Joseph Caster

Joseph Caster was born 1 June 1891 in St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota. His parents were William Caster and Bertha Vent (or Pint), both born about 1861; they immigrated to the U.S. from the Kingdom of Prussia (later Germany) in 1887 and became naturalized citizens in 1896. William was a shoemaker, and they lived at 768 Arundel Street in St. Paul.

Joseph registered for the draft on 5 June 1917 at age 26. He was then living on South Concord Street in South St. Paul and was unemployed. He was single.

He enlisted at Fort Snelling on 27 July 1917. During the War, he served as a private in Battery B, 151st Field Artillery, 42nd Division of the U.S. Army (the Rainbow Division) aboard the USS *Huntington*. Joseph was one of what were affectionately called "Minnesota's Gopher Gunners," commanded by Col. George E. Leach, who would later become mayor of Minneapolis. The 151st trained at Camp Mills in New York and sailed for France on rough seas on 20 September 1917. They were one of the first American divisions to reach the battlefield. They fought at Argonne, St. Mihiel and Chateau-Thierry. Joseph was severely wounded in action on 27 October 1918. He returned to the United States from France with his regiment on 17 April 1919. A homecoming parade in their honor was held from the State Capitol on 8 May 1919, with over 300,000 people attending. Joseph was discharged on 10 May 1919.

In 1920, Joseph was living with his widowed sister, Agnes Carlsen, and her two children at 400 2nd Avenue South in South St. Paul. He worked as an electrician at the stockyards. In about 1921, Joseph married Sophia Casper. Sophia (who would later marry Emil Pinochi and died in 1969) grew up at 760 Arundel Street, not far from the Caster home. Joseph and Sophia had a daughter, Lorraine Mary Caster (1921-2017), who was born in St. Paul. But by 1930, Joseph and Sophia had divorced, and Sophia and Lorraine were living at 729 Virginia Avenue in St. Paul.

Joseph Caster died 11 March 1955 at St. Paul, Minnesota. He is buried at Fort Snelling National Cemetery.