

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 108

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Area: *Srath Spè* (Strathspey): *Goirtean, Dreagaidh, Achadh Osnaich, Sliabh an Fheàrna, Gleann Beag, Fionn Làirig, Lagan, Tulnan, Baile an Tuim, Gathaich & Na Creagan*

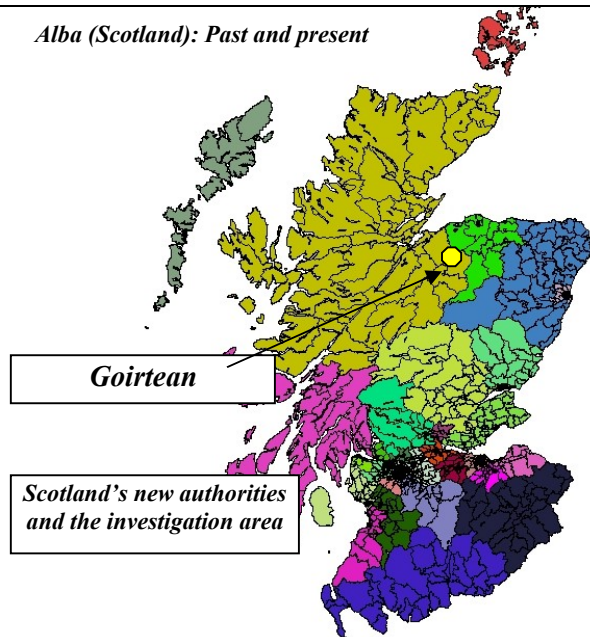
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Dreggie, Achosnich, East Gorton, West Gorton, Sleabhfern, Ryneckra, Glenbeg, Finlairig, Laggan, Dulnain, Ballintomb, Gaich, Kirkton, Railway Station & Craggan)

Number of households: 50 Population present at census night: 248

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 38.6 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Moray	Inverallan, Cromdale & Advie	Inverallan	2	1 - 11

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

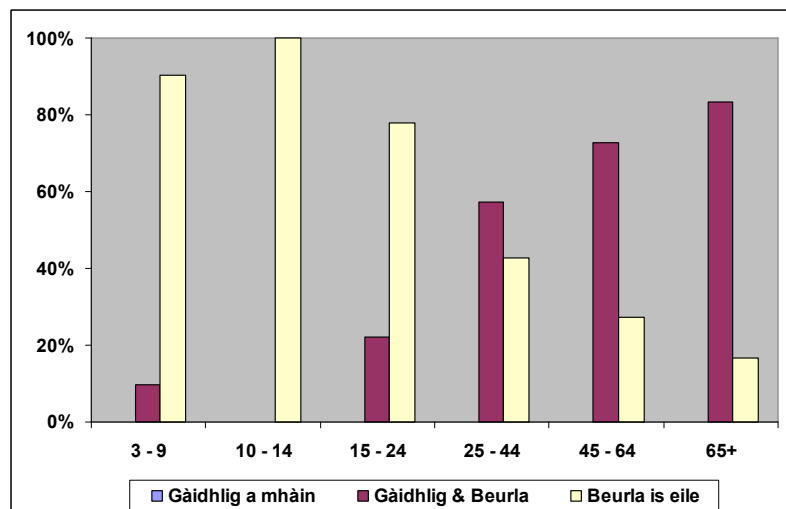
At this time the language had already seized from being transmitted from generation to generation. Whereas almost everyone beyond the age of 44 spoke Gàidhlig in the district almost no children used the traditional tongue according to census statistics.

The language was strongest in the area around *Gathaich* (Gaich) and *Na Creagan* (Creggan) with 60 % of the usually resident population still speaking the Gàidhlig language. On the other hand, the households associated with the railway station and the local kirk were almost entirely “English only” zones (8.9 %).

Area description:

The district in question is situated in the middle reaches of *Uisge Spè* (River Spey) in the south-western corner of the old county of *Siorrachd Mhoireibh* (Morayshire).

Apart from people engaged in activities associated with the railway line this was farming countryside and the inhabitants lived in a scattered patchwork of tiny groups of houses and farms on comparatively fertile soils.



