

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 054

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Area: *Cataibh an Ear (East Sutherland): Dòrnach*

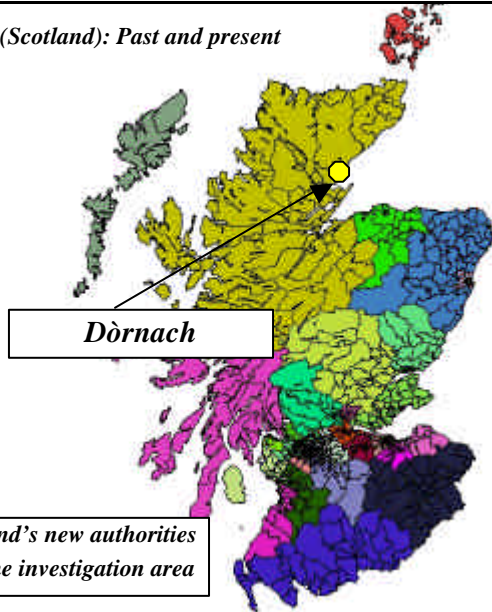
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Dornoch, West End, Front Street, Back Street, The Meadows, The Square, Gilchrist Square, Argyll Street, Littletown)

Number of households: **144** Population present at census night: **515**

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking *Gàidhlig*: **56.4 %**

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Sutherland	Dornoch	Dornoch	1	1 - 21

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of *Gàidhlig* in 1891:

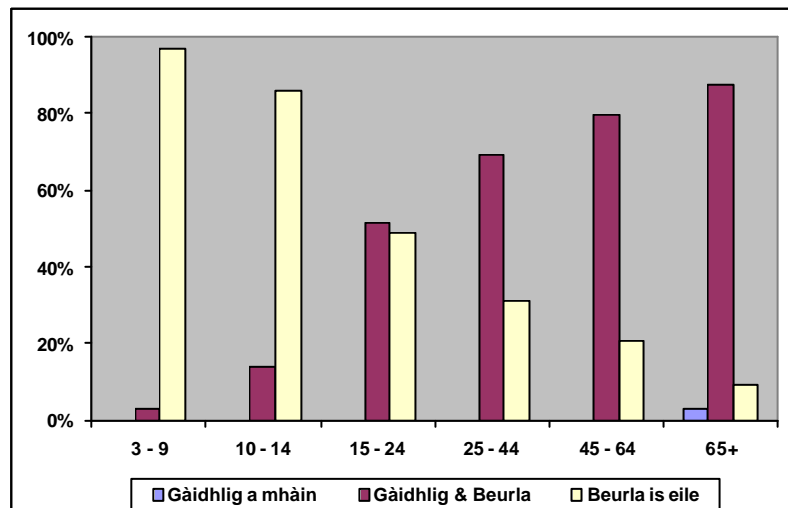
Despite the open ignorance and hostility of public authorities towards the traditional language of the county *Gàidhlig* was still spoken by a majority of usually resident persons in the centre of power of *Cataibh* (Sutherland).

In all generations beyond school age *Gàidhlig* speakers outnumbered the English monolingual population. The latter was indeed “bolstered” by a significant fraction of Lowlanders most of them ignoring the *Gàidhlig* tongue. Within the 10 households with no *Gàidhlig* speaking parent just one person was enumerated as speaking *Gàidhlig* and English!

Area description:

The small town of *Dòrnach* (Dornoch) has been the county town of *Cataibh* (Sutherland) for centuries. It is situated on the relatively fertile east coast of the county.

The inhabitants of *Dòrnach* were occupied with a variety of trades apart from the usual governmental and judicial authorities a county town has to provide.



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	515	22	0	16	477	2	267	56.4 %
3-4	18		0	0	18	0	0	0.0 %
5-9	49		0	0	49	0	2	4.1 %
10-14	50		0	0	50	0	7	14.0 %
15-24	82		0	8	74	0	38	51.4 %
25-44	125		0	5	120	0	83	69.2 %
45-64	104		0	2	102	0	81	79.4 %
65+	65		0	1	64	2	56	90.6 %
Gender								
Female	299	10	0	3	286	2	163	57.7 %
Male	216	12	0	13	191	0	104	54.5 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	357	22	0	4	331	0	199	60.1 %
In neighbouring parish¹	39	0	0	0	39	2	27	74.4 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	37	0	0	5	32	0	25	78.1 %
Other places	82	0	0	7	75	0	16	21.3 %

