

# Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 109

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**Area:** *Leamhnachd (Lennox): Fionnaird, Àird Daraich, An t-Sròn, Gleann Meallan, Creagan, Goirtean, Port nan Capall, Port Chapuill, Cill Bhrìghde an Iar, Blar an Fheàrna, Baile a’Mhuilinn, Cill Bhrìghde an Ear, Druim Fada & Am Baile Meadhonach*

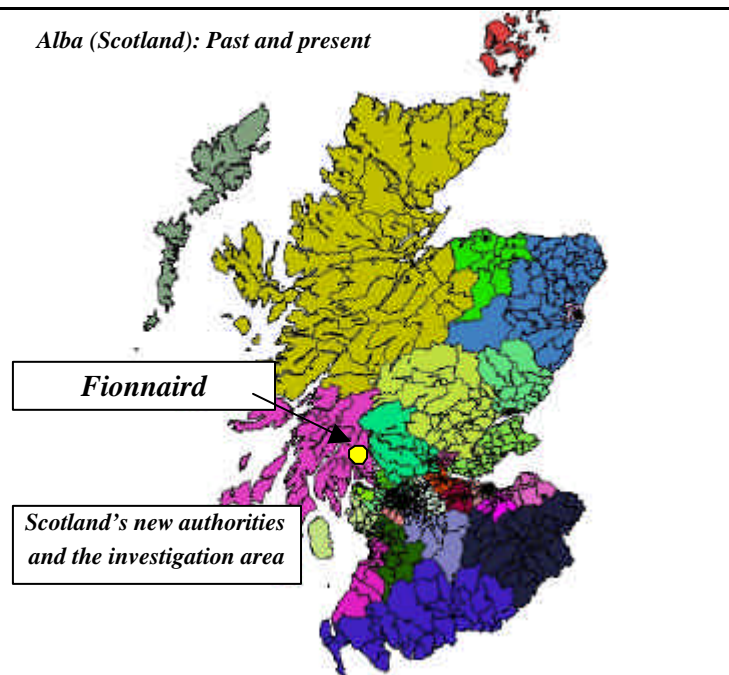
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Whistlefield Inn, Finnart, Ardarroch, Strone, Glenmallon, Craggan, Gorton, Portincaple, West Kilbride, Blairnairn, Balavoulin, Auchinguich, Strone, Dairland, Drumfad, Milligs, Daligan, East Kilbride & Ballemenoch)

**Number of households:** 52      **Population present at census night:** 293

**Share of resident population (aged 3 years or over) speaking Gàidhlig:** 24.9 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Dunbartonshire	Rhu	Rhu	10 13	1 – 5 25(part) - 32

*Alba (Scotland): Past and present*



### State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

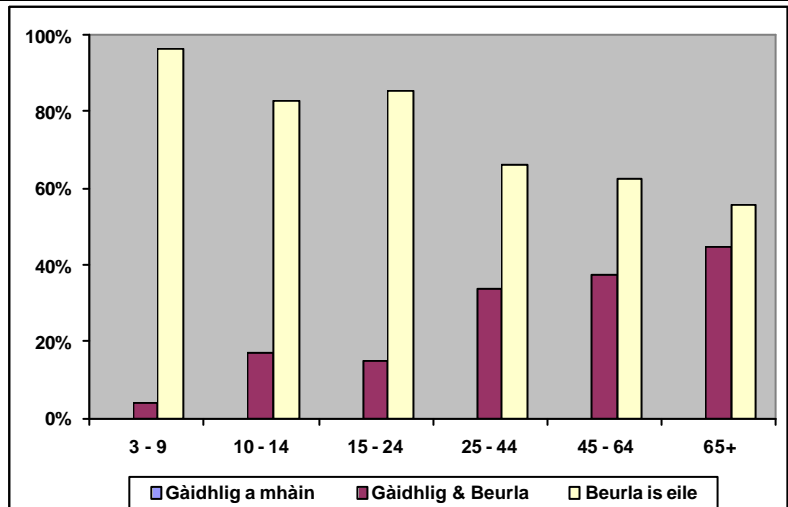
The area was situated on the southern margins of the language boundary in 1891. The Gàidhlig language community was heavily biased towards the older generation and only a few speakers were actually born in the parish. On the other hand language transmission in families was (rather surprisingly) very successful in the seven families with Gàidhlig speaking parents.

The strength of the language was quite different in the individual locations of the district. Whereas Gàidhlig was very much a minority issue in *Gleann Freòin* (Glen Fruin), however, almost half of the usually resident population around *Fionnaird* (Finnart) still spoke the traditional language of the area.

### Area description:

The district occupies a narrow strip of land from *Loch Long* to the lower slopes of *Gleann Freòin* (Glen Fruin). It forms the northern portion of the large civil parish of *An Rubha* (Rhu) which was then part of the ancient county of *Dùn Breatainn* (Dumbarton).

