

Brigands' Bounty

by Keith Pogue www.pogre.com

Introduction

One of the difficult things in putting together a successful and believable campaign is bringing together the PCs. PCs tend to be from very different backgrounds, races, and professions. While that is a good thing for pure gameplay, it does interfere with believability at times. After all, soldiers tend to serve together, wizards hang out in the library, thieves have their guilds, and so on. The following adventure suggests a way to form a disparate bunch of individuals into an adventuring group.

The background and adventure hooks assume the PCs are in the White Stallion Coaching Line's Inn on a road north of a major city. DMs could create backgrounds to explain why each PC finds himself in the coaching inn, but generally it is much simpler to have the PCs do this. Part of the character creation process should include a background, even a brief one that leads up to the moment of the campaign starting. The coaching inns are quite popular stopping off places for all manners of travelers so explaining the PCs presence there should be relatively simple. More information on coaching inns may be found in the appendix.

Background

A group of northern tribesmen are raiding travelers moving between two cities. The tribesmen were banished from their home area because of their failure to obey a truce in the north. Their leader, Olf, now seeks to increase his wealth and status and return to the tribe's home to wrest control from the current tribal chief. Olf is not a subtle warrior and assumes all men to the civilized lands are weak and soft.

Olf's first targets were trading carts moving between small villages, but these soon became a bore. The tribesmen then tried to heist a White Stallion Coach and failed. The White Stallion Runner guards' fierce defense of the coach has given Olf reason to pause. Olf did upset the White Stallion Coach's Coachmaster enough to

force him to attempt to hire bounty hunters to punish the brigands. Olf then ambushed a Dwarven Brewer named Turin Alemaker and stole his cart.

Although the Dwarf escaped he had to leave his brew behind for the tribesmen. Olf intended only to sample one of the barrels of ale, but he and his men could not stop themselves and ended up drinking most of it.

Olf and most of his men sit drunk, or are trying to sleep off the effects of the Dwarven ale. Their timing could not be worse for the brigands as the White Stallion Coachmaster has managed to hire some bounty hunters.

Adventure Synopsis

A White Stallion Coachmaster comes into one of the line's famous coaching inns and offers a bounty for the tribesmen's heads. The PCs are brought together to mount a punitive expedition against the brigands and get their bar tab picked up along the way. Heading north to hunt down the brigands, the PCs run into Turin Alemaker, a Dwarven brewer, who tells them the brigands have stolen his wares. If the PCs push ahead they find the brigands in very bad condition and unready for the PCs assault.

For The Players

The White Stallion Coaching Inn is indeed a welcome reprieve from your travels. The place is warm and pleasant and the buzz of conversations fills the air. A group of folks in upper class garb make their way through the open tavern back to one of the private rooms. Shortly thereafter, a coachmaster and runner guards come in and order ales and bread. Following an initial lull while the men eat and drink the coachmaster stands before his chair and makes a loud announcement:

"My coach ran into a bit of trouble up the way. As is standard White Stallion policy I will discuss a reward for those willing to help deal with this problem. Those interested in this work

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will meet with me at dawn here tomorrow."

The coachmaster then gathers together the rest of his party and marches off to bed. The tavern bursts into a buzz behind them and you head off to your bedroll wondering about what this job entails. It won't hurt you to see what the coachmaster has to say...

The following dawn you rush to get down to the meeting. The coachmaster reclines in a seat at the head of a table. A simple but appealing breakfast of wheat gruel, boiled eggs, and roots is spread across the table. The coachmaster greets you and motions for you to take a seat. The coachmaster passes around the breakfast dishes for the small group that has gathered. A few minutes into sampling the delights the coachmaster speaks:

"I am thankful there are a few of you as this is not a one person job. You see, a dozen miles up the road we had a bit of trouble. Our coach was ambushed by a bunch of brigands. Fortunately, our runner guards were capable of fending them off."

The Coachmaster pauses to take a deep draught from his morning tea. He then continues:

"I would like for all of you to travel back up the road and punish these brigands. There looked to be about a dozen of them, young humans. They probably are young tribesmen on raids from the north. Nonetheless, they must be punished. I am authorized to offer you 10 crowns per head. Do you accept this contract?"

The coachmaster will pick up the PCs tab at the inn if they agree to pursue the contract. The contract will be payable at the inn when the PCs return. The PCs are not required to kill all of the brigands, killing a few of them send should the message needed.

