

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 035

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Area: *Toirbheartan (Torridon): Camas Roill, Loidse Beinn Damh, An Annaid, Am Baile Nodha, Gleann Toirbheartan, Am Fasag, Am Ploc, An Coire & Taigh Toirbheartan*

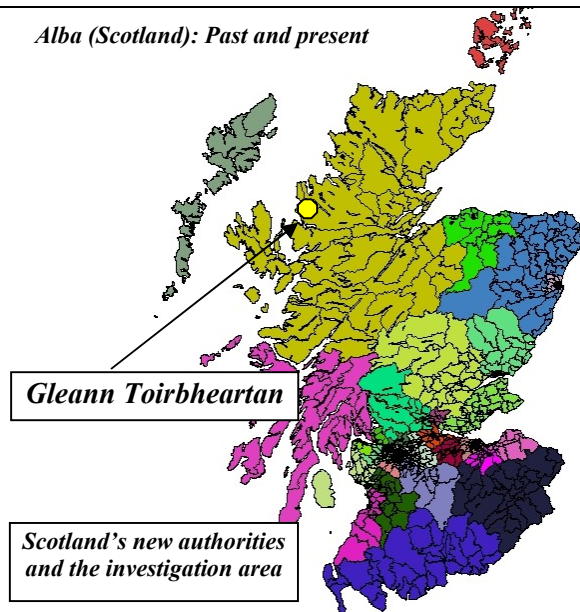
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Camustroll, Bendamph Lodge, Annet, Newton, Glen Torridon, Fasaick, Plock, Coire, Mains of Torridon)

Number of households: 51 **Population present at census night:** 204

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 87.6 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Ross & Cromarty	Applecross	Shieldaig	3	1 – 12; 21

Alba (Scotland): Past and present

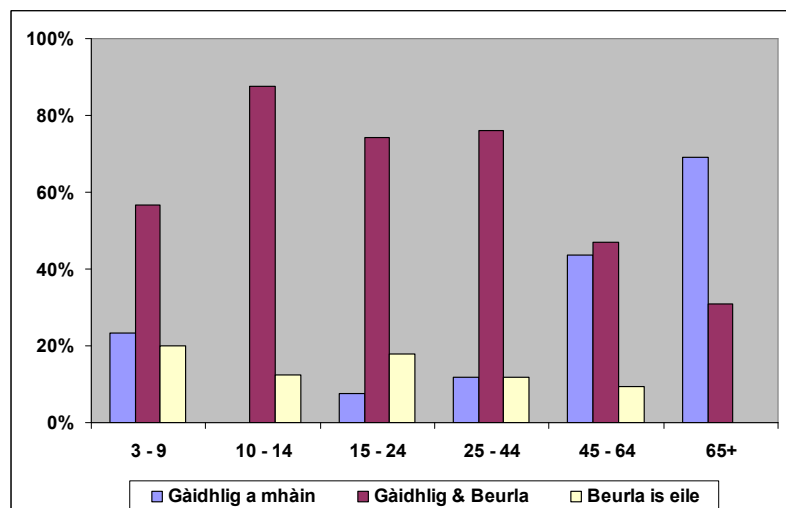


State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

Two separate language communities existed in this area. The first was an English dominated society associated with the estates of Torridon and Ben Damph. Almost all members of this exclusive group were born outside the *Gaidhealtachd* and did not speak the local language at all. The second community was made up of the inhabitants of the local hamlets where Gàidhlig was universally spoken – notably in *An Annaid* (Annet) and *Am Fasag*. A quarter of all Gàidhlig speakers still did not speak English – mostly in the older age groups.

Area description:

The district comprises the dwellings on the head of *Loch Toirbheartan* (Loch Torridon) on the western seaboard of *Ros is Cromba* (Ross & Cromarty). In the neighbourhood of crofting hamlets like *Am Fasag* (Fasag) and *An Annaid* (Annet) two stately homes were occupied by lowland landowners and their servants: Bendamph Lodge and Torridon House. The estates provided some employment also for local people although crofting and fishing of course remained the most important occupations to earn a living in this remote corner of the Highlands.



