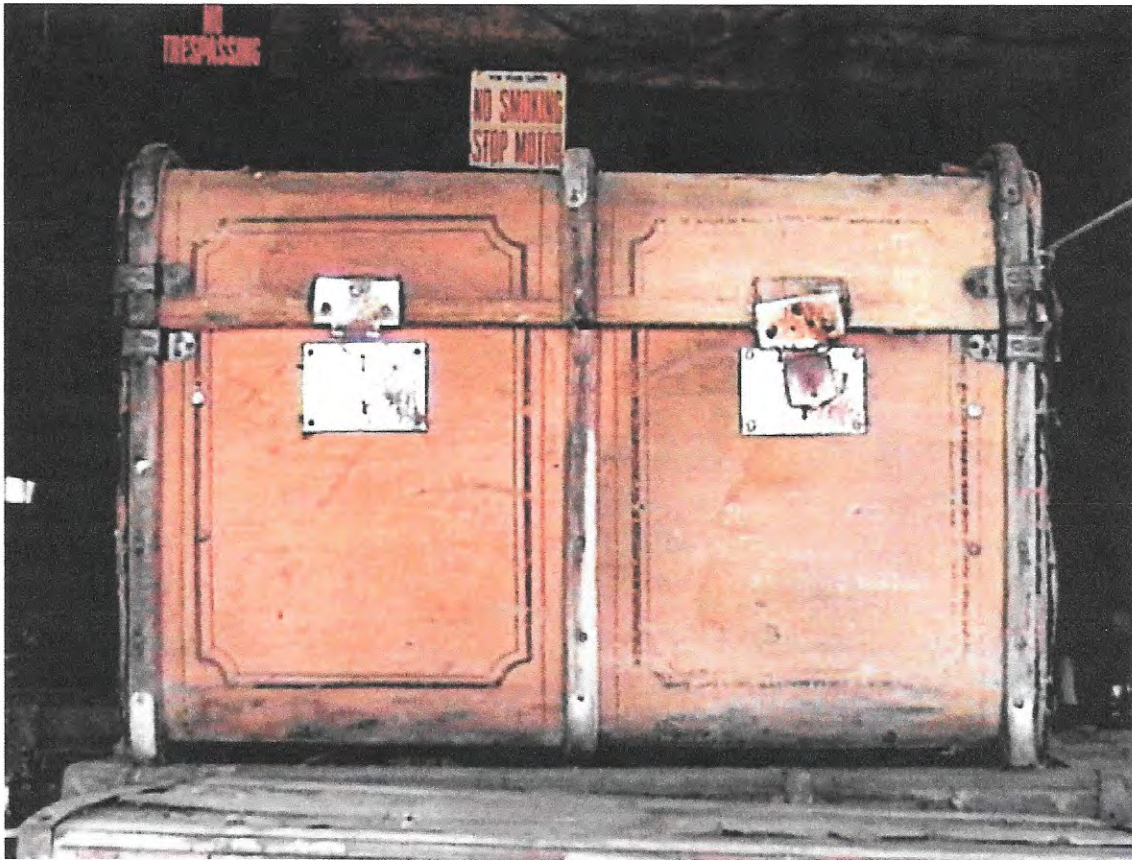


History of the “Red Star Line” Trunk

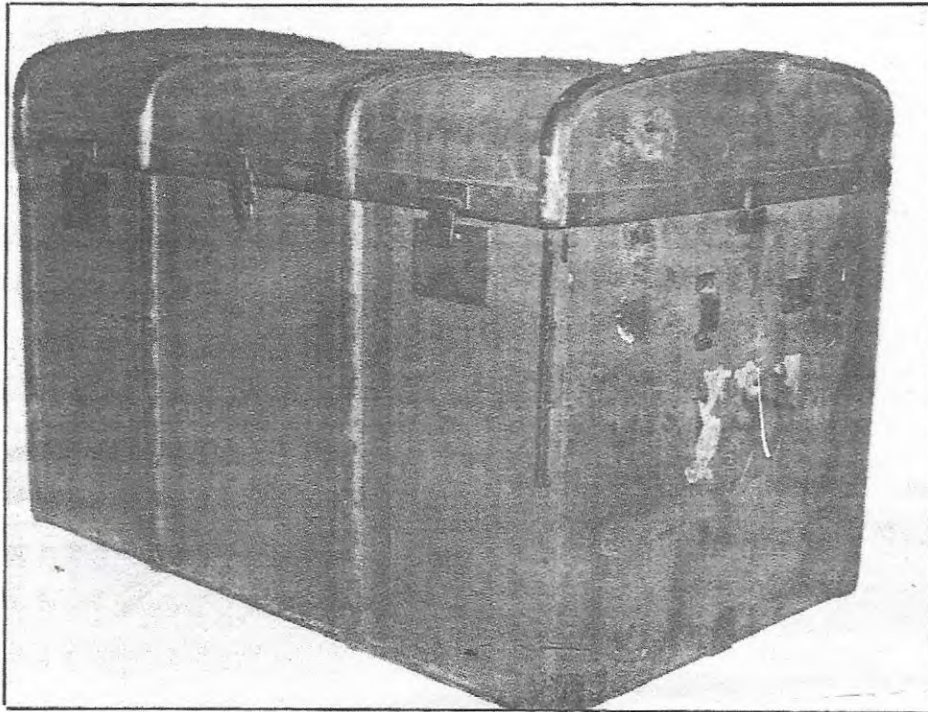


I purchased this trunk in Sacramento, California in April of 2008. It is in very fragile condition. The trunk is made of light wood covered in heavy canvas.

This is a “bentwood-style” trunk, possibly made in Austria. It may have been originally purchased circa 1877 by or for a Miss Katherine D Leggett for her use while she was studying abroad.

