

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 132

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Area: *An Gearasdan (Fort William): An t-Sràid Ìosal & Sràid a'Mheadhoin*

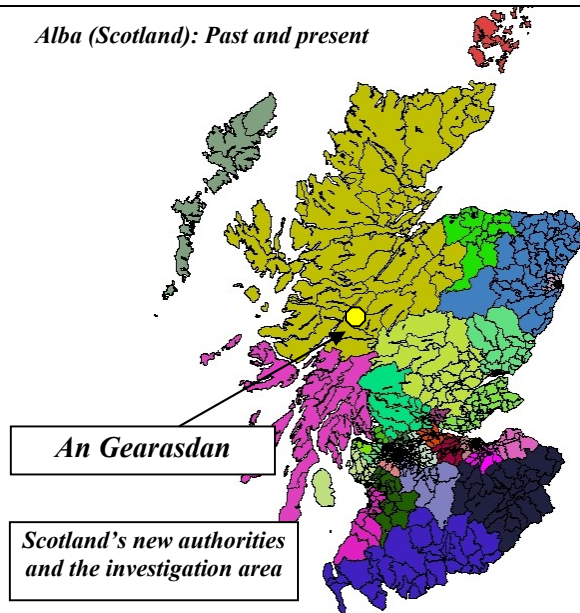
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Fraser Square Imperial Hotel, Low Street, Middle Street, Cuislies Close, Gasmor's Lane, Taylor's Lane, MacMillan's Lane, Kennedy's Lane)

Number of households: 101 Population present at census night: 389

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 82.7 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Inverness	Kilmallie	Kilmallie	4	1 - 17

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



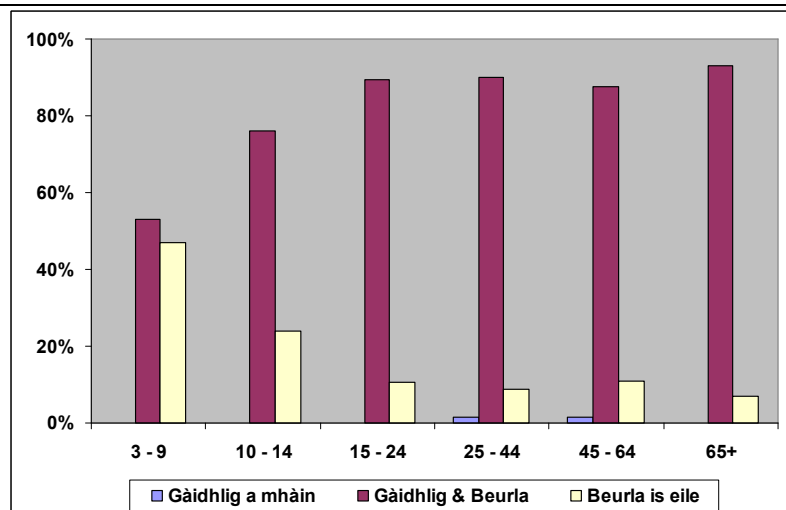
State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

The Gàidhlig language was still used extensively in this part of the town at the time setting aside the large community of residents originating from far away places in Lowland Scotland or even England.

Except for children under the age of 10 Gàidhlig was overwhelmingly used by the usually resident population. The handful of Gàidhlig monolingual persons counted was made up entirely of older people with a birthplace in the islands further west.

Area description:

The town of *An Gearasdan* (Fort William) forms the economic and administrative centre of the Highland district of *Loch Abar* (Lochaber). In 1891 the town was the second most important population centre in the county of *Inbhirnis* (Inverness). The lowest part of the town between *An t-Sràid Àrd* (High Street) and the seashore was situated within this census enumeration district. Most of the residents in this part of *An Gearasdan* were labourers in small industrial workplaces (distillery, railway, gasworks, etc.) or acted as servants in the various hotels.



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

Area: *An Gearasdan (Fort William): An t-Sràid Ìosal & Sràid a'Mheadhoìn*

	Population enumerated				Usually resident population (3+)			
	Total	Aged 0-2	Deaf & dumb	Visitors etc. ³	Total ⁴	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Age								
Total	389	26	0	33	330	2	271	82.7 %
3-4	17		0	0	17	0	8	47.1 %
5-9	34		0	0	34	0	19	55.9 %
10-14	47		0	1	46	0	36	76.1 %
15-24	63		0	6	57	0	51	89.5 %
25-44	78		0	9	69	1	62	91.3 %
45-64	71		0	7	64	1	56	89.1 %
65+	53		0	10	43	0	40	93.0 %
Gender								
Female	197	10	0	13	174	2	148	86.2 %
Male	192	16	0	20	156	0	123	78.9 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	215	24	0	11	180	0	155	86.1 %
In neighbouring parish¹	61	0	0	1	60	0	60	100 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	52	0	0	11	41	2	35	90.2 %
Other places	61	2	0	10	49	0	21	42.9 %

