

Nederboden Canton in 594 CY

By Patrick Williamson

Overview:

Geography and demographics

Nederboden Canton is situated in the southwestern section of the Perrenland region and is bordered along its eastern and western sides by the Oostflow and Vestflow rivers. It is the heart of the nation of Perrenland. The land trapped between these two tributaries is by virtue of the spring floods and alluvial deposits some of the most fertile soil in all of Perrenland, it is this distinction that has Perrenders refer to the canton as the “Kornkammer of Perrenland” (Granary). The rivers themselves serve also to act as a highway for a plethora of barges and trading craft that travel from the border of Yatil mountains to the shores of Lake Quag and beyond. Spread almost evenly along their banks, can be found a number of fortified communities from as small as a village to the size of a small city which Nederboden has three of. The three cities of Nederboden are Haigh, Riberlund and Nederquag, each has a population averaging around 4,000 to 5,000 people during any one time. The towns and cities along the Oostflow are more prosperous and populated than those along the Vestflow’s course. This is because the Vestflow travels along the edges of the Mounds of Dawn and the western bank where it does so is well known as a place of haunted ruins, the legacy of the Ur-Flanne empire that once thrived there. Thus most traders are content to use the Oostflow to get their goods to Nederquag. Though there are hardy traders willing to risk the dangers, the communities along the banks of the Vestflow have never really prospered due to the difficulty of getting their produce to market. The rolling plain between the rivers is a sea of at times shoulder length grass, called the Central Feronwald. By tact agreement this belongs to the Rosrijder clan who graze their herds of horses and “steward” the entire area protecting the large herds of migratory deer from over-hunting. The farmers of Nederboden content with their fertile river lands do not encroach into this area. Some farmers have actually begun to breed the migratory deer, ensuring that venison is available all year round without having to hunt for it. Travelers upon the Feronwald often marvel at being able to journey amidst herds of horses and deer, watched over by small groups of the nomadic Rosrijders. Nederboden is rightly said to be the most scenic Canton of Perrenland.

Folk

The inhabitants of Nederboden, mostly Hussens mixed with Vurrzwalds, are bound to their lands and look to the members of the Grove to guide them in using it correctly and preventing land degradation. These folk are for the most part a peace loving people, whose hard work and husbandry of the land make Nederboden seldom go without a bountiful harvest. The farming communities of Nederboden are not by nature suspicious of strangers and few turn away a traveler, caught upon the road by the fall of night, a warm meal and a bed.

The folk of Nederboden are less inclined to accept long-terms of military service than many Perrenders. Most do their duty within the Landwehr when they come of age, but prefer to return to their farms and seldom enlist for more permanent duties within the Auszug. As a result it is common knowledge that Nederboden has the largest pool of reserves available to the nation in time of need. The folk of Nederboden are dutiful to this role and have ensured that all their settlements are well fortified and maintained. This may be a legacy of the ruin that the legions of Iggwily visited upon this folk in the past, when lowland Nederboden was reduced to a burned out ruin and the nation starved for two years. Nederboden was the hardest hit Canton of Perrenland in these times, and some say the fighting spirit of its folk was more sorely bled than any other. The folk of Nederboden have not forgotten these days. It was perhaps these memories that made peace with Iuz, although abhorrent to a good folk attractive to the Voormann Franz Hussen, who was an easy going peace loving man by all accounts.

Governance

Pfalzgraf Karla Hussen leads the forty odd thousand members of the Cantons Hussen clan. Karla a cousin to Franz by blood was earlier reported to be showing an attachment to Hasten Weisspeer, regardless though Karla and Franz were married and their son Karl was meant to lead the next generation of Nederlanders. Karla (formally the Hintervoormann of the Canton) has taken over the running of the clan from her husband Franz who abdicated refusing to return to the position of Pfalzgraf after being unanimously ousted as Voormann. Franz has gradually lost his mind during the following eight years and is now little more than an old demented man. Karla Hussen, a strong woman, somehow juggles the day to day running of the clan and the canton with her position on the highest bench

of Rechters in Perrenland, being a Priestess of Allitur, wife to an ailing man and mother to an outlawed son. She is ably assisted by her brother Ohan Eldebraandt the current Hintervoormann of the Canton and her youngest son Conrad Hussen who looks to be the leader his brother failed to be. It is important to note that in all of Nederbodens history there has never been a Hintervoorman elected who was not from the Hussen clan and the Hintervoormann acts more akin to a steward for the Pfalzgraf of the Hussen clan than in independent statesman.

