

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 071

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Area: *Leòdhas (Lewis): Barabhas Uarach & Baile an Truiseil*

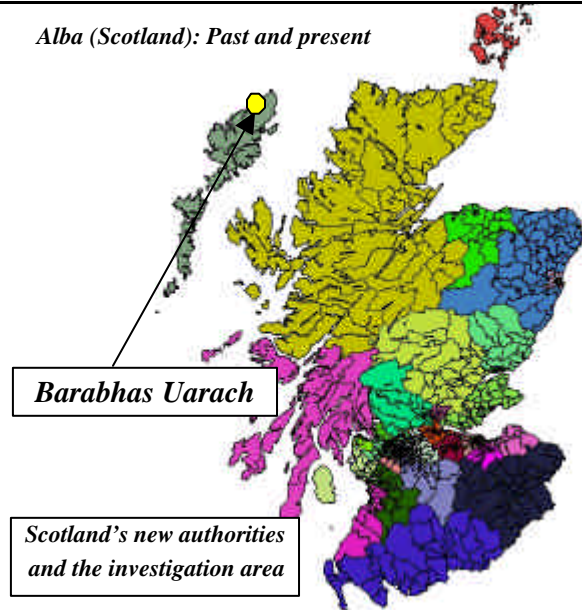
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Upper Barvas, Policeman's House, The Manse, Shepherd's House & Ballantrushal)

Number of households: 54 **Population present at census night:** 320

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 99.7 %

| County | Civil parish | Registration district | Enumeration district number | Census form pages |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Ross & Cromarty | Barvas | Barvas | 4 | 1 – 14 |

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

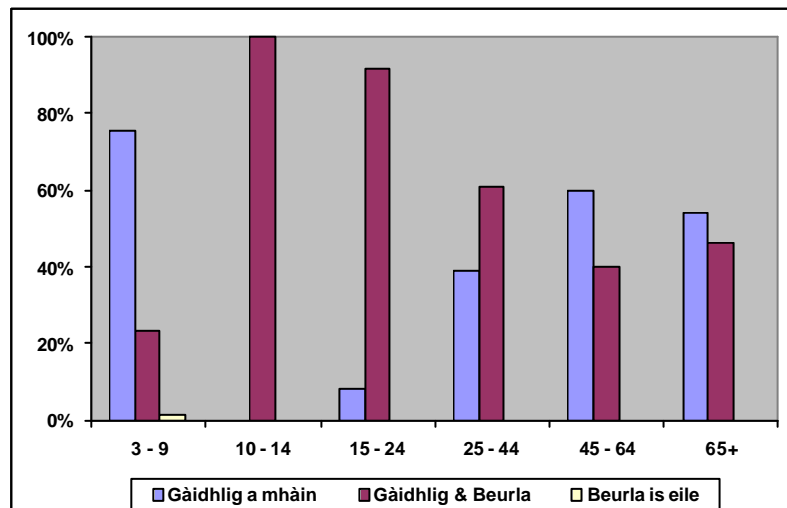
The crofting townships in question were as thoroughly Gàidhlig-speaking as any in the Outer Hebrides. According to census sources - with the exception of one child - the whole usually resident population spoke the traditional language. Around 40 % of the people did not even speak English. The “bilingual” part of the population was most prominent in the school age generation.

In *Baile an Truiseil* (Ballantrushal) the monolingual inhabitants made up even one half of the population.

Area description:

The communities described are situated on the westside of the island of *Leòdhas* (Lewis) in the centre of the parish of *Barabhas* (Barvas). The whole island was of course part of the county of *Ros & Cromba* (Ross & Cromarty). In particular the townships described are *Barabhas Uarach* (Upper Barvas) and *Baile an Truiseil* (Ballantrushal).

Most of the inhabitants of these Hebridean communities were crofters, a few others were engaged as fishermen.



Age profile: Share of population speaking (1) Gàidhlig, (2) Gàidhlig & English, or (3) no Gàidhlig at all

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| | Population enumerated | | | | Usually resident population (3+) | | | |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|-------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| | Total | Aged 0-2 | Deaf & dumb | Visitors etc. ³ | Total [†] | Gàidhlig | Gàidhlig & English | Gàidhlig speakers (%) |
| Age | | | | | | | | |
| Total | 320 | 28 | 0 | 2 | 290 | 123 | 166 | 99.7 % |
| 3-4 | 18 | | 0 | 0 | 18 | 17 | 0 | 94.4 % |
| 5-9 | 51 | | 0 | 0 | 51 | 35 | 16 | 100 % |
| 10-14 | 41 | | 0 | 0 | 41 | 0 | 41 | 100 % |
| 15-24 | 38 | | 0 | 1 | 37 | 3 | 34 | 100 % |
| 25-44 | 78 | | 0 | 1 | 77 | 30 | 47 | 100 % |
| 45-64 | 40 | | 0 | 0 | 40 | 24 | 16 | 100 % |
| 65+ | 26 | | 0 | 0 | 26 | 14 | 12 | 100 % |
| Gender | | | | | | | | |
| Female | 154 | 12 | 0 | 1 | 141 | 81 | 60 | 100 % |
| Male | 166 | 16 | 0 | 1 | 149 | 42 | 106 | 99.3 % |
| Place of birth | | | | | | | | |
| Born in parish | 300 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 273 | 119 | 153 | 99.6 % |
| In neighbouring parish[†] | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 100 % |
| Gaidhealtachd elsewhere² | 8 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 5 | 100 % |
| Other places | 7 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 100 % |

