

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

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Area: Taobh Siar Rois (Wester Ross): An Srath, A'Chathair Bheag, Am Baile Mòr, Port na h-Aile, Achadh a'Chàirn, Baile Theàrlaich, Miall, Baile a'Ghobhainn, An Lòn Mòr

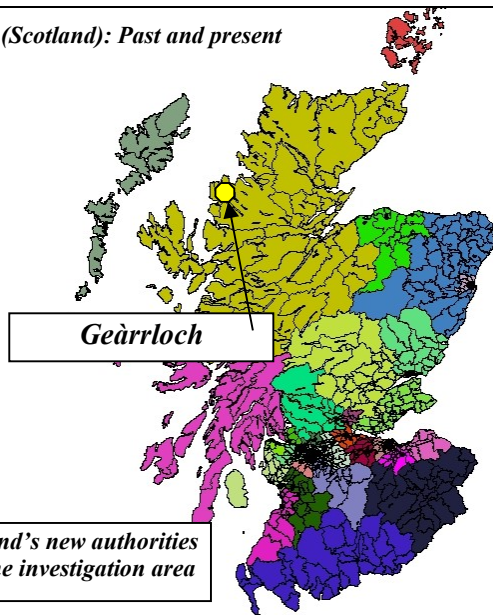
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Kerrysdale, Charleston, Flowerdale, Kintail, Portnahail, Achtergutte, Auchtercairn, Caledonian Bank, Strath, Lonemore, Glebe, Mihol, Smithton)

Number of households: 128 Population present at census night: 543

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 89.9 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Ross & Cromarty	Gairloch	Gairloch Southern	6	1 – 8
			7	1 - 18

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

The Gàidhlig language was spoken almost universally by all inhabitants at the time. Even almost a tenth of speakers did not speak English – most of them in the older generation.

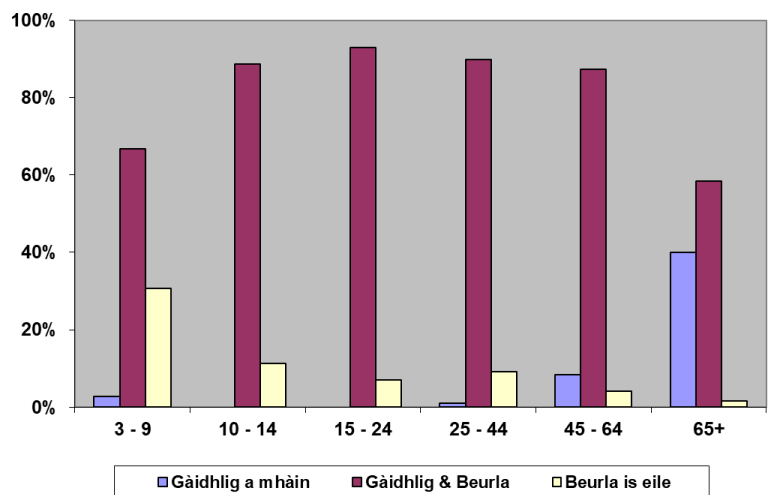
The strongest Gàidhlig-speaking communities were of course crofting hamlets like *Miall* (Mail) and *An Lòn Mòr* (Lonemore).

Most unlikely to speak the local tongue were – as expected - gamekeepers, schoolteachers, shepherds, cooks, and gardeners (and their families).

Area description:

The population investigated lived in a rather scattered array of homesteads, farms, and the odd manor house, which surrounded the wider bay of *Gèarrloch* (Gairloch) on the west coast of the Highlands.

Besides the traditional crofting and fishing crafts of the locally settled population a separate lifestyle was adopted by the landlords of the time. This led to the influx of gamekeepers, shepherds, and even gardeners to the estates which hitherto had no connection to the Gàidhlig culture.



