

John Christian Carstens
3rd WI Infantry, Company I

Born: July 19, 1826 in Lessum, Kingdom of Hannover, Germany

Married: 1853 February 11 in Hanover, Germany to Anna Margariata Veilstich, 1826-1910

Enlisted: September 30, 1864 as a Private from Newton, WI for a period of 1 year. He had brown eyes, brown hair, ruddy complexion and 40 years of age.

Treated at hospitals at Chattanooga, TN, Nashville, TNH and St Louis, MO

Mustered Out: March 14, 1865 from Company A due to disability—"excessive myopia. He has done no duty for five months and is unfit for the Veterans Reserve Corps."

Civil War Letter from Christian Carstens (translated):

Dalton, Georgia, November 16, 1864

Greetings in the Lord. Jesus and the Holy Ghost may be with you and life you all my loved ones. First of all I greet you all.

I have to take pen in hand again, because you have the right to know what is happening to me. Praise and thanks to the Lord that he has kept me healthy and happy so far! I haven't had a scratch on my body so far, because his eyes are watching over me in the night.

In the middle of enemy country, 38 miles south of Chattanooga, in the State of Georgia in the Town of Dalton, I am under the open sky and I write this to you. Everything is destroyed here and what is still standing they burn down. Horrible! It's terrible and still they burn down more. I never thought such a thing would happen.

Dear Annachen, it could be that I will never see you again, or my children, sisters, brothers and in-laws. We are living in a very dangerous place in constant peril, because the Rebels are not far from here. We are always on alert. But, be of good cheer. The Lord will take care of us. Be still and happy and satisfied. You can't do anything better than to pray for me and my friends. We are convinced that the Lord hears prayers. Lift not only your voices, but also your hearts when you pray. Oh, let us not miss the sound of his voice as he calls us to repent.

Dear wife, I always think about you, awake and asleep. I sure would like to know about our children. Do they help you and mind you and treat you well? Do they learn well and as much as they can? Especially Heinrich, please be extra good and helpful, you are already quite grown-up now. And all of you listen to your grandparents and learn all you can from them. I hope that you will honor my plea about this.

Dear brother Herman, I am so glad that you are not with our Company any longer. It is much different here than in Madison. There we had tents and floors. Here it's the ground and a linen tent, but we make do. We try to be happy and tolerant with the situation which we cannot change and to go on day after day. I sleep well. God looks down on me and is my comfort at all times. I give thanks to him.

I am hoping that all of you are well and happy and are of one mind, and leave you thus in the care of our Lord. He will be your help and your staff.

I will tell you not, all my loved ones, do not worry too much about me. God is watching over me, he is my Father and I am his child. Through his mercy I am hopeful and never afraid, now and then a little apprehensive, but that goes away fast. I am aware of your prayers. I feel them very strongly and they make me feel very confident. God refreshes my soul with verse 4-32, "The Lord is with me, that's why I am unafraid." I am going to ask you again, be still and leave everything in God's hands.

Now I better tell you that I will not be able to get away from here. I cannot report to my Company until we can re-unite with them. That may take quite a while. The 3rd Regiment left Atlanta and is on the march through enemy country, who knows where. They will destroy Atlanta altogether, very little will be saved. All day long things are on the move, people, animals, and beds on their way to Chattanooga. This war creates much hardship.

Please write to me, even though I do not know if I will get the letters. Of course I worry how you all are.

Dear brother Herman, please go to Ahl's and Schuttel's wives and tell them that their husbands are alright and they send love and greetings. Also let us know if the old lady is still alright and alive, and how their children and wives are. Are they well? Of course they would like to know because they haven't heard anything from home yet. Greetings to Gottfried Groelle's parents. He is fine and happy. We are 10 here in this group and must stay together. We are all from Company 3 and we get along well with each other. Please bring some greetings from Richter von Schuttel.

