

**Letter from John Donne, Covent Garden, to Sir Robert More, Loseley, 1614  
July 28: autograph manuscript signed, Papers of the More family of Loseley  
Park, Surrey. Transcription by Early Modern Manuscripts Online (EMMO).  
MS L.b.537, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC.**

leaf 1 recto

S<sup>r</sup>

Our predecessors were neuer so conquered by y<sup>e</sup> Danes  
as I ame at thys tyme. for theyr comminge haue put  
my litle Court busines out of y<sup>e</sup> way, and dispossessed  
me of so neer hopes, as lackd litle of possession.  
I must confes my weaknes in thys behalfe; no man  
attends court fortunes w<sup>th</sup> more impatience then I  
do. I esteeme nothinge more inexcusable, then to  
attend them chargeably, nor any expence so chargeable,  
as that of tyme. I ame so angry at theyr comminge,  
that I haue not so much as inquir'd why they came.  
But they are euen w<sup>th</sup> mee; for, in truthe, they came  
for nothinge. Statesmen, who can finde matter of  
state, in any wrinkle in y<sup>e</sup> kings socks, thinke that  
he came for y<sup>e</sup> busines of Cleue. but whether for  
hys brother Saxon, or hys Cousin Brandenbourge, I  
do not hear that he can tell. And the low-Country  
men, thys last year, did hym such an affront, at hys  
great Custome-place, the Sondt, that some thinke  
he comes to vnderstand o<sup>r</sup> kings disposition in y<sup>t</sup> busi=  
nes, if he <sup>shall</sup> go about to right himselfe vpon them. Others  
thinke he came to correct o<sup>r</sup> enormity of yellow bands,  
by presentinge as many, as blew. For my particular opi=  
nion, I thinke, he came to defeat mee, and retard my busines.  
He came vpon fryday, and he goes vpon monday; and these two  
termes limit are his history; for he doth nothinge between.  
He hath brought with hym hys Chanceler, and hys Admirall; and  
ys otherwise well attended. He ships 100 horse; but sent

leaf 1 verso

them back, after he had been a day at sea. He pretended  
to go into Germany; but after he was at sea, he disco=  
verd hys purpose; and accordingly left a Commission for y<sup>e</sup>  
gouernment, to be opened, after he had been certaine  
dayes away. The rest of hys history, yo<sup>w</sup> may finde, I  
thinke, in some part of Amadis y<sup>e</sup> Gaule, at yo<sup>r</sup> leysure.  
I wyll not contribute so much to myne own ill fortune,  
nor ioyne w<sup>t</sup> her in a treason against myselfe, so much  
as to be absent now, when my absence may give perchance  
occasion, perchance excuse to others of slacknes in my busines.  
therefore I have neglected my pleasure, and y<sup>e</sup> litle circum=  
stance of my health, (for in good faythe, my lyfe yt=

selfe ys no great Circumstance to mee) w<sup>ch</sup> I intended by  
goinge into y<sup>e</sup> Cuntry. Therfor, s<sup>r</sup>, I send backe yo<sup>r</sup> horse,  
in as good case, as so longe rest in y<sup>e</sup> Coven garden  
can make hym. If I finde yt necessary to go, I wyll  
be bold to aske yo<sup>w</sup>, by an expresse Messenger againe,  
whether yo<sup>w</sup> can spare him then, or no. yo<sup>r</sup> poore sister  
remembers her loue to yo<sup>r</sup> selfe and all yo<sup>r</sup> company. So<sup>do</sup> I,  
s<sup>r</sup>, who ame euer

Yo<sup>rs</sup> to be commanded  
I: Donne.  
At my poore Hospitall  
28 Iulii 1614

**leaf 2 recto**

This ~~Mr. Donne~~<sup>Donne</sup> Married One of S<sup>r</sup> George  
Mores Daughters  
against his Consent

**leaf 2 verso**

To the righte wor: S<sup>r</sup>  
Robert More knight  
At Lothesley.