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	248	17	0	3	228	0	88	38.6 %
3-4	12		0	0	12	0	0	0.0 %
5-9	29		0	0	29	0	4	13.8 %
10-14	28		0	1	27	0	0	0.0 %
15-24	52		0	2	50	0	11	22.0 %
25-44	54		0	0	54	0	31	57.4 %
45-64	44		0	0	44	0	32	72.7 %
65+	12		0	0	12	0	10	83.3 %
Gender								
Female	131	12	0	1	118	0	41	34.7 %
Male	117	5	0	2	110	0	47	42.7 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	161	15	0	0	146	0	52	36.6 %
In neighbouring parish¹	10	1	0	0	9	0	7	77.8 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	47	1	0	0	46	0	25	54.3 %
Other places	30	0	0	3	27	0	4	14.8 %

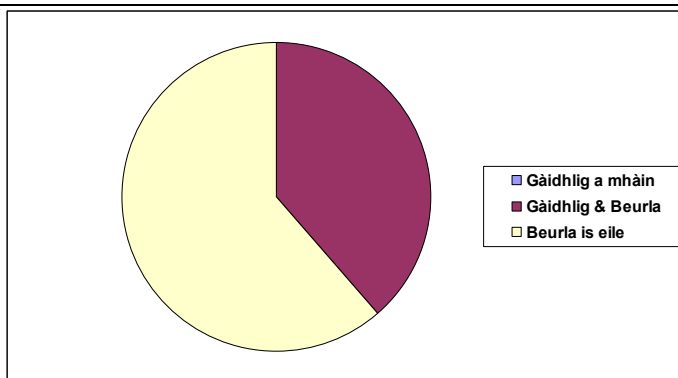
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Knockando, Dyke, Edinkillie (all Moray); Ardlach (Nairn), Kirkmichael (Banff); Abernethy & Kincardine, Alvie (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 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.

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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Goirtean & Na Creagan</i>	50	228	0	88	38.6 %
Individual communities					
<i>Dreagaidh & Goirtean</i> (Dreggie & Gorten)	12	65	0	26	40.0 %
<i>Fionn Làirig, Lagan & Tulnan</i> (Finlairig, Laggan & Dulnain)	19	66	0	29	41.2 %
<i>Gathaich & Na Creagan</i> (Gaich & Creggan)	12	50	0	30	60.0 %
<i>Baile an h-Eaglaise & An Stèisean</i> (Kirkton & Railway Station)	7	45	0	4	8.9 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	11	71	0	35	49.3 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	4	25	0	10	40.0 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	7	38	0	7	18.4 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	4	23	0	1	4.3 %
Households with no children (0-14)	24	71	0	35	49.3 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	15	79	0	31	39.7 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	3	12	0	6	50.0 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	1	7	0	1	14.3 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	11	55	0	22	40.0 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	1	5	0	0	0.0 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	19	71	0	28	39.4 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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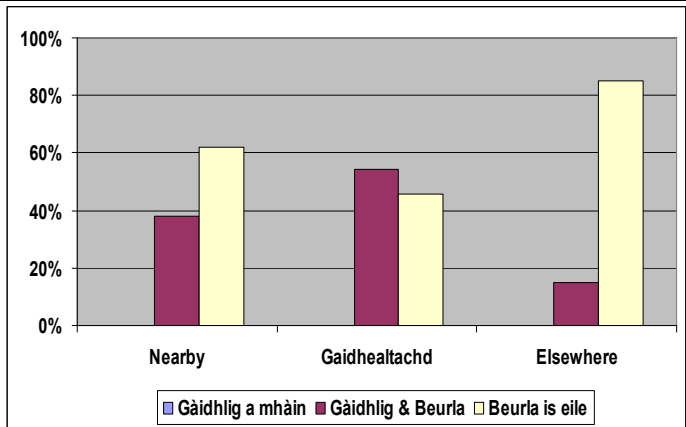
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

Gàidhlig was still spoken by over a third of the locally born population. Rather surprisingly only just a majority of people born in the *Gaidhealtachd* spoke *Gàidhlig*, too. Almost no-one with a birthplace further away spoke the local language.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Edinkillie or Cromdale, Inverallan & Advie (both Moray) or in the adjacent parishes of Knockando, Dyke (both Moray); Ardclach (Nairn), Kirkmichael (Banff); Abernethy & Kincardine, Alvie (both 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. There were no monolingual *Gàidhlig* speakers registered in the area in 1891.
2. In original census report terms, the district had a population of 248 persons of all ages in 1891. Then 89 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English”. The “official” share of *Gàidhlig* speakers accordingly was 35.9 %. This was a small under-estimate of 2.7 % compared with the realistic figures considering only the usually resident population.