The ISBGFH
Heritage Dispatch
November 2026

Welcome to this month's edition of the *ISBGFH Heritage Dispatch*. Our society continues to grow as more genealogists discover the value of specialized education focused on British Isles and Commonwealth family history.

Time for change: Clocks, Clothes, Convertibles, & Colleagues

Our audience is from all over the world. Our audience has people from ages 1 – 100. Our audience has various interests and reasons for participating in genealogy activities, watching presentations, reading resources, and attending events.

Here in Michigan, USA the kiddos just wrapped up their annual evening of playing dress-up and gathering all sorts of goodies from lots of venues. Even the grown-ups get into the Halloween happenings too. But it is all of a sudden November, and as the leaves fall, so do the temperatures. The clocks have been rolled back, the summer shorts have been stored and sweaters are ready, the convertible and other "toys" have been winterized and are back in storage, which leaves us with colleagues and conversations!

October is Family History Month. You will see almost every library, museum and society have some sort of special programing or event that can pique your interest in Genealogy and Family History. ISBGFH also has something special for those of you who are not members of our society. For October and November, we are offering a 30% discount on a new membership for the first year. Becoming a member grants you many member benefits that will keep you hunting down your history, finding family and so much more. If you are interested in becoming a member, now is the time! Consider it your treat from the Halloween holiday, or an early stocking stuffer for yourself. Visit our website at www.isbgfh.com and click on ISBGFH Store. Find the SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP image and click on that. We'll be waiting with open arms, warm sweaters, and fellow genealogists to share your journey! If you have any questions, just get in touch with us at EducationDirectorISBGFH@gmail.com

Did You Know?

Ancestry.com offers an ANCESTRY ACADEMY? It is an educational virtual event series, mainly hosted by Crista Cowan, the corporate genealogist at Ancestry. As of this writing, there are three upcoming events you can register for, and 71 videos that you can watch too!

Here is the link: https://www.ancestry.com/c/discover/education

Here are the latest dates for 2026

Visit our calendar for the details of our upcoming events

7 November – Saturday, Winter Webinar
21 November – Saturday, Winter Webinar
5 December – Saturday, Winter Webinar
19 December – Saturday, Winter Webinar
We will post the dates for 2027 in the December issue of The Heritage Dispatch.

NOVEMBER IS FAMILY STORIES MONTH

Family Stories Month invites us to connect with our roots throughout November. This special time encourages families to gather, share memories, and document their unique histories. Start by interviewing elders, organizing old photos, and recording cherished anecdotes to pass down. The holidays are fast approaching, so grab a notebook, and ask your family about their memories, favorite foods, and activities, where they traveled and how they got there. Share recipes, traditions, and pull out the old 8mm movie projector or carousel of slides for a walk down memory lane.

Remember what you remember, is not what your siblings or adults would remember. You are telling the details from your point of view and memory. Write the story!

This Month's FREEBIE!

One of the main goals of the National Genealogical Society is to educate the public about family history research. In our Free Genealogy Resources section, we offer a number of different and important educational resources. Here you will find free genealogy charts, templates, and tutorials on the US Census and How to Borrow Books from the NGS Book Loan Collection.

We have organized helpful tips, articles, and recommended resources for every level of family researcher whether you are **Getting Started**, **Going to the Next Level** or working at **Building Advanced Skills**. And for those of you who are not NGS members, we offer a free sampling of beneficial articles from NGS Magazine, NGS Quarterly, and NGS Monthly.

https://www.ngsgenealogy.org/free-resources/

Spotlight
ISBGFH Board, Trustees, and Members
Sylvia Tracy Doolos

I have been working as a professional genealogist for fifteen years as the owner of New Leaf Genealogy. I am the President of W.I.S.E-FHS, and Past-President of the Colorado Chapter of the Association of Professional Genealogists, and ISBGFH. I'm actively involved with the Denver Public Library and the Carbon Valley Library, and an active member of other family history organizations. I'm a graduate of the ProGen course. I have a B.A. in History with a minor in English focusing on linguistics.

Questions from the Crowd

What would you like to read or hear about?

We received another email:

With the holidays coming, are there any special sales or events we should be aware of? And how do we find out about these details?

Answer:

It is the season! There are always deals happening with many companies supporting the genealogy community. I personally have found that the more companies mailing lists to join, the more often I receive the information before it is printed elsewhere, like the early bird that gets the worm. Here are some suggestions that I would recommend. Also consider joining Facebook pages of these companies, they will advertise and sometimes have a discount code for more savings.

