



Just My Luck: Memoirs of a Police Officer of the Raj

Philip E.S. Finney

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The First World War had wrought a revolution in people's ideas of equality and liberty everywhere. In India, the Home Rule agitation had heightened political awareness and ambition across the length and breadth of the country under the British Raj. The Rowlatt Bill (1919), based on the controversial recommendation of the Rowlatt Committee, was enacted to deal with acts of sedition on the lifting of the Defense of India Act after the war. This was the backdrop when Philip Finney joined the Bengal Police in 1924. For 23 years Philip Finney had an interesting and often exciting career in Bengal Police, particularly because it was during a period when India, and Bengal in particular, was in turmoil and in the grip of the terrorist movement. These memoirs will provide an insight into the action taken by the British Raj in dealing with terrorists, communists and nationalist revolutionaries. They also provide information about life in rural Bengal, district towns and cities as well as details of the normal policing duties in these areas. Numerous accounts have been published on this forgotten chapter of Indian history drawing upon hitherto unpublished extracts from police records, interviews and archival material now in the public domain, but here is a firsthand account of what went on in the mind of a British field administrator. During the Second World War Philip Finney worked in Military Intelligence in the UK and India, largely in counter-espionage and, in particular, dealing with the attempts of the Axis Powers to set up spy networks in India. He accompanied the Fourteenth Army in its drive into Burma towards the end of the war. One of his most challenging tasks at that time was dealing with members of Subhas Bose's Indian National Army who had joined forces with the Japanese and had fallen into Allied hands. After the war Philip Finney was Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Bureau in Delhi, in which position he was privileged to have an inside view

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