

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 069

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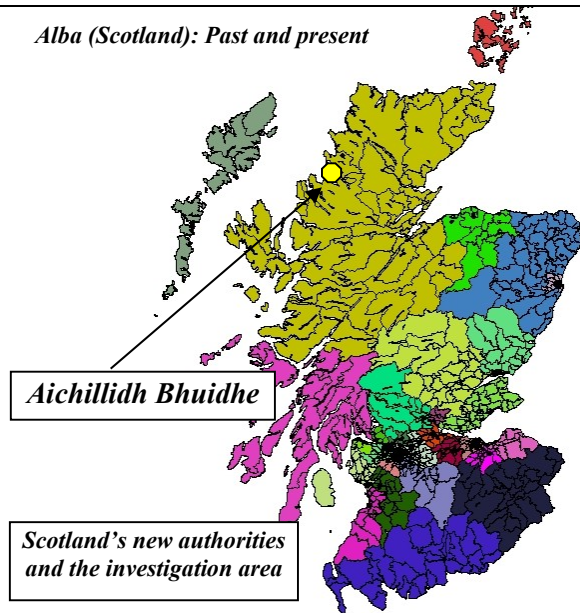
Area: **Coigeach (Coigach): Poll Glas, Achadh an Lochain & Aichillidh Bhuidhe**
 (Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Polglass, Achlochan, Achiltibuie)

Number of households: **64** Population present at census night: **322**

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking **Gàidhlig: 98.0 %**

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Ross & Cromarty	Lochbroom	Coigach	1	12 – 25

Alba (Scotland): Past and present

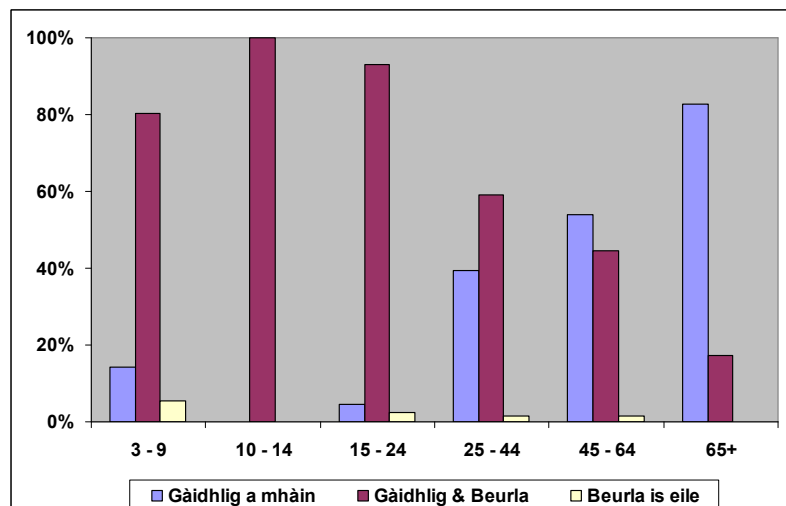


State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

Gàidhlig was the dominant language of the district. With the exception of a handful of persons (see also remarks on page 4) all residents spoke Gàidhlig, almost a third of the population did not speak English at all. These monolingual speakers, however, were mainly confined to the older generation. The language was equally strong in all three crofting townships in this district.

Area description:

The district is part of the remote peninsula of *Coigeach* (Coigach) in the north-western part of mainland *Ros is Cromba* (Ross & Cromarty). It comprises the small hamlets of *Poll Glas* (Polglass), *Achadh an Lochain* (Achlochan) and *Aichillidh Bhuidhe* (Achiltibuie). Even today they can only be reached via a long and narrow road or alternatively by boat. *Aichillidh Bhuidhe* was and still is the “centre” of the district with facilities like the local school and police station.



Age profile: Share of population speaking (1) Gàidhlig, (2) Gàidhlig & English, or (3) no Gàidhlig at all

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Area: *Coigeach (Coigach): Poll Glas, Achadh Lochan & Aichillidh Bhuidhe*

	Population enumerated				Usually resident population (3+)			
	Total	Aged 0-2	Deaf & dumb	Visitors etc. ³	Total ⁴	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Age								
Total	322	15	0	12	295	92	197	98.0 %
3-4	12	0	0	0	12	5	5	83.3 %
5-9	44	0	0	0	44	3	40	97.7 %
10-14	42	0	0	0	42	0	42	100 %
15-24	47	0	0	3	44	2	41	97.7 %
25-44	68	0	0	7	61	24	36	98.4 %
45-64	65	0	0	2	63	34	28	98.4 %
65+	29	0	0	0	29	24	5	100 %
Gender								
Female	151	7	0	3	141	52	86	97.9 %
Male	171	8	0	9	154	40	111	98.1 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	285	14	0	4	267	88	177	99.3 %
In neighbouring parish¹	8	1	0	1	6	2	4	100 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	16	0	0	5	11	2	7	81.8 %
Other places	13	0	0	2	11	0	9	81.8 %

