

Caravan Guards



A GURPS Fallout Campaign Adventure

From the D20 adventure by John Wyatt

Nathan Robertson Me Fecit Anno Domini MMVIII

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ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The characters are treated to a brief description of Outer Reno, and overhear that the Crimson Caravan Trading Company is making a caravan run to the village of Eureka to trade supplies and are paying good guard rates for one-way and round trips.

The caravan leaves New Reno and proceeds to Eureka, a trip which takes 12 days. After 4 days have passed, one caravan hauler breaks down, requiring a new axle. This can be fixed with a Mechanic skill check.

The caravan proceeds for 2 more days, when two of the brahmin come down with Rad-Cow Disease and go berserk on the caravan hauler, destroying it. The brahmin are put down, and the hauler is left with minimal supplies. The characters are asked to guard the hauler until the caravan returns 12-14 days later with repair parts and extra Brahmin to haul the vehicle back to New Reno.

Left in the desert heat, the characters have to deal with heat conditions, starvation and thirst dangers for 14 days until the caravan returns with fresh supplies.

Two days before the caravan returns, Black Jack Raiders attack the characters guarding the hauler.

The caravan returns with supplies to fix the hauler, and the characters return to New Reno and receive payment (with bonus hazard pay provided they put down the raiders).

NEW RENO'S ATTITUDES ON GHOULS AND SUPER-MUTANTS

Reno generally will tolerate ghouls, as they offer valuable services in the repair fields. Super-Mutants serve New Reno in a law enforcement capacity, but are generally not tolerated in the inner city due to their violent nature.

In Outer Reno, many trade companies hire ghouls, because they are adept in repairing haul carts and bed-haulers. Super-Mutant hired muscle is usually brought on for show, because raiders tend not to attack caravan with Super-Mutant guards.

Ghouls that wander around Outer Reno are subject to persecution. The human inhabitants of New Reno will verbally abuse ghouls with racial epithets, and may physically attack a lone ghoul should a chance present itself.

Super-Mutants that wander New Reno will draw looks of disdain and get the silent treatment, unless he is a New Reno enforcer (which is not an option for players). People are afraid of Super-Mutants and will generally give them a wide berth.

Merchants in New Reno will refuse to sell goods to both ghouls and Super-Mutants unless brokered by a New Reno representative. This will also apply to humans that consort with a ghoul or Super-Mutant publicly.

INTRODUCTION - RENO

Reno, also known in the Wasteland as the twin towns, is a city divided. The town has two districts: New Reno and Outer Reno, separated by a fifteen foot tall wall. The wall separates affluent New Reno from rough-and-tumble Outer Reno, and has only one point of entry - a high-security checkpoint.

New Reno is made up of the villas of wealthy merchants and high-end boutiques and restaurants, and requires an expensive "citizen's license" to even clear the checkpoint (along with the forfeiture of all arms). Four Super-Mutant guards are on duty at all times enforce the laws of entry into New Reno.

Outer Reno on the other hand is a scum pit of low class and destitute wastelanders attempting to gain a license and move on to a better life. Many wasteland merchants and scavengers have set up shop just outside the New Reno checkpoint, creating a tent-town bazaar that skirts the wall. Ramshackle housing can be found in a one mile radius of New Reno in all directions. This housing is built from the remnants of the buildings that stood here before the War.

A single building of ancient brick stands in Outer Reno that has not been scavenged. A sign with faded lettering proclaims it to be the "Serpent's Pit." It's just your luck that today you find yourselves enjoying a meal in this hive of scum and villainy. Dozens of scruffy-looking men and dirty women (along with the occasional ghoul) are tucking into meals of odd-looking green fruit, brahmin testicles or gecko chops, and are drinking various species of booze or dirt water.

Several men sitting at a nearby table are speaking loudly while downing pint glasses of Whiskey and Nuka-Cola. From what you're able to overhear, the Crimson Caravan Trading Company is paying top dollar for a run from Reno to the village of Eureka.

The men discussing the caravan job are slightly drunk, and will open up to any potential companions wishing to join them in their next caravan endeavor. The men will offer the characters a drink and tell them to sign up on the roster at the Crimson Caravan Trading Company tent near the loading dock. The pay is based on experience, but even if this is their first caravan run, it'll be well worth it.

