

# Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 050

Page 1 of 4

**Area:** *Srath Athfhinn (Strath Avon): Drochaid Bhruthainn, Baile a'Mhuilinn, Cnocan Buidhe, Allt na h-Àtha, Loinn, Ruadhainn, Inbhir Lòchaidh, Foirleitir, Na Torranan, Tom Breac, Drochaid Athfhinn, Achadh Leacnaidh, Baile an Leis, An Dail & Àird Gaoithe*

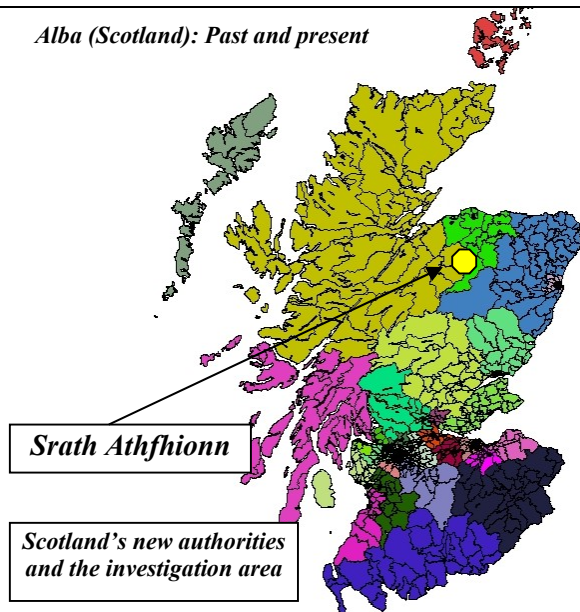
(Names of locations on census forms: Milltown, Balnalon, Kinardochoy, Balrannoch, Mains, Mains Cottage, Knock, Knockanbui, Lackanlean, Altnaha, Lyne, Slocktown, Chord Cottage, Inverlochy, Delvrict, Balneden, Balnalochan, Fodderletter, Lyngarvie, Torrans, Stroncharvy, Tombreck, Tomachlaggan, Ruthven, Strathavon Lodge, Bridge of Avon, Urlarmore, Campdelmore, Auchlichnie, Ballintruhan, Ballinlish, Ballcorrach, Dell, Altaglander, Ardgeith)

**Number of households:** 57      **Population present at census night:** 276

**Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig:** 34.9 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Banff	Kirkmichael	Kirkmichael	1	1 - 4
			2	1 - 3
			3	1 - 3
			4	1 - 5
			5	1 - 5
			6	1 - 6

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



## State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

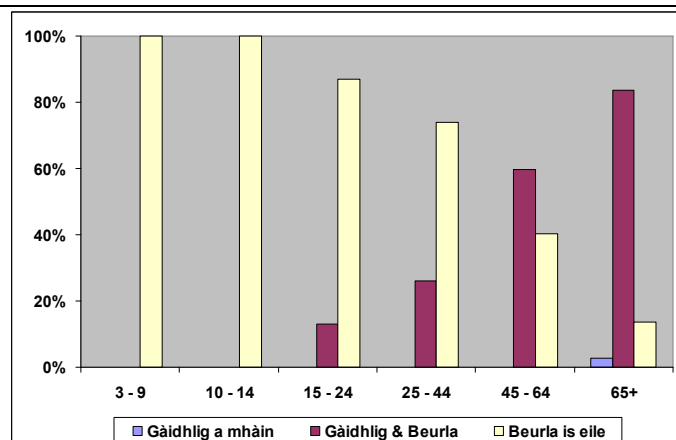
More than a third of the usually resident population still spoke Gàidhlig. The language was spoken by the majority of all persons older than 45. Accordingly, it can be assumed that intergenerational language transmission had seized in this district roughly in the 1850s. On the other hand, no school aged children were returned as speaking Gàidhlig.

Gàidhlig-speakers were most prominent in the dwellings of *Sròn a'Charbhaigh* (Stroncharvie) and *Tom Breac* (Tombreck) with over 57 % of inhabitants speaking the traditional language.

## Area description:

The district covers the rural part of the parish of *Baile Mhicheil* (Kirkmichael) north of the village of *Tom an t-Sabhail* (Tomintoul) in the mountainous part of the county of *Banbh* (Banff).

The human settlements consisted of scattered farm houses and crofts on both banks of the middle course of *Abhainn Athfhinn* (River Avon).



