

# Alba 1891: Gàidhlig (Scottish Gaelic) Local Profile

No. 034

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**Area: Fàrr (Farr): Druim Basbaidh, Innis Armadail, Armadal, Lead na Gualainn, Fliuchairidh, Àird Bhinn Ghlais & Allt a'Phuist**

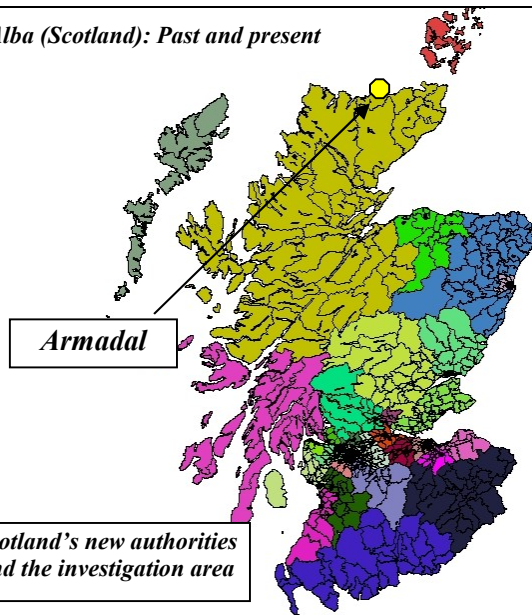
(Names of enumeration locations used on census forms: Drumbasbie, Armadale Insh, Mains of Armadale, Leadnagullin, Fluchary, Ardbhinglas, Altephuist)

**Number of households: 60    Population present at census night: 276**

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

County	Civil parish	Registration district	Enumeration district number	Census form pages
Sutherland	Farr	Strathy	1	1 - 12

*Alba (Scotland): Past and present*

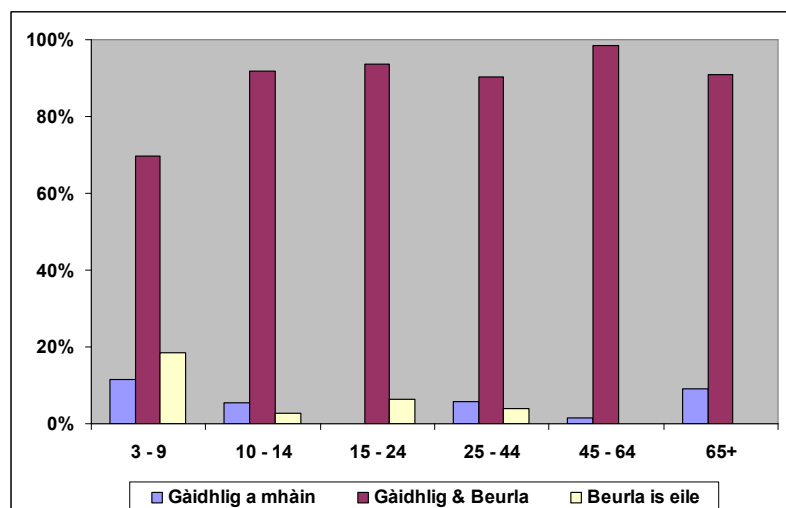


## State of Gàidhlig in 1891:

The language was universally spoken in all crofting families of the district. English monoglots were confined to some servants of the local landlord. Very few of the Gàidhlig speakers on the other hand could not speak English. Apart from *Armadal* (Mains of Armadale) all crofting hamlets were universally Gàidhlig-speaking. Gàidhlig was also spoken right across the community in all age groups.

## Area description:

The district lies on the northern coast of the county of *Cataibh* (Sutherland). The small crofting communities are situated on the shores of sheltered *Bàgh Armadail* (Armadale Bay). Most of the local residents were occupied as crofters and fishermen apart from the servants of the absentee landlord in Armadale Mains.



**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>	276	12	0	2	262	14	235	95.0 %
<b>3-4</b>	14	0	0	0	14	2	6	57.1 %
<b>5-9</b>	29	0	0	0	29	3	24	93.1 %
<b>10-14</b>	37	0	0	0	37	2	34	97.3 %
<b>15-24</b>	31	0	0	0	31	0	29	93.5 %
<b>25-44</b>	51	0	0	0	51	3	46	96.1 %
<b>45-64</b>	68	0	0	1	67	1	66	100 %
<b>65+</b>	34	0	0	1	33	3	30	100 %
<b>Gender</b>								
<b>Female</b>	145	5	0	2	138	10	122	95.7 %
<b>Male</b>	131	7	0	0	124	4	113	94.4 %
<b>Place of birth</b>								
<b>Born in parish</b>	233	12	0	1	220	10	207	98.6 %
<b>In neighbouring parish<sup>1</sup></b>	22	0	0	1	21	4	14	85.7 %
<b>Gaidhealtachd elsewhere<sup>2</sup></b>	8	0	0	0	8	0	8	100 %
<b>Other places</b>	13	0	0	0	13	0	8	46.2 %