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	204	13	0	6	185	47	115	87.6 %
3-4	8	0	0	0	8	4	1	62.5 %
5-9	22	0	0	0	22	3	16	86.4 %
10-14	16	0	0	0	16	0	14	87.5 %
15-24	40	0	0	1	39	3	29	82.1 %
25-44	45	0	0	3	42	5	32	88.1 %
45-64	33	0	0	1	32	14	15	90.6 %
65+	27	0	0	1	26	18	8	100 %
Gender								
Female	117	6	0	4	107	29	64	86.9 %
Male	87	7	0	2	78	18	51	88.5 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	162	13	0	4	145	42	99	97.2 %
In neighbouring parish¹	8	0	0	0	8	3	5	100 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	9	0	0	1	8	1	7	100 %
Other places	25	0	0	1	24	1	4	20.8 %

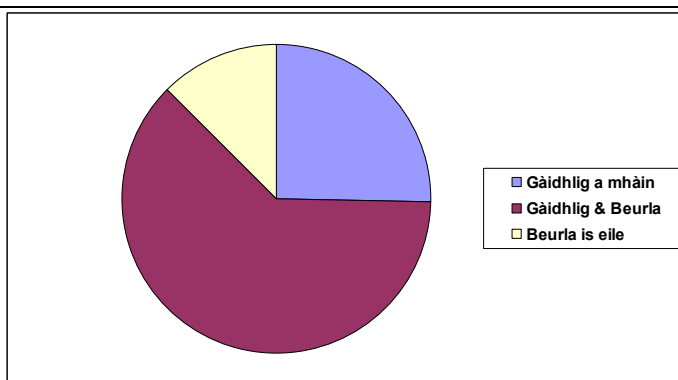
Notes:

¹Parishes of Gairloch and Lochcarron (both Ross & Cromarty).

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

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

⁴Number 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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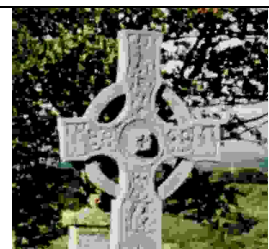
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	Households	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Gleann Toirbheartan</i>	51	185	47	115	87.6 %
Individual communities					
<i>Camas Roill & Loidse Beinn Damh</i> (Camustroll & Bendamph Lodge)	3	15	0	2	13.3 %
<i>An Annaid</i> (Annet)	17	58	27	31	100 %
<i>Am Baile Nodha & Gleann Toirbheartan</i> (Newton & Glen Torridon)	4	14	5	9	100 %
<i>Am Fasag</i> (Fasag)	19	64	15	49	100 %
<i>An Coire & Am Ploc</i> (Coire & Plock)	6	28	0	19	67.9 %
<i>Taigh Toirbheartan</i> (Mains of Torridon)	2	6	0	5	83.3 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	11	62	12	48	96.8 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	9	36	7	29	100 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	1	2	0	1	50.0 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	2	24	0	6	25.0 %
Households with no children (0-14)	28	61	28	31	96.7 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	16	72	24	46	97.2 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	2	15	2	2	26.7 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	3	12	0	12	100 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	8	28	9	19	100 %
Living on private means	2	15	1	7	53.3 %
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	7	21	0	18	85.7 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	13	22	11	11	100 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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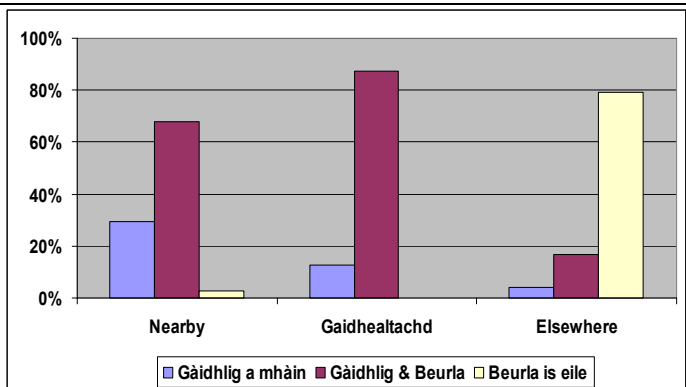
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

Almost all persons born in the *Gaidhealtachd* were Gàidhlig speakers. On the other hand persons born elsewhere were very unlikely able to speak Gàidhlig.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Applecross or in the adjacent parishes of Gairloch and Lochcarron (all 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 quite a substantial number of residents who did not have a “G&E” or “G” marked on their registration sheets. The vast majority of this English-speaking community was associated with the estates of *Beinn Damh* (Bendamph) or *Toirbheartan* (Torridon). Landowners and servants alike were overwhelmingly born in the Lowlands or even England and had apparently no close contact with the local population.
2. In original census report terms, the whole community in total had a population of 204 persons of all ages. 114 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English” and 53 persons were reported as monolingual Gàidhlig speakers. These figures led to an “official” share of Gàidhlig speakers of 81.9 %. A comparison with the more realistic statistics of this factsheet reveals that this percentage was a slight under-estimate of 5.7 % caused by the inclusion of under-three olds in the official population base.