

CAPTAIN ROBERT BRUNGER DSO (1903-11)

Date of Birth	25 May 1893
School Information	Eldest son of WT Brunger, who was bursar at the College. Brother of William Valentine Brunger (1904-07). Senior prefect. Chair of Debating Society. Football XI 1910-11. Sergeant OTC.
Career Information	Dairy farmer in New Zealand.
Date Of Death	8 October 1918
Cause of Death	Killed in action
Location	Bellicourt, Somme
Cemetery	British Cemetery at Bellicourt, Somme, France Grave : VII D 8 Beneath the War Memorial in the Chapel is a marble table on which stands a brass cross and a pair of vases for flowers. These were dedicated on the anniversary of Armistice Day in 1923, in memory of him.
Rank	Captain
Branch of Service	New Zealand Expeditionary Force and Norfolk Regiment. He was appointed Captain and won his DSO on 24 June 1916. The citation reads "for conspicuous gallantry when leading a successful raid on the enemy's trenches". He was also mentioned in dispatches and wounded.

We are indebted to Simon Last, author of "*The Men Behind the Names*" on the Framlingham Town War Memorial for the following photo.



My thanks to David Empson for providing the following :



Captain Robert Brunger, D.S.O., was received by His Majesty the King at Buckingham Palace, and invested with the Insignia of the Distinguished Service Order. This distinction was awarded to Captain Brunger, who is only 23 years of age, for very capable service rendered to the country in France, where he had charge of a raid on the enemy's trenches. With keen appreciation of the difficulties with which he and his party were faced, he so managed the operation as to effect the maximum of damage possible under the circumstances with the minimum of loss, getting his men back with extraordinary few casualties, having regard to the circumstances.

The following information is on the Framlingham Roll of Honour :

Captain, 9th Battalion, Norfolk Regiment. Killed in action 8 October 1918. Aged 25. Son of Mr and Mrs W T Brunger of Framlingham. Awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO). Buried in Bellicourt British Cemetery, Aisne, France. Plot VII. Row D. Grave 8.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Brunger of Framlingham, he was educated at Framlingham College. After a varied career, including emigrating to New Zealand, he returned at the outbreak of war. He was a temporary Captain in the 4th Suffolks by January 1915. Robert was in France 1 February 1915. at Neuve Chapelle, but succumbed to measles and returned to the Military Hospital at Colchester in May. After local service, back in France in October 1915, he was placed in charge of "C" Company. The following March the 4th Suffolks headed for Bethune, and later Cuinchy. On 13th/14th May, Robert's Company was detailed for a trench raid, which he was commanding, Lt. Hume as second in command. In that raid, Robert was awarded the DSO, Lt. Hume the M.C., and L/Sgt. Beach and L/Cpl Webb, the M.C., After receiving his award at Buckingham Palace, Robert fell ill with pneumonia and by 12 March 1917 he was still unfit. In October, he took a regular commission in the Norfolk Regiment, and was back in France, being promoted to Major that month. Robert was to lose his life near Brancourt and Jonnecourt where the Norfolks were met by gunfire from both villages, whilst trying to advance.

Extract from The VC and DSO Book Vol. III:

BRUNGER, R. (D.S.O. L.G. 24.6.16); b. 25.5.01; s. of W. T. Brunger, Secretary to the Governors, Framlingham College ; educ. Framlingham College; Capt., Suffolk R., T.F.; served Europ. War ; went to France for first time Jan. 1915; invalided to England, May, 1915; returned to France, Oct. 1915; wounded once ; Despatches ; D.S.O. awarded for commanding a company in a light raid on the German trenches at the Brecstacks, Givenchy, in France on 15.5.16; wounded. He was killed in action 8.10.18.

Extract from De Ruvigny's Roll of Honour 1914-1918:

BRUNGER, ROBERT, D.S.O., Capt., 9th (Service) Battn. The Norfolk Regt., elder s. of William Thomas Brunger, of Framlingham College. Secretary, by his wife. Lydia Edwards, dau. of Robert Corner : b. Framlingham, co. Suffolk. 23 May, 1893; educ. Framlingham College, where he was Senior Prefect, and a Sergt. in the O.T.C. gazetted 2nd Lieut. 4th Suffolk Regt. in Sept. 1911 : promoted Lieut. July, 1913, and Capt. Jan. 1915 ; went to New Zealand in 1913, where he engaged in sheep farming, and was attached to the 3rd Auckland Battn. : was recalled to England on the outbreak of war joined his regiment at Colchester : served with the Expeditionary Force in France and Flanders from Jan. 1915, taking part in ninny engagements, including that of Neuve Chapelle : was wounded at Givenchy in May. 1915, and was invalided home ; returned to France in May, 1918, transferring to the 9th Norfolk Regt. in Oct. 1917, and was killed in action at the Battle of Cambrai 8 Oct. 1918. Buried in Remicourt. He was mentioned in Despatches [London Gazette, 15 June, 1916] by General (now FA.) Sir Douglas Haig, and was awarded the Distinguished Service Order "For very capable service rendered when in charge of a raiding party which attacked the enemy's trenches: he so managed the operation, which was one of great difficulty, as to affect the maximum of damage with the minimum of loss, getting his men back with few casualties." Unm.