

S. - J. - Z.  
28th Sept. 1916

My dear mother,

Received your letters of 24th +  
25th together with P.O. for which I thank you.  
Also thank Y. for his letter.

Still going on O.K. Weather a  
bit rotten to-day but have had a spell of decent  
weather this last week.

TBB1/1/1/1/78

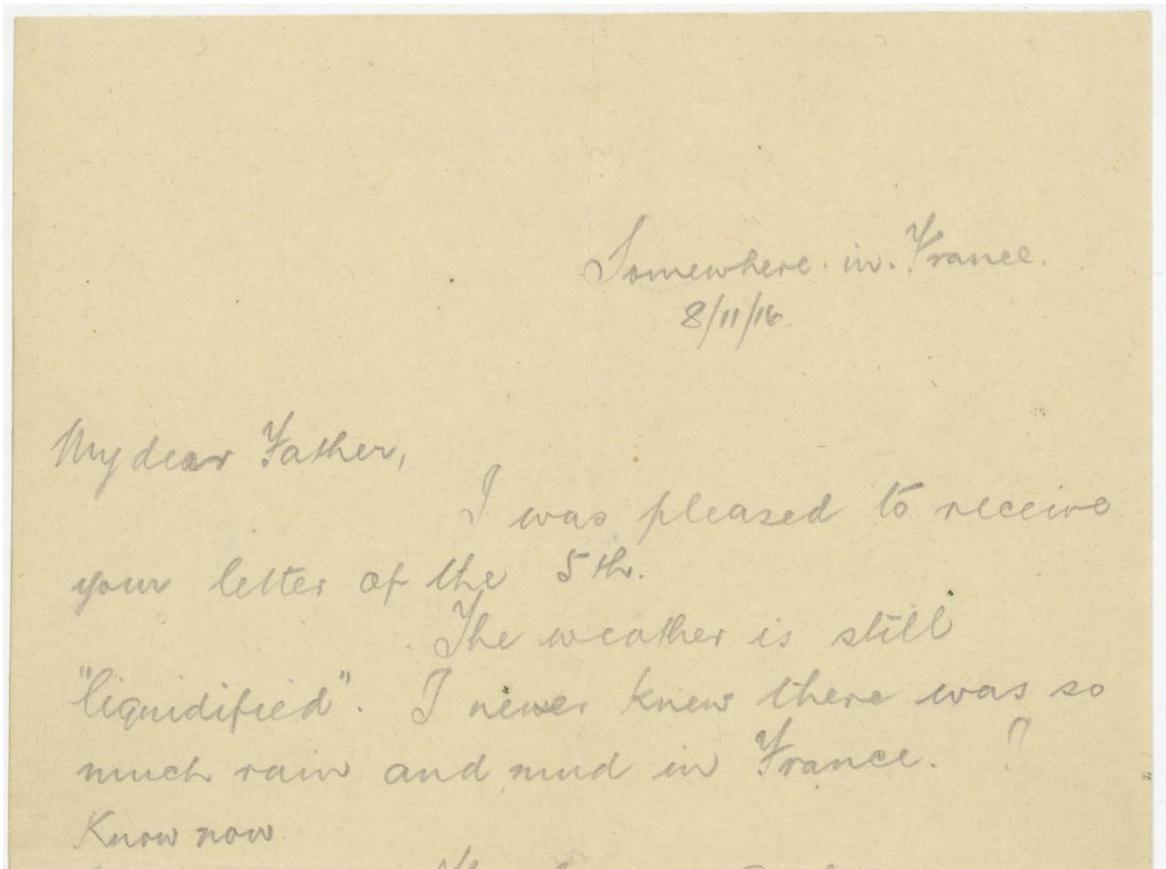
Extract from a letter from Thomas Baker Brown to his mother from France, 28 September 1916.

