

TBB1/1/1/1/280

Typewritten copy of the text from a postcard dated 27th March 1918 from Thomas Baker Brown to his father to inform him he has been taken prisoner on the Arrasfront at Bullecourt and is now on his way to a Prisoner of War (POW) camp in Germany.

Thomas Baker Brown was one of 16,000 men taken prisoner by the Germans during the Spring Offensive of 1918. This was when a series of attacks were launched by the German armies along the Western Front (the main are of fighting in Belgium, France, Western Germany) to try to win the war.

Key words:

POW – Short for 'Prisoner of War' – person who is taken prisoner by the enemy during wartime.

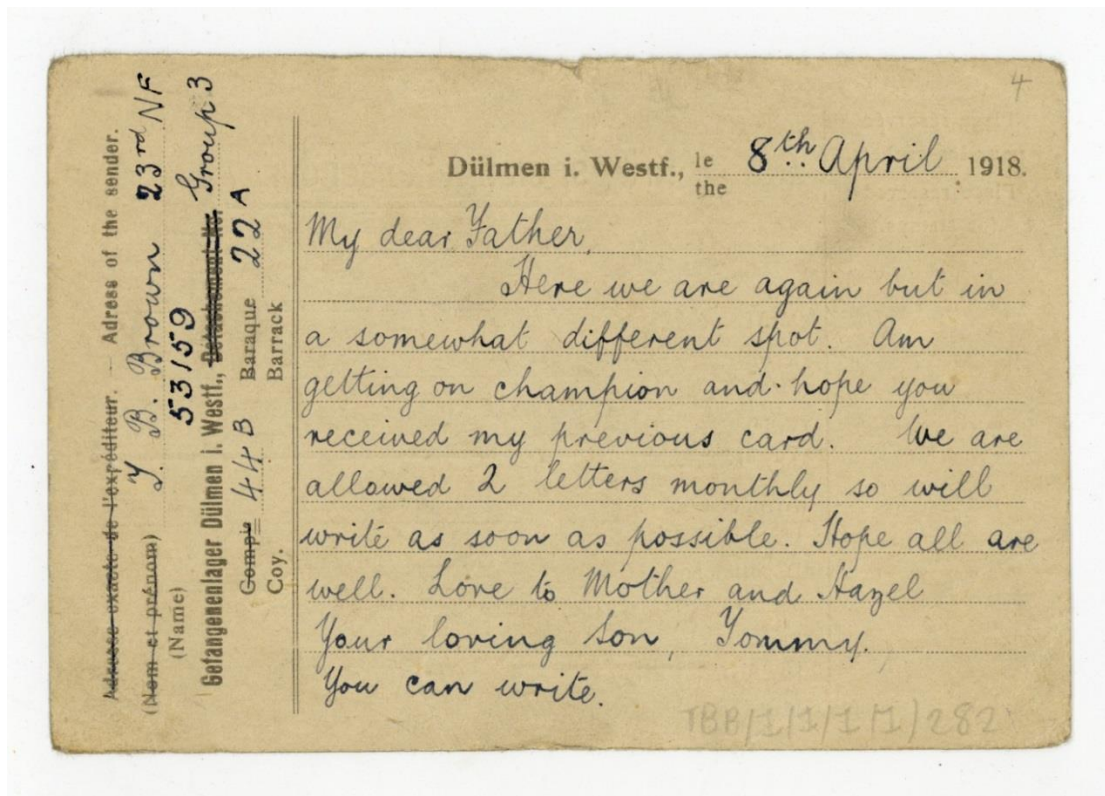
Arras Front – An area of fighting near the city of Arras in Northern France.

Question:

Where does Thomas say he's being taken to?

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TBB 1/1/1/1/282

Postcard from Thomas Baker Brown to his father dated 8th April 1918 from a Prisoner of War (P.O.W) camp in Dülmen, Germany. He writes that he is 'getting on champion' and is allowed to send '2 letters monthly'.

