

Restoring of Clan Macnab Title Recalls Stormy Madawaska Days

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If a recent news report out of Edinburgh is correct there will be shortly a 14th Chief of Macnab.

Archibald Corrie Macnab, home from India, has already bought Kinnell House, the historic seat of the Clan on the Dochart near the castle which the English destroyed 300 years ago. Now he has petitioned the Crown for the restoration of the coat of arms of his clan—the gory head of MacNelsh with its motto "Dread Nought".

Thus after 100 years history has come full cycle. Redeemed is the proud clan heritage which another Archibald, the 13th Laird, squandered in the courts of Europe and finally in defeat in our Madawaska-Ottawa wilderness.

Tattered Titan.

There is a splendid township in Renfrew county named after this tattered Titan who tried to establish a kingdom in the triangle of the Madawaska and the Ottawa.

In the town of Arnprior there is now an Oblate Novitiate on the site of that "Kinnell Lodge" which the 13th Laird completed in 1831 in memory of his last ancestral House on the Dochart in Scotland. (He also named a brawling creek nearby the Dochart.)

Also at White Lake are the gaunt stone remains, weed-grown, of Waba Lodge which he built by forced labor as an outpost in the Madawaska hinterland, and where he spent his last Canadian days.

Of the Canadian memories of the "Macnab of Macnab" the happiest is that when he with his kinsmen, Andrew and George Buchanan, named and founded Arnprior.

"King of Kippen."

These Buchanan brothers were descended from John Buchanan, the first Laird of Arnprior, who once stole a deer destined for the Royal table and then dined King James the Fifth on his own venison! For that exploit he was dubbed the "King of Kippen", and he passed from history with an otherwise untarnished escutcheon, dying gallantly in battle for the beautiful Mary Queen of Scots.

On one of his trips to Quebec or Montreal, where he met new arrivals and depicted the glories of his Madawaska "kingdom", Chief Macnab induced these two kinsmen, Andrew and George Buchanan, to accept his proposition to come up the Ottawa and help him build a new Eden in the wilderness. Without much hesitation they took the Chief at his word and came.

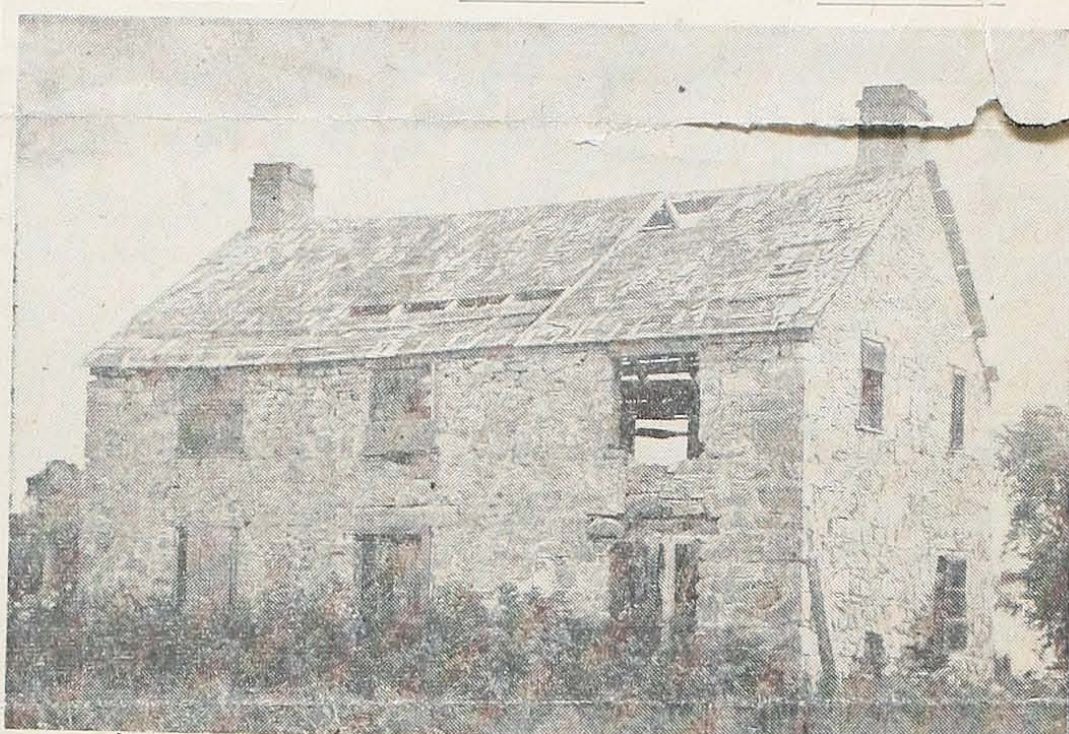
And so, on an Autumn night late in 1831, we find the three "exiles" gathered under the hospitable shelter of Kinnell Lodge. On such occasions Macnab was at his best—the true and generous host. Besides, these Buchanans were his "ain folk". The Chief's maternal grandfather was Buchanan of Arnprior.

