

The Basiliscae Mercury 438

The Internet newsletter for the arms and armour community

As in recent weeks, a large number of assorted sword stories, plus the oldest firearm found in the US, how prisoners in the Tower spent their time and Notre Dame is open again. Happy Advent...

Arms and armour in the news

Ancient arms

Investigating Bronze Age swords from the Balearics

<https://www.ancient-origins.net/news-history-archaeology/balearic-bronze-age-swords-0021722>

Greek helmet found in Haifa some years ago handed to authorities

<https://greekreporter.com/2024/11/23/ancient-greek-helmet-found-israel/>

Feature on Britain's gladiator helmet

<https://www.historyhit.com/gladiator-helmet-discovered-britain/>

Santa comes early to Chichester museum with Anglo-Saxon sword fittings

<https://www.medievalists.net/2024/11/early-medieval-treasure-secured-for-english-museum/>

Ritually bent sword found in Vaerebro

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2024/11/ritually-bent-bronze-age-sword-discovered-in-the-vaerebro-adal/153977>

Part of Viking sword hilt found in the Netherlands

<https://www.medievalists.net/2024/11/viking-sword-fragment-discovered-in-the-netherlands/>

Feature on the composite bow in ancient warfare

<https://jordantimes.com/news/local/sinew-horn-rise-composite-bow-ancient-warfare>

Beasts of assorted varieties...

How to buy a warhorse

<https://www.medievalists.net/2024/11/buy-medieval-warhorse/>

Sami culture and sacred trees

<https://phys.org/news/2024-11-engraved-trees-smi-culture.html>

Antique fishing lures for sale

<https://artdaily.com/news/175728/Wayne-Edens--antique-fishing-lures-set-to-hook-new-owners-at-Morphy-s-Dec--9-auction>

Grave stories

Tomb of Greek boxer found in Turkey

<https://greekreporter.com/2024/11/28/turkey-shrine-tomb-of-ancient-greek-boxer-diagoras/>

Genes and going a-viking

<https://cosmosmagazine.com/science/biology/vikings-genes-faroes-iceland/>

On the frontlines

Letter for William Wallace goes on display, briefly

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/ckg0gl8rnvno>

What they found at Glencoe

<https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/glencoe-archaeology-digs-reveal-poignant-artefacts-from-past>

Miscellany

Weapons and the crusaders

<https://www.medievalists.net/2024/11/weapons-violence-and-the-crusades-a-medieval-arms-race/>

New viewing platform at Corfe castle

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2024/dec/02/henry-is-luxurious-tower-at-corfe-castle-reopens-to-visitors-after-378-years>

Solingen sword to go on display in Sofia, Bulgaria next month

<https://www.bta.bg/en/news/culture/787977-popovo-history-museum-to-present-medieval-double-edged-sword-at-exhibition-in-so>

Decoding inscriptions in the Tower of London

<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2024/dec/01/16th-century-graffiti-of-tower-of-london-prisoners-decoded-for-first-time>

Arizona's hackbut

<https://www.zmescience.com/science/news-science/oldest-firearm-in-the-usa/>

16th century manuscript about rocket-making

<https://www.msn.com/en-in/news/techandscience/a-forgotten-16th-century-manuscript-that-reveals-spaceflight-instructions/ar-AA1tnNRg?apiversion=v2&noservercache=1&domshim=1&renderwebcomponents=1&wcseo=1&batchservertelemetry=1&noservertelemetry=1>

Cannons to the left, cannon to the right

The story of Minehead's missing cannon continues

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cz6jvvdxnveo>

Napoleonic era 36 pounder recovered from the Schelde

<https://www.vrt.be/vrtnws/en/2024/11/19/napoleonic-cannon-retrieved-from-the-slurry-of-the-river-schelde/>

Fremont's cannon history

<https://nevadasportsnet.com/news/reporters/fremont-cannon-101-the-history-behind-college-footballs-most-expensive-rivalry-trophy>

Café Basiliscoe

The history of chilli peppers

<https://phys.org/news/2024-11-spicy-history-chili-peppers.html>

2000-year-old fig

<https://arkeonews.net/a-fig-dating-back-over-2000-years-has-been-discovered-in-north-dublin-a-first-of-its-kind-for-ireland/>

Clootie dumplings from the Castle for Christmas

<https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/recipe-irenes-clootie-dumpling-from-castle-fraser>

Princesses and Amazons

Gift giving and medieval queens

<https://www.medievalists.net/2024/11/medieval-english-queens-gifts/>

Whose portrait is it anyway? – No 1

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2024/nov/17/after-decades-tiny-500-year-old-royal-portrait-is-identified-as-mary-tudor>

and No 2

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2024/dec/01/rediscovered-elizabethan-portrait-may-have-been-love-token-for-sir-walter-raleigh>

How a pair of Madame de Pompadour's sconces ended up in Yorkshire

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/nov/24/its-been-a-lot-of-detective-work-madame-de-pompadours-1m-wall-lights-discovered-in-yorkshire-hotel>

Looking after Georgian gowns on open display

<https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/out-in-the-open-caring-for-a-dress-on-open-display>

Fascinating story of a 20th century Indian princess

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cn017r4zw3wo>

And a lady re-enactor tells her story

<https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2024/dec/01/im-a-mixed-black-female-historical-re-enactor-in-a-sea-of-men-with-beards>

Nautical news

Investigating mysterious wreck at the bottom of a Norwegian lake

<https://www.livescience.com/archaeology/scientists-glean-new-details-of-mysterious-centuries-old-shipwreck-submerged-in-norways-largest-lake>

And finding a message in a bottle in a Viking ship burial...

