeded by his Catholic son Rudolf*  
 (1–7 Nov.) *Antwerp falls to Spanish mercenaries*  
 (?) birth of Robert Wroth (d. 1614), later husband of Mary Sidney (d. 1651)
- 1577 (16 Jan.) Philip Sidney meets John Dee, probably at Mortlake  
 (Feb.) preparations for Philip Sidney’s embassy to Emperor Rudolf to offer condolences on the death of his father  
 (Mar.–Jun.) Philip Sidney at Ostend, Brussels, Louvain, Heidelberg, Nuremberg, Prague, Frankfurt, Antwerp, Middelberg, and Bruges  
 (21 Apr.) Mary Sidney (d. 1621) marries Henry Herbert (d. 1601), second Earl of Pembroke; wedding attended by her brother Robert, and henceforth the Sidneys are regular guests at the Herbert residences at Wilton and Baynard’s Castle, London  
 (17 Nov.) Philip Sidney participates in Accession Day tilts as “Philisides,” and then stays at Wilton House (Dec.)
- 1578 (21 Sept.) Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, secretly marries Lettice Knollys Devereux (d. 1634) with Sir Henry Sidney attending
- 1579 (Apr.) Robert Sidney sets out on his Continental travels  
 (17–27 Aug.) The French Duc d’Anjou visits England to pursue marriage negotiations with Queen Elizabeth; Philip Sidney’s tennis court quarrel with the Earl of Oxford (late Aug.)
- 1580 (8 Apr.) birth of William Herbert (d. 1630), later third Earl of Pembroke; at his christening (28 Apr.) the godparents are Queen Elizabeth and the Earls of Leicester and Warwick; Philip Sidney is probably based at Wilton House Apr.–Aug.
- 1581 (15 Jan.) Philip Sidney takes part in the “Callophismus Challenge”  
 (15/16 May) Philip Sidney takes part in *The Four Foster Children of Desire*  
 (Nov.) Duc d’Anjou again in England for marriage negotiations; leaves in early Feb. 1582 and dies in Jun. 1584
- 1582 (spring) Robert Sidney returns to England
- 1583 (13(?) Jan.) Philip Sidney knighted to enable him to stand proxy for Count Casimir at his installation as a Knight of the Garter  
 (spring) plans for Sir Philip Sidney to marry Frances, daughter of Sir Francis Walsingham; marriage celebrated 21 Sept.
- 1584 (29 Jun.) *assassination of the Prince of Orange, leading to England’s involvement in the Dutch wars*  
 (23 Sept.) marriage of Robert Sidney and Barbara Gamage (d. 1621), promoted by Henry Herbert, second Earl of Pembroke

- (16 Oct.) birth of Philip Herbert (d. 1650), later fourth Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, with Mary Dudley Sidney, Sir Philip and Robert Sidney as godparents  
 (autumn) circulation of the libelous *Leicester's Commonwealth*
- 1585 (26 Aug.) England to send forces to Low Countries, led by the Earl of Leicester with Sir Philip Sidney as Deputy and Governor of Flushing  
 (early Nov.?) birth of Elizabeth (d. 1612), daughter of Sir Philip and Frances Sidney  
 (18 Nov.) Sir Philip and Robert Sidney sail for Flushing
- 1586 (1 or 5 May) death of Sir Henry Sidney at Worcester  
 (9 Aug.) death of Lady Mary Dudley Sidney at London  
 (23 Sept.) Sir Philip Sidney wounded during a skirmish at Zutphen  
 (7 Oct.) Robert Sidney is knighted by his uncle, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, for valor at Zutphen  
 (17 Oct.) death of Sir Philip Sidney
- 1586–1601 Henry Herbert, second Earl of Pembroke and husband of Mary Sidney Herbert, President of Wales
- 1587 (8 Feb.) *execution of Mary Stuart*  
 (16 Feb.) funeral of Sir Philip Sidney at St. Paul's Cathedral, London  
 (18 Oct.) birth of Robert Sidney's daughter, Mary (d. 1651), later Lady Mary Wroth; her christening is probably held in the Great Hall at Baynard's Castle
- 1588 (16 Jul.) Sir Robert Sidney appointed Governor of Flushing  
 (Aug.) *Spanish Armada crisis*; Robert Sidney joins the English forces at Tilbury, led by his uncle, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, and is then dispatched on a mission to King James VI of Scotland to ensure Scotland's support for England against Spain  