THE CRIMSON CARAVAN TRADING COMPANY

Crimson Caravan Trading Company is the second largest caravan company based in Reno -- the largest company being the Fresco Waters Traders - a company that supplies wasteland towns with needed supplies and non-radiated water. The Crimson Caravan Trading offices are located in the northwest section of Reno, just north of the Serpent's Pit. Ailis McLafferty owns the company through inheritance from her father who died in a raider attack two years ago. She is a shrewd dealer, and only hires the best caravan operators to run her haulers. Caravan guards are expendable, and if they die, then you don't have to worry about paying them - one of the mottoes by which she lives.

Hearing the rumors that the Crimson Caravan Trading Company is planning a large caravan trip to Eureka has brought you to the doors of the Crimson Caravan offices. The offices are in an old run down brick building that has been slightly restored with salvaged bricks, wood, and canvas. The gutted window frames sport makeshift shutters that are currently open, and the doorway has been fitted with a rusted steel door, with the Crimson Caravan logo painted on it.

A single male guard, clad in metal armor and holding a shotgun, greets you. "Howdy chums, you looking for work? Go on inside and talk to Hank, he's the caravan master taking care of the guard roster. If you're just gawking, then scram losers."

Allow the characters to determine if they are interested in undertaking the job. If they enter the Crimson Caravan offices, then continue. If they decide otherwise, then the adventure is over for them.

A rugged old man dressed in a dusty gray suit is seated in the foyer. As you enter, he's just finishing a talk with a few young men and a ghoul that pass you on their way out the door. The man looks in your direction, "Ye here for the guard duty? It pays based on yer experience in the Wasteland. This here be an interview, answer me questions honestly and ye be paid a fair rate. If yer not here for the job, best be leaving, Ailis' not seeing anyone this week."

If the characters agree to answer the questions, Hank will ask them the following, using *Detect Lies* to determine if they are embellishing the truth, telling tall tales, or holding back information.

What is your name and where are you from?

Who is your daddy and what does he do?

What is your favorite color and sexual orientation?

What relevant skills to you have that will benefit this caravan trip?

Have you ever worked for a caravan company? If so how long and for what company?

Have you ever worked for the Fresco Waters?

Hank will determine pay rate based on the answers that the characters provide. Of course the characters can lie, and embellish, that is why there

is the *Fast Talk* skill after all, or they can be honest. The pay scale starts at 100 caps and goes up to a maximum of 500 caps based on the requirements below.

- If a character has the *Animal Handling (Brahmin)* skill, he gains a +50 caps bonus pay.
- If a character has the *Professional Skill (Caravan Guard)* skill, the *Acute Vision* or *Acute Hearing* advantages or similar job-related benefits, he gains a +100 caps bonus pay.
- If the character can demonstrate familiarity with the Reno to Eureka caravan route (The *Area Knowledge* skill), he gains a +50 caps bonus pay.
- If the character has worked for the Crimson Caravan before, he gains +100 caps bonus pay.
- If a character lies and gets away with it, he gains bonus pay equal to the question lied about.
- Should a character get caught lying, or is suspected of withholding information, he loses -50 caps pay (if he's hired at all).
- If the character admits to working for Fresco Waters, he gets no bonus pay, period!
- If the character's favorite color is red, he gains +50 caps bonus pay.

Once the questions are answered, calculate the cap total that the character is worth, and then make the offer to the individual character. With multiple characters being interviewed at once, there may be price differences that the players will dispute, while other players may attempt to barter up; regardless, Hank will give them the standard response, **“Prove your worth, and you'll get paid better next time.”**

If the character accepts the payment, he will need to make his mark on the roster and show up to the caravan port at dawn on the morrow (which means 6 am sharp). Hank will tell the characters that they are expected to defend the caravan from any danger and must furnish their own equipment. Food and water will be provided from the caravan to Eureka and back.

Any questions that the characters may have about working the caravan will be answered by Hank in the same fashion: **“Save it for the caravan master.”**

Hank Pearson (Human Male)

ST: 10	HP: 10	Speed: 5.00
DX: 10	Will: 14	Move: 5
IQ: 10	Per: 10	
HT: 10	FP: 10	SM: 0
Dodge: 8	Parry: 8	DR: 0

Unarmed (10): 1d sw cr / 1d-2 thr cr

Traits: None of note.

