

Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 057

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Area: *Loch Abar (Lochaber): Coire Uanain, Druim Earbainn, Achadh an Todhair, Croit a'Charrain, Blàr Mac Faoilteach, Blàr a'Chaorainn, Blàr nan Clèireach, Drochaid Nibheis, Gleann Nibheis, Poll Dubh, Achadh Riabhach, Lùb Eilde, Achadh an t-Sìth & Beinn Nibheis*

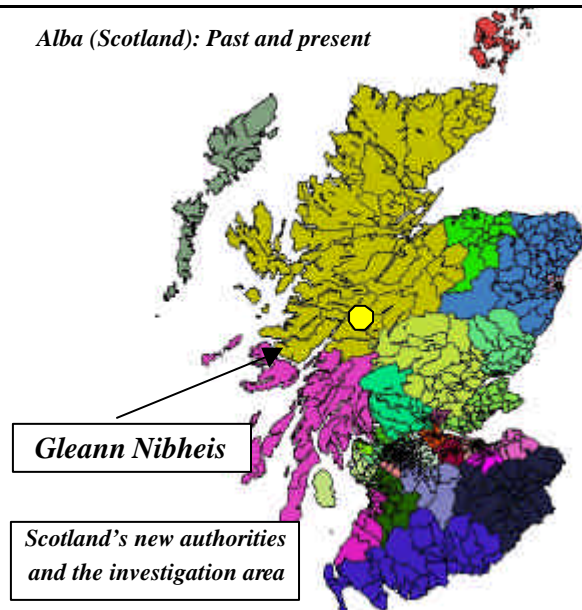
(Names of locations used on census forms: Coruanan, Drimarbin, Achintore, Croitacharran, Blarmachfoldach, Blarachaorin, Blarnaclerach, Bridge of Nevis, Glennevis, Poldhu, Achreach, Steil, Lubeilt, Achintee & Ben Nevis)

Number of households: 57 **Population present at census night:** 271

Share of resident population (aged three years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 95.8 %

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Inverness	Kilmallie	Kilmallie	1	1 - 6
			2	1 - 4
			5	1 - 3
			6	1

Alba (Scotland): Past and present



State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

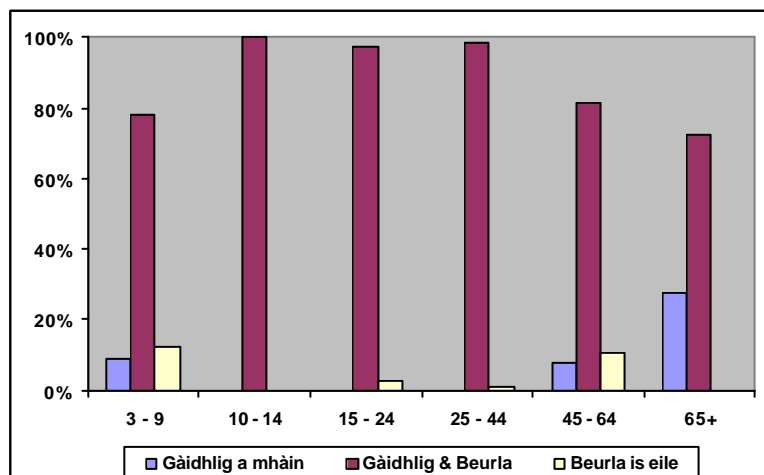
The local population was almost exclusively Gàidhlig speaking with a few inhabitants unable to speak English (mainly among the very young and the very old). The handful of English monolingual persons came mainly from three households the most prominent of which was of course the one at the observatory on *Beinn Nibheis* (Ben Nevis)!

The crofting settlements were thoroughly Gàidhlig speaking with *Achadh an Todhair* (Achintore) and *Gleann Nibheis* (Glen Nevis) boasting 100 % of Gàidhlig speakers among the usual resident population.

Area description:

The area lies in the centre of the district of *Loch Abar* (Lochaber) and occupies land south and east of the town of *An Gearasdan* (Fort William). It includes the remoter settlements around *Blàr Mac Faoilteach* (Blarmachfoldach) and within *Gleann Nibheis* (Glen Nevis).

Most inhabitants were occupied with crofting with some persons engaged as shepherds and gamekeepers. In addition three persons were working at the weather observatory on *Beinn Nibheis* at census night.



