

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 129

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Area: *Ile (Islay): Àird Nèimh, Cill Nèimh, Gearraidh Ealabus, Leac Gruinneirt, Baile a'Mhuilinn, Grèineal, Bruach an Aoraidh, Srath Ghruinneirt, Na Creigean, Corsapoll, Cùlabus & Earsaid*

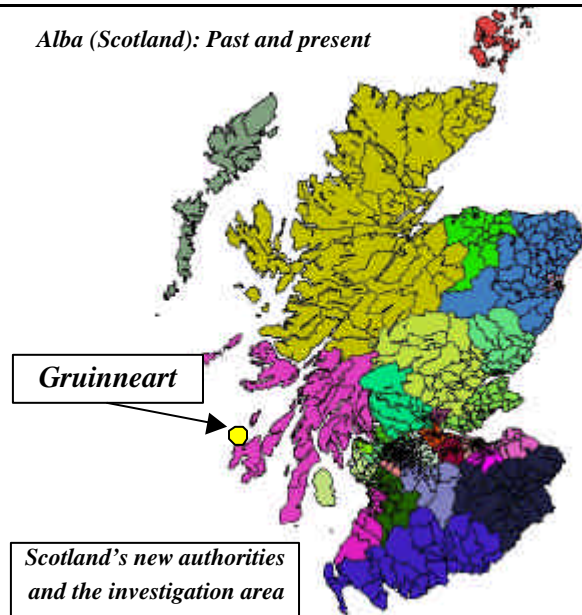
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Ardnave, Kilnave, Garidh Eallabus, Leek Gruinart, Milton, Gruinart Farm, Grenial, Aoradh, Strath of Gruinart, Craigens, Corsapol, Coullabus & Erisaid)

Number of households: 75 **Population present at census night:** 356

Share of resident population (aged 3 years and over) speaking Gàidhlig: 97.6 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Argyll	Kilchoman	Kilchoman	1 2	1 - 9 1 - 10

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

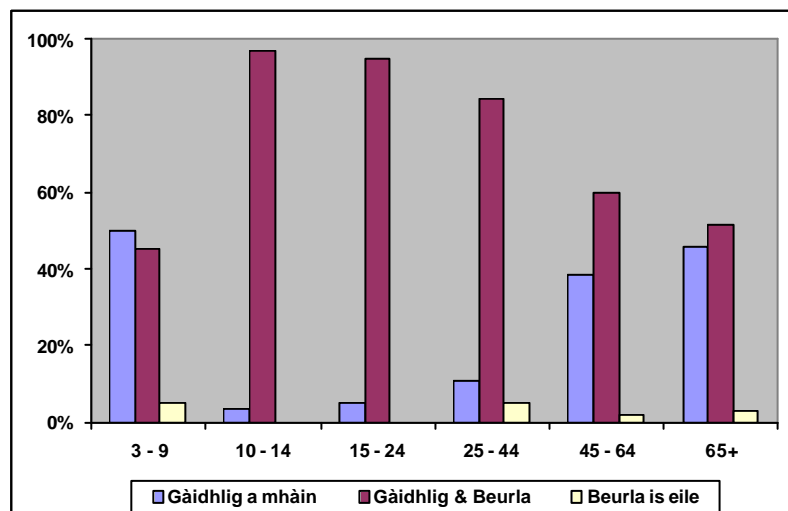
The local population of this island district was almost exclusively Gàidhlig speaking. Among the very young and the older generation many inhabitants did not speak English in 1891. The handful of English only” speakers in the district were found in three farmer families and two schoolmaster households all with Lowland connections.

In principle Gàidhlig was the dominant tongue in every location in the area but especially so in *Srath Ghruinneirt* (Strath of Gruinart) with 100 % of residents able to speak the traditional language of the island.

Area description:

The area is situated on the shores of *Loch Gruinneirt* (Loch Gruinart) in the centre of the Hebridean island of *Ile* (Islay) which was part of the ancient county of *Earra-Ghaidheal* (Argyll) in those days.

Main economic activity of the local population was farming and to some extent fishing. The majority of inhabitants were dependent fieldworkers on the local farms.



