

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 014

Page 1 of 4

Area: *Gallaibh (Caithness): Achadh Liabost, Ogrinmore, Ogrinbeg, Tongueside, Caladal nan Gall, Leosag & Braehours*

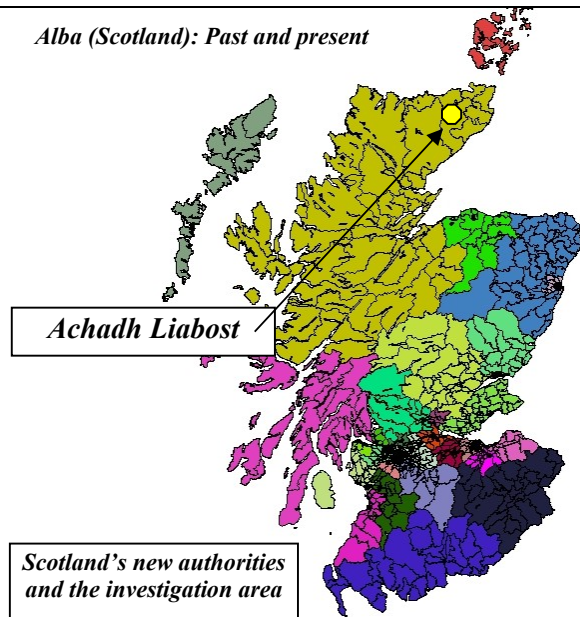
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Achlibster, Tongueside, Upper Tongueside, Scotscaelder Railway Station, Ogrinmore, Ogrinbeg, Leosag & Braehours)

Number of households: 35 Population present at census night: 179

Share of resident population (aged three years +) speaking *Gàidhlig*: 48.0 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Caithness	Halkirk	Halkirk	7 8	2(part)-3 1 – 8

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of *Gàidhlig* in 1891:

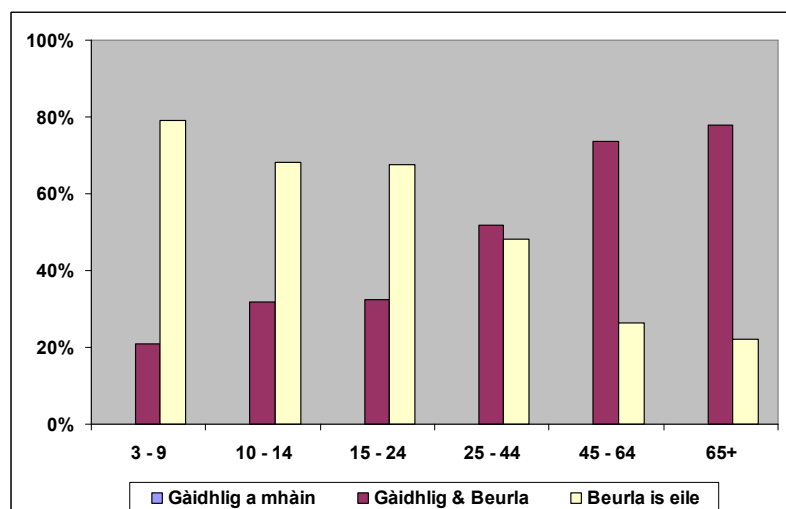
Almost half of the usually resident population of this district still spoke *Gàidhlig*. This was true also for locally born persons – contrary to the widely held belief that the tongue was alien to the county of *Gallaibh (Caithness)*.

Whereas older people were overwhelmingly *Gàidhlig*-speakers, only a minority of children spoke the traditional language. Men were more likely to speak *Gàidhlig* than women. The language was also very present among the farming families. The strongest *Gàidhlig*-speaking community in 1891 was the scattered hamlet of Ogrinmore with more than 50 %.

Area description:

The district described is situated in the heart of the north-eastern Scottish county of *Gallaibh (Caithness)* in the parish of *Hacraig (Halkirk)*. It encompasses a few scattered farming communities between *Achadh Liabost (Achlibster)* and Ogrinmore south-west of the larger town of *Baile Theòrsa (Thurso)*. Main occupations in the area were farming and other agriculturally connected assistances.

Please see the remark regarding the use of placenames in Caithness on page 4 of this factsheet!



Age profile: Share of population speaking (1) *Gàidhlig*, (2) *Gàidhlig & English*, or (3) no *Gàidhlig* at all

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 014

Page 2 of 4

Area: *Gallaibh (Caithness): Achadh Liabost, Ogrinmore, Ogrinbeg, Tongueside, Caladal nan Gall, Leosag & Braehours*

	Population enumerated				Usually resident population (3+)			
	Total	Aged 0-2	Deaf & dumb	Visitors etc. ³	Total ⁴	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Age								
Total	179	8	0	0	171	0	82	48.0 %
3-4	5		0	0	5	0	0	0.0 %
5-9	19		0	0	19	0	5	26.3 %
10-14	22		0	0	22	0	7	31.8 %
15-24	40		0	0	40	0	13	32.5 %
25-44	29		0	0	29	0	15	51.7 %
45-64	38		0	0	38	0	28	73.7 %
65+	18		0	0	18	0	14	77.8 %
Gender								
Female	87	3	0	0	84	0	36	42.9 %
Male	92	5	0	0	87	0	46	52.9 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	109	8	0	0	191	0	47	46.5 %
In neighbouring parish¹	59	0	0	0	59	0	31	52.5 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	4	0	0	0	4	0	4	100 %
Other places	7	0	0	0	7	0	0	0.0 %

