

From Farm to Fork in South Uist

VIRGINIA BLANKENHORN

Writing in the *West Highland Free Press* a couple of years ago, John Shaw recalled how he spent several weeks in the summer of 1961 as a guest of John Lorne Campbell and Margaret Fay Shaw in Canna.¹ That same year, equipped with introductions from his hosts, he travelled to South Uist and Barra, where he met tradition-bearers whose enormous contributions to the Gaelic collections of the School of Scottish Studies have given them legendary status.

Ten years later, when I first visited South Uist, John Shaw had become something of a legend himself. Known to local residents as ‘Iagan’, he was remembered by repeat guests at the Gatliff Trust youth hostel in Howmore not just for his long hair and broad-brimmed black hat – hardly unique fashion choices among young American males in the 1960s – but for his uncommon interest in Gaelic. People told me he had studied Celtic languages at Harvard.

In describing his summer experiences, Dr Shaw drew upon what he called his ‘intermittent diary’. While fieldwork diaries are now regarded as valuable sources of social context for the fieldworkers’ activities and the lives of their informants, I do not imagine that someone who was a high-school student in 1961 took such a longsighted view of his own notes. These were travel diaries, not fieldwork records. But after reading his article in the *West Highland Free Press*, I wondered if my own equally intermittent diary entries might contain anything of interest. What follows is my offering to him, in gratitude for the example he set.



Fig. 1. Old croft buildings in Howbeg, South Uist, in 1979. Kenneth and Teenie MacIntyre had built a new bungalow elsewhere on the croft, but the byres – which Kenneth himself had built – were still in daily use, while the old house sheltered farm equipment and functioned as feed store, dairy and henhouse. (Photo: author).

¹ John Shaw, ‘Tobar an Dualchais: A visit to Canna, South Uist and Barra in 1961’. *West Highland Free Press*, 12 January 2022.

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In 1973, on what by then had become my annual summer visit to South Uist, I became acquainted with the family of Kenneth (Coinneach Phàdruig) and Christina ‘Teenie’ (Ross) MacIntyre, who owned a croft in Howbeg. The picturesque croft buildings – the old house, surrounded by three thatched byres – have featured more than once in photographic collections.² I got to know these buildings and their owners following a chance encounter with their teenaged granddaughter Christine one afternoon as we were both walking south up the road.³ She said it seemed daft to be walking the same road in the same direction without speaking to the only other person there.



Fig. 2. A supply of dry peats kept Teenie’s range burning, but cutting, drying and gathering them was hard work, especially in humid weather with no breeze to keep the flies off. (Photos: author)

Kenneth MacIntyre, born and orphaned in Glasgow, was raised in Uist by his uncle Pàdruig and his wife. Like many islanders, as an adult he spent a good deal of time as a sailor in the merchant navy and working at various jobs on the mainland – including a spell as a gravedigger. Christina ‘Teenie’ Ross, also born in Glasgow, came to South Lochboisdale as a small child along with her mother and two siblings after the death of her father. She, too, had worked on the mainland – ‘in service’ in the Oban area, as well as on farms and in hotels. Following their marriage, Kenneth and Teenie lived for five years in South Lochboisdale with her mother before moving north with Kenneth’s aunt – always referred to as ‘the *cailleach*’ (‘the old lady’) – who obtained the croft in Howbeg through family connections. They raised three sons and a daughter: Angus Donald was tragically drowned as a teenager; a second son, Angus Peter, lived with his parents for much of the period of my visits; their

² The MacIntyres and their croft are pictured and described in Bill Innes, *Old South Uist*. (Stenlake Publishing, 2006), front and inside front cover; another photograph, by Dr Kenneth Robertson, appears in Kenneth Robertson, Shona Grant and Lesley Harley, *Dualchas àraid agus prìseil: A unique and precious culture – The changing face of South Uist and Eriskay* (Kershader, Isle of Lewis: Islands Book Trust, 2009), 87.

³ I am grateful to Christine (Stewart) MacIntyre for reading a draft of this article, confirming many details, correcting others – and for being my steadfast friend for half a century.

youngest, Ian, had moved to Glasgow before I met the family; and Christine’s mother, Penelope, was married in Glasgow where she and her husband David Stewart worked in hotels. Penelope and David’s daughter Christine, their only grandchild, grew up in Uist until she was fourteen.