**“Still going on o.k. Weather a bit rotten today but have had a spell of decent weather this last week.”**

*From a letter from Thomas Baker Brown to his mother,*

Question:

What is the weather like where Thomas is in France in September 1916?



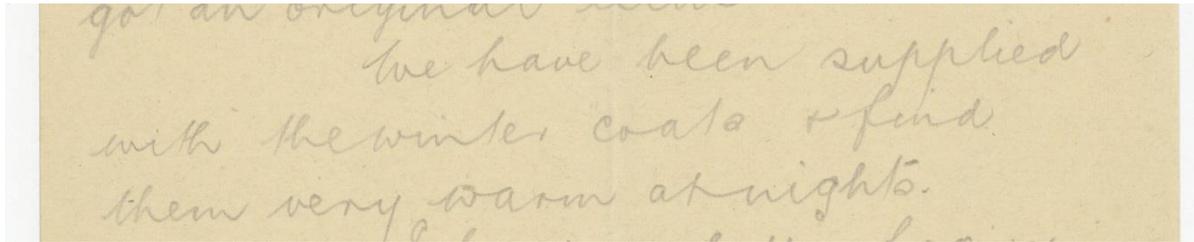
TBB1/1/1/1/96

A letter from Thomas Baker Brown to his father from somewhere in France, 8 November 1916.

**“The weather is still “liquidified” I never knew there was so much rain and mud in France. I know now.”**

**Question:**

What is the weather like where Thomas is in France in November 1916?



