

# Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

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**Area:** *Latharn (Lorn): Gleann Urchaidh, Làirig, Inbhir Dhobhrain, Clais Gobhar, Àird Breicinis, Taigh an Rìgh, An Dubh Leitir, Gleann Sreith, Sròn Mhaolagain, Aodann Donachain, A'Chreag, Inbhir Lòchaidh, Drochaid Urchaidh, Achadh Chaladair, Na Goirtean, An Socach, Àirigh na Bì, Achadh Innis Chalainn & Achadh an t-Sithein*

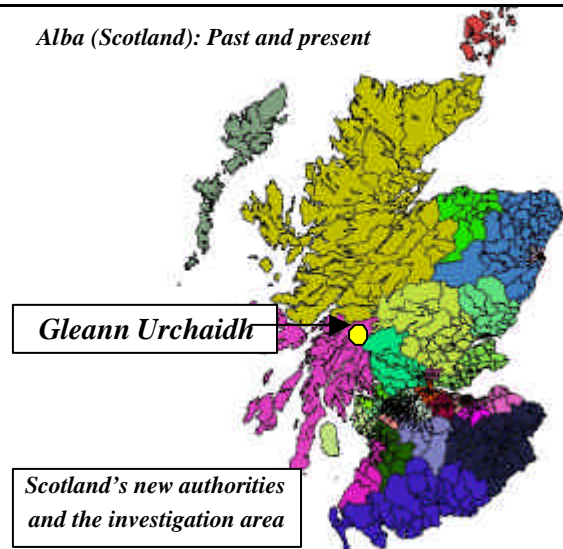
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Catnish, Lairigs, Inverveich, Inveroran, Clashgour, Schoolhouse, Forest Lodge, Hall, Ardbrecknish, Baa Cottage, Black Rock, Kingshouse, Castles, Rob Roy Cottage, Castle Stance, Duilletter, Glenstrae, Tomvargie, Stronmilchan, Edendonich, Orchy Bank, Monsquodan, Craig, Inverloch, Auchnafaunich, Bochoile, Knockintay, Invergounan, Bridge of Orchy Huts, Auchallander Huts, Auchallander Farm, Gorstan, Barravurich, Succoch, Inverloch, Strone, Glenloch, Arivean, Arinabea, Auch Huts, Auch, Bendorin Huts, Auch Bridge Huts & Achintean)

**Number of households: 80      Population present at census night: 915**

**Share of resident population (aged 3 years or over) speaking Gàidhlig: 95.0 %**

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Argyll	Glenorchy & Inishail	Glenorchy	1	1 – 6
			2	1 – 10
			3	1 – 15
			4	1 - 11

*Alba (Scotland): Past and present*



## State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

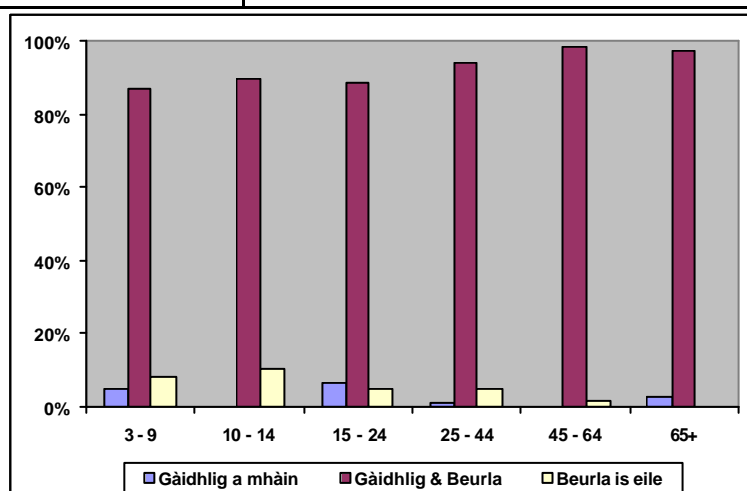
During the time of the census a large railway workforce was enumerated in this district which distorted the official census figures considerably.

