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5-6-1863

## Letter to Margaret E. Cahill, 1863 May 6

Thomas W. Cahill

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U.S. 100  
New Orleans May 6<sup>th</sup> 1863

My Dear Wife

We arrived here safely on Sunday morning after a slow but pleasant passage. The Dr and all our friends and acquaintances were well. Capt. Brien is down for a few days from his Parish. Everything is going on well with him and the people are extremely pleased with him he anticipates a very pleasant time.

The men and Officers of the Regiment are all well and doing nicely being all on the same kind of duty as when I left although some changes have taken place in their location.

Capt. Healy Co C, and I am at Pass Manchac and Company B, Capts Sheridan and Wright at the W & Barnacks; A at Bocterville and H. along the River below New Orleans D at Algiers. N. and J. at Lafayette Square. Major Frye is at Pass Manchac he has been under arrest once since he was stationed at Hickox Station and he was retained and sent to Pass Manchac. he is about half crazy as it is not a very desirable place; his wife has left and he was not allowed to come in to see her off and he naturally feels down over it. Father Larnaud is called to see me to day. he is stopping in town for a few days. Father Chalou called when I was sent to left his card, he left word with Johnny that he was



shed me to call & see the Arch Bishop which I pro-  
pose to do to-morrow Johnny is well except a  
slight touch of the shakes The Dr has been fitting  
up his Regimental Hospital in great shape he had  
all his mattresses emptied and refilled with  
new Moss he has a fine set of new Iron Bedsteads  
clean new sheets and Blankets and fine white  
Mosquito Bars, and his Hospital looks Elegant  
A Medical Inspector General from Washington vis-  
ited it a few days ago and complimented him  
highly on its appearance and condition

There is great excitement here over a general Order  
Ordering all Registered Enemies to leave the departm-  
ent by the 15<sup>th</sup> This has been qualified since by allowing  
such as choose to take a very stringent Oath on  
Oath of their remaining, Of course the seceders are  
all over this as they must leave all their Property be-  
hind them as they have never been allowed to sell or  
dispose of it, they will go forth beggars, what a  
terrible infatuation has seized these people to pro-  
ud and haughty once, in their wealth and exalted  
agance. The poorest beggars are happy in compan-  
ion with them, since they have never known wealth or  
luxury, what a fate has befallen them and yet they  
are as insolent as ever, By all accounts they have  
grossly imposed on General Banks kindness and  
leniency and seemed to have construed it as so  
much Cowardice now they feel the consequences of  
their insolence as they have succeeded in stirring up the sleeping



lion, and he will let them know who they have  
over them; General Banks is pushing on thro-  
ugh the Country at a terrible Rate towards Alex-  
andria with Every prospect of tremendous  
success he has already seized a ~~very~~ great  
quantity of Cotton and sugar it is said more than  
three hundred thousand Bales of Cotton and sugar  
without limit and he has only commenced his op-  
erations, this is through the celebrated Rich-  
paw Country said to be the Richest in all the Sou-  
th; and it is said with immense quantities of Cot-  
ton all of which will be sent in for the governme-  
nt and I think General Banks will see that it does  
not go as last years work did; I believe he is honest  
so that the Government must be immensely ben-  
efitted if he is lucky, and it is a terrible blow  
to the Rebels by far the worst blow they have re-  
ceived during the war; and worse for them than  
capturing Richmond, take in connection with  
this the desperate and successful Raid of the  
gallant Colonel Grierson through the whole le-  
ngth and breadth of the State of Mississippi cutting  
every Rail Road in the State and burning all the Bridges  
this Raid beats anything in Military History since  
it or modern, as an offensive movement by such a for-  
ce full of men; The damage it has done cannot be meas-  
ured as it will prove the vulnerability of Rebel dom &  
this can be done again and again, and it should be  
what if these men had been captured & in comparison with



The amount of damage they have done; They have done more  
than twenty thousand men could do anywhere else.  
Banks & Baragut will now operate against the Rebels  
on the Red River and the chances are very good that  
the Rebels will not have so much Cotton to give Johnny  
Bull for his money; Cotton taken from the Enemy now  
is better than lives or dearly bought victories in the  
field. The prospect is glorious given all the gloom  
if we have troops to stand by what we have on if we only  
strip the Country completely of every vestige of wealth so  
they will not submit; this is the method to subdue them  
and take Vicksburg and Port Hudson not by pushing me  
on fortifications prepared for their slaughter. They are  
not living on the air, and they must be starved if they will  
not submit, we continue to hear the most terrible accounts  
of their sufferings in some places from hunger, flour  
is worth two hundred dollars per barrel on the coast of  
the Gulf & cannot be bought at any price it is said that  
absolute starvation exists in Mobile and the cutting  
of the bridges on the Rail Roads will not help them.  
In addition to the immense amount of Cotton and sugar Banks  
has seized all the horses and mules said to amount to  
thousands upon thousands so he will not be behind hand  
for transportation on Cavalry or Artillery horses, and if he  
drives all the non producers out of the Country into the  
Rebel lines he must add immensely to the number of men  
whom they must feed or let them starve and let them  
eat even so little of wheat take a great deal from them and  
more pretends to say they have anything to spare in the States East  
of the Mississippi River. So that as for any measure every per-  
son sent to them hunts them and the brave men of decess who  
show their bravery by calling Yankee names can have a chance  
of something else to try their teeth on as well as the insolent  
Russies of women. Let them go and then conscript the men  
who are left behind on their Oaths this will test them  
to their senses to a certain extent. You will think this a crazy  
letter and these are crazy times; well good bye give my  
respects to all Enquiring friends to Stephen Clark and say I am  
intended to work him a good long letter soon, My love to Ellen  
and kiss the Babies as usual for me, your loving husband  
J. W. Cahill