



## BRIEFING PAPER

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# Cabinet Ministers suffering electoral defeat while holding office

Compiled by  
Sarah Priddy

Cabinet ministers in the House of Commons, like all MPs, must fight their Parliamentary seats at general elections. It is relatively rare for Cabinet ministers to lose their parliamentary seats, as most of them hold relatively safe seats.

This list notes all serving Cabinet ministers since 1900 who have lost their seats. It does not include Ministers who were not of Cabinet rank who lost their seats, or individuals who had served in the Cabinet at one time but lost their seat after having left the Cabinet.

By convention, ministers and Cabinet ministers must sit in either the House of Commons or the House of Lords. However, it is possible for ministers to be appointed whilst not sitting in either House. This happened to Patrick Gordon Walker, who unexpectedly lost his seat in Labour's 1964 election victory. He was nevertheless appointed Foreign Secretary. He contested a by-election in January 1965, but lost it, and at that point resigned his position as Foreign Secretary.

### **Re-election of Ministers Act 1926**

The majority of Members listed lost their seats at general elections. However, until the passage of the *Re-election of Ministers Act 1926*, any Member admitted into the Cabinet other than at a general election was obliged to resign his or her seat and contest a by-election. Of those on the list, Churchill, Masterman (twice) and Griffith Boscawen (twice, in 1921 and 1923) lost their by-elections.

## Cabinet Members suffering Electoral Defeat while holding Office

Parliament	Date	Minister	Notes
1906-1910	Apr-08	Winston Churchill	Entered cabinet and lost by-election: sought another seat and continued in office
1910-1918	Feb-14	Charles Masterman	Sought another seat and continued in office
1910-1918	May-14	Charles Masterman	By-election defeat followed by resignation
1918-1922	Mar-21	Sir Arthur Griffith-Boscawen	Sought another seat and continued in office
1918-1922	Nov-22	Sir Arthur Griffith-Boscawen	
1922-1923	Mar-23	Sir Arthur Griffith-Boscawen	Retained ministerial post following defeat; resigned following by-election defeat
1922-1923	Dec-23	Sir Anderson Montague-Barlow	
1922-1923	Dec-23	Sir Robert Sanders	
1923-1924	Oct-24	Frederick Jowett	
1924-1929	May-29	Sir Arthur Steel-Maitland	
1931-1935	Nov-35	Ramsay MacDonald	Sought another seat and continued in office
1931-1935	Nov-35	Malcolm MacDonald	Sought another seat and continued in office
1935-1945	Jul-45	Leo Amery	
1935-1945	Jul-45	Brendan Bracken	
1935-1945	Jul-45	Sir Percy James Grigg	
1935-1945	Jul-45	Harold Macmillan	
1935-1945	Jul-45	Sir Donald Somervell	
1945-1950	Feb-50	Arthur Creech Jones	
1959-1965	Oct-64	Anthony Barber	
1959-1964	Oct-64	Geoffrey Rippon	
1964-1966	Jan-65	Patrick Gordon-Walker	By-election defeat followed by resignation
1966-1970	Jun-70	John Diamond	Lord Diamond, 1970
1970-1974	Feb-74	Gordon Campbell	Baron Campbell of Croy, 1974
1974-1979	May-79	Shirley Williams	Baroness Williams of Crosby, 1 February 1993
1987-1992	Apr-92	Chris Patten	Lord Patten of Barnes , 1 January 2005
1992-1997	May-97	Michael Forsyth	Lord Forsyth of Drumlean, 14 July 1999
1992-1997	May-97	Roger Freeman	Lord Freeman, 29 October 1997
1992-1997	May-97	Ian Lang	Lord Lang of Monkton, 29 September 1997
1992-1997	May-97	Tony Newton	Lord Newton of Braintree , 31 October 1997
1992-1997	May-97	Michael Portillo	
1992-1997	May-97	Sir Malcolm Rifkind	
1992-1997	May-97	William Waldegrave	Lord Waldegrave of North Hill, 28 July 1999
2010-2015	May-15	Sir Danny Alexander	
2010-2015	May-15	Sir Vince Cable	Re-elected for Twickenham in June 2017
2010-2015	May-15	Sir Edward Davey	Re-elected for Kingston and Surbiton in June 2017

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