



DESERT  
WELL  
STATION

E Clampus Vitus  
1994



**HISTORY**  
**of**  
**DESERT WELL STATION**  
**in**  
**Stagecoach Nv.**

**J.U.N.K.**

JULIA'S UNEQUIVICAL NEVADA KLAMPOUTS

AUGUST 26, 27, 28, 1994

JULIA C. BULETTE

CHAPTER

VIRGINIA CITY, NV.

1864



## DESERT WELL STATION

The Desert Well Station was on the Overland Mail and Stageroute during the period of 1843 to 1869.

This was an era of transition between the arrival of the first immigrant wagon train and completion of the Trans-Continental Railroad.

Desert Well Station, which was later known as Nelson, achieved a measure of fame when Mark Twain wrote of his experience there in his book, "Roughing It".

The original site featured two wells, an Inn, and corrals. One well was used exclusively for oxen and camels. The camels were brought to the Nevada desert to haul salt to the



mines on the Comstock.  
These wells were hand dug  
and lined with stone.

Mark Twain tells the story  
of his travels with a  
friend, Mr. Ballous and two  
others in the early  
1860's. They left higher  
Comstock for Carson City.  
On the way, they ran into a  
huge snow storm.

They tried to reach Desert  
wells, but the storm was so  
bad that Mark Twain was  
going in circles and so  
they decided to make camp  
for the night.

All four men tried to get  
help by shooting their  
guns, hoping that someone  
at the Inn would hear them.  
Men at the Inn did hear the  
shots and returned the fire  
thinking that the shots  
were coming from drovers  
whom they were expecting.



Mark Twain and his friends did not hear the return fire because the wind was so loud. The next morning, when it was light, they realized they were within 15 feet from the Inn.

Information was gathered from a State plaque located at the Stagecoach Fire Department and the Carson City Public Library.

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STORY

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