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Col. Thomas W. Cahill Civil War Letters

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11-7-1861

## Letter to Margaret E. Cahill, 1861 November 7

Thomas W. Cahill

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Camp Chase Lowell Nov 17<sup>th</sup> 1861

My Dear Wife we arrived safely at this Camp on Tuesday morning at 10 o'clock we had an awful time with the Hand Cases on the Manny of the Cars had no lights in them and when they commenced to hammer one another they could not tell where the blow came from; they smashed the glass in the car windows; and raised the mischief generally; we went through Meriden Hartford & Springfield without stopping and from Springfield to Worcester and to a place 17 Miles from here called Groton Junction where we arrived at 1 1/2 o'clock A.M. and remained at that place until 8 o'clock on Tuesday morning when we left for Lowell arriving at 9 1/2 A.M. we were met at the Cars by Col E. Jones of the 26<sup>th</sup> Mass Regt; and after escorting us through the City delivered us into Camp pretty well tired out; and now with reference to life at this Camp E. F. Jones of the 26<sup>th</sup> Mass is in Command of the Post and stands on his Dig he is a very strict Disciplinarian and inflicts very severe punishment on the Hand Cases The Camp is surrounded by a High Board fence and there is but one Gate so that when they get outside it is next to impossible to get in without coming in at the Gate and if they have no Pass or have obtained their Pass they are clapped into the Stocks on a 32 Pound Ball and chain clapped on them and nothing is allowed to

Prisoners in the Guard House are not allowed  
anything to Eat but Bread and Water I tell you  
It makes some ~~some~~ of the Hard Cases open  
their Eyes when they see the way Prisoners are  
furnished here. Our Baggage came out to-  
day and we had it on the Camp at 12 o'clock  
M. and I am writing this Letter on my Patent  
Desk sitting on your mattress. I shall sleep on the Camp  
to night I have slept at a Hotel last night with Dr. Gallagher  
Major Frye the Dr. and Harrall are trying to find  
a place to Board their wives near the Camp: I do not  
know how they will succeed. If they find a Place near  
the Camp I wish you would come on and see us we are  
not many farther from the center of the City than  
our New Haven Camp was from our House. But it is  
along walk to undertake to get meals at the Hotels  
and Hornitty has not got his arrangements to  
feed the field and line mess: we are badly off  
at present for ~~for~~ meals the line officers feed  
with their men: but they say that the grub is not  
as good as it was in New Haven; General Butler  
gave the line officers a terrible going over this  
morning ~~for~~ and unless I am very much mistaken  
he will train some of them ere long he told them among  
other things that once duty commenced he drank no liquor  
and they should not besides a great many other things  
not at all pleasant Miss Mary and Eddie for me  
I am afraid it will be impossible for me to get home  
as I expected this old Butler and his Com<sup>ds</sup> of this Part

are such strict Disciplinearians that I dislike  
very much to ask any leave of absence so soon  
after coming here and don't very much whether  
I would get it if I did if, I. Can arrange to have  
you come on here I will. Harrell wanted his  
wife to come on with you she would stop at New Har-  
en and arrange to stop over night at Springfield.  
As getting late and I am cold sitting  
in the tent Sergeant Lawler has just arrived  
from New Haven with Eleven Men and tells  
me he has something in ~~my~~ his trunk for me for  
you when he gets it up to camp and says he  
left you all well and that you are going to  
New York with Mrs Gallagher no more absent  
from your Loving husband  
Thos. H. Cahill