Jesse Root Grant

Though he married and fathered two children, he never settled down to a regular family relationship, preferring traveling and spending little time at home. Ironically, in 1914, Jesse filed divorce proceedings in Nevada, on grounds of desertion by his wife. His wife, Elizabeth, had the divorce set aside. But four years later Jesse tried again, and this time he was successful in obtaining his divorce on the grounds his wife had deserted him. One week after the second divorce was granted, Jesse married a widow, nineteen years his junior. He outlived her by ten years.

In opposition to his father, Jesse was a Democrat. From his college days he took an active interest in politics, although he never attempted to seek office until 1908.

Returning to New York City from a speaking tour in the South and West, Jesse astonishingly announced his candidacy for the Democratic nomination for the presidency of the United States. Clearly, his ambitions were waylaid, as the party nominated William Jennings Bryan who was soundly defeated by Republican William Howard Taft.

From: America’s Royalty: All the Presidents’ Children, by Sandra L. Quinn-Musgrove and Sanford Kanter. Greenwood Press, 1995

Jesse accompanied his parents on their round the world trip. Here are his comments about his travels:
An American Prince in London.

Mr. Jesse Root Grant writes from London to a friend in this country:

Of course you have seen in the papers the gratifying manner father has been received in England. It is rather a nice thing to read about, but when you have to go out every evening to a dinner at some Duke's or Earl's, and every afternoon at some Lord's, it gets to be what you might call a bore. When one travels he wants to see the country, and study the manners and habits of the middle classes, and not the fashionable, which is the same all the world over. * * * It is rather amusing the way I am treated here. They consider me a prince, and at all the dinner parties I sit ahead of all the noblemen; and the waiters say, "Will his Excellency have some fish?" etc., and once I started to speak to some old fellow near me, who did not hear me, and the waiter gave him a punch, interrupting him in some conversation, and told him that "His Excellency" was speaking. I have had to make several speeches at different banquets, and have had, generally, a miserable time.