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

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No. 050

Page 2 of 4

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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>276</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>34.9 %</b>
<b>3-4</b>	<b>13</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0 %</b>
<b>5-9</b>	<b>19</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0 %</b>
<b>10-14</b>	<b>24</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0 %</b>
<b>15-24</b>	<b>38</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13.2 %</b>
<b>25-44</b>	<b>74</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>26.1 %</b>
<b>45-64</b>	<b>59</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>59.6 %</b>
<b>65+</b>	<b>39</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>86.5 %</b>
<b>Gender</b>								
<b>Female</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>35.2 %</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>34.6 %</b>
<b>Place of birth</b>								
<b>Born in parish</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>37.9 %</b>
<b>In neighbouring parish<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>46</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>40.5 %</b>
<b>Gaidhealtachd elsewhere<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>36.4 %</b>
<b>Other places</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12.1 %</b>

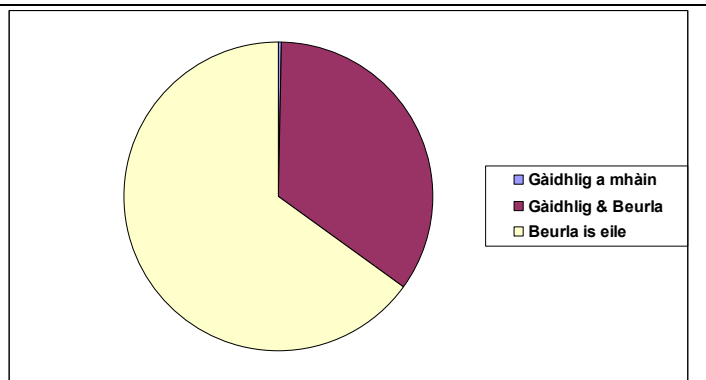
## Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Parishes of Inveravon (Banff/Moray); Cromdale, Inverallan & Advie (Moray), Abernethy & Kincardine (Inverness), Crathie & Braemar and Strathdon (Aberdeen).

<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.de/GLP\\_english.htm](http://www.linguae-celticae.de/GLP_english.htm).

# Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 050

Page 3 of 4

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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<b><i>Srath Athfhionn</i></b>	<b>57</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>34.9 %</b>
<b>Individual communities</b>					
<b><i>Baile a'Mhuilinn &amp; Cnocan Buidhe (Milton &amp; Knockanbuie)</i></b>	<b>8</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>41.7 %</b>
<b><i>Allt na h-Àtha &amp; Loinn (Altnaha &amp; Lyne)</i></b>	<b>6</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>32.1 %</b>
<b><i>Drochaid Bhruthainn &amp; Inbhir Lòchaidh (Bridge of Brown &amp; Inverlochy)</i></b>	<b>8</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>41.9 %</b>
<b><i>Foirleitir &amp; Na Torranan (Fodderletter &amp; Torrans)</i></b>	<b>7</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>39.5 %</b>
<b><i>Sròn a'Charbhaigh &amp; Tom Breac (Stroncharvie &amp; Tombreck)</i></b>	<b>5</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>57.9 %</b>
<b><i>Ruadhainn &amp; Drochaid Athfhinn (Ruthven &amp; Bridge of Avon)</i></b>	<b>10</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>26.1 %</b>
<b><i>Achadh Leacnaidh &amp; Baile an Leis (Achlichnie &amp; Ballenlish)</i></b>	<b>13</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>24.6 %</b>
<b>Language of parents</b>					
<b>Both parents Gàidhlig speaking</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>40.7 %</b>
<b>Single parent Gàidhlig speaking</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>38.9 %</b>
<b>One parent Gàidhlig speaking</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>16.7 %</b>
<b>No Gàidhlig speaking parent</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0 %</b>
<b>Households with no children (0-14)</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>47.6 %</b>
<b>Occupation of head of household</b>					
<b>Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>36.5 %</b>
<b>Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>28.6 %</b>
<b>Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>38.5 %</b>
<b>Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16.7 %</b>
<b>Living on private means</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Manager, coachman, cook, etc.</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0 %</b>
<b>Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>48.6 %</b>
<b>Remaining occupations</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>

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Page 4 of 4

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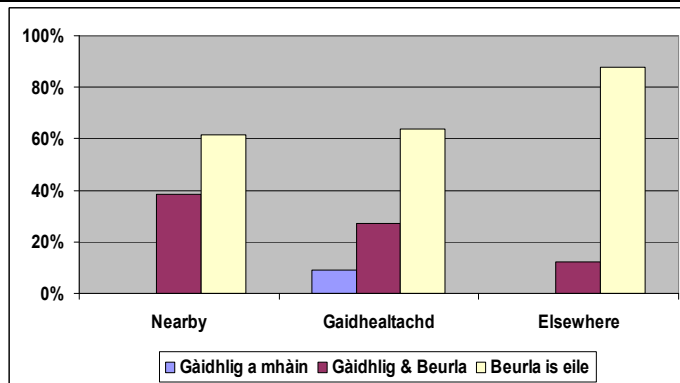
## Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

Almost 40 % of people born nearby still spoke Gàidhlig. This was a share similar to the one among those residents born in other parts of the *Gaidhealtachd*.

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Born either in Kirkmichael or in the adjacent parishes of Inveravon (Banff); Cromdale, Inverallan & Advie (Moray), Abernethy & Kincardine (Inverness), Crathie & Braemar and Strathdon (Aberdeen).

<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 a 66-year-old woman was returned as speaking “Gaelic only”. She was married to a local crofter and water bailiff. Her birthplace, however, was located on *An t-Eilean Sgitheanach* (Isle of Skye)
2. In original census report terms, the district had a population of 276 persons of all ages. 90 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English” and one return was counted as monolingual Gàidhlig speaker. This led to an “official” share of Gàidhlig speakers of 33.0 %. This was a small under-estimate of 1.9 %!