I have to close now, no more time. I greet all in the name of the Lord. You dear wife I hold close to my heart. Greeting to Papa and Mama, brothers, sisters and in-laws. I hope that you find my address. I call you often in my mind my dear wife.

Your husband, Christian"

1880 Federal Census: WI, Manitowoc County, Newton Twp:

Christ Carsten, 54, Married, Farming, b Prussia

Anna Carsten, 54, Wife, Keeping house, b Prussia

Chd: John-22, Ernst-21, Christina-17, all b Wisconsin

Pension application: November 18, 1886

1890 Veterans Schedule of Manitowoc County: Christ. Carsten, Pvt 3 A, post office Newtonburgh; Now blind

Der Nord Westen, 19 Feb. 1903: "Mr. and Mrs. Christian Carstens, in Town Newton, celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary last Sun. The actual observation should have been on Wed. last week because they were married 11 Feb. 1853 in Hanover. Following their marriage they set out for America and landed in New York 10 May 1853, promptly moving westward to settle in Town Newton where they have lived ever since. Their 4 children were in attendance -John, Ernst M., and Henry Carstens, and Mrs. Ernst Wehausen, along with their children, many friends and neighbors. He is 76 -she 77."

Manitowoc Citizen, 14 April 1904: "Carstens Christ to John Carstens 40 acres section 16 Newton \$2000."

1905 WI State Census, Manitowoc County, Norwood/John Carstens family:

John Carstens, Father, 78, b ca 1827 Germany

Anna Carstens, 79

Wisconsin Census Enumeration, 1905 June 1, Ex-Soldiers & Sailors Residing in WI:

Carsten, Christian, Pvt, Co I, 3rd WI Inf., Post office Manitowoc

Died: April 14, 1906 at Newton, WI of old age

Buried: St John Evangelical Lutheran Church Cemetery, Newton, WI

Gravesite:

J. Christian/Carstens/19 Juli 1826/14 Apr. 1906

Der Nord Westen, 19 April 1906: "Death in Town Newton on Friday of well-known John Christian Carstens at the advanced age of 80. The deceased leaves his sorrowing widow, a daughter, and 2 sons, including E. M. Cartens here. The funeral was held Tuesday from the Lutheran Church in Newton."

CARSTENS: Johann Christian (also Christian Carstens) b: 19 July 1826 d: 14 Apr. 1906/bur. St. John's Ev. Luth. Ch. cem. Newtonburg. m: 11 Feb. 1853 in Hanover to: Anna Margariata (nee) Vielstick (also Vielstich) b: 30 Jan. 1826 d: 19 Jan. 1910

Children: Johann Ernst Heinrich: 16 Apr 1854-25 Feb 1937
Joh. Christoph Friederich: 27 Apr 1856-28 Apr 1948
Joh. Ernst Martin: 10 Oct 1858-17 Dec 1936
Christian Luther: 30 Dec 1860-18 Jan 1862
Bertha Christine: 18 Jan 1863-12 May 1910
Baby: 15 Mar 1865
Ludwig (Louis) Edward Hermann: 24 Jan 1867-24 Jul 1869

Pension Application, 10 October 1906: by Anna M. Carsten, age 80, of Newton, Manitowoc County, WI.

Family Member Notes: "Christina Carsten and his wife, Anna "nee Vielstich" were both born in Lessumstotel-Hannover in 1826. Christian was the third child in a family of eight children. Shortly after Christian and Anna were married in 1853, they left for America. They took his parents and four younger sisters along with them, arriving in America in May. They were preceded in this country by two older brothers and a sister. The eight new arrivals settled on an eighty acre farm adjoining the northwest part of his brother Herman's farm. This farm was located on what was later called Carsten Road. Christian was drafted into the Civil War in 1864 despite the fact that he was discharged from the German Army for nearsightedness. The war records show that he was discharged after five months because of very poor eyesight. The Carstens raised six children on that farm in Newton and stayed there until they died of old age. Anna survived her husband by four years, dying in 1910."