



Jessie Benton Fremont

- Jessie Benton Fremont was born on May 31, 1824 in Virginia.
- Jessie was born to Thomas Hart Benton, senator of Missouri, and Elizabeth McDowell.
- Jessie was exposed early in life to many different cultures; some say this was a key to her being so tolerant of others.
- Jessie was well known in Washington. She had exposure to many powerful politicians.
- She married Lieutenant John C. Fremont. Together they made a fine couple and were sought out in Washington.
- John was an explorer. After exploring much of the West, he dictated his thoughts to Jessie and together they promoted the expansion of the West.
- Jessie knew French and Spanish. She translated for many people including secretary of State, James Buchanan.
- Jessie and John left for California. She proved to herself and others that slaves and servants were not needed, that she could do the work for herself.
- John was elected to run as the first republican candidate ever. He wouldn't have run without Jessie's help. Jessie was the first woman ever to help with a presidential campaign. John ran on her anti-slavery platform. They might have won the election if her father hadn't ruined things in Washington by spreading rumors. She was an inspiration to many California women.
- Later Jessie supported her family by writing for a newspaper. She also wrote books.
- After John died she lived with her daughter and continued writing about things she had seen and done.
- Jessie died in 1902, at the age of 78.
- Jessie proved women could make a difference and that she could have control, even under stifling circumstances.