PCs who agree to the terms of the contract are asked to sign two copies, one of which they will retain. Give the player handout 1.1 (White Stallion Bounty Contract):

Bounty Contract

NOW COMES, White Stallion Coach Company (Company) through its assigned agent _____ to propose a bounty contract with _____ (Bounty Hunter) a lawful person seeking bounties in the Realm and agree to the following:

1. Company has been wronged by one or more persons in doing Company's legally rightful course of business of providing the finest in coach accommodations; and such persons in interfering in said business of the Company hath violated all good and decent laws of the realm and its finest cities, and wherefore, legal enforcement is fully stretched and a burden to the dutiful tax paying citizenry of the Realm, thus Company seeks to hire the heretofore named Bounty Hunter to redress its wrongs.

2. That Company is a licensed bounty contract provider and the heretofore mentioned Bounty Hunter hereby agrees to follow all of the laws of the Realm and must agree to facilitate or participate in acts that are fully defensible under the Realm's fair rule and notwithstanding any noble intention or actions of the Bounty Hunter the Company shall not be liable for any legal defense expenses or other pitfalls of said employment.

3. Company agrees to compensate the bounty hunter as follows: 10 Gold per live Brigand or Brigand's head presented at this Inn within a fortnight.

Lynus Barger, Coach Master

Company Agent

Encounter Areas

(Refer to Map 1.1)

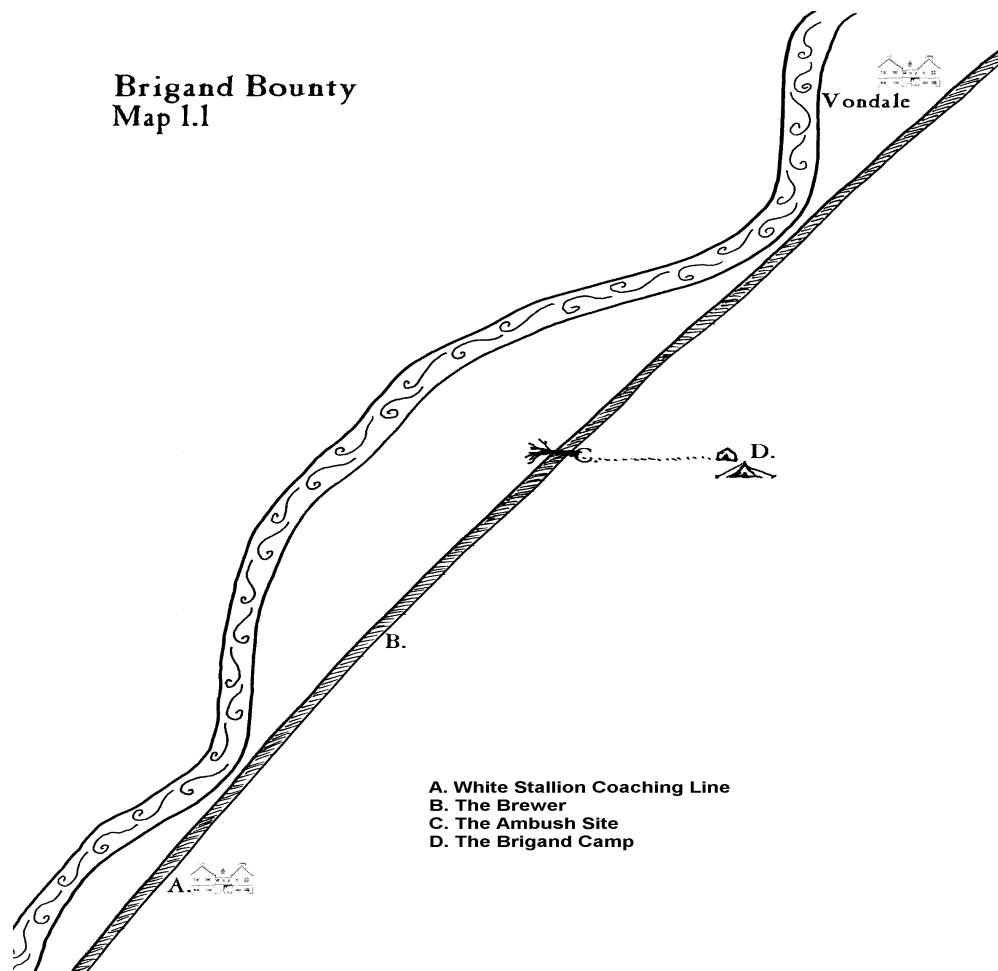
A. The Coaching Inn

This is the meeting place where the adventure starts. It is the first White Stallion Coaching Inn

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Brigand Bounty Map 1.1



north of Derlon and only has a few farms surrounding it.