An Antique Week news article dated Apr 20, 1992, shows pictures and details of a similar trunk (labeled M Wurzl & Sohne) that was owned by Mrs Julie Grant, wife of President Ulysses S Grant. Mrs Grant was supposed to have taken the trunk on a world tour that she & the President made during the period of May 1877 through September of 1879.

belong to Mrs. U.S. Grant?

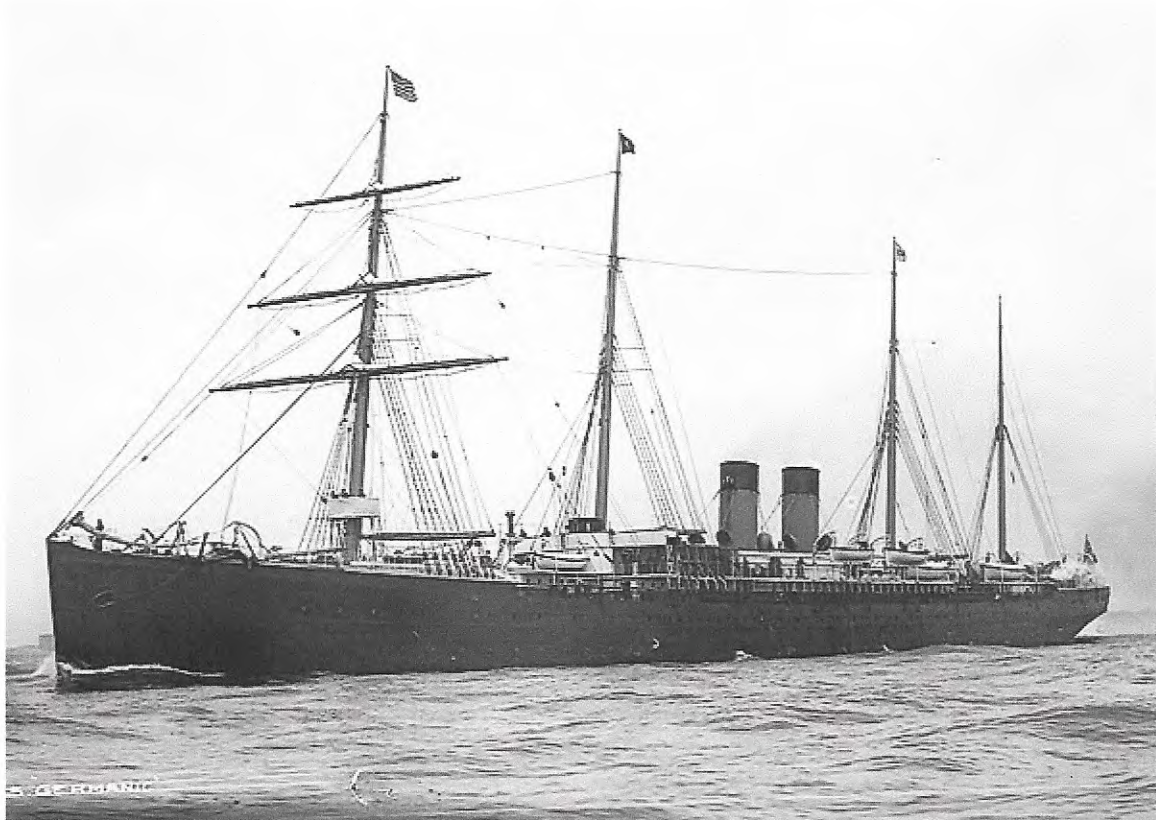


PARTIALLY obscured by a label, "Mrs. U.S. Grant New York" is printed on the sides of this trunk. The trunk is extremely light, weighing only a few pounds. It was ideally suited for a trip around the world.



