

# Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 093

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Area: **Tiriodh (Tiree): An Caolas, Ruthaig & Sathalum**

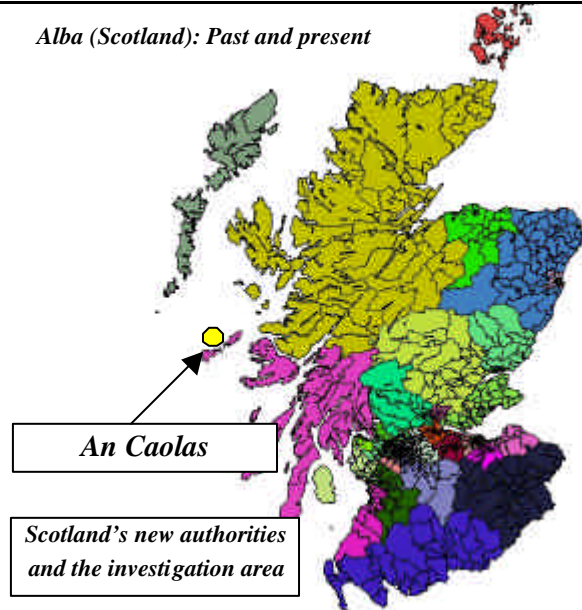
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms : Caolis, Ruaig, Salum)

Number of households: **63** Population present at census night: **282**

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

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Argyll	Tiree	Tiree	1	1 – 13

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



## State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

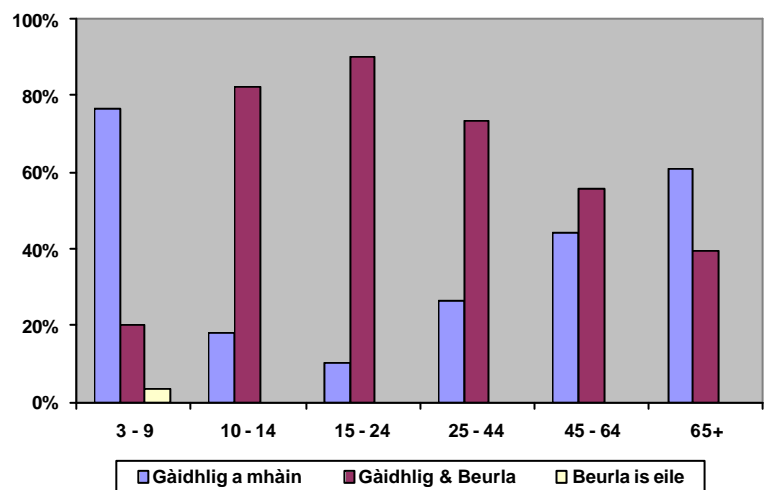
In 1891 *Tiriodh* generally was a very thorough stronghold of the *Gàidhlig* language. This part of the island was clearly no exception. With the exception of a three year old girl from Glasgow all residents spoke *Gàidhlig*.

In addition a very substantial proportion of people did not speak English at all. Most of these monolingual persons were either less than 10 years of age or belonged to the older generation.

## Area description:

The district described forms the north-eastern tip of the Hebridean island of *Tiriodh* (Tiree). As such it was part of the ancient county of *Earra-Ghaidheal* (Argyll). The island itself was one of the remotest parts of the Inner Hebrides in those times.

All the three hamlets situated in the area - namely *An Caolas* (Caolis), *Ruthaig* (Ruaig) and *Sathalum* (Salum) - were traditional crofting communities where almost everyone was dependent either on self subsistence agriculture or inshore fisheries.



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. <sup>3</sup>	Total <sup>4</sup>	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<b>Age</b>								
<b>Total</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>99.6 %</b>
<b>3-4</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>83.3 %</b>
<b>5-9</b>	<b>25</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>10-14</b>	<b>28</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>15-24</b>	<b>40</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>25-44</b>	<b>64</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>45-64</b>	<b>70</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>65+</b>	<b>38</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Gender</b>								
<b>Female</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>99.3 %</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Place of birth</b>								
<b>Born in parish</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>In neighbouring parish<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Gaidhealtachd elsewhere<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Other places</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>91.7 %</b>

