

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 052

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Area: *Suaineart (Sunart): Sròn an t-Sithein, Àth na h-Eilde, Càrnach, Druim an Tòrrain, Lìdeasdal, An t-Achadh Liath & Labhdal*

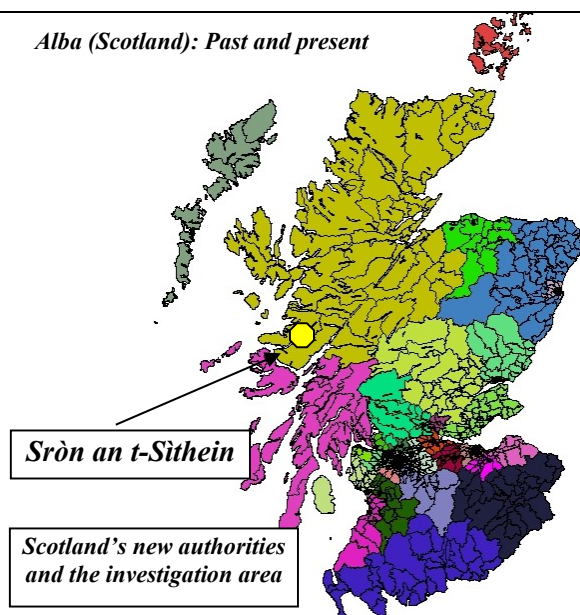
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Strontian, Anaheilt, Achnaliadh, Carnoch, Drimintorran, Laudale, Liddesdale, Achlie, Achghavol)

Number of households: 47 Population present at census night: 267

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 96.7 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Argyll	Ardnamurchan	Sunart	2	1 – 6
			3	12 – 18
		Morvern	2	1 - 4

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



Sròn an t-Sithein

Scotland's new authorities and the investigation area

State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

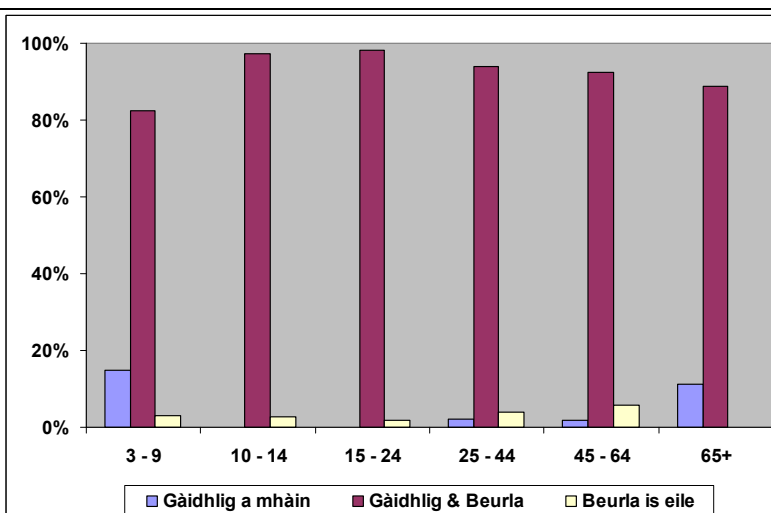
Apart from a few women of Lowland descent the overwhelming majority of usually resident persons was Gàidhlig speaking. Apart from the village of *Sròn an t-Sithein* (Strontian) the language was spoken by virtually everyone in the area.

On the other hand, just nine residents were reported as not speaking English. All monolingual Gàidhlig speakers lived in *Àth na h-Eilde* (Anaheilt) and they were either very young or belonged to the older generation.

Area description:

The district lies in the eastern part of the parish of *Aird nam Murchan* (Ardnamurchan) in the northernmost mainland portion of the old county of *Earra-Ghaidheal* (Argyll). It comprised the crofting township of *Àth na h-Eilde* (Anaheilt), the hamlet of *Sròn an t-Sithein* (Strontian) and a handful of remote houses on the eastern shores of *Loch Suaineirt* (Loch Sunart).

The main occupation in the area was crofting besides some work as shepherds, gamekeepers, or servants for the local estates.



