

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 025

Page 1 of 4

Area: *Lios Mòr (Lismore): Port Ramasa, Am Baile Garbh, An Lagan, Baile nan Gobhann, Am Baile Ùr, A' Phàirc, Rubha Àird a' Ghaimhich & An Clachan*

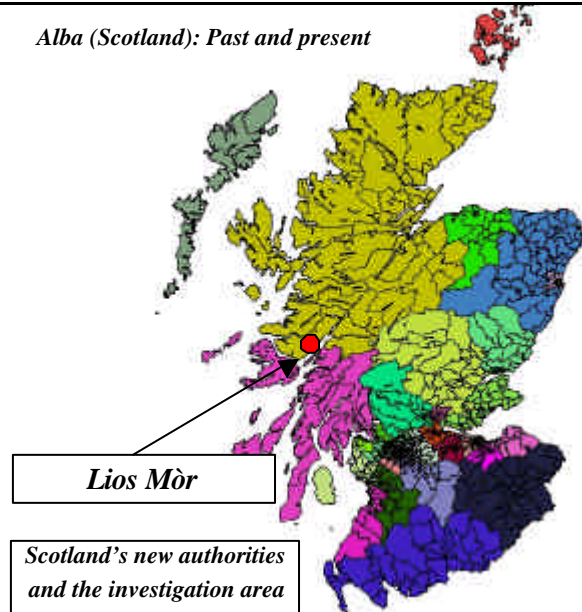
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Ballimackilichan, Bachuil, Baligarve, Achauran, Laggan, Port Ramsay, Balure, Balnagown, Rhuardganich, Park & Clachan)

Number of households: 68 **Population present at census night:** 272

Share of resident population (aged three years +) speaking Gàidhlig: 98.0 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Argyll	Lismore & Appin	Lismore	1	1 - 9
			2	1 - 3

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

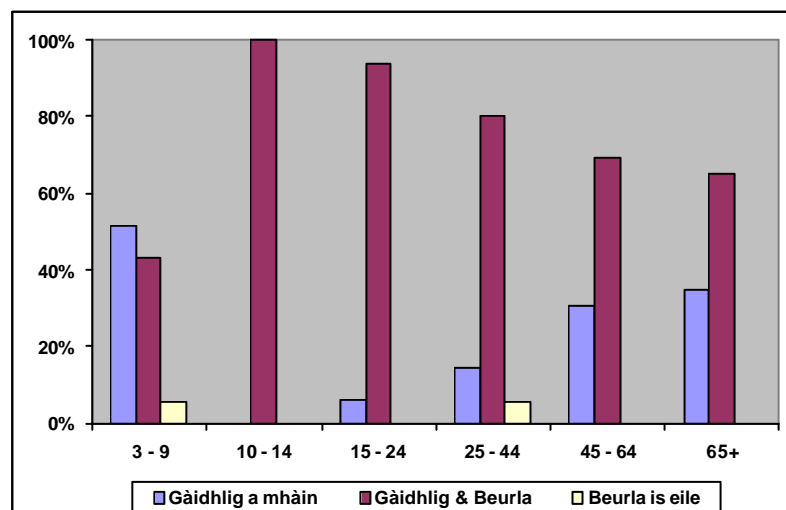
The usually resident population was almost exclusively speaking the traditional language. A significant part of the community did not even speak English – these monolingual speakers were to be found mainly among the elderly and the very young.

The only English monolingual family was headed by the school teacher. In those days it was very common to provide English monoglot teachers to schools where almost all pupils were monoglot Gàidhlig speakers!

Area description:

The area in question occupies the northern half of the island of *Lios Mòr* (Lismore) in the ancient county of *Earra-Ghaidheal* (Argyll). Major settlements were the small townships of *Port Ramasa* (Port Ramsay) and *Am Baile Garbh* (Baligarve).

People in this part of the island were mostly occupied with farming and related agricultural works.



