

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 119

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Area: Asainn (Assynt): Innis nan Dàmh, Baile na h-Eaglaise Asainn, An Gleann Bàn, Unapul, Caolas Cumhang, Gleann Leireag, Gleann Canaisp

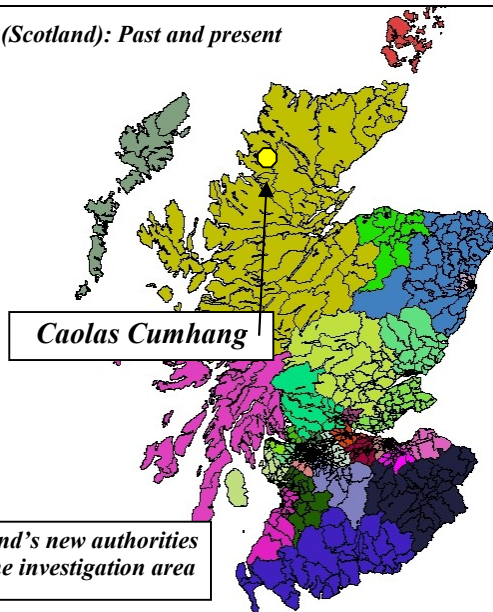
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Stronachrubie, Inchnadamph, Kirkton, Glenbain, Achumore, Unapool, Kylesku, Kircher, Renntrad, Ardour, Glenlairag, Tumore, Little Assynt, Inveruplan, Glencanisp)

Number of households: 37 Population present at census night: 178

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 63.3 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Sutherland	Assynt	Assynt (Kirkton)	3	1 – 6
			4	1 – 8
			5	1 - 5

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

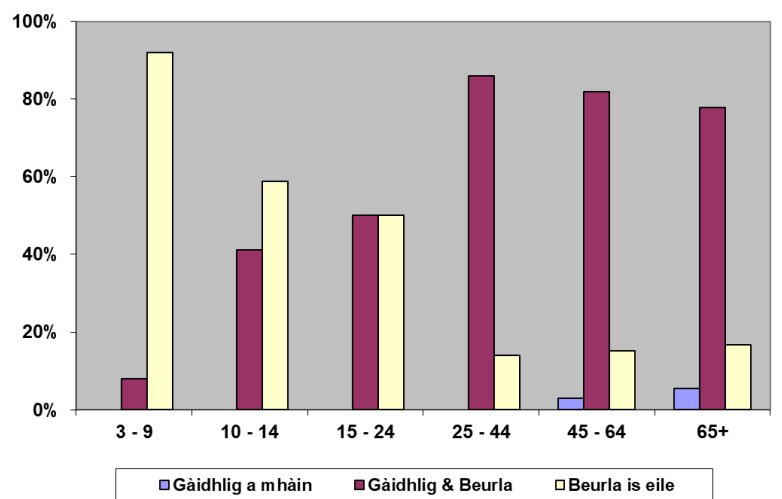
The language use in this very sparsely populated landscape was quite different depending on the occupation of the inhabitants.

Crofters in the tiny settlements around *Innis nan Dàmh* (Inchnadamph) and *Unapul* (Unapool) were predominantly Gàidhlig-speaking. However, the families of gamekeepers or shepherds did live in isolated spots and obviously seized to raise their children bilingually.

Area description:

This region is a remote inland area in the centre of the parish of *Asainn* (Assynt) in the old county of *Cataibh* (Sutherland). As such the traditional inhabitants around *Baile na h-Eaglaise* (Kirkton) and *Caolas Cumhang* (Kylesku) were mainly occupied with the traditional crofting activities.

Some additional work opportunities were related to gamekeeping in the name of local landlords who owned vast tracks of this mountainous moorland.