From 1973 onwards, as I became a frequent visitor to Uist and to the MacIntyres’ croft, Christine and I spent days exploring the island, running errands for her grandparents – to Lochboisdale to buy a scythe, to the co-op at Creagorry, to Fraser MacDonald’s shop (*bùth Fhraser*) in Howmore, where gossip with neighbours enlivened the wait for delivery of the *Daily Record* – rounding up the cattle if they were late returning from the common grazing in the evening, and helping with summer work.⁴ Although still remarkably fit, Christine’s grandparents were then in their late seventies, and rarely left the croft; they were glad of help with heavy chores like lifting peats and haymaking.

The Fank



Fig. 3. Howmore fank, 1973. Howbeg sheep often turned up in other fanks, and someone would have to go and deal with them. Duncan MacEachern (Donnchadh Iain Alasdair) in foreground; beyond the gate, Kenneth MacIntyre (Coinneach Phàdruig), left, talking with Duncan MacDonald (Donnchadh Ailig Bhig). (Photo: author)

⁴ Department of Agriculture regulations governed the use of common grazing and other agricultural practices in crofting townships. Alasdair MacDonald of Kilmoluag, Tiree, described the regulations in detail to Eric Cregeen in 1982; School of Scottish Studies Archives SA1982.096 (<https://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/track/103096?l=en>).

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One particularly demanding summer task was the ‘fank’ (*faing*) – the gathering, shearing, dipping, and vetting of the blackface sheep that had wintered on the Uist hills. On a dry day in midsummer, people and dogs would go out early to scour the landscape for as many sheep as they could find, in order to get them penned in the fank by midday.

Gathering the sheep was a communal effort, but in the days before many crofting villages formed cooperatives, shearing them was up to their individual owners. Whereas other Howbeg crofters owned a few dozen sheep, the MacIntyres owned over 100 animals. Kenneth regularly hired other men to help at the fank; but even so, the work often went on until late at night – not fully dark at midsummer, but a very long and tiring day.



Fig. 4. Traditional *deamhais* (‘sheep shears’). (Photo: author)

After lunch, the strenuous work began. Because the animals were agitated, catching one might be difficult, although the fact that blackface sheep have horns is helpful. After tying three of its legs together and laying the beast on its side, the shearer began working from its belly towards the spine.⁵ When the sheep was shorn as far as its backbone, it was turned onto its other side and the process repeated until the fleece could be lifted, neatly rolled up inside out, and stuffed into a burlap sack. No longer used locally to manufacture clothing, the fleeces were sold to Scottish Wool Growers, Ltd in Paisley for cleaning and processing.

Shearing the animal was only the start. Once shorn, each sheep received a prophylactic dose for protection against internal parasites, was anointed with weatherproof marking fluid, and finally went through the dipping trough for control of external parasites. Lambs were subjected to the bloody indignity of ear-marking (today, tags record ownership – a tidier process); and all but the most robust of the ram lambs were castrated.

In Howbeg, despite shearing being a man’s job, Christine had for some time been part of her grandfather’s shearing crew. When I volunteered to help, I was put to work administering red *peint*

⁵ Sharp-eyed readers will note that, in *Fig. 2*, Donnchadh Iain Alasdair has dispensed with the rope and adopted a slightly different technique – something a number of the men were able to do.

(‘War Red’) to the shoulders and backside of each animal with a flat stick. After watching how Christine went about it, however, I wondered if I might be up to the shearing itself. If she hadn’t already proven to him that such a thing was possible – and if he hadn’t needed all the help he could get – Kenneth might not have agreed to let me try; but after confirmation that I could handle the *deamhais* (‘shears’) without harming the animal, Kenneth MacIntyre’s shearing squad included two women.⁶



Fig. 5. Rolling up the *rùsg* (‘fleece’). (Photo: author)

Having demonstrated our efficiency – and perhaps because of our novelty value – Christine and I were in demand. We joined the crofters at Drimdsdale, who had formed a cooperative and had an impressively large flock – a two-day job that actually earned us a few pounds plus repeat bookings. We also regularly visited neighbouring villages where – unsurprisingly, given the random distribution of the sheep on the hills – some of the MacIntyres’ animals regularly turned up. The following note for 3 July 1976 is typical:

⁶ In Lewis, the women’s role at the fank was limited to bringing food and tools for the shearers; see School of Scottish Studies Archives, SA 1973.154.A5 (<https://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/track/55864?l=en>).

