

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 002

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Area: Mùideart (Moidart): Miogharraidh, An Dòrlinn, Blàthan, Monadh Blàthain, Blàthan Àrd, An Dìg, Dail nam Breac, Langal, Langal Uachdrach, Dail Eildhe, Cùil, Gasgan

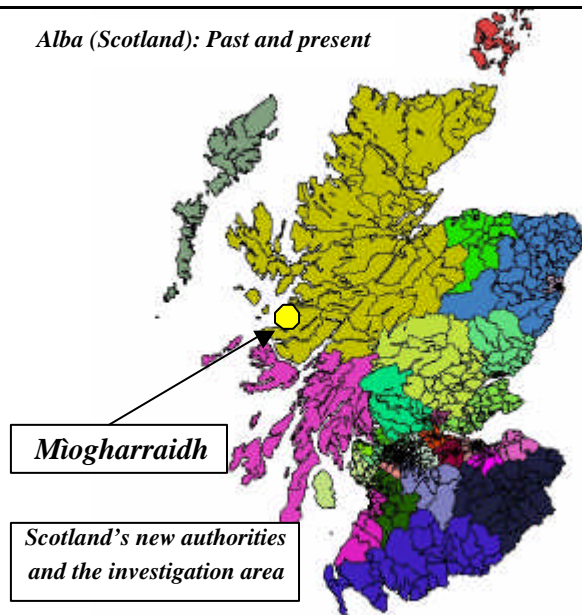
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms : Dorlin, Blain Moss, Blain, Blain Ard, Mingarry, Deek, Dalnabreck, Langal, Upper Langal, Dalilea, Cuil, Gasgan)

Number of households: 52 Population present at census night: 262

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 97.5 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Inverness-shire	Arisaig & Moidart	Aharacle	1	8 – 12
			2	13 - 14
			4	7 – 9
			5	1 – 6
			6	1

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



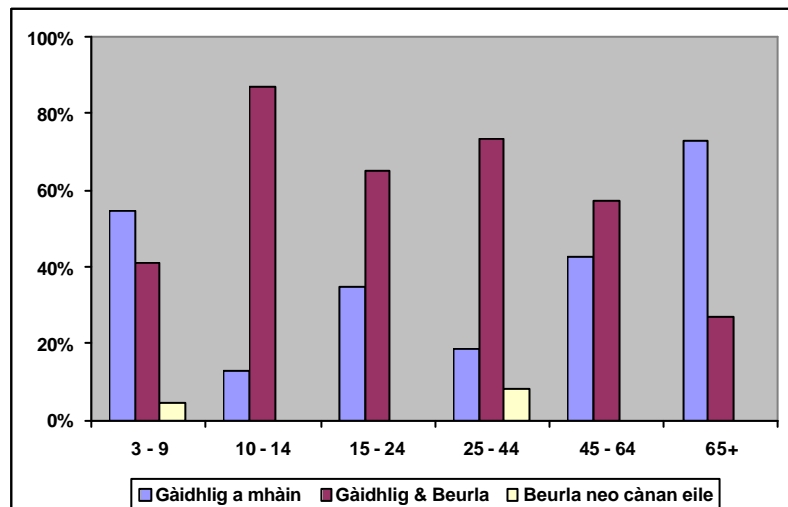
State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

Almost everyone spoke Gàidhlig in the district. A substantial number of speakers was still monolingual. The age profile was well-balanced between the generations. Only people born in England or in the Lowlands were less likely to speak Gàidhlig.

All communities were overwhelmingly or even completely Gàidhlig speaking. *Dail nam Breac* (Dalnabreck) and *Monadh Blàthain* (Blain Moss) had even a substantial majority of monolingual speakers of the traditional language.

Area description:

The district in question is situated on the west coast of the old county of Inverness-shire. It is the southernmost part of Mùideart (Moidart) adjacent to *Loch Seile* and its outlet *Abhainn Seile* (River Shiel) – a very remote part of the Highlands in these days. Most inhabitants were crofters. Main avenues of communication with the outside world were by boat on *Loch Seile* (Loch Shiel) or the adjacent sea.



