

# Raddock Bay Trading House

The Slave Traffickers  
The masters of the Known World



*Raddock Bay trading house is the first choice of every slaver and slave trader in the Known World. We move more slaves than every other trading house combined and supply slaves to every major market. We can fulfil any need, no matter how great; new mines can be opened, buildings constructed and fields cleared in a matter of days with the slaves we supply. We can provide specialized slaves, bards and musicians for entertaining, smiths and carpenters for skilled work, clerks for handling ledgers and accounts. If you need work done to a high standard, quickly and cheaply, then Raddock Bay is the only trading house that can meet your needs.*

## A Brief History

Raddock Bay started as an Alkonian volery and still retains extensive investments in Alkyon, but it split from the nation of Alkyon over sales of slaves to the tiny nation state of Schaffhausen. Merisusi raiders had been attacking Alkonian ports along the northern coast of the Rachilde Sea and hundreds of prisoners had been taken as slaves. Raddock Bay Volery was purchasing slaves from dozens of different Merisusi raiding clans and there was no evidence that the slaves purchased were the same avians who had been taken in raids by the Merisusi. Despite this, an alliance of voleries moved to take action through the office of the Plutarch and the trade was outlawed.

In response at this outrageous infringement of their legitimate business interests, the volery responded by seceding from the Alkonian state and becoming the first truly independent trade house. Slaving operations were expanded and profits were increased now that tariffs did not have to be paid for moving the goods through Alkyon. Of course Schaffhausen could no longer be reached, for the indignant Alkonians interdicted this trade route from the House, but new markets were already being found in Maya and Amun'Sa.

Freed from the shackles of national politics, the influence of Raddock Bay continued to grow. By its very nature, slavery requires a neutral position; despite the technical legality of the trade, few nations will accept the sale of their own people. Able to operate freely in every market the House was able to buy and sell slaves in every land, Alkyon, Merisusi, Bantustan, Maya, Amun'Sa, Flambard and Fidelia until eventually their trade ships even reached Rukh and Kamakura.

The loss of slave ships to pirates passing through the Mallin Straits led to the first of the raids on the Free Islands. Bakhana mercenaries were hired in great numbers and ships outfitted to take them to the Free Islands. Once there, illegal settlements of pirates, smugglers and outlaws were fired, and their occupants

taken as slaves. Although such expeditions could be costly to arrange, the rewards were high. So high that other nations began to follow Raddock Bay's example, with raids being launched from Amun'Sa, Maya and even distant Merisusi. The results were predictable; defences in the Free Islands were improved, returns on investments fell and intelligent Raddock Bay merchants moved on to more profitable opportunities.

## Raddock Bay Today

It is well known that Raddock Bay has the most advanced slave trading operations to be found anywhere in the Known World. Gnoll and Merisusi prisoners taken in raids are purchased by operatives of the House and moved to lands like Maya and Amun'Sa where the market is always in demand.

Miners, farmers and labourers are only a single aspect of slavery and one that it is easy for competitors to imitate. There are countless upstart dragons in Maya who hope to make a business for themselves buying and selling common slaves. A much better margin is earned for purchase and sale of skilled slaves; those trained as smiths and carpenters. Acquiring such slaves takes careful and astute purchasing; producing them is easier, but only if you have the facilities and the capital to hold and train slaves for prolonged periods of time. In recent years, Raddock Bay has begun to explore such avenues, looking for ways to increase profits.

## Current Politics

The opportunities presented by the New World dominate thinking at every level in Raddock Bay. The most obvious potential is the huge new markets; the colonies are going to need slaves in huge numbers to construct buildings, ships, roads and the infrastructure they will need. Of course, many of them will be filled with naive idealism and will initially be resistant to the idea of using slavery. Nonetheless they are going to face stark choices. Building and maintaining a colony is expensive, it costs money to pay people to work in shipyards,

smithies, warehouses and so forth. Those nations that purchase slaves to help them build their new colony will find that the costs of everything are significantly reduced. They will be able to expand faster than the other colonies and eventually they will all need to face simple economic realities: they need slaves.

In addition to the growing and urgent need for slaves, it seems almost certain that the New World will provide an invaluable source of new slaves. The tribes of insects and snakemen are primitive and uncivilized but even they accept and understand slavery. It seems certain that when these tribes go to war, huge numbers of enemy tribesmen will be taken as slaves and this may well be available for purchase at prices far below the value they would fetch in Merisusi or Bantustan. If Raddock Bay is to retain the prestige position in its most profitable market, it must ensure that it takes control of the burgeoning slave trade.

In private, some Raddock Bay traders are discussing another possibility: necromancy. The ability to raise a slain being as an undead slave has enormous significance, although no one can quite agree what impact it will have. Doomsayers claim that the market could collapse under the influx of cheap and permanent slaves that never tire and never need to be fed and, worst of all, never need to be replaced. Others claim it will create a fabulous new market; that undead slaves will present a valuable new opportunity that will expand the depth of the market for everyone involved. Everyone agrees that the impact could be significant and the leaders of the House are keen to find out as much as they can about this new magic.

*The Free Islanders are always entertaining. Take the flotsam and jetsam from any and all society, let them go where they want, and they all end up in the same place. Is it the islands, or the people?*

*Bennett was most definitely at the jetsam end of the scale. He was a rat, but at least his body odour wasn't able to compete with the scars on his face. He's also the best eyes and ears in the Free Islands, so whenever I need to get the best information, I go to him.*

*I needed information on a new crime family. The Onyx, was the name I'd heard. Bennett filled me in on the rest. Some money, on the run from somewhere, and attempting to make a name in slaving, as well as criminal interests. Strictly minor league, but given a couple of decades and a brain in charge, and they might become something. Probably had plans to be a minor house and they definitely had plans to be dealing in slaves.*

*I sent the information back to the Archon. They were not only a prime target, but one that would not be missed. In fact, we would be doing the Islanders a favour, no-one was going to mourn their disappearance.*

*Their main base was in an area known as Coral Cove. They seemed to like dealing in children, taking them young, and then trying to brainwash them into some kind of fanatical slave. Well, pipe dreams are one thing, but trying to make them reality is only going to lead to disappointment.*

*Disappointment, in this case, being a large company of Bakhiana, followed by the slave ships. It was a very cost effective operation. Once past the slaves it was a case of fighting the family, and any retainers stupid enough not to know that the game was up as soon as we knew where they were.*

*And the Free Islanders? Well, in the history of the Free Islands, the Onyx pebble didn't even make a ripple in the water. Some of them got away of course. Stick a price on their head right through the House, next time they show up somewhere we'll have the rest of them.*