

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 166

Page 1 of 4

Area: *An t-Eilean Sgitheanach (Isle of Skye): Steinn, Lusta, Camas Lusta, Bràighe Lusta, Bràighe Steinn & Am Bàgh*

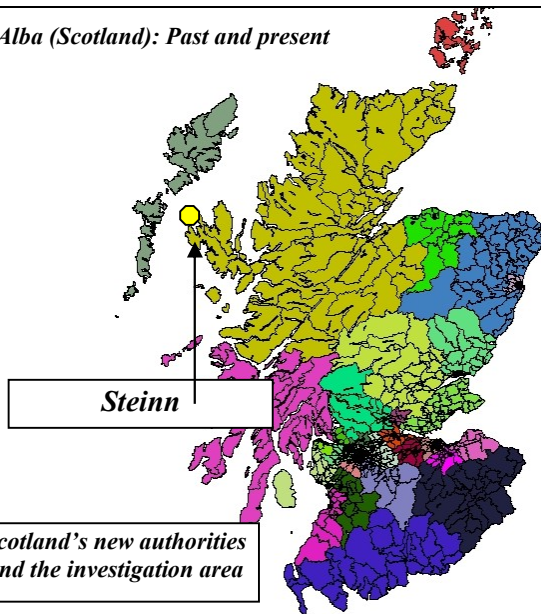
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Stein, Lusta, Camuslusta, Braelusta, Braestein, Bay)

Number of households: 64 **Population present at census night:** 287

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 99.6 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
<i>Inverness-shire</i>	<i>Duirinish</i>	Waternish	3	1 - 12

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

Gàidhlig was almost exclusively spoken by the usually resident population. Many crofters even did not speak English at all. Often only the household head spoke it – therefore more women than men remained monolingual *Gàidhlig* speakers.

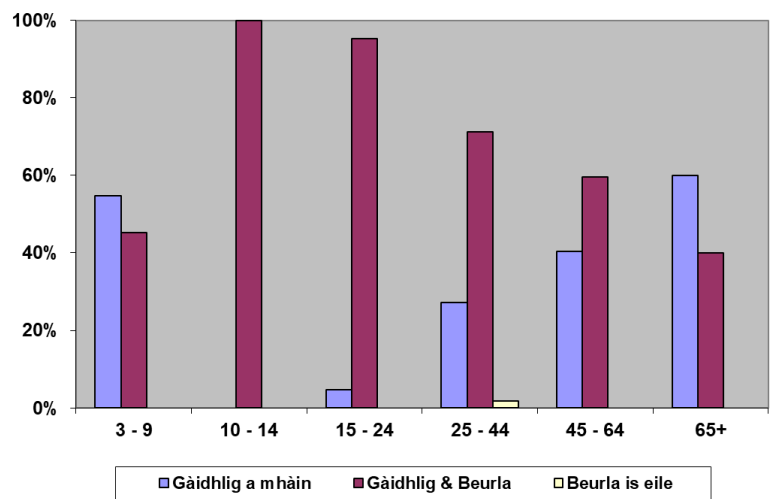
Bilingual persons were mostly found among those aged between 15 and 44 – a result of the school system at the time.

All communities were reported as almost totally *Gàidhlig*-speaking. Just one police constable from the English-speaking Black Isle was not recorded as speaking the local language.

Area description:

The communities investigated are situated on the *Bhàtarnais* (Waternish) peninsula in the north-western part of *An t-Eilean Sgitheanach* (Isle of Skye). Basically, these were all genuinely crofting townships with a very strong *Gàidhlig* tradition. They comprised all settlements on the west of the peninsula between *Hàllain* (Hallin) right to the Fairy Bridge in the south.

The main occupations of the inhabitants were of course concerned with crofting activities and some coastal fishing from *Steinn* (Stein).



