

**Letter from John Donne to Sir George More, 1601/1602 February 13:  
autograph manuscript signed, Papers of the More family of Loseley Park,  
Surrey. Transcription by Early Modern Manuscripts Online (EMMO). MS  
L.b.529, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC.**

leaf 1 recto

S<sup>r</sup>

From yo<sup>w</sup>, to whom next to God, I shall owe my health, by enioyeng by yo<sup>r</sup> Mediacon this  
mild change of Imprisonm<sup>t</sup>, I desire to derive all my good fortune and Content in  
this world. And therfore w<sup>th</sup> my most vnfeyned thanks, psent to yo<sup>w</sup> my humble  
peticon that yo<sup>w</sup> would be pleasd to hope, that as that fault w<sup>ch</sup> was layd to  
me, of hauing deceiud some gentlewomen before, and that of loving a Corrupt  
Religion are vanishd and smoakd away (as I assure my self, owt of theyr weaknes  
they are, And that as the Deuyll in the Article of o<sup>r</sup> Death takes the aduan-  
tadge of o<sup>r</sup> weaknes and fear to aggrauate o<sup>r</sup> Sinns to o<sup>r</sup> Conscience, so some vn-  
charitable Malice hath presented my Debts doble at least, So; many of the  
Imputacons layd vpon me, would fall of, if I might but shake and purge my  
self in yo<sup>r</sup> psence. But if that were donne, of this Offence committed to yo<sup>w</sup>  
I cannot acquit my self. Of w<sup>ch</sup> yet, I hope that God, to whom for that  
I hartily direct many prayers, wyll informe yo<sup>w</sup> to make that vse, that as  
of Euyll Manners good Lawes growe, so owt of o<sup>r</sup> disobedience and boldnes,  
yo<sup>w</sup> wyll take Occasion to show Mercy and tendernes. And when yt shall  
please <sup>^god</sup> yo<sup>w</sup> to soften yo<sup>r</sup> hart so much towards vs, as to pardon vs, I beseech  
yo<sup>w</sup> allso to vndertake that charitable office of beeing my Mediator to my  
L: whom as vpon yo<sup>r</sup> iust Complaint yo<sup>w</sup> found full of iustice, I doubt not  
but yo<sup>w</sup> shall allso find full of Mercy: for so ys the Almighty pattern of  
Iustice and Mercy, equally full of bothe. My Conscience and such Affec-  
tion as in my Conscience becomes an honest man, emboldneth me to make  
one request more, w<sup>ch</sup> ys that by some kind and Comfortable message yo<sup>w</sup>  
would be pleasd to giue some ease of the afflictions w<sup>ch</sup> I know yo<sup>r</sup>  
Daughter in her Mind suffers; and that (if it be not against yo<sup>r</sup> other  
purposes) I may w<sup>th</sup> yo<sup>r</sup> leaue wright to her; for w<sup>th</sup> owt yo<sup>r</sup> leaue  
I wyll never attempt any thing concerning her. God so haue mercy  
vpon me, as I ame vnchangeably resolvd, to bend all my Courses to make  
me fitt for her; w<sup>ch</sup> if God, and my L: and yo<sup>w</sup> be pleasd to strengthen  
I hope neyther my Debts, w<sup>ch</sup> I can easily Order, nor any thing els shall  
interrupt. Allmighty god keepe yo<sup>w</sup> in his fauor, and restore me to his  
and yo<sup>rs</sup>. From my Chamber, whether by yo<sup>r</sup> fauor I ame Come. 13<sup>o</sup>  
Feb: 1601

Yo<sup>rs</sup> in all dutifull obedience  
I: Donne

leaf 1 verso || leaf 2 recto

**leaf 2 verso**

To the right wor<sup>pl</sup>  
S<sup>r</sup> George More knight