

Basil was born at Potters Bar, London on 23rd June 1886. His family had interests in Ceylon as he travelled between the UK and Ceylon before arriving in Australia. He enlisted in F Company, AN&MEF on 11th August 1914, stating that he was a Race Horse Trainer and Jockey, was single and gave his father, Mr J.S.W. Blackett of Hartfield, Herefordshire, as his next of kin.

Prior to enlistment, Basil served with the 2nd Bucks (Territorial Army) from 1900 to 1905, the Ceylon Planters Rifles from 1907 to 1908 and the Ceylon Mounted Rifles from 1909 to 1914 (as a trumpeter).

On 24th September 1914 he was appointed Lance Corporal, promoted Corporal on 29th October and then commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant on 20th November. Basil returned from Rabaul and was discharged, term expired, on 4th March 1915, having completed 206 days service.

He applied for and was granted a Commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the 18th battalion in May 1915 and left with the battalion for the Middle East aboard the CERAMIC on 25th June 1915. He received a gunshot wound on 18th September 1915 whilst on Gallipoli followed by a serious bout of dysentery, resulting in him being evacuated, firstly to the Blue Sisters Hospital on Malta and subsequently to the 3rd London Hospital in Wandsworth, UK. During this period, on 17th October he was promoted Lieutenant.

He was sent to Scotland to recuperate, and it was here that he met Jean Mounsey Whittle, whom he married in London on 26th February 1916.

He returned to active duty in February 1917 and was transferred to the 61st Battalion on 22 March 1917. On 23rd July he was seconded for training as an Observer with the Australian Flying Corps and in July 1918 was awarded the Belgian Croix de Guerre. On 31st October 1918 he resigned his Commission in the AIF to take up a Commission as Lieutenant (Observing Officer) in the RAF, where he served until the cessation of hostilities on the 11th November.

On 22 April 1927 died at Hendon, Middlesex, leaving his considerable estate to his sister Ruth.