# Letter to James after his Condemnation (1604)

Sir Walter Raleigh

## Transcript

British Library, Additional MS 22601, ff. 17r–18r

**17r**

{*gap: elision*}

Enuseth the l[ett]re of S[i]r Walter Rawleigh to the Kinge after his Arraignm[en]t

**18v**

The life w[hi]ch I had moste mighty Prince the lawe hath taken from me, and I am nowe but the same Earth & duste, of whiche I was made: yf my offence had any quantity w[i]th yo[u]r Ma[jes]ties vnmeasurable goodnes, I mighte hope; but yet yo[u]r great Ma[jes]tie must Iudge both & not I. Anie bloud, gentility, birth or Estate I haue none, no not so muche as a beinge, no not so muche as *vita plante*: I haue only a penitent Sowle in a bodie of Iron whiche moueth towards the Loadestone of death, and cannot be w[i]th-held from touchinge it, except your Ma[jes]ties mercy turne the point towards me w[hi]ch expelleth it. Lost I am for hearinge a vaine man, for hearinge only, and neuer belieuinge or acceptinge, and so little accompt I made of that speache of his w[hi]ch was my condemnat[i]on, as the liuinge God doth truly witnes yt I neuer remembred any suche thinge vntill it was at my triall obiected against me: So did he repaye my Care, who cared to make him good, w[hi]ch I see no care of man can effect. But for my offence to him yt layed this heauy burthen on me miserable and vnfortunate wretch yt I am, but not for

**18r**

louinge you my Soueraigne, hath God layed this sorrowe on me: For God knoweth, with whom[m]e I may not dissemble, that I honored, yo[u]r Ma[jes]tie by fame, and loued & ~~a~~ admired yo[u]r Ma[jes]ty by knowledge; so as whither I dy or liue, your Ma[jes]ties true and louinge Seruaunt I will die or liue. If I nowe write what doth not become me? (moste mercifull Prince) vouchesaue to ascribe it to [th]e Counsell of a dead hart w[hi]ch sorrow hath broken: but [th]e more my miserie is, the more is yo[u]r Ma[jes]ties great mercy, if you please to behold it; and [th]e less I can deserue, the more liberall is yo[u]r guifte: God only, yo[u]r Ma[jes]ty shall im[m]itate herein, both by giuinge freely to suche a one, fro[m] whom[m]e there can be no retribut[i]on, but only a desire to paie againe a lent life with the same greate loue w[hi]ch the same great goodnes shall pleas to bestowe it. This beinge the first l[ett]re w[hi]ch euer yo[u]r Ma[jes]ty receiued from a dead man, I humbly submitt my selfe to the will of my supreame Lorde and shall willingly & paciently suffer, whatsoeuer shall please yo[u]r Ma[jes]ty to laye on me./

## Other manuscript witnesses

- Alnwick Castle, MS 556, pp72–73
- British Library, Additional MS 4108, f. 114v
- British Library, Additional MS 44848, ff. 166v–167r
- British Library, Additional MS 73087, ff. 26v–27v
- British Library, Egerton MS 3876, f. 215v

- British Library, Harley MS 1576, f. 213r
- British Library, Harley MS 39, ff. 353v–354v
- British Library, Harley MS 4761, ff. 19r–20r
- British Library, Harley MS 6242, ff. 89r–v
- British Library, Lansdowne MS 157, ff. 155x–156x
- British Library, Sloane MS 3520, ff. 12r–13r
- British Library, Additional MS 25707, ff. 147r–v
- British Library, Additional MS 52585, ff. 41v–42r
- British Library, Sloane MS 3079
- Beinecke Library, Osborn File 12456
- Beinecke Library, Osborn fb243
- Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 781, f. 93
- Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson B 151, f. 1v, 2r
- Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson C 744, f. 59r
- Bodleian Library, MS Tanner 82, ff. 241v–242v
- Cambridge University Library, MS Ee.5.23, p427
- Folger Shakespeare Library, MS G.b.9, ff. 137v–138v
- Folger Shakespeare Library, MS X.d.241, ff. 1r–v
- Gonville & Caius College, MS 73/40, ff. 215r–v
- Huntington Library, HM 102, f. 13r
- Huntington Library, HM 36836, ff. 118–120
- Inner Temple Library, Petyt MS 538/36, ff. 79r–v
- London Society of Antiquaries, MS 291, ff. 31v–32r
- Lincoln's Inn, Maynard MS 59, ff. 341r–342v
- Somerset Archives, DD\MI/18/82
- University College, MS 152 [on deposit at the Bodleian], ff. 46–47

## Seventeenth-century print exemplars

- *Arraignment and Conviction of Sr Walter Rawleigh* (1648) [Wing A3744], pp. 35–36

## Modern print exemplars

- *Somers Tracts* (2nd ed.), vol. 2, pp. 442–443

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