Most “local” folk were mainly occupied with crofting or farming at the time. However, quite a number of railway workers were present at census night in 1891.



**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>5</sup>	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<b>Age</b>								
<b>Total</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>24.9 %</b>
<b>3-4</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0 %</b>
<b>5-9</b>	<b>20</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5.3 %</b>
<b>10-14</b>	<b>33</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>17.2 %</b>
<b>15-24</b>	<b>68</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14.9 %</b>
<b>25-44</b>	<b>83</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>33.9 %</b>
<b>45-64</b>	<b>58</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>37.5 %</b>
<b>65+</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>44.4 %</b>
<b>Gender</b>								
<b>Female</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>26.2 %</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23.6 %</b>
<b>Place of birth</b>								
<b>Born in parish</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>14.5 %</b>
<b>In neighbouring parish</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>51.9 %</b>
<b>Gaidhealtachd elsewhere<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>31</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>70.4 %</b>
<b>Other places</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11.0 %</b>

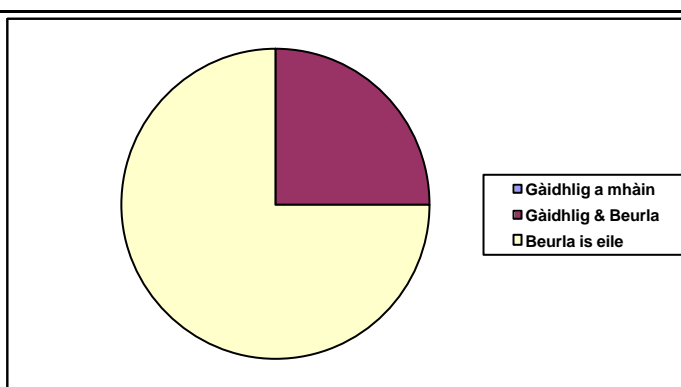
## Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Civil parishes of Cardross, Arrochar, Rosneath, Bonhill or Luss (all Dunbarton).

<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. This column includes also railway workers living in temporary huts.

<sup>5</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-celtic.ae.org/GLP\\_english.htm](http://www.linguae-celtic.ae.org/GLP_english.htm).

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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Fionnaird &amp; Gleann Freòin</i>	52	209	0	52	24.9 %
<b>Individual communities</b>					
<i>Fionnaird</i> (Finnart)	16	33	0	16	48.5 %
<i>Àird Daraich &amp; Creagan</i> (Ardaroch & Craggan)	15	65	0	17	26.2 %
<i>Port nan Capall</i> (Portincaple)	8	31	0	8	25.8 %
<i>Gleann Freòin</i> (Glen Fruin)	13	80	0	11	13.8 %
<b>Language of parents</b>					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	4	23	0	12	52.2 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	3	16	0	12	75.0 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	0	0	0	0	-
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	12	90	0	4	4.4 %
Households with no children (0-14)	33	80	0	24	30.0 %
<b>Occupation of head of household</b>					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	13	84	0	11	13.1 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	6	25	0	10	40.0 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	1	2	0	0	0.0 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	5	12	0	3	25.0 %
Living on private means	4	19	0	2	10.5 %
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	9	32	0	12	37.5 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	14	35	0	14	40.0 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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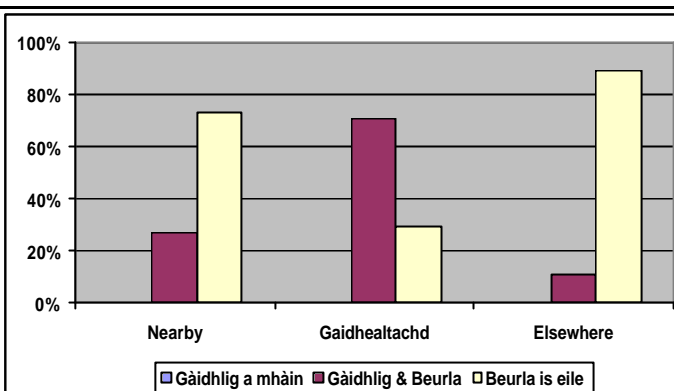
## Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

Situated at the southern margins of the *Gaidhealtachd* roughly a quarter of locally born persons spoke *Gàidhlig*. The majority of those born in the *Gaidhealtachd* still was returned as *Gàidhlig* speaking.

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Born either in Rhu (Dunbarton) or in the parishes of Cardross, Arrochar, Rosneath, Bonhill or Luss (all Dunbarton).

<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. In original census report terms the area had a population of 293 persons of all ages. In total 53 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English. This led to an “official” share of *Gàidhlig* speakers of 18.1 %. This census figure was an under-estimate of 6.8 % caused mainly by the inclusion of visitors in the total population base.