



## Jessie Benton Frémont Letter (K0215)

**Collection Number:** K0215

**Collection Title:** Jessie Benton Frémont Letter

**Dates:** circa 1862

**Creator:** Frémont, Jessie Benton, 1824-1902

**Abstract:** The collection contains a letter by Jessie Benton Frémont to the publishers of her book, *The Story of the Guard: A Chronicle of the War*, published in 1863, requesting advanced copies of the book.

**Collection Size:** 0.01 cubic foot  
(1 folder)

**Language:** Collection materials are in English.

**Repository:** The State Historical Society of Missouri

**Restrictions on Access:** Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at [kansascity@shsmo.org](mailto:kansascity@shsmo.org). Collections may be viewed at any research center.

**Restrictions on Use:** The Donor has given, assigned, and transferred to the University all copyrights, and associated rights the Donor may possess in the materials.

**Preferred Citation:** [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Jessie Benton Frémont Letter* (K0215); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Kansas City [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Kansas City].

**Donor Information:** The papers were transferred to the University of Missouri by the University of Missouri-Kansas City, General Library on October 24, 1980 (Accession No. KA0054).

**Related Material:** Additional materials related to the Jessie Benton Frémont Letter can be found in the following collections:

*Frémont Family Papers* (BANC MSS C-B 397)

The University of California-Berkeley, The Bancroft Library

**Processed by:** Processed by State Historical Society of Missouri staff in October 2015. Finding aid format and index terms updated by Mimi Loran, January 2018.

### **Historical Note:**

Jessie Benton Frémont, daughter of Senator Thomas Hart Benton, was born on May 31, 1824, near Lexington, Virginia. She spent her childhood splitting her time between St. Louis, Missouri, and Washington, D.C. In 1840, while studying at the Georgetown Seminary in Washington, D.C., Jessie met famed explorer John C. Frémont, and the two became engaged. Jessie's parents objected to the marriage, as she was only 15; the couple decided to elope.

Jessie accompanied her husband on many of his expeditions throughout the west, which would serve as the inspiration for her later published works. John Frémont was instrumental in the conquest of California, and was third military governor of that state, until his court martial trial for his actions during the Bear Flag Revolt. In 1849, Jessie joined him in San Francisco, and became actively involved in her husband's political activities.

John Frémont eventually became a senator of California, helping to establish the state as a non-slave state, and both John and Jessie played active roles in the anti-secession movement for California during the Civil War. John Frémont eventually made a run for the presidency in 1856, but lost to James Buchanan.

The Frémonts spent their last few years traveling between California, Missouri, and New York. When the family had to declare bankruptcy during the Panic of 1873, Jessie began to write books to support the family, using her traveling and exploration through the west as inspiration. Jessie wrote seven works, all very popular.

John Frémont continued his political career, serving as the governor of the Territory of Arizona. John died in 1890 in New York. Jessie moved to Los Angeles, where she would stay until her death in 1902.

### **Arrangement:**

The collection is arranged into a single folder.

### **Scope and Content Note:**

The collection consists of a single letter and was likely written to the firm of Ticknor and Fields in Boston, Massachusetts, publishers of Frémont's 1863 book, *The Story of the Guard: A Chronicle of the War*. Frémont asks to have several advanced copies of the book sent to her as soon as they are available. She also complains about the inappropriate use of some maps and illustrations in the volume.

### **Container List:**

f. 1                      Letter, circa 1862

**Index:**

Index Term	Folder
Publishers and publishing	1
United States--History--Civil War, 1861 -1865	1
Women writers	1