

## **The City of Cuvauw**

Cuvauw is a small city that sits at the edge of the hills south of Argaevaligne, where the head of the Eastward waters leaves the mountains. A few small fishing villages and towns line the river downstream to Minkarraph. High in the mountains, yet protected from the brutal North Sea storms, Cuvauw was a favoured summering spot for the noble and wealthy at the height of the Eschlatli Empire. The town was originally built to support a mining colony, whose endeavors still produce great wealth in ores and gems for the region. With the Goblin invasion to the south Cuvauw has become the largest free community in Balaconth, and consequently harbors many noble families of the region, and is building a sizable military presence to defend them.

Cuvauw is ruled by Comte Mlash Revuud, cousin of the 'King' of Nipend, and is widely thought to be stern but just. He is advised by the sage Ocurod, and his uncle, a priest of Thedine. Ocurod is known as acolyte of Ri-Ephond (Lord of the Earth), the traditional patron deity of Cuvauw. In recent years, rumour has it that the Comte is merely following the orders of his brother Duke Naffan, a former ruler of Balaconth now in exile from the Goblin Invasion.

Cuvauw straddles the streams and falls the join just outside the city walls and run west through the midst of the city. Docks, market squares, and small canals line the waterway, as well as a central bridge that leads north to the palace, militia barracks, and fortified mine entrances. Two great towers from the smelting houses tower over the southern side and the sight of their plumes of smoke can be seen from miles away. Butchering, timbering, and other industries reside in the Southern Ward as well and much of the lower class housing.

### **Other Notes**

- Cuvauw is the nearest city to Argaevaligne, but the Church is not a major player in the city. The Comte's uncle is a priest, but not his closest advisor. The idea of noble (and wealthy) families retaking their rightful lands from the Goblin Queen falls in line with the Church's ethics.
- The Jeweler's Guild has always wanted a piece of the action in Cuvauw. They control the luxury goods trade in the major coastal cities and along the Minkush River. In Cuvauw they have to go through a few middlemen, seriously cutting into the potential profit. They are heavily opposed by the Commerce Guild.
- All the noble titles are remnants of when the Eschlatli Empire unified most of the Rhiat, and are still passed on hereditarily. Dukes, Barons, Viscounts etc hold title and land, but there is no king or feudal structure over them. They all lord over small city-state (or less!), but fight for status with \$\$\$.
- Back in the days of the Empire, Cuvauw was the Aspen or Cape Cod of the region, where all the families would go to marry their children off to other noble families. Many still do this, usually in an attempt to consolidate their power. In the case of the Comte, his only son is currently tucked away in the local asylum.

## **People & Places of Note**

### **Nog Hill**

In the southeast corner of Cuvauw, in the midst of smelters and slaughterhouses, stands Nog Hill. A natural ridge, supplemented with mounds of trash, it has become a combination borrowing den and apartment-complex for the Nogs of Cuvauw. Nogs are short, humanoid race of varied shapes and proportions. Most have a tan or light brown complexion, and two proportionate sets of limbs. Hair is rare, and facial features tend to be extreme - very bulbous, or pointed and fine. Height ranges from 2 to 4 feet, and weight varies from rail-thin to barrel-gutted. The community is loosely ruled by "King" Fround. The nogs themselves are nearly slaves to the human population. Many indentured servants and actual slaves work in the noble villas, while others man poor quality fields outside the city walls. A few lucky nogs and "free" and work as labourers and petty assistants in the area. The free nogs, having the most money of the bunch, build ramshackle huts on Nog Hill, only to be overtaken by the next lucky nog with an influx of coin or building material. This has led to construction on Nog Hill to tower higher and higher, with frequent accidents due to the complete lack of engineering skill.

### **The Cauldron**

If you should be unlucky enough to wander the back alleys of Cuvauw's south end at night you may run into a few thugs from this "family business". The Cauldron, nicknamed for founder Elias Cauldron, were the dominant criminal organization in town a few decades ago, but have now begun hiring new muscle and taken to new markets in response to recent competition. Be careful - they no longer just want your purse.

