

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 010

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Area: *Gallaibh (Caithness): Am Bràigh Mòr, Clais Buidhe, Bràigh a'Bhaile, Coire Choich, Fliuchairidh, Àth a'Chàirn & Cnoc Alaidh*

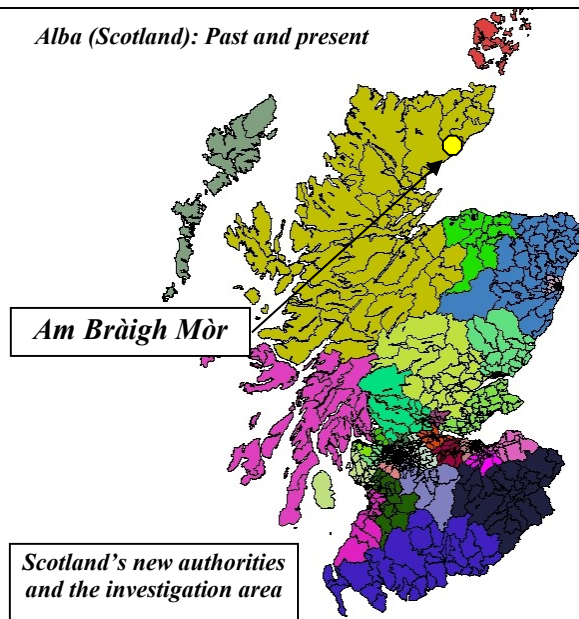
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Braemore, Achinavish, Achnellin, Clashbuie, Corrichoich, Braeval, Fleuchary, Achorn, Knockally)

Number of households: 61 **Population present at census night:** 263

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 51.2 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Caithness	Latheron	Latheron	18 17	1-6 3(part)-10(part)

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

Most residents still spoke Gàidhlig. With the exception of two older members of the community all speakers were bilingual Gàidhlig and English.

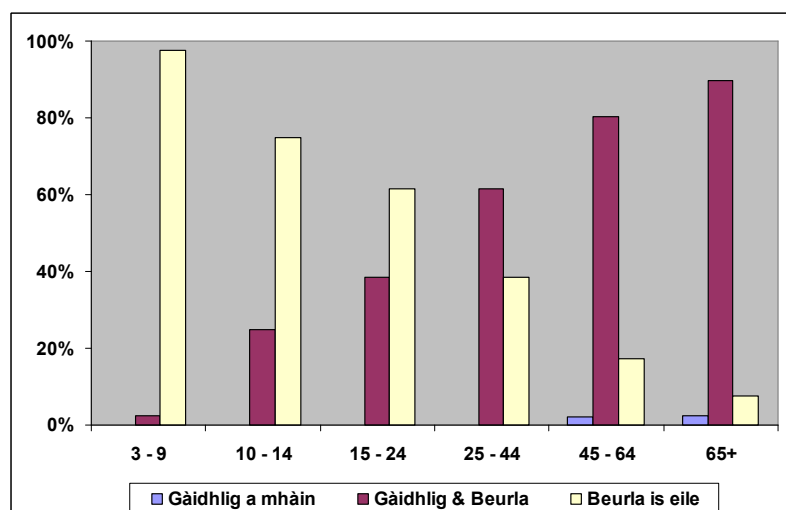
The language community was heavily biased towards the older generations but nonetheless some young folk still spoke Gàidhlig.

Am Bràigh Mòr (Braemore) and *Àth a'Chàirn* (Achorn) were still hamlets with more than 50 % Gàidhlig-speakers.

Area description:

This district of *Gallaibh* (Caithness) consists of the area of the once estate of *Am Bràigh Mòr* (Braemore) and the crofting hamlets of *Àth a'Chàirn* (Achorn) and *Cnoc Alaidh* (Knockally) in the south-western part of the county. Apart from some employment as servants, gamekeepers or shepherds on the estate traditional crofting was the dominant means to earn a livelihood in this hilly country.

Please see the remark regarding the use of placenames in Caithness on page 4 of this factsheet!



