

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 046

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Area: *An t-Àrar (Arrochar): Àird Màigh, Monadh Lagain, Inbhir Crom, Coilleach, Taigh an Loin, Gleann Riabhach, Taigh na Cloiche, Gleann Loinn, Fascalaid & Taigh an Easa*

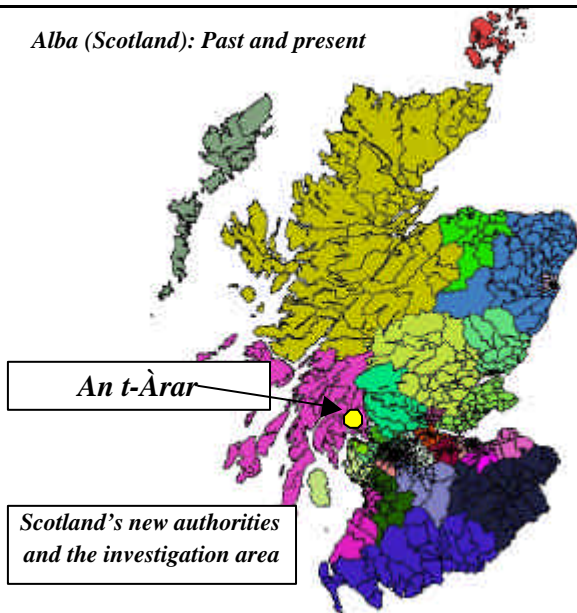
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Arrochar, Ardmay, Morelaggan, Invergrom, Golach, Tynloan, Glanreoch, Ballyhunan, Tynectan, Tynaclach, Glenloin, Stronafyne, Fascalaid, Tyness, Dail Daraich)

Number of households: 88 Population present at census night: 583

Share of resident population (aged 3 years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 29.9 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Dunbartonshire	Arrochar	Arrochar	1 2	1 – 7 (part) 7 - 25

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

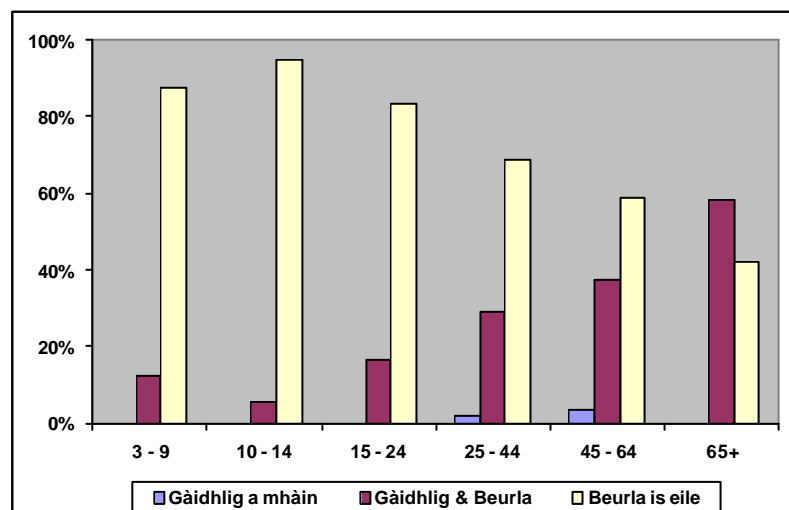
During the time of the census a large railway workforce was enumerated in this district which distorted the official census figures beyond recognition.

Looking at the usually resident population, however, the district emerged as a partly Gàidhlig-speaking area. In 1891 there was still a majority of speakers found among those older than 64 years of age. 24 % of those born in the parish spoke Gàidhlig – accordingly the language had been also in use among the local population.

Area description:

The district forms the western part of the parish of *An t-Àrar* (Arrochar) on the shores of *Loch Long*. The settlements belonged in those days to the county of *Dùn Breatainn* (Dumbarton).

The area experienced a great disruption just around the census date when hundreds of railway workers and engineers were busily engaged in the erection of the railway.



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 ⁵	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Age								
Total	583	20	0	289	274	4	78	29.9 %
3-4	15		0	2	13	0	1	7.7 %
5-9	38		0	11	27	0	4	14.8 %
10-14	30		0	12	18	0	1	5.6 %
15-24	135		0	99	36	0	6	16.7 %
25-44	211		0	118	93	2	27	31.2 %
45-64	97		0	41	56	2	21	41.1 %
65+	37		0	6	31	0	18	58.1 %
Gender								
Female	186	8	0	29	149	2	36	25.5 %
Male	397	12	0	260	125	2	42	35.2 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	119	13	0	6	100	0	24	24.0 %
In neighbouring parish¹	31	0	0	6	25	0	13	52.0 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	130	0	0	79	51	3	34	72.5 %
Other places	303	7	0	198	98	1	7	8.2 %

