William Hague

William Hague, now Lord Hague of Richmond, is a senior British Conservative politician who was the Member of Parliament for Richmond (Yorks) from 1989 to 2015. He also served as Leader of the House of commons from 2014 to 2015, as Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs from 2010 to 2014, and as Leader of the Conservative Party and Leader of the Opposition from 1997 to 2001.

Lord Hague was born in Rotherham, South Yorkshire, a strongly working-class area. He caused a sensation at the age of 16 by speaking at the Conservative Party's national Conference. Subsequently, Lord Hague went to Magdalen College, Oxford, and while there was President of the Oxford Union, a noted breeding-ground for political hopefuls and high-flyers. After completing his studies at INSEAD, he pursued a career in management consultancy.

Lord Hague has been a prominent political leader for more than 20 years, serving as Leader of the Conservative Party and as Foreign Secretary. After announcing his intention to step down, he concluded his political career as First Secretary of State and Leader of the House of Commons.

In four years as Foreign Secretary Lord Hague dealt with a turbulent period encompassing wars in Libya and Syria, withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Ukraine crisis, the struggle against terrorism and relations with Europe. He expanded Britain's diplomatic network and placed a renewed emphasis on export success. He was also responsible for two of Britain's intelligence agencies, and visited more countries than any Foreign Secretary in history.

Lord Hague also led the negotiating team that created coalition government in 2010. His mix of international and domestic experience has given him a deep knowledge of the inside of politics and the reasons for growing instability in world affairs. He speaks with great authority on the impact of technological change, population movement, economic trends and the rise of religious intolerance on our economy and all our lives.

Having known many global leaders, he speaks from rich experience about different styles of leadership – drawing on numerous debates with Tony Blair and first hand knowledge of the world's Presidents from George W Bush to Vladimir Putin.

Lord Hague is also well known as a raconteur, hailed by Hillary Clinton as "the David Beckham of toasting." With true Yorkshire wit and natural comic timing he describes the pitfalls of politics and the disasters caused when media, drink, politicians and debating come together. Lord Hague put in three much-praised appearances as guest host on the BBC satirical news show Have I Got News For You. He became one of the few figures to outwit the famously quick Paul Merton.

He is also an accomplished historian, author of two bestsellers and winner of the History Book of the Year Award.

Amongst many speech themes Lord Hague talks about Politics, Europe, Foreign Affairs and Brexit.

Lord Hague continues with his humanitarian work, including the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative which he co-founded with Angelina Jolie Pitt, and works to combat the illegal trade in wildlife.