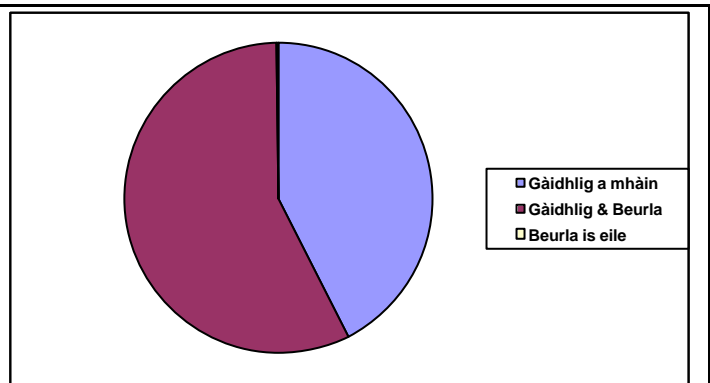
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Stornoway and Uig (both Ross & Cromarty).

² Other parishes in Scotland with more than 50 % Gàidhlig speakers in the 1891 census.

³ People described as visitors, boarders, lodgers or other similar terms.

⁴ Number of enumerated persons who were (1) older than 2 years of age, who were (2) not deaf & dumb and who (3) did not live only temporarily in the area.



Share of population speaking (1) Gàidhlig, (2) Gàidhlig & English, or (3) no Gàidhlig at all

Background of Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profiles:

The 1891 census was the first such enumeration exercise with an unequivocal language question. After more than 100 years the original census forms are publicly available for detailed analysis. During research concerned with the “Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Studies” a vast number of such local statistics have been gathered about the Gàidhlig speaking population of Scotland in that year. As many of these results could not be included in the reports these concise fact-sheets are a welcome way to publish some of the “local gems”. More information is provided at http://www.linguae-celticae.org/GLP_english.htm.

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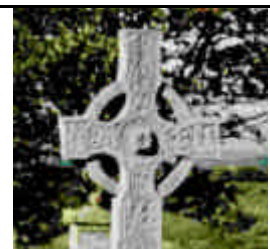
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Area: *Leòdhas (Lewis): Barabhas Uarach & Baile an Truiseil*

| | House-holds | Usually resident population (3+) | | | |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|----------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| | | Total | Gàidhlig | Gàidhlig & English | Gàidhlig speakers (%) |
| <i>Barabhas Uarach & Baile an Truiseil</i> | 54 | 290 | 123 | 166 | 99.7 % |
| Individual communities | | | | | |
| <i>Barabhas Uarach</i> (Upper Barvas) | 29 | 151 | 54 | 97 | 100 % |
| <i>Baile an Truiseil</i> (Ballantrushal) | 25 | 139 | 69 | 69 | 99.3 % |
| Language of parents | | | | | |
| Both parents Gàidhlig speaking | 35 | 217 | 100 | 116 | 99.5 % |
| Single parent Gàidhlig speaking | 6 | 27 | 10 | 17 | 100 % |
| One parent Gàidhlig speaking | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - |
| No Gàidhlig speaking parent | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - |
| Households with no children (0-14) | 13 | 46 | 13 | 33 | 100 % |
| Occupation of head of household | | | | | |
| Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc. | 44 | 250 | 110 | 139 | 99.6 % |
| Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar | 1 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 100 % |
| Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc. | 3 | 15 | 0 | 15 | 100 % |
| Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc. | 2 | 10 | 5 | 5 | 100 % |
| Living on private means | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - |
| Manager, coachman, cook, etc. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - |
| Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc. | 4 | 9 | 8 | 1 | 100 % |
| Remaining occupations | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | - |

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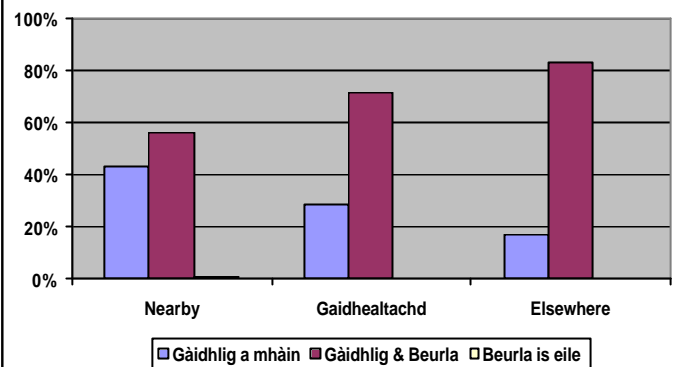
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

The share of monolingual (*Gàidhlig*-speaking) persons was highest among those born nearby or in the wider *Gaidhealtachd*. However, even a few inhabitants who were born elsewhere did not speak English. These persons were mostly very young and probably had returned with their parents to the island recently.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Barvas or in the adjacent parishes of Stornoway and Uig (both Ross & Cromarty).

² Born in other parishes of Scotland with more than 50 % *Gàidhlig* speakers in the 1891 census.



Speakers according to place of birth (1) nearby¹ (2) in remaining *Gaidhealtachd*², or (3) elsewhere

Remarks:

1. There was just one person (a three year old boy) who was enumerated as “not speaking Gaelic”.
2. In original census report terms the enumeration district in total had a population of 320 persons of all ages. 168 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English” and 122 persons were reported as monolingual *Gàidhlig* speakers. These figures lead to an “official” share of *Gàidhlig* speakers of 90.6 %. A comparison with the more realistic statistics of this fact-sheet reveals that this percentage was a considerable under-estimate of 9.1 % mainly caused by the inclusion of under-three olds and visitors in the official population base.