

# Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 070

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**Area:** *Geàrrloch (Gairloch): Inbhir Àsdail, An t-Eirtheaire, Baile Meadhain, A'Bhruthach & Nàst*

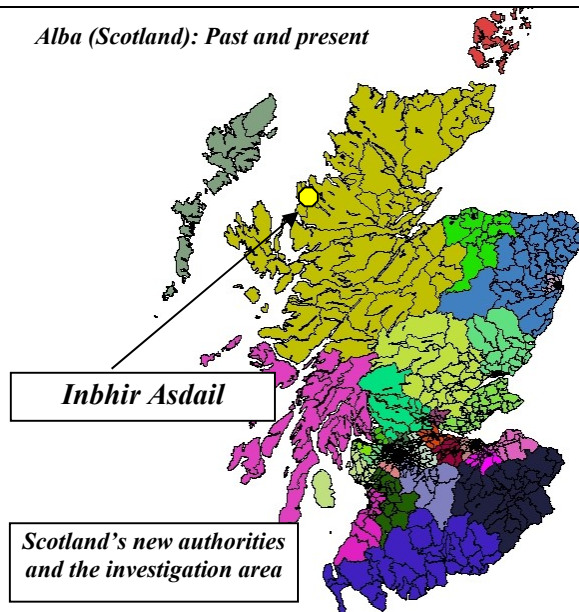
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Inverasdale, Coast, Midtown, Braes, Naast)

**Number of households:** 77      **Population present at census night:** 342

**Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig:** 99.7 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Ross & Cromarty	Gairloch	Gairloch Southern	13	1 – 15

*Alba (Scotland): Past and present*

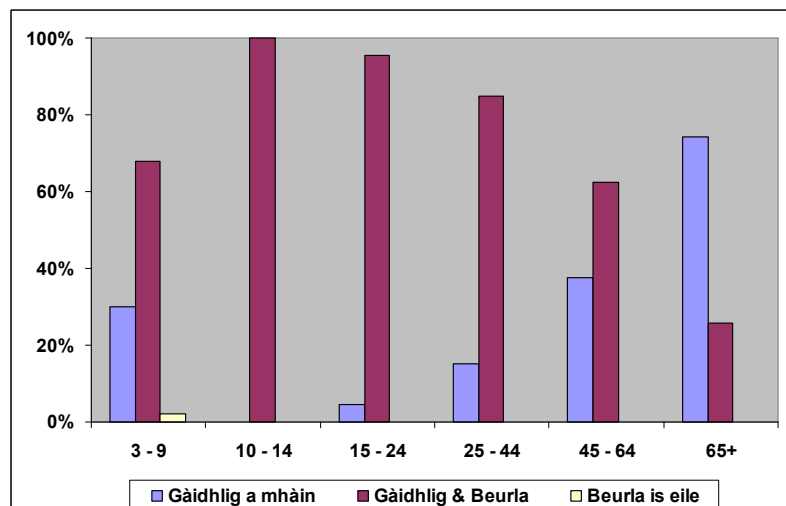


## State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

According to the census Gàidhlig was spoken by all local residents with the sole exception of a six-year-old girl. Monolingual speakers, however, were most evident in the old generation. Also, far more women than men were not speaking English. Conditions in all four crofting townships were comparable with the sole “English only” return enumerated in the hamlet of *Baile Meadhain* (Midtown).

## Area description:

The district of *Inbhir Àsdail* (Inverasdale) covers a string of crofting townships on the south-western coast of *Loch Iùbh* (Loch Ewe). It is located in the vast parish of *Geàrrloch* (Gairloch) in the western mainland part of the old county of *Ros is Cromba* (Ross & Cromarty). The communities are connected with the large village of *Poll Iùbh* (Poolewe) by a narrow by-road leading also to the even remoter hamlets around *An Uaghaidh* (Cove).



