

#38 Nick Oster, Loyal American



Alien Enemies
Keep Away

This picture is not for you. Keep away unless you wish to be maddened by the exposure of the Kaiser's rotten "Kultur" We expose everything. We hide nothing. You see it all in

"The Kaiser The Beast Of Berlin"

Friday And Saturday
At Palace Theatre

Reserved seats at Leonards.

Caption reads: *I may ask you at any time to strike down your own mother, sister or sweetheart.*
(Scene from the movie, "The Kaiser, The Beast of Berlin")

May 2, 1918 Kinsley Mercury

I've been blogging about how Germans fared in this area during the war. With movies playing like the one advertised above, it was little wonder that people were suspicious and afraid. This animosity was even evident with people who had lived in the area for over thirty years.

Nickolaus Oster is a good example. He was born in 1857 in Germany and came to the Sts. Peter and Paul neighborhood in 1879. He married Gertrude Herrmann in 1881, and they had three children. After a couple of failed attempts at farming, he made final proof of his land claim in March, 1898. Unfortunately Gertrude died in 1910 and she was buried in the cemetery at Sts. Peter & Paul Church.

Nick Oster had many occupations over the years, from ranching to real estate, especially promoting the land around Sts. Peter and Paul. From 1910 to 1912, he was the first president of Farmers and Merchants State Bank, located at 200 E. Sixth St. in Kinsley. He was an agent for the new Waterbury Sanitary Indoor Closets (1915) and also sold Rio automobiles (1916). In 1917 he bought a hotel in Macksville.

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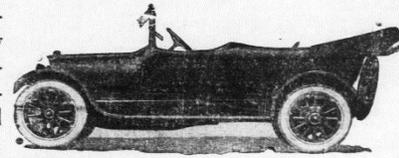
For further particulars call or write

Nick Oster, County Agt.

Kinsley, Kansas

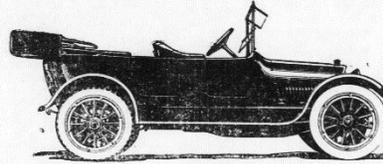
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\$950 Delivered

Sold Exclusively in This Territory By

Oster & Merten, Kinsley, Kans.

In 1916 Nick married for the second time and left Kinsley. His son Peter and his family were still in Edwards County, and according to the paper, Nick and his wife made frequent visits back. On one visit in April, 1917, he must have been venting to J. M. Lewis, the editor of the *Kinsley Graphic*, about rumors regarding his loyalty to the country. Lewis wrote the following:

Mr. Oster returned from the Pacific Coast recently and has expressed himself as greatly surprised at certain stories in circulation here regarding his loyalty to the United States. He says he is ready and willing to fight for his adopted country or the people who have been guilty of maligning him. He says he was born in Germany and has been here for thirty-eight years. He has accumulated property and reared a family and every tie binds him to his adopted country, and that any stories reflecting on his loyalty are untrue and that the story of his having been arrested for treasonable utterances against this government are malicious and without any foundation in fact. Mr. Oster seemed very much in earnest and we believe it will be well for any who may desire to express a doubt as to his loyalty to be a good running start or they may find themselves in need of first aid to the wounded. (Kinsley Graphic, April 19, 1917)

Nick's son Peter registered for the draft Sept. 19, 1918, but the war ended before he had to go. Tragically, Peter died of influenza in February, 1920. From what I can tell, Nick and his wife settled down in Wichita. He died in 1937, just short of his 80th birthday and is buried in the cemetery at Sts. Peter and Paul.