

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 134

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Area: *Taobh Loch Nis: Baile a'Chreagain, Obar Itheachan, Am Baile Mòr, An t-Achadh, Caiplich, Leth Allt, Loch Laide, An t-Achadh Buidhe*

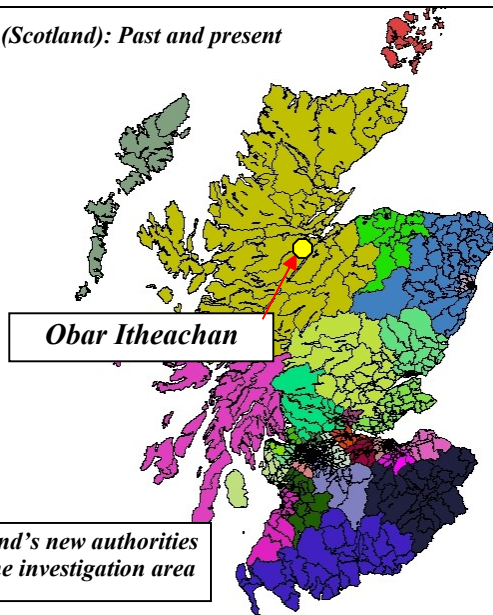
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Caiplich, Altuarie, Achadh, Lochlait, Leault, Balchraggan, Corriefoyness, Abriachan Wood, Achullin, Achbuie & Balmore)

Number of households: 57 **Population present at census night:** 260

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 97.9 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Inverness-shire	Inverness & Bona	Inverness	29	1 - 12

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

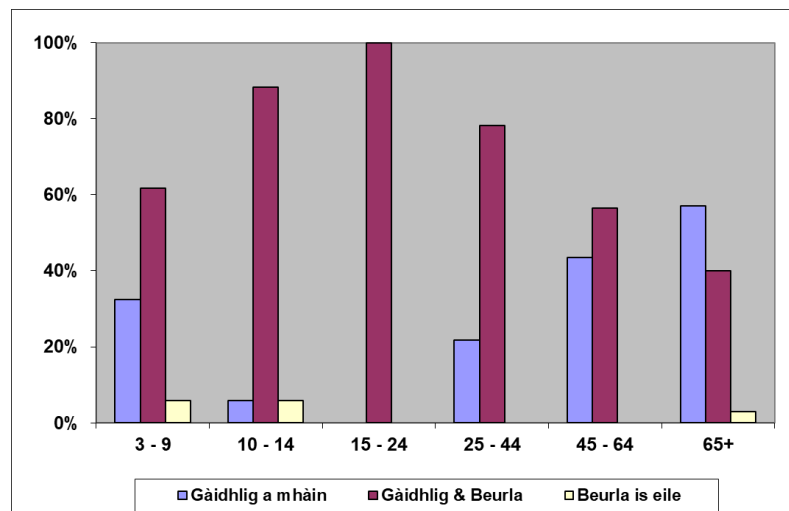
Despite the relative proximity of the town of *Inbhirnis* (Inverness), *Gàidhlig* was still spoken by almost everyone in this rural community (97.9 % of the usually resident population). *Obar Itheachan* (Abriachan) was a strong *Gàidhlig* speaking area then in the strictest sense in Scotland.

A very substantial part of the population did not speak English in 1891, apart of course from the school-aged generation. In the age-group of persons older than 64 years, *Gàidhlig* monoglots were still in the majority.

Area description:

The district around the woods of *Obar Itheachan* (Abriachan) is a very remote part of the otherwise affluent parish of *Inbhirnis & Am Banna* (Inverness & Bona). The area is situated in hilly country above the western shores of *Loch Nis* (Loch Ness).

The inhabitants lived in scattered dwellings and were mainly occupied with farming or crofting activities.