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If yesterday was hot, today was worse – mist on the hills and hardly a puff of wind. They were shearing in Howmore today and we went down around two o'clock, and sure enough there were four of ours there, old ladies with two fleeces on each of them.⁷ After that we went down to Drimsdale and there were a few more, plus two lambs. I am covered in sheep-shit and paint and blood and oil and whatnot up to the eyes and I'm sure there will be complaints in the hostel about how I smell.

The Larder

Sale of the rough blackface fleeces might have contributed little to the crofters' income, but the animals themselves – specifically, the wethers – added richly to their diet. As a happy consequence of owning all these sheep, the MacIntyres' deep-freezer was always well-stocked with mutton and with black and white puddings. The mutton was beyond excellent; and it was for that reason that I wanted to witness the process – and show some respect to the animal – that made it possible. I made the following notes during close observation of the slaughter of a wether by Roderick MacDonald (Ruairidh an Tàilleir) of Peninerine on 23 July 1979 in the old house on the MacIntyres' croft:

Tie the beast's legs as if you were going to shear it (i.e. three out of four) and lay him on a table (or an old door off its hinges) with his head over the end. The knife should go in the side of his neck to one side of his wind-pipe. Another person will have to hold him down while the one doing the killing grips his head. The blood should be allowed a long time to run out, so that the meat & guts will be clear. Keep the blood in a basin for black puddings (*maragain*); if it clots add a bit of salt to it & stir it until it gets cold.

Remove the sheep's head. Cut round all 4 legs at the knee, through the skin, and cut through the skin on the inside of the thighs towards the belly, and begin flaying the carcass, working towards the belly and then from the belly around towards the back of the beast. Cut through the knees and remove the feet. (It's important to wash your hands after handling the feet particularly in case they would be dirty & the rest of the carcass would then be contaminated.) The hind legs have two bones in them, connected lengthwise by a piece of tissue. Cut through this tissue until you are able to put a stout rope between them and hang the beast from a beam in the house. It is then ready to have the guts removed.

First remove the urethra etc. which can be plainly seen on the outside of the belly, and throw it to the dog. Cut down the belly to the breast-bone, and the guts will fall out of the hole but will still be attached inside. Remove the white fat that is amongst them and put it in a separate basin, for puddings. Hunt at the back of the sheep until you find the ends of the intestines and tie knots in them – these have to be pulled away from the back, they are stuck down inside, but I didn't see exactly where: one end is white, and it gets tied twice or 3 times; the other was pink and not so big around, and Ruairidh cut into it lengthwise and drew the end through the slit before tying it off 2 or 3 times. The stomach and the guts can then be put into a basin for puddings (including contents at this stage – they are cleaned later.) The liver can be eaten so long as it hasn't got fluke (cut into it to see how it is), but cut away the part surrounding the black thing

⁷ These were sheep that hadn't been sheared the previous year. Some ewes grew crafty and managed to avoid the pre-fank dragnet.

(gallbladder?) attached to it and give this to the dog as well. Clean out anything else that may be left in the intestinal cavity and throw it away – except the kidneys. These are easier removed when the beast has hung for a while & they are dried out.

Cut through the diaphragm and remove the lungs (*sceamhan*) & heart & windpipe – you will need to cut through breast-bone with a hack-saw (*sabh*).

Hoist him up to rafters. The carcass can be wrapped up to keep off the flies.

Killing a beast in this way is considered to be better from the point of view of the meat, since all the blood flows out of it.⁸ It is however not so good from the sheep's point of view as it can take rather a long time for him to die, and it is on this account that such killing is now against the law, which says you must take your beasts to a slaughterhouse to be dispatched, for a fee. This traditional style of killing is, however, widely practiced.

Ruairidh killed two wethers for us on this occasion, and said that last Christmas he had killed 27 beasts in the neighbourhood. His skill at the business is much sought after.

Slaughtering was indeed common in November and December, but why two animals were slaughtered on this occasion in July is not recorded in my notes. Once the carcass was butchered, however, the meat would not have required salting, as in earlier times, because the deep-freeze preserved it very well.⁹

Watching this process allowed me to honour the sheep, but it was not something I would care to repeat. I was happy enough, however, to observe the steps taken to ensure that it had not died in vain – specifically, the manufacture of black and white puddings. While more precise recipes surely exist, here are the ones I noted down from observing Teenie MacIntyre in July 1979:

Before making black or white puddings, clean the stomach and guts [under running water] & scrape them inside & out (soaking them for a day helps with the scraping & put some salt & washing soda in the water).