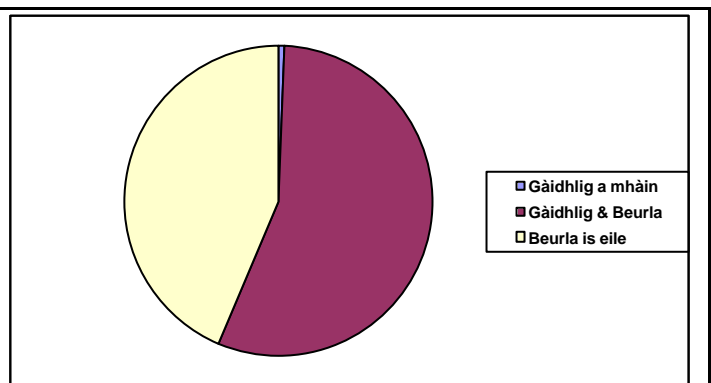
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Creich, Lairg, Rogart and Golspie (all Sutherland).

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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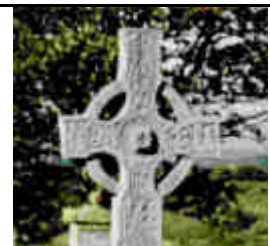
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Area: *Cataibh an Ear (East Sutherland): Dòrnach*

	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Dòrnach	144	477	2	267	56.4 %
Individual communities					
<i>Crìoch Shuas</i> (West End)	5	23	0	15	65.2 %
<i>Sràid Aghaidh</i> (Front Street)	17	49	0	28	57.1 %
<i>Sràid Cùil</i> (Back Street)	12	47	0	26	55.3 %
<i>Na h-Innseagan</i> (The Meadows)	7	24	0	21	87.5 %
<i>A'Cheàrnag</i> (The Square)	39	145	0	71	49.0 %
<i>Ceàrnag Mhic Gille Chriosda</i> (Gilchrist Square)	22	66	0	40	60.6 %
<i>Sràid Earra-Ghaidheil</i> (Argyll Street)	10	38	1	18	50.0 %
<i>Am Baile Beag</i> (Littleton)	32	85	1	48	57.6 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	28	156	0	79	50.6 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	10	36	1	20	58.3 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	3	12	0	3	25.0 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	10	55	0	1	1.8 %
Households with no children (0-14)	93	218	1	164	75.7 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	13	41	0	29	70.7 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	1	2	1	1	100 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	17	70	0	32	45.7 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	44	181	0	98	54.1 %
Living on private means	12	27	1	20	77.8 %
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	10	30	0	12	40.0 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	42	111	0	66	59.5 %
Remaining occupations	5	15	0	9	60.0 %

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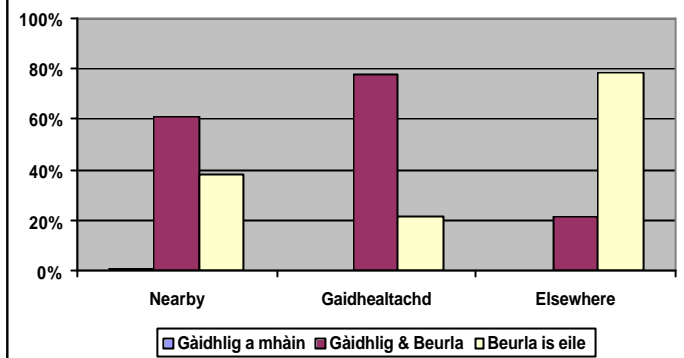
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

The majority of locally born residents still spoke *Gàidhlig* in the town. Even a fifth of all inhabitants born outside the *Gaidhealtachd* spoke the local language.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Dornoch or in the adjacent parishes of Creich, Lairg, Rogart and Golspie (all Sutherland).

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 two persons in the town spoke “Gaelic only”. Both were elderly women born in neighbouring parishes: A shepherd’s widow from *Craoich* (Creich) and a lady from *Raoghard* (Rogart) “living on private means”.
2. Official census figures reported 272 bilingual inhabitants and 2 monolingual *Gàidhlig*-speakers out of a total population of 514 persons (53.3 %). The usually resident population consisted of 269 *Gàidhlig*-speakers (56.4 %) including two persons “with no Gaelic”.