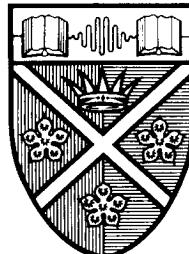


STRATHCLYDE PAPERS ON GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS



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HOUSE OF COMMONS –
FORTY YEARS ON*

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THE MEMBERS OF THE 1945 HOUSE OF COMMONS - FORTY YEARS ON

By C. M. Regan

Introduction

Although the great bulk of the membership of the 1945 House of Commons was elected on 5th July of that year, it was not until 16th November 1945 that the House was complete. On that day, Mr Richard Law,¹ the victor in the last of the eight by-elections which were caused by deaths during the election process, and by elevations to the Lords in the Resignation Honours and arising from the appointment to the Lord Chancellorship,² was introduced. This article examines the 132 surviving members (as at June 1, 1985) of the 1945 House of Commons in various respects.³ "Surviving members"⁴ for this purpose includes of course those no longer serving in the Commons, the preponderant majority, as well as the very small number who are still serving currently.⁵

The 1945 House had 640 members. It was a House of which the dominant feature was that it had an overall Labour and supporters' majority of some 170, whereas, in the 1935 House, the overall Conservative and supporters' majority had been about 165 - an almost exact reversal.⁶ One hundred and thirty-two represents just over 20 per cent of 640. Of the 132, forty-one had been serving at the dissolution in June 1945, and were re-elected; and another two were elected who had had service in an earlier Parliament.⁷

Eighty-nine were elected for the first time. The 43 represent nearly 15 per cent of the total number of 299 members who were elected in 1945 with previous House of Commons service; the 89 represent rather over 25 per cent of the 341 members who were newly elected in that year. The Party composition of the 132 survivors (about 45 per cent Conservative, over 50 per cent Labour and less than five per cent Liberals and Independents) does not represent in percentage terms either the Party composition of the 1945 House or the respective Party proportions in the previous-service or newly elected categories. Thus this article makes no pretence to statistical validity in the sense of a claim that the material which is analysed is representative of the 1945 House of Commons as a whole; time and resources have not allowed the 508 members of that House who are no longer alive to be examined. What is claimed is that a group of 132 - just over one-fifth of the total population - is in itself quite sufficiently interesting to warrant examination as to various characteristics, in the sense of a snapshot at a point in time. The characteristics considered in turn are years of birth (from which current ages are of course derivable); age at start of service in the House of Commons; number of years of service in the Commons and related matters; political success, as measured by office held and some other factors; changes in Party affiliations; reasons for the end of service in the Commons; and age at the end of such service.

A number of provisos need initially to be stated, however. First, time and resources have not allowed any cross-analyses between the four main tables which are set out below. It also follows from the approach adopted of sequentially considering different but related aspects of service in the

Commons that - though every endeavour has been made to keep it to a minimum - some degree of repetition of the same names under different classifications is unavoidable. Secondly, it has been a matter of deliberate decision, given the high age profile of the group, and what must clearly be an inevitable incidence of a degree of disability among many of them, to rely entirely on published sources.⁸ Any gaps that there are which personal approaches might have filled therefore remain unfilled. Thirdly, constituencies are not analysed *per se* in this article, but are only referred to where they are directly or indirectly relevant to an aspect which is itself analysed. Fourthly, it will be clear that what, in a nutshell, is being analysed is a group of politicians - not the politics or policies pursued by those politicians over the last 40 years. And, fifthly, the focus is wholly on those politicians as politicians, so that all activities, achievements and forms of public service which are extra-Parliamentary are outside the scope of this article except where they incidentally bear on Parliamentary careers.

Years of Birth

Table 1 below⁹ sets out the years of birth of the 132 members who survive. In this Table, as in the other three, the convention which has been adopted is one of a double division. Category A represents throughout the 43 who had served in the House at some period before the 1945 general election; and Category B the 89 who were first elected in that year. And there is, secndly, a division by Party - Conservative; Labour; and Liberal and Independents¹⁰.

Table 1

TABLE 1

YEAR OF BIRTH

YEAR OF BIRTH	CONSERVATIVE		LABOUR		LIBERAL/ INDEPENDENT	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
1884			0			
1888			0			
1890	0					
1891	0					
1892			0			
1893	0			0		
1894	00	0				
1895			0	0		
1896				0		
1897	0	0				
1898		0		0		
1899	0			00	0	
1900	00			0	0	
1901	000	00	0	00		
1902		0		000		
1903	000000	00		000	0	
1904	00		0	0		
1905	0		0	0000		
1906	00	0	0	00000		
1907	000	0		0000000		
1908		000		0000		
1909	00	000		000		
1910	00	0		000		
1911	00	0	0	0		
1912		00		0000		
1913			0		0	
1914		00		00000		
1915				00		
1916		0		00		
1917		0		0		
1918		0		0		
1920		00		0		

It will be seen that there is now one centenarian (Lord Shinwell, born on 18th October 1884, and the oldest living Parliamentarian), while the youngest survivor (The Hon. Edward Carson, born on 17th February 1920) is 65. The total of 132 includes seven women¹¹. Of these the oldest (Mrs Muriel Nichol) was born in 1893, and is thus 93; and the youngest (Lady Bacon) was born in 1911, and is now 74. Twenty-two out of the 132 were born before the present century started and are thus over 85. Another 38 were born between 1900 and 1905 inclusive, and are thus 80 or over. As one would expect, those in Category A (with pre-1945 service) are generally to be found nearer the top of the Table than those in Category B (first elected in 1945); the youngest of those in Category A (two Conservatives, one Labour) were all born in 1911, and are thus now 74 (Sir Fitzroy Maclean, Sir Charles Mott-Radclyffe and Mr Thomas Fraser).

The two features which stand out are that there are many more Conservative ex-Members in Category A (32) than there are Labour ones (eight); and that, correspondingly, the Labour representation in the Table is heavily concentrated in the first 15 years of this century. Clearly these two aspects reflect, on the one hand, the generally lower age of pre-war Conservative members and the fact that, even among the general Conservative debacle in 1945, a surprising number (some 137) managed to hold on; and, on the other hand, the generally higher age profile of pre-war Labour members, contrasted with the fact that, in 1945, the preponderant Labour strength had, in the nature of things, a heavy incidence not only of new Members (261) but also of young ones. Table 1, of course, says nothing about ages actually achieved in relation to expectation of life (whether generally or differentially as between men and women) nor about those ages in comparison with the ages achieved by the 508 elected in 1945 who do not survive. Nonetheless, it may be observed that an overall survivor rate of over 20 per

cent is not inconsiderable; and that it appears to raise the question whether the widespread assumption that the life-style imposed upon members of the House of Commons is an unhealthy one predisposing to disability and often premature death is in fact warranted. On the other hand, it may simply be a question of the survival of the fittest; and the differential survivor rate within the overall 20 per cent figure (men 20 per cent but women nearly 30 per cent) proves that here the group certainly conforms to the general pattern. It may be added, finally, that no-one in Category A is still serving as at 1st June 1985. On the other hand, three Members, born respectively in 1908 (Mr Ian Mikardo); 1912 (Mr James Callaghan);¹³ and 1913 (Mr Michael Foot) who were elected in 1945 are still serving currently.

Ages at Start of Service in the House of Commons

Table 2 sets out the ages of the group of 132 at the start of their service in the House of Commons.

Table 2

TABLE 2

AGE AT START OF SERVICE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

AGE AT START OF SERVICE IN THE COMMONS	CONSERVATIVE		LABOUR		LIBERAL/ INDEPENDENT	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
21	0					
24	00		0			
25	0	00		0		
26	0					
27	0	0		0		
28	00	0	0	0		
29	0	0	0	00		
30	00000			00	0	
31	0000	00		00000		
32			0	0		0
33		00		0000		
34	0	0	0	0		
35	00			000	0	
36	0	000		000		
37	0	000	0	0000		
38	0	0	0	000000		
39	0	0		00000	0	
40				0000		
41	0			0		
42	0	00		000		
43	00	0		000		
44		00		00		
45				0		
46		0	0	00		
47		0		0		
48		0				
49	0			0		
50	0			0		
51		0				
52				00		

The Table materially reflects the salient features noted in the previous analysis of the information in Table 1 about years of birth. Out of 58 Conservatives in Categories A and B together, no less than 44 were below the age of 40 at the start of their service in the Commons, and this emphasis on youth is not startlingly greater in the pre-1945 group than among those first elected in that year. Six Conservative members were first elected at or below 25; and the youngest was only 21 at the date of his election (Sir Hugh Munro-Lucas-Tooth, born in January 1903 and first elected in October 1924). On the Labour side, 43 out of 68 were first elected between the ages of 30 and 40 inclusive; and all but one of the Labour survivors in Category A were 38 or less at first election. Only five in any Party were 50 or over at the date of first election; and 52 was the highest age at first election (Mr W. T. Paling, Labour, born in October 1892, and first elected in 1945).