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. <sup>3</sup>	Total <sup>4</sup>	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<b>Age</b>								
<b>Total</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>99.7 %</b>
<b>3-4</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>5-9</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>97.2 %</b>
<b>10-14</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>15-24</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>25-44</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>45-64</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>65+</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Gender</b>								
<b>Female</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>99.4 %</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Place of birth</b>								
<b>Born in parish</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>99.7 %</b>
<b>In neighbouring parish<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Gaidhealtachd elsewhere<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Other places</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100 %</b>

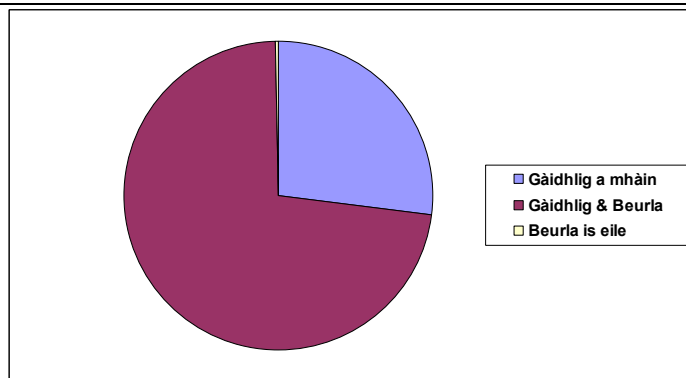
## Notes:

<sup>1</sup>Parishes of Lochbroom, Contin, Lochcarron and Applecross (all Ross & Cromarty).

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

<sup>3</sup> People described as visitors, boarders, lodgers, or other similar terms.

<sup>4</sup> 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 factsheets are a welcome way to publish some of the “local gems”. More information is provided at [http://www.linguae-celticae.de/GLP\\_english.htm](http://www.linguae-celticae.de/GLP_english.htm).

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	Households	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Inbhir Àsdail</i>	77	320	86	233	99.7 %
<b>Individual communities</b>					
<i>An t-Eirtheaire</i> (Coast)	18	80	16	64	100 %
<i>Baile Meadhain</i> (Midtown)	36	155	36	118	99.4 %
<i>A'Bhruthach</i> (Brae)	11	36	13	23	100 %
<i>Nàst</i> (Naast)	12	49	21	28	100 %
<b>Language of parents</b>					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	31	170	34	135	99.4 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	10	52	11	41	100 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	0	0	0	0	-
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	0	0	0	0	-
Households with no children (0-14)	36	98	41	57	100 %
<b>Occupation of head of household</b>					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	69	301	80	200	99.7 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	1	4	0	4	100 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	1	2	0	2	100 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	3	8	2	6	100 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	0	0	0	0	-
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	3	5	4	1	100 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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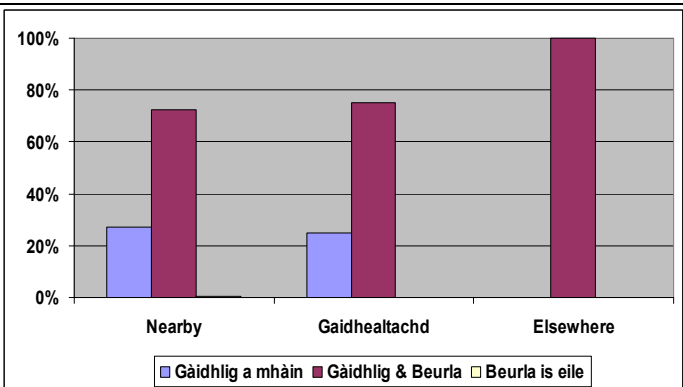
## Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

The Gàidhlig monolingual speakers were born nearby or at least in the *Gaidhealtachd*. Remarkably all persons born elsewhere spoke both Gàidhlig and English.

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Born either in Gairloch or in the adjacent parishes of Lochbroom, Contin, Lochcarron and Applecross (all Ross & Cromarty).

<sup>2</sup> Born in other parishes of Scotland with more than 50 % Gàidhlig speakers in the 1891 census.



Speakers according to place of birth (1) nearby<sup>1</sup>  
(2) in remaining *Gaidhealtachd*<sup>2</sup>, or (3) elsewhere

## Remarks:

1. Only one person of the usually resident population was reported as not speaking Gàidhlig. This “\_\_\_” in the language row on the enumeration sheet came from a six-year-old girl.
2. In original census report terms, the enumeration district in total had a population of 342 persons of all ages. 239 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English” and 88 persons were reported as monolingual Gàidhlig speakers. These figures led to an “official” share of Gàidhlig speakers of 95.9 %. A comparison with the more realistic statistics of this factsheet reveals that this percentage was a slight under-estimate of 4.2 % mainly caused by the inclusion of under-three olds and visitors in the official population base.