Maragain dubha ('black puddings')

Mix some oatmeal and pepper, bicarbonate of soda & cream of tartar in a basin. Pour in some of the blood, through a sieve, and some plain self-raising flour. Mix it to the consistency of paste, then add the suet, chopped fine. When it is the consistency of very gooey paste (the more fat you put in the better), then stuff it into the stomach of the beast, rough side out, and sew up the opening twice. Put it on a dish in a big pot with lid of boiling salted water and cook for some hours. The thing smells terrible when it's cooking. You must puncture the skin with a big needle when it gets tight with gas in the cooking, so keep an eye on it.

Once the pudding is cooked, put it on a plate and store it on a shelf in the cupboard to cool thoroughly.

⁸ Indeed – apart from the religious observances – this method is identical to *zabiha*, the method of slaughter approved for the production of *halal* meat in Islamic countries. Islam, however, would not countenance any use of the blood, which is considered unclean.

⁹ Norman Paterson of Barvas, Lewis, told Morag MacLeod how mutton was preserved before refrigeration; School of Scottish Studies Archives SA1967.28.A4 (<https://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/track/36449?l=en>).

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Although easier to watch than the slaughtering of the animal, the making of these puddings – especially of the black puddings – is perhaps not for the fainthearted. In 1998, when TV chef Nick Nairn was in North Uist filming Ena MacDonald making black puddings for a BBC cookery program, the sight of the congealed sheep's blood was too much for him – an incident that led to a story in the *Scottish Daily Record* and an hilarious interview on BBC Radio nan Gàidheal.¹⁰

When cooked and cooled, Teenie's black pudding was round in shape, about the size of a large grapefruit. All of the animal ingredients came from the sheep; I never saw a pig in Uist, and pig's suet – frequently listed as an ingredient in black puddings today – did not feature in her recipe.

Maragain geala ('white puddings')

Mix oatmeal and plain (self-raising) flour in a basin; add a good fistful of raisins, some pepper, bicarb soda, cream of tartar, chopped suet, and salt. The mixture can be moistened very slightly with milk, then stuffed into the pouch and sewn up. The puddings must not be filled too full in case they would burst in the pot. Another item of the guts is shaped rather like an hour-glass, with two holes in it which need to be sewn up. The name of it in Gaelic is something like *mudal mhór* or *muadal mhór*.

This last item, correctly spelled *maodal*, is translated as 'paunch' in Fr Allan's lexicon; Dwelly's dictionary also gives 'paunch' as well as 'stomach' and 'tripe'.¹¹ These definitions all seemingly refer to the stomach, and I suspect that, despite its being connected to the recipe for white puddings, my note on this word may be connected to the black pudding process. Whatever the precise meaning of *maodal mhór* as she intended it – and I would be glad to know – I believe Teenie used the large intestine as casings for her white puddings, which were sausage-shaped.

Aside from those used to make the black and white puddings, no other items from the sheep's carcass were used on this occasion, that I knew of, apart from the mutton and the liver. I heard nothing about haggis, which typically utilises the heart and lungs and is encased in the stomach of the animal; and as for utilising the sheep's head, I can only report that on this occasion I saw the skull of this particular sheep lying on the ground outside the house for some days after the events I have described. Nor have I any record of what became of the kidneys or the sheepskin.¹²

The Dairy

To a large extent, the life of a crofter's wife revolved around her kitchen, whether she was gathering the food herself or preparing it for consumption. The MacIntyres' cows required milking twice a day and, apart from that needed for immediate household use or to feed a calf, much of the milk would be allowed to stand in covered pails in the old house to allow the cream to rise. Before churning, Teenie would transfer the cream to the churn using scallop-shell ladles that had holes drilled in them. I never witnessed the churning myself, but Christine tells me that her grandmother owned two churns:

¹⁰ 'SICK NAIRN SHOW; Blood makes chef throw up', accessed 4 March 2025 from *The Free Library*, <https://www.thefreelibrary.com/SICK+NAIRN+SHOW%3b+Blood+makes+chef+throw+up.-a060570739>. The story also featured on Radio nan Gàidheal's *Prògram Choinnich*, hosted by Kenneth MacIver on 17.03.1998 (<https://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/track/14436?l=en>).

