

# John T. Norton Civil War letterMS.0401

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1863 May 23

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## Title Statement

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## Publication Statement

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## Descriptive Summary

**Unit ID**

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**Unit ID**

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**Unit Date**

1863 May 23

**Language**

English

**Creator**

Norton, John T.

**Extent**

1 items

**Physical Location**

Manuscripts stacks

**Repository**

Virginia Military Institute Archives

## Administrative Information

**Conditions Governing Access**

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## Preferred Citation

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## Scope and Contents

This collection consists of one Civil War letter (dated May 23rd, 1863) written by Union soldier John T. Norton (Lieutenant, 97th Regiment New York State Volunteers) to his father, Morgan Norton of Norway, New York. Norton discusses the Battle of Chancellorsville, Virginia and mentions the death of Stonewall Jackson, referring to him as "the bravest of the brave."

## Keywords

United States. Army—New York Infantry Regiment, 97th (1861-1865)

Chancellorsville (Va.), Battle of, 1863

Virginia—History—Civil War, 1861-1865

Correspondence

Jackson, Stonewall, 1824-1863

## Description of Subordinate Components

### Letter to Morgan Norton

**Unit ID** /repositories/3/archival\_objects/5308

**Unit Date** 1863 May 23

**Language** English

### Scope and Contents

Written from "Camp, 9th Regt. N.Y.S.V." Letter discusses the Battle of Chancellorsville, Virginia and mentions the death of Stonewall Jackson, referring to him as "the bravest of the brave."

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Chancellorsville (Va.), Battle of, 1863

Correspondence

United States. Army—New York Infantry Regiment, 97th (1861-1865)

Virginia—History—Civil War, 1861-1865

Jackson, Stonewall, 1824-1863

### Transcription

Camp, 9th Regt. N.Y.S.V. May 23d, 1863

Dear Father: Your kind letter of the 17th inst. is received. I am sorry that the letter I wrote to Mary did not reach you before you wrote as I am afraid that you are too anxious in regard to me. I am happy to state I am enjoying good health and in very good spirits, dwelling on the sacred soil of Virginia, watching the rebels across the river. They come down to the river to bathe and would swim across if they were not ordered back by our officers, as our pickets are not allowed to speak or hold any conversation with them.

I should have written to Mary before I did, but could not find time enough. Before I did write the 1st Army corps was under fire on April 30th from Rebel Batteries which forced those in the 2d Division to withdraw out of our position at the river bank. While retiring, one of the enemy's shots came rolling through the ranks of my company and before we changed our position a shell came directly over our Regiment and killed two officers in the 13th Massachusetts.

On the 2d day of May the enemy opened upon us again with shell but did not much injury. All this below Fredericksburg. Same day we made a forced march of 22 miles and crossed the river at US Ford some distance above Fredericksburg, when we were marched to the extreme right of the line of battle and took up our position near where the 11th Army corps ran. The same day we were busy all night in building breastworks and a part of next day in constructing abatis around them.

During this time our Division captured about 200 prisoners. One that was taken had a bayonet wound

through the throat. He was over 6 feet in height and made his brags that we might kill them but could not conquer them.

On this day the 3d Sunday, the hottest of the fighting took place from 5 1/2 a.m. to 10 1/2 o'clock a.m. It was one continual roar of musketry and artillery which exceeded anything I ever heard. There were 4 cannon shots fired in a second. A brigade of rebels charged our position and about 50 men returned to tell the tale. This was a little on the left of our Corps. In the afternoon our Regiment went on picket. Next morning a rebel had the audacity to fire at me while eating breakfast. I gave orders to the picket to keep a sharp watch for Jonny Reb and continued to eat my breakfast. We were relieved in the afternoon and went back to our works, but judge my surprise when instead of one single breastwork, I beheld a dozen more which our boys had built while we were on picket. On Wednesday we made a great strategic movement across the river, cross a little after daylight. All came off in safety but the 6th Army Corps, who crossed at Fredericksburg and took the heights were not quite so lucky. If the rebels call it a victory, it was a dear one to them for at the last calculation they lost two to one, and it would not take many such victories to end the rebellion. Besides losing one of their best Generals who is a host in himself, namely Jackson, the bravest of the brave.

There are many little incidents I would like to relate to you but it would take up too much space. I am happy to learn that Sophia and Florine are nearly well again. I will close hoping to hear from you soon. Hoping this will find you all in good health. Your affectionate son, Lieut. John T. Norton