It is worth noting specially two facts about the surviving women members. At one extreme, Lady Lee of Ashridge was born in November 1904, and was, as Miss Jennie Lee, first elected as Labour member for North Lanarkshire at a by-election in February 1929, being the 16th woman ever to be elected. At 24 she was in 1929 the youngest woman to have been elected to the House, and she was only superseded in this respect 40 years later by the (then) Miss Bernadette Devlin. Miss Lee in 1934 married Mr Aneurin Bevan who died in 1960. At the other end, one of the 21 Labour women members elected in 1945 (Mrs Muriel Nichol) was at the top of the age range, being then 52.

Number of Years of Service in the Commons and Related Matters

We turn now to the lengths of the periods of service in the House of Commons of the 132 survivors. Table 3 presents their total numbers of years of service.

TABLE 3

TABLE 3

**TOTAL YEARS OF SERVICE
IN THE COMMONS
(TO NEAREST WHOLE YEAR)**

	CONSERVATIVE		LABOUR		LIBERAL/OTHER	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
5		00		00000 00000		
6		00		0000		
8	0	00			0	
10	0			0		
11		000 ¹				
13				0		
14				0000		
15	00	0		00 ¹	0	
16	0				0	
17		0				
18	00 ¹	0				
19	00	00000		0000 ¹		
20	0	00 ³				
21	0	00		00 ³		0
22	000			0	0	
24	000	0 ²		0		
25	0 ²	0		0 00000 000		
26	00 ¹	0				
27		0				
28	00		0 ²			0 ²
29		0		00000		
30	00 ³					
31				00 ⁵		
33	00000 ¹					
34	0	0		00000		
35				000 ⁶		
38	0 ²	00	0 ²	00000		
39	0					
40			0 ⁴	0 ⁷		
45	0					
47			0 ²			
48		0				

1. Includes one with broken service.
2. Broken service.
3. Both with broken service.
4. Service broken twice.
5. Includes one with service broken twice.
6. All three with broken service; two out of three are serving currently.
7. Serving currently.

It will be seen that the shortest period of service was five years; two Conservative and ten Labour members served for only the one Parliament up to the dissolution in February 1950. At the other extreme, Mr John Parker (Labour) left the House at the dissolution in May 1983, having had 47½ years' continuous service since the general election in November 1935. Lord Strauss (Labour) comes next with a total length of service as Mr George Strauss of 46 years and ten months. But Lord Strauss's total represents an aggregate of two periods of service: between the 30th May 1929 general election and the 8th October 1931 dissolution, and then again from the date of the by-election, on 23rd October 1934, in which he regained his Lambeth North seat, until he finally retired at the dissolution on 7th April 1979.¹⁴ The third longest service is that of 44 years and eight months continuously given by Mr R. H. Turton, now Lord Trammire (Conservative) between the May 1929 general election and the February 1974 dissolution.¹⁵

Mr James Callaghan has 40 years of service; the periods of service of Mr Michael Foot and Mr Ian Mikardo were both interrupted (at different dates) for some five years and amount to just under 35 years at 1st June 1985 in each case.¹⁶ Altogether twenty-three of the survivors in fact have non-continuous service, in all but one case of voluntary first retirement due to defeat; and two of them (including Lord Shinwell) have had two breaks. Interruptions in service are, in the nature of things, often associated with considerable length of total service.

In general, Table 3 shows that very short periods of service are concentrated among those on the Labour side who were first elected in 1945; no less than 14 Labour Members in that category had six or fewer years of service, as against only four Conservative ones. This reflects the Labour

losses in the February 1950 and then the October 1951 general elections. Sixty-three members had periods of service of between 10 and 25 years inclusive: 34 of them Conservatives, 25 on the Labour side, three Liberals and one Independent. Very long periods of total service, of 30 years or more, are also unevenly distributed: there are 13 on the Conservative side (10 in Category A and three in Category B) and 20 on the Labour side (four in Category A and 16 in Category B). There are five cases of 40 or more years' service, only one of them on the Conservative side. All three members still serving currently are Labour members, and of these one, Mr James Callaghan, is the current Father of the House.¹⁷ It is clearly a good thing in Westminster terms to have good health, and thus to be able to be around for a long time!

The position of the seven women members in relation to length of service is an interesting one. At one end, one of them (Mrs Muriel Nichol) only served for less than five years between July 1945 and February 1950. At the other, Mrs Barbara Castle served continuously between 1945 and the dissolution in April 1979. Her 34 years' service is so far the longest of any women member of the House of Commons.¹⁸ In between these two extremes, the periods of service are 22 years (the Dowager Viscountess Davidson, the only Conservative); 25 years (Lady Beacon and Miss Margaret Herbison); almost 28 years (Lady Lee of Ashridge, though with a break in service of nearly 14 years);¹⁹ and 29 years (Mrs Freda Corbet).

The actual number of years served in the Commons is, however, by no means the whole story so far as the attractions of a Parliamentary career, and efforts to attain, maintain or regain it are concerned. In the first place, a considerable number of members elected in 1945 had made previous unsuccessful attempts at entering the House. The figures, excluding those cases where both changes of party allegiance and unsuccessfully contested elections are involved (these cases are analysed in the section on changes in party affiliation below) are as follows. Seven Conservative members are in this position. Six made one earlier attempt (including the Earl of Stockton, who stood in Stockton-on-Tees in December 1923, the year before he was first elected in 1924) and one made two earlier attempts. Thirteen Labour members are in the same position. Ten made one previous attempt and three made two previous attempts. The ten include Mr George Oliver and Lord Shinwell (December 1918); Lord Strauss (October 1924); Mr John Parker (October 1931); and Mr Michael Foot and Mr Julius Silverman (both November 1935). The three are Mr W.T. Paling (May 1929 and October 1931 - this puts into perspective that he was 52 when he first entered the House in 1945); Lord Stewart of Fulham (October 1931 and November 1935); and Lord Segal (November 1935 and May 1939 at a by-election.

Six members - all Labour ones - made unsuccessful attempts after defeat to return to the House on occasions prior to that at which they were eventually successful. Four of the six (including Mr Michael Foot) made one such attempt; one (Lady Lee of Asheridge) made one at a general election and one at a by-election; and one (Lord Wallace of Coslany) made three attempts successively at the 1951, 1955 and 1959 general elections.

Eight members unsuccessfully contested seats after what in the event turned out to have been the end of their House of Commons service. Four (one Conservative and three Labour members) did so at the general election next succeeding the one in which they were defeated; one Labour member - Mr T. C. Skeffington-Lodge - did so at the general election following that in which he was defeated, as well as at the two succeeding ones (and then again at a by-election ten years later); and one Labour woman member did not stand at the general election after the one at which she was defeated, but did so at the one after that. One Conservative member who had resigned for political reasons, over Suez, in November 1956 (Sir Anthony Nutting) stood again in 1964. Mr Victor Montagu, who had succeeded to his father's peerage in June 1962, but disclaimed it in 1964, also stood again, as a Conservative, in that year's general election.

It is interesting that the high degree of persistence of effort evidenced by the 31 members whose electoral history has been examined above (the total is 31 because there are three members who feature twice) applies to Labour members more markedly than to Conservative ones. The ratio is 2:1. It is noteworthy that Sir Hugh Munro-Lucas-Tooth (Conservative) having been defeated in the Isle of Ely in May 1929, made no further attempt to re-enter the House until he was successful for Hendon South in 1945. It must also be emphasized that even continuous service, ^{does not by} any means necessarily mean continuity in the same constituency. Nonetheless, overall the analysis, relating, as it does, to well over 20 per cent of the whole group of 132, again shows the strong attraction of a career in the House of Commons, and demonstrates that continuity of effort is a very important attribute for those who experience that attraction.

