

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 100

Page 1 of 4

Area: *Gleann Athfhinn & Gleann Conghlais (Glen Avon & Glen Conglass): Crothaigh, Innis Ceap, Dail nam Bò, Am Baile Beag, Dail a'Mhorair, Iomair nan Gall, An Tòrr Bàn, Innis Ruairidh, Lagan an Uilt, Lagan a'Mhuilinn, Blàr nam Marbh, Ruigh nam Mart & An Leac*

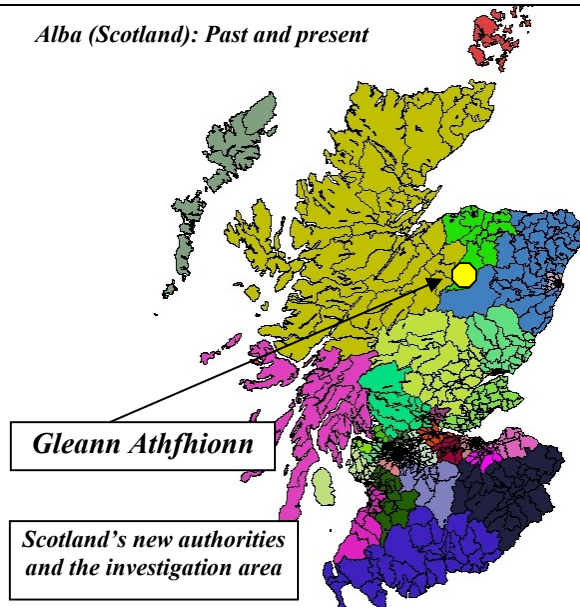
(Names of locations on census forms: Blackhaughs, Inverchor, Ellick, Bulbain, Glenconglass, Croughly, Inchcape, Blairwick, Whitehouse, Upper Cults, Fordmouth, Delnabo, Bellabeg, Delavorar, Ballintomb, Gaulrigg, Ballcruach, Delvechan, Torbain, Delechte, Inchrory, Lagganauld, St. Bridget, Milton, Knockanvae, Auchriechan, Lagganvoulin, Delnalyne, Glenmulie, Casfuar, Lynavoir, Lecht, Blairnamarrow, Rhynamarst, Delachule, Aultachbeg, Findron & Bellavlair)

Number of households: 55 Population present at census night: 261

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 22.1 %

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

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



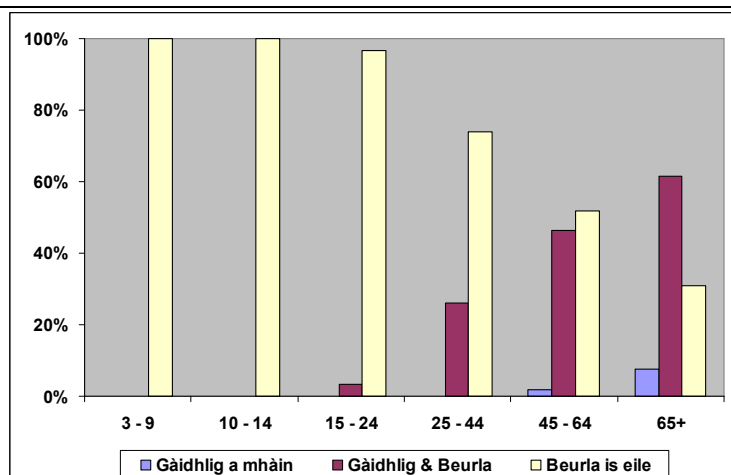
State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

More than 20 % of the usually resident population in this area still spoke Gàidhlig. This comparatively low percentage hides the significant strength of the language in individual communities like *Iomair nan Gall* (Gaulrigg) and *Innis Ruairidh* (Inchrory) where over 70 % of inhabitants spoke the traditional tongue.

The language community as a whole, however, was relatively old aged with no children below the age of 15 found to speak Gàidhlig. It can be assumed that the language generally ceased to be used in the raising of children in the area around 1860.

Area description:

The district described lies north and east of the small village of *Tom an t-Sabhail* (Tomintoul) in the mountainous part of the old county of *Banbh* (Banff). The communities included very small and scattered dwellings in *Gleann Conghlais* (Glen Conglass), the narrow glen leading to the mountain pass of *An Leac* (Lecht) and of course remote *Gleann Athfhinn* (Glen Avon) itself. People were occupied mainly with some farming and a few services for the local lairds including game keeping.



