

The following letter was written by Captain Charles A. Phillips – 5th Massachusetts Battery. The letter informs John Platts of the death of son, Corporal Edwin Morton Platts, at the Battle of Fredericksburg. Edwin is buried in the Fredericksburg National Cemetery in Grave #2742. A scanned copy of the original letter was found on Ancestry.com, but lacks any attached provenance. The scanned copy has written “A Copy” across the top, suggesting it was a copy of the original letter received by John Platts. Typescript produced by Eric J. Mink.

9/17

A Copy

Camp near Falmouth Dec 17/62

My Dear Sir

At the earliest opportunity I undertake the sad duty of announcing to you the death of your son Edwin M. Platts a corporal in this Battery. He was killed on the 13th of December by a shot from the enemy's batteries near Fredericksburg. We were ordered into position about 4 o'clock of the afternoon of that day and engaged the enemy immediately upon coming into position. While Corp Platts was attending to his duties a bullet from one of the enemy's Sharpnell struck him in the breast passing completely through his body. He was assisted off the field to a hospital and his wounds were dressed, he lived through the night but died early the next morning quietly and apparently without suffering much. His body was buried by his comrades in the lower part of Fredericksburg with proper religious ceremonies, Chaplain Miller of the 15th Con. officiating at the grave. His death has caused grief to us all as he was respected and loved by us all. No man in the Battery performed his duty more cheerfully and more faithfully than he. I never heard him grumble and I never had occasion to punish him for neglect of duty. On the battlefield, as in camp he showed himself a brave man and a true soldier and his death has left a vacancy we cannot fill. It is hard for us to think that we have thus lost one of the best of our number, but our grief must be trifling compared with the sorrow of his friends at home. Please accept my sincere sympathy in your affliction and believe me,

Yours Truly
Charles A. Phillips, Capt.
5th Mass. Battery

Enlisted Sept 1861
at the age of 16 and was killed
in his 18th year