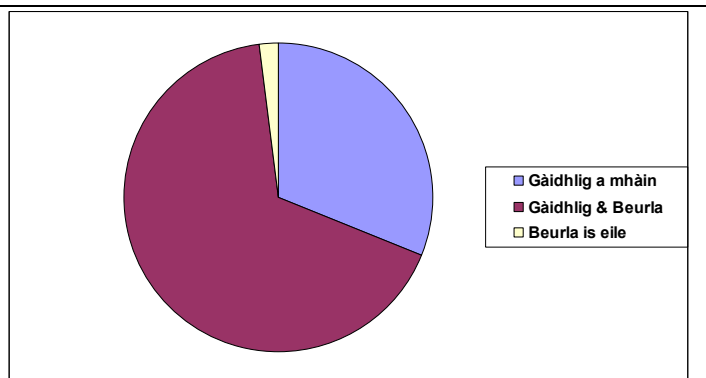
Notes:

¹Parishes of Assynt (Sutherland), Gairloch, Contin and Kincardine (all Ross & Cromarty).

²Other 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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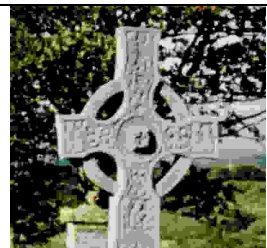
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Area: *Coigeach (Coigach): Poll Glas, Achadh Lochan & Aichillidh Bhuidhe*

	Households	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	<i>Gàidhlig</i>	<i>Gàidhlig</i> & English	<i>Gàidhlig</i> speakers (%)
<i>Poll Glas & Aichillidh Bhuidhe</i>	64	295	92	197	98.0 %
Individual communities					
<i>Poll Glas</i> (Polglass)	24	116	37	75	96.6 %
<i>Achadh an Lochain</i> (Achlochan)	4	25	7	18	100 %
<i>Aichillidh Bhuidhe</i> (Achiltibuie)	36	154	48	104	98.7 %
Language of parents					
Both parents <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	20	116	20	96	100 %
Single parent <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	17	85	31	52	97.6 %
One parent <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	1	11	0	9	81.8 %
No <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking parent	0	0	0	0	-
Households with no children (0-14)	26	83	41	40	97.6 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	53	243	85	154	98.4 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	0	0	0	0	-
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	2	12	5	7	100 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	6	34	0	32	94.1 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	0	0	0	0	-
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	2	3	2	1	100 %
Remaining occupations	1	3	0	3	100 %

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Area: *Coigeach (Coigach): Poll Glas, Achadh Lochan & Aichillidh Bhuidhe*

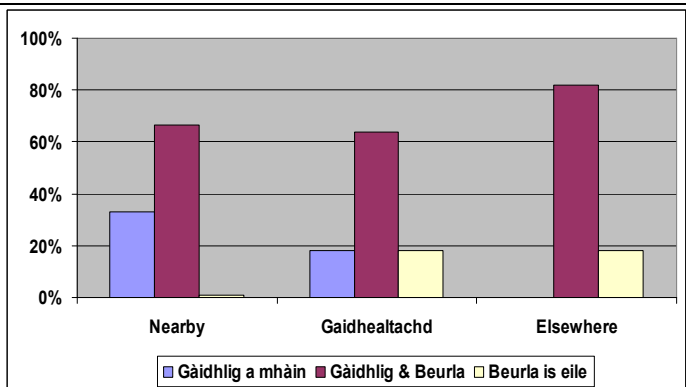
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

A significant proportion of locally (or nearby) born persons did not speak English. The few English monolinguals originated mainly from further away.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Lochbroom or in the adjacent parishes of Assynt (Sutherland), Gairloch, Contin and Kincardine (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. Just six persons of the usually resident population were reported as not speaking *Gàidhlig*. These residents “with no Gaelic” comprised a tailor’s wife (born in Olig, Caithness) and her youngest daughter as well as an imbecile pauper and his son. There were also two young relatives of a crofter family who were counted as not speaking *Gàidhlig*: The eight-year-old niece had been born in Greenock and the four year old nephew came from anglicised Stornoway – both children had apparently moved into the district rather late.
2. In original census report terms, the enumeration district in total had a population of 322 persons of all ages. 210 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English” and 94 persons were reported as monolingual *Gàidhlig* speakers. These figures led to an “official” share of *Gàidhlig* speakers of 94.4 %. A comparison with the more realistic statistics of this factsheet reveals that this percentage was a slight under-estimate of 3.6 % mainly caused by the inclusion of under-three olds and visitors in the official population base.