“My Dear Father

Here we are again but in a somewhat different spot. Am getting on champion and hope you received my previous card. We are allowed two letters monthly so will write as soon a possible. Hope all are well. Love to mother and Hazel.

Your loving son Tommy

You can write”

Key words:

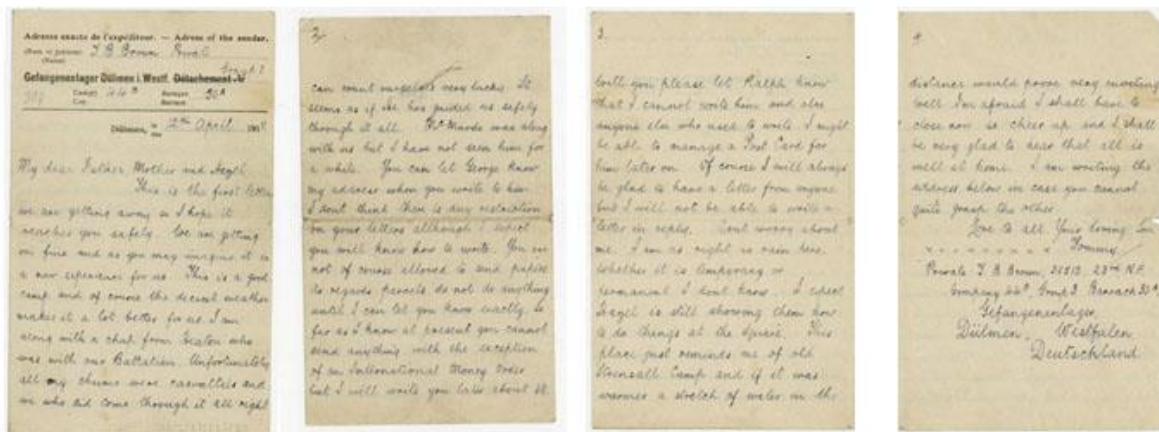
POW – Short for ‘Prisoner of War’ – person who is taken prisoner by the enemy during wartime.

Question:

Look carefully at the letter. What is the name of the town in Germany where Thomas has been taken to as a prisoner of war?

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TBB1/1/1/1/283

A four page letter from Thomas Baker Brown to his family from a prisoner of war camp in Dülmen. Thomas reassures his family that, despite being taken prisoner, he is okay.

“Camp 44B Barrack 30A 12th April 1918

My dear Father, Mother and Hazel

This is the first letter we are getting away so I hope it reaches you safely. We are getting on fine and as you may imagine it is a new experience for us. This is a good camp and of course the decent weather makes it a lot better for us.

I am along with a chap from Heaton who was with our Battalion. Unfortunately all my chums were casualties and we who did come through it all right can count ourselves very lucky. It seems as if He has guided us safely through it all. McMurdo was along with us but I have not seen him for a while.

You can let George know my address when you write to him. I don't think there is any restriction on your letters although I expect you will know how to write. You are not of course allowed to send papers. As regards parcels do not do anything until I can let you know exactly. So far as I know at present you cannot send anything with the exception of an International Money Order but I will write you later about it.

Will you please let Ralph know that I cannot write him and also anyone else who used to write. I might be able to manage a Post Card for him later on. Of course I will always be glad to have a letter from anyone but I will not be able to write a letter in reply.

Don't worry about me. I am as right as rain here. Whether it is temporary or permanent I don't know.

I expect Hazel is still showing them how to do things at the Square.

This place quite reminds me of old Strensall Camp and if it was warmer a stretch of water in the distance would prove very inviting.

Well I'm afraid I shall have to close now so cheer up and I shall be very glad to hear that all is well at home.

