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Col. Thomas W. Cahill Civil War Letters

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12-25-1861

## Letter to Margaret E. Cahill, 1861 December 25

Thomas W. Cahill

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1861.

Ship Island, Mississippi Sound  
Christmass Day.

My Dear Wife

J. Takeup

my pen to day as a memorial of the  
day. we had an early Mass at six o'clock  
and another at 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; just at this time  
I received an invitation from Flag Officer  
J<sup>r</sup> Dean to go on Board the Niagara  
We embarked on a small Propellor Barge  
which arrived here from Philadelphia  
for the Quarter masters Department the  
Field and staff of the two Regiments were  
present and received with all the honours  
this ship had just <sup>arrived</sup> ~~returned~~ here from Pensacola  
where she had taken an active part in  
the recent Bombardment. I must confess  
that I had rather a poor opinion of the

Artillery Practice of the Rebels when I found  
That they had only hit this monster of a  
ship in two places during a fire of more  
than 24 hours continuance with open decks  
on which were working between 5 and 6  
hundred men, the shot that struck did  
not penetrate her side and not a  
man was injured; It is a lovely day  
and if we were among green hills and  
meadows instead of Barren sand Banks  
It would be considered splendid  
weather for Early September at home  
we feel rather lonesome however  
thinking of friends at home wonder  
ing what they are saying about us  
and whether anny one is left in New  
Haven; we had rather a good  
dinner to day considering our Circum  
stances we draw our provisions for  
the Field and staff mess from the

Commissary of the Brigade as provided  
by the Regulations at their Cost at the  
place of purchase so that we live at  
a fair rate of Cost for the prime necessaries  
Prime Pork at <sup>4</sup>10.50 per Bbl Ham 9 cts  
per pound Sugar 9 cts Coffee 17 Flour <sup>4</sup>6.50  
<sup>per Bbl</sup>  
and all articles of food furnished the Soldiers  
for Rations at lower rates than you can purcha-  
se them at Retail in New Haven  
of Course we have no delicacies or  
Luxuries except some 15 bbls of Dried  
apples. We can get Preserved Meats and  
Poultry and many other Luxuries put up  
in Cans; at an Extravagant Price, but I am  
glad to say that our mess are all of them  
up to this time apparently as anxious to  
have their pay as myself so that we get along  
very well on our Camp fare, and are all  
in Excellent health and heavier in flesh than  
when we landed! The men are also in

the most-Excellent health and spirits  
indeed they have improved so much  
that I Can scarcely recognise a great  
many of them as being the hard look-  
ing and loose acting Cases of Camp  
Welch: they have possibly not had  
a glass of Rum since they Came on  
the Island and it will be next to  
impossible for them to get a Drop  
while they remain here; only imagine  
a month of perfect Sobriety among  
this Crowd and no prisoners in  
the guard House no insubordina-  
tion and no trouble only to Eat their rations  
and the most splendid weather

A perfect Paradise of a sand  
Spit - is it not; but it must be a  
mighty hot spot in summer time  
and I hope you have sent me the Fatigue  
Coat as my Dress Coat is getting the worse  
for wear and I shall need some  
new fatigue Pants and a Dress pants  
We have not heard anything from Starrald  
yet and the King fisher has been lying  
here two weeks and over when we might  
have had our letters, and an M<sup>rs</sup> Crelb for  
the Men had it been put on board if her  
as he should have done.

No more this time from your  
loving husband J. W. C. Hull