

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 051

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Area: *Àth Tharracail* (Acharacle): *Rèiseapol, An t-Sailean, An Tairbeart, Camas Aonghuis, Camas Forsa, Làga, Gleann Bhorghdail & Gleann Beag*

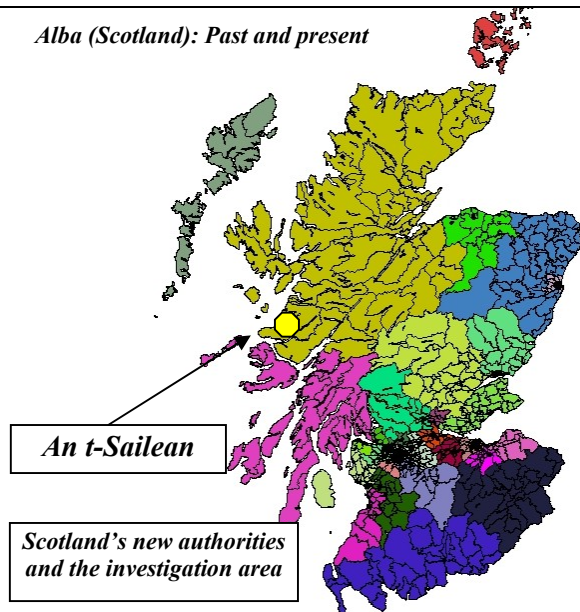
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Resipole, Refollan, Salen, Tarbet, Camunias, Camusforsa, Laga, Innisforag, Glenborrodale & Glenbeg)

Number of households: 35 **Population present at census night:** 174

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 55.5 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Argyll	Ardnamurchan	Aharacle	7	1 – 8

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

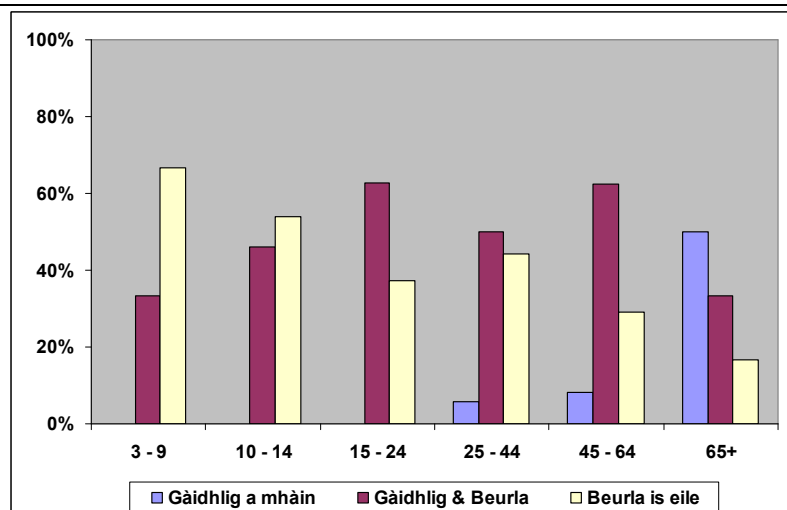
The Gàidhlig speaking intensity in this district was astonishingly low in 1891 compared with the adjacent areas. The census material suggests that especially 46 “English only” returns from eight families (mostly notables like hotel keeper, teachers, medical practitioners) were reason for this unusual result.

This “anglophone” society was based in the locations of *Gleann Bhorghdail* (Glenborrodale) and *An t-Sailean* (Salen). In contrast people from *Làga* (Laga) or *Camas Forsa* (Camusforsa) were overwhelmingly Gàidhlig speaking.

Area description:

The district described forms the southern part of the old parish of *Àth Tharracail* (Acharacle) within the north-western corner of *Earra-Ghaidheal* (Argyll).

Many inhabitants of the tiny settlements between *Gleann Beag* (Glenbeg) and *Rèiseapol* (Resipol) were occupied with crofting. The remainder of the inhabitants were mostly engaged in activities concerned with the local estates of Sunart and Ardnamurchan.