Wassail at Kinnell.

Old Jacobite days of vanished splendor were relived as the Chief's piper played them into the brave past. Dugald C. MacNab records that "they made glorious jollification at Kinnell that night". They surely did. And if three Highland gentlemen, decidedly enlivened, quaffed from full goblets the forbidden toast to a "King across the water", who is there to condemn?

Under the spell of the pibroch and good Highland whisky warming their veins, the Chief suggested calling the place Arnprior after the ancestral estates at Kippen. The suggestion met with enthusiastic approval and was at once adopted.

But the three kinsmen soon quarrelled bitterly. Macnab abandoned Kinnell Lodge and built Waba Lodge to keep out of sight of the Buchanans! From this strategic point he



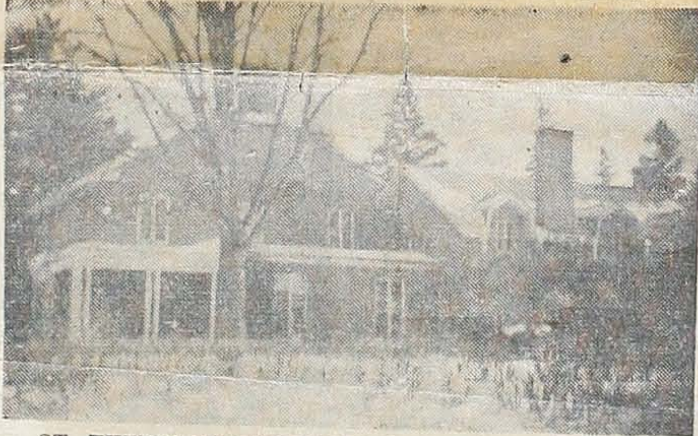
WABA LODGE, Chief Macnab's outpost at White Lake as it was just before it was destroyed about 20 years ago. The lodge was erected in 1835.



CHIEF MACNAB.

Here is a rare portrait of Archibald, the last Laird of Macnab, possibly quaffing in reminiscent mood to his days of vanished glory on the Madawaska.

—(Courtesy of Archives of Canada)



ST. THERESA'S NOVITIATE (Oblate Fathers) at Arnprior now occupies the commanding site on the Ottawa of Chief Macnab's Kinnell Lodge. Some of the original timbers are incorporated in sections of the present structure. After the Chief lost his Madawaska kingdom, Dan McLachlin, Arnprior's pioneer lumber "king", took over Kinnell Lodge, rebuilt it and landscaped it. Here he received King Edward VII when he toured the Upper Ottawa as Prince of Wales.

—(Photo by courtesy of Rev. F. Quinlan, OMI)

commanded all bush and water traffic at White Lake.

Tragedy Stalked Kinsmen.

The Buchanans went into lumbering in a big way. They built the famous timber slides at Bytown. But tragedy stalked them all.

George Buchanan was killed on the Ottawa river and was interred in the old pioneer stockaded burying ground at Bytown where the Ottawa Transportation (Electric) Building now stands. Andrew also met an early death and now lies in the famous "Inch Bhui" cemetery at Arnprior.

The Chief died "unhonored and unsung" in a Brittany fishing village.

It would have been a "Beau Geste" of Destiny if these three Highland kinsmen—their quarrel dissolved in dust—had been permitted to sleep by the Madawaska where they founded a "kingdom" as splendid as any won by the claymores of their ancestors beyond the Highland Line.

Yes, it will be the reclamation of a lot of history when the present Archibald Macnab becomes the 14th Chieftain of a great clan. We hope he comes to Arnprior and White Lake and rallies the Canadian descendants of a great name in bitterness that lingered along Scottish history, erasing all the the turbulent Madawaska.