B. The Brewer (EL variable, probably 0)

A haggard looking Dwarf with a gray beard struggles up the road towards you. He holds a handaxe at his side and his eyes are cast downward. He struggles to place one foot before another. He bears a number of wounds and his garb is torn and bloody.

If the Brewer notices the party he will cry out to them, "Ho there. Another patch of rogues to jump old Turin eh? Well, you are a few hours late all I have left is this axe, but I am willing to give it to you. Right 'tween your eyes!"

Turin Alemaker is a brewer of some repute and if approached gingerly he will tell them his load of wares was high jacked farther up the road. Turin was taking a cartload of ale to the city when brigands jumped him. He managed to hack his way through, but not before taking a number of wounds. He believes there were at least 10 Brigands involved in the attack. Unlike most highwaymen, these thieves did not offer safe passage for a price, nor did they use bows. Instead, they descended upon his meager wares like wild wolves. He complains that they probably killed his mule, took his wagon, and the six kegs of ale it had on it.

If the party questions Turin further about the attack they will also learn that the brigands used a large felled tree to halt traffic on the road.

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Turin approached the tree and was immediately beset by the brigands.

If the party shows Turin their Bounty Contract he will tell them he will reward them as well. Turin tells the PCs to find him in city at the Quail's Covey tavern. He promises to reward them for any of his materials they recover and a bonus to their bounty. He also promises to compensate them for any healing they may have bestowed upon him.

Turin Alemaker, Male Dwarf Exp6: CR 5; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 6d6+9; hp 30 (currently 11); Init +0; Spd 20 ft; AC 10; Atks +4 melee (1d6/ x3, handaxe); SQ dwarven traits; AL LN; SV Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +6; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills: Alchemy +10, Appraise +10, Craft (barrel-making) +6, Knowledge (nature) +4, Profession (brewing) +12, Sense Motive +6.
Feats: Endurance, Skill Focus (brewing), Toughness.

Special Qualities: Dwarven Traits (Ex): 60 foot darkvision, stonemasonry, +2 save vs. poison, +2 save vs. spells or spell-like abilities, +1 attack vs. goblinoids or orcs, +4 dodge vs. giants, +2 craft with stone or metal.

Possessions: Hand Axe.

C. The Ambush Site (EL 1)

A large, felled tree apparently hewn from the dense woods surrounding this section of the highway crosses the road. The leaves on the tree are quite green and there are no immediate signs of rotting or burning, at least from this distance. The barrier would be very difficult to get around by foot and would need to be moved if one were traveling by coach.

This is the ambush site the tribesmen employed. They have learned from their previous botched attempts that they needed to find a way to force traffic to stop before they could rob them. As the PCs near the downed tree they may hear the buzz of flies coming up from the other side of the tree.

The flies are feasting on the corpse of Turin Alemaker's mule.

A lone lookout has been left at this place. The rest of the Brigands have retired to the camp to enjoy the alcoholic bounty they have captured. The boy left behind is very disappointed in his assignment and is not being particularly attentive. Lefander's *Spot* check should be modified downward 5 by the DM.

Lefander, Male Human War1: CR 1/2; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 1d8+3; hp 7; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 12 (+2 leather); Atk +1 melee (1d8/19-20, longsword); AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills: Spot +3, Listen +2. *Feats:* Awareness, Toughness.

Equipment: leather, longsword, short bow, arrows (x20), 5 sp .

Lefander will attempt to run back to the Brigand Camp and raise the alarm if he spots the PCs. If the PCs are able to get the drop on Lefander he will quickly surrender. If they convince him they are not going to kill him he may be willing to tell them about the brigands including their strength and the location of their base camp. If the PCs convince the boy they are going to let him go, he will tell them that the brigands are probably all drunk and will draw the PCs a simple map of the camp's layout.

The brigand's took the brew wagon back to camp with them. Their excitement at their booty also caused them to fail to cover their tracks in any way. Tracking them back to their base camp should be a relatively simple task (DC 5).

