

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

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Area: Muile (Mull): Ceann Tràghad, Crèich, Fionnphort, Tòrr Mòr, Na Fidean, Cnoc Mhaolagain, Pot Ì & Eilean Earraid.

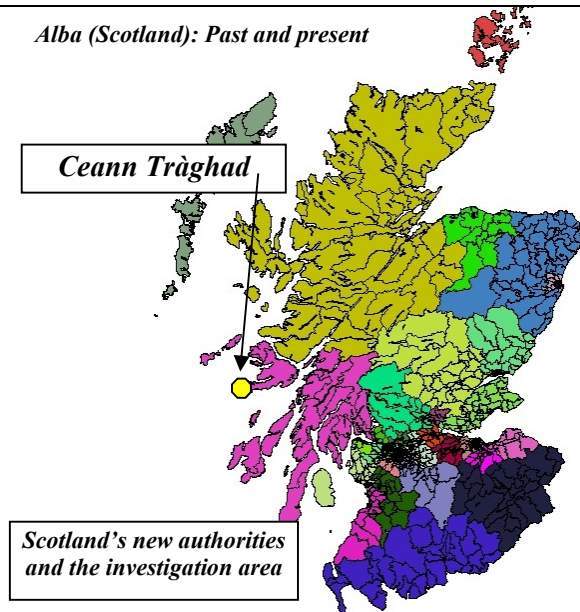
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Aridhglas, Creich, Deargphort, Kintra, Finaphort, Tormore, Catchean, Fidden, Knockvolagan, Pottee, Erraid, Lighthouse)

Number of households: 91 Population present at census night: 399

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 91.3 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Argyll	Kilfinichen & Kilvickeon	Kilfinichen	8	1 – 9
			9	1 – 5
			10	1 - 5

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

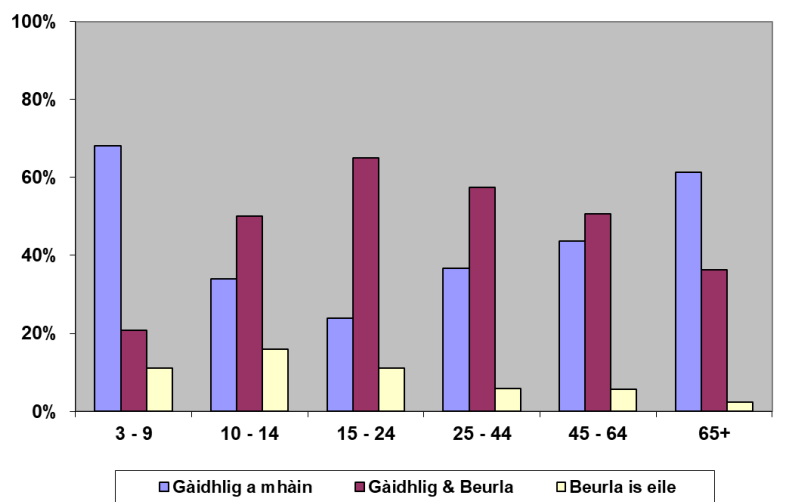
Almost 50% of the inhabitants still spoke only Gàidhlig. This was especially evident in the crofting communities around the ferry port of Fionnphort and Na Fidean (Fidden) where overall 100% of people spoke the traditional tongue.

A statistically significant distortion was caused by the presence of Lowland families of lighthouse keepers on the island of Earraid (Erraid) a few yards offshore. They still used only English, even with their children.

Area description:

The investigation area was the westernmost tip of the *An Ros Muileach* (Ross of Mull) peninsula of the island of *Muile* (Mull) in the Inner Hebrides.

Of major importance was the geographic position both as ferry point to the famous *Eilean Ì* (Isle of Iona) and the location of major lighthouses in the treacherous coastal seas around the peninsula. Most local folk were involved in various crofting activities and coastal fishing.