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 ¹	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
Age								
Total	271	7	0	27	237	14	213	95.8 %
3-4	8		0	1	7	1	5	85.7 %
5-9	28		0	3	25	2	20	88.0 %
10-14	28		0	4	24	0	24	100 %
15-24	47		0	6	41	0	40	97.6 %
25-44	83		0	10	73	0	72	98.6 %
45-64	41		0	3	38	3	31	89.5 %
65+	29		0	0	29	8	21	100 %
Gender								
Female	129	3	0	9	117	9	104	96.6 %
Male	142	4	0	18	120	5	109	95.0 %
Place of birth								
Born in parish	145	7	0	7	131	8	120	97.7 %
In neighbouring parish	40	0	0	1	39	2	37	100 %
Gaidhealtachd elsewhere²	61	0	0	13	48	4	44	100 %
Other places	25	0	0	6	19	0	12	63.2 %

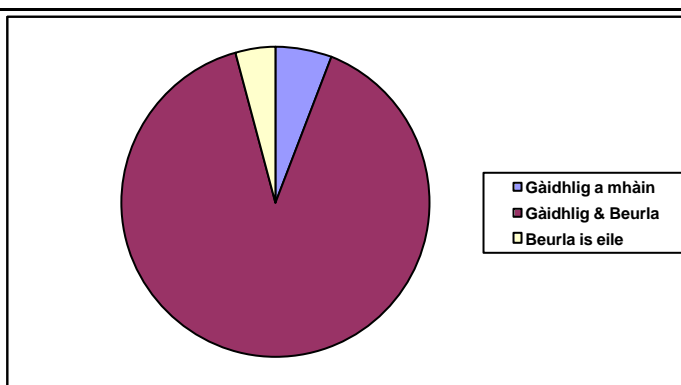
Notes:

¹ Parishes of Kilmonivaig, Arisaig & Moidart (all Inverness) 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 & 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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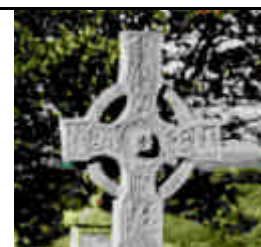
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	House-holds	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Achadh an Todhair & Gleann Nibheis</i>	57	237	14	213	95.8 %
Individual communities					
<i>Coire Uanain & Druim Earbainn</i> (Coiruanan & Druimarbin)	12	50	0	43	86.0 %
<i>Achadh an Todhair</i> (Achintore)	12	45	2	43	100 %
<i>Blàr Mac Faoilteach</i> (Blarmachfoldach)	19	80	8	71	98.8 %
<i>Gleann Nibheis & Lùb Eilde</i> (Glen Nevis & Lubeilt)	12	52	4	48	100 %
<i>Achadh an t-Sìth & Beinn Nibheis</i> (Achintee & Ben Nevis Obervatory)	2	10	0	8	80.0 %
Language of parents					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	9	64	1	59	93.8 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	14	58	6	49	94.8 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	0	0	0	0	-
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	0	0	0	0	-
Households with no children (0-14)	34	115	7	105	97.4 %
Occupation of head of household					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	39	154	12	140	98.7 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	12	62	2	60	100 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	2	4	0	2	50.0 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	1	5	0	1	20.0 %
Living on private means	1	3	0	1	33.3 %
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	0	0	0	0	-
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	2	9	0	9	100 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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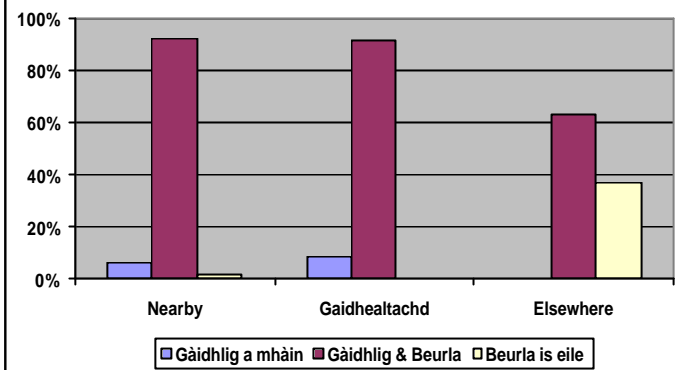
Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

Almost all people born nearby or in the wider *Gaidhealtachd* spoke the traditional language. The few English monolinguals originated overwhelmingly from places further afield.

Notes:

¹ Born either in Kilmallie or in the adjacent parishes of Kilmonivaig, Arisaig & Moidart (all Inverness) 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. Ten persons were returned as not speaking *Gàidhlig*. These included a lady from England (living on private means) and her servant, a contractor's wife (born in Kirkcudbrightshire) and three of her children, a 6 year old crofter's niece (born in Glasgow) as well as a 15 year old herdboy born in Malta. In addition two of the three persons on duty at the observatory on *Beinn Nibheis* (Ben Nevis) could not speak *Gàidhlig*.
2. Fourteen residents were reported as not speaking English. Three children younger than 10 and eleven adults beyond the age of 44 belonged to this tiny monolingual group.
3. In original census report terms the district had a population of 271 persons of all ages. 240 enumerated inhabitants spoke "Gaelic and English" and 14 were counted as monolingual *Gàidhlig* speakers. This led to an "official" share of *Gàidhlig* speakers of 93.7 %. This was an under-estimate of 2.1 %!