History

Nederboden sits upon the ruins of an older civilization, that of the Ur-Flanne empire of Jor-Russ. This empire of rival necromancer witch kings and queens dominated most of the Quaglands until it was torn down by bloody internecine war. Many of the current settlements have foundations that date back to this civilization, and it is rightly said that the descendants of the ancient kingdom are folk of the Quaglands today. The folk of Nederboden have therefore to all intents and purposes always been there and have suffered and seen-off all interlopers so far. The forces of Iggwilv during her occupation largely ruined the Canton and most of the settlements with the exception of Haigh and Riberlund were looted and sacked. During these dark days the folk of Nederboden resisted as best they could and many of them perished in the war. A great number of the lowland folk during this time escaped into the Ferronwald where the fierce Rosrijder nomads protected, fed and ultimately rearmed them. It was a combined Rosrijder, Hussen and Vuurzwald army, mounted on the famous Rosrijder horses that drove the legions of Iggwilv across the Ferronwald for four days into the waiting formations of the Vossers, Weisspeers and Morganrood pikemen in the battle of DerLangerrunn in 491, freeing Perrenland from her tyranny. Since those dark days the folk of Nederboden have maintained a close, if banterish, friendship with the Rosrijders of the Ferronwald.

Today the Canton is in the grips of another crisis. The signing the non-aggression pact in 582 by the Voormann Franz Hussen with Iuz (the son of Iggwilv) nearly tore the Canton (let alone the nation) apart, so much so that Franz did not resume his position as Pfalzgraf when Karenin ousted him from power. Only the wise election of his wife Karla formally the Hintervoormann of the Canton prevented both factions from drawing blood. Franz now a mentally shattered and old man well before his time can be found rambling to himself about what may have been and the demons that torment him. His legacy to the Hussen clan and the Canton in general saw the Hussens treated with derision by the other clans, and this led to the beginnings of an economic recession. Things seemed to be turning around when the son of Franz and Karla, Karl Hussen (the groomed apple of his mother eye) gained widespread popularity by destroying the bandits that were plaguing the Krestingtrek in 591. When this turned out to be a fraud and as the crimes of Karl were revealed things went from bad to worse. His corruption and descent into evil is a betrayal that coupled with the treaty Franz had signed with Iuz has tarnished the Hussen clan and the Canton irreparably causing the other clans and cantons to distance themselves from the stigma of evil that now pervades the canton and its people. Moreover Karl's kidnapping and abuse of Hanne Weisspeer the daughter of the Voormann has seen the Weisspeer clan sharpen its spears and the Morganroods reconsider their friendship. The Hussens and folk of the Canton condemned as a whole by the actions of two men have seen little choice other than to shake the dust of their battle axes and make ready for hostility.

Locations of Note

Nederquag: This small city (pop 4500+) could be called the "Torweg of Nederboden" (Gateway) at least for those coming by boat from the myriad of other ports along the shores of Lake Quag, and it is the cantons major port on Lake Quag. Nederquag is also dominated by the Vestmeer clan who constitutes nearly 60% of the cities population. The Hussens and Vuurwalds making up the rest. Nederquag is a very commercial port and the number of ship in and out on any given week during the warmer months makes it a lively place with a plethora of taverns and cheap places to eat.

