

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 054

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Area: *Cataibh an Ear (East Sutherland): Dòrnach*

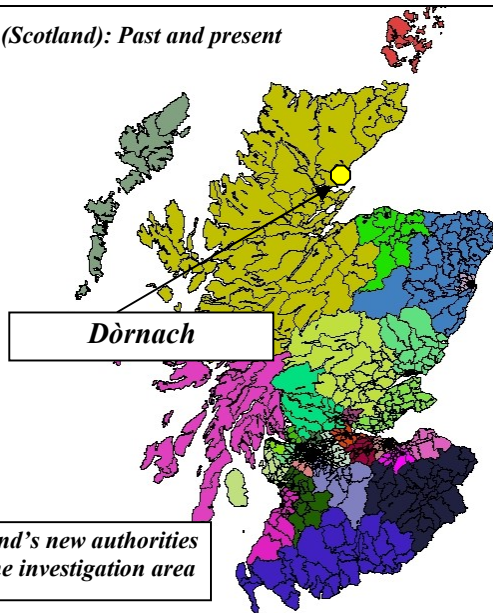
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Dornoch, West End, Front Street, Back Street, The Meadows, The Square, Gilchrist Square, Argyll Street, Littletown)

Number of households: 144 Population present at census night: 515

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 56.4 %

| County | Civil parish | Registration district | Enumeration district number | Census form pages |
|------------|--------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Sutherland | Dornoch | Dornoch | 1 | 1 - 21 |

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

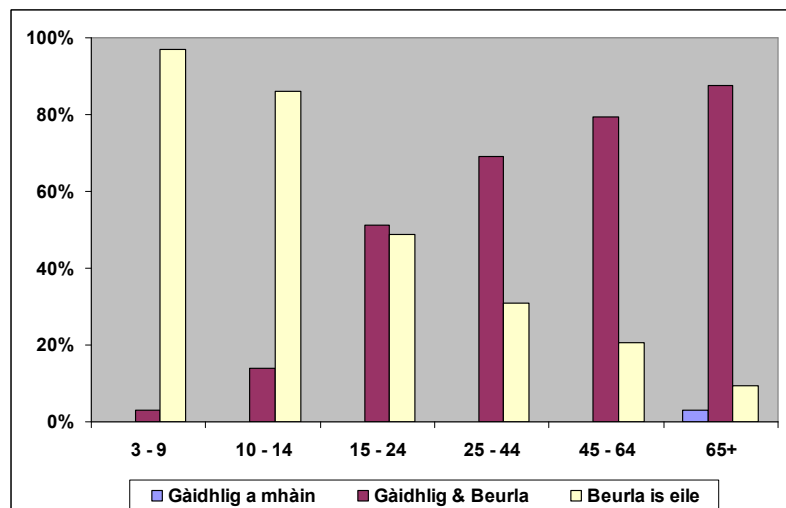
Despite the open ignorance and hostility of public authorities towards the traditional language of the county Gàidhlig was still spoken by a majority of usually resident persons in the centre of power of *Cataibh* (Sutherland).

In all generations beyond school age Gàidhlig speakers outnumbered the English monolingual population. The latter was indeed “bolstered” by a significant fraction of Lowlanders most of them ignoring the Gàidhlig tongue. Within the 10 households with no Gàidhlig speaking parent just one person was enumerated as speaking Gàidhlig and English!

Area description:

The small town of *Dòrnach* (Dornoch) has been the county town of *Cataibh* (Sutherland) for centuries. It is situated on the relatively fertile east coast of the county.

The inhabitants of *Dòrnach* were occupied with a variety of trades apart from the usual governmental and judicial authorities a county town has to provide.



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 | 515 | 22 | 0 | 16 | 477 | 2 | 267 | 56.4 % |
| 3-4 | 18 | | 0 | 0 | 18 | 0 | 0 | 0.0 % |
| 5-9 | 49 | | 0 | 0 | 49 | 0 | 2 | 4.1 % |
| 10-14 | 50 | | 0 | 0 | 50 | 0 | 7 | 14.0 % |
| 15-24 | 82 | | 0 | 8 | 74 | 0 | 38 | 51.4 % |
| 25-44 | 125 | | 0 | 5 | 120 | 0 | 83 | 69.2 % |
| 45-64 | 104 | | 0 | 2 | 102 | 0 | 81 | 79.4 % |
| 65+ | 65 | | 0 | 1 | 64 | 2 | 56 | 90.6 % |
| Gender | | | | | | | | |
| Female | 299 | 10 | 0 | 3 | 286 | 2 | 163 | 57.7 % |
| Male | 216 | 12 | 0 | 13 | 191 | 0 | 104 | 54.5 % |
| Place of birth | | | | | | | | |
| Born in parish | 357 | 22 | 0 | 4 | 331 | 0 | 199 | 60.1 % |
| In neighbouring parish¹ | 39 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 39 | 2 | 27 | 74.4 % |
| Gaidhealtachd elsewhere² | 37 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 32 | 0 | 25 | 78.1 % |
| Other places | 82 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 75 | 0 | 16 | 21.3 % |

