

The Basiliscoe Mercury 352

The Internet newsletter for the arms and armour community

I know for many of our friends and colleagues this has been a truly awful year and the light at the end of the tunnel is still a long way off. But here is the Bazy Christmas stocking edition - Greek helmets! Arms in movies! Drinks! Feasting! Napoleon's Barge and Shackleton's sledge! Wonderful new armours at the Met! Have as good a holiday as you can manage.

Arms and armour in the news

Ancient arms and towers

Greek helmet found in Croatia tomb - pictures

<https://eu.greekreporter.com/2020/12/08/ancient-greek-helmet-found-in-stone-burial-chamber-in-croatia/>

Roman marching camps investigated across Spain

<https://archaeologynewsnetwork.blogspot.com/2020/12/66-roman-military-camps-identified-in.html>

Roman military HQ found in Serbian cornfield

<https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2020-11-26/buried-under-a-serbian-cornfield-roman-military-headquarters-slowly-sheds-its-secrets>

A tour of ancient Byzantine

<https://www.nationalgeographic.co.uk/history-and-civilisation/2020/12/why-istanbuls-ancient-imperial-legacy-lies-hidden-in-plain-sight>

Conserving an Iron Age broch in Sutherland

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-55230814>

Missing part of Hunnestad rune stone found in Swedish bridge

<https://www.ancientpages.com/2020/12/16/unique-lost-runestone-hunnestad-monument-finally-found-after-300-years-in-sweden/>

Update on the sword from the Polish lake earlier in the year

[Archaeologists Pulled A Sword From Beneath The Waves Of A Lake Where It Had Lain For 1,000 Years \(scribol.com\)](https://www.scribol.com/news/Archaeologists-Pulled-A-Sword-From-Beneath-The-Waves-Of-A-Lake-Where-It-Had-Lain-For-1,000-Years)

Hunting round the world and through the ages

Reindeer hunting and ancient arrows in Norway

<https://norwaytoday.info/news/photos-archeologists-unravel-6000-years-of-reindeer-hunting-in-norway-through-arrows/>

Fascinating read about the Norse colonies on Greenland

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/why-greenland-vikings-vanished-180962119/>

Ivory from Namibia shipwreck & what it tells us about 16th century elephants

https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2020-12/cp-si120920.php

Grave stories

Excavating the grave mound of a Scythian warlord (and his horse and guard)

<https://archaeologynewsnetwork.blogspot.com/2020/12/burial-mound-of-scythian-warlord-from.html>

Whodunnit in medieval Edinburgh

<https://www.scotsman.com/whats-on/arts-and-entertainment/murder-mystery-over-remains-medieval-woman-dumped-pit-beneath-site-edinburgh-tram-line-3057071>

20 graves in a moated castle in Netherlands

<https://archaeologynewsnetwork.blogspot.com/2020/11/mass-grave-containing-20-medieval.html>

What to do with the bones after they have been disinterred & studied

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/18/arts/design/Fort-William-Henry-soldiers-remains.html>

In the lists

When jousts go bad

<https://www.medievalists.net/2020/12/medieval-tournaments-wrong/>

Through the arrow-slit . . .

Key to the castle returned....

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/dec/09/mystery-sender-returns-key-borrowed-from-norman-tower-in-1973>

Living in the medieval castle

<https://www.grunge.com/291839/what-life-was-really-like-in-a-medieval-castle/>

A walk round Codnor Castle

<https://www.baldhiker.com/2020/12/17/codnor-castle-a-walk-with-history/>

Work on Southsea castle reveals old walls

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-hampshire-55087607>

Cannons to the left, cannon to the right

Preserving two cast-iron guns in Mumbai – not wrought-iron!

<https://www.mid-day.com/articles/mumbai-historians-on-quest-to-preserve-two-ancient-cannons/23148207>

Cannons and castles at Hereford

<https://www.britainexpress.com/counties/hereford/castles/castle-green.htm>

Update on the Alamo's recent cannon projects

[New surprises surround Alamo's famed '18-pounder' cannon that fired a hot round in response to Santa Anna's demand for surrender - SFChronicle.com](#)

Mysterious cannon found in Newfoundland

<https://vocm.com/2020/12/05/cannon-in-harbour-main/>

What they found inside Australia's cannon

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-12-10/19th-century-cannonballs-emerge-at-port-fairy/12971250>

WWI German gun found under Canadian baseball field

https://www.upi.com/Odd_News/2020/12/18/World-War-I-era-cannon-found-buried-under-Canadian-baseball-field/4611608323984/

<https://www.lintelligencer.com/german-cannon-from-ww-i-found-underneath-amherstburg-ballpark-photo-10166-2020/>

Miscellany

Investigating the Death of Wolfe

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/11/25/arts/benjamin-west-general-wolfe.html>

Medieval knife found in Scotland (looks more like a letter opener to me...)