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**I am writing the address below in case you cannot quite grasp the other. Love to you all
Your loving son Tommy x x x x x x x x
Private T B. Brown 38513 23rd N.F. Company 44b, Group 3, Barrack 30A Gefangenenlager
Dulmen Westfalen Deutschland”**

Key words:

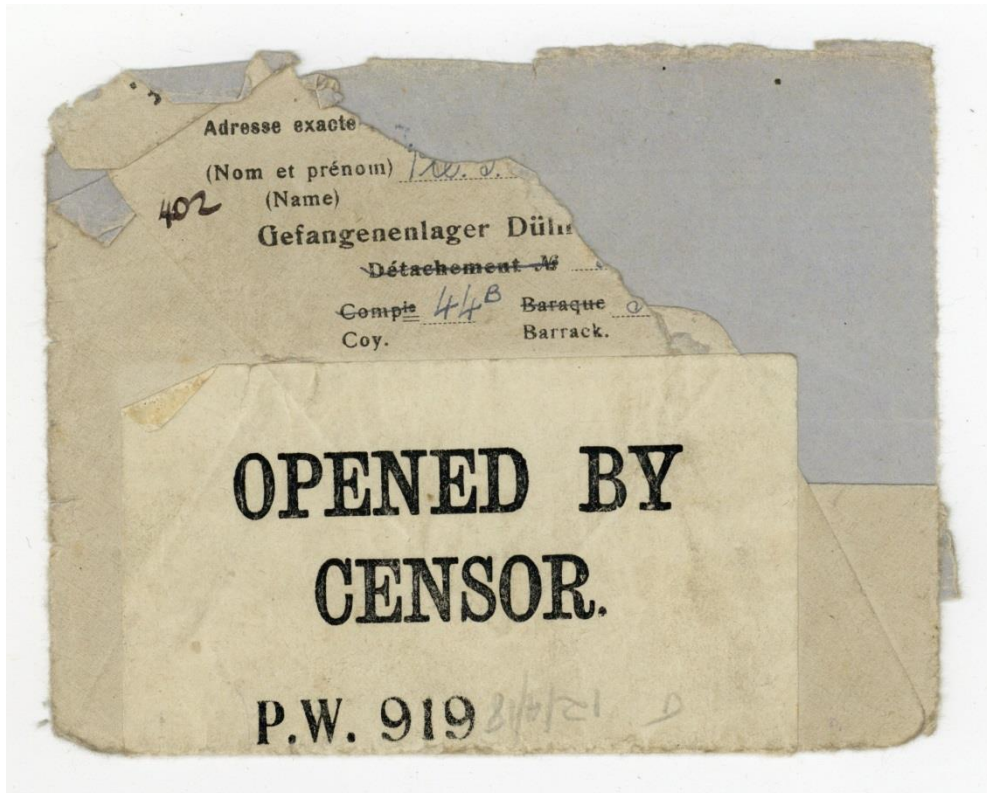
Battalion – a large group of about 1000 foot-soldiers (infantry)

International Money Order - a way of sending money to someone in another country

Questions:

Why does Thomas think he is lucky?

Why do you think Thomas can't send so many letters now?



TBB1/1/1/1/283

One side of an envelope that contained letter sent by Thomas Baker Brown to his family from the POW Camp in Dulmen, 12th April 1918. It says 'Opened by Censor. P.W. 919'.

Key words:

POW: Prisoner of War – a person who has been captured by the other side (the enemy) during a war.

Censor – a person who reads private letters sent in war time to check there are no parts that they don't want the person receiving the letter to read. If they find things that they don't want people to know they take those parts out.