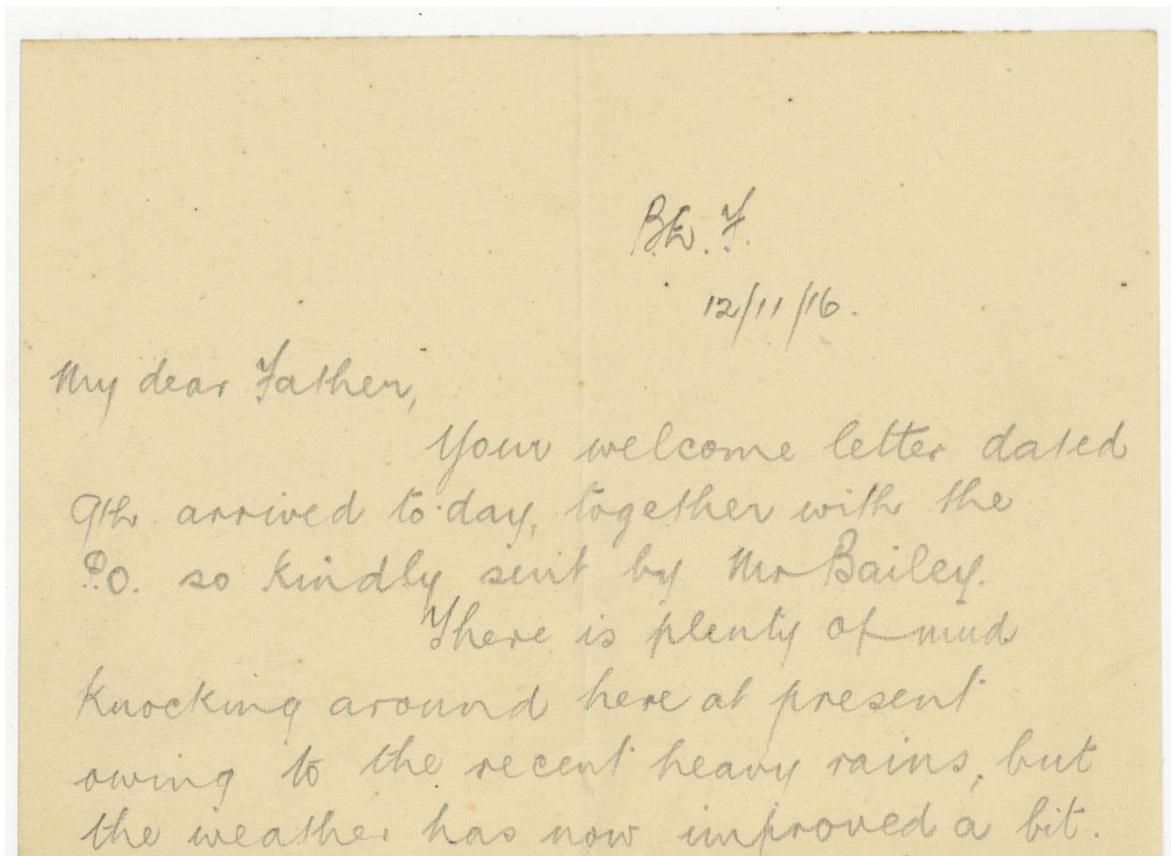
TBB1/1/1/1/97

Extract from a letter from Thomas Baker Brown to his mother from France, *11 November 1916*. He comments that he has been given his winter coat.

**“We have been supplied with the winter coats and find them very warm at night.”**

Question:

How does Thomas try to make sure his mother isn't too worried about him?



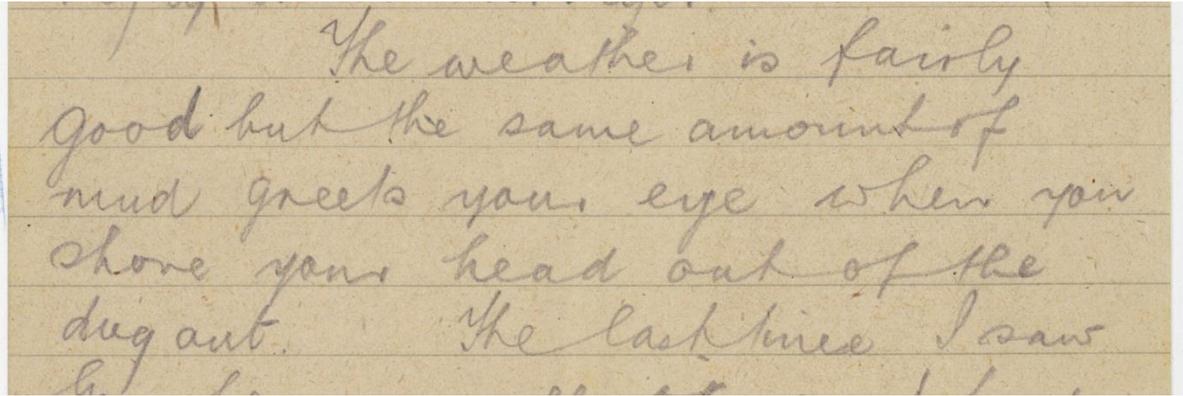
TBB1/1/1/1/98

An extract from a letter from Thomas Baker Brown to his father from France, 12 November 1916. He writes that it is very muddy in the trenches due to heavy rains.

**“...there is plenty of mud knocking around here at present owing to the recent heavy rains, but the weather has improved a bit.”**

**Question:**

What is the weather like where Thomas is in France in November 1916?



TBB1/1/1/1/109

An extract from a letter from Thomas Baker Brown to his father from Somewhere in France, 9 December 1916.