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	262	16	0	4	242	92	144	97.5 %
3-4	12	0	0	0	12	8	3	91.7 %
5-9	32	0	0	0	32	16	15	96.9 %
10-14	31	0	0	0	31	4	27	100.0 %
15-24	43	0	0	0	43	15	28	100.0 %
25-44	50	0	0	1	49	9	36	91.8 %
45-64	50	0	0	1	49	21	28	100.0 %
65+	28	0	0	2	26	19	7	100.0 %
Gender								
Female	138	10	0	2	126	52	70	96.8 %
Male	124	6	0	2	116	40	74	98.3 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	212	13	0	2	197	88	109	100.0 %
In neighbouring parish¹	28	2	0	0	26	3	22	96.2 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	13	0	0	1	12	1	11	100 %
Other places	9	1	0	1	7	0	2	28.6 %

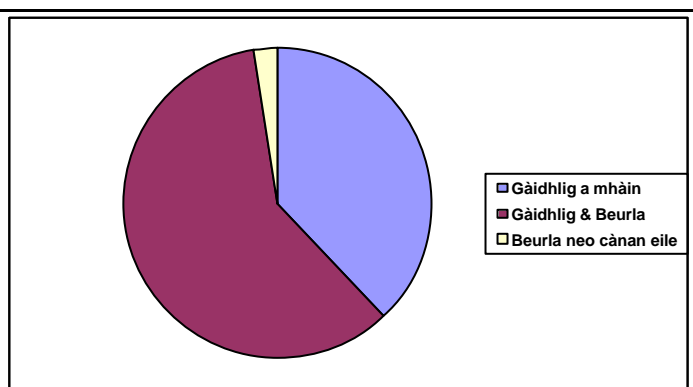
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Ardnamurchan, Ardgour, Morvern (all Argyll); Glenelg, Kilmallie (all Inverness).

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 fact-sheets are a welcome way to publish some of the “local gems”. More information is provided at http://www.linguae-celticae.org/GLP_english.htm.

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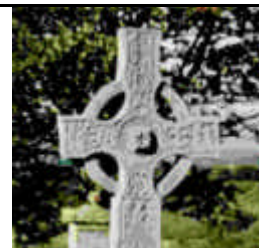
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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Mùideart (part 1)	52	242	92	144	97.5 %
Individual communities					
<i>An Dòirlinn</i> (Dorlin)	9	50	0	47	94.0 %
<i>Monadh Blàthain</i> (Blain Moss)	10	45	30	14	97.8 %
<i>Blàthan & Blàthan Àrd</i> (Blain & Blain Àrd)	3	7	2	5	100.0 %
<i>Miogharraidh & An Dìg</i> (Mingarry & Deek)	8	35	6	27	94.3 %
<i>Dail nam Breac</i> (Dalnabreck)	10	50	34	16	100.0 %
<i>Langal & Langal Uachdrach</i> (Langal & Upper Langal)	6	27	9	18	100.0 %
<i>Dail Eildhe</i> (Dalilea)	4	15	4	11	100.0 %
<i>Cùil & Gasgan</i> (Cuil & Gasgan)	2	13	7	6	100.0 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	22	151	53	97	99.3 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	5	21	10	10	95.2 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	0	0	0	0	-
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	0	0	0	0	-
Households with no children (0-14)	25	70	29	37	94.3 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	26	118	63	54	99.2 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	6	44	13	31	100.0 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	2	6	0	4	-
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	6	37	12	22	91.9 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	5	26	0	26	100.0 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	7	11	4	7	100.0 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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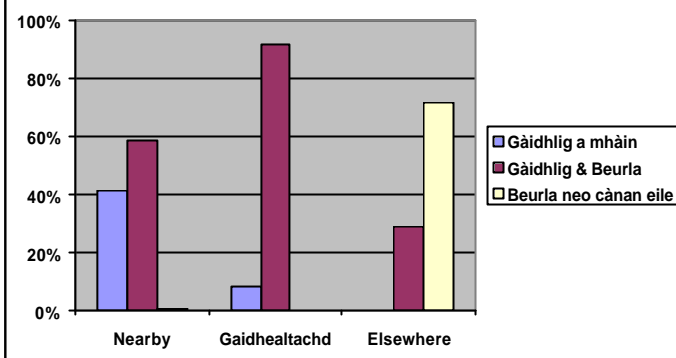
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

Only a few inhabitants were born outside the *Gaidhealtachd*. Those born nearby or in the parish itself were often monolingual Gàidhlig speakers. All locally born people were Gàidhlig speaking.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Arisaig & Moidart or in the adjacent parishes of Ardnamurchan, Ardgour, Morvern (all Argyll); Glenelg, Kilmallie (all Inverness).

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. Just six persons were reported as not speaking the Celtic tongue: A house carpenter and his wife (both from England), a three-year old child, a wine & spirit merchant from Glasgow and last but not least the school mistress and her sister (both from England).
2. In original census report terms the district had a population of 262 persons of all ages. 145 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English” and 97 were counted as monolingual Gàidhlig speakers. This led to an “official” share of Gàidhlig speakers of 92.4 %. This was an under-estimate of 5.1 %!