Looking at the usually resident population, however, the district emerged still as a strongly Gàidhlig-speaking area. A majority of all age groups spoke Gàidhlig with a few of monolingual speakers still around in 1891. Almost everyone born either locally or in the wider *Gaidhealtachd* spoke the traditional language.

## Area description:

This district occupies the north-eastern corner of the ancient county of *Earra-Ghaidheal* (Argyll). Besides a handful of scattered farms and shepherd huts there was only one settlement of any significance: the crofting hamlet of *Sròn Mhaolagain* (Stronmilchan).

The area experienced a great disruption just around the census date when hundreds of railway workers and engineers were 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. <sup>3</sup>	Total <sup>4</sup>	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<b>Age</b>								
<b>Total</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>528</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>95.0 %</b>
<b>3-4</b>	<b>24</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>92.9 %</b>
<b>5-9</b>	<b>62</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>91.7 %</b>
<b>10-14</b>	<b>50</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>89.5 %</b>
<b>15-24</b>	<b>180</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>95.2 %</b>
<b>25-44</b>	<b>308</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>95.2 %</b>
<b>45-64</b>	<b>196</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>98.3 %</b>
<b>65+</b>	<b>49</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Gender</b>								
<b>Female</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>93.5 %</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>661</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>96.5 %</b>
<b>Place of birth</b>								
<b>Born in parish</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>96.8 %</b>
<b>In neighbouring parish<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>106</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Gaidhealtachd elsewhere<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>248</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Other places</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>53.8 %</b>

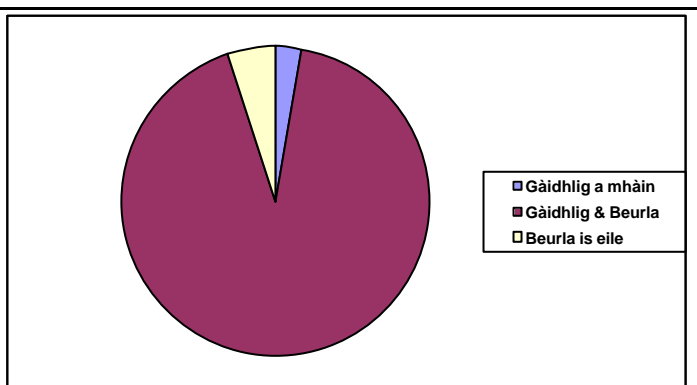
## Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Parishes of Killin and Fortingall (both Perthshire), Lismore & Appin, Inveraray, Ardchattan & Muckairn, Kilchrenan & Dalavich (all Argyll).

<sup>2</sup> Other parishes in Scotland with more than 50 % Gàidhlig speakers in the 1891 census.

<sup>3</sup> People described as visitors, boarders, lodgers or other similar terms. This column includes also railway workers living in temporary huts.

<sup>4</sup> 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) Beurla is eile

