

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 091

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Area: *Na Hearadh (Harris): Caolas Stocanais & Leac a'Li*

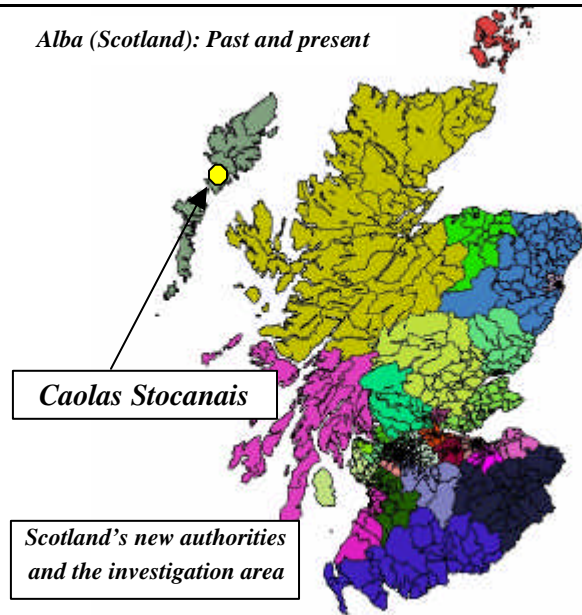
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms : Kyles Stocknish, Luskentyre Farm, Leachilee)

Number of households: 47 Population present at census night: 249

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 96.1 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Inverness-shire	Harris	North Harris	1	1 – 11

Alba (Scotland): Past and present

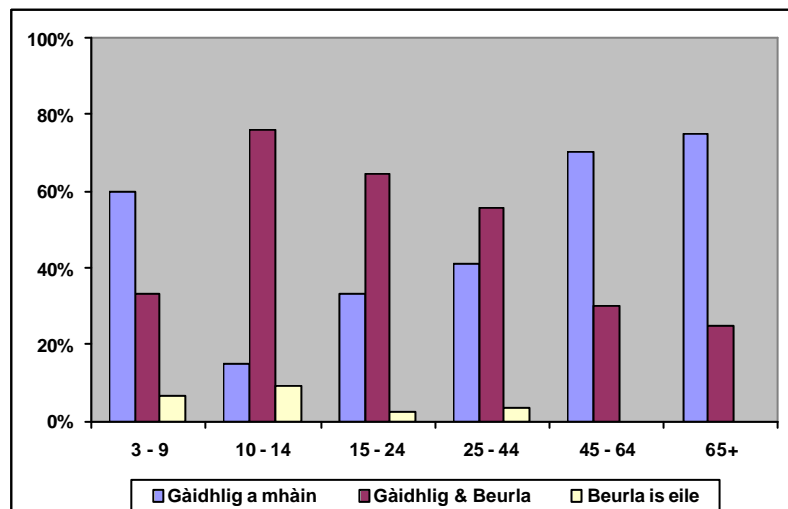


State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

All families except two were entirely Gàidhlig-speaking in this remoter part of *Na Hearadh* (Harris). The only exceptions were the households of the teacher (!) and of a newly settled house carpenter. The monolingual part of the Gàidhlig-speaking community was made up almost half of all speakers with notable maxima in pre-school age and among the elderly. Both townships – *Caolas Stocanais* and *Leac a'Li* – boasted comparable percentages of Gàidhlig language incidence. Very pronounced, however, was the difference between women and men. Whereas most women did not speak English, most men were reported as speaking also the official language.

Area description:

The crofting hamlets of *Caolas Stocanais* (Kyles Stockinish) and *Leac a'Li* (Leachilee) are situated on the remote east coast of the Hebridean semi-island of *Na Hearadh* (Harris). Besides the usual crofting and fishing occupations quite a number of people was engaged in the weaving trade – laying the foundations of the future world-known Harris Tweed mark.