DNA Test Kits – popular kits from AncestryDNA, 23andMe, MyHeritage DNA, FamilyTreeDNA
Watch what type of kit you buy, if you want Y-DNA (paternal line), or more bells and whistles. Ordering from a company is usually cheaper than purchasing at your local Walmart / Pharmacy, because there are other costs that are not covered but need to be paid for, causing a higher final price. Research it.

Genealogy Database Subscriptions – paid access to platforms like Ancestry.com, MyHeritage, Findmypast, or Newspapers.com to name a few.

Memberships & Learning – Gift memberships to a local or national genealogical society, online research workshops, or conference registrations. Magazine subscriptions and reference books are a great asset saving people going to the library and not being able to check out these books, start building your home library. Antique Maps, Military guidebooks, the list is long!

Heirloom Notebooks & Charts – Many companies that offer printed family tree suitable for framing, custom engraved wood family trees, have a book printed showing your heritage with photos. A collection of recipes, notes, certificates makes a wonderful heirloom for any occasion (weddings, births, etc.)

Customized Ornaments & Keepsakes - Quilts, ornaments, jewelry, generational photographs as artwork, antiques of items that “grandpa had this toy” or “Grandma had that cookbook” or Nana always wore an apron like that, or someone did needlework, crochet, knit, woodworking, Check websites like Etsy for ideas or to order special personalized made items.

WINTER WEBINAR SERIES

The next season of our Winter Webinar Series will begin on November 7th. The events are on the first and third Saturdays of November through March. Watch our website for the speakers, topics and times posted this week. As a member benefit, you may attend these programs and have access to all the recordings and handouts. The recordings will be available to view until August 1, 2027.
Register today for your Zoom link and get the handout (if one is available).
The Winter Webinar virtual doors will open 5 minutes before the program begins.

FOR ISBGFH MEMBERS ONLY!

You have received an email regarding our election for a new trustee. Please take one minute to open the email and vote. The button is located at the bottom of the email. We have one position that needs to be filled and one person running for that seat. You are also able to write in the name of a candidate that you would like to see as part of the ISBGFH governing board.

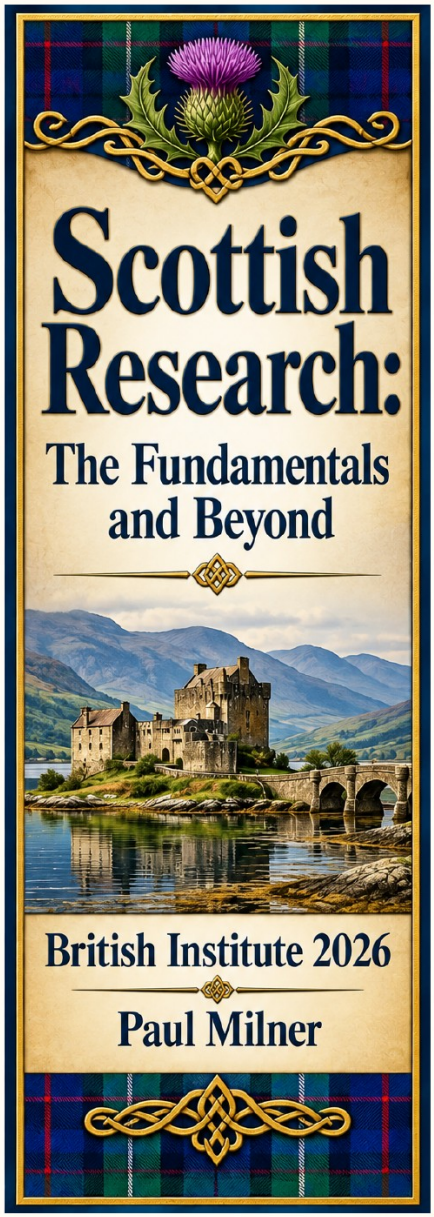
Thank you in advance for not putting off this request.
Voting ends on Friday, November 6, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. Mountain Time.

YOU CAN STILL GET ACCESS TO THIS PROGRAM – PURCHASE THE RECORDINGS

TIME IS RUNNING OUT

DON'T MISS BRITISH INSTITUTE 2026!

BEGINS OCTOBER 5 • PAUL MILNER • SCOTTISH RESEARCH



There's still time to register for **British Institute 2026**, beginning **October 5**, featuring internationally recognized genealogist and educator **Paul Milner** presenting **Scottish Research: The Fundamentals and Beyond**. And there's an important reason you won't want to miss this year's Institute: **this will be Paul's final time presenting his Scotland course!** If Scottish ancestors are hiding somewhere in your family tree, this is your opportunity to spend dedicated time learning from one of the field's most experienced Scottish researchers.

