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Letter to Margaret E. Cahill, 1862 January 29

Thomas W. Cahill

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Ship Island Jan 29th 1862
11 o'clock P.M.,

You will laugh I suppose at these piece meal letters but I do not commence a long letter from the liability of interruption so I take a chance at them when I can and as I have nothing to write there is no use of stopping in the middle of a big sheet so I scratch a bit and wait like "Micard" "for something to turn up" well this evening the Steamer Santiago de Cuba turned up with news of the change in the Secretary of War I suppose it is all right and I imagine a change in the Navy would be for the better for I think there is something rotten or wrong there; this vessel comes here with news that there is seven or nine Secesh Steamers laying in the "Passes" ready to slip out and thrash our little bit of a fleet of sailing

vessels and run the Blockade Loaded
with Cotton: and this vessel runs up
here from the Passes and reports the
fact as Cooly as though it amounts
to nothing and here lies the Big
Niagara and a whole Fleet of Smaller
Gunboats and up to this hour not a
sign of Moving among them: fine
or size of these "light draft SaColet
Gunboats drawing 8 or 10 feet of water
are too much for these shores"

lie here like so many useless hulks
with their machinery Broken on Boilers
Burnt out: or something wrong: these
broken down things all hail from
Philadelphia: and how do the
Mobilians run their Blockade
will they dig a channel it is
said across an Island some miles
from the Mouth of the Harbor where
the Blackading vessels lay: and where

they run out buxels drawing eight feet
of water it is said that there is more trade
going on at Havana with the South
than ever before; and lots of these
Naval drones lay around here
and talk about the affairs coolly
as though they were in no way
interested in the matter; if they
are asked why they do not stop ^{it} they
say that they go where they are ordered.
If you only heard the Old Grey
Beard of a General swear at them
he says they are like a lot of Bar-
Room loafers discussing politics
over their beer instead of fighting
but I suppose they get tired and lay-
ing around in these lonesome places
and lose all their life and activity
it is now 12^o Clock and I am going to
sleep the mail leaves here at 10^o Clock

tomorrow; just at this moment Dr Galagher
steps into the tent with word of the
death of Old Michael Fagan
of Capt Coates Company of Bridgeport
he has been just kept alive for
some time by the greatest assenters
of the Dr who has feared to have a
death in the Regt but he was worn
out by old age he died a good
Christian patient death
and has been well cared for to
the last he will be buried tomorrow
afternoon. the men going home will start
the day after to morrow good night
God Bless you Bless the Babies
for me
Your loving husband
Thos. W. Cahill
Col