<https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/heritage-and-retro/heritage/metal-detectorist-unearths-rare-medieval-knife-near-penicuik-3050603>

Solving a Mughal mystery

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/freshman-art-history-student-discovers-identity-of-anonymous-subject-in-mughal-miniature>

Regency boxing

<https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/a-tale-of-two-champions-the-fight-for-freedom>

Back to the front

Goya and the fight against Napoleon

<https://artdaily.com/news/131120/The-Goya-Code-Chapter-4--Three-Kings-and-an-Emperor-for-the-Crown-of-Spain>

Update on Culloden field

<https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/scotlands-largest-conservation-charity-welcomes-decision-on-culloden-planning-application>

Café Basiliscoe mainly alcoholic....

Oldest olive oil bottle in the world

<https://www.oliveoiltimes.com/business/europe/insights-into-oldest-bottle-olive-oil/87546>

Roman wine

<https://www.euronews.com/2020/11/24/bringing-an-ancient-roman-vineyard-back-to-life>

Illicit whiskies in NE Scotland

<https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/pioneering-spirit-illicit-whisky-stills-at-mar-lodge-estate>

Boot-legged whisky

<https://edition.cnn.com/2020/11/25/us/whiskey-bottles-found-new-york-home-walls-trnd/index.html>

Wines with trebuchets on the label...

[Identity Wines - True to Ourselves, True to Nature!](#)

Princesses and Amazons

Nefertiti's chariot

<http://www.asor.org/onetoday/2020/12/nefertiti-chariot>

Fascinating story of the last Queen of Madagascar

<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2020/dec/06/remarkable-story-of-madagascars-last-queen-emerges-from-surrey-attic>

Nautical news

Exploring an ancient underwater battlefield

<https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/news/hub/recovering-an-ancient-battle-from-the-sea-floor.aspx?fbclid=IwAR0HwTEIkqVJqB9kOPy2hUqxpK0NzXa7hmTMO35yKNDE4fBfXiwPazRSqQQ>

Update on the Viking ship excavations

<https://www.livescience.com/viking-ship-fit-for-royalty-unearthed.html>

Scheidam, wrecked 1684: excavations in Cornwall begin

<https://digitaleditions.telegraph.co.uk/data/431/reader/reader.html?#!preferred/0/package/431/pub/431/page/14/article/107240>

Armed vessel's remains found in the Aegean

<https://www.dailysabah.com/life/history/turkish-researchers-discover-18th-century-warship-wreck-in-the-aegean>

Enigma machine recovered from the Baltic

<https://www.sciencealert.com/divers-stumble-across-a-legendary-code-machine-in-the-baltic-sea>

<https://artdaily.com/news/130827/Divers-find-Nazis--Enigma-code-machine-in-Baltic-Sea>

Museum news and exhibitions

News

Major - and that is an understatement - gift of arms and armour to the Met

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/ronald-lauder-presents-major-gift-of-european-arms-and-armour-to-the-met>

British institutions get emergency funding

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/gbp40m-loan-for-historic-royal-palaces-and-gbp11m-for-southbank-centre-in-latest-round-of-uk-covid-funding>

London museums closed again

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/museums-and-galleries-in-london-to-close-from-wednesday-under-new-covid-tier-3-restrictions>

French Museums closed till after the New year

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/french-museums-coronavirus-reopen-7-january>

And in the USA

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/museum-of-fine-arts-boston-and-other-us-institutions-announce-a-second-wave-of-pandemic-closures>

What was found in this week's cupboard in the museum story

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/dec/16/lost-artefact-from-great-pyramid-of-giza-found-in-cigar-box-in-aberdeen>

New museums

V&A considering reduced openings

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/v-and-a-to-close-for-two-days-a-week>

Humboldt Forum

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/what-exactly-is-the-humboldt-forum>

Museum developments

Making your museum a TikTok sensation

<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2020/dec/13/how-a-dudley-museum-became-a-tiktok-sensation>

Museum musings

Concerns over the re-opening of Mussolini's Museum of Colonialism

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/amid-reckoning-on-race-italy-exhumes-colonial-history>

Museum labels in the time of BLM

<http://blogs.getty.edu/iris/rethinking-descriptions-of-black-africans-in-greek-etruscan-and-roman-art/>

Conservation corner

Nice feature on 17th century tapestry

<https://smarthistory.org/abduction-of-helen-tapestry/>

Objects

Too late to buy James Bond's first gun for a Christmas present

<https://artdaily.com/news/130797/Sean-Connery-s-Dr--No-gun-sold-for--256-000-at-Julien-s-Auctions-Icons---Idols-Trilogy--Hollywood>

Medals collection at Brodie castle

<https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/collections-diaries-princess-maries-napoleonic-coins-and-medals-at-brodick-castle>

The Leith Hays of Leith halls - portraits in military uniforms!