Journey through **Scottish research from the 17th through the 20th centuries** as Paul takes you beyond the fundamentals and explores the records, resources, research strategies, and challenges that can help bring your Scottish ancestors to life. Bring those questions you've always wanted to ask - even the ones you were afraid to ask!

ISBGFH members receive a discounted registration rate, so if you've been thinking about joining the International Society for British Genealogy and Family History, this is a great time to become a member and take advantage of the savings.

Don't wait until it's too late! British Institute 2026 begins **October 5**. Visit **www.isbgfh.com** for complete Institute details, registration information, and FAQs.

Questions? Contact the **ISBGFH Institute Director** at InstituteDirectorISBGFH@gmail.com

---

Scotland is calling - will you answer?

International Society for British Genealogy and Family History | www.isbgfh.com

This vs. That: Census vs. Electoral Register

Census: A census attempts to enumerate a population at a particular point in time and commonly records households together. British censuses can reveal names, ages, relationships, occupations, birthplaces, and addresses, making them excellent tools for reconstructing families. Their periodic nature, however, leaves sizable gaps between snapshots.

Electoral Register: Electoral registers identify people entitled to vote and can help place individuals at an address between census years. They do not represent the entire population because voting eligibility changed over time and excluded many people. Used alongside censuses, directories, and other sources, electoral registers can help track an ancestor's movements and distinguish people with similar names.

To understand where we're going, it helps to see where we've been. We are launching a brand-new recurring segment called *The History Of...*, where we unearth the origin stories of major industry breakthroughs, cultural shifts, and everyday items. Grab a coffee and travel back in time with us below as we look at the evolution of **VOTING**

Voting Rights: The United States vs. the British Isles

An Interesting Look at How the Right to Vote Evolved Across the Atlantic

The history of voting in the United States and the British Isles shares many similarities, but also some fascinating differences. Although both developed systems of representative government, voting was originally a privilege reserved largely for men who owned property or met certain qualifications. Over the centuries, reforms gradually expanded voting rights, allowing more citizens to have a voice in their government.

What Were the Biggest Differences?

One interesting distinction is that American women gained nationwide constitutional protection against sex-based voting restrictions in 1920, eight years before women in the United Kingdom achieved equal parliamentary voting rights with men in 1928. However, women in the newly established Irish Free State gained equal voting rights at age 21 in 1922.

Another notable difference concerns the voting age. The United Kingdom reduced its voting age to 18 in 1969, two years before the United States did so in 1971. Scotland later lowered the voting age to 16 for Scottish Parliament and local elections in 2015, although UK parliamentary elections continued to have a voting age of 18.

A Genealogist's Perspective

For family historians, voting records can provide another fascinating window into our ancestors' lives. British electoral registers, poll books, and property qualifications may help establish where an ancestor lived, their occupation, or their social standing. In the United States, voter registration records and historical election documents may reveal residences, citizenship information, and family movements.

A final thought: When researching an ancestor, remember that the absence of their name from an electoral register does not necessarily mean they were absent from the community. They may simply not have qualified to vote at that particular time.

Voting rights were not achieved overnight on either side of the Atlantic. They evolved through centuries of political debate, social change, and the determination of ordinary people seeking representation.

Calendar Klatches

Month of November: Native American Heritage Month & Military Family Month

November 1 – All Saints' Day UK
November 1-30 – ISBGFH Membership Drive
November 2 – All Souls' Day UK
November 5 – Guy Fawkes Day / Bonfire Night UK
November 7 – Winter Webinar ISBGFH
November 8 – Remembrance Sunday UK & Canada
November 8 – Diwali / Deepavali UK
November 11 – Veterans Day
November 21 – Winter Webinar ISBGFH
November 26 – Thanksgiving Day
November 27 – Black Friday
November 29 – First Sunday of Advent UK
November 30 – St. Andrew's Day UK

Happy Holidays to you and yours!

Got something to share? Contact us! Send it to EducationDirectorISBGFH@gmail.com. Please include ISBGFH DISPATCH in the subject line. Thank you for reading and sharing this Heritage Dispatch!

Join ISBGFH Today

Become part of the "International Society for British Genealogy and Family History" and connect with a community that is passionate about British ancestry. Gain access to expert-led institutes, exclusive resources, and a network of fellow researchers. Whether you're just beginning or advancing your research, ISBGFH supports your journey. Discover your past – join us today at www.ISBGFH.com

And Remember…
Your trustee election ballot is waiting in your email!

THANK YOU!