

Letter from Christopher Brooke, Marshalsea Prison, to Sir Thomas Egerton, 1601/1602 February 25: autograph manuscript signed, Papers of the More family of Loseley Park, Surrey. Transcription by Early Modern Manuscripts Online (EMMO). MS L.b.531, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC.

leaf 1 recto

May it please y^r good Lp

What myne offence is, beinge singled out by it selfe, none can better iudge then y^r Honour, whoe vnderstand what man can vnderstand, & iustly censure greater every day. And perhaps it should bee indiscreetly done, to offer to yo^r Lps eares (filled necessarily every houre wth the complaints of the whole Realme) such circūstances, as might diminishe this poore fault of myne myne. Therefore I spare, yet will bee bold, my Lord, to say, that they are as many, as those y^t can bee founde out to aggravate the same. My Lord, it was inioyned, y^t I should make some submission. I haue drawn one out of my hart, & writt it wth myne owne hande, & sent it to his Grace, & the Rest of the Comissioners for those causes wherein I have confessed myne offence against the Canon Lawes, & Constitucons provinciall of this Realme, & have testified my sorrowe for the whole fact. What other satisfacōn I (but such an offender as I am) should make, I knowe not, but I allwayes submitt myselfe. ffor S^r George Moore (my Lord) I knew then neyther his parson nor his Estate, much lesse y^t worthy favour, in w^{ch} (yo^r Lp wittnes) he standeth wth y^r Honour. ffor, my Lord, if I had (as vnwise as I am) I would have chosen rather to haue vndergone for M^r Donne some other more apparant daunger. And pardon me a word for him my Lord, were it not nowe best, y^t every one, whome he any way concerns, should become his favourer or his frind, whoe wants (my good Lord) but fortunes handes & tonge to reare him vpp, & sett him out. ffor my part, my L, besides these other thinges I am held from the sittinge at yorke, already foure dayes since begunne, where (in my silly fortune, such as it is) my profitablest practise lies. And I protest, my Lord, y^t thereby I am indaungered to loose my mothers favoure, whome I seeme to forsake in her greatest businesses, whose favoure is the best part of my strenght & meanes of well-doinge. Wherefore my humble request vnto y^r Lp is, y^t youe would bee soe good L vnto me as to discharge me & my suerties of y^t Recognisance of 1500 1100^{lb}. That when it shall please his Grace & the Rest to deliuer me from the marshalsee, whereof I have hope I may noe longer, my L, bee staid from those businesses in the Cuntry, whereof I have nowe more, then yet in all my lyfe I ever had. Thus I most humbly take my leave, & betake y^r Lp to Gods protecōn. This 25th of ffebruary 1601. from the marshalsee.

y^r Honours in all humble service
ever to bee comaunded
Chr: Bruke

leaf 1 verso

leaf 2 recto

leaf 2 verso

To the Right Honourable Sr
Thomas Egerton knight
Lord Keeper of the great
Seale of England