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

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

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Page 2 of 4

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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	261	14	0	21	226	2	48	22.1 %
3-4	10		0	1	9	0	0	0.0 %
5-9	25		0	5	20	0	0	0.0 %
10-14	28		0	10	18	0	0	0.0 %
15-24	64		0	2	62	0	2	3.2 %
25-44	50		0	0	50	0	13	26.0 %
45-64	56		0	2	54	1	25	48.1 %
65+	14		0	1	13	1	8	69.2 %
Gender								
Female	132	8	0	8	116	2	24	22.4 %
Male	129	6	0	13	110	0	24	21.8 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	177	13	0	3	161	0	34	21.1 %
In neighbouring parish¹	20	0	0	1	19	1	5	31.6 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	21	0	0	1	20	1	7	40.0 %
Other places	43	1	0	16	26	0	2	7.7 %

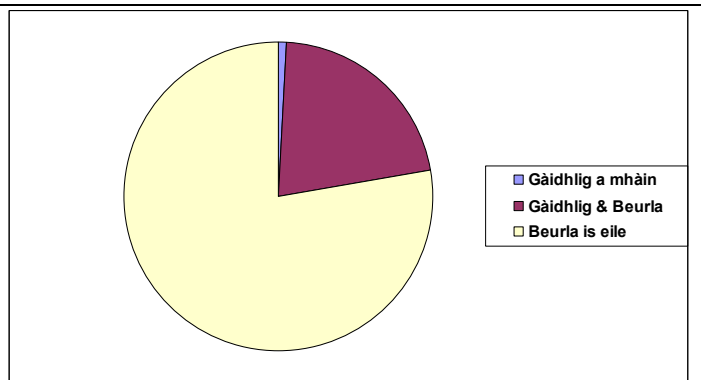
Notes:

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

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 factsheets 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

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Page 3 of 4

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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Gleann Athfhionn & Gl. Conghlais</i>	55	226	2	48	22.1 %
Individual communities					
<i>Gleann Conghlais & Innis Ceap (Glen Conglass & Inchcape)</i>	14	65	0	7	10.8 %
<i>Dail nam Bò & Cill Bhrìghde (Delnabo & St. Bridget)</i>	6	37	0	1	2.7 %
<i>Am Baile Beag & Dail a'Mhorair (Bellabeg & Delavorar)</i>	4	16	1	6	43.8 %
<i>Iomair nan Gall & Innis Ruairidh (Gaulrigg & Inchrory)</i>	10	28	0	20	71.4 %
<i>Lagan a'Mhuilinn (Lagganvullin)</i>	11	46	1	8	19.6 %
<i>An Leac & Blàr nam Marbh (Lecht & Blairnamarrow)</i>	10	34	0	6	17.6 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	2	13	0	6	46.2 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	4	16	0	6	37.5 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	3	26	0	3	11.5 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	16	77	0	0	0.0 %
Households with no children (0-14)	30	94	2	33	37.2 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	31	162	1	31	19.8 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	6	12	0	6	50.0 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	0	0	0	0	-
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	5	14	1	2	21.4 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	0	0	0	0	-
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	13	38	0	9	23.7 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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Page 4 of 4

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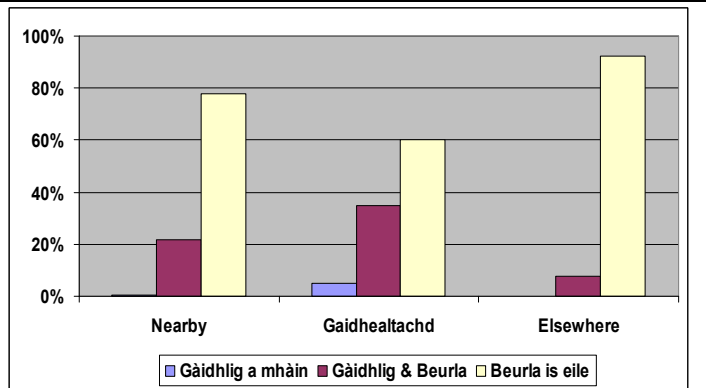
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

A significant part of the locally born population still spoke Gàidhlig. Those born outside of the *Gaidhealtachd* were almost totally non-Gàidhlig speaking.

Notes:

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

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 two women in the district spoke “only Gaelic”: A 68-year-old crofter’s widow in *Dail a'Mhorair* (Delavorar) born in neighbouring *Obar Neithich* (Abernethy) and a mason’s wife (56 years of age) in *Lagan a'Mhuilinn* (Lagganvullin). The latter was born on the west coast in the parish of *Arasaig* (Arisaig) and had been wrongly counted in the census calculations as speaking Gàidhlig as well as English.
2. In original census report terms, the district had a population of 261 persons of all ages. 52 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 20.3 %. This was a small under-estimate of 1.8 %!