

**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 your good Lordship  
What mine offence is, being singled out by it self, none can better judge then your Honor, who understand what man can understand, & justly censure greater every day. And perhaps it should be indiscreetly done, to offer to your Lordship's ears (filled necessarily every hour with the complaints of the whole Realm) such circumstances, as might diminish this poor fault of ~~myne~~ mine. Therefore I spare, yet will be bold, my Lord, to say, that they are as many, as those that can be found out to aggravate the same. My Lord, it was enjoined, that I should make some submission. I have drawn one out of my heart, & wrote it with mine own hand, & sent it to his Grace, & the Rest of the Commissioners for those causes wherein I have confessed mine offence against the Canon Laws, & Constitutions provincial of this Realm, & have testified my sorrow for the whole fact. What other satisfaction I (but such an offender as I am) should make, I know not, but I always submit myself. for Sir George More (my Lord) I knew then neither his parson nor his Estate, much less that worthy favor, in which (your Lordship witness) he stands with your Honor. for, my Lord, if I had (as unwise as I am) I would have chosen rather to have undergone for Mr Donne some other more apparent danger. And pardon me a word for him my Lord, were it not now best, that every one, whom he any way concerns, should become his favorer or his friend, who wants (my good Lord) but fortunes hands & tongue to rear him up, & set him out. for my part, my Lord, besides these other things I am held from the sitting at York, already four days since begun, where (in my silly fortune, such as it is) my profitablest practise lies. And I protest, my Lord, that thereby I am endangered to loose my mothers favor, whom I seem to forsake in her greatest businesses, whose favor is the best part of my strength & means of well-doing. Wherefore my humble request unto your Lordship is, that you would be so good Lord unto me as to discharge me & my sureties of that Recognisance of 4500 1100<sup>lb</sup>. That when it shall please his Grace & the Rest to deliver me from the Marshalsea, whereof I have hope I may no longer, my Lord, be staid from those businesses in the Country, whereof I have now more, then yet in all my life I ever had. Thus I most humbly take my leave, & betake your Lordship to God's protection. This 25<sup>th</sup> of February 1601. from the Marshalsea.

your Honor's in all humble service

ever to be commanded  
Christopher Brooke

**leaf 1 verso**

**leaf 2 recto**

**leaf 2 verso**

To the Right Honorable Sir  
Thomas Egerton knight  
Lord Keeper of the great  
Seal of England