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 ¹	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Age								
Total	249	18	0	3	228	106	113	96.1 %
3-4	11	0	0	0	11	9	1	90.9 %
5-9	34	0	0	0	34	18	14	94.1 %
10-14	34	0	0	1	33	5	25	90.9 %
15-24	44	0	0	2	42	14	27	97.6 %
25-44	56	0	0	0	56	23	31	96.4 %
45-64	40	0	0	0	40	28	12	100 %
65+	12	0	0	0	12	9	3	100 %
Gender								
Female	119	8	0	3	108	77	28	97.2 %
Male	130	10	0	0	120	29	85	95.0 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	232	18	0	3	211	103	108	100 %
In neighbouring parish¹	4	0	0	0	4	2	2	100 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	4	0	0	0	4	1	2	75.0 %
Other places	9	0	0	0	9	0	1	11.1 %

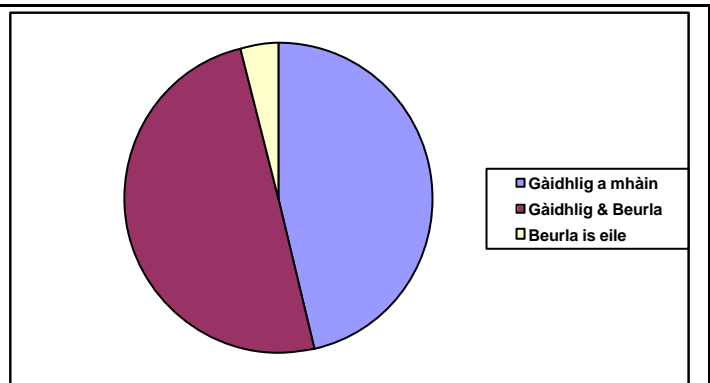
Notes:

¹ Parishes of North Uist (Inverness), Lochs or 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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Area: *Na Hearadh (Harris): Caolas Stocanais & Leac a'Li*

	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Caolas Stocanais & Leac a'Li</i>	47	228	106	113	96.1 %
Individual communities					
<i>Caolas Stocanais</i> (Kyles Stockinish)	25	106	41	59	94.3 %
<i>Leac a'Li</i> (Leachilee)	22	122	65	54	97.5 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	25	150	75	75	100 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	11	44	15	26	93.2 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	0	0	0	0	-
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	1	6	0	0	0.0 %
Households with no children (0-14)	10	28	16	12	100 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	41	198	98	100	100 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	0	0	0	0	-
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	1	6	0	0	0.0 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	2	6	1	2	50.0 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	1	7	1	6	100 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	2	11	6	5	100 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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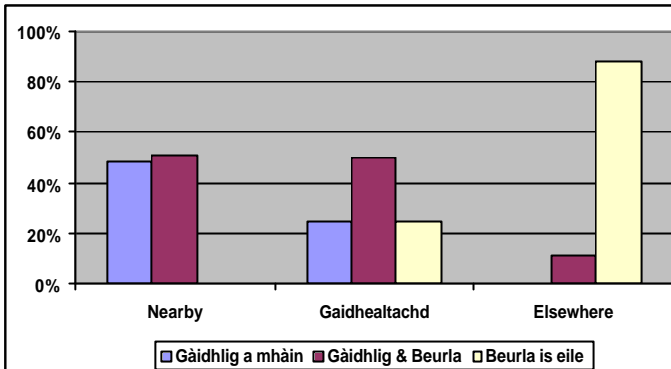
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

The monolingual English speakers were largely confined to those born in the Lowlands or even further afield. Those who could not speak English were overwhelmingly born in the islands.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Harris or in the adjacent parishes of North Uist (Inverness), Lochs 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. Nine persons of the usually resident population were reported as not speaking *Gàidhlig*. These belonged to two prominent households. The certified schoolmaster originated from Ayrshire and apparently looked back to a long service in Aberdeenshire because his children were born in this Lowland area. The second family “with no Gaelic” was headed by a widowed house carpenter whose Dunbartonshire -born children also claimed to be unable to speak the language of their neighbours.
2. In original census report terms all communities in total had a population of 249 persons of all ages. In all 116 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English” and exactly the same number was reported as monolingual *Gàidhlig* speakers. These figures lead to an “official” share of *Gàidhlig* speakers of 93.2 %. A comparison with the more realistic statistics of this fact-sheet reveals that this percentage was a slight under-estimate of 2.9 % mainly caused by the inclusion of under-three olds and visitors in the official population base.