Frederic John Napier Thesiger Chelmsford Biography

Frederic John Napier Thesiger Chelmsford

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.



Contents

Frederic John Napier Thesiger Chelmsford Biography.....1

Contents.....2

Biography.....3

Biography

The English administrator Frederic John Napier Thesiger Chelmsford, 1st Viscount Chelmsford (1868-1933), was viceroy of India during a difficult period when British prestige there was at a dangerously low ebb. He initiated the course of Indian independence.

Frederic John Chelmsford was born in London on Aug. 12, 1868, the eldest of five sons. Educated at Winchester and at Magdalen College, Oxford, he won distinction in jurisprudence and a fellowship to All Souls in 1892. After a brief experience in local government, he became governor of Queensland, Australia (1905-1909), and governor of New South Wales (1909-1913).

In 1914 he went with the 4th Dorset Territorials to India. Though only a captain with no Indian experience, in 1916 he was offered the most important post of the empire, the viceroyalty of India, succeeding Lord Hardinge of Penshurst.

The government of India had undertaken a disastrous campaign in Mesopotamia, in which Chelmsford's oldest son had died; mismanagement was partially due to the overcentralized system of army administration instituted by Lord Kitchener, commander in chief from 1902 to 1909. "The disastrous effect" of Britain's defeat at "Mespot," as Chelmsford expressed it, led to the resignation of Austen Chamberlain, Secretary of State for India, in July 1917, and the appointment of E. S. Montagu in his stead.

Earlier in 1917 terrorism had broken out in Bengal, and Chelmsford had been forced to assume temporary powers of repression. On Aug. 20, 1917, the historic Montagu-Chelmsford Report announced Britain's ultimate goal in India as "the progressive realisation of responsible government." It drew the sting from a potentially explosive agitation and initiated the Government of India Act of 1919.

Because the Indian bureaucracy had always been slow to implement change and was largely unimaginative, Chelmsford and his council were especially criticized for institutional faults. But he guided his government through the unrest caused by Mohandas Gandhi's campaign of *satyagraha,* which was followed by serious disorders in the Punjab and by the Third Afghan War. Chelmsford used force and firm executive action in both crises, leaving the subsequent bitter Indian resentment to his successors.

After retiring in 1921, Chelmsford assumed a number of academic appointments which were interrupted only by his joining the first Labor government of Ramsay MacDonald in 1924. Chelmsford became first lord of the Admiralty, but the government fell within a year. He died of a heart attack on April 1, 1933.