I should explain that on Lismore, and it may happen elsewhere, when a child is baptised Ann she is often referred to thereafter as Agnes and vice versa. It happens frequently but I don’t know the reason for it. In this case she was baptised Ann but on her marriage certificate she is referred to as Agnes.

John Buchanan married Agnes (Ann) Connell in Blythswood, Glasgow in 1861. It appears that he was at that time an Agricultural labourer living at 16 Ferguson Street, Glasgow and she was a Domestic servant living at 17 Ferguson Street, Glasgow. His age is given as 26 and hers as 24. John’s parents were John Buchanan and Margaret (Peggy) McColl both from Lismore. John Buchanan senior died in 1874 at Baleveolan, Lismore aged around 86. He had been born in 1789 at Balimakillichan which lies more or less next door to Baleveolan. John Snr. was the son of Niel (nowadays Neil) Buchanan and Mary Black. Niel and Mary do not appear in the 1841 census so I assume they died before that year. The records show they had 4 sons in all but there may have been more children – at that time the records were not well kept. Having looked at a book of transcriptions of the stones in the old graveyard this couple do not appear to have a gravestone. However we know there were once more stones but on the other hand not everyone buried there had a gravestone.

John Snr’s wife was Peggy McColl (Margaret). She was born in 1792 to Alexander McColl and Mary Campbell. Peggy was a member of a huge McColl family many of whom emigrated to Canada and USA. Peggy was born at a farm called Balegrundle which is south west of Baleveolan and Balimakillichan. It is assumed that they married around 1816 or 17 since the first of their 9 children was born in 1818 and baptised Niel after John’s father but unfortunately on Lismore records of marriages were not kept in the Old Parish Registers. Until 1855 there are few notes of marriages apart from after 1836 when the minister kept a private diary.

Agnes (Ann) was born to James Connell (spelling varies) and Sarah McCallum in 1835 at Balure. She had 8 or 9 brothers and sisters. Names and birthdates can be supplied if you would like them. As you probably know statutory registration did not start until 1855 and before then notes of deaths were not normally kept. However, I can tell you that James Connell died on 11th December 1849 aged 56 years. He was born in 1783 to Connell Connell (honestly that was the name – but in the pre 1800 OPR the surname is in Gaelic McIllechonnel) and Mary McColl at Balnagown on the island. James was one of ten children – but I think there may be some more not recorded in the OPRs.

James Connell and Sarah McCallum probably married about 1827 because their first child was born in 1828. I have taken a photo of James’s gravestone (attached separately). Someone transcribed them all five years ago but it is incredible how illegible some have become even in that short time. In the case of this stone the top half has been engraved much more deeply than the rest. Also on the gravestone is Sarah McCallum who died on Lismore in 1881 at Balure where she was living with her sons John and Malcom (this was the spelling at that time). In the 1871 census living with them was Sarah Buchanan aged 5 daughter of John Buchanan and Ann/Agnes Connell who were living at 73 Richard Street, Anderston, Glasgow in the 1871 census. I assume this is the correct Sarah since she isn’t with her own family in that census and aged 5 she would be unlikely to be elsewhere.

Now although the records state that the Connells lived at Balure that is not strictly true. They actually lived at Port Moluag which at one time was probably part of Balure. It is a lovely bit of the island. There is a house still standing which I assume was theirs and the sawpit where they sawed the wood for their boats. However some of the land has been sold and there is planning permission for, I think, two houses.

The transcription from the above gravestone reads as follows –

“1873. Erected by John Connell to the memory of his father James Connell, Boat Builder, Balure who died 11th December 1849 aged 56 years. And of his brother James who died March 1847 aged 14 months. Also of his sister Sarah who died 4th May 1872 aged 22 years. And his brother Connel died at Glasgow 8th October 1877. His mother Sarah McCallum died Jan 1881. And the above John Connell died 13th Jan 1898.”