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

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 166

Page 2 of 4

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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	287	22	0	1	264	74	189	99.6 %
3-4	15	0	0	0	15	12	3	100.0 %
5-9	27	0	0	0	27	11	16	100.0 %
10-14	48	0	0	0	48	0	48	100.0 %
15-24	43	0	0	0	43	2	41	100.0 %
25-44	59	0	0	0	59	16	42	98.3 %
45-64	53	0	0	1	52	21	31	100.0 %
65+	20	0	0	0	20	12	8	100.0 %
Gender								
Female	158	10	0	1	147	61	86	100.0 %
Male	129	12	0	0	117	13	103	99.1 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	257	22	0	0	235	69	166	100.0 %
In neighbouring parish¹	10	0	0	1	9	1	8	100.0 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	13	0	0	0	13	3	10	100.0 %
Other places	7	0	0	0	7	1	5	85.7 %

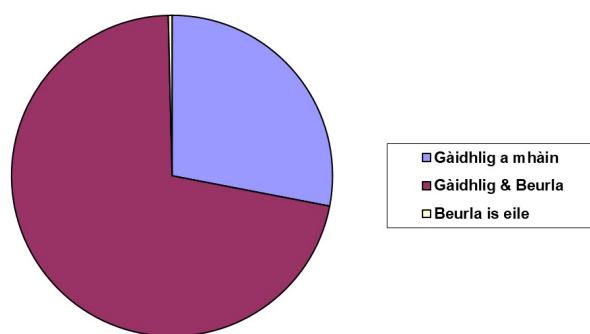
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Bracadale or Portree (both Inverness-shire).

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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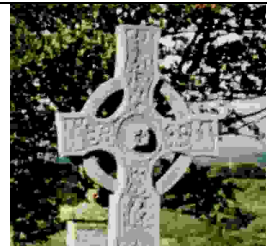
No. 166

Page 3 of 4

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	Households	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Steinn & Lusta</i>	64	264	74	189	99.6 %
Individual communities					
<i>Steinn</i> (Stein)	16	62	13	48	98.4 %
<i>Lusta</i> (Lusta)	12	50	15	35	100.0 %
<i>Camas Lusta</i> (Camuslusta)	7	29	16	13	100.0 %
<i>Bràighe Lusta</i> (Brae Lusta)	18	70	18	52	100.0 %
<i>Bràigh Steinn & Am Bàgh</i> (Brae Stein & Bay)	11	53	12	41	100.0 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	25	141	40	101	100.0 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	14	58	17	41	100.0 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	1	2	0	1	50.0 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	0	0	0	0	-
Households with no children (0-14)	24	63	17	46	100.0 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	41	188	51	137	100.0 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	2	9	2	7	100.0 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	4	13	4	8	92.3 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	5	25	1	24	100.0 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	0	0	0	0	-
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	1	4	3	1	100.0 %
Remaining occupations	11	25	13	12	100.0 %

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Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

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Page 4 of 4

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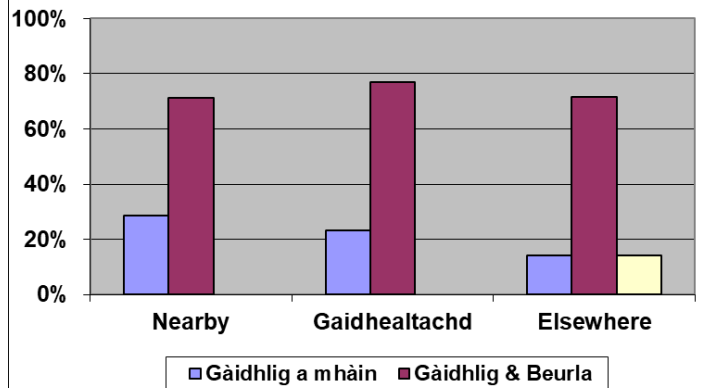
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

The language was spoken unilaterally by all locals whether born locally or not. Please note the sole exception in the remarks below.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Duirinish or in the adjacent parishes of Bracadale or Portree (both Inverness-shire).

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 188 bilingual inhabitants and 82 monolingual Gàidhlig-speakers out of a total population of 288 persons (93.8%). The usually resident population of 264 persons, however, consisted of 263 Gàidhlig-speakers (99.6%) including 74 inhabitants “with no English”.
2. The solitary monolingual English speaker in the district was a 32-year-old police constable. He seemingly happened to be on a different cultural planet in *Steinn* (Stein). He was born in *Abhaich* (Avoch) on the English-speaking Black Isle in Ross-shire.