Haigh: This fortress city (pop 5000+) is said to date back to the Ur-Flanne and certainly aspects of its architecture suggest monolithic foundations. It has the honor of being the principle seat of power for the Hussen clan. It is also a thriving mining and manufacturing community extracting and smelting mainly copper and iron but other metals as well to a lesser degree from the surrounding Yatils. A large (1000+) and thriving community of the Dwarven Khund tribe has a quarter of their own in this city, and they are the principle element in the manufacturing industry of good Khund steal and copper blanks. These blanks find their way to most of the rest of Perrenlands blacksmiths, initially on the backs of sturdy mules and then on barges to Nederquag and beyond. A smaller quantity makes it way overland to Krestible and then to Molvar in Ket via the Krestingtrek. For summer months of the year the Pfalzgraf can be found here, and the larger portion of the Pfalzgrafs Grafardt is maintained here year-round to protect the Cantons vulnerable southern flank.

Riberlund: The city of Riberlund (5000) is the seat of the Hintervoormann and the winter residence of the Pfalzgraf. Nestled almost lovingly within a small range of hills and along the banks of the Oostflow, the hills acting as a barrier against the biting winter winds and storms make Riberlund the perfect winter retreat. The architecture of this attractive city is mostly of white granite, the exception being the black granite of its fortifications. Riberlund is unnaturally warmed by a small set of volcanic fissures to the east of the city. The Ur-Flanne in ancient times constructed a marvelous set of pools and aqueducts that funnel warm water year round to the principle buildings of the city. Communal bathing is the norm in this city, and it is the home of the sauna and massage. Riberlund has a well-deserved reputation as one of the best places to spend winter in Perrenland if you have a few gold to spare. Riberlund is famous for the fine sand that it mines from the banks of the river. Families of skilled artisans using secret techniques produce the glass that adorns many of the finer buildings in Perrenland. In fact the glass makers guild is the strongest trades guild in the city and the richest.

Willenhiem Pop 3100

A fishing town at the mouth of the Vestflow River, this thriving community also acts as the trading centre for all the river traffic coming downriver from Hohle. Being virtually the halfway point between Huglerote and Nederquag gives it the added bonus of being a way station for caravans and ships travelling along the coast to each of these destinations. Currently there is a level of rivalry between the Vestmeer trading cartel in Naderquag and the fledgling Vuurzward trade guild in Willenhiem. The Vestmeer traders deny any such thing especially with an insignificant guild especially a Vuurzward one. In truth however Karla has allowed the new company to export canton goods as a counter to the Vestmeer tariff charges only time will tell how this gambit will go.

Eidelburg Pop 1900

Unhappily along the edges of the Mounds of Dawn, Eidelburg has over the last ten years been in decline. Luckily on the opposite side of the river to the mounds, the town has had one disaster follow another. Originally a step off point for mining expeditions into the Mounds of Dawn, the main resource for the town has been farming and ranching. In a bid to return the town to its former glory, a group of ranchers have in co-operation with Adler further up the river, begun to domesticate and breed deer. Though this project is only 4 years old it is already starting to show signs of success and there has been an apparent halt to citizens leaving. Only time will tell if it shall remain so and how successful the venture will be, a main problem however is still the nearness of the Mounds of Dawn and the hazards they bring to river traffic. As a counter to this the locals have begun to drive there herd to Etzel were the river traffic is less dangerous. It has recently be called "Tollelan" or "the great drive" and herds from Adler join those from Eidelburg for the journey. It should be pointed out however that the largest resource the town provides is still its crops and it is primarily a farming community as are all the towns along the river hinterlands.

Adler Pop 2000

This town is in the same predicament as Eidelburg, though further from the mountains Adler was also in decline until recently. Joining with Eidelburg insane scheme to domesticate the migratory deer, Adler now is also beginning to show signs of economic stabilisation. Only time will tell if there attempts will be successful. Luckily though the western side of the river has a large peat bog which has added a resource otherwise wasted. The peat is traded with the rural clans as a cheap but long lasting fuel. Each year the clans on the western side of the vestflow ship there herds from Weisich to here where they join the towns herds for the drive first to Eidelburg and then across to Etzel. Luckily the town is also primarily a farming community which has helped keep the town alive.