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 ⁴	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Age								
Total	174	9	0	1	164	10	81	55.5 %
3-4	7		0	0	7	0	1	14.3 %
5-9	26		0	0	26	0	10	38.5 %
10-14	26		0	0	26	0	12	46.2 %
15-24	35		0	0	35	0	22	62.9 %
25-44	35		0	1	34	2	17	55.9 %
45-64	24		0	0	24	2	15	70.8 %
65+	12		0	0	12	6	4	83.3 %
Gender								
Female	95	4	0	0	91	6	40	50.5 %
Male	79	5	0	1	72	4	41	61.6 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	109	6	0	0	103	8	52	58.3 %
In neighbouring parish¹	17	1	0	0	16	2	10	75.0 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	24	0	0	0	24	0	18	75.0 %
Other places	24	2	0	1	21	0	1	4.8 %

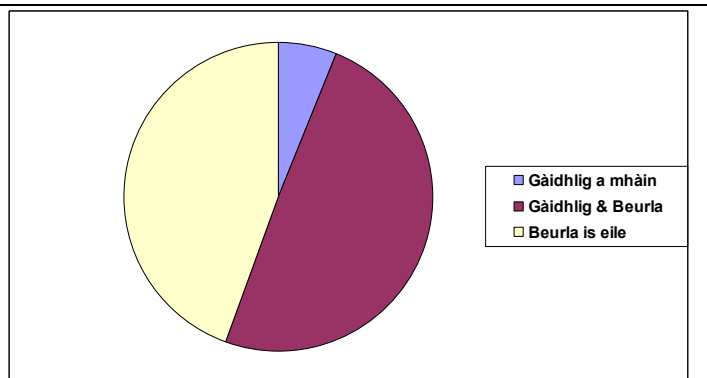
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Ardgour, Morvern (both Argyll); Arisaig & Moidart, Kilmallie (all Inverness).

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.

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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>An t-Sailean & Gleann Bhorghdail</i>	35	164	10	81	55.5 %
Individual communities					
<i>Gleann Beag & Camas Forsa</i> (Glenbeg & Camusforsa)	3	5	3	2	100 %
<i>Gleann Bhorghdail</i> (Glenborrodale)	9	47	0	21	44.7 %
<i>Làga</i> (Laga)	3	12	2	9	91.7 %
<i>An t-Sailean</i> (Salen)	16	80	4	42	57.5 %
<i>Rèiseapol</i> (Resipol)	4	20	1	7	40.0 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	10	62	1	52	85.5 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	4	21	0	16	76.2 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	2	10	0	3	30.0 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	8	47	0	1	2.1 %
Households with no children (0-14)	11	24	9	9	75.0 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	4	22	0	9	40.9 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	5	31	1	16	54.8 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	4	16	0	6	37.5 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	8	38	1	25	68.4 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	3	16	0	5	31.3 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	11	41	8	20	68.5 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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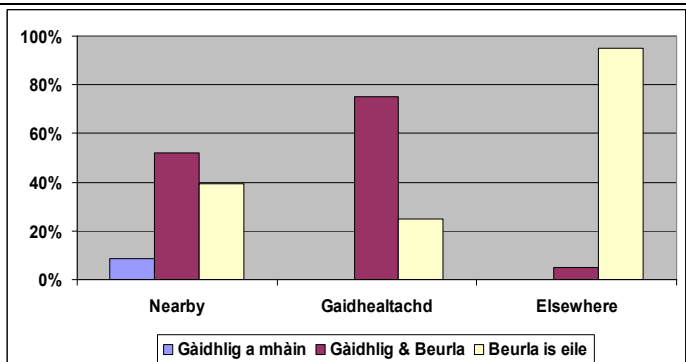
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

People born outside the *Gaidhealtachd* were very unlikely able to speak *Gàidhlig*. However, there was also a significant portion of the locally born population speaking only English.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Ardnamurchan or in the adjacent parishes of Ardgour, Morvern (both Argyll); Arisaig & Moidart, Kilmallie (all Inverness).

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. Ten persons were returned as not speaking English. All were older than 24 years of age.
2. Many residents did not speak *Gàidhlig*. Major factors in this unusual result (by Highland standards) were the returns from several households headed by notables like police constables, teachers, or medical practitioners.
3. In original census report terms, the district had a population of 174 persons of all ages. 80 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English” and 10 were counted as monolingual *Gàidhlig* speakers. This led to an “official” share of *Gàidhlig* speakers of 51.7 %. This was an under-estimate of 3.8 %!