The initials "KDL" & "N Y" are stamped on either end of my "Red Star Line" trunk and remnants of shipping labels bear evidence of ownership by the Leggett family.

Kate Leggett, age 18, traveled "Saloon" class (1st Class for the wealthy) aboard the SS Germanic that departed from Liverpool and arrived Oct 1877 at the Port of New York. The SS Germanic was operated at that time by the White Star Lines.



The Germanic between 1890 and 1900

Kate Leggett, or K D Leggett (as I've come to think of her) was the daughter of Dr Charles P Leggett and Dr Ellen Leggett. Both of her parents were physicians. She was born in New York on June 10, 1857. Her younger sister, Eleanor, was born in New York on August 2, 1864. Both of the sisters became spinster school teachers and frequently traveled abroad together.

In 1894, the Leggett sisters, along with their mother Ellen Currie Leggett, took a trip to Nova Scotia. Records show they were tourists who returned to New York via Boston. They arrived in Boston aboard the SS Boston out of Yarmouth on September 5, 1894. Mrs Leggett passed away just a few years later on January 17, 1897.

On January 5, 1907, records show that "K D" & Eleanor returned from abroad and arrived at the Port of New York aboard the SS New York (American Line). They had departed Northampton on December 29, 1906. Their father passed away in September of 1907.

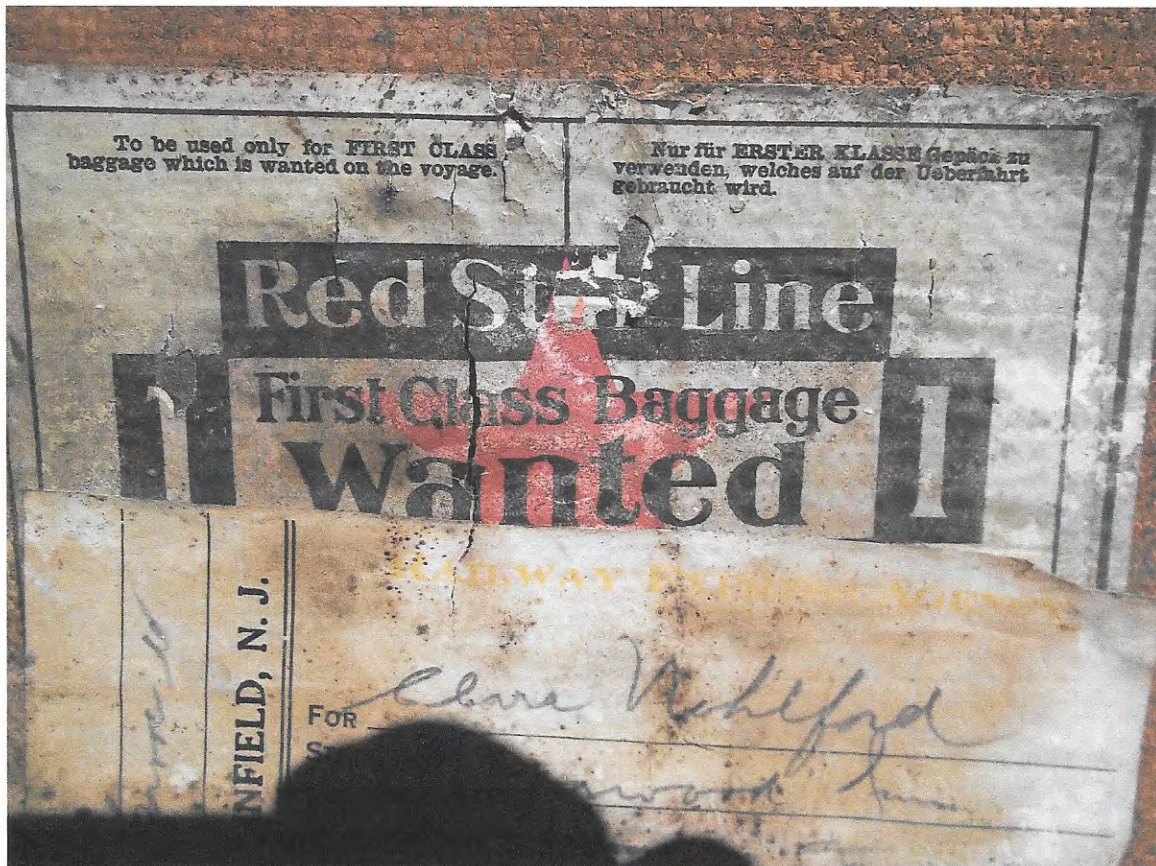


SS Kroonland was an ocean liner for International Mercantile Marine (IMM) from her launch in 1902 until scrapped in 1927.