In addition, persistence makes what may in many cases already be a very long career in national politics in any event still longer. To illustrate this point, extending Mr John Parker's 47½ years of Commons service back to when he first stood makes his total period one of almost 51½ years; Lord Strauss and Mr Michael Foot (though in both cases their actual Commons service has not been continuous) have on the same criterion respectively 54½ and nearly 50 years; Lord Stewart of Fulham and Mr Julius Silverman nearly 48 years; and Mr George Oliver (though again with a gap in service) nearly 46 years. And, of course, Mr Foot is still serving in the Commons and Lord Stewart is active in the House of Lords. Even more remarkable, perhaps, are the cases of the two major elder statesmen of the present day. The Earl of Stockton first stood unsuccessfully in December 1923, was elected in 1924, defeated in 1929 and then served from 1931 to 1964. After 20 years out of Parliament he entered the Lords in 1984 and has participated in debate there this year; his public career can thus now be said to span 61½ years. And Lord Shinwell stood unsuccessfully in December 1918, and served between 1922 and 1924 and 1928 and 1931, and then continuously from 1935 to 1970. In the latter year he entered the Lords, where he has been active since. The criterion of going back to the first election contested therefore makes his total political span one of 66½ years. Moreover, he has the distinction of being the most senior of the surviving members in terms of earliest date of first actual election²⁰.

Political Success

Having examined the length of service in the House of Commons of those in the group of 132 we turn in this section to their success in terms of paid Ministerial office held²¹. For this purpose, the basic approach adopted is that each office holder is included once only, and is classified under the most senior office held where he has occupied office at different levels. No distinctions are made in regard to length of periods of office held or in regard to the number of posts held, whether (if more than one) at a particular level or in total. Without this simplification, the analysis would become impossibly complicated. Nor is account taken, except where they are relevant in a specific context, of instances of political resignations of office as such.

Sixty-six out of the total group of 132 have held paid Ministerial office during their Commons service. Of these 26 were Conservatives and 40 were Labour members. The 26 Conservatives include eight in the pre-1945 (A) category who held junior office; and seven in the same A category who held Cabinet level office. The most senior offices achieved were Lord Thorneycroft's tenure of the Exchequer from January 1957 to January 1958, and the Earl of Stockton's Prime Ministership from January 1957 to October 1963. In the B category (those first elected in 1945) there were two Conservative holders of junior office; three Ministers of State; and six Ministers at Cabinet level.

Of the 40 Labour members who held paid Ministerial office, there were nine in the A category. Five of these held junior office; one, a woman (Lady Lee of Ashridge) was a Minister of State; and three were Cabinet level Ministers, with Lord Shinwell holding the most senior office as Minister of

Defence from 1950 to 1951. In the group of the Labour members first elected in 1945, 10 were junior Ministers; three (including one woman) were Ministers of State;³² one was Attorney-General; and 17 held Cabinet level office. This last group includes Lord Wilson of Rievaulx, Prime Minister from October 1964 to June 1970 and again from February 1974 to April 1976, and his successor as Prime Minister, Mr James Callaghan, who served as such until the Labour defeat in the May 1979 general election. It also includes such senior figures in the Labour Party as Mrs Barbara Castle, Mr Michael Foot and Lord Stewart of Fulham (who was Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary from 1968 to 1970). Miss Margaret Herbison (who was successively Minister of Pensions and National Insurance and Minister of Social Security from 1964 to 1967) is the second woman in the group.

This is not, however, the full story. In the first place, Lord Hailsham, while he is included above as a Conservative Cabinet level Minister in the A category, having been Secretary of State for Education and Science in 1964,³³ subsequently rose to a much more senior office after he had left the Commons and begun his second period of membership of the House of Lords. He was Lord Chancellor from 1970 to 1974 and has been so again since 1979; he is, indeed, the only one out of the whole group of 132 who still holds Ministerial office currently, having first been appointed to junior office 40 years ago. Similarly, Lord Elwyn-Jones, who is included above, having been the Attorney-General in the Labour government of 1964-70, became Lord Chancellor in the later Labour government formed in February 1974, and held that office until Labour was defeated in May 1979. Lord Tony Pandy is also included among the 17 Category B Labour Cabinet level Ministers; as Mr George Thomas he was Secretary of State for Wales from 1968 to 1970. But he subsequently filled the office of Speaker from February 1976 to May 1983. Similarly, Lord Fletcher, who was a Minister without Portfolio from 1964 to

1966, and is thus also in the group of 17, subsequently occupied the office of Chairman of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons from 1966 to 1968.

Lord Strathclyde is included above among the A group of Conservative junior Ministers because, during his Commons service, he only held junior office (in 1945 and from 1951 to 1955). But, subsequent to his elevation to the Lords in 1955, he was for three years a Minister of State in the Conservative government of the day.¹⁴ The same is true of Lord Beswick, who appears above in the group of 10 Labour Category B junior Ministers, in respect of service from 1950 to 1951. He was created a Life Peer in 1964, and was a Minister of State, and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords, from 1974 to 1975. Not included anywhere above is one Labour member - Lord Wallace of Coslany - who was elected for the first time in 1945 and subsequently had two breaks in service. His final period of service in the Commons ended in February 1974; he then went to the Lords as a Life Peer; and he held office for the first time as a Labour Whip in the Lords from 1977 to 1979.

Thus the true total of Ministerial office holders among the group of 132 when service in the Lords following service in the Commons is included, becomes 67; and the picture shifts a little more towards the senior end of the level-of-office spectrum. All in all a more than 50 per cent Ministerial office rate among the total group represents a remarkable figure per se; and it is even more when it includes three ex-Prime Ministers, a current and an ex-Lord Chancellor, a former Chancellor of the Exchequer, two former Foreign Secretaries and three former Lord Presidents of the Council. Moreover, a career of service in the House of Commons which culminates in the tenure of the Speakership for seven years is also a distinguished one on that score.

A question which now falls for consideration is that of the relationship between length of service in the House of Commons and the attainment of office. Given that the office analysis here presented is, as explained at the beginning of this section, a deliberately simplified one, under which each of those concerned only appears once under the highest paid office held, this examination also has been simplified, so as to compare the average length of Commons service for the whole group of 132 with the actual lengths of service for the office holder group. The average length of Commons service for the whole group of 132 is 22.4 years (and the averages when analysed for the Conservative and Labour groups separately are 22.2 and 22.4 years respectively). As compared to this, the Conservative group of 26 office holders has an average length of total Commons service of almost exactly 25 years. There were 11 whose service was of less than/22.5 years average, and 15 whose length of service exceeded that average. The average total length of Commons service for the Labour group of 40 office holders was higher at nearly 26 years. Of the 40, only 13 had service of less than the 22.5 years' average, while 27 had service of greater than that average length.

It is against this background that we must seek to answer the obvious question why - given that the two main parties divide among the group of 132 in the Table (Table 3 above) which analyses total years of service in the Commons, as to Conservative 61, Labour 65 - the figure for the total number of offices held by Labour members (in effect 41) should be substantially greater, by over 50 per cent, than the figure of 26 offices for the Conservatives. This disproportion, moreover, becomes larger if, realistically, office before the July 1945 election and since May 1979 is excluded, since it reduces the total Conservative figure to 22. Over the same 34-year period, between July 1945 and May 1979, Conservative and Labour governments have been in office almost equally for 17 years each; so it is not a question of the Labour

members having more years of opportunity for office than the Conservative ones. Nor does an analysis (not reproduced here) of lengths of periods of office held show any more rapid turnover on the Labour side - if anything, the contrary is true. While there has been a slow secular growth in the number of paid offices available to be filled during the whole period, that growth has not been markedly different as between Conservative and Labour administrations. Finally, since the Conservatives who survive out of the total number of Conservatives and supporters elected in 1945 in fact represent a substantially higher proportion (about 30 per cent) than do the Labour members (rather over 15 per cent) the explanation is not to be found in that aspect. Failing all these possible causes, a part of the explanation must clearly lie in the greater average length of service - and greater incidence of very long periods of service - for the Labour than for the Conservative group of office holders, and perhaps also in the greater Labour persistence factor which we have noted. But it does not seem likely that these causes can account for the whole of the disproportion; and thus there remains here an element of the unexplained.