Skills: Detect Lies -12.

Equipment: Rumpled gray pre-war businesswear.

DON'T THROW ME AWAY

The next morning, on the way to the Caravan Port, the players catch a glimpse of a several Reno inhabitants beating a ghoul (Bob the Harvester) in a side alley. If the characters wish to intervene, the Aggressors below will accuse them of being "ghoul lovers", and will proceed to lay into the characters. If two of the Aggressors are defeated, then the other two will attempt to flee.

Bob is knocked out and can be revived with a successful *First Aid* skill check. He will explain that the locals attacked him for his fruit, pointing out a burlap bag. In the bag is (a number equal to the characters) of green misshapen pieces of fruit. Bob will offer the fruit to the characters for saving him. Should the character not revive Bob and take his bag of fruit, shame on them (but they're welcome to it)!

Bob, Frank, Jeff and Johnny (4 aggressors)

ST: 13	HP: 13	Speed: 6.00
DX: 12	Will: 11	Move: 6
IQ: 10	Per: 10	
HT: 12	FP: 12	SM: 0
Dodge: 9	Parry: 8	DR: 0

Unarmed (14): 2d+1 sw cr / 1d+1 thr cr

Traits: Language (English; Native/Semi-Literate); Striking ST 2.

Skills: Axe/Mace -12; Brawling -14; Guns/TL 5 (Pistol) -12; Knife -13.

Equipment: Brahmin Jerky, Rotgut, and 10 caps each.

THE CARAVAN PORT

On the northern outskirts of Reno stands a ruined warehouse that once had a large loading dock. There's a Crimson Caravan symbol painted on the broken concrete dock. The dock area has been partitioned into several sections: a supply offloading area with small handcarts being manned by humans and ghouls, a brahmin stable with some Tribals shoveling manure, an area for the caravan haulers, and finally the supply loading area.

Hank, along with a few other men, are just finishing loading up the haulers; these are mostly composed of the rear-ends of cars and pickup truck beds fitted with salvaged material to harness several brahmin.

Noticing the arrival of the characters, Hank will motion the group over and assign them to guard hauler number six. If asked, Hank states that the caravan will be heading out shortly.

At this time the characters may ask Hank questions about the trip -- use the following responses below to answer their questions:

- The village of Eureka is a Brotherhood of Steel outpost to the east of Reno, in what was once the Northwest Commonwealth. It takes just over 12 days by caravan to reach.
- The desert holds many dangers, from break-downs, wild animal attacks, raiders and the elements themselves.
- The Crimson Caravan Trading Company trades with the Chi, the Brotherhood of Steel, the NCR, several local groups of Tribals, and the Vegas Mafia. Most of the trade wares are building supplies and tools scavenged from Wasteland ruins.
- Please state your answers in the form of a question.

ROAD TRIP

After waiting nearly an hour in the Crimson Caravan's docking area, the haulers are finally loaded and ready to leave for Eureka. You have all been assigned to guard a single hauler: number six. Hauler six is an old Dodge N' Evade medium duty pickup truck; the front end has been replaced with rigging and harness, attached to a pair of large brahmin. The pickup bed contains building materials (bricks, wood, and metal) scavenged from the Wasteland. There is a 20 gallon barrel of water on the front of the hauler, along with a sack of salted brahmin jerky and an ox tongue. These must be your provisions.

The caravan pulls away from the docks and moves out into the Wasteland at a steady pace. The caravan consists of 10 haulers carrying various building supplies and tools and close to 70 workers, including guards, brahmin handlers, and caravan masters.

The caravan proceeds through the hot day, not making camp until early evening. Immediately upon stopping, sentries are posted around the perimeter of the caravan. The sentries are chosen at random, and none of you have drawn the short straw. At dawn the caravan breaks camp and begins another leg of the 12 day journey.

Several days pass uneventfully as the caravan makes its way east. Midway through day four, the tedium is broken as your hauler suddenly begins to wobble violently as one of the back wheels falls off and crashes with a loud thud to the ground. Noticing the noise, one of the caravan masters calls the entire caravan to a halt.