**“The weather is fairly good but the same amount of mud greets your eye when you shove your head out of the dugout.”**

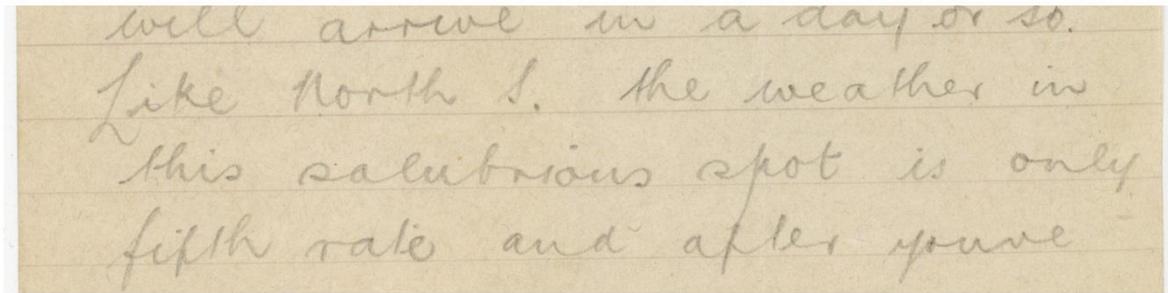
**Key words:**

Dugout – holes dug out of the sides of trenches and used for shelter and protection.

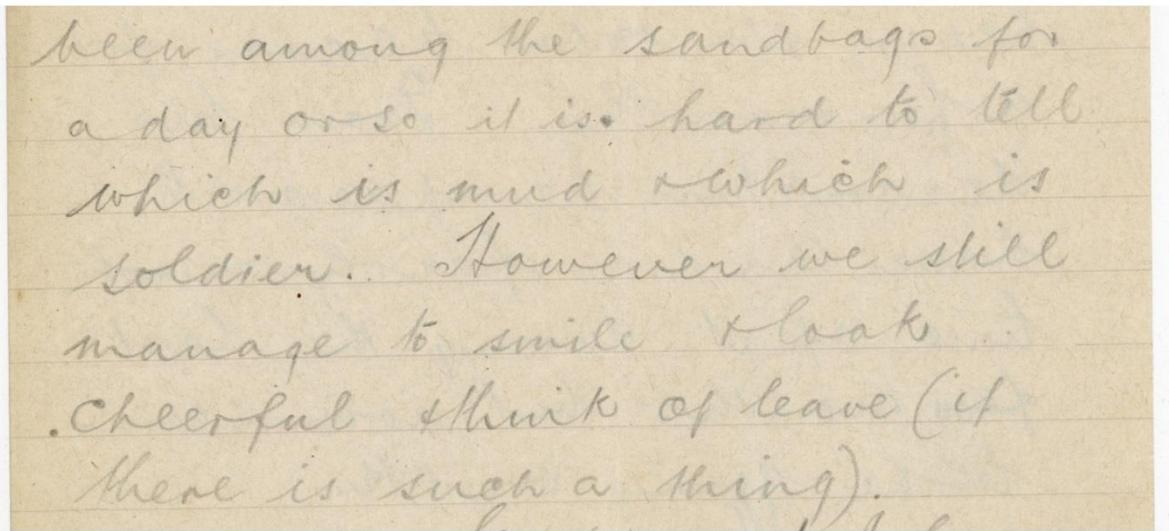
Trenches – long, narrow ditches dug into the ground where soldier lives all day and night.

**Questions:**

How do you know Thomas was in the trenches on 9<sup>th</sup> December 1916?



will arrive in a day or so.  
Like North S. the weather in  
this salubrious spot is only  
fifth rate and after you've



been among the sandbags for  
a day or so it is hard to tell  
which is mud & which is  
soldier. However we still  
manage to smile & look  
cheerful & think of leave (if  
there is such a thing).

