

# Reg Paget (1908-1990)



**Labour MP for Northampton from 1945 until 1974, when the constituency was abolished**

**By Sue Miller**



**Reginald Thomas Guy Des Voeux Paget, Baron Paget of Northampton (Reg)** had an unusual background for a Labour MP, he came from a long line of Conservative MPs but joined the Labour Party while at university. Educated at Eton and Cambridge, on graduation he became a barrister in 1934 and became a QC in 1947.

Notably, he served as the defence advocate for **Field Marshal Erich von Manstein** during his post-World War II war crimes trial. He later wrote a book about the case. As an MP he was considered **an independent voice** within the House of Commons.

He played a key role in the campaign to **abolish capital punishment**, actively opposing the execution of Derek Bentley. Paget was also known for being the slowest speaker in the House of Commons. Unusually for a Labour MP, was the master of the Pytchley Hunt for several years.

When his seat was abolished, he was created **a life peer** as **Baron Paget of Northampton** in 1975.

Paget's views on the European Economic Community (EEC) shifted significantly. Initially, he was supportive, but he later became a strong opponent, voting against membership in 1971 and speaking out and voting against remaining in the EEC during the **1975 referendum**