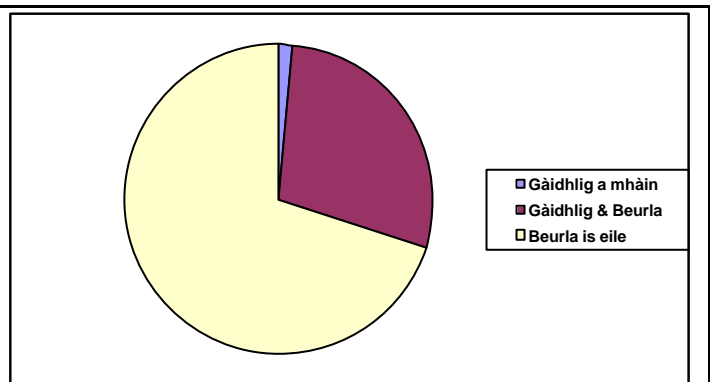
Notes:

¹ Civil parishes of Killin, Balquhidder (both Perthshire), Buchanan (Stirling), Lochgoilhead & Kilmorich (Argyll) or Luss (Dunbarton).

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. This column includes also railway workers living in temporary huts.

⁵ 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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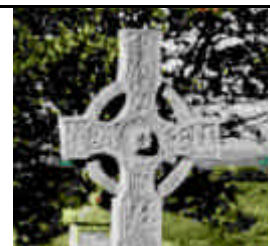
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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>An t-Àrar</i>	88	274	4	78	29.9 %
Individual communities					
<i>An t-Àrar (Arrochar)</i>	29	68	0	26	38.2 %
<i>Taigh an Lòin (Tynloan)</i>	8	29	0	6	20.7 %
<i>Baile Leathan (Ballylennan)</i>	13	49	2	16	36.7 %
<i>Taigh na Cloiche (Tynaclach)</i>	16	73	0	17	23.3 %
<i>Gleann Loinn & Sròn na Fìne (Glen Loin & Stronafyne)</i>	4	12	0	3	25.0 %
<i>Taigh an Easa (Tighness)</i>	18	43	2	10	27.9 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	7	40	0	21	52.5 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	3	14	0	5	35.7 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	7	25	0	6	24.0 %
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	16	72	0	1	1.4 %
Households with no children (0-14)	55	123	4	45	39.8 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	5	14	0	5	35.7 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	5	21	0	4	19.0 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	2	6	0	2	33.3 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	33	123	2	28	24.4 %
Living on private means	4	5	0	3	60.0 %
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	11	34	0	11	32.4 %
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	24	62	2	22	38.7 %
Remaining occupations	4	9	0	3	33.3 %

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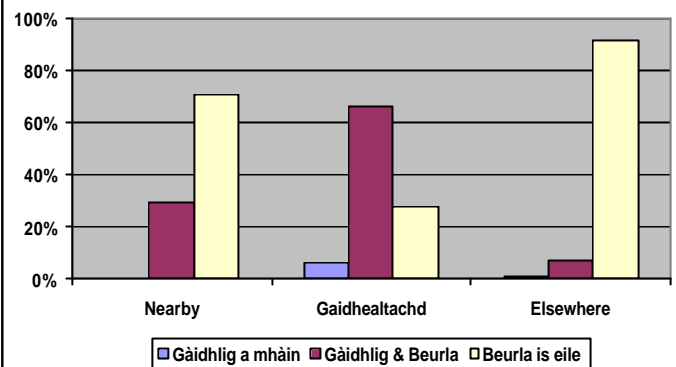
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

A quarter of all locally born residents still spoke Gàidhlig. In contrast only a handful of persons born outside the *Gaidhealtachd* spoke the language.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Arrochar (Dunbarton) or in the parishes of Killin, Balquhiddel (both Perthshire), Buchanan (Stirling), Lochgoilhead & Kilmorich (Argyll) or Luss (Dunbarton).

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. The census results for this district were heavily biased by the presence of a large workforce during the building phase of the railway. In these statistics returns of all persons living in railway huts were not taken into account in order to arrive at meaningful figures. 289 persons lived only temporarily in the area – among them two monolingual Gàidhlig speakers and 90 bilingual members of the workforce. These persons appeared in official census reports and distorted the picture considerably.
2. There were four Gàidhlig monolingual speakers within the usually resident population of the area. A railway storekeeper and his wife as well as a farm labourer and his sister from *Cill Fhinn* (Killin) did not speak English according to the census results.
3. In original census report terms the area had a population of 583 persons of all ages. 168 enumerated inhabitants spoke “Gaelic and English”; in addition six persons spoke “Gaelic only”. This led to an “official” share of Gàidhlig speakers of just 29.8 %. This figure, however, was a negligible under-estimate of 0.1 % although the huge number of railway workers was included in the “total population” of official census reports.