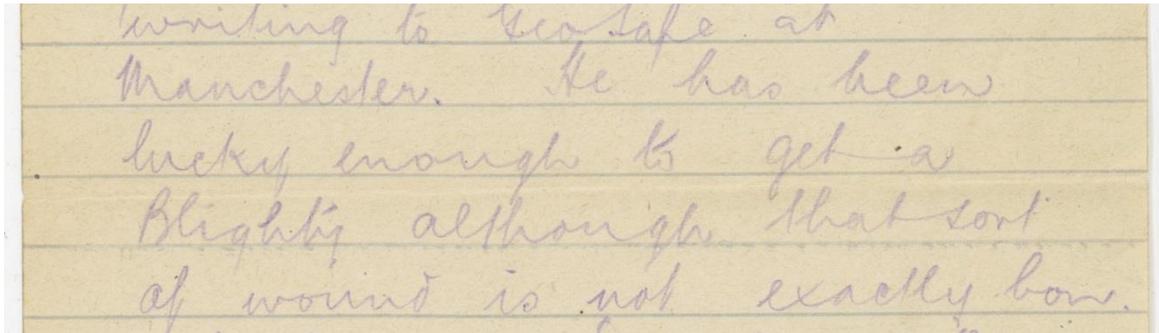
TBB/1/1/1/1/122

Two extracts from a letter from Thomas Baker Brown to his father from somewhere in France, 13 January 1917. He writes about how much mud there is in the trenches.

**“Like North S[hields] the weather in this salubrious spot is only fifth rate and after you’ve been among the sandbags for a day or so it is hard to tell which is mud and which is soldier. However we still manage to smile + look cheerful + think of leave (if there is such a thing).”**

Question:

What is Thomas looking forward to? Is he hopeful he will get it? Pick out the words that show you this.



waiting to be safe at  
Manchester. He has been  
lucky enough to get a  
Blighty although that sort  
of wound is not exactly low.

TBB/1/1/1/1/158

An extract a letter from Thomas Baker Brown to his mother from France, 27 May 1917. He discusses a fellow soldier who managed to get a 'Blighty', an injury bad enough to get them sent home.

**“He has been lucky enough to get a Blighty although that sort of wound is not exactly low.”**

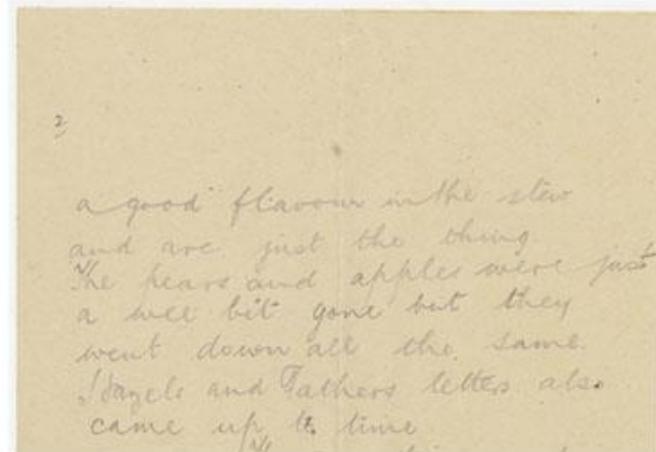
**Key words:**

Blighty – a slang word for Britain. A ‘Blighty’ or ‘Blighty-one’ was a wound that was bad enough to get a soldier sent home to Britain but not serious enough to kill them or seriously injure them

**Questions:**

Do you think it was common for people to get a ‘Blighty?’ How can you tell this from Thomas’ letter?

Why do you think Thomas describes the man who is injured as ‘lucky’?



TBB1/1/1/1/210

A letter from Thomas Baker Brown to his mother from France, 1 November 1917. He thanks her for sending a parcel of food, including 'sauce' and 'pears and apples', and asks that she send him some 'Gong soups'.

**“My dear Mother, Your letter and parcel I received quite safely today. The contents of the parcel were quite appetising and soon began to fill up the odd corners of which there were a few. All your parcels have arrived ok and so far I have been lucky in that respect. The sauce arrived in good order and it made the coloured water go down quite nicely. Next time you are sending anything on would you include some Gong Soups as they put a good flavour in the stew and are just the thing. Pears and apples were just a wee bit gone, but they went down all the same.”**

**Key word:**

Gong Soups – soups that came in packets of dried squares (like stock-cubes). You can see an advert for Gong Soups on page 9 of your comic.

