

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 176

Page 1 of 4

Area: *Loch Abar (Lochaber): Magh Siorlaich, Torr a'Chaisteil, An t-Sròn, Gleann Laoigh, Achadh na Càiridh, Na Cluainean, Loch Airceig, Gleann Airceig, Gleann Deisearaidh*

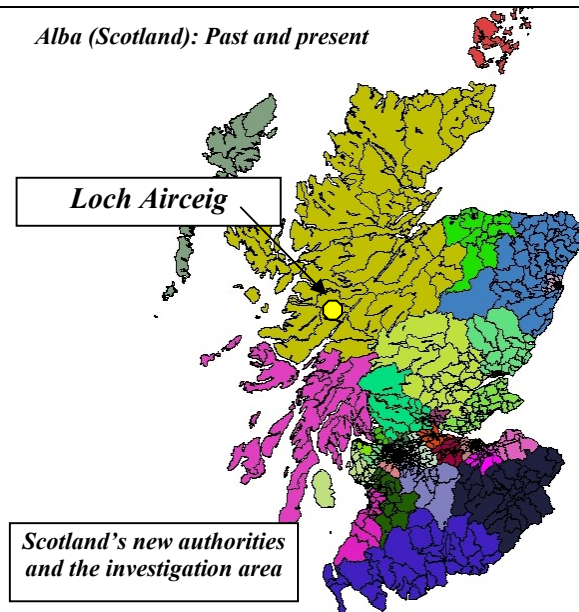
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Muirshearlich, Torcastle, Strone, Moy, Erracht, Putachan, Achnellan, Glenmallie, Achnacarry, Bunarkaig, Clunes, Corriebuie, Muirlaggan, Achnasaul, Glendessary)

Number of households: 66 **Population present at census night:** 347

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 81.4 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Inverness-shire	Kilmallie	Kilmallie	7	1 - 6
			8 + 9	1 - 5 + 1
			10	1 - 2
			11	1 - 2
			14	5 - 8

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

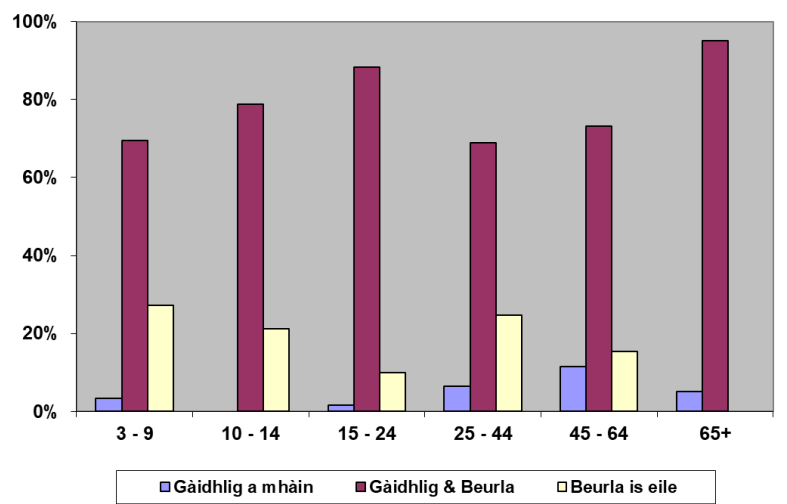
Most of the locally born and raised inhabitants still spoke Gàidhlig. Even a few did not speak English, mostly at pre-school age or as older people.

The relatively high proportion of English monoglots in the census was superficially high. The vast portion of these speakers lived and worked at Achnacarry House as gardeners, drivers, kitchen servants, cooks, and of course as household heads with no connection and/or affection to the local culture.

Area description:

The region under investigation comprises the mountainous country west of the *Abhainn Lòchaidh* (River Lochy) in the southern part of the *Gleann Mòr* (Great Glen). This was almost exclusively in the hand of wealthy landlords at the time.

Accordingly, most of the inhabitants were engaged in one way or another with gamekeeping, shepherding or simply servicing their lairds like the ones living in the mansion of Achnacarry House. In the once populous glens of *Airceig* and *Deisearadh* only a handful of gamekeepers remained.



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. 176

Page 2 of 4

Area: *Loch Abar (Lochaber): Magh Siorlaich, Torr a'Chaisteil, An t-Sròn, Gleann Laoigh, Achadh na Càiridh, Na Cluainean, Loch Airceig, Gleann Airceig, Gleann Deisearaidh*

	Population enumerated				Usually resident population (3+)			
	Total	Aged 0-2	Deaf & dumb	Visitors etc. ³	Total ⁴	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Age								
Total	347	24	0	22	301	15	230	81.4 %
3-4	18	0	0	0	18	0	14	77.8 %
5-9	42	0	0	1	41	2	27	70.7 %
10-14	33	0	0	0	33	0	26	78.8 %
15-24	70	0	0	10	60	1	53	90.0 %
25-44	84	0	0	7	77	5	53	75.3 %
45-64	54	0	0	2	52	6	38	84.6 %
65+	22	0	0	2	20	1	19	100.0 %
Gender								
Female	167	10	0	4	153	11	110	79.1 %
Male	180	14	0	18	148	4	120	83.8 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	181	21	0	7	153	8	138	95.4 %
In neighbouring parish¹	28	2	0	2	24	2	20	91.7 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	86	1	0	10	75	4	66	93.3 %
Other places	52	0	0	3	49	1	6	14.3 %