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 ¹	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Age								
Total	356	23	0	4	329	74	247	97.6 %
3-4	18		0	0	18	16	2	100 %
5-9	24		0	0	24	5	17	91.7 %
10-14	32		0	0	32	1	31	100 %
15-24	67		0	1	66	3	63	100 %
25-44	93		0	3	90	10	76	95.6 %
45-64	63		0	0	63	23	39	98.4 %
65+	36		0	0	36	16	19	97.2 %
Gender								
Female	173	14	0	1	158	39	113	96.2 %
Male	183	9	0	3	171	35	134	98.8 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	265	21	0	2	242	64	177	99.6 %
In neighbouring parish¹	55	2	0	0	53	9	43	98.1 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	9	0	0	0	9	1	8	100 %
Other places	27	0	0	2	25	0	19	76.0 %

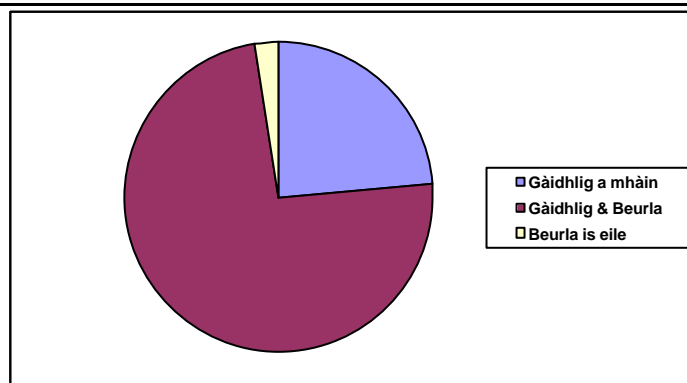
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Kildalton or Killarow & Kilmény (all 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 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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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Gruinneart	75	329	74	247	97.6 %
Individual communities					
<i>Àird Nèimh & Cill Nèimh</i> (Ardnave & Kilnave)	13	56	11	40	91.1 %
<i>Gearraidh Ealabus & Leac Gruinneirt</i> (Garidh Eallabus & Leek Gruinart)	10	41	11	30	100 %
<i>Baile a'Mhuilinn & Gruinneart</i> (Milton & Gruinart Farm)	9	38	8	28	94.7 %
<i>Grèineal & Bruach an Aoraidh</i> (Grenial & Aoradh)	10	51	11	39	98.0 %
<i>Srath Ghruinneirt</i> (Strath of Gruinart)	9	36	10	26	100 %
<i>Na Creagan & Corsapoll</i> (Craigens & Corsapol)	11	57	16	41	100 %
<i>Cùlabus & Earsaid</i> (Coullabus & Erisaid)	13	50	7	43	100 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	24	127	34	93	100 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	20	109	24	85	100 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	0	0	0	0	-
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	1	6	2	0	33.3 %
Households with no children (0-14)	30	87	14	69	95.4 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	28	144	21	117	95.8 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	3	15	2	13	100 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	1	4	0	3	75.0 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	9	31	4	26	96.8 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	0	0	0	0	-
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	34	135	47	88	100 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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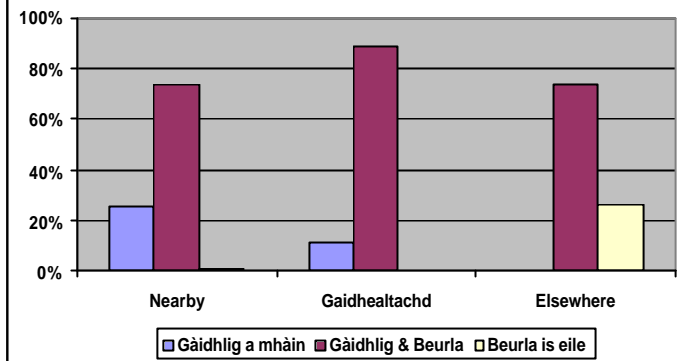
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

A quarter of people born nearby did not speak English. With the exception of some Lowland born residents people spoke Gàidhlig in this island district.

Notes:

¹ Born in the parishes of Kilchoman, Kildalton or Killarow & Kilmeny (all 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. Only eight residents were enumerated as not speaking Gàidhlig. Six were found in three farmer families with Lowland connections and the remaining two “English only” speakers in the district were a schoolmistress (from Dumfriesshire) and the wife of the local schoolmaster (from Boharm in Banffshire).
2. In original census report terms the district had a population of 356 persons of all ages. 251 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English” and 83 were counted as monolingual Gàidhlig speakers. This led to an “official” share of Gàidhlig speakers of 93.8 %. This figure was an under-estimate of 3.6 % compared with the more realistic figures taking into account only the usually resident population.