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	399	23	0	8	368	164	172	91.3 %
3-4	19	0	0	1	18	15	1	88.9 %
5-9	55	0	0	1	54	34	14	88.9 %
10-14	52	0	0	2	50	17	25	84.0 %
15-24	65	0	0	2	63	15	41	88.9 %
25-44	70	0	0	2	68	25	39	94.1 %
45-64	71	0	0	0	71	31	36	94.4 %
65+	44	0	0	0	44	27	16	97.7 %
Gender								
Female	199	9	0	4	186	95	69	88.2 %
Male	200	14	0	4	182	69	103	94.5 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	327	22	0	4	301	151	134	94.7 %
In neighbouring parish¹	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	-
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	33	0	0	0	33	7	21	84.8 %
Other places	38	0	0	4	34	6	17	67.6 %

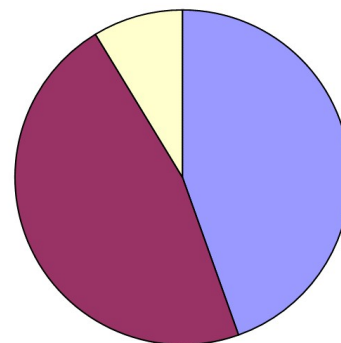
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Kilninian & Kilmore or Torosay (both 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.

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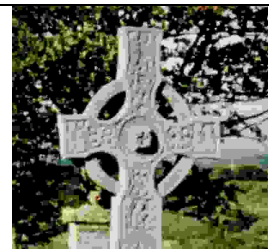
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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Ceann Tràghad & Fionnphort</i>	91	368	164	172	91.3 %
Individual communities					
<i>Ceann Tràghad & Crèich</i> (Kintra & Creich)	43	173	120	51	98.8 %
<i>Fionnphort & Tòrr Mòr</i> (Fionnphort & Tormore)	21	93	19	74	100.0 %
<i>Na Fidean & Pot Ì</i> (Fidden & Pottee)	14	58	20	38	100.0 %
<i>Eilean Earraid</i> (Erraid Island)	13	44	5	9	31.8 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	31	178	92	84	98.9 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	21	86	36	45	94.2 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	0	0	0	0	-
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	5	22	0	1	4.5 %
Households with no children (0-14)	34	82	36	42	95.1 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	15	67	31	36	100.0 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	3	19	7	12	100.0 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	1	0	0	9	100.0 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	24	25	25	39	73.6 %
Living on private means	4	4	4	10	100.0 %
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	3	1	1	13	82.4 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	34	92	92	49	96.6 %
Remaining occupations	7	4	4	4	88.9 %

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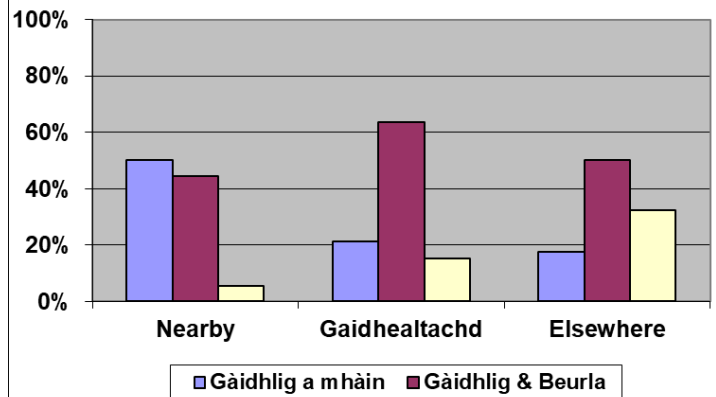
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

The language was universally spoken apart from families of lighthouse keepers on the island of *Earraid* (Erraid).

Notes:

¹ Born either in Kilfinichen & Kilvickeon or in the adjacent parishes of Kilninian & Kilmore or Torosay (both 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 *Gaidhealtachd*², or (3) elsewhere

Remarks:

1. Official census figures reported 173 bilingual inhabitants in addition to 171 monolingual *Gàidhlig*-speakers out of a total population of 396 persons (86.7 %). The usually resident population of 368 persons, however, consisted of 336 *Gàidhlig*-speakers (91.3 %) including 164 inhabitants “with no English”.
2. The overall figures are somewhat distorted by the very significant English monoglot part of the population (30 persons in total) on the island of *Eilean Earraid* (Erraid). Some lighthouse keeper’s families were stationed there. A lighthouse on *Dubh Artach* further offshore and the ship observatory on the island’s highest hill had to be safely operated all day and night.