A Privy Counsellorship for Cabinet level Ministers, whether in the Commons or in the Lords, has now for all practical purposes become automatic; but it is given only to some Ministers of State and rarely to junior Ministers. In addition it is sometimes awarded on an individual basis to Members who have not held office. The total number of Privy Counsellors in the group of 132 is 47, divided (on the basis of Party at the time of award) as to 19 Conservatives and 28 Labour members. This ratio corresponds broadly to that between Conservative and Labour office holders. Among the Conservatives two, Lord Martonmere and Lord Poole, did not hold government office. Among the Labour members three, Mr John Freeman (created 11 years

after the end of his Commons service), Lord Davies of Leek and Lord Rhodes held only junior office. On the Conservative side, Lord Poole was made a Privy Counsellor 13 years after the end of his Commons service, and on the Labour side Lord Rhodes five years after the end of his service and Lord Beswick nine years after the end of his. ^{Lord} But Beswick held government office in the Lords at the time, and Lord Rhodes had done so earlier³⁷. The distinction of being the senior Privy Counsellor among the whole group of 132 belongs to the Earl of Stockton, who joined the Privy Council as long ago as 1942.

It is convenient next to set out the information about peerages among the group of 132. Whichever one of a variety of possible motives in a particular case causes a serving or retired member of the House of Commons to be awarded a peerage, the effect for the present purpose is two-fold. First, if Parliament as a whole is looked at, then the award of a peerage enables, even if it does not compel or guarantee, the extension of the overall length of political service at the national level beyond that in the Commons by the mere fact of membership of the House of Lords. And, second - and many peerages are of course given precisely for this purpose even where office or further office in the Lords, either immediately or later, is not in contemplation - it means that nominal membership can be turned into continued active participation in the business of the Upper House at any time, for as long as health and other circumstances allow or individual inclination dictates.

Nearly 40 per cent of the group of 132 have peerages; the crude figure is 52. Of these, again on the basis of Party membership at the date of creation, 24 are held by Conservatives, 27 by Labour members and one by a Liberal. However, these crude figures need to be qualified. The Conservative total includes Lord Hailsham of St. Marylebone, who

disclaimed a hereditary viscountcy but was subsequently created a Life peer as it were ex- officio by virtue of his appointment to the Lord Chancellorship; and the Dowager Viscountess Davidson, who was created a Life Peer in her own right four years after she had ended her Commons service.²⁶ There is one Earl (Stockton); there are three Viscounts and seven hereditary Barons of first creation; and there are 11 Life Peers. On the Labour side Lord Elwyn-Jones's life peerage is again ex-officio by virtue of his appointment as Lord Chancellor; and there is one hereditary viscountcy. This went to Mr George Thomas (who has, however, no heirs) on his ceasing to be Speaker in 1983. All the remaining 25 peerages on the Labour side, including that accepted by Mr Harold Wilson, the former Prime Minister, (who could by tradition have laid claim to an Earldom) are Life ones; there are two women (Ladies Bacon and Lee of Ashridge) among them. The Liberal peerage is a Life one.

Thus it appears that (leaving aside the greater propensity of at any rate some Conservative Prime Ministers to be willing to award, and of Conservative members to wish to have, hereditary titles, to some extent on what used to be considered the traditional scale related to seniority of former office held) the conclusion to be drawn about peerages for the whole group of 132 is that, by this criterion also, they have been remarkably successful. As an illustration of the continuity that arises from this particular aspect of success, it is worth noting that, in a major division in the House of Lords in the 1984-85 Session, which was on 30th April 1985 on the amendment moved to the Local Government Bill by Lord Hayter that would have provided for the establishment of a London Metropolitan Authority as the strategic authority for Greater London in succession to the GLC, no less than 23 of those voting for the amendment (including Lord Shinwell) and 11 of those voting against had formerly been members of the Commons elected in 1945. These 34 peers

represented two-thirds of the 52 peers in our whole group of 132; and they constituted eight per cent of the total number of 422 peers who voted on the amendment.

Still in the same vein, it may be noted that six Conservative members were also awarded Baronetcies either during their Commons service, or within a year of the end of it; and that 12 other ²⁹ Conservatives were knighted within that time span. So the affliction of "knight starvation" which has in the past from time to time been said to trouble the Conservative Party appears, at any rate so far as concerns those Conservatives who survive from 1945, to have been successfully overcome. There are no Labour Baronets or Knights.

Finally, there are a number of other honours which can be awarded by the Crown to those in public service; and so it is worth noting that the group of 132 includes two Knights of the Garter (Lords Wilson of Rievaulx and Rhodes); one Knight of the Thistle (Lord Muirshiel); one Companion of the Order of Merit (the Earl of Stockton); and eight Companions of Honours (Lords Aylestone, Eccles, Elwyn-Jones, Hailsham, Muirshiel, Shinwell, Stewart of Fulham and Thorneycroft).

Changes in Party Affiliations

Changes in the Party affiliations of the 132 survivors are unquestionably highly interesting; they are also far from easy to analyse or present. In order to do comprehensibly here, two simplifications have been adopted. Resignations from a Party and/or withdrawals of the Whip which are temporary are ignored; and so are movements between minor and major parties of the same tendency (e.g. from the Independent Labour Party or the Commonwealth Party to the Labour Party, or from the Liberal National or National Labour Parties to the Conservative Party).

There are, first, four major changes of allegiance in that the individuals concerned actually first served as Labour members and, indeed, Ministers, and then subsequently changed their Party.

Mr Ivor Bulmer-Thomas had contested Spen Valley as a Labour candidate at the 1935 general election. He was elected as Labour member for Keighley in February 1942 and re-elected in July 1945; between 1945 and 1947 he held two successive junior offices. He became an Independent in October 1948 and became a Conservative in January 1949, continuing to serve as such until he was defeated as Conservative candidate for Newport - to which he had switched - at the February 1950 general election.

Mr Aidan Crawley was elected as Labour member for Buckingham in 1945 and served as such until 1951, when he was defeated. He held junior office from 1950 to 1951. He resigned from the Labour Party in 1957, and in June 1962 was elected as Conservative member for West Derbyshire at a by-election. He held this seat until he resigned in October 1967.

Mr Christopher Mayhew was elected as Labour member for South Norfolk in 1945 and served until February 1950, when he was defeated there. He returned to Parliament as Labour member for Woolwich East (later Greenwich, Woolwich East) at a by-election in June 1951 and held this seat until the dissolution in September 1974. But in July 1974 he had become a Liberal. As such he stood unsuccessfully for Bath at the ensuing October 1974 general election; and again at the May 1979 one; and also twice in 1979 for the European Parliament. He was created a Life Peer as Lord Mayhew in 1981. He had been a Junior Minister from 1946 to 1950, and Minister of Defence for the Royal Navy from 1964 until he resigned in 1966.

Mr Evelyn King was elected as Labour member for Penryn and Falmouth in 1945, and was defeated in February 1950. He was a Junior Minister from 1947 to 1950. In 1951 he resigned from the Labour Party and became a Conservative; as such he unsuccessfully contested the Itchen Division of Southampton at the 1959 general election. At the ensuing general election, in October 1964, he was elected as Conservative member for South Dorset, and served as such until the April 1979 dissolution.

A second group involves five Liberals and Independents. Mr E. L. Granville was elected as member for the Eye Division of Suffolk as a Liberal in May 1929. In 1931 he became a Liberal National; and in February 1942 an Independent; in April 1945 he rejoined the Liberal Party. He held Eye throughout until he was defeated, as a Liberal, at the October 1951 general election; in the same year he joined the Labour Party, and unsuccessfully contested his old seat as Labour candidate in the 1955 and 1959 general elections. He was given a Life Peerage as Lord Granville of Eye in 1967.

Mr Wilfrid Roberts contested North Cumberland as a Liberal in October 1931. In November 1935 he was elected for this seat and held it until he was defeated in February 1950. In 1956 he joined the Labour Party, and unsuccessfully contested the Hexham Division of Northumberland as a Labour Candidate in October 1959.

Mr Kenneth Lindsay contested Oxford at a by-election in June 1924, Harrow at the October 1924 general election and Worcester at the 1929 general election as a Labour candidate. In November 1933 he was elected as a National Labour member for Kilmarnock at a by-election; and he held that seat at the 1935 general election. He held junior office from 1935 to 1940. In February 1942 he became a National Independent. In 1945 he did not stand for Kilmarnock, but stood instead, and was elected, as National Independent for the Combined English Universities. He retired at the February 1950 dissolution, following the abolition of the university seats with effect from the end of the 1945 Parliament.

Mr W. D. Kendall was elected for Grantham in March 1942 as an Independent and held the seat as such in 1945, but was defeated there at the February 1950 general election. In 1951 he unsuccessfully contested his old seat as a Liberal.

Sir John Barlow contested the Northwich Division of Cheshire as a Liberal in 1929. He was elected as National Liberal member for the Eddisbury Division of Cheshire in 1945, and served until the February 1950 dissolution. In that month's general election he unsuccessfully stood as a Unionist and National Liberal candidate for the Walsall Division of Staffordshire; and at

the October 1951 general election he became Conservative member for the Middleton and Prestwich Division of Lancashire, serving until he was defeated there in 1966.