 (23 Aug.) the stationer William Ponsonby is granted publication rights for the *Arcadia* and Sidney's translation of Du Bartas  
 (4 Sept.) death of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester
- 1589 (1 Aug.) *assassination of King Henri III of France*
- 1589–1616 Robert Sidney serves as Governor of Flushing
- 1590 (21 Feb.) death of Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick  
 (10/11 Nov.) birth of William (d. 1612), eldest son of Sir Robert and Barbara Sidney  
 (?) publication of *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*; probable year of marriage of Frances Walsingham Sidney, widow of Sir Philip Sidney, to Robert Devereux (1565–1601), second Earl of Essex
- 1591 (autumn) publication and "taking in" of *Astrophil and Stella*  
 (22 Dec.) marriage of Thomas Sidney to Margaret Dakins Devereux
- 1592 (?) publication of the Countess of Pembroke's translations of Duplessis-Mornay's *A Discourse of Life and Death* and Garnier's *Antoniuis*

- 1593 (9 Mar.) William and Philip Herbert matriculate from New College, Oxford  
 (?) publication of *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, with Books I–III from 1590 edition and IV–V from manuscript
- 1594 (Jan.–Apr.) Sir Robert Sidney sent on an embassy to King Henri IV of France  
 (?) probable date of completion of the Sidney Psalter
- 1595 (26 Jul.) death of Thomas Sidney  
 (17 Sept.) beginning of the surviving correspondence of Rowland Whyte (whose grandfather had been in the service of William Herbert, first Earl of Pembroke) to Sir Robert Sidney (until 28 Dec. 1602)  
 (1 Dec.) birth of Robert Sidney (1677), later second Earl of Leicester, at Baynard's Castle
- 1596 (Apr.) Sir Robert Sidney meets with King Henri IV at Boulogne to discuss the retaking of Calais from the Spanish  
 (19 Aug.) birth of Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James VI of Scotland and later Queen of Bohemia  
 (?) Marcus Gheeraerts II paints portrait of Barbara Gamage Sidney and six of her children
- 1597 (23/24 Jan.) Sir Robert Sidney serves with distinction at Siege of Turnhout; he then unsuccessfully seeks the Wardenship of the Cinque Ports (Mar.), and later a peerage and the post of Vice-Chamberlain (Oct.)
- 1598 (5 Mar.) Sir Philip Sidney's daughter Elizabeth marries Roger Manners, Earl of Rutland  
 (?) birth of Dorothy Percy Sidney (d. 1659), later wife of Robert Sidney, second Earl of Leicester; publication of a "collected works" of Philip Sidney, including *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, *Defence of Poetry*, and *Astrophil and Stella*  
 (5 Aug.) death of William Cecil, Lord Burghley
- 1599 (Jul.) a proposed royal visit to Wilton House is cancelled; William Herbert welcomed to court (2 Jul.) by Queen Elizabeth  
 (c. 29 Sept.) birth of Lucy Percy (d. 1660), later Countess of Carlisle  
 (?) pirated edition of *Arcadia* is printed in Scotland for Robert Waldegrave
- 1600 (19 Nov.) birth of Prince Charles, later King Charles I  
 (?) transcription of the Countess of Pembroke's translation of Petrarch's *Triumph of Death*
- 1601 (19 Jan.) death of Henry Herbert, second Earl of Pembroke  
 (Feb.) William Herbert, now third Earl of Pembroke, refuses to marry Mary Fitton, who bears him a stillborn child (Mar.)  
 (7/8 Feb.) rebellion led by Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex (executed 25 Feb.)
- 1602 (?) Publication of the Dowager Countess of Pembroke's "A Dialogue" in Francis Davison's *Poetical Rhapsody*

- 1603 (24 Mar.) *death of Queen Elizabeth and accession of King James VI of Scotland and I of England*  
 (13 May) Sir Robert Sidney created Baron Sidney of Penshurst; appointed Queen Anne's Chamberlain and Surveyor of Revenues (Nov.); sent to Canterbury to welcome the French ambassador (early Jun.)  