Weisich Pop 2900

The town is a bustling trade centre, most of which comes from the clans living on the western side of the vestflow river. The clans in that pocket of land prefer to go to Weisich as opposed to Adler due to Adlers nearness to the Mounds of Dawn. Weisich then is where they come to send their produce up and down river. Also a farming community, Weisich has the added advantage that if river travel becomes too dangerous caravans can and have gone across the Feronwald to Riberlund to join the river there.

Fuberg Pop 2700

Nestled at the edge of the Yatils and built on the banks of the Vestflow, Fuberg is a town that is better known for its orchards and herbs. Apples from Fuberg are rumoured to be the juiciest and it is known around the region for providing fifteen percent of Perrenlands herbal needs. Added to this the town's copper and iron mining, has Fubergs population on the rise.

Hohle Pop 2200

The last town along the river network of the vestflow, Hohle is named after the dwarven hold that the town has grown from. Originally an iron mine the town has since also stumbled across large deposits of copper, silver and gems. Rather than ship the ore outright, the local smiths guild have constructed a smelter and the ore is first smelted or made into items prior to shipping. As a secondary resource and left over from the ancient dwarven residence, Fuberg also grows a rare mushroom, which has become a delicacy in the towns and cities of Perrenland. These mushrooms are grown underground in special chambers under the care of dwarven farmers guided by a dwarven Druid of such age she is rumoured to be the earth mothers daughter.

Felsspalte Pop 3200

Nestled in the mountains half way between Hohle and Haigh, the town though it mines copper, silver and tin of reasonable loads, also has become famous for its woodworking. The mountains around the mines are covered in trees and they have been farmed over the decades to help create a thriving industry in timber and timber products. Though the ingots from the mining operations are taken to Haigh under heavy military escort, the timber goods for some reason have always gone to Hohle. It is believed that this is due to the fact that a good quarter of the goods are bought by the locals thus reducing the towns costs to get them to market. A small percentage has recently begun to be shipped to Haigh also as pressure was bought to bare for timber goods as well.

Alpenrose Pop 2100

A town that has the honour of being the most isolated in all of Nederboden, Felsspalte is a mine rich in copper, gold and iron. They have also taken from the earth in small quantities mithril and adamantine as well as some gems. The town's isolation is of such concern that the Landwehr stationed here is one of the largest contingents in the canton. Every six months the stockpiled inventory is escorted under heavy guard consisting of over three hundred troops, one hundred of which are seasoned dwarvish warriors to Haigh. The town itself was named after a plant that was discovered to grow only in one isolated area of the mountains. The plant has long since been destroyed and no one has ever found another like it.

Kurort Pop 2800

Nestled at the edge of the Yatils and built on the banks of the Oostflow, Kurort is a town that is better known for its orchards and herbs. Cherries from Kurort are rumoured to be the most succulent and it is known around the region for providing five percent of Perrenlands herbal needs. Added to this the town's silver and copper mining, has Kurorts population on the rise. Due to the similarity the town has with Fuberg, the two have been referred to as sister towns.

Stammburg Pop 2300

A reasonably sized town, that is predominantly a farming community growing maize, wheat and barley. There is also a sizeable herd of horses and cattle with a few ranchers running sheep. Since the general tendency of the other clans to distance themselves from Nederboden trade has begun to fall from outside the canton. Crop wise this has no real serious ramifications as the canton provides nearly fifty percent of Perrenland grains. Built along the banks of the Oostflow River, Stammburg is a way station for the river traffic that navigates the river almost all year round.

Hofstadt Pop 3300

Nestled in a small mountain chain along the banks of the Oostflow River, Hofstadt is on the point of three cantons. Trading between Nederboden, Krestible and Schwartenbruin this growing town not only has a reasonable farming community as well as a large number of pig farms, but also a number of small mines dealing with iron, copper and low value precious gems. The point of interest here is the lock that has been built to allow river traffic to travel from the Quag side of the mountains to the Yatil side. This is due to the drop in elevation along the river itself in as it nears the middle of the mountains and the site of Hofstadt. The lock is over three hundred years old and its mechanisms that are dwarven made still operate as easily as when it was first commissioned. There is only one other location that a lock is required and that is Riberlund where the river drops elevation once again. The locks are designed to allow a craft to raise and lower to match the new river level but there is also a side flow built that allows

the river to run freely over the falls that the lock is built around. The lock at Hofstadt raises and lowers a vessel fifty feet, a procedure that on raising takes 30 minutes to complete though lowering of a vessel takes only fifteen minutes.

