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CLASSIFICATION	SUBJECT	SOURCE	DATE
Biog	BILLING, N.	Times	12: 11: 48

Pemberton

12. 11. 48  
~~Times~~

**MR. N. PEMBERTON BILLING**

Mr. Noel Pemberton Billing, who died on Thursday at his home at Burnham-on-Crouch, was a forceful publicist who was deeply interested in aviation and Empire development.

Born in London in 1880, the son of Charles Eardley Billing, a Birmingham ironfounder, and his wife, Annie Emilia Claridge, he showed early signs of the possession of an adventurous disposition, and at the age of 13 stowed away on a ship bound for Africa. For the next five years he worked as a sailor and as a trooper in the Natal Mounted Police, and from 1899 to 1901 he fought in the South African war. He then returned to Hampstead and married in 1903 Lilian Maud, daughter of Mr. T. H. Schweitzer, of Bristol. She died in 1923. Billing paid, in 1906, the first of many visits to the United States. He worked there in various parts for long periods and developed an admiration for American character and methods that made him a firm advocate of close collaboration between the two countries. He was among the earliest Englishmen to realize the potentialities of aircraft. So far back as 1908 he constructed an airfield at Farnbridge and designed three aircraft, the last of which flew.

Meanwhile he was persistently writing in the newspapers and reviews on air development, and he foresaw the vital role that aircraft would play in future wars. From 1914 to 1916 Pemberton Billing did useful service in the R.N.A.S. In 1916 he retired with the rank of squadron commander in order to seek election to Parliament. After a reverse at Mile End he was elected for East Hertfordshire as an Independent. Attacks in a paper published by him on alleged treacherous activities led to his arrest on a charge of criminal libel, but he was acquitted. In 1921 Pemberton Billing resigned his seat for health reasons, and his subsequent attempts to enter Parliament were unsuccessful. His constant and dismal appearances in the Courts had begun to pall, and the public found little to admire in a man so persistently combative.

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