 (29/30 Aug.–Dec.) King James visits Wilton House on several occasions  
 (?) marriage of Frances Walsingham Sidney, widow of Sir Philip Sidney and Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, to Richard Burke (1572–1635), fourth Earl of Clanricarde
- 1604 (Jan.) William and Philip Herbert and Sir Robert Sidney prominent in court entertainments  
 (27 Sept.) Mary Sidney marries Sir Robert Wroth at Penshurst  
 (4 Nov.) William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke, marries Mary Talbot, daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury, at Wilton House  
 (27 Dec.) Philip Herbert marries Susan de Vere, daughter of the Earl of Oxford, at London
- 1605 (4 May) Robert Sidney (d. 1626) created Viscount Lisle; Philip Herbert created Earl of Montgomery; Star Chamber rejects the claim on the estate of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, made by his illegitimate son, Robert(o) Dudley  
 (Aug.) Robert Sidney's vessel to Flushing blown off course and forced to moor at Gravelines (then under Spanish control)  
 (5 Nov.) *discovery of the Gunpowder Plot*
- 1606 (Jun.–Jul.) *visit to England of Queen Anne's brother, King Christian IV of Denmark*
- 1607 (27 Feb.) Robert Sidney (d. 1677) matriculates with his brother William (d. 1612) from Christ Church, Oxford
- 1608 (Jan.) Rowland Whyte describes the harsh winter conditions at Baynard's Castle, London
- 1609 *plantation of Ulster by English Protestants*
- 1610 (Jan.) Prince Henry's Barriers, involving William and Philip Herbert  
 (14 May) *assassination of King Henri IV of France and accession of King Louis XIII*  
 (2–5 Jun.) *investiture of Prince Henry as Prince of Wales*; Robert Sidney (d. 1677) created a Knight of the Bath
- 1611 (?) *publication of King James Bible*  
 (?) Ben Jonson resident at Penshurst
- 1612 (24 May) *death of Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury*  
 (6 Nov.) *death of Prince Henry*; Sidney family deaths in 1612 include Roger Manners, Earl of Rutland (26 Jun.); Elizabeth Sidney Manners, Countess of Rutland (c. 1 Sept.); Sir Henry Sidney of Walsingham (2 Nov.), and William Sidney (3 Dec.), eldest son of Robert Sidney, Viscount Lisle

- 1613 (14 Feb.) *marriage of Princess Elizabeth to Frederick V, Elector Palatine*  
 (Apr.–Aug.) Robert Sidney, Viscount Lisle, escorts Princess Elizabeth to Germany; travels home with his son Robert (d. 1677), who is then commanding a military company at Flushing
- 1614 (Feb.) birth of Lady Mary Wroth’s only legitimate son, James (d. 1616)  
 (14 Mar.) death of Sir Robert Wroth  
 (25 Jun.) Mary Sidney Herbert, Dowager Countess of Pembroke, arrives at Flushing, and probably remains abroad until Dec. 1616
- 1615 (17 Oct.) arrest of Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, and his wife, Frances Howard, on suspicion of the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury  
 (23 Dec.) William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke, appointed Lord Chamberlain
- 1616 (early) Robert Sidney (d. 1677) marries Dorothy Percy (1598–1659), daughter of the Earl of Northumberland; the Sidneys’ neighbor, Lady Anne Clifford, notes in her diary (Feb. 1616) that their union is “openly known” to their family circle; it does not become public knowledge until Mar. 1617  
 (23 Apr.) *death of William Shakespeare*  
 (6/7 May) Robert Sidney, Viscount Lisle, created a Knight of the Garter  
 (30 May) Robert Sidney, Viscount Lisle, accompanied by his son Robert, formally hands over Flushing to the Dutch  
 (5 Jul.) death of James Wroth, son of Mary Sidney Wroth  
 (late?) Mary Sidney Herbert, Dowager Countess of Pembroke, arrives back in England and receives by royal grant a life interest in Houghton Park, Bedfordshire, where she builds herself a new mansion
- 1617 (5 Jan.) *George Villiers created Earl of Buckingham*  
 (5 Oct.) baptism of Dorothy Sidney (d. 1684), later Countess of Sunderland, the first child of Robert and Barbara Sidney  
 (6 Nov.) marriage of Lucy Percy (d. 1660) and James Hay (d. 1636), later Earl of Carlisle
- 1618 (1 Jan.) *George Villiers created Marquis of Buckingham*  
 (13 May) *Defenestration of Prague, leading to initiation of the Thirty Years’ War*  
 (2 Aug.) in a public ceremony, Robert Sidney (d. 1626) created first Earl of Leicester (after a private ceremony on 22 Jul.); Robert Sidney (d. 1677) succeeds his father as Viscount Lisle
- 1619 (10 Jan.) birth of Philip Sidney (d. 1698), son of Robert and Dorothy Sidney, later third Earl of Leicester  
 (3 Apr.) marriage of Barbara Sidney (1599–1644) and Thomas Smythe (c.1599–1635), later Viscount Strangford  
