



The 'Neish Island' in Loch Earn, where the Macnabs massacred the MacNeishes in 1612. The MacNeishes had been defeated near Comrie at Boltachan and a few survivors had withdrawn to this artificial island, whence they continued raiding the Macnabs. The Macnab chief's eldest son, 'Smooth John' or Iain *Min* Macnab, fiar of Bovain, with three of his brothers, carried a boat from Loch Tay overland some eight miles over the hills and down Glen Tarken, and launched it at nightfall on Loch Earn. The next day the brothers returned to The Macnab's castle on Eilean Ran on the river Lochay, and brought their mother a sack from which they 'emptied out the gory heads of their victims'. (In 1965, The Black Watch territorials successfully carried a boat all the way from Loch Tay to Loch Earn over the same hills as an energetic military exercise, in memory of this historic operation). Eilean Ran Castle

was burnt by the Cromwellian English invaders, after Iain *Min* Macnab, now himself the Laird of Macnab, had been killed in an attack on their occupying forces in Breadalbane in 1653. The English commander in Scotland reported that: 'the Lord MacKnab, one of the great Montrossians, with his whole clan, did rise upon our partie; and coming to them, after some little parley (we having got some of their cattel together) they offered our partie free quarter, if they would lay downe arms and return in peace. But our men, not willing to be so affronted, stood upon their defence; which the Highlanders perceiving, sent a flight of arrows and a volley of shot among them; and ours letting fly again at them, killed MacKnab, the great chieftain of that wicked clan, with four more, and fell upon them and routed them all.'



Kinnell House, home of The Macnab. After Eilean Ran Castle was burnt by the Roundhead English in 1654, the Macnab chiefs moved to Kinnell nearby. The walls of the older part of the building are from three to five feet thick. When an official came to serve a writ on Francis, 16th Chief, the laird went into hiding while the stranger was lavishly entertained overnight. Meanwhile a dummy was hanged on an elm-tree near the house. When the official 'woke with a splitting headache and bleary eyes the next morning and asked what was the grisly sight, she told him 'Oh that's just a wee bit baillie body that angered the Laird': whereupon the bailiff fled without daring to serve the writ.' The next chief, Archibald, took over so burdened an inheritance that he was soon in danger of being arrested for debt. So one morning in 1823, he went out for a walk with his gun and a couple of dogs, as usual; and then just disappeared. He never returned to Kinnell. But his creditors tracked him in Scotland and thence to London; and he had to flee to Canada. The estates had to be sold to the main creditor, the 4th Earl of Breadalbane, and remained in Campbell hands until 1949, when Kinnell was recovered by another Archibald Macnab of Macnab, the present 22nd Chief. (See also p. 14.)

In the greenhouse on the left of the picture grows the famous Black Hamburg vine. At one time it was 192 feet long and considered to be the largest vine in the world. Though its branches at both ends have been cut back, it still produces 600 bunches of grapes a year.