### **The South Ward**

The South Ward, or "Industrial Quarter", houses the unpleasant businesses and people of Cuvauw. On these poorly cobbled streets you can find, slaughterhouses, butchers, smelters, and the hospital (nee asylum).

### **The Noble Ward**

This walled quarter sits on the eastern edge of town, between the river and the garrison. It is well maintained, with oil lamps, frequent patrols, and sculptured gardens and lawns. The focal point is the Comte's manorhouse, which is flanked by manors of the most wealthy nobles in town.

### **Noble Families**

- **Enfer**
- **Eldwere**
- **Sabri** - Wealthy family from Vensat. Controls trade along the rivers, and sole owners of airships in Cuvauw. Known interest in undercutting the Commerce Guild
- **Guffan**
- **Givon**
- **Revuud** – Headed by Comte Mlash, the Revuud clan has been the foremost family in Cuvauw since the days of the Empire.

- **Thive** (*Clan of the Raining Fields*) - Chlendi clan owning much of the arable farmland outside of Cuvauw, with a near monopoly of the westernlands below the river.

### **Guilds**

- The Forging Guild – active in Cuvauw, as well as Nipend, parts of Argaevaligne, and Northern Ghikarn'gai. Strong supporters of the Commerce Guild and the Comte.
- The Jeweler's Guild
- Bluemoon Sorcery House
- Commerce Guild – no longer as prominent in Cuvauw as in decades past. Still maintains a guild house, but primarily relies on it's connections within the Noble Houses.

### **The “Hill Beasts”**

Years past when Cuvauw was considered a “resort” town by the nobility, one of the fashionable pursuits was to be lead up into the hills for a weekend of drinking and hunting , with the assistant of trappers and mercenaries. The hill beasts, a variety of mongel beastmen, would be hunt with great blackpowder weapons and packs of hounds. Since Cuvauw's decline, the hill beasts have rebuilt their number and their tribal orginazation. Few trappers go into hills alone and return.

### **The Amp**

An old arena down by the river, this structure was built at the height of the Empire for gladatorial games, performances, and ceremonies. Now largely abandoned and crumbling, the arena is the home of a slipshod unorganized marketplace. Once grand townhouse surrounding the ampritheatre are rundown and rented out by the poorest of nobles fleeing Balaconth.

### **The Hung Man**

Built on the edge of the old town square, this tavern was a favoured spot to watch the weekly executions. It's a rather seedly looking, decrepit place, but safe due to it's proximity to nicer parts of town. Members of the upper class patronize late at night when "slumming it", or looking for pleasures not found in nicer establishments. The tavern has a leaky wine cellar available for private meetings or large groups.

### **The Rat's Hatchet**

Dive bar on the block outside the mine entrance. Frequented by soldiers, militia men and miners. Not a friendly place for nobles, merchants, or foreigners.

### **The Earl's Dead Fish**

With a name derived from the punchline of a joke no one longer remembers, this fine tavern is the establishment that all up and coming society members don't want their parents to see them at. Located upsteam from the Amp in the stifling heat of the furnaces, The Earl's Dead Fish offers a variety of local cuisine, along with drinks and pleasures from across the Rhiat. The proprietor, Minaan, is said to a heretic wanted by the Mindat, who still offers prayers and trinkets to his dead gods in a shrine behind the taproom.

### **The Stem & Stone**

Apothecary shop in the merchant ward. Gets shipments of rare southern items from the Commerce Guild.

### **Near Cuvauw**

- **Argaevaligne** – Theocratic nation north of the mountains, based around agriculture, a feudal economy, and the Church of Thedine.
- **Nipend** – Small nation of fortified cities among the hills and mountains north of Cuvauw.
- **The Minkush River Valley** – Valley of prominent cities downstream from Cuvauw. Once the core of the Eskla Empire and still the height of culture and power in the Rhiat.
- **Balaconth** – Coastal nation to the south, now overrun by the forces of the Goblin Queen. Many of the nobles of Balaconth have fled to Cuvauw for shelter and plan for its liberation.
- **Ghikarn'gai** – Rough and tumble nation to the southwest of Cuvauw. In the midst of a civil war that dates back to Heteri cultural identity of centuries past.