<https://www.newsweek.com/message-bottle-found-archaeologist-viking-site-1992507>

Extra bottle bonus - the story of the Bottle in a Scottish lighthouse

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c8rl6456pr2o>)

Has one of Vasco da Gama's ships been found off Kenya?

<https://www.livescience.com/archaeology/it-is-a-treasure-wreck-off-kenyan-coast-may-be-from-vasco-da-gamas-final-voyage>

<https://phys.org/news/2024-11-archaeologists-shipwreck-kenya-vasco-da.html>

Steve Ellis and the *London*

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/nov/19/im-obsessed-with-historic-shipwreck-the-london-oliver-cromwell>

Spreading the news of the *Gloucester*

<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/campus/sharing-shipwreck-stories-rewrite-maritime-history>

Museum news and exhibitions

News

Notre Dame restored

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c937r4k5rvno>

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/gallery/2024/nov/29/inside-the-restored-notre-dame-cathedral-in-pictures>

Museum developments

Arts for Vets programme

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2024/11/29/museums-therapeutic-art-programme-helps-military-veterans-find-their-voices>

Museum musings

Saving culture in terrible times

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2024/11/29/inside-aliph-the-organisation-racing-to-save-the-worlds-heritage>

Conservation corner

Fascinating insights into making the Nebra Sky Disc

<https://phys.org/news/2024-11-insights-production-nebra-sky-disc.html>

Exhibitions

Science for French kings to come to London- sounds fascinating

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2024/11/29/scientific-wonders-from-versailles-which-once-delighted-kings-to-go-on-show-in-london>

Clocks at the Wallace Collection

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2024/nov/28/keeping-time-review-wallace-collection-london-boulle>

Four *vanitas* paintings to be shown together in Cambridge

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2024/nov/30/jan-davidsz-de-heem-still-life-quartet-fitzwilliam-museum-cambridge>

Thirty Years War in Stockholm

[The Battle for Europe - War and Art during the Thirty Years' War - Livrustkammaren](#)

Books

Anna Ferrari: ***Versailles: Science and Splendour***

<https://scalapublishers.com/versailles-science-and-splendour/>

Jeremiah McCall: ***Swords and Cinema; Hollywood vs the Reality of Ancient Warfare***

<https://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk/Swords-and-Cinema-Paperback/p/51417>

British Museum publications

<https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/british-museum-publications>

Popular culture

Airbnb plans for gladiatorial combat not well received by locals

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2024/11/19/romans-rebel-against-colosseum-and-airbnbs-plans-to-stage-gladiatorial-battles-for-tourists>

Fencing like it's 1499

<https://www.medievalists.net/2024/11/renaissance-fencing-master-tyson-paul-fight/>

Bad medieval films for Christmas

<https://www.medievalists.net/2024/11/worst-medieval-movies/>

Events

Diary Dates

What's on for Christmas holidays at Leeds

<https://royalarmouries.org/leeds/whats-on>

Sales, fairs and auctions

3 December 2024 Lyngby, Denmark

Antiques and ancient weapons

<https://bruun-rasmussen.dk/m/auctions/1008196>

4 December 2024 London

Fine Arms & Armour

<https://www.olympiaauctions.com/auction/details/041224-fine-antique-arms-armour--militaria/?au=145>

Various auctions

<https://www.hermann-historica.de/en>

Websites and downloads

What's happening in the Royal Armoury, Stockholm

<https://livrustkammaren.se/en/whats-on/>

1066 etc Crusading states, Lewes, Templars

<https://www.medievalists.net/2024/11/were-the-crusader-states-penal-colonies/> [The Battle of Lewes \(1264\) – Bow & Blade, Episode 56 - Medievalists.net https://www.medievalists.net/2024/11/templars-secret-cult/](https://www.medievalists.net/2024/11/templars-secret-cult/)

Perfect combination of Christmas, music and steel & iron-making - the carol tradition of South Yorkshire

<http://www.localcarols.org.uk/index.php>

Finally

Make your own Christmas presents & decorations inspired by the Mary Rose

https://maryrose.org/things-to-make-and-do/?fbclid=IwY2xjawG5MXFleHRuA2FibQlxMAABHcslwzyKomc_xpQgmJT1nBDr-fltTu0lcHptU_gVz45StjvPhQqcUFQ54Q_aem_aLaC-0C9EYKpzn37xF0Z3g#kingonathing

Compiled by Ruth Rhynas Brown – 1 December 2024

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<http://www.basiliscoe.com>