The hauler needs to be repaired before the caravan can resume the trip. The caravan lacks a maintenance man, as there was none to be found before the journey began. The characters can attempt to repair the hauler themselves.

Repairing the hauler requires the materials to be unloaded and the hauler lifted to place the wheel back into position. The fully-loaded hauler weighs 1,300 lbs. and requires a combined ST of 29 to lift, a half loaded hauler weighs 900 lbs. and requires a combined ST of 24, and the unloaded hauler weighs 500 lbs. and requires a combined ST of 19. ST requirements are cut in half for using leverage to lift the hauler, if the players think of this solution.

Once the hauler is lifted, a *Mechanic* skill check is needed to put the wheel back into working condition. The character that repairs the wheel will also notice that the axle is bent and has stress fractures.

If no character possesses the means to repair the hauler, the caravan master will unload the hauler (except for the food and water), and pack the goods into other haulers. He will then order the characters to guard the hauler until the caravan returns in a week. If this is the case, skip to the encounter **Guard Duty**.

If the hauler is repaired, then the caravan continues toward San Francisco, with a two hour delay.

WHEN ANIMALS ATTACK

The next couple of days pass with little problem as the caravan travels across the desert toward San Francisco. The day's heat beats down upon the caravan, making travel slow. The brahmin must be rested under canopy tents every few hours to keep them from heat exhaustion. As the day wears on, even with frequent stops, the brahmin begin to get a little unruly. In particular, one of the brahmin in your team keeps breaking the caravan train. Each time the brahmin breaks his harness, a handler comes over and shocks the beast with a cattle prod. This time, however, the brahmin appears to have had enough: as the handler approaches, the brahmin, frothing at the mouth, breaks his restraints begins to gore him! Your hauler crashes to the ground as the brahmin turns and charges your group. The second brahmin breaks free, and throws his lot in with the first. Somebody yells from behind, "We got a RAD Frenzy!"

The brahmin will slam the hauler until it is destroyed. The hauler has 40 HP and a DR of 5. After the hauler is destroyed, the frenzied beasts will turn to attack the closest target or person. These brahmin have gone mad with Rad-Cow Disease and need to be put down.

The character should have to put these beasts down, but have an occasional handler run in and get gored should the characters be hard pressed to defeat the brahmin. You can state that the other caravan guards and handlers are calming down their own spooked brahmin, and can offer the PCs no aid.

If the brahmin are stopped before the hauler is destroyed, the axle on the hauler snaps once the caravan begins to set off again. The caravan master will unload the hauler (except for the food and water), and pack it into the other haulers. He will then order the characters to guard the hauler until the caravan returns in 13 days.

The characters may attempt several ideas to stay with the caravan (such as dragging the broken-down hauler for 7 days), but ultimately the party will fail. Hank will order them to stay with the hauler after a few attempts, as it will slow down the rest of the caravan.

The players can either guard the hauler or return to Reno, at which point the scenario ends. If the characters abandon the hauler and return to Reno, they earn a -2 Reputation with the Crimson Caravan Trading Company and do not get paid, but still receive their XP up to this point.

Mad Brahmin (2)

ST: 22	HP: 22	Speed: 5.60
DX: 8	Will: 12	Move: 4
IQ: 4	Per: 10	
HT: 14	FP: 14	SM: +2 (3 Hexes); 2,500 lbs.
Dodge: 8	Parry: N/A	DR: 2 (Skulls only)

Horn Gore (8): 2d+2 impaling.

Bite (8): 2d-3 crush.

Traits: Bad Sight (Motion Sensitive); Domestic Animal; Enhanced Move 1 (ground); Hooves; Night Vision 4; Peripheral Vision; Parabolic Hearing 2; Quadruped; Striker (horns; impaling); Temperature Tolerance 1 (cold); Ultrahearing; Weak Bite.

Skills: None.

GUARD DUTY

Hank has left you in charge of guarding the hauler until the caravan makes its return trip from Eureka in 13 days. You've been left with only a few days of food and water, so rationing will be a necessity. So what to do?

This is the characters' chance to make preparations against the elements and the desert. The first order of business should be to make a shelter to prevent severe sunburn and heatstroke during the 13 days until the caravan returns. Allow the character to be creative; they have their equipment, the hauler, and two dead brahmin to work with here.