Next, five members had a greater or lesser degree of political disagreement with their Party during service. Mr John Platts-Mills was expelled from the Labour Party in April 1948, and so stood as an Independent Labour candidate in Shoreditch and Finsbury (he had been elected for Finsbury in 1945) in February 1950, but was defeated. Mr E. L. Gandar Dower was elected as Conservative member for Caithness and Sutherland in 1945; he became an Independent in November 1948. He was thus not re-adopted by his former constituency association, and did not stand in February 1950.

Sir Victor Raikes, who had served as Conservative member for South-East Essex, and then for two Liverpool divisions, since October 1931, became an Independent Conservative in May 1957 and resigned his seat in November of that year. Sir Charles Taylor, who had been elected as Conservative member for Eastbourne at a by-election in March 1935, was not re-adopted by his local Conservative Association for the 1974 general election and so retired at the February 1974 dissolution, on that account. And Mr Arthur Lewis, who had been Labour member for a succession of West Ham and Newham seats continuously since 1945, similarly disagreed with his local Labour constituency party before the 1983 general election and so was not re-adopted. Accordingly he stood, and was defeated, in his old seat as an Independent Labour candidate.

Five people, four former Labour members (three of them Peers) and one former Conservative member, have left their original parties and joined the Social Democratic Party in or since 1981. The Labour ones are Lord Aylestone (formerly Mr Herbert Bowden); Lord George-Brown (formerly Mr George Brown); Lord Shawcross (formerly Sir Hartley Shawcross); and Mr Francis Noel-Baker. The first three had all been Labour Cabinet Ministers. Lord Aylestone has had a period as Leader of the SDP peers. The former Conservative member is Mr W. S. Shepherd, who had sat for two Cheshire Divisions until 1966; he joined the SDP in 1982.

Finally, Sir Woodrow Wyatt was Labour member for the Aston Division of Birmingham from 1945 to 1955, stood and was defeated as Labour candidate for Grantham at the 1955 general election, and was elected as Labour member for the Bosworth Division of Leicester from the October 1959 general election until he was defeated at the June 1970 one. He has since left the Labour Party.

Thus a degree of fluctuation of party affiliation, whether greater or lesser, has at different times, in some cases during House of Commons service and in some cases at or after the end of it, applied in all to 20 members, or about 15 per cent of the total group of 132.

Reasons for the End of Service in the Commons

We turn now to the analysis of the reasons for the end of service in the House of Commons. It has to be said at once that such an analysis is by no means straightforward. Not only is the necessary information not available in all instances, but it is also the case that a number of arbitrary assumptions have to be made; and that, in particular, there can often be more than one overlapping cause for the end of service, or that more than one cause separated in time appears to be relevant. For this reason the discussion which follows does not use a tabular approach but deals successively with categories of reasons.³⁰

The first, and probably simplest, category of reason for the end of service in the House of Commons is defeat at a general election. In the absence of a subsequently successful attempt to reverse such defeat (as to which see section on numbers of years of service and related matters above) it is final. Defeat happened to only five Conservatives - one of whom, Mr Ivor Bulmer-Thomas, had sat as a Labour member for the first two of his eight years of service. His defeat occurred at the 1950 general election; one was at the 1964 election, and three were at the 1966 election.

Defeat was suffered by the much larger number of 16 Labour (including two women) members. The dates were 1950 - seven, including one woman; 1951 - two; 1959 - two; and 1970 - five, including one woman. One of the five was Sir (then Mr) Woodrow Wyatt.

Four Liberals were also defeated, two of them straightforwardly in 1951 and 1966 respectively,³¹ and one in 1950 in a constituency different from the one which he had previously represented. The fourth (Mr Christopher Mayhew) was defeated standing as a Liberal

candidate in October 1974 in Bath. Finally, Mr W. D. Kendall was defeated as an Independent in Grantham in February 1950 after having held the seat since 1942; Mr John Platts-Mills was defeated as an Independent Labour candidate in effectively his old seat in February 1950; and Mr Arthur Lewis, who had sat continuously as a Labour Member for 38 years from 1945, was defeated when he stood, in his old seat, in June 1983 as an Independent Labour candidate. So the total for the 'Defeated' group is 28, though this figure understates the true number in that it does not include "interim" defeats made good by subsequent re-election. Defeat appears to afflict men and women, those with shorter service and those with longer (though there have been no defeats since 1970) and the better-known as well as the less-known members more or less indifferently. Nor does the type of constituency appear to make much difference. The one factor which does stand out, however, is that those who fluctuate in their Party loyalties (whether markedly or marginally) are more prone to defeat than those who do not change Party. In the case of five out of the total group of 28 - four Labour members (including one woman) and one Conservative - a Life Peerage was awarded in the year of defeat or the following year.³² Some of these defeats could perhaps as appropriately have been included under the political disagreement category listed below.

Turning now to retirements, we find that there is a much larger group who retired in a straightforward way at the end of a Parliament. "Straightforward" is used for this purpose to cover those who retired at or above the minimum retirement pension age of 60 for a woman and 65 for a man; or who retired below that age but had had total service of at least 20 years. There are 25 such members on the Conservative side, and their retirement dates were - at the 1955 dissolution, two; 1959 dissolution, three, including one woman; 1964 dissolution, four, one of whom had already been created a Peer; 1966 dissolution, four; 1970 dissolution, three; February 1974 dissolution, four; September 1974 dissolution, one; ³³ 1979 dissolution, two; and 1983 dissolution, two.

The straightforward retirements on the Labour side add up to the larger total of 30. The numbers were one at the 1959 dissolution (Mr W. T. Paling, who had been older than anyone else in the whole group of 132 at his election in 1945); three in 1964; one in 1966; eight (including Lord Shinwell, and two women, Lady Bacon and Miss Margaret Herbison) in 1970; five (including one woman, Mrs Freda Corbet) in 1974; five (including Mrs Barbara Castle) in 1979; and seven, including Lord Wilson of Rievaulx, the former Prime Minister, and Mr John Parker in 1983.

The total number of retirements as such, both straightforward and not, for the two major parties in thus 55. It may here be noted that, of the 55, a high proportion - 24 - were given peerages either shortly before actual retirement or in the year of retirement or within a year after retirement. Fifteen of these, including one woman, were Labour members. They included Lord Wilson of Rievaulx; Lord Shinwell, and Mr George Thomas, who was the only one among the Labour members not to receive a Life Peerage; he was created a Viscount. On the Conservative side these peerages total nine; one is a Viscountcy, and four are hereditary baronies of first creation, with the other four being Life Peerages. A baronetcy was awarded to another Conservative member in the year after his retirement.

Two Conservatives and two Labour members resigned for ill-health reasons at various dates. Mr Norman Bower did so in March 1964 after 10 years' service at the age of 44; Lord Stockton (Mr Harold Macmillan) resigned in September 1964 at the age of 70 after 38 years' service, which had been broken - he had ceased to be Prime Minister the year before; Mr F.E. Noel-Baker resigned in March 1969, at the age of 49 and having had (interrupted) service

of 19 years; and Lord Lever of Manchester (Mr Harold Lever) resigned in July 1979 at the age of 65 after 34 years' service. He was then immediately given a Life Peerage.

In the remaining cases in the whole group, the reasons are more varied. There is, first, a group of 13 who resigned at different dates which were not the ends of Parliament between 1958 and 1972, and who were all given peerages. Nine were Conservatives. Mr T. D. Galbraith resigned in April 1955, before the general election in that year, to go to the Lords with a hereditary peerage (Strathclyde), and to become a Minister, at a more senior level than in the Commons, in the Lords for three-and-a-half years. He was then 64, and had served for 15 years. Sir Robert Boothby resigned in July 1958 at the age of 58 after nearly 34 years' service, and was given a Life Peerage (Boothby).