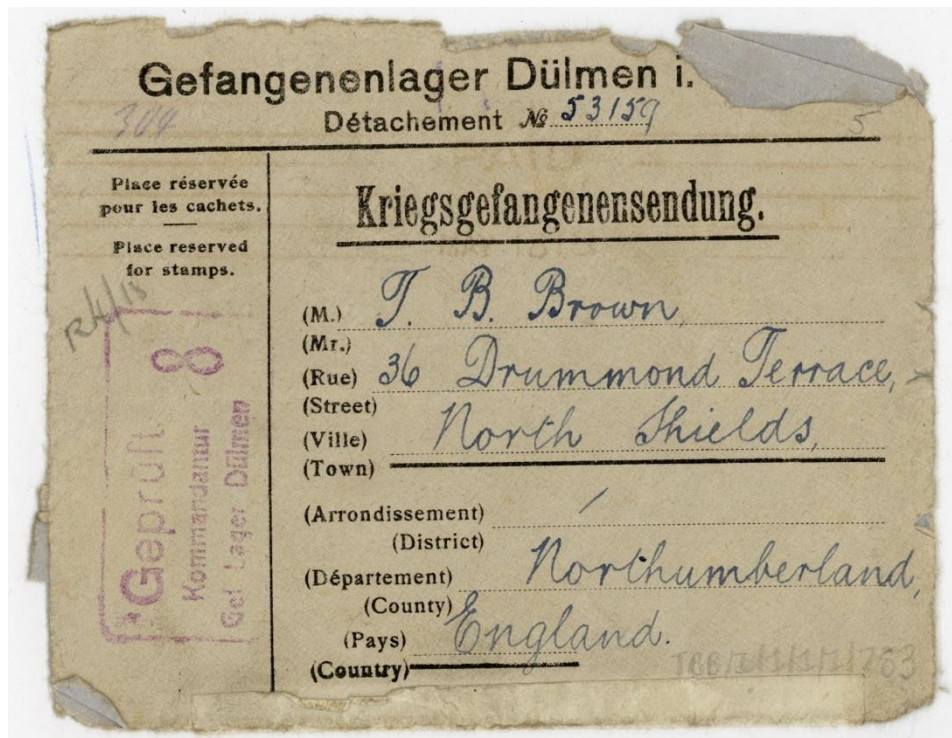
Gefangenenlager – German word for prison camps.

Question:

What can you tell from this envelope about Thomas' letters home from the POW camp in Germany?

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TBB1/1/1/1/283

Other side of an envelope that contained a letter sent by Thomas Baker Brown to his family from the POW Camp in Dulmen, 12th April 1918. It is addressed to T.B. Brown, 36 Drummond Terrace, North Shields, Northumberland, England.

Key words:

POW – Prisoner of War – a person who has been captured by the other side (the enemy) during a war.

Gefangenenlager – German word for prison camps


Kriegsgefangenensendung – German phrase meaning ‘prisoner of war sending’

Question:

Who do you think Thomas was sending this letter to? What makes you think that? Where did they live?

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C. or B.		Charges to pay.	No. of Telegram	
Recd. from } <i>a</i>		s. d.	Sent.....M	Office Stamp
			To.....	
By..... <i>8/1</i>			By.....	
Prefix	Handed in at	Office of Origin and Service Instructions		Words Received here at
<p>A: 464 S: C MGS 11:9 TH: 11H30 SITTARD 10: =</p> <hr/> <p>BROWN 36 DRUMMOND TCE NTHSHIELDS =</p> <p>ARRIVED HOLLAND HOME SOON = BROWN .:</p>				
<p>M 745. Wt. 5457/V TO. 20,000,000. 9/18. L.B.L. (374.)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">TBB1/1/1/1/303</p>				

TBB1/1/1/1/303

Telegram from Thomas Baker Brown to his father, 21st November 1918. Telegram reads "Arrived Holland Home Soon".

Key word:

Telegram – A telegram was a message sent by a telegraph machine. Telegrams were a fast way to send important news to people who didn't have telephones. A telegraph operator would tap the message out in code using a machine called a Morse key. The message travelled to another operator who decoded the long and short taps into words, and then passed the message to a delivery boys or girl who would cycle quickly to deliver it.

Question:

Where was Thomas when he sent this telegram?