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 ⁴	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Age								
Total	263	14	0	7	242	2	122	51.2 %
3-4	11	0	0	0	11	0	0	0.0 %
5-9	28	0	0	0	28	0	1	3.6 %
10-14	41	0	0	1	40	0	10	25.0 %
15-24	40	0	0	1	39	0	15	38.5 %
25-44	41	0	0	2	39	0	24	61.5 %
45-64	49	0	0	3	46	1	37	82.6 %
65+	39	0	0	0	39	1	35	92.3 %
Gender								
Female	131	3	0	0	128	1	68	53.9 %
Male	132	11	0	7	114	1	54	48.2 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	210	14	0	3	193	2	102	53.9 %
In neighbouring parish¹	17	0	0	1	16	0	8	50.0 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	16	0	0	2	14	0	9	64.3 %
Other places	20	0	0	1	19	0	3	15.8 %

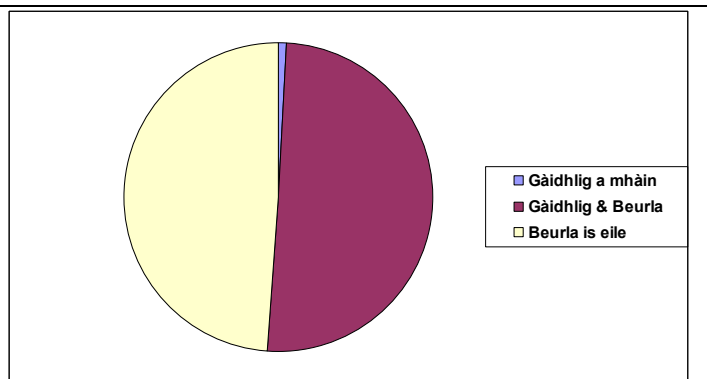
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Kildonan (Sutherland) or in the parishes of Halkirk, Watten or Wick (all Caithness).

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.de/GLP_english.htm.

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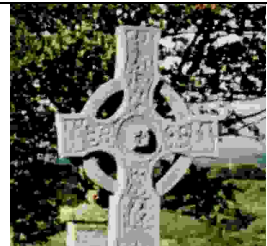
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	Households	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Am Bràigh Mòr & Cnoc Alaidh</i>	58	242	2	122	51.2 %
Individual communities					
<i>Am Bràigh Mòr (Braemore)</i>	20	82	2	41	52.4 %
<i>Àth a'Chàirn (Achor)</i>	10	35	0	22	62.9 %
<i>Cnoc Alaidh (Knockally)</i>	31	125	0	59	47.2 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	18	98	1	53	55.1 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	4	21	0	8	38.1 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	2	13	0	9	69.2 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	7	37	0	5	13.5 %
Households with no children (0-14)	30	73	1	47	65.8 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	30	122	1	80	66.4 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	9	46	0	15	32.6 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	1	3	0	2	66.7 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	7	29	0	11	37.9 %
Living on private means	2	2	1	1	100 %
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	1	8	0	0	0.0 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	11	32	0	13	40.6 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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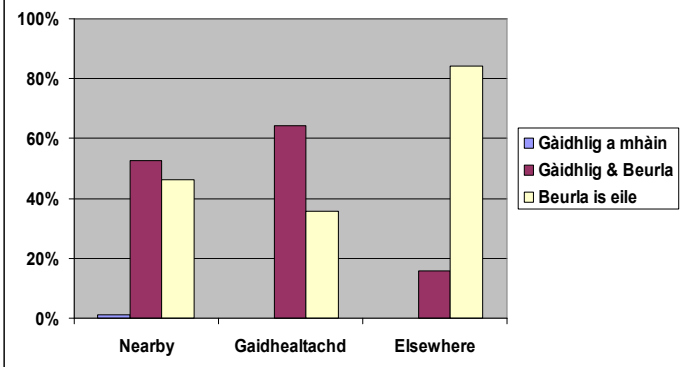
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

A majority of locally born inhabitants still spoke Gàidhlig. This proportion was of course higher among people who originated from other parts of *Gaidhealtachd*.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Latheron or in the parishes of Kildonan (Sutherland), Halkirk, Watten or Wick (all Caithness).

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. Two inhabitants of the community of *Am Bràigh Mòr* (Braemore) spoke Gàidhlig but not English: A 61-year-old farmer and a lady aged 82 who lived on private means.
2. In original census report terms, the district had a population of 263 persons of all ages. 126 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English” and three persons present at census night spoke no English. This led to an “official” share of Gàidhlig speakers of 47.9 %. This was an under-estimate of 3.3 % compared with the more realistic figures considering only the usually resident population.
3. There are many names of settlements in Caithness – even in the west of the county – where no distinct Gàidhlig placenames have been ascertained or documented. This does not mean that there were no Gàidhlig descriptions by the local inhabitants. Often some parts of names suggest at least a partially Gàidhlig topographic description like “ach-“, “dun-“, “brae-“, “knock-“, or “bal-“. However, the names used on Ordnance Survey maps are used in these factsheets.