The SS Kroonland was operated by the Red Star Line from 1902 thru 1914 and again from 1920 - 1923. When launched in 1902, the SS Kroonland was the largest U.S. steamship ever built.

On July 24, 1909, the sisters departed Antwerp (Belgium) on their return voyage aboard the SS Kroonland, arriving at Ellis Island (Port of NY) on August 3, 1909.

On October 4 1913, the SS Kroonland departed from Antwerp, arriving in the Port of New York on October 17, 1913. KDL & Eleanor were both aboard.



One of the first things that caught my attention on this trunk was the Red Star Line sticker indicating "To be used only for FIRST CLASS baggage which is wanted on the voyage".

This Red Star Line tag that I found on the trunk gained it my nickname "Red Star Line" trunk. The tag was most likely attached to the trunk during one of the several voyages of the Leggett sisters on the SS Kroonland.

The sisters traveled extensively in Europe. They both applied for passports to return from Paris, France in 1908. KDL (Katherine) passed away on December 15, 1916 in Manhattan. Eleanor continued her travels alone.

Records show that Eleanor was issued a U S Passport on April 11, 1921. During May, Jun & July of that year she visited France, Italy, Switzerland and Great Britain for "study and health on the continent".

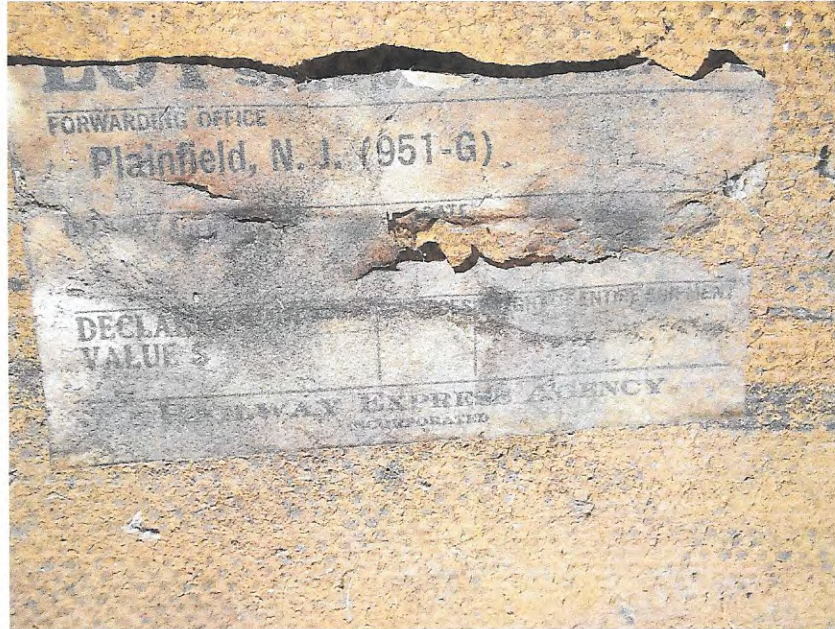
In July of 1924, Eleanor again applied for a Passport. She again planned to visit France, Italy, Switzerland and Great Britain "for recuperation of health". She intended to depart from New York on July 30, 1924 aboard the SS Providence.



Eleanor's 1924 Passport application contained a picture of Eleanor shown with (I believe) her father, Charles Pleasants Leggett. Her father passed in 1907, so the picture was not current as of 1924. Eleanor indicates in the application that she will be departing on the SS Providence on July 30, 1924. (She returned on the SS Providence voyage that sailed from Naples on September 21, 1925 arriving in NY on October 6, 1925.)

At some time, perhaps after her sister "KDL" died, the trunk came to be used by Eleanor in her travels. Remnants of Railway tags marked Plainfield, NJ (home of Eleanor's brother Thomas H Leggett) are on the trunk as well as, tags showing her name, "Miss E Leggett". Eleanor lived in Plainfield for a period of time with her brother.

I have not yet determined when Eleanor curtailed her travels. She lived to the age of 80 and passed away in a two room residential suite in a New York hotel on November 18, 1944.



Railway Tag on the trunk



Baggage tag for Miss E Leggett

Plainfield, New Jersey, is another link the trunk has to its succeeding owner, Mrs. Clara Turner Wohlfold.

See "The Red Star Line Trunk" Part II!