Mr George Ward resigned in October 1960, aged nearly 57, after 15 years' service, and was given a hereditary viscountcy (Ward of Witley) but this happened after he had ceased to be Secretary of State for Air in the same month. Mr Hugh Molson resigned in January 1961, aged 57, after over 25 years' (though interrupted) service and was created a Life Peer (Molson); Sir Toby Law, aged 47, resigned in January 1962 - while he was Chairman of the Conservative Party Organisation - and was given a hereditary barony (Aldington); Sir David Eccles, at the age of nearly 58, resigned in July 1962 after 19 years' service, and was given a hereditary barony (Eccles) - but his resignation occurred in the same month in which he had lost Ministerial office.³⁵ Mr Niall Macpherson resigned in October 1963 at the age of 55 after 18 years' service. He had been Minister of Pensions and National Insurance

in the Macmillan government, and was then given, following his elevation to the Lords with a Life Peerage (Drumalbyn) further office as Minister of State at the Board of Trade in Lord Home's government. His successor in his seat was a man 14 years younger³⁴. Sir Vere Harvey resigned in April 1971, at the age of 65 and with nearly 26 years' service, and was created a Life Peer (Harvey of Prestbury). In his case he had ceased to be chairman of the Conservative Backbenchers' Committee the year before his resignation, after holding that position for four years. Finally, Mr John Boyd-Carpenter resigned in March 1972, aged nearly 64 and after 27 years' service, and was given a Life Peerage (Boyd-Carpenter); he was then appointed to the chairmanship of the Civil Aviation Authority, and held that post until 1977.

Four Labour members are in the same position. Mr H. W. Bowden resigned, at the age of 62, and after 22 years' service, in August 1967 and was given a Life Peerage (Aylestone). He became chairman of the Independent Television Authority (now the Independent Broadcasting Authority) in the same month, and held the post for eight years. Sir Hartley Shawcross, aged 56 and a former Law Officer and Cabinet Minister, resigned in April 1958 after 13 years' service; he was given a Life Peerage (Shawcross) the following year. He retired from practice at the Bar in 1958 and thereafter pursued a business and public service career. Mr Alfred Robens, also a former Cabinet Minister, resigned from the Commons in October 1960, at the age of nearly 50 after 15 years' service, and was created a Life Peer (Robens of Woldingham) the following year. He was from 1961 to 1971 Chairman of the National Coal Board. Finally, Mr Fred Peart resigned from the Commons in September 1976, at the age of 62 and after 31 years' service, in order, immediately to become Lord Peart (a Life Peerage), Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Lords. He held this office until Labour lost power in 1979, and then became Leader of the Opposition in the Lords for three years.

Still in the field of peerages, one Conservative member succeeded to his father's peerage, and so had to leave the Commons as the law then stood. He was Mr Victor Montagu, then Lord Hinchingbrooke, who succeeded to the Sandwich Earldom at the age of 56 in June 1962 after 21 years' service.

Mr Quintin Hogg became Lord Chancellor in the Government formed by Mr Heath at the June 1970 general election; he was as a result given a life peerage as Lord Hailsham of St. Marylebone, and thus had to give up his seat at the age of 62, after a total of nearly 18½ years' (interrupted) service. He was Lord Chancellor until 1974 and has held the same office again since 1979. Mr F. Elwyn-Jones was in 1974 in the same position as Mr Hogg had been in four years earlier. He was re-elected at the general election in February 1974 but was appointed Lord Chancellor in the incoming Labour Government and given a life peerage as Lord Elwyn-Jones, being then 64 and having served for nearly 29 years. He held office as Lord Chancellor until the fall of the Labour government in 1979.

Three other resignations, occurring at times other than the ends of Parliament, were also connected with appointments. Mr Basil Nield (Conservative) resigned in October 1956, after 16 years' service, and at the age of 53, to become Recorder of Manchester; he was subsequently a High Court Judge from 1960 to 1978. Mr Thomas Fraser (Labour) resigned in September 1967, at the age of 56 and after 24 years' service, to become Chairman of the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board until 1973. And Mr Aidan Crawley (Conservative) resigned in October 1967, at the age of 59, and after 11 years' (interrupted) service consequent upon his having become Chairman of London Weekend Television earlier in 1967; he held the position (later renamed President) until 1973.

Leaving aside instances already referred to in the "Defeated" analysis above, the end of service of four members (all Conservative) was connected with political disagreement. As already explained in the section on changes in Party affiliations above, three of them are Mr E. L. Gandar Dower (who went in February 1950 at the age of 55 after four years' service); Sir Victor Raikes (in November 1957, at the age of 56, and after 16 years' service); and Sir Charles Taylor (in February 1974, aged almost 64, and after nearly 39 years' service. Sir Charles had first been elected at a by-election in March 1935 before his 25th birthday; The Times reported a reception on 1st April 1985 to mark the 50th anniversary of his introduction into the House of Commons. His successor in his seat was almost 27 years younger than he.) And, as has also already been mentioned, Sir Anthony Nutting resigned in disagreement with the Suez policy of the government - in which he had been a Minister of State for Foreign Affairs - in November 1956, at the age of 36 and after 11 years' service.

Two members retired at the February 1950 dissolution because their seats were abolished. One of these was, as already mentioned, Mr Kenneth Lindsay (Combined English Universities) who was then 52, and had had rather over 16 years' service. The other was Lieut.-Col. G. M. Sharp who retired when he was 44, and had had less than five years' service, consequent upon his Spen Valley constituency falling to boundary redistribution. Thus the above categories - defeated (28); straightforward retirements (55); ill-health retirements (4); conferment of or succession to peerages (16); appointments (three); political causes (four); and abolition of seats (two) account in total for 112 out of the total group of 129 (three out of the 132 are of course still serving). This leaves a group of 17 for whom the occasion but not the cause is known. There are 13 members who retired at the end of Parliaments but do not fit the "straightforward" definition adopted here. Of

the 13, eight are Conservatives. One retired in 1950, at the age of 38, and with five years' service;³⁷ two did so in 1951 at the age of 42 and 50 respectively with, in each case, six years' service;³⁸ one in 1959 at the age of 56 with 18 years' service; and four in 1964 at the age of 50, 52, 55 and 63 respectively, in each case after 19 years' service.³⁹ Five Labour members are in the same position of having retired at the end of a Parliament without fitting the "straightforward" classification. One retired in 1950, at the age of 44 after five years' service; two did so in 1951, at the age of 37 and 44 respectively after six years' service in each case;⁴⁰ one retired in 1955, at the age of 40 after 10 years' service; and one did so in 1959, at the age of 57 after 14 years' service.

Finally, four Conservatives resigned at dates other than the end of a Parliament and also do not fall within the "straightforward" classification. They did so respectively in January 1953 at the age of 51 after eight years' service; in February 1953 at the age of 33 - the youngest age for any termination of service in the whole group of 131 - after eight years' service; and in February 1954, at the age of 45, after 15 years' service; / in May 1956, at the age of 53, after 11 years' service. (There are no Labour members in a similar position.)

Given the intrinsic interest of the reasons for the end of House of Commons service, it has seemed right to devote considerable space and detail to this aspect. But, beyond the fact that defeats in total amount to over 20 per cent, and straightforward retirements in total to rather over 40 per cent (the largest single group) few general lessons seem to emerge. The specifically identified cases of retirement due to ill-health are very few - only four, or three per cent - and no doubt the health factor must have played a part also in a number of the cases in the retirements total. On the other

TABLE 4

AGE AT THE END OF SERVICE IN THE COMMONS, OR AT PRESENT

	CONSERVATIVE		LABOUR		LIBERAL/ INDEPENDENT	
	A	B	A	B	A	B
33		0				
34				0		
36		0		0		
37				0		
38		0		0		
40				0		
42		0				
44	0			0000		
45	00			00		
47				0	0	
48		00		0		
49				00		
50		00		000		0
51	0	0				
52		0		0	0	
53	0	00			0	0
54		0				
55		00				
56	0000	0	0	00		
57	00	0		00		
58	0000					
59	00	0		0		0
62	0			00		
63	000	0		00		
64	000	0				
65	00	00		000		
66	0		0	0000		
67	00	000		00000		
68		0		00		
69	0			00		
70	0					
71	0	0	0	00		
72		0		00		
73		0		000 ²		
74				000		
76			0	0		
77			0	03		
78			0	0		
80				0		
85				04		

1. Includes one serving currently.
2. Includes one serving currently.
3. Serving currently.
4. Oldest living Parliamentarian.

hand, we know that no-one in the whole group is now less than 65 years old, and that their single most marked common characteristic is perhaps the very fact that they have survived for over 40 years since 1945. It would be interesting to know more of the reasons, as distinct from the occasions, in the final group of 17 but, short of personal approaches, adequate sources do not exist for this purpose. As regards the picture between the Parties, Labour members were, as would be expected given the 1945 pattern, more prone to defeat than Conservative ones; on the other hand, perhaps somewhat surprisingly, peerages overall play as large a part for the Labour as they do for the Conservative members.