 (13 May) Robert Sidney, Earl of Leicester, Mary Sidney Herbert, Dowager Countess of Pembroke, Dorothy Percy Sidney, Mary Sidney Wroth, and Philippa Sidney Hobart attend the funeral of Queen Anne (d. 2 Mar.), as do most of their male relatives  
 (4 Nov.) *Frederick Elector Palatine and Princess Elizabeth crowned King and Queen of Bohemia*

- 1619/20(?) probable date of Lady Mary Wroth's *Love's Victory*
- 1620 (Aug.) *Pilgrim Fathers sail in Mayflower for America*  
(8 Nov.) *Battle of the White Mountain; Frederick and Elizabeth lose Bohemia*
- 1621 (21 Feb.) christening of Philip Herbert (d. 1669), later fifth Earl of Pembroke  
(24(?) May) death of Barbara Gamage Sidney, Countess of Leicester; buried at Penshurst (26 May)  
(25 Sept.) Mary Sidney Herbert, Dowager Countess of Pembroke, dies from smallpox at her house in Aldergate Street, London; funeral at St. Paul's and burial at Salisbury Cathedral  
(?) publication of Lady Mary Wroth's *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania* and poems *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*; denounced by Edward Denny
- 1623 (14/15 Jan.) birth of Algernon Sidney (executed 1683), son of Robert and Dorothy Sidney  
(18 May) George Villiers created Duke of Buckingham  
(May) Robert Sidney, first Earl of Leicester, transfers the Penshurst estate to his eldest son, Robert, later second Earl of Leicester  
(?) First Folio of Shakespeare's plays dedicated to William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke, and Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery
- 1624? (spring) birth of William and Katherine, illegitimate children of William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke, and Lady Mary Wroth  
(Nov.) *marriage agreed between Prince Charles and the French Princess Henrietta Maria*
- 1625 (27 Mar.) *death of King James I and accession of King Charles I; plague begins to spread across London and southern England*  
(1 May) *King Charles I marries (by proxy) Henrietta Maria, daughter of King Henri IV of France*  
(18 June) *King Charles I's First Parliament (18 Jun.–11 Jul., 1–12 Aug.); beginnings of war with Spain and disastrous English expedition to Cadiz (Oct.)*  
(Oct.) *King Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria visit Wilton House*  
(30 Nov.) *Treaty of The Hague, under which England, the Palatinate, and the United Provinces form an alliance with King Christian IV of Denmark*
- 1626 (2 Feb.) *coronation of King Charles I (delayed from Jan. due to plague)*  
(23 Feb.) *impeachment of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, begins*  
(25 Apr.) Robert Sidney, first Earl of Leicester, marries Sarah Blount Smythe (d. 1655), widow of Sir Thomas Smythe  
(15 Jun.) *King Charles I dissolves Parliament and refuses to dismiss Buckingham*  
(13 Jul.) death of Robert Sidney, first Earl of Leicester; buried at Penshurst on 16 Jul.; succeeded by his son, Robert Sidney, second Earl of Leicester  
(Aug.) William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke, appointed Lord Steward; his brother Philip, Earl of Montgomery, appointed Lord Chamberlain  
(19 Sept.) christening of Robert Sidney (d. 1668), son of Robert and Barbara Sidney  
(Oct.) King Charles I visits Wilton House
- 1627 (Jul.) *expedition to La Rochelle and the isle of Rhé under Duke of Buckingham; the remnants of his defeated forces return to England (Oct.)*

- 1628 (7 Jun.) *King Charles I accepts the Petition of Right, denying him the option of making forced loans and imprisonment at his personal command*  
 (23 Aug.) *assassination of Duke of Buckingham*  
 (18 Oct.) *fall of La Rochelle to King Louis XIII of France*
- 1628–29 *King Charles I's Third Parliament (17 Mar.–26 Jun. 1628, 20 Jan.–10 Mar. 1629)*
- 1629 (Jan.) *death of Susan Vere, the first wife of Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery*  
 (10 Mar.) *King Charles I dissolves Parliament and begins eleven years of personal rule*  
 (Apr.) *peace with France through the Treaty of Susa*
- 1630 (10 Apr.) *death of William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke*  
 (29 May) *birth of Prince Charles, later King Charles II (d. 1685)*  
 (3 Jun.) *Philip Herbert, fourth Earl of Pembroke, marries Lady Anne Clifford, widow of Richard Sackville, Earl of Dorset, and daughter of George Clifford, Earl of Cumberland; this union effectively breaks down in 1634*  
 (5 Nov.) *peace with Spain through the Treaty of Madrid*