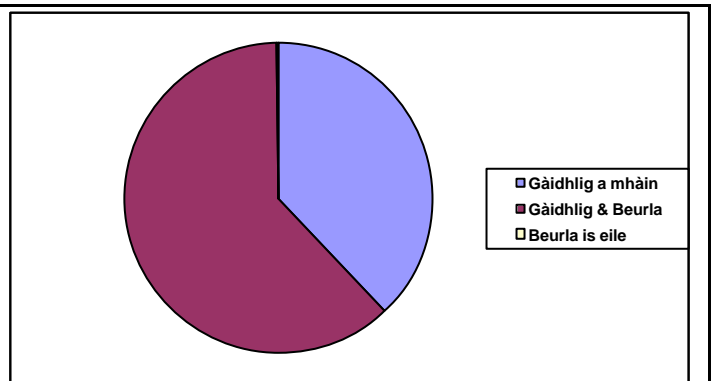
## Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Parish of Coll (Argyll).

<sup>2</sup> Other parishes in Scotland with more than 50 % Gàidhlig speakers in the 1891 census.

<sup>3</sup> People described as visitors, boarders, lodgers or other similar terms.

<sup>4</sup> 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](http://www.linguae-celticae.org/GLP_english.htm).

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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	<i>Gàidhlig</i>	<i>Gàidhlig</i> & English	<i>Gàidhlig</i> speakers (%)
<i>An Caolas, Ruthaig &amp; Sathalum</i>	63	270	103	166	99.6 %
<b>Individual communities</b>					
<i>An Caolas</i> (Caolas)	31	148	60	87	99.3 %
<i>Ruthaig</i> (Ruaig)	28	110	41	69	100 %
<i>Sathalum</i> (Salum)	4	12	2	10	100 %
<b>Language of parents</b>					
Both parents <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	15	105	38	67	100 %
Single parent <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	17	63	24	38	98.4 %
One parent <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	0	0	0	0	-
No <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking parent	0	0	0	0	-
Households with no children (0-14)	31	102	41	61	100 %
<b>Occupation of head of household</b>					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	29	152	54	98	100 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	0	0	0	0	-
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	1	6	0	6	100 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	9	32	18	13	96.9 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	9	38	11	27	100 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	12	35	14	21	100 %
Remaining occupations	3	7	6	1	100 %

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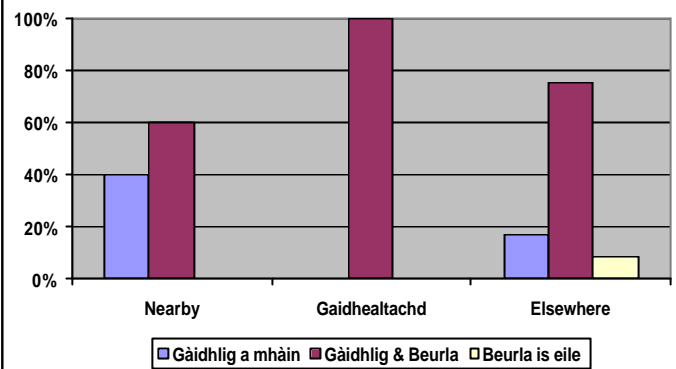
## Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

The only non-Gàidhlig speaker was born in the Lowlands. 40 % of locally born residents were monolingual Gàidhlig speakers. On the other hand people born in the wider *Gaidhealtachd* did also speak English.

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Born either in Tiree or in the adjacent parish of Coll (Argyll).

<sup>2</sup> Born in other parishes of Scotland with more than 50 % Gàidhlig speakers in the 1891 census.



Speakers according to place of birth (1) nearby<sup>1</sup>  
(2) in remaining *Gaidhealtachd*<sup>2</sup>, or (3) elsewhere

## Remarks:

1. Only one person of the usually resident population was reported as not speaking *Gàidhlig*. She was a three year old girl born in Lanarkshire. Whether she spoke English was not mentioned as the language column was left blank in this case.
2. In original census report terms the enumeration district in total had a population of 282 persons of all ages. Just 167 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English” and 109 persons were reported as monolingual *Gàidhlig* speakers. These figures lead to an “official” share of *Gàidhlig* speakers of 97.9 %. A comparison with the more realistic statistics of this fact-sheet reveals that this percentage was a slight under-estimate of 1.7 % mainly caused by the inclusion of under-three olds in the official population base.