They will also face danger of starvation and thirst before the caravan returns; this will need to be addressed as well. The characters have 20 gallons of water and 2 pounds of dried meat. Each character needs 1½ gallons of water each day to avoid dehydration and ¼ pound of meat to avoid starvation. (5 characters will have a little less than 3 days of water and 2 days of food).

The characters have several choices they can make here: First, they can butcher the brahmin for meat (no skill check required here, the animals have a lot of meat). The characters will have to be quick about it; in the desert heat, the meat will spoil within a day if they fail to harvest and either dry it out in the desert sun or cook it. Second, they will need to find water, and can do so with a *Survival (Desert)* skill check (multiple characters can help search for water). Any water source found, however, will be contaminated with radiation. Characters drinking this water are subject to low levels of radiation, gaining 50 RADs each day they drink the water to the maximum of 300 RADs.

This encounter is an ongoing threat to the characters, as long as they stay in the desert or until the caravan returns in 13 days. Keep track of how the characters fare against the elements and any conditions that they suffer.

STRANGE FINDINGS

This encounter can take place at any time during the characters' stay with the hauler, but must take place at least one day prior to the raider attack in the next encounter.

Should the characters explore their surroundings during their stay in the desert (such as by climbing a sand dune), allow the characters doing so to make a Perception check. If successful, the character will notice a reflective glinting in the sand some distance away. The glint is a brisk mile walk through the desert wasteland. Should a character go and explore the glint, they will find a large circular piece of glass buried in the sand. If the characters want to excavate the glass, it will take some time, as the circular glass is 10 feet in diameter, buried 10 feet deep and weighs 200 pounds. As characters dig out the glass object, they will find pieces of cinder blocks around the circular object. When the object is fully excavated and removed, it looks to be a giant round glass water pitcher, with eyes and a mouth painted on it.

Time is not a major factor in this encounter, unless it is close to the raider attack. In the event this happens, however, we have included a simple chart with sample times to excavate the water pitcher by hand, with a shovel, or with improvised tools.

Excavation Tool	1 character	additional characters	Minimum time
Hands	10 hours	-1 hour for each character digging	5 hours
Shovel	2 hours	-15 minutes for each character digging	45 minutes
Improvised	5 hours	-30 minutes for each character digging	2 hours 30 minutes

If excavated and brought back to the hauler (and if it avoids destruction in the raider attack), Hank will offer to purchase the artifact from the characters on the caravans return trip for 100 caps. If the characters refuse to take the offer, Hank will leave it behind instead of loading it on a hauler.

RAIDERS

Several days have passed since the caravan left you to fend for yourselves. The caravan should be passing back by within the next week, according to Hank's calculations.

Some raiders have spotted the hauler and the characters, and will wait until dusk to attack the camp. Allow characters that are keeping watch to make a *Perception* check to notice the light reflecting from a pair of binoculars on a dune about 400 yards away. This is the only warning that the characters will get before the raiders attack at dusk.

If a character (or a few characters) notes the flash and goes to explore the area, the raiders will attack those characters. If successful in defeating the exploring characters, the raiders will then attack any characters that remain guarding the hauler.

If the raiders win, then game over for the players. If they lose, then the characters gain some loot, as well as food and drink to help survive the duration of their guard duty.

Ringo (Raider A)

ST: 13 **HP:** 13 **Speed:** 6.00
DX: 12 **Will:** 10 **Move:** 6
IQ: 10 **Per:** 10
HT: 12 **FP:** 12 **SM:** 0
Dodge: 9 **Parry:** 8 **DR:** 1 (Leather Jacket)

Unarmed (14): 2d-1 sw cr / 1d thr cr

Colt 6520 (16): 2d pi+

Combat Knife (12): 2d-3 cut / 1d imp

Traits: Bloody Mess (see GURPS Fallout pg. 43); Combat Reflexes; Language (English; Native/Semi-Literate); One Hander (see GURPS Fallout pg. 43).

Skills: Brawling -14; Climbing -13; Gambling -9; Guns/TL 5 (Pistol) -16; Intimidation -9; Jumping -14; Knife -12; Navigation (Land) -9; Stealth -13; Survival (Desert) -9.