<https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/colonial-power-and-profit-at-leith-hall>

Exhibitions

Next year's exhibitions - fingers crossed

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/dec/10/netherlands-rijksmuseum-exhibition-to-tell-story-of-dutch-slave-trade>

<https://artdaily.com/news/131012/Dutch-Rijksmuseum-announces-landmark-slavery-exhibition>

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/news/epic-iran-preview>

Old masters at the Queen's gallery

[Buckingham Palace masterpieces hop next door for exhibition at the Queen's Gallery | The Art Newspaper](#)

Books

Guy de la Bédoyère: ***Gladius. Living, Fighting and Dying in the Roman Army***

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Gladius-Living-Fighting-Dying-Roman-ebook/dp/B083XSPTLV>

Peter Brears: ***Carry on Curating***

<https://www.wakefieldhistoricalsociety.org.uk/publications/other-new-publications/>

Online Book

Madras Artillery Records

https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=ij4IAAAAQAAJ&dq=editions%3A-F-cGNkdtmIC&pg=PP11&fbclid=IwAR3pL24lhiTHw3Lv8fcLCI_O5LLd4GZO-f48VHXqkdwzOSD47nrv6BEhao#v=onepage&q&f=false

Sales Fairs and auctions

Saleroom news

<https://artdaily.com/news/130821/Armour-from-the-Art-Institute-of-Chicago-fetches-three-times-its-estimate>

<https://artdaily.com/news/130964/Boss---Co-gun-from-the-heyday-of-the-English-gun-fetches--pound-40-000-in-Gavin-Gardiner-Ltd-s-auction>

Finally - The Bazzy Christmas stocking!

Cook yourself a medieval feast

https://blog.britishmuseum.org/how-to-cook-a-medieval-feast/?utm_source=rss&utm_medium=rss&utm_campaign=how-to-cook-a-medieval-feast

Christmas iconography

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2020/dec/21/christmas-cards-star-baby-jesus-myrrh-mystery-balthasar-three-kings-black-art>

When Kings meet

<https://royalarmouries.org/tudor-power-glory/>

Travel the Atlantic to the New World with the Dutch fleets

<https://www.newnetherlandinstitute.org/history-and-heritage/digital-exhibitions/voyages-of-new-netherland/methods-and-sources/>

When Christmas was cancelled

<https://www.bbc.com/reel/video/p091np52/how-cancelling-christmas-reignited-a-civil-war>

Enjoy Christmas in Georgian Scotland

<https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/a-georgian-house-christmas>

Napoleon's barge

<https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/napoleon-imperial-barge-scli-intl/index.html>

Shackleton's sledge saved for the nation

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2020/dec/16/shackletons-sledge-and-flag-from-south-pole-expedition-to-stay-in-uk>

Something to read - latest *ICOMAM Magazine*

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1n435OkVmsGXfsrTz8ALmgRJRn7-zRCIP/view>

Toby Capwell rates the movies and their arms and armour

<https://www.insider.com/medieval-weapons-master-fact-checks-rates-weapons-armor-movie-tv-scenes>

Cai Guo-Qiang sets off virtual fireworks above the forbidden city

<https://www.designboom.com/art/cai-guo-qiang-virtual-fireworks-forbidden-city-vr-artwork-12-16-2020/>

The history of Christmas crackers

<https://www.homesandantiques.com/christmas/who-invented-the-christmas-cracker/>

Conon Doyle and the Cottingley Fairies

<https://museumcrush.org/arthur-conan-doyle-and-the-cottingley-fairies/>

This fortnight I tweeted beautiful cannon

<https://twitter.com/Basiliscoe>

Stay safe through the Christmas break and I will be back – I hope! - in 2021.

Compiled by Ruth Rhynas Brown – 22 December 2020

Some people have asked me about making a contribution to the Newsletter – if you would like to support us, you can make a donation here through our Paypal account – see here for details:

<http://www.basiliscoe.com/id2.html>