¹¹ Rev. Fr Allan McDonald, *Gaelic Words and Expressions from South Uist and Eriskay* (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1958), 174.

¹² I suspect that a use would have been found for these and other by-products in the not-too-distant past; see the account given to Alan Bruford by Laura Malcolmson in Cunningsburgh, Shetland, School of Scottish Studies Archives SA1970.236 (<https://www.tobarandualchais.co.uk/track/64870?l=en>).

Her favourite was a long narrow upright one and you pushed a long broom handle with a flat wooden block on the end which you pushed up and down until you had butter. The other was a round wooden one she could put on a table and it had a wooden paddle which you turned on a metal handle; she didn't much like it. I donated it to the museum in Kildonan.¹³



Fig. 6. Teenie milking one of her cows. (Photo: author)

Teenie's homemade butter – made from unpasteurised milk and thus no longer strictly legal – was wrapped in paper and stored in the deep-freeze until needed. Spread on fresh girdle scones or pancakes, it was food for the gods; it could even make a treat out of a toasted slice of stale Mother's Pride from *bùth Fhraser*.

Another product from the dairy was *cruth* ('crowdie'), a soft cheese made from skimmed milk. It was made as follows:

Allow some milk to go sour and lumpy. Put it in a pot on the stove (low) until it goes flat, floating in whey. Break it up, strain it dry; add a bit of salt and some cream.

Milk was also used to make *cairgean* ('carragheen'), a sort of blancmange that depended for setting on a mossy seaweed 'collected at Eilein Vorrán at a low tide the day after a new moon':

Wash the seaweed carefully to rinse all the salt & sand out & put it in a sunny place for some days to bleach. When it is dried it will stand for any amount of time.

¹³ Christine MacIntyre, email to the author, 25 January 2022.

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When you want to make pudding, soak a handful of the seaweed in water overnight. The next day, put it into a muslin bag and boil it in a saucepan with a couple of pints of milk. When it is boiled, strain it well a couple of times & set it aside in a basin until it sets like a jelly. You can sprinkle it with sugar and put cream over it when you serve.

I myself experimented with adding some melted chocolate to the carrageen mixture to make this dessert even more delicious. For Kenneth, unfortunately, this was a step too far.



Fig. 7. Christina 'Teenie' MacIntyre at the back of one of the byres with some of her hens, which furnished both eggs and the occasional chicken dinner. (Photo: author)

Feeding the Animals

In addition to the human beings, the cattle and poultry also required feeding. As well as their grazing in summer and their winter fodder of oats, barley and hay, Teenie's cows got a special tonic:

There is another kind of seaweed which used to be boiled up & fed to the cattle among potatoes or meal or something – *feamainn-chìreìn*. Also [collected] in Eilein Vorrán, this kind smells very strongly of iodine. Two or three handfuls with a little of the juice mixed with some potatoes, or meal, to the cattle when they get a feed in the morning.

The benefits of *feamainn-chìreìn* ('channelled fucus') were known throughout the highlands; and while often administered as a general tonic to beasts in good health, in some places it was regarded as a cure for specific ailments. As Norman Paterson of Barvas, Lewis, explained to Morag MacLeod:¹⁴

¹⁴ SA1967.28.A4; see n. 9 above; Gaelic transcription by Mòrag MacLeod, translated by the author. *Teas-broillein* may refer to an inflammation of the manyplies (omasum), the third stomach of a ruminant.

Uill, bha feamainn-chìrean, nam biodh bò tinn no beathach crodh, bhiodh iad a' dol sìos chun a' chladaich, agus bhiodh iad a' buain rud ris an can iad feamainn-chìrean. Tha i a' fàs air a' chladach rudeigin coltach ris a' chairgean, agus bhiodh iad ga thoirt dhachaigh agus ga bhruich ùine mhòr air an teine, gus an draodhadh i gu math, 's bhiodh iad a' cur sin ann am botal, 's bhiodh iad ga thoirt dha crodh, gu h-àraid nam biodh rud ris an canadh iad teas-broillein orra, 's bha sin a' dèanamh fiosaig dhan a' chrodh, anns na seann làithean mus robh bheataichean ann man a th' ann an-diugh.