Age at the End of Service in the House of Commons

We consider finally the ages of the 132 survivors at the end of their periods of service in the House of Commons (or at present). This information is provided in Table 4.

Table 4

It will be seen that there is a wide spread of ages on cessation, running from 33 at the lower end (The Hon. Edward Carson, Conservative) to 85 at the top end (Lord Shinwell, Labour).

Seven members left before the age of 40; and 18 between 40 and 49. Fifteen of this young group of 24 were Labour members, and this reflects in part the fact that the 1945 Labour high tide began to recede as early as the next following (February 1950) general election.

Forty-one members (including two women) were between 50 and 59 inclusive when they left the House; another 42 (including four women) were between 62 and 60 inclusive; but no less than 23 (including one woman) were between 70 and 80 inclusive. Of these 23, as many as 18 (including the one woman) were Labour members; and this must clearly largely reflect rock-solid Labour majorities and the stability, until recent years, in the constituency parties in those solid seats. Perhaps it also to a degree reflects the lesser ability on the part of at any rate some Labour members to replace the Parliamentary salary with financially reasonably cushioned provision for retirement.

Obviously, the Conservatives in the A (pre-1945) category were generally older at the end of their service than those in Category B (first elected in 1945); but, save for the factor of the "high age" Labour group of 18 just noted, the only other marked difference between the Conservative and Labour members is - as one would expect - the greater number of the latter in the B category. The last three successive Fathers of the House before the present one left respectively at the age of 70 (Lord Tramire in February 1974);

at the age of 78 in April 1979 (Lord Strauss, Labour); and at the age of 76 in May 1983 (Mr John Parker, Labour). The three members who are still serving were at 1st June 1985 respectively just under 72 (Mr Michael Foot); 73 (Mr James Callaghan); and just under 77 (Mr Ian Mikardo).

Last Word

It remains to pull together very briefly the overall picture that emerges from the detailed and sequential analysis of a number of factors relating to the survivors of the House of Commons elected in the summer and

autumn of 1945 - a group of 132 in all as at 1st June 1985 - which it has been the purpose of this article to present. A number of conclusions have already been drawn at the appropriate places above, but perhaps there are three general points to be made.

First, if a magic fairy could have waved her wand so as to enable all the survivors of the House of Commons elected in 1945 to foregather on the terrace of the House of Commons on some afternoon this summer, those who would have come together might well have been pleased, as well as perhaps somewhat surprised, that they were still such a goodly number. It is likely that by no means all of them would have been aware that they were part of as large a group as 132. (And, of course, had they gone beyond their own immediate group and allowed other surviving ex-members of the Commons, whenever first elected, before 1945, to join the party, there would have been - see Note 5 - at least another 31). Secondly, the assembled company would have been conscious that, as a group, they had done very well. Success and recognition, whether measured in terms of Government offices formerly held, peerages, Privy Councillorships or other honours, had come to them in great measure. And thirdly, and finally, they would have realised that what had brought them this success and recognition was, above everything else, related to persistence and durability - in getting to the House of Commons in the first place and, once there, staying there for a long period, continuously in most cases but, if necessary, as "re-entrants" as soon as possible after unsought-for breaks in service. Being re-elected after first time is - on the face of the record - more than anything what it has all been about for the "class" of 1945; and there is no reason to assume that it has been, or is, any less dominant a consideration for any "class" since then.

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NOTES

1. Mr Law afterwards became Lord Coleraine. Except where the context clearly requires a former name, or both a former and the present name, the convention which has been adopted in this article is the use of present names and/or titles, as given in, 'Who's Who'. (A list of all those who form the subject of this article is available from the author.)

2. Among the victors in the other seven consequent by-elections that autumn were Mr Peter Thorneycroft, now Lord Thorneycroft, and Mr Harold Macmillan, now the Earl of Stockton. Both had served before 1945 and were defeated in their former constituencies at the general election. They are included in the group of 132 which is analysed in this article, and their 1945 breaks in service are disregarded. Lord Rhodes, who, as Mr Hervey Rhodes, was, without having had previous service (though he had stood unsuccessfully in the July general election) elected in another of the autumn 1945 by-elections is also included. No one elected after Mr Law is included.

3. A cut-off date for the information in this article has necessarily had to be used, and this is 1st June 1985. Where periods or ages are precisely calculated, they refer to that date; and so does the term "currently". Occurrences after 1st June 1985 are thus excluded and, with a high age range for the population under examination in this article, it is very possible that a death or deaths may occur between 1st June and the appearance of this article. (The average death rate for the population has recently been running at something like three every five months.) Insofar as such an occurrence or occurrences may be in respect of an individual or individuals who are for any reason identified in this article, the author offers his sincere regrets to those affected. It must also be added that, while every care has been taken with the verification of the information as at 1st June 1985, the possibility does exist that a death or deaths may have occurred before that date which has escaped both all the relevant reference works and the obituary columns, so that the individual(s) concerned is/are mistakenly included.

4. "Surviving members", "survivors" and "members" are all used interchangeably in this article; and, in general, the use of "ex" before "members", which, while accurate, is clumsy, is avoided.

5. It should be noted that there were at 1st June 1985 at least a further 11 ex-members of the House of Commons who, having served in the House before the date of the 1945 General Election, stood at that election but were unsuccessful, and who did not subsequently re-enter the House. Their birth years range from 1891 to 1909. Another eight (or more) ex-members (whose birth years range from 1903 to 1915) who had also served before 1945 and who stood unsuccessfully at the 1945 General Election were successful in being elected again subsequently in a by or general election. They include Lord Home, the former Prime Minister. Thirdly, one known ex-member (born in 1888) who had served before 1945 and did not stand in that year's general election subsequently re-entered the House at the 1950 general election. Finally, at least 11 ex-members, with birth years ranging from 1897 to 1910, had service in the Commons before the 1945 General Election but did not contest that

election or, successfully, any subsequent by or general election; there may be others. The 31 or more people in these four categories bear further analysis on another occasion.

6. The details are as follows. Labour had 393 seats, and there were also broadly supporting it three Independent Labour Party and one Commonwealth member. The Conservatives had 189 seats, with 13 Liberal Nationals, nine Ulster Unionists and two Nationals in support. There were 14 Independents, 12 Liberals, two Communists and two Irish Nationalists. These figures compare with those in the House which had been dissolved in June 1945 (in total size 615) of 358 Conservatives, with 26 Liberal Nationals, five National Labour members and four National members in support. The Labour Party had had 164 seats, with three Independent Labour members, three Independent Labour Party members and three Commonwealth members in support. There had been 20 Independents, 18 Liberals, two Irish Nationalists, one Scottish Nationalist and one Communist member; seven seats had been vacant.

7. One up to 1929, and one up to 1931.

8. The sources used are:

David Butler and Anne Sloman - British Political Facts 1900-1979, Macmillan's, 1980.

Burke's Peerage.

Dod's Parliamentary Companion.

Hansard.

The Times Guides to the House of Commons.

The Times Index.

The Times obituaries.

Vacher's Parliamentary Companion.

Whitaker's Almanack.

Who's Who (up to and including the 1985 edition).

"Who's Who of British Members of Parliament", Ed. Michael Stenton and Stephen Lees, Volume 4 (1945-1979). Published by The Harvester Press, 1981.

"Women in the House of Commons", House of Commons Public Information Office Factsheet No. 5, Dec. 1981.

9. In this Table, and also Tables 2 to 4 inclusive, any year, age or period which is not included in the first column does not apply in the particular context. Wherever ages or periods are stated, a whole-number-of-years convention has been adapted except insofar as the context obviously requires a

more precise formulation. Where it has been material to calculate a period of service precisely the beginning and end dates used are those of general elections and of dissolutions.

10. The convention which has been adopted in Party allocation where an individual has had more than one Party is to have regard to which facet of that service is being analysed. Thus a member is classified in the Party in which he effectively started his service in Tables 1 and 2 and in the Party in which he finished his service, or is currently serving, in Tables 3 and 4. It follows that, while each of the two pairs of Tables cross-checks internally, the two respective pairs do not do so completely with each other. Changes in or cessations of Party allegiance subsequent to the termination of service in the Commons have only been taken into account insofar as they bear on the analysis of other aspects which are analysed.

11. Since even now the total number of women who, since 1918, have been elected to the House of Commons and who have taken their seats is only 120, a group of seven - out of 24 women in all elected in 1945 - represents a significant proportion.