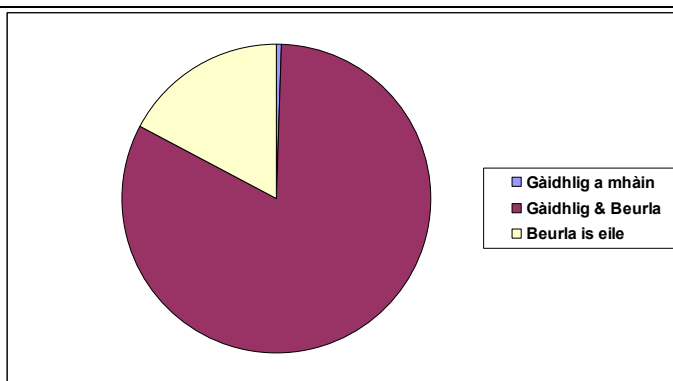
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Kilmonivaig, Arisaig & Moidart, Laggan (all Inverness), Fortingall (Perth), Lismore & Appin, Ardgour and Ardnamurchan (all Argyll).

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:

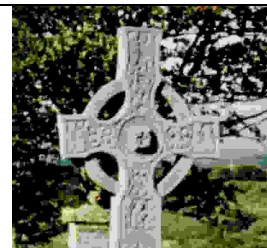
The 1891 census was the first such enumeration exercise with an unequivocal language question. After more than 100 years the original census forms are publicly available for detailed analysis. During research concerned with the “Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Studies” a vast number of such local statistics 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.

Area: *An Gearasdan (Fort William): An t-Sràid Ìosal & Sràid a'Mheadhoin*

	Households	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>An Gearasdan (#3)</i>	101	330	2	271	82.7 %
Individual communities					
<i>Sràid Ìosal</i> (Low Street)	41	115	1	95	83.5 %
<i>Sràid a'Mheadhoin</i> (Middle Street)	60	215	1	176	82.3 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	32	158	2	132	84.8 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	15	57	0	51	89.5 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	2	9	0	3	33.3 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	2	8	0	1	12.5 %
Households with no children (0-14)	50	98	0	84	85.7 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	6	17	1	16	100 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	1	2	0	0	0.0 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	4	17	0	8	47.1 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	13	70	0	57	81.4 %
Living on private means	3	10	0	9	90.0 %
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	6	14	0	9	64.3 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	67	199	1	171	86.4 %
Remaining occupations	1	1	0	1	100 %

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Additional individual profiles may be downloaded from a special page on the Linguae Celticae website: http://www.linguae-celticae.de/GLP_english.htm



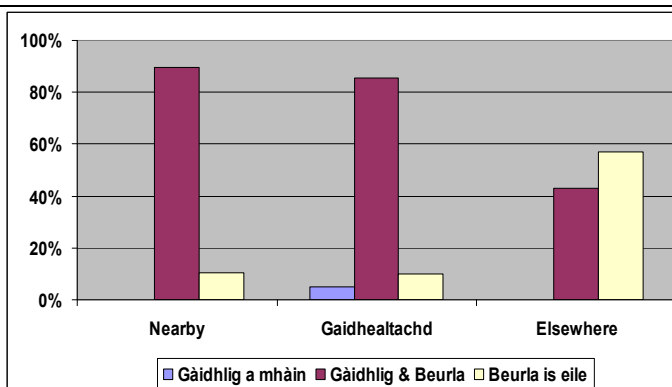
*An Gearasdan (Fort William): An t-Sràid Ìosal & Sràid a'Mheadhoin***Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:**

A very tiny proportion of those born in the Gaidhealtachd spoke only English. On the other hand, almost 50 % of people born elsewhere were bilingual members of the community.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Kilmallie or in the adjacent parishes of Kilmonivaig, Arisaig & Moidart, Laggan (all Inverness), Fortingall (Perth), Lismore & Appin, Ardgour and Ardnamurchan (all Argyll).

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 Gaidhealtachd², or (3) elsewhere

Remarks:

1. According to census material just two usually resident women spoke “Gaelic only” in this part of the town: A 48-year-old wife of a railway worker had a birthplace on the Hebridean island of *Na Hearadh* (Harris). Another 38-year-old monolingual woman originated also in the islands.
2. Official census figures reported 291 bilingual inhabitants and five monolingual Gàidhlig-speakers out of a total population of 389 persons (74.8 %). The usually resident population, however, consisted of 273 Gàidhlig-speakers (82.7 %) including two persons “with no English”.