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	543	22	0	35	486	39	398	89.9 %
3-4	16	0	0	0	16	0	10	62.5 %
5-9	59	0	0	0	59	2	40	71.2 %
10-14	44	0	0	0	44	0	39	88.6 %
15-24	96	0	0	11	85	0	79	92.9 %
25-44	115	0	0	17	98	1	88	90.8 %
45-64	123	0	0	4	119	10	104	95.8 %
65+	68	0	0	3	65	26	38	98.5 %
Gender								
Female	262	10	0	10	242	25	194	90.5 %
Male	281	12	0	25	244	14	204	89.3 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	444	21	0	22	401	38	330	91.8 %
In neighbouring parish¹	23	0	0	2	21	0	21	100.0 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	33	0	0	2	31	1	29	96.8 %
Other places	43	1	0	9	33	0	18	54.5 %

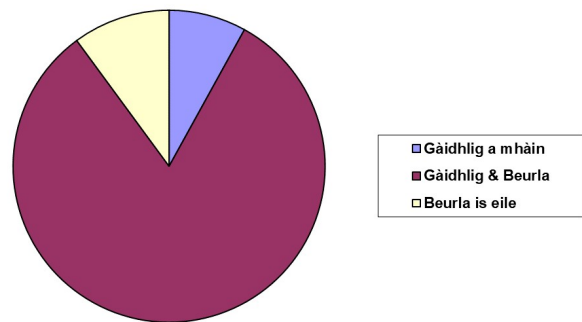
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Applecross, Lochcarron, Lochbroom or Contin (all Ross & Cromarty).

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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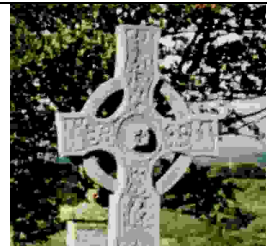
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	Households	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Geàrrloch: An Srath	128	486	39	398	89.9 %
Individual communities					
Baile Theàrlaich & Am Baile Mòr (Charlestown & Flowerdale)	25	106	0	84	79.2 %
An Srath & Achadh a'Chàirn (Strath & Auchtercairn)	36	142	3	116	83.8 %
Miall (Mial)	21	67	9	58	100.0 %
Baile a'Ghobhainn (Smithton)	14	44	6	38	100.0 %
An Lòn Mòr (Lonemore)	32	127	21	102	96.9 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	47	244	10	200	86.1 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	11	48	3	45	100.0 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	2	13	0	6	46.2 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	0	0	0	0	-
Households with no children (0-14)	68	181	26	147	95.6 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	47	209	27	178	98.1 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	7	20	2	14	80.0 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	7	33	0	14	42.4 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	26	111	3	94	87.4 %
Living on private means	1	2	0	2	100.0 %
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	8	34	0	32	94.1 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	26	70	3	61	91.4 %
Remaining occupations	6	7	4	3	100.0 %

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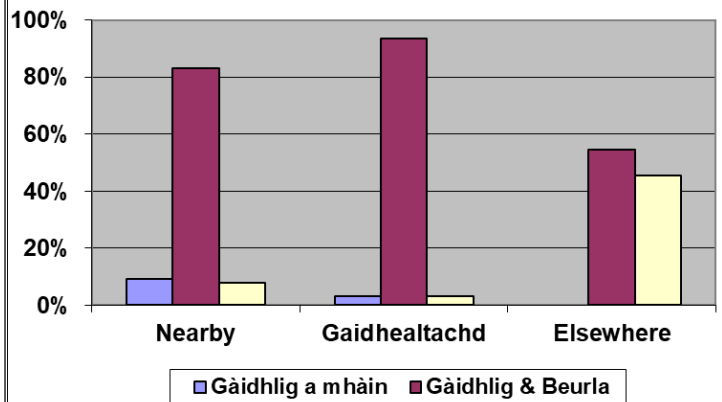
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

The language was almost universally spoken by those born locally or in the wider *Gaidhealtachd*.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Gairloch or in the adjacent parishes of Applecross, Lochcarron, Lochbroom or Contin (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. Official census figures reported 325 bilingual inhabitants and 87 monolingual *Gàidhlig*-speakers out of a total population of 514 persons (80.2 %). However, in this instance major discrepancies became apparent between the official summary figures and the information on the corresponding registration sheets (where individual entries were listed). Therefore, entries in the individual forms had to be counted once again and the following figures were obtained: The usually resident population of 486 persons consisted of 437 *Gàidhlig*-speakers (89.9 %) including 39 inhabitants “with no English”.