12. Defined for this purpose as starting on 1st January 1900.

13. For the avoidance of doubt, all references in this article to Mr James Callaghan are to the former Prime Minister, and not to the Labour member for Heywood and Middleton, who has the same name.

14. Notwithstanding this break in his service, Lord Strauss was, as Mr George Strauss, Father of the House from 1974 to 1979.

15. Mr Turton was Father of the House from 1965 to 1974.

16. Where service is non-continuous, the second or subsequent period(s) may of course be in the same constituency as the earlier one(s) or (as in the case of both Mr Foot and Mr Mikardo) in a different one. Apart from this, redistribution and re-naming of constituencies can also come into the picture.

17. But in 1983, when he became Father of the House, it was by a narrow margin only. When Mr John Parker, who had been Father of the House since 1979, retired at the May 1983 dissolution, there were, in the new House elected in June, two, but only two, members with continuous service going back to 1945 (the earliest date). They were Mr Callaghan and Sir Hugh Fraser. Mr Callaghan had been prescient enough in 1945 to get himself sworn in on 2nd August 1945, one of the earliest days on which the new House had then first met for that purpose. But Mr Fraser (as he then was) was not sworn in until 15th August 1945. Thus Mr Callaghan won the contest in 1983 by 13 days. Sir Hugh Fraser died, while still serving, in March 1984.

18. After her retirement in 1979, Mrs Castle successfully contested Greater Manchester North for the European Parliament, and was re-elected for the Greater Manchester West constituency in 1983. She is leader of the U.K. Labour party group in the European Parliament, and is senior Vice-Chairman of the Socialist group there.

19. So that her total period in national politics of over 41 years actually exceeded Mrs Castle's 34 years substantially. And this of course disregards the fact that Miss Lee was created a Life Peer at the end of her service.

20. Mr Shinwell and Mr George Oliver were, as it happens, both sworn in on 21st November 1922, but Mr Shinwell was some 125 members ahead of Mr Oliver, so that he wins the longest seniority palm by a short head. It is interesting to note that, until 1984, even Lord Shinwell would, on the criterion of earliest election, have been beaten to it. Mr Sean McEntee (who later became a senior Minister in the Irish Republic, and who died in 1984) was at the December 1918 general election returned for the Westminster seat of South Monaghan. But he was one of the Sinn Fein group who then decided to boycott the House, and so did not take his seat. And, until November 1982, even Mr McEntee would not have won. It was in that month that the first Lord Rathcavan died at the age of 99, and he had first been elected for the Westminster seat of Mid-Antrim in 1915 (as Mr, later Sir Hugh O'Neill) serving for it, and later Antrim, until 1952. There must be something in the Irish air!

21. For the purposes of this section, junior office covers all forms of Parliamentary Secretaryships, including Civil and Financial Lordships, and all forms of paid Royal Household appointments and paid Treasury Lord Commissionerships. Assistant Whip posts are excluded. Cabinet level office includes all Ministers who were heads of departments as well as the offices of Lord President of the Council, Lord Privy Seal, Paymaster General, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Minister without Portfolio and Chief Secretary to the Treasury. The analysis is of course a deliberately narrow one which relates purely to Parliamentary service, and altogether excludes all other forms of public service, whether central, local or international, and whether voluntary or paid. The Party classification is that of the Party to which an individual belonged at the time he held the office for which he is listed.

22. The office of Minister of State was first created as a war-time measure (in the Foreign Office) in 1943; it was resorted to with increasing frequency from the 1950's onwards to provide middle-level assistance to the senior Minister in busy and important Departments; and it is now a well-established grade to which a specific salary intermediate between that of junior and senior Minister attaches. At 1st June 1985 there were 26 Ministers of State so designated.

23. Lord Hailsham (Mr Quintin Hogg) had had his earlier period of service, which had started in October 1938 as Conservative member for Oxford, ended by his succession to his father's viscountcy of Hailsham in August 1950. From 1956 he served in a succession of Ministerial offices as a member of the House of Lords. He disclaimed his hereditary peerage for life in November 1963, in the context of the struggle for the succession to Mr Harold Macmillan. This enabled him to re-enter the House of Commons at a by-election in December 1963.

24. Lord Strathclyde was subsequently, from 1959-1967, Chairman of the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board.

25. In fact, of course, Table 3 somewhat understates the Labour figure, in that it allocates Party affiliations as they were at the end of service in the House of Commons, that is does not show as Labour supporters numbers who were such during a part or for most of their service and thus available to hold office in Labour administrations.

26. Mr John Freeman had, in April 1951, resigned as a Junior Minister in the Labour government over policy disagreements, together with Mr Harold Wilson and Mr Aneurin Bevan. It was during Mr Wilson's premiership that, in 1966, Mr Freeman became a Privy Counsellor.

27. He held the same office (Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade) in the Commons from 1950 to 1951 and in the Lords, following his Life Peerage, from 1964 to 1967.

28. Lady Davidson had succeeded her husband in the same constituency, on his elevation to the peerage, in 1937. Her Life Peerage is Northchurch.

29. Inherited baronetcies are disregarded. "Knighted" for this purpose includes membership at the knighthood level of the Orders of Chivalry.

30. Where there has for any reason been an earlier termination of service in the House, followed by re-election, the earlier one is ignored. This section deals only with the reasons for the end of the second or last period of service.

31. The Liberal defeated in 1966 was Mr Roderick Bowen, who had been Deputy Chairman of Ways and Means for the previous year. He had served for the County of Cardigan since his election as a Liberal member in 1945, and so by definition had not held any earlier Ministerial office. Subsequent to his leaving the House he became - and still is - a Social Security Commissioner; this is a full-time legal office.

32. In addition, five of those who were defeated - three Labour members (Mr Frank Beswick, Dr. S. Segal and Mr D. W. T. Bruce) one Liberal who joined the Labour Party after the end of his period in the House (Mr E. L. Granville) and one Labour member who joined the Liberal Party shortly before his service ended (Mr Christopher Mayhew) - were given Life Peerages respectively nine, 14, no less than 24, 16 and seven years after their defeats. Mr Beswick, who had been defeated in October 1959 at the age of 47 after 14 years' service, subsequently held a succession of Government and Opposition Whips offices as a member of the House of Lords (Lord Beswick) for 11 years from December 1964 and, later still, became Chairman of British Aerospace from 1977 to 1980. Dr. Segal was, as Lord Segal, Deputy Speaker and Deputy Chairman of Committees in the House of Lords from 1973 to 1982. Mr Bruce (Lord Bruce of Donington) was a member of the British delegation to the European Parliament from 1975 to 1979.

33. Sir Douglas Dodds-Parker (Conservative). Sir Douglas had retired at the 1959 General Election in Banbury, which he had represented for the 14 years since 1945. He was then 50. Five years later, in the October 1964 General Election, he returned to Parliament as member for Cheltenham, and served for another ten years. His is the only case of this kind in the whole group of 132. Sir Douglas was also a member of the British delegation to the European Parliament from 1973 to 1975.

34. Among those who received hereditary baronies are Lords Margadale and Martonmere, both in 1964. Lord Margadale (formerly Mr Charles Morrison) had in that year ceased, after nine years, to be chairman of the Conservative Backbenchers' Committee. Lord Martonmere subsequently served as Governor of Bermuda from 1964 to 1972.

35. Sir David Eccles was given a hereditary barony in 1962 and was advanced to a viscountcy as Viscount Eccles in 1964. Under Mr Heath he held further Ministerial office while sitting in the Lords from June 1970 to December 1973.

36. Lord Drumalbyn later, while sitting in the House of Lords, held further Government office under Mr Heath from October 1970 to January 1974.

37. This was Mr Oliver Poole. He was given a hereditary peerage as a Baron (Poole) in 1958, eight years after his retirement from the House. He held a succession of senior appointments in the Conservative Party organisation from 1952 to 1964.

38. The older of these two, Mr Cyril Maude, Q.C., became a Judge in 1954, three years after his retirement, and held judicial office until 1968.

39. One of this last group of four retirements is that of Lord Inglewood. As Mr W. Fletcher-Vane he had been elected for Westmorland in 1945. When he retired, he did so after having held only junior offices (two successive posts between 1958 and 1962). Nonetheless he was, unusually, immediately created a Life Peer. His successor in his seat was over 21 years younger than he.

40. The younger (Mr Lyall Wilkes) pursued an active career at the Bar and held a succession of legal appointments from 1964 onwards; the older (Wing-Commander Geoffrey Cooper) went to live in the Bahamas.