## 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](http://www.linguae-celticae.org/GLP_english.htm).

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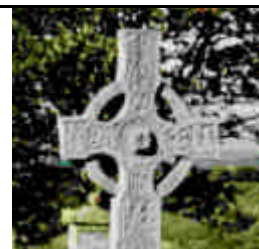
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	Households	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<b><i>Gleann Urchaidh &amp; Am Monadh Dubh</i></b>	<b>80</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>95.0 %</b>
<b>Individual communities</b>					
<i>Am Monadh Dubh &amp; Inbhir Dhobhrain</i> (Black Mount & Inveroran)	10	40	0	35	87.5 %
<i>Sròn Mhaolagain</i> (Stronmilchan)	27	107	3	103	99.1 %
<i>An Dubh Leitir &amp; Gleann Sreith</i> (Duilletter & Glen Strae)	6	33	0	32	97.0 %
<i>Aodann Donachain &amp; An Lagan Buidhe</i> (Edindonich & Lagganbuie)	17	55	3	45	87.3 %
<i>Gleann Urchaidh</i> (Glen Orchy)	11	50	1	49	100 %
<i>Achadh nan Chaladair &amp; Na Goirtean</i> (Achallader & Gorton)	3	17	2	15	100 %
<i>Gleann Lòchaidh &amp; Achadh na Bì</i> (Glen Lochy & Achnabea)	4	25	0	25	100 %
<i>Achadh Innis Chalainn &amp; Achadh an t-S.</i> (Auch & Achintean)	2	14	0	11	78.6 %
<b>Language of parents</b>					
<b>Both parents Gàidhlig speaking</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>98.4 %</b>
<b>Single parent Gàidhlig speaking</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>One parent Gàidhlig speaking</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>37.5 %</b>
<b>No Gàidhlig speaking parent</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.0 %</b>
<b>Households with no children (0-14)</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>96.1 %</b>
<b>Occupation of head of household</b>					
<b>Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>96.3 %</b>
<b>Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>96.5 %</b>
<b>Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>90.3 %</b>
<b>Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Living on private means</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100 %</b>
<b>Manager, coachman, cook, etc.</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>89.7 %</b>
<b>Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>90.7 %</b>
<b>Remaining occupations</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-</b>

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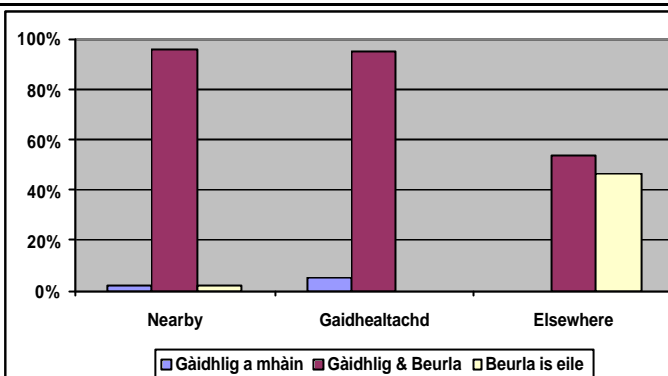
## Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

*Gàidhlig* was spoken almost exclusively by persons born in the *Gaidhealtachd*. Even among those born elsewhere a majority spoke *Gàidhlig* in addition to English.

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Born either in Glenorchy & Inishail or in the parishes Killin and Fortingall (both Perthshire), Lismore & Appin, Inveraray, Ardchattan & Muckairn, Kilchrenan & Dalavich (all Argyll).

<sup>2</sup> Born in other parishes of Scotland with more than 50 % *Gàidhlig* speakers in the 1891 census.



Speakers according to place of birth (1) nearby<sup>1</sup>  
(2) in remaining *Gaidhealtachd*<sup>2</sup>, 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. 528 persons lived only temporarily in the area – among them 225 *Gàidhlig* speaking members of the workforce including two monolingual *Gàidhlig* speakers. These persons appeared in official census reports and distorted the picture considerably.
2. Nine usually resident persons in the district were enumerated as speaking *Gàidhlig* but not English: Three children aged between 3 and 5, four servants from the Hebrides (aged between 19 and 26), an 81 year old retired dairymaid (born locally) as well as a 15 year old servant from *Màcarna* (Muckairn).
3. 17 members of the usually resident population did not speak *Gàidhlig*. They had mostly Lowland backgrounds. These persons included (a. o.) a school teacher (born in Wigtownshire) and her adopted son, the two domestic housekeepers (from Stirlingshire) of Forest Lodge and Craig Lodge and their four children, a 27 year old ploughman's wife (from Kincardine, Perthshire) as well as the three children at Achintean House.
4. In original census report terms the district had a population of 915 persons of all ages. 542 enumerated inhabitants spoke "Gaelic and English"; an additional number of 12 persons spoke "Gaelic only". This led to an "official" share of *Gàidhlig* speakers of just 60.5 %. This figure, however, was a dramatic under-estimate of 34.5 % because the huge number of railway workers was included in the "total population" of official census reports. 1901 census results logically proved to be in line with the percentages presented in this fact-sheet.