

The Basiliscoe Mercury 464

The Internet newsletter for the arms and armour community

The discovery of a hoard of British war trumpets and standard has been the big archaeological news. Several features relating to hunting and whaling through the ages, medieval castle for sale and armour in Asia.

Arms and armour in the news

Poisoned arrowheads

<https://www.sciencenews.org/article/oldest-poison-arrowhead-hunting-weapons>

Iron age trumpet found in Norfolk

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cr7jvj8d39eo>

And other material, too

https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/in-your-area/east-of-england/rare-iron-age-hoard-found-in-norfolk/?fbclid=IwT01FWAPLCXdleHRuA2FibQlxMABzcnRjBmFwcF9pZAwzNTA2ODU1MzE3MjgAAR4G6lJ5D5frT6dBu08qN3nrCn7IA8AjXdcZ- -3rHYf8Mhysgn4XJF9xHtFKQ_aem_3HrhDvhlopBGQfpBzIHrw

Roman whