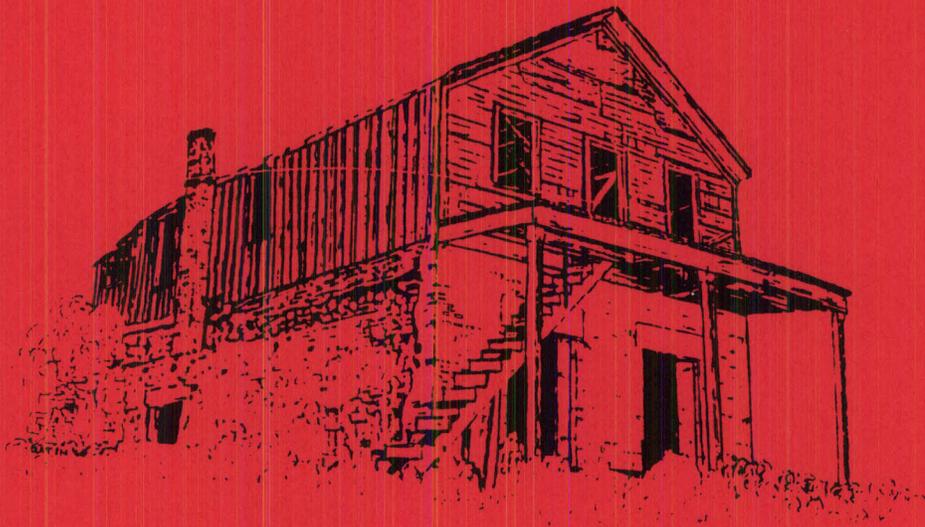


**JUNK**  
**TRIP 98**  
**NO. 19**



**HUMBOLDT CITY**

## JULIA'S UNEQUIVICAL NEVADA KLAMPOUTS

NO	YEAR	LEADER	LOCATION
1	1980	GENO OLIVER (CHARTER)	STAR CITY-UN IONVILLE
2	1981	SKIP PENNINGTON	MANHATTEN
3	1982	BILL KENNEDY	KENNEDY
4	1983	JIM CRONN*	PINEGROVE
5	1984	GEORGE COURSON	LEADVILLE
6	1985	DOUG WALLING	BERLIN
7	1986	DAVID WOOD	ROCHESTER
8	1987	JOE LEOPRI*	AURORA
9	1988	BILL SAWYER*	SULPHUR
10	1989	MIKE MILLER	MILLER'S STATION
11	1990	REDBEACH	SHAMROCK
12	1991	BOB RODGERS	COMO
13	1992	RON WALSH	SEVEN TROUGHS
14	1993	DANNY COSTELLA	NATIONAL
15	1994	JIM GROWS	DESERT WELLS
16	1995	DANIEL BOWERS	HIGH ROCK CANYON
17	1996	PETER VAN ALSTYNE	FAIRVIEW
18	1997	EDDY GONZALES	GRANTSVILLE
19	1998	JOHN DORNSTAUDER	HUMBOLDT CITY

\* GONE TO THE SILVER HILLS

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Nevada Ghost Towns & Mining Camps  
 Nevada's Turbulent Yesterday  
 Historical Society  
 History of Nevada  
 Mining Districts of Nevada  
 Nevada Place Names  
 Postal History of Nevada

Stanley Paher  
 Don Ashbaugh  
 Vol X, No. 3  
 Thompson and West  
 F. C. Lincoln  
 H. S. Carlson  
 H. P. Harris

### ARTICLES

My First Gold Mine  
 Nevada Ghosts of the Humboldt  
 Humboldt House, Humboldt City  
 Star City, Unionville

Mark Twain  
 Bob and Peggy trego  
 XNGH Peter J. Van Alstyne  
 XNGH Geno Veno Oliver

Chairman of the most important  
 committee and HUMBUG for 1998

H.M.F.I.C.

John Dornstauder

**CELEBRATE 6003, JULIA'S 35<sup>TH</sup>, 30 YEARS IN THE BUILDING**

**E CLAMPUS VITUS  
 AND SO RECORDED**

## Humboldt City

IT'S AN AXIOM THAT PRECOCIOUS OFF spring frequently almost obscure the activities of sturdy parents. This was true in the Humboldt family of towns. Humboldt City was the sire of all of them, but Unionville, Star City and others quickly pushed it into the background, and then a second generation upstart, Winnemucca, sprang up and took the spotlight away from them all.

Humboldt City was the place where the initial group of hopeful prospectors settled in 1860 after traipsing eastward from the, Comstock. And it was out of Humboldt Canyon that Capt. Hugo Pfersdorff and J. C. Hannan climbed with their two-pack burros, guided by four Paiutes, on that May day of 1861, to discover Buena Vista canyon and inaugurate the Humboldt boom.

In a very short time Humboldt City had slipped into the background and quietly dropped into obscurity after a few years-which may be a good thing since it hasn't been completely ruined by tourist and commercial ghouls. It still has far more ruins than many of the centuryold communities of the State, including two saw mills, an old Wells Fargo office and about 30 other buildings.

The community thrived in a canyon on the northwest shoulder of the Humboldt mountains, only two gravel-road miles off present-day U. S- 40

Our curious newspaper editor of those days, W. J. Forbes, paid Humboldt City a visit and left us a description of it in the *Register* on May 2, 1863. He described it as "A picturesque and beautiful village containing some 200 well-built houses, some of which are handsome edifices, and many beautiful gardens that attest the taste and industry of the inhabitants. A beautiful, crystal stream of water diverted from its natural course, runs, a little babbling stream, through every street."

Forbes continued the description, "Humboldt City contains two hotels, kept in good style, one the Coulter House, by Mr. and Mrs. Bailey Nichols, the other, the Iowa House, by Mr. and Mrs. Wilson; two saloons, one by Messrs. Sylvester and Helmer, gentlemen ready to argue or fight for their politics, or deal out red-eye to their numerous thirsty customers, the other by Wilson and Coulter; one blacksmith's shop by Daniels and Cooper, who will at any moment stop shoeing a refractory horse to spin a yam; two stores with large and well selected stocks of goods; four families (five or six more are on the road for the place) and children, chickens, pigs, and dogs enough to give the place a lively appearance."

The first settler was one Louis Barbeau, who must be given credit for being the discoverer of minerals in Humboldt County. Right behind him came other disappointed seekers of riches who had left the Comstock, when they learned Barbeau had found mineral in Humboldt Canyon. First of these were A. Pryor, John Coulter, F. J. Daniels, Colerick Brothers, George W. Meacham, Thomas McKinzie, Charles Lewis, Tony Martin and John Sylvester.

The State Mineralogist reported in the '60s that there was a strong vein or reef of limestone, as high as 70 feet in spots, which was the principal geological feature of the district. Several quartz veins ran parallel to it. Below the reef were located the Reveille, Franklin, Santa Cruz and Monte Cristo veins, while above it were the Calaveras, Sigel, Adriatic, Winnemucca, Washington and St. Bernard, all in quartzite formations. Nine of the mines were reported to have been opened to depths of 50 feet or more and "tunnels were driven into the mines at great expense, but no large bodies of ore were found."

In the May 14, 1864 issue of the *Register*-a year after Forbes had paid his visit-a correspondent brought Humboldt activities up to date. "Under the able supervision of Mr. Montgomery the Calaveras Co. is having a large double-track tunnel run night and day," he reported. "They obtained astonishing assays of from \$500 to \$4000 per ton."

"Near to and running parallel with this claim is the Starlight-working two shifts of men day and night, with a large double-track tunnel," and "near these is the Sigel," worked day and night . . . by working process it goes \$240 to the ton; assays \$2300." He continues with a similar report on the other mines in the district.

Then he gives an insight into the activities of an early mining town doctor. Previous reference has been made to Dr. C. W. Sbaug-the only medico in the area-who advertised that he would "perform all surgical operations in a speedy, neat and successful manner, for reasonable charges." Evidently he was kept busy, the Humboldt correspondent wrote ...

"Seven or eight very serious casualties have occurred in the last few months on this side of the mountain from premature blasts. At least they would have been serious, had it not been for the timely and skilful treatment extended to them. Me. Smith, of Prince Royal [the little town between Humboldt and Santa Clara], badly burned, it was feared would lose his sight-but has now recovered and is at work. Mr. Lacey, of Echo [another small hamlet on the west side of the mountains], right arm broken in two places and left thigh broken, now well again. Davis, Cole and Morehouse, badly injured, but recovering. But the most serious case, the Doctor now has under treatment: Mr. Jacob Keller, while working in the Starlight tunnel, a hale and robust worker, in an instant was hurled back, the bleeding, torn, helpless invalid; his arm broken in three places, and his left it seemed one mass of beef. The Doctor performed him a few days ago, and cutting away a portion ceeds in saving the arm, inclined to think he will."

The Atlantic and Pacific Gold and Silver Company was Humboldt City's major mining operator after March of 1864. It was a stock outfit organized in New York and "a large majority of its members are residents of the city and men of large capital." This firm bought up five major claims for a total of 8100 feet along the main lode. The company hired one of the early Humboldt mining veterans, E.L. Montgomery, from whom they had purchased some of the locations, as superintendent.

The *Register* reported, "The A and P Co. has been peculiarly fortunate in securing the services of one so well qualified. . . . They recently purchased in Humboldt City a commodious dwelling, with offices etc., elegantly furnished, and have on hand a large amount of supplies...The stock is full paid and not assessable, and held by parties who will sell at any price.

Activity became very slow in Humboldt City in the fall of 1864, as elsewhere in the Humboldt region. Forbes, who had slipped away to California to be married, returned and wrote a full column lamenting the situation..."Silver mines are the most permanent and profitable investment we have...then why this depression? We have been reckless, extravagant and in many cases dishonest...one year ago scarcely a dollar had been shipped from Humboldt County, and now about \$20,000 per week is taken from the Sheba mill alone."

Even a depression couldn't keep down the spirits when Nevada held its first election campaign. W.H. "Billie" Claggett-who first arrived at Unionville with Mark Twain, but stayed longer-and William Stewart, the firebrand attorney who became the State's famed first senior U.S. Senator, came to the Humboldt to campaign for the Union party.

Forbes referred to Claggett-who was elected a state Senator from Storey County in November-by writing, "He is well known to the Humboldt people and well liked. Like a gray shirt he wears well." At the first meeting in Unionville the *Register* reported, "The meeting adjourned with three cheers for Claggett, three for Bill Stewart and a repeater for Lincoln and Johnson and the Union."

The next night, accompanied by a brass band, and a wagon load of Union adherents, the rally moved to Star City and the third night to Dun Glen, then closed in Humboldt City.

It is interesting to note the differing reports on the Humboldt City meeting as written by the *Register* correspondents there and at Star City. The Humboldt man reported, "Large and enthusiastic audiences were out...Sunday night to hear Stewart and Claggett. The meeting at Humboldt is described as the best in the whole series in the county. The audience was composed of men from all parts of the surrounding country-from the river, the mountains and beyond, and the valleys above. The speeches were better, too, and everything seemed right."

From that it would seem that things were just dandy in Humboldt City-but the record shows that the Atlantic & Pacific Company had slacked down on explorations, and little work had been done in the mines during recent previous months. At any rate, the Star City correspondent reported it in considerably different light. He wrote-in the same issue as the above report-"From Dun Glen the boys went to Humboldt City-but they took all the enthusiasm there with them, as they say they found none there. One of our Star boys, on his return, swore there were but 25 men in Humboldt City, and 28 of them copperheads."

The Star reporter was wrong about the community's loyalty. When the election was held, the vote in Humboldt City was cast for the Union party. B. H. Nichols of Humboldt City received the largest vote for the State Assembly, winning by a majority of 151, while D. B. Brown of Unionville, with a majority of 143, and J. Angus Dun, of Dun Glen, with 142, were the others elected.

The whole county was slipping-the *Register* had less and less countywide news in succeeding issues.

Thompson & West's *History*, published in 1881, writes off the county's first town as completely dead, stating "During the panic of 1865 all work was suspended, though the claims were not quite abandoned, sufficient work being done to bold possession. In 1871 work was partly resumed on the Starlight and Madia, which, however are not worked at present.

"The town seems to be utterly prostrated. The nearest place is Humboldt House' two miles away. The place seems capable of being useful, and in the hurly-burly of mining may again wake to life ... Humboldt City may be said to be the best illustration of the celebrated 'places that were'that is known."

Later on a mercury deposit was explored in the area in 1906. In 1907 silver operations were resumed and continued until 1918. Sulphur was mined near Humboldt in 1869, the same year that the post office was discontinued.

Angel in his book called the silver mines very promising and claimed that prospective millionaires were as plentiful as mosquitoes. This was not to be.

## **My First Gold Mine**

On the fifteenth day we completed our march of two hundred miles and entered Unionville, Humboldt County, in the midst of a driving snowstorm. Unionville consisted of eleven cabins and a liberty pole. Six of the cabins were strung along one side of the deep canyon, and the other five faced them. The rest of the landscape was made up of bleak mountain walls that rose so high into the sky from both sides of the canyon that the village was left as it were, far down in the bottom of a crevice. It was always daylight on the mountaintops a long time before the darkness lifted and revealed Unionville.

We built a small, rude cabin in the side of the crevice and roofed it with canvas, leaving a corner open to serve as a chimney, through which the cattle used to tumble occasionally, at night, and mash our furniture and interrupt our sleep. It was very cold weather and fuel was scarce. Indians brought brush and bushes several miles on their backs, and when we could catch a laden Indian it was well-and when we could not (which was the rule, not the exception), we shivered and bore it.

I confess, without shame, I expected to find masses of silver lying all about the ground. I expected to see it glittering in the sun on the mountain summits. I said nothing about this, for some instinct told me that I might possibly have an exaggerated idea about it, and so I betrayed my thought I might bring derision upon myself. Yet I was as perfectly satisfied in my own mind, as I could be of anything, that I was going to gather up, in a day or two, or at furthest a week or two, Silver enough to make me satisfactorily wealthy-and so my fancy was already busy with plans for spending this money. The first opportunity that offered, I sauntered carelessly away from the cabin, keeping an eye on the other boys, and stopping and contemplating the sky when they seemed to be observing me; but as soon as the coast was manifestly clear, I fled away as guiltily as a thief might have done and never halted till I was far beyond sight and call. Then I began my search with a feverish excitement that was brimful of expectation-almost of certainty. I crawled about the ground, seizing and examining bits of stone, blowing the dust from them or rubbing them on my clothes, and then peering at them with anxious hope.

Presently I found a bright fragment and my heart bounded! I hid behind a boulder and polished it and Scrutinized it with a nervous eagerness and a delight that was more pronounced than absolute certainty itself could have afforded. The more I examined the fragment, the more I was convinced that I had found the door to fortune. I marked the spot and carried away my specimen. Up and down the rugged mountainside I searched, with always increasing interest and always augmenting gratitude at that I had come to Humboldt and come in time. Of all the experiences of my life, this secret search among the hidden treasures of silver land was the nearest to unmarred ecstasy. It was a delirious revel.

By and by, in the bed of a hallow rivulet, I found a deposit of shining yellow scales, and my breath almost forsook me! A gold mine, and in my simplicity I had been content with vulgar silver! I was so excited that I half believed my over-wrought imagination was deceiving me. Then a gear came upon me that people might be observing me and would guess my secret. Moved by this thought, I made a circuit of the place, and ascended a knoll to reconnoiter. Solitude. No creature was near. Then I returned to my mine, fortifying myself against possible disappointment, but my fears were groundless – the shining scales were still there. I set about scooping them out, and for an hour I toiled down the windings of the stream and robbed its bed. But at last the descending sun warned me to give up the quest, and I turned homeward laden with wealth. As I walked along I could not help smiling at the thought of my being so excited over my fragment of silver when a nobler metal was almost under my nose. In this little time the former had so fallen in my estimation that once or twice I was on the point of throwing it away.

The boys were as hungry as usual, but I could eat nothing. Neither could I talk I was full of dreams and far away. Their conversation interrupted the flow of my fancy somewhat, and annoyed me a little too. I despised the sordid and commonplace things they talked about. But as they proceeded, it began to amuse me. It grew to be rare fun to hear them planning their poor little economies and sighing over possible privations and distresses when a gold mine, all our own, lay within sight of the cabin and I could point it out at any moment. Smothered hilarity began to oppress me, presently. It was hard to resist the impulse to burst out with exultation and reveal everything; but I did resist. I said within myself that I would filter the



great news through my lips calmly and be serene as a summer morning while I watched its effect in their faces. I said:

“Where have you all been?”

“Prospecting.”

“What did you find?”

“Nothing.”

“Nothing? What do you think of the country?”

“Can’t tell yet,” said Mr. Ballou, who was an old gold miner, and had likewise had considerable experience among the silver mines.

“Well, haven’t you formed any sort of opinion?”

“Yes, a sort of a one. It’s fair enough here, maybe, but overrated. Seven thousand-dollar ledges are scarce, though. That Sheba may be rich enough, but we don’t own it; and besides, the rock is so full of base metals that all the science in the world can’t work it. We’ll not stave, here, but we’ not get rich, I’m afraid.”

“So you think the prospect is pretty poor?”

“No name for it!”

“Well, we’d better go back, hadn’t we?”

“Oh, not yet – of course not. We’ll try it a riffle, first.”

“Suppose, now – this is merely a supposition, you know – suppose you could find a ledge that would yield, say, a hundred and fifty dollars a ton – would that satisfy you?”

“Try us once!” from the whole party.

“Or suppose – merely a supposition, of course – suppose you were to find a ledge that would yield two thousand dollars a ton – would that satisfy you?”

“Here – what do you mean? What are you coming at? Is there some mystery behind all this?”

“Never mind. I am not saying anything. You know perfectly well there are no rich mines here – of course you do. Because you have been around and examined for yourselves. Anybody would know that, that had been around. But just for the sake of argument, suppose – in a kind of general way – suppose some person were to tell you that two-thousand dollar ledges were simply contemptible – contemptible, understand – and that right yonder in sight of this very cabin there were piles of pure gold and pure silver – oceans of it – enough to make you all rich in twenty-four hours! Come!”

“I should say he was as crazy as a loon!” said old Ballou, but wild with excitement, nevertheless.

“Gentlemen,” said I, “I don’t say anything – I haven’t been around, you know, and of course don’t know anything – but all I ask of you is to cast your eye on that for instance, and tell me what you think of it!” and I tossed my treasure before them.

There was an eager scramble for it, and a closing of heads together over it under the candlelight. Then old Ballou said:

“Think of it? I think it is nothing but a lot of granite rubbish and nasty glittering mica that isn’t worth ten cents an acre!”

So vanished my dream. So melted my wealth away. So toppled my airy castle to the earth and left me stricken and forlorn.

Moralizing, I observed, then, that “all that glitters is not gold.”

Mr. Ballou said I could go further than that, and lay it up among my treasures of knowledge, that nothing that glitters is gold. So I learned then, once for all, that gold in its native state is but dull, unornamental stuff, and that only lowborn metals excite the admiration of the ignorant with an ostentatious glitter.

However, like the rest of the world, I still go on underrating men of gold and glorifying men of mica.  
Commonplace human nature cannot rise above that.

## Idah Meacham Strobridge

Although Idah Meacham Strobridge displayed a subtle touch for the pulse of Nevada, she was born in Moraga Valley, Contra Costa County, California, on June 9, 1855. Her father was George W. Meacham, born in New Jersey. He worked in the California gold fields in the 1850's, but after three years was only slightly ahead of a shifting balance of successes and failures. He returned to New Jersey and married a childhood friend, Phoebe Craiger. But she refused to go with him to California. After six months of marriage, he returned to California alone. Upon his arrival, Meacham learned that his partner had sold their mining interests and had disappeared. Shortly after informing his wife of the recent event, she decided to join him in California.

In Contra Costa County, Meacham went into ranching. Shortly after, Idah was born. When she was about eight years old, in 1863, the family moved to Humboldt County, Nevada, and Meacham became one of the pioneer stockmen. Nevada was still a territory, and the Promontory Point epic a few years in the future. The family lived close by the Overland Trail to California in Humboldt City.

In those impressionable years, Idah watched the emigrants passing through and liked to ride out into the desert to visit with them. Often, she rode just to be alone in the desert and seemingly to wonder about it all. Like Emerson, she was to believe, "Nature never wears a mean appearance." Yet she knew the desert to be harsh and a difficult challenge to those who settled on the land. Her writings do not deny this.

By the late 1860's the Central Pacific Railroad had established a station stop called Humboldt House, about two miles from Humboldt City. During the 1870's it was operated by Idah's father, along with a partner. By this time, Idah had attended Mills Seminary, Oakland, California, from 1871-1873. Facts are vague, but she may have returned to live with her parents for the next decade. By 1884, she had married Samuel Strobridge in San Francisco and later lived in Oakland. Three sons were born, all dying in infancy. This was the beginning of a series of tragedies. Four years after their marriage, her husband died. Shortly after this, her father's cattle herd was virtually wiped away by the severe winter of '88-89. Her parents joined her shortly after in Oakland.

Again, facts are hazy. Idah did return to Humboldt County because by 1896, she was writing short stories and poetry for *Nevada Magazine*, some California newspapers and *Land of Sunshine*, edited by Charles Lummis. Later, she wrote for *Sports Afield* and *Munsey's*. Her very early writing carried the pseudonym of George Craiger, a combination of her parents' names.

Along with her writing she raised cattle and worked a gold mine called the Great West Gold Mine. An account in the *Lovelock Tribune* (c. 1901) of mining in that region reported some "very rich quartz having been taken from the mine and promises a fortune for its owner. . ."

An unusual hobby of hers was bookbinding which she conducted in the attic of the ranch house. Lummis, in an editorial comment in *Land of Sunshine*, wrote: "A commercial-bound book looks cheap beside her staunch and honest and tasteful bindings; and when I have a book that merits to endure longer than the commercial binds can make it, off it goes to Humboldt-and never in vain."

Spaced between her varied activities, Idah managed to take horseback rides into the desert and to visit with those who lived in cabins or in an outdoor camp. She came to know a number of prospectors, Indians, and cowboys and listened avidly to their stories. She also liked to ride along the old wagon trails where the emigrants had passed. On the Black Rock Desert broken and sun-dried wagon wheels, animal bones, and household furniture abandoned by the emigrants to lighten their wagons had a profound effect upon her. Moody from her own tragedies, the mere indications of misfortunes were deeply felt by her:

"So, if you will do as I have done-in the saddle-ride over mile after mile of the old emigrant road where it winds in and out among the gullies along the foothills, or where it dips farther down into the lowlands, or as it trails along the mesa, or stretches out straight across the hard, alkali flats; -or where it follows the banks of the muddy Humboldt, crossing and recrossing the bends where the old fords are, you will surely chance upon some long neglected mounds which tell their silent stories of the sufferings and privations of those whose names must forever remain unknown. Sometimes a roughly-lettered board was placed at the head, but oftener it was 'a grave without tombstone or token.'

"Forgotten and neglected graves of the Desert! For more than fifty years they have been part of that vast silence; visited only by the snows of winter or the rays of the burning summer sun. No one comes to mourn them. No one comes to lay flowers on their head. . ."

The great dangers of the desert, Idah indicates, were never to be doubted. It was an enemy to the emigrants who fought every desolate mile through Nevada and their final suffering before the rewards of California's pleasant valleys were claimed. In spite of the havoc the Nevada desert had wrought on the emigrants, the cause was not so much the desert as it was the lack of its understanding by the emigrants. Miragemisty shapes that lured emigrants to unknowing destruction she well imagined:

"Away back in the old days when the slow-moving ox team dragged its weary way, foot by foot, over the alkali flats and the long stretches of sun-baked soil, where the only growth was the gray sage and the greasewood-away back in those far days the mirage, that Loreli of the Desert, was there to lure men on to their destruction.

"Great lakes of shining water, where little waves ran up to lap the shore; wide fields of clover and bluegrass, that looked so green and cool under the burning sun; forests which reached miles away in a tangle of vine and tree-those were the visions that the Siren of the Dry Lakes showed to the water-starved emigrant of old, and beckoning-led him on and on, in the pursuit of the unreal, until the picture grew fainter and fainter, and at last down the diminishing perspective of the vision-as he looked-he saw it fade away. The grassy fields where the oxen might have fed, the sparkling waters at which they might have drunk, the broad-leafed shade under which man and beast might have found refreshing rest, were gone! A tantalizing glimpse of Paradise in the great and awful desolation of those Desert days.

"Many a poor traveler, led far astray by following the evercalling, ever-retreating enchantress, has laid down at last to die alone in that vast waste, where his bones must bleach in the sun, and his dust must become the sport of the winds of the Desert."

Typically she bridges some of her topics from the purely subjective to the descriptive real. Thus, when she speaks again of mirages she says:

"It is apt to make the shivers run up one's spine to see a harmless looking brush, of a sudden, metamorphose itself into a tall man, and see the man come striding toward you with a long, swinging step; and then-while you are still intently gazing, and wondering where he could have sprung from on that barren Desert bit-as suddenly discover that he is walking away from you-and backwards at that...

"The mirage is, in very truth, a part of the Desert itself-just as the sagebrush, and the coyote, and the little horned toads, and the sandstorms are part. To those who, know the Desert-land, the picture would be incomplete without them. . ."

About 1903, shortly after Idah was finding a wider acceptance of her work, she left Humboldt County and moved to Los Angeles. She built a house in an area which then was a center for artists and writers. Charles Lummis lived close-by, as did Mary Austin and Will Levington.

From here she issued her books and continued her bindery and the residence was known as the *Sign of the Sagebrush*. Her books were issued in limited editions of about 1,000 copies. Some were covered in wrappers, 8vo, and sold for \$1.75. For \$6.75, she covered the books in three-quarter morocco, and in full morocco for \$10.00. In these fullleather copies the chapter heads of simple vignettes were hand colored. Each book was numbered and autographed in a bold, free-moving handwriting.

An unusual practice was her use of a binder's colophon, which she also autographed. Her bindings won her a silver medal, the highest award, at the California State Fair in 1908, and a gold medal at the Alaskan-Yukon Fair in 1909. Artists Maynard Dixon and Duncan Gleason exhibit their early efforts as illustrators in her books.

Presumably Idah never did return to Humboldt County after her move to Los Angeles. Often in her stories she pined to go back to the desert where she preferred . . . "alkali in my nostrils, and to smell the smoke from a greasewood campfire. . ." It may well be that Idah Strobidge needed the "alkali" and the "smoke," and to be close to the Nevada desert in order to write about it. For the years following her departure from Humboldt seem to drain her creative energies, and her later writings are, frankly, mediocre. Some of her attempts at fiction were even absurd.

After the publication of her third book, she apparently ceased writing. She became active in geneological studies and continued her bookbinding craft until her death in 1932.

## Humboldt House

The Central Pacific Railroad in 1868, started the Humboldt House as an eating station along its transcontinental route.

A small stream of water about a hundred inches wide made this desert area a small oasis. It has been written that there were 1,000 fruit and shade trees. Among the trees were: 500 peach, apple pear and apricot.

During the 1870's the Humboldt House was operated by Idah Strobidge's father, along with a partner.

The railroad trip across the country could be quite tiring and suffocating for the travelers. Many times travelers would rest here for a few days before resuming their journey.

In the 1890's, dining cars were added to trains thus eliminating the need for meal stops at the house. From this time on the Humboldt House served as an inn for stage travelers.