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	267	16	0	8	243	9	226	96.7 %
3-4	8		0	0	8	2	6	100 %
5-9	27		0	1	26	3	22	96.2 %
10-14	38		0	1	37	0	36	97.3 %
15-24	53		0	1	52	0	51	98.1 %
25-44	52		0	3	49	1	46	95.9 %
45-64	55		0	2	53	1	49	94.3 %
65+	18		0	0	18	2	16	100 %
Gender								
Female	137	10	0	4	123	4	111	93.5 %
Male	130	6	0	4	120	5	115	100 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	176	15	0	3	158	8	149	99.4 %
In neighbouring parish¹	34	1	0	1	32	0	32	100 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	34	0	0	2	32	1	29	93.8 %
Other places	23	0	0	2	21	0	16	76.2 %

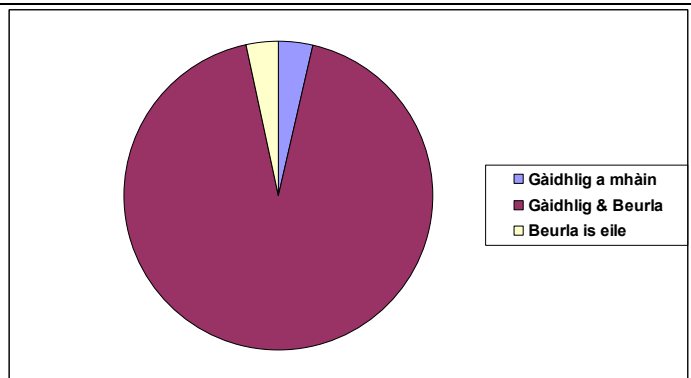
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Ardgour, Morvern (both Argyll); Arisaig & Moidart, Kilmallie (all Inverness).

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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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	<i>Gàidhlig</i>	<i>Gàidhlig</i> & English	<i>Gàidhlig</i> speakers (%)
<i>Sròn an t-Sithein & Àth na h-Eilde</i>	47	243	9	226	96.7 %
Individual communities					
<i>Àth na h-Eilde</i> (Anaheilt)	26	127	9	118	100 %
<i>Druim na Tòrrain</i> (Drumnatorran)	1	7	0	6	85.7 %
<i>Sròn an t-Sithein</i> (Strontian)	8	34	0	28	82.4 %
<i>An t-Achadh Liath & Càrnach</i> (Achaliadh & Carnoch)	2	18	0	18	100 %
<i>Lìdeasdal</i> (Liddesdale)	7	31	0	31	100 %
<i>Labhdal</i> (Laudale)	3	26	0	25	96.2 %
Language of parents					
Both parents <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	22	137	4	132	99.3 %
Single parent <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	10	45	4	41	100 %
One parent <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	4	29	0	24	82.8 %
No <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking parent	0	0	0	0	-
Households with no children (0-14)	11	32	1	29	93.8 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	14	79	5	73	98.7 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	5	27	0	26	96.3 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	2	7	1	6	100 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	13	66	2	60	93.9 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	4	25	1	23	96.0 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	8	35	0	34	97.1 %
Remaining occupations	1	4	0	4	100 %

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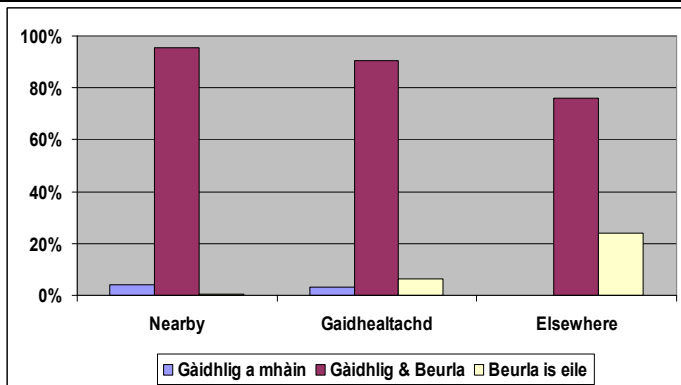
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

Most of the “English only” speakers were born outside the *Gaidhealtachd*.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Ardnamurchan or in the adjacent parishes of Ardgour, Morvern (both Argyll); Arisaig & Moidart, Kilmallie (all Inverness).

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. Eight persons were returned as not speaking *Gàidhlig*. Six of those residents were counted in *Sròn an t-Sithein* (Strontian). The wife and daughter of the general merchant and in addition the wife and daughter of the hotel keeper belonged to this group as well as the wives of a gamekeeper and a ploughman. All but the ploughman's wife were born in the Lowlands. The remaining “English only” returns came from the factor's wife (originally from Fife) at Laudale House and a 7-year-old girl at *Druim na Tòrrain*.
2. Just nine residents were reported as not speaking English. All monolingual Gàidhlig speakers lived in *Àth na h-Eilde* (Anaheilt). They were either very young or belonged to the older generation.
3. In original census report terms, the district had a population of 267 persons of all ages. 231 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English” and 11 were counted as monolingual *Gàidhlig* speakers. This led to an “official” share of *Gàidhlig* speakers of 97.0 %. This was an under-estimate of 6.1 %!