

Macnab

Macnab means 'Son of the Abbot', and the Macnab chiefs were the descendants and heirs of the Celtic hereditary Abbots of Glendochart, themselves the *coarbs* or heirs of St. Fillan mac Feradach, who was a prince of the Dalriadic royal house of Lorn and died in 703. He founded his principal abbey in Glendochart, the upper part of the glen becoming known as Strathfillan. It was the Celtic custom for abbots to be chosen from the Founder's Kin, and the old Gaelic MS. genealogies trace the mediaeval Macnab chiefs through some twenty generations from Saint Fillan's brother, Ferchar mac Feradach.

In the thirteenth century, the Abbot of Glenochart still ranked with the Earls of Atholl and Menteith, and after the discontinuance of the Celtic abbacies the Macnab chiefs retained the barony of Bòvain in Glendochart. But in 1828 an old prophecy was fulfilled, that 'when a great storm blew a branch of a pine tree against the trunk of another, and grafted itself on to the trunk, the Macnabs would lose their lands': and the old clan lands were sold up for debt. However, the offending pine branch has died since the present snowy-bearded chief bought back the last 7,000 acres of the clan country, and returned to live in the home of his forefathers as The Macnab.

The Macnab, 22nd Chief, C.I.E., with his wife Alice, daughter of Dame Flora MacLeod of MacLeod. The Macnab was Financial Commissioner of the Punjab in the Indian Civil Service, and his wife was awarded the Kaiser-i-Hind silver and gold medals. His elder brother, the 21st Chief, resigned the

Chiefship to him when he recovered the old Macnab lands from the Campbells. His heir is his nephew, James Macnab of Macnab, yr. (son of the 21st Chief), who is married to Lord Kilmany's daughter and lives nearby, also in the ancient Macnab country.



Sir Allan MacNab, 1st Baronet, Prime Minister of Canada, who became heir male of the Macnabs on the death of the 17th Chief in 1860, but left an only daughter Sophia MacNab, Countess of Albemarle. On William Lyon Mackenzie's rebellion against what he called 'the Family Compact', in Canada in 1837, 'MacNab turned out with his militia battalion—known by the rebels as "the Men of Gore"—defeated the rebels at Montgomery's tavern, cleared the neighbouring districts, and cut adrift the schooner *Caroline*, belonging to a body of American "sympathisers", who had taken possession of Navy Island, a little above Niagara, and sent her in flames over the falls.' (Mackenzie, who also called his innocent sovereign 'Victoria Guelph, the bloody queen of England', later died of softening of the brain.) The Iron Duke of Wellington declared that it was his conviction 'that owing to the loyalty, zeal and active intelligence of Sir Allan MacNab the Canadas had been preserved to the British Crown'.