D. The Brigand's Camp (EL 2+)

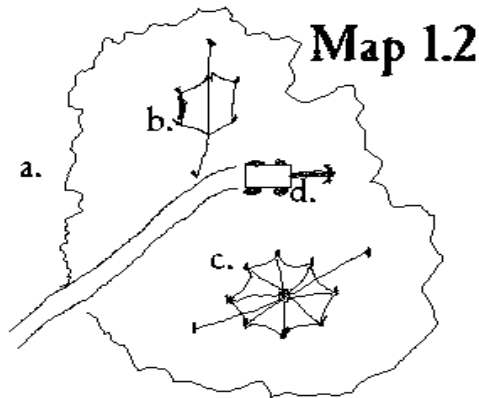
(Refer to Map 1.2)

There is a clearing in the woods ahead. Light streams down onto two tents made of animal skins and a broken down cart. The cart has half dozen barrels on top of the bed. A couple of the barrels appear to have been damaged. You can

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see a body lying across the cart's bed.



The PCs have arrived at the brigands' camp after one hell of a party. The body lying across the cart is actually the person who is supposed to be on guard! The details of the camp are described in reference to Map 1.2.

Allow the PCs to make a *Hearing* check (DC 10) to hear some one singing and slurring their way through a drinking song in a foreign language. If the test is succeeded by 10 the PCs will be able to discern that it is the man lying atop the cart who is singing.

a. The Clearing Edge

The clearing is about 40 feet across and the wood line gives solid cover. The PCs can move around the clearing nearly at will as long as they are attempting to be quiet. (See area d. below).

b. Chief Olf's Tent

The man responsible for bringing the raiders to this place rests in this tent along with his lieutenant. They will grab weapons and rush to the attack without concerning themselves with armor. Assuming the PCs attack within a day of the cart being stolen these two men will be under the influence of alcohol and suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls and -4 to Initiative rolls.

Chief Olf, Male Human Bbn1/War1: CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 1d8+1d12; hp 11; Init +0; Spd 40 ft; AC 10; Atk +4 melee (1d12+1/ x3, greataxe); SA rage; SQ fast movement; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills: Intimidate +4, Intuit Direction +3, Wilderness Lore +3. *Feats:* Power Attack, Weapon Focus (Greataxe).

Special Attacks: Rage (Ex): 1/day, Chief can fly into screaming blood frenzy for 5 rounds. Chief gains +4 Str, +4 Con, and a +2 morale bonus vs. fear, but suffers -2 to AC. After the rage, Chief is winded.

Possessions: Greataxe.

Lieutenant, Male Human War2: CR 1; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 2d8+3; hp 12; Init +1; Spd 30 ft; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Atk +2 melee (1d8/19-20, longsword); AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Climb +4, Intimidate +4, Jump +2. *Feats:* Toughness, Blind-Fight.

Equipment: longsword.

The Chief will fly into a rage in the first round of combat and he and the Lieutenant will concentrate their attacks on one of the PCs. They will go after spell-casters first if at all possible.

Treasure. The tent has the men's armor consisting of wooden shields and studded leather. There are also two sacks containing silk cloth the group has stolen from farther north. The cloth is worth 30 gp. There is a small purse with 6 gp and 27 sp.

c. Brigands' Tent

Seven brigands are sleeping in this tent trying to let the effects of the Dwarven ale wear off. They grab only their weapons as they rush out of the tent when they become aware of an enemy

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attack. The seven brigands will also still be suffering from the effects of the alcohol and suffer a -2 penalty to attack rolls and -4 to Initiative rolls.

Brigands, Male Humans War1 (7): CR 1/2; Medium-size Humanoid; HD 1d8+3; hp 7; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 10; +1 melee (1d8/19-20, longsword); AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 11.
Skills: Climb +2, Jump +3, Listen +2, Spot +2;
Feats: Awareness, Toughness.
Equipment: longsword

If the brigands' chief is killed or half of their numbers fall the remaining brigands will attempt to escape. They will run off in the woods in different directions. Wounded brigands will surrender to the PCs if the Chief is killed or the brigands are running away.