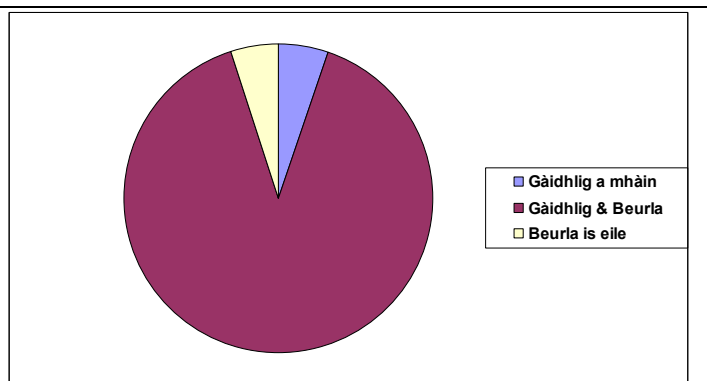
## Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Parishes of Kildonan and Tongue (both Sutherland) or Reay (Caithness and Sutherland).

<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.

<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 & 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.de/GLP\\_english.htm](http://www.linguae-celticae.de/GLP_english.htm).

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	Households	Usually resident population (3+)			
		Total	Gàidhlig	Gàidhlig & English	Gàidhlig speakers (%)
<i>Armadal</i>	60	262	14	235	95.0 %
<b>Individual communities</b>					
<i>Druim Basbaidh</i> (Drumbasbie)	1	2	0	2	100 %
<i>Innis Armadail</i> (Armadale Insh)	35	150	11	136	98.0 %
<i>Armadal</i> (Mains of Armadale)	4	20	3	7	50.0 %
<i>Lead na Gualainn</i> (Lednagullin)	12	58	0	58	100 %
<i>Fluchairidh</i> (Fluchary)	2	5	0	5	100 %
<i>Àird Bhinn Ghlais</i> (Ardbhinglas)	3	15	0	15	100 %
<i>Allt a'Phuist</i> (Altaphuist)	3	12	0	12	100 %
<b>Language of parents</b>					
Both parents Gàidhlig speaking	14	92	6	85	98.9 %
Single parent Gàidhlig speaking	11	49	4	42	93.9 %
One parent Gàidhlig speaking	0	0	0	0	-
No Gàidhlig speaking parent	1	9	0	1	11.1 %
Households with no children (0-14)	34	112	4	107	99.1 %
<b>Occupation of head of household</b>					
Crofter, farmer, fisherman, etc.	44	202	10	191	99.5 %
Shepherd, gamekeeper or similar	3	10	3	5	80.0 %
Clergyman, teacher, physician, etc.	1	4	0	4	100 %
Mason, carpenter, merchant, etc.	7	28	0	28	100 %
Living on private means	0	0	0	0	-
Manager, coachman, cook, etc.	0	0	0	0	-
Worker, farm/domestic servant, etc.	5	18	1	7	44.4 %
Remaining occupations	0	0	0	0	-

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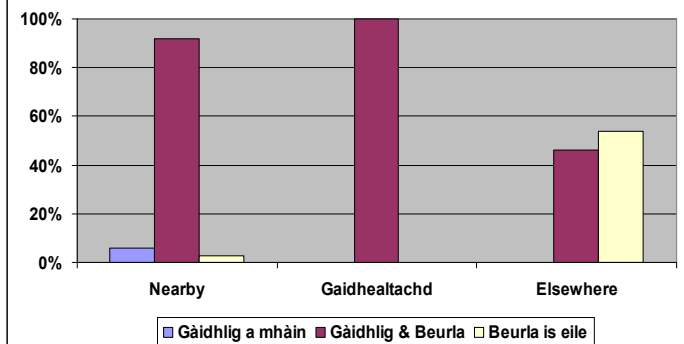
## Place of birth and Gàidhlig speaking:

Apart from a few residents born outside the *Gaidhealtachd* almost all people spoke Gàidhlig in the area. Many of the “English only” returns lived in the vicinity of Armadale House.

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Born either in Farr or in the adjacent parishes of Kildonan and Tongue (both Sutherland) or Reay (Caithness and Sutherland).

<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. Thirteen persons did not speak *Gàidhlig*. Seven of these English monoglots were part of a ploughman's family originating from Stemster in Caithness. Four census returns were also reported from a local shepherd's family where the youngest children were enumerated as “English” speakers. However, two of these children could be detected 10 years later in the 1901 census and were classified as “G&E”. Accordingly, social pressure in this community was strong enough to ensure successful language transmission in those days.
2. Official census figures in this part of *Fàrr* (Farr) reported 242 bilingual inhabitants and 13 monolingual *Gàidhlig*-speakers as part of a total population of 276 persons (92.4 %). The usually resident population of this area consisted of 249 *Gàidhlig*-speakers with a more realistic share of population of 95.0 %.