Breitdorf Pop 2300

Breitdorf is a town famous for its ale, mead and recently for its white wines. Originally a farming community the town discovered that its hills and soil made perfect conditions for growing of alcoholic beverages. In the last one hundred years Breitdorf has an unsurpassed ale that has grown in popularity, in fact "Breitweisser" seems to be the only product not effected by the current atmosphere the canton is under regarding the rest of the region. Other resources here include sheep and goats with a small number of pig farms. There is also a single tin mine that operate but its output is not even sufficient for the town itself and is a family run affair only.

Sintflut Pop 2800

Another wine town, Sintflut is the primary wine producer for the canton. Predominantly red and white wines are produced, but recently a new wine has been added and indications are that this wine will rival Breitdorf for popularity. As it is, the demand for the wine far exceeds the town's ability to produce it, causing the value of the wine to almost double. There are currently only three Elven families producing the wine and two are currently enlarging the facilities to meet demands. Called "Edhelfaer" in elvish, Perrenders however refer to this nectar as "Feensaufen" (faerie booze) and it is a must to have if you are of importance or even considering to climb the society ladder in any city as it has become the drink of nobles.

Anschlub Pop 3000

This picturesque community on the banks of a slow flowing Oostflow River with Feronwald stretching out as far as the horizon in all directions is a town amidst a sea of green with a thin blue line down one side and a cluster of hills to the south. Though primarily a farming community growing corn, wheat, barely and potatoes, the town also has a number of cattle and horse ranches mainly run by Rosrijder clans. Anschlub has also in the last twenty years made a name for itself as a town for the family wishing to have a rest. As such for a town its size, Anschlub has a number of specialised inns and taverns that rival any cities in number. In fact the "Konigtum Heimkehr" is more a mansion and caters for the very rich or very powerful. The inn has recently taken the Heimkehr as a means to drop the common mans term for an inn and make it obvious that this is no inn. They took up Heimkehr, which means, "home coming", the intent to let customers know that when you stay at the Konigtum you are coming home and all your needs will be taken care of.

Etzel Pop 3400

Etzel has a proud namesake and an even prouder tradition. The town prides itself on the quality and bravery of its warriors. Etzel was Perrens champion and his fame in battle is legendary. No one really knows what his origins where but the location of the town is where he fought his mightiest battle and though victorious it cost his life. The town has erected a monument to both Perren and Etzel, though Etzel takes pride of place in the centre of the Marktplatz Perren is revered also. It is believed that praying to Etzels statue will banish fear and bring courage to even the most craven coward. This may not generally be true but there is evidence that warriors from Etzel have by far the largest number of berserkers than any other community in Perrenland. Warriors of all types can be found praying here, there is even an order of Etzel made up mainly of barbarians that pride themselves in battle rage and do so regularly in his name. A number of war clerics can be seen here at times, some think to pray while others believe they are here to disprove the myth. What is of more concern however is that in the last few years a number of unarmed tiger nomads have arrived allegedly on a pilgrimage to an honoured ancestor and have been known to abase themselves quietly at the foot of the statue for days at a time. Then in the dawn are gone, leaving no evidence of their presence except for a necklace made up of various creature fangs around the statues neck.

For the most part however, Etzel is the last lay over for the river traffic returning to Nederquag and is truly a town amidst a sea of green. Farms here have been sized to one hundred acres some even larger, mainly sunflowers, wheat, corn and a myriad of vegetables are grown with Rosrijder clans ranching horses, cattle and Angora goats. The large number of goatherds makes Etzel a producer of Angora wool, famous for its softness. Tailors in Etzel have made a name for themselves in producing Angora products as warm as wool but almost as soft as silk. The quality of garments is very high indeed, the Hetmann having released a proclamation forbidding the sale of any inferior or low quality goods.