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	260	5	1	20	234	63	166	97.9 %
3-4	7	0	0	1	6	3	3	100.0 %
5-9	31	0	0	3	28	8	18	92.9 %
10-14	40	0	0	6	34	2	30	94.1 %
15-24	40	0	0	1	39	0	39	100.0 %
25-44	47	0	0	1	46	10	36	100.0 %
45-64	53	0	0	7	46	20	26	100.0 %
65+	37	0	1	1	35	20	14	97.1 %
Gender								
Female	150	4	1	11	134	34	96	97.0 %
Male	110	1	0	9	100	29	70	99.0 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	221	5	1	17	198	60	135	98.5 %
In neighbouring parish¹	22	0	0	0	22	2	20	100.0 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	14	0	0	1	13	1	10	84.6 %
Other places	3	0	0	2	1	0	1	100.0 %

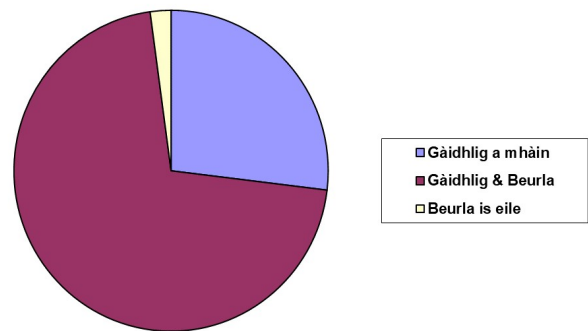
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Kirkhill, Kiltarlity & Convinth, Dore, Petty, Daviot & Dunlichity, Urquhart & Glenmoriston (all Inverness-shire).

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.

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	Households	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Taobh Loch Nis: Obar Itheachan</i>	57	234	63	166	97.9 %
Individual communities					
<i>Caiplich & Leth Allt</i> (Caiplich & Leault)	29	117	41	71	95.7 %
<i>Obar Itheachan & Baile a'Chreagain</i> (Abriachan & Balchraggan)	16	70	7	63	100.0 %
<i>Am Baile Mòr & An t-Achadh Buidhe</i> (Balmore & Achbuie)	12	47	15	32	100.0 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	20	123	29	90	96.7 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	4	12	4	8	100.0 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	0	0	0	0	0.0 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	0	0	0	0	0.0 %
Households with no children (0-14)	33	99	30	68	99.0 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	41	181	51	129	99.4 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	1	7	2	5	100.0 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	3	16	0	12	75.0 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	5	18	5	13	100.0 %
Living on private means	2	2	2	0	100.0 %
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	0	0	0	0	-
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	5	10	3	7	100.0 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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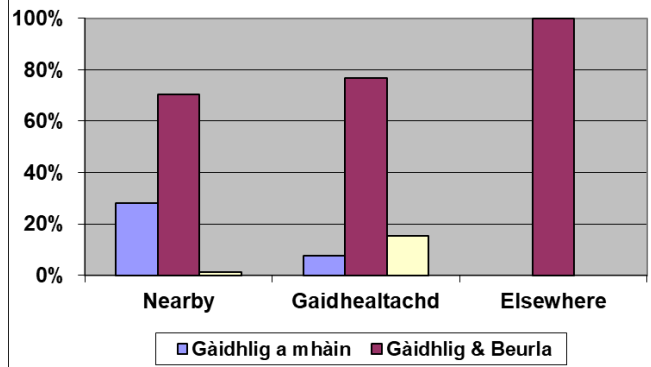
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

The language was spoken by almost anyone irrespective of birthplace.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Inverness & Bona or in the adjacent parishes of Kirkhill, Kiltarlity & Convinth, Urquhart & Glenmoriston, Daviot & Dunlichity, Dores or Petty.

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. There were only 5 residents recorded with no *Gàidhlig*. Three of these lived in the household of the local schoolmaster in *Leth Allt* (Leault): Two of the youngest children (aged 10 and 13 years) and a servant's daughter aged 8 years. According to birthplace the teachers' family originated from *Taobh Sear Rois* (Easter Ross) and as such from a less *Gàidhlig* background.
2. The other "English only" entrants were a retired teacher's wife (born in *Rathais* (Rothies)) and an 8-years-old farmer's daughter. The latter had "*Gàidhlig* only" parents, therefore this census record seems to be a bit strange.
3. Official census figures reported 162 bilingual inhabitants and 68 monolingual *Gàidhlig*-speakers out of a total population of 260 persons (96.2 %). The usually resident population, however, consisted of 229 *Gàidhlig*-speakers (97.9 %) including 63 inhabitants "with no English".