Equipment: Ammunition (10mm – 48 rounds), Beer (2), Binoculars, Colt 6520 10mm, Combat Knife, Leather Jacket, Brahmin Jerky (4), Metal Canteen, and 25 caps.

Guido, Lenny, and Star (Raiders B, C, and D)

ST: 13 **HP:** 13 **Speed:** 6.25
DX: 13 **Will:** 10 **Move:** 6
IQ: 10 **Per:** 10
HT: 12 **FP:** 12 **SM:** 0
Dodge: 9 **Parry:** 8 **DR:** 1 (Leather Jacket)

Unarmed (14): 2d-1 sw cr / 1d thr cr

Baseball Bat, Crowbar or Lead Pipe (16): 2d+2 cr

Traits: Bloody Mess (see GURPS Fallout pg. 43); Combat Reflexes; Language (English; Native/Semi-Literate); One Hander (see GURPS Fallout pg. 43).

Skills: Axe/Mace -12; Brawling -14; Climbing -13; Intimidation -9; Survival (Desert) -9.

Equipment:

Guido's Equipment: Baseball Bat, Beer (2), Brahmin Jerky (2), Metal Canteen, and 15 caps.

Lenny's Equipment: Beer (2), Crowbar, Brahmin Jerky (2), Metal Canteen, and 25 caps.

Star's Equipment: Ammunition (10mm – 12 rounds), Lead Pipe, Brahmin Jerky (4), Metal Canteen, Wine Cooler (4), and 5 caps.

RETURN TO RENO

After several more days of waiting, sand clouds signal that a caravan is heading in your direction. After an hour, the Crimson Caravan haulers return with fresh supplies and parts to fix your hauler. Hank thanks you for the excellent job in protecting the hauler from further damage, and for defeating the raiders.

After fixing the hauler, the caravan makes the return trip to Reno. During the journey back, the remains of a small caravan is spotted that was heading to Eureka before falling prey to the creatures of the Wasteland. Heavy damage from both explosives and bullets have destroyed the haulers; all valuable supplies have been taken, leaving another husk to be claimed by the desert.

Upon returning to Reno, Hank pays off all of the caravan guard with their contracted rates. Hank also gives you a bonus of 100 caps for a job above and beyond the normally required duties of a caravan guard.

As well as receiving the bonus, each character is entitled to purchase a +1 Reputation with the Crimson Caravan Trading Company.

EXPERIENCE

To determine experience, total up the amount of earned experience listed below and divide by the number of characters.

Experience		
Road Trip	Fix the Hauler	2
When Animals Attack	Defeat the Brahmin	3
Guard Duty	Survive the Desert Environment	2
Raiders	Defeat the Raiders	4
Role-Playing	Discretionary Award	1
Total (divide by number of players)		12
		Maximum XP Attainable per character
4 players		3
5 players		2
6 players		2

TREASURE

To determine the amount of treasure (loot and caps) that a character earns, consult the results below for items and add up the caps earned from the encounters in which the character participated. A chart of potential caps earned is included below for quick reference. Allow the players to determine the items that they are keeping and what they are selling. Items with a quantity of (1) only one player can attain, and it is up to the players to determine who gets the item without in-character fighting. A common method to determine who gets a disputed item is a dice roll off; or, one of the characters adding the sell value to the coin earn that is split amongst the other characters. Items may be sold for half their book price (or more, with successful bartering).

Encounter	Maximum Attainable Coin
Don't Throw Me Away	40 caps
Strange Findings	100 caps
Raiders	70 caps
Return to Reno	Up to 600 caps per character

Equipment	Sell Value (individual)	Sell Value (total)
Ammunition (10mm – 60 rounds)	1.125	67.5
Baseball Bat (1)		22.5
Beer (6)	0.5	3
Binoculars (1)		200
Colt 6520 10mm (1)		175
Combat Knife (1)		50
Crowbar (1)		32.5
Leather Jacket (1)		125
Lead Pipe (1)		12.5
Brahmin Jerky (20)	0.75	15
Metal Canteen (4)	5	20
Rotgut (4)	10	40
Wine Cooler (4)	2.5	10
Total	---	773