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Letter to Margaret E. Cahill, 1864 August 10

Thomas W. Cahill

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Recommended Citation

Cahill, Thomas W., "Letter to Margaret E. Cahill, 1864 August 10" (1864). *Col. Thomas W. Cahill Civil War Letters*. 83.
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Head 2nd ^{regt} Corn Vols

Fennallytown D. C August 11th 1864

My Dear Wife

As you will understand by the heading we are having a glorious rest at this place, and from appearances it is like to continue for some time, as it is understood at Div & Brigade Head Q^{rs} that we are permanently assigned to the defences of Washington, now under command of Gen Hagar, It is also understood that an endeavour will be made to place us in permanent quarters or Camps in this vicinity, as an illustration of the little use there is in attempting to say in a letter what is going to happen in this soldier's life since I commenced writing this letter I have received an order to go into permanent Camp or at least to rearrange our Camp which was pitched simply in Bicouac. (D. C.) without any regard to its Order of formation, It is very hot and I do not fancy running out of my tent in the hot sun to direct the new formation, to say nothing of the interruptions while writing, I had my tent under the shade of a tree but in the new location I shall not have a particle of shade, I went into Washington ~~the~~ yesterday and the day before and after a long search found a raw boned plug of a horse for which I paid \$135.00 I could not get one a cent less, 180.00 and 200 and 250 being the ruling prices, The one I have is a poor looking affair but I could not fail as though I would go higher, I suppose I may be able to get a hundred for him when I want to sell him, I have learned with my official as what is considered the situation of our Regiment at Head Q^{rs}, The Battle I expect will come up first with the 26th Mass who will run

And on the 18th of October, they now declare that
they will go out (that is the Officers) but I have ceased
to have any faith in what men say, and my impres-
sion of them, is as your own that as many as can
will remain. The fact is the war is a business for
those in it and however odd it may seem yet it is so that
the majority of Officers do not decline to leave the service.
This is not only the case with Regiments which like those
of us from Louisiana have not seen much fighting
And who in comparison to those of the Potomac and Ten-
nessee may be considered as mere Holiday Sol-
diers but it is so among the most unlucky and have
lost fighting Regiments, Every where young officers
are being mustered in to new promotions and all are
apparently as anxious as even for the Officers, I am
laying low to see how our lads will act when
the issue arrives. My belief is they will retain their
places particularly if we have a easy winter then
if they can, as I understand it now. The whole
thing is done by favour of Brigade Div and Corps Com-
manders. That is if the Officer desires to be retained
last week and the week before I doubt if an officer
in the if he could but would have left the service
to day I do not believe one would like to go out
I wish you would look and see if have left a large
pair of Rust Coloured saddle Bags made
to go on a horses Back at home, so that in case
I need them if there I can get them, I have rec^d
no letter from you for three days and ought
not to write this one but expect one this P M
I have written Father and a short letter
my love to Ellen kiss the babies as usual
from your loving husband
J. W. Child