Well, as for *feamainn-chìrean*, if there were a sick cow or cattle, they'd go down to the shore and they'd pick something they call *feamainn-chìrean*. It grows on the shore something like the carrageen, and they'd take it home and boil it for a long while over the fire, and drain it well, and they'd put this in a bottle and be giving it to the cattle, especially if they were suffering from something they called *teas-broillein*, and that gave a physic to the cattle in the old days, before there were as many vets about as there are today.

As for the hens, their diet consisted of what they pecked for themselves; but 'growing chickens' benefited from a regular feed of 'oatmeal and plain flour dampened to a very stiff paste with a very little boiling water'.

'Research' – or something else?

My diary entries from South Uist span ten years, and reflect my growing understanding, gradually reinforced by formal study, of the community in which I found myself. On my first visit in 1971, a longtime visitor introduced me to the youth hostel and to some of the local people as well as to Uist's abundant bird and animal life. Reading my notes reminds me that Scotland itself was new to me at the time, never mind the Western Isles.

In 1972, travelling alone, I returned to Uist and renewed acquaintance with those whom I had met the previous year. I began to get a sense of relationships among them, what villages they lived in, what the crofting life entailed, and how they viewed the hostel visitors – including some they regarded as a nuisance. My notes from then onwards reflect the people's gift for sharp-eyed, sharp-witted repartee and their love of gossip and anecdote – the more scandalous the better.

From 1973 to 1979, beginning with my first encounters with Kenneth and Teenie MacIntyre and their granddaughter Christine, I continued to lodge at the hostel but increasingly spent my days in Howbeg during visits that lasted up to six weeks. My diaries and letters home began to deal less with wildlife than with the summer rhythms of the croft. As I got to know the local people – and was determined to become neither a nuisance nor a scandal – I found that a 'fly-on-the-wall' approach worked best. I had no specific research agenda, did not regard my friends as 'informants', did not question them about a topic unless it came up naturally, and avoided using my camera or tape recorder unless invited to do so. Even Gaelic, which I had begun to study in 1972 and which they knew I wanted to learn, did not intrude, because our relationship had begun in English, and I did not want my lame efforts to speak Gaelic to filter our communication. As I wrote home in July of that year:

Have managed to swot up a bit more Gaelic than I knew before, in spite of being very slothful about it. Christine and her grandparents talk it constantly when I'm around and bits of it seep through. If I could figure out some way to stay in Uist for a year or so I might get a grip of it.



Fig. 8. Kenneth MacIntyre (Coinneach Phàdruig), 1979. (Photo: author)

Many of the activities recorded in my diaries have been reported by other observers and, indeed, by members of Gaelic-speaking communities themselves. The accounts given here reflect topics that might interest ethnologists. Other notes contain telling anecdotes and details about relationships that were every bit as complicated as we might expect. While these might fit someone's definition of legitimate ethnographic enquiry, however, I shall not be publishing them any time soon – or, indeed, ever.

For me, the most vivid memories are of certain moments – such as when Christine and I tried to hang new wallpaper in her grandparents' living room and discovered that because the walls weren't quite straight the coach-and-horses pattern would never trot properly round the corners; or when I arrived at the croft to find haymaking underway and grabbed a tool, only to be laughed at because the *graip* (the dung fork) was not considered suitable for turning hay; or when Christine and I were expelled from the hotel at Pollochar by '*bean* Hotel' (the proprietor's wife) because we looked disreputable; or the second day of the fank at Drimsdale when one of the shearers, who had done the work of three men the day before, arrived so drunk that he could do nothing but lean against a solid object and sing Gaelic songs; or when my efforts to milk a cow inevitably ended in abject failure; or

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when, defying her tendency to become seasick aboard the *Claymore*, Christine led me on a visit to Barra; or when, accompanied by a friend from the hostel, I visited an elderly lady named Isbeal MacLellan in Peninerine who was in the midst of telling us a ghost story when one of her cats, in a bid to get in, launched itself at the window behind us, causing my friend, already on tenterhooks, to perform a sitting high-jump; or when Kenneth MacIntyre, standing in his living room, poured everyone a dram to toast the successful hanging of the wallpaper, or the conclusion of the fank, or the end of my visit, expressing his wish that I would return the following year.

I don't need diary entries to remind me of those moments.



Fig. 9. Christine in 1995 at the grave of her grandfather and an uncle who died young. Teenie lived to be nearly 100. (Photo: author)

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