

Oi13 Justice of late hath lost her witts

Notes. The final four lines of this poem on the elevation of Sir Nicholas Hyde to Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench in February 1627 are not commonly included in variant sources. Since they also form part of "*Fower Cheyffe Justices late wee had*", we might infer a scribe either wittingly or unwittingly conflating different poems on the same topic. The version used also has "1628" as a date, which is off by a year.

"1628"

Justice of late hath lost her witts

Or els is growne into strange fitts

And flyes about like Ague-fitts¹

With Reverend Cooke² it would not stay

For Mountague³ drewe it away

From learned Lee⁴ and honest Crewe⁵

As swift as ayre away it flewe

And sith it would not theire abide

Its nowe wrapt upp within a Hyde⁶

Nowe boots, and shooes must needs be deere

For Hyde is rais'd for all this yeare.

1 Learned Cooke. 2. Mountague

3 Grave Lee. 4 honest Crewe

Two preferr'd two sett asyde⁷

And then upstart Sir Nicholas Hyde

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Source. Bodleian MS Malone 23, pp. 119-120

Other known sources. Bodleian MS Ashmole 38, p. 143; BL Add. MS 33998, fol. 29v; Rosenbach MS 239/27, p. 46

¹ *Ague-fitts*: shivering fits associated with the malaria-like disease known to contemporaries as the ague.

² *Reverend Cooke*: Sir Edward Coke, dismissed as Lord Chief Justice in 1616.

³ *Mountague*: Sir Henry Montagu, who succeeded Coke as Lord Chief Justice in 1616 and held the office until his promotion to Lord Treasurer in 1620. Montagu was created Viscount Mandeville around the time of the promotion and became Earl of Manchester and Lord President of the Privy Council under Charles I.

⁴ *learned Lee*: Sir James Ley, Earl of Marlborough, succeeded Montagu as Lord Chief Justice and was promoted to Lord Treasurer late in 1624.

⁵ *honest Crewe*: Sir Randall (or Ranulph) Crew (or Crewe) was sworn in as Lord Chief Justice early in 1625 and held the office until late 1626 when his challenge to the legality of the forced loan led to his dismissal. The adjective “honest” thus has an extra political bite here.

⁶ *Hyde*: Sir Nicholas Hyde. The next two lines pun on Hyde’s surname to imply that his raising—the raising of Hyde—would inflate the cost of leather goods because the price of “hide” has risen.

⁷ *Two preferr’d two sett asyde*: Montagu and Ley were “preferred”, promoted from Lord Chief Justice; Coke and Crew were “set aside”.