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	178	11	0	9	158	2	98	63.3 %
3-4	8	0	0	0	8	0	0	0.0 %
5-9	17	0	0	0	17	0	2	11.8 %
10-14	17	0	0	0	17	0	7	41.2 %
15-24	24	0	0	2	22	0	11	50.0 %
25-44	47	0	0	4	43	0	37	86.0 %
45-64	35	0	0	2	33	1	27	84.8 %
65+	19	0	0	1	18	1	14	83.3 %
Gender								
Female	103	6	0	5	92	1	54	59.8 %
Male	75	5	0	4	66	1	44	68.2 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	88	8	0	3	77	1	55	72.7 %
In neighbouring parish¹	26	1	0	3	22	0	17	77.3 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	57	2	0	2	53	1	23	45.3 %
Other places	7	0	0	1	6	0	3	50.0 %

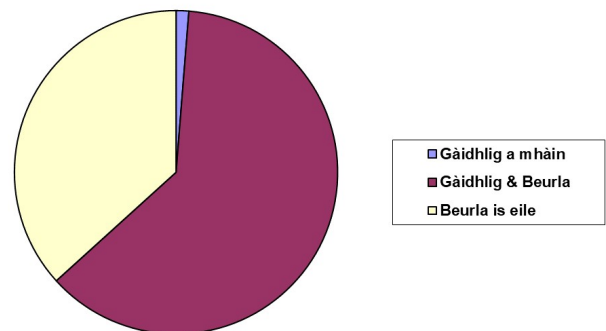
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Lochbroom or Kincardine (both Ross & Cromarty) or Eddrachillis (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 & Beurla, 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>Innis nan Dàmh & Caolas Cumhang</i>	37	158	2	98	63.3 %
Individual communities					
<i>Innis nan Dàmh & Baile na h-Eaglaise (Inchnadamph & Kirkton)</i>	14	70	2	41	61.4 %
<i>Unapul & Caolas Cumhang (Unapool & Kylesku)</i>	12	44	0	33	75.0 %
<i>Gleann Leireag & Gleann Canaisp (Glen Leireag & Glen Canisp)</i>	11	44	0	24	54.5 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	10	72	1	38	54.2 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	1	3	0	3	100.0 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	2	15	0	4	26.7 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	3	7	0	0	0.0 %
Households with no children (0-14)	21	61	1	53	88.5 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	10	33	1	28	87.9 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	14	69	0	27	39.1 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	2	8	0	8	100.0 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	1	4	0	4	100.0 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	3	28	0	19	67.9 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	4	9	0	9	100.0 %
Remaining occupations	3	7	1	3	57.1 %

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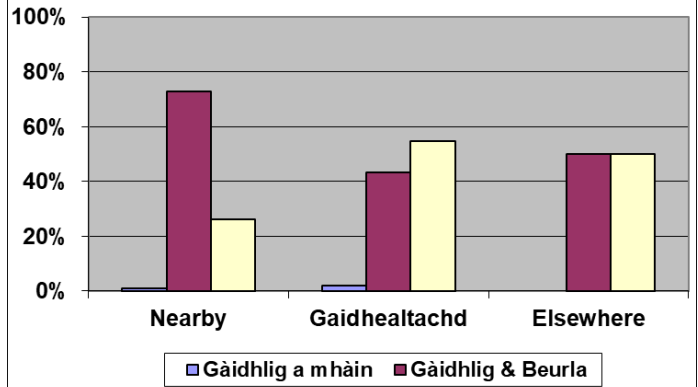
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

The language was spoken widely by people born or near the place. The relatively high proportion of “English monoglots” with a *Gaidhealtachd* background is probably due to their upbringing by gamekeepers’ or shepherds’ families in isolated glens without close contact with *Gàidhlig*-speaking neighbours.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Assynt or in the adjacent parishes of Lochbroom, Kincardine (both Ross & Cromarty) or Eddrachillis (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. Official census figures reported 105 bilingual inhabitants and two monolingual *Gàidhlig*-speakers out of a total population of 178 persons (60.1 %). The usually resident population, however, consisted of 98 *Gàidhlig*-speakers (63.3 %) including two inhabitants “with no English”.
2. The two recorded census returns of *Gàidhlig*-speakers “with no English” were elderly cottars living in the settlement of *Innis nan Dàmh* (Inchnadamph).