



Major Basil Herbert Barrington-Kennett  
Grenadier Guards

**Basil Herbert Barrington-Kennett** was born in Hove, Sussex in 1885, the son of Lieutenant Colonel Brackley Herbert and Mrs Ellinor Barrington-Kennett.

**After beginning** his education at Ludgrove School, Basil went on to Eton. The 1901 census shows the family living at 'Burton Firs', Barlavington. Later the family moved to Tillington House, Tillington. Basil entered Sandhurst Military Academy in 1905 where he was an average student, but did well in History, Geography, Tactics and Riding. He left the Academy in 1906 to join the Grenadier Guards.

**Basil led such** a full, colourful and distinguished life, both in the Grenadier Guards and the Royal Flying Corps, that it is impossible with the limitations of space to give a full account. However, it was the development of powered flight for military purposes that was to shape his future career. We re-join Basil's story after gaining his 'Aviator's Certificate' on December 31st 1910, only the 43rd person to do so.

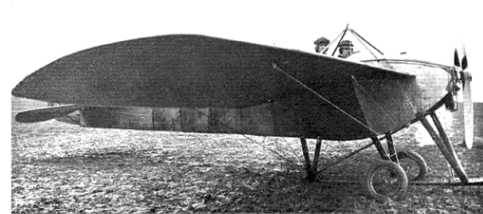


Aviator's Certificate - No 43 with Basil's signature

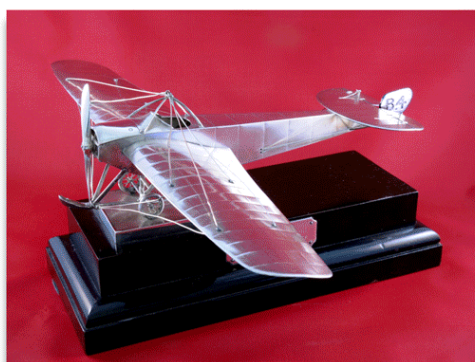
**He spent his early** flying days with the Air Battalion and on February 12th 1912 gained a world record for long distance flying - 249 miles 840 yards at a height of 250 feet in 4 hours 51 minutes.

**On May 13th** 1912 the Air Battalion was replaced by the Royal Flying Corps and 'BK', as Basil was always known in the RFC, was one of the first army pilots and became one of the most prominent aviators in the British Army. Captain F H Sykes was given command of the RFC and immediately made BK its first adjutant.

**On Wednesday** January 8th 1913 Lt Barrington-Kennett married Rhoda Violet Hargreaves, the eldest daughter of Captain Hargreaves of Remenham Park, Wraybury, Buckinghamshire (now Berkshire). The large number of guests included many of his RFC colleagues and 'Colonel' Samuel Franklin Cody, one time showman and aeroplane inventor who designed several early military aircraft. The couple received some impressive gifts from their distinguished guests, including a silver model of BK's Nieuport aeroplane B4 and a solid silver slipper sugar bowl.



The Nieuport B4 with Lt Basil Barrington-Kennett and passenger  
Corporal Ridd ready for their record breaking flight



A silver Nieuport No B4 wedding gift from  
brother officers of the RFC



A silver slipper sugar bowl a wedding gift from  
'Colonel' Sam Cody

**War came quickly** and by August 1914 BK was in France as part of the RFC advanced unit. Lt Barrington-Kennett was Adjutant and Quartermaster-General of this unit. This was a Headquarters position and he did not fly during the war but was promoted to Staff Captain and then to Brevet Major.

**Also on the** Headquarter's staff at this time was Maurice Baring, assistant to the new RFC Commander Brigadier-General Hugh Trenchard. BK and Maurice became great friends. Baring maintained a diary throughout the war and later wrote 'Flying Corps Headquarters 1914-18', a detailed account of daily life at RFC Headquarter as it moved around northern France.

**The two friends** regularly dined together and often shared a room, talking well into the night. They travelled together to buy food or to search for potential new aerodromes. They drove to Paris to visit the French Embassy or one of the banks and they even went to Eprenay to buy champagne for the Officers' Mess.