- 1631 (17 Feb.) *funeral of Frances Walsingham/Sidney/Devereux/Burke, Countess of Essex and Clanricarde, widow of Sir Philip Sidney and Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex*
- 1632 (Jan.) *Viscount Wentworth appointed Lord Deputy of Ireland*  
 (Sept.–Nov.) *embassy of Robert Sidney, second Earl of Leicester, to Denmark, accompanied by his sons, Philip and Algernon*  
 (late?) *Van Dyck commissioned to paint a series of Sidney and related family portraits*
- 1633 (6 Aug.) *William Laud appointed Archbishop of Canterbury*  
 (14 Oct.) *birth of Prince James, later King James II (d. 1701)*
- 1635 (15 Mar.) *Archbishop Laud appointed as First Lord of the Treasury*  
 (9 May) *France declares war on Spain*
- 1636 (Apr.) *Robert Sidney, second Earl of Leicester, appointed ambassador extraordinary to France; leaves England on 7 May, accompanied by his sons, Philip and Algernon; arrives in Jun. and serves there until May 1641; his wife, Dorothy Percy Sidney, manages the Penshurst estate and the building of their London residence during his absences abroad*
- 1637 (5 Feb.) *Ferdinand III succeeds as Holy Roman Emperor after death of Ferdinand II*
- 1638 (1 Mar.) *Scottish National Covenant signed at Edinburgh*
- 1639 (Feb.) *Robert Sidney, second Earl of Leicester, temporarily recalled from France (returned in Aug.) and sworn a Privy Councillor on 5 May. He is accompanied in France by his wife Dorothy Percy Sidney, Countess of Leicester, between Sept. 1639 and Oct. 1641*  
 (11 Jul.) *Dorothy Sidney (1617–84) marries Henry Spencer (1620–43), later Earl of Sunderland, at Penshurst*

- 1640            *King Charles I's "Short Parliament" (13 Apr.–5 May)*  
*King Charles I's "Long Parliament" begins (30 Nov. 1640–20 Apr. 1653)*
- 1641 (May)        Robert Sidney, second Earl of Leicester, and his sons, Philip and Algernon, recalled to England  
 (spring?)        birth of Henry Sidney (d. 1704), son of Robert and Dorothy Sidney, later Earl of Romney  
 (14 Jun.)        Robert Sidney, second Earl of Leicester, appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (but he never travels there)  
 (Jul.)            Philip Herbert, fourth Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, resigns as Lord Chamberlain  
 (Aug.)            Robert Sidney, second Earl of Leicester, briefly returns to France until early Oct.  
 (5 Sept.)        birth of Robert Spencer (d. 1702), son of Dorothy Sidney Spencer (d. 1684), later second Earl of Sunderland  
 (Oct.)            *rebellion in Ireland*
- 1642 (4 Jan.)     *King Charles I attempts to arrest the "five members" of Parliament and leaves London; Robert Sidney, second Earl of Leicester, attempts to cross to Ireland, but is recalled by the king*  
 (Apr.)            Philip and Algernon Sidney arrive in Ireland  
 (May–Jun.)     Robert Sidney, second Earl of Leicester, serves as temporary Speaker of the House of Lords and is appointed Lord Lieutenant for Kent (replaced in Aug.)  
 (Jun.–Jul.)     *King Charles I issues Commissions of Array, and the navy declares for Parliament*  
 (Oct.)            *Battle of Edgehill (indecisive)*  
 (Nov.)            *royalist forces advance to Turnham Green (parliamentarian victory)*  
 (Dec.)            *formation of the Eastern Association, a parliamentarian army drawn from forces in the east of England; commanded by Edward Montagu, second Earl of Manchester, and including an elite cavalry troop led by Oliver Cromwell (disbanded in early 1645 and incorporated into the New Model Army)*
- 1643 (Jan.)        Philip Herbert, fourth Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, is one of the parliamentary commissioners sent to Oxford to offer peace propositions to King Charles I  
 (14 May)        *death of King Louis XIII and accession of King Louis XIV of France*  
 (22 Jun.)        Philip and Algernon Sidney leave Ireland  
 (15 Sept.)        *English royalists agree to a ceasefire in Ireland*  
 (20 Sept.)        death of Henry Spencer (b. 1620), first Earl of Sunderland, at the Battle of Newbury (indecisive)  
 (26 Sept.)        Penshurst sequestered by the Kent County Committee  
 (Nov.)            Robert Sidney, second Earl of Leicester, replaced as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland by Earl of Ormond; *the Scots agree to send an army to assist Parliament*
- 1644 (Jan.)        *royalist Parliament summoned at Oxford; Scottish army crosses into England to assist the Long Parliament*  
 (15 Apr.)        Algernon Sidney appointed colonel of a parliamentarian regiment of horse  
 (Jun.)            Robert Sidney, second Earl of Leicester, leaves royalist Oxford and retires to Penshurst