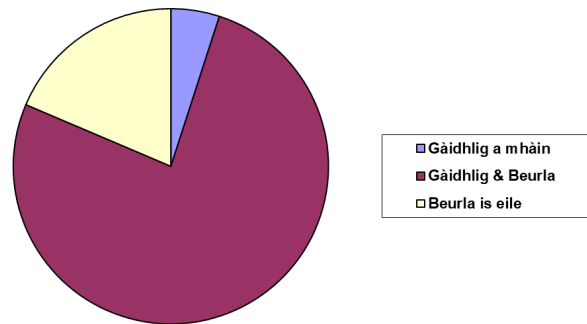
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Kilmonivaig, Arisaig & Moidart, Glenelg (all Inverness-shire) or Lismore & Appin (Argyll).

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 & Beurla, 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

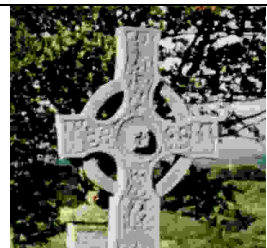
No. 176

Page 3 of 4

Area: *Loch Abar (Lochaber): Magh Siorlaich, Tòrr a'Chaisteil, An t-Sròn, Gleann Laoigh, Achadh na Càiridh, Na Cluainean, Loch Airceig, Gleann Airceig, Gleann Deisearaidh*

	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Gleann Laoigh & Loch Airceig</i>	66	301	15	230	81.4 %
Individual communities					
<i>Magh Siorlaich & Tòrr a'Chaisteil</i> (Muirshearlich & Torcastle)	18	58	1	52	91.4 %
<i>An t-Sròn & Gleann Laoigh</i> (Strone & Glen Loy)	10	60	0	53	88.3 %
<i>Gleann Mallaidh</i> (Glen Mallie)	4	31	0	31	100.0 %
<i>Achadh na Càiridh (An Taigh Mòr)</i> (Achnacarry House)	15	59	0	17	28.8 %
<i>Na Cluainean & Loch Airceig</i> (Clunes & Loch Arkaig)	9	42	8	32	95.2 %
<i>Gleann Airceig & Gleann Deisearaidh</i> (Glen Arkaig & Glen Dessarry)	10	51	6	45	100.0 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	28	174	5	164	97.1 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	3	11	5	6	100.0 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	1	4	0	3	75.0 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	6	47	0	6	12.8 %
Households with no children (0-14)	28	65	5	51	86.2 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	11	59	1	52	89.8 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	25	136	10	122	97.1 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	3	12	0	7	58.3 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	5	23	4	12	69.6 %
Living on private means	1	18	0	2	11.1 %
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	5	17	0	10	58.8 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	11	30	0	20	66.7 %
Remaining occupations	5	6	0	5	83.3 %

© 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. 176

Page 4 of 4

Area: *Loch Abar (Lochaber): Magh Siorlaich, Tòrr a'Chaisteil, An t-Sròn, Gleann Laoigh, Achadh na Càiridh, Na Cluainean, Loch Airceig, Gleann Airceig, Gleann Deisearaidh*

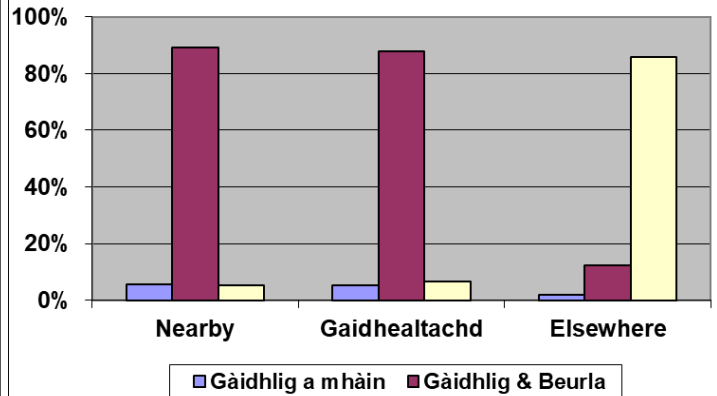
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

The language was commonly spoken by those born nearby or in the wider *Gaidhealtachd*. People born further away were far less likely to speak the language.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Kilmallie or in the adjacent parishes of Kilmonivaig, Arisaig & Moidart, Glenelg (all Inverness-shire) or Lismore & Appin (Argyll).

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. Official census figures reported 253 bilingual inhabitants and 15 monolingual *Gàidhlig*-speakers out of a total population of 348 persons (77.0%). The usually resident population of 301 inhabitants, however, consisted of 245 *Gàidhlig*-speakers (81.4%) including 15 inhabitants “with no English”.
2. The 56 census returns with “no Gaelic” (18.6 % of inhabitants) do not show the whole picture. The area was far more *Gàidhlig*-speaking as these figures suggest, because 42 English monoglots lived in or around the mansion of *Achadh na Càiridh* (Achnacarry).
3. The majority of the 15 “no English” counts, on the other hand, were found in the upper glens of *Airceig* and *Deisearaidh*.