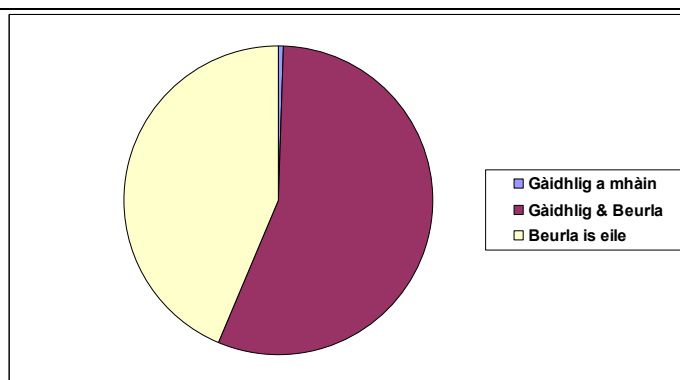
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Creich, Lairg, Rogart and Golspie (all Sutherland).

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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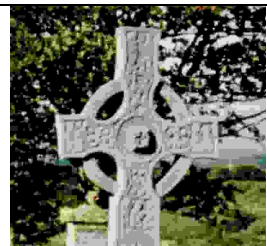
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Area: *Cataibh an Ear (East Sutherland): Dòrnach*

| | Households | Usually resident population (3+) | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------|------------|----------------------------------|----------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| | | Total | Gàidhlig | Gàidhlig & English | Gàidhlig speakers (%) |
| Dòrnach | 144 | 477 | 2 | 267 | 56.4 % |
| Individual communities | | | | | |
| <i>Crìoch Shuas</i> (West End) | 5 | 23 | 0 | 15 | 65.2 % |
| <i>Sràid Aghaidh</i> (Front Street) | 17 | 49 | 0 | 28 | 57.1 % |
| <i>Sràid Cùil</i> (Back Street) | 12 | 47 | 0 | 26 | 55.3 % |
| <i>Na h-Innseagan</i> (The Meadows) | 7 | 24 | 0 | 21 | 87.5 % |
| <i>A'Cheàrnag</i> (The Square) | 39 | 145 | 0 | 71 | 49.0 % |
| <i>Ceàrnag Mhic Gille Chriosda</i> (Gilchrist Square) | 22 | 66 | 0 | 40 | 60.6 % |
| <i>Sràid Earra-Ghaidheil</i> (Argyll Street) | 10 | 38 | 1 | 18 | 50.0 % |
| <i>Am Baile Beag</i> (Littletown) | 32 | 85 | 1 | 48 | 57.6 % |
| Language of parents | | | | | |
| Both parents Gàidhlig speaking | 28 | 156 | 0 | 79 | 50.6 % |
| Single parent Gàidhlig speaking | 10 | 36 | 1 | 20 | 58.3 % |
| One parent Gàidhlig speaking | 3 | 12 | 0 | 3 | 25.0 % |
| No Gàidhlig speaking parent | 10 | 55 | 0 | 1 | 1.8 % |
| Households with no children (0-14) | 93 | 218 | 1 | 164 | 75.7 % |
| Occupation of head of household | | | | | |
| Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc. | 13 | 41 | 0 | 29 | 70.7 % |
| Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 100 % |
| Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc. | 17 | 70 | 0 | 32 | 45.7 % |
| Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc. | 44 | 181 | 0 | 98 | 54.1 % |
| Living on private means | 12 | 27 | 1 | 20 | 77.8 % |
| Manager, coachman, cook, etc. | 10 | 30 | 0 | 12 | 40.0 % |
| Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc. | 42 | 111 | 0 | 66 | 59.5 % |
| Remaining occupations | 5 | 15 | 0 | 9 | 60.0 % |

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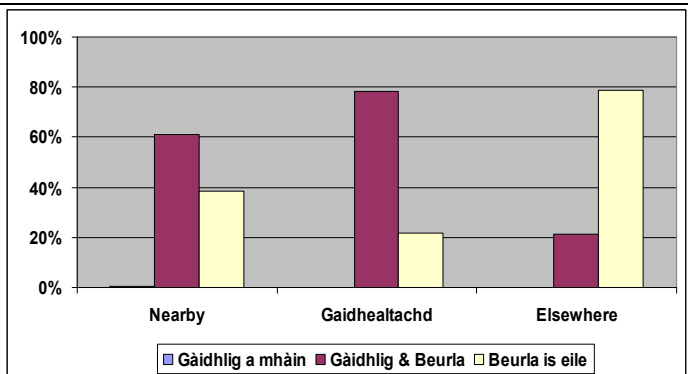
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

The majority of locally born residents still spoke *Gàidhlig* in the town. Even a fifth of all inhabitants born outside the *Gaidhealtachd* spoke the local language.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Dornoch or in the adjacent parishes of Creich, Lairg, Rogart and Golspie (all Sutherland).

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. Just two persons in the town spoke “Gaelic only”. Both were elderly women born in neighbouring parishes: A shepherd’s widow from *Craoich* (Creich) and a lady from *Raoghard* (Rogart) “living on private means”.
2. Official census figures reported 272 bilingual inhabitants and 2 monolingual *Gàidhlig*-speakers out of a total population of 514 persons (53.3 %). The usually resident population consisted of 269 *Gàidhlig*-speakers (56.4 %) including two persons “with no Gaelic”.