Treasure. The Brigands' tent contains their seven suits of leather armor, 4 short bows, 100 arrows, 48 sp, and a pair of dice.

d. Turin Alemaker's Cart

The guard in charge of the cart is not asleep, but his eyes are half open looking up into the sky. He is also under the influence of alcohol. These two factors add up to a penalty of -7 to all of his listen and spot checks. As soon as he becomes aware of the PCs he lets out a piercing scream that alerts everyone in the two tents. It takes some time for the groggy men to shake off their drunken slumber to meet the threat, but they emerge in 1d3 rounds after the guard has screamed.

Brigand, male human War1: CR 1/2; Medium-size Humanoid (human); HD 1d8+3; hp 7; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 12 (+2 leather); +1 melee (1d8/19-20, longsword) or +1 ranged (1d6/ x3, short bow); AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills: Spot +5, Listen +4. *Feats:* Awareness, Toughness.

Equipment: leather, longsword, short bow, arrows (x20), 5 sp .

Treasure. Turin's cart remains intact and has two of the original barrels of ale on it. The other four barrels of ale have been tapped via axe slashes in the barrels making them worthless for reuse. Turin will be very glad to receive the cart and ale back.

Conclusion

If the PCs return to the appointed Coaching Inn they will be paid as promised under the contract.

A Job Well Done

If they have managed to bring in six or more of the brigands dead or alive) they will catch the eye of another inn patrons – A noble who will send them a note of congratulations. This noble may serve as a patron for later adventures.

If the PCs continue to the city with Turin's cart and ale, he will be overjoyed to see them. He will pay them a reward of 20 gp and tell them he has a job they may be interested in (see Chapter Two: A Recipe for Disaster).

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Appendix One

White Stallion Coaching Line

This old coaching line provides transportation between the cities. They are renowned for the speed and efficiency and make a lot of their gold by delivering letters and goods between the cities. Part of the line's success is the series of coaching inns they have set up along the way. Every 20 to 30 miles of the 203-mile journey there is a coaching inn where travelers can rest and new horses are made ready for the next leg of the journey.

The coaching inns are large and include full kitchens. They pride themselves on reasonable prices, clean rooms, and decent food. The result is the inns are very popular stops for all travelers along the route. The success of the inns has led to several small villages springing up around them and in one case, Yeaf's Crossing, a town.

White Stallion Coaching Inns are all owned by Aymeric Frunnenberl and is run by the Frunnenberl family. All of the Inns' masters are paid according to their profits and years of service. The headquarters for the Coaching line is located in a large city.

Typical White Stallion Coaching Line Prices:

<u>Price</u>	<u>Item/Service</u>
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Accomodations

6 sp	Stay in common room
23 sp	Stay in private room
5 gp	Suite

Food & Drink

2 sp	Breakfast
5 sp	Supper (served from 3 PM until around 9 PM)
3 cp	Sweet Meat

5 cp	Berry Tart
6 cp	Mug of Ale
2 sp	Wine pitcher with meal
5 gp	White Stallion signature wine (bottle)

Stabling

7 sp	Stabling includes feed (per day)
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Transportation

1 gp	Coach fare between any two Coaching Inns
5 gp	Coach fare between the cities.

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Appendix Two

Handout 1.1

Bounty Contract

NOW COMES, *White Stallion Coach Company (Company)* through its assigned agent _____ to propose a bounty contract with _____ (*Bounty Hunter*) a lawful person seeking bounties in the Realm and agree to the following:

- 1. Company has been wronged by one or more persons in doing Company's legally rightful course of business of providing the finest in coach accommodations; and such persons in interfering in said business of the Company hath violated all good and decent laws of the realm and its finest cities, and wherefore, legal enforcement is fully stretched and a burden to the dutiful tax paying citizenry of the Realm, thus Company seeks to hire the heretofore named Bounty Hunter to redress its wrongs.*
- 2. That Company is a licensed bounty contract provider and the heretofore mentioned Bounty Hunter hereby agrees to follow all of the laws of the Realm and must agree to facilitate or participate in acts that are fully defensible under the Realm's fair rule and notwithstanding any noble intention or actions of the Bounty Hunter the Company shall not be liable for any legal defense expenses or other pitfalls of said employment.*
- 3. Company agrees to compensate the bounty hunter as follows:
10 Gold per live Brigand or Brigand's head presented at this Inn within a fortnight.*

Lyrus Berger, Coach Master
Company Agent

Bounty Hunter

Handout One
Chapter One
Brigand Bounty

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Appendix Three

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