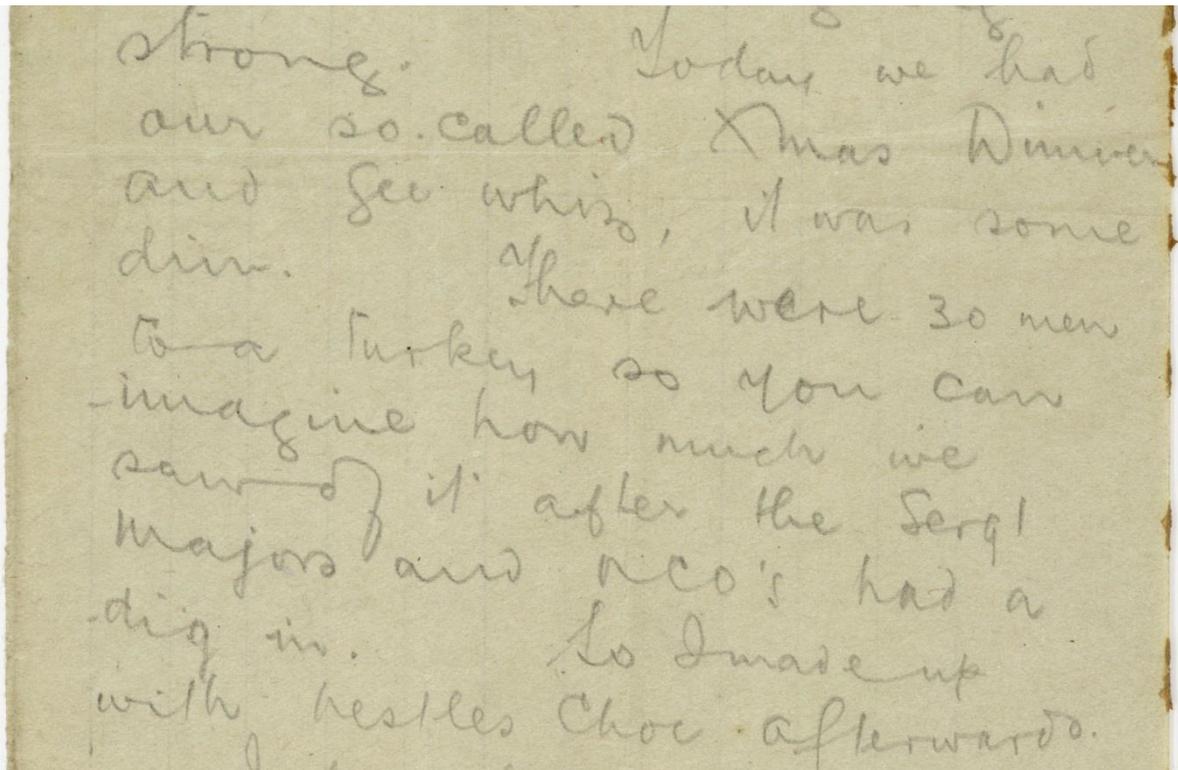
**Questions:**

Why do you think Gong soups were a good thing for Thomas' mother to send to him in France?

Why do you think it was not such a good idea for Thomas mother to send him fruit?

Thomas Baker Brown: The story of a First World War soldier from North Tyneside

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TBB1/1/1/1/248

A letter from Thomas Baker Brown to his father from France, *29 December 1917*. He describes having his Christmas dinner, and remarks that there were '30 men to a turkey'.

**“Today we had our so called Xmas dinner and gee whiz it was some dinner. There were 30 men to a turkey so you can imagine how much we saw of it after the Sergt Major and the NCOs had a dig in. So I made up with Nestles Choc afterwards.”**

**Key words:**

Sergt Major – (Sergeant Major)- A senior officer in the British Army.

N.C.O. – a Non-Commissioned -Officer (a lower-ranking officer such as a sergeant).

**Question:**

Why did Thomas not get much Christmas dinner? How did he fill himself up afterwards?