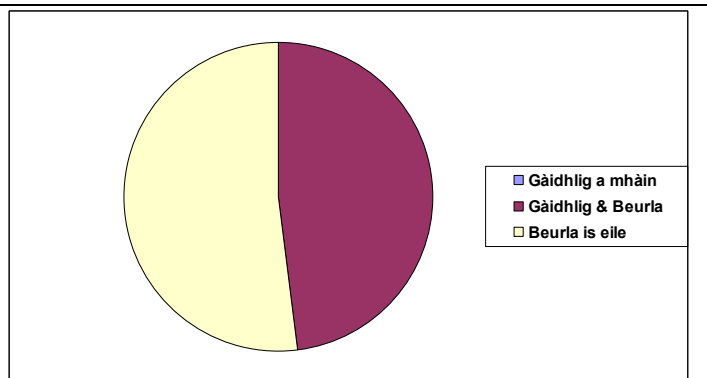
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Farr and Kildonan (Sutherland), Latheron, Bower, Reay, Watten and Thurso (all Caithness).

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.de/GLP_english.htm.

Alba 1891: *Gàidhlig* (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

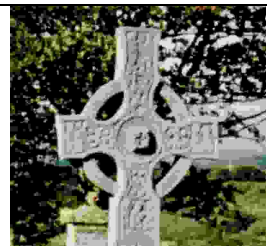
No. 014

Page 3 of 4

Area: *Gallaibh* (Caithness): *Achadh Liabost, Ogrinmore, Ogrinbeg, Tongueside, Caladal nan Gall, Leosag & Braehours*

	Households	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	<i>Gàidhlig</i>	<i>Gàidhlig</i> & English	<i>Gàidhlig</i> speakers (%)
<i>Achadh Liabost & Ogrinmore</i>	35	171	0	82	48.0 %
Individual communities					
<i>Achadh Liabost</i> (Achlibster)	7	27	0	13	48.1 %
<i>Tongueside & Caladal nan Gall</i> (Tongueside & Scotscalder)	10	42	0	15	35.7 %
<i>Ogrinmore</i> (Ogrinmore)	18	102	0	54	52.9 %
Language of parents					
Both parents <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	11	71	0	38	53.5 %
Single parent <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	4	17	0	9	52.9 %
One parent <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking	3	16	0	3	18.8 %
No <i>Gàidhlig</i> speaking parent	4	22	0	1	4.5 %
Households with no children (0-14)	13	45	0	31	68.9 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	21	123	0	58	47.2 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	5	22	0	13	59.1 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	2	4	0	1	25.0 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	1	4	0	1	25.0 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	0	0	0	0	-
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	6	18	0	9	50.0 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

© Text and statistics: Copyright Kurt C. Duwe. All rights reserved except private and non-commercial use. Any other use has to be cleared by the author Kurt C. Duwe, Jägerstr. 120a, 21079 Hamburg, Germany (duwe@linguae-celticae.de) and it may also fall under restrictions of the Crown Copyright of census data. Statistics have been derived from 1891 census returns published by the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS). The use of this material here is permitted under Licence No. C02W0003665. Crown Copyright of census data is acknowledged. The digital boundaries shown on the Scotland map are courtesy of Ordnance Survey as part of the Geography Products provided by GROS. Additional individual profiles may be downloaded from a special page on the Linguae Celticae website: http://www.linguae-celticae.de/GLP_english.htm



Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 014

Page 4 of 4

Area: *Gallaibh (Caithness): Achadh Liabost, Ogrinmore, Ogrinbeg, Tongueside, Caladal nan Gall, Leosag & Braehours*

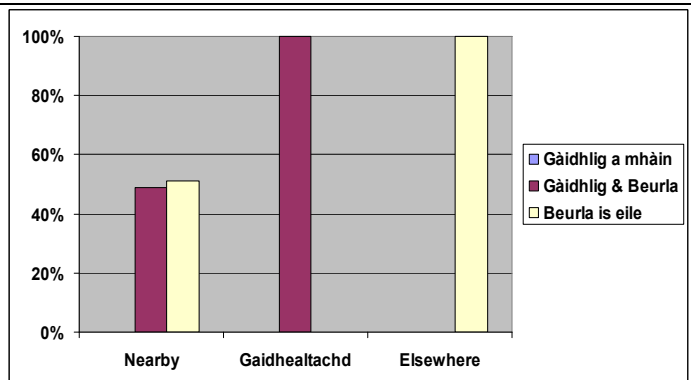
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

Almost 50% of nearby born residents spoke Gàidhlig. Those born in the wider *Gaidhealtachd* all spoke Gàidhlig. In contrast no-one of those with a birthplace elsewhere was found to speak the traditional language.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Halkirk or in the parishes of Farr, Kildonan (Sutherland), Reay, Bower, Latheron, Watten and Thurso (all Caithness).

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. In original census report terms, the district had a population of 179 persons of all ages. 59 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English”. This led to an “official” share of Gàidhlig speakers of 33.0 %. This figure was a very substantial underestimate of 15.0 % compared with the more realistic figures considering only the usually resident population. The difference was mainly caused by the misinterpretation of several entries in the language column of the registration sheets. Marks like – “ “ – were apparently counted erroneously as “no entry” by the enumerator.
2. There are many names of settlements in Caithness – even in the west of the county – where no distinct Gàidhlig placenames have been ascertained or documented. This does not mean that there were no Gàidhlig descriptions by the local inhabitants. Often some parts of names suggest at least a partially Gàidhlig topographic description like “ach-“, “dun-“, “brae-“, “knock-“, or “bal-“. However, the names used on Ordnance Survey maps are used in these factsheets.