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 ¹	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Age								
Total	272	18	0	2	252	59	188	98.0 %
3-4	11		0	0	11	5	5	90.9 %
5-9	27		0	1	26	14	11	96.2 %
10-14	35		0	0	35	0	35	100 %
15-24	33		0	0	33	2	31	100 %
25-44	55		0	0	55	8	44	94.5 %
45-64	50		0	1	49	15	34	100 %
65+	43		0	0	43	15	28	100 %
Gender								
Female	135	11	0	2	122	25	95	98.4 %
Male	137	7	0	0	130	34	93	97.7 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	232	18	0	2	212	55	155	99.1 %
In neighbouring parish¹	5	0	0	0	5	2	3	100 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	16	0	0	0	16	2	14	100 %
Other places	19	0	0	0	19	0	16	84.2 %

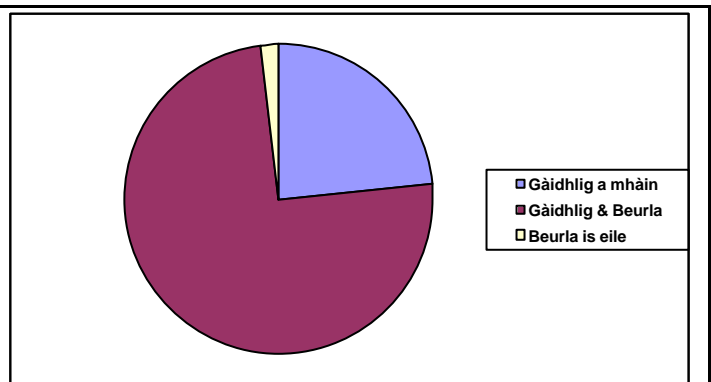
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Ardhattan & Muckairn, Glenorchy & Inishail (Argyll) and Kilmallie (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.org/GLP_english.htm.

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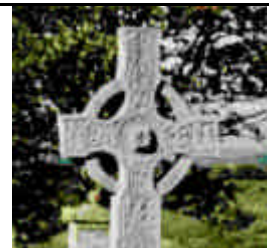
No. 025

Page 3 of 4

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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Lios Mòr (Taobh Tuath)	68	252	59	188	98.0 %
Individual communities					
<i>Am Baile Garbh</i> (Baligarve)	12	54	7	43	92.6 %
<i>Achadh Fhuaran</i> (Achaoran)	10	35	9	26	100 %
<i>An Lagan</i> (Laggan)	4	12	8	4	100 %
<i>Port Ramasa</i> (Port Ramsay)	19	67	17	50	100 %
<i>Am Baile Ùr</i> (Balure)	9	30	7	23	100 %
<i>Baile nan Gobhann</i> (Balnagown)	6	20	5	14	95.0 %
<i>An Clachan & A'Phàirc</i> (Clachan & Park)	8	34	6	28	100 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	22	110	20	89	99.1 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	12	47	16	31	100 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	0	0	0	0	-
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	1	6	0	2	33.3 %
Households with no children (0-14)	33	89	23	66	100 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	30	133	27	105	99.2 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	0	0	0	0	-
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	2	10	0	6	60.0 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	9	33	9	24	100 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	0	0	0	0	-
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	26	75	22	53	100 %
Remaining occupations	1	1	1	0	100 %

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Page 4 of 4

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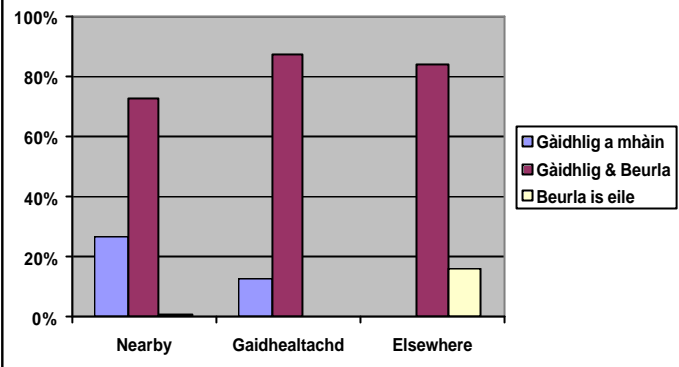
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

Gàidhlig monolingual persons were most frequently found in the locally born population. Apart from a handful of souls even Lowlanders spoke the language of the community.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Lismore & Appin or in the parishes of Ardchattan & Muckairn, Glenorchy & Inishail (Argyll) and Kilmallie (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. All persons except five in the area spoke *Gàidhlig*. This small group consisted of a farmers wife (born in Greenock) and four members of the teacher family. The latter was headed by an elementary teacher who originated from Kirriemuir.
2. In original census report terms the district had a population of 272 persons of all ages. 186 enumerated inhabitants spoke "Gaelic and English"; an additional number of 69 inhabitants spoke "Gaelic only". This led to an "official" share of *Gàidhlig* speakers of 93.8 %. This figure was still an under-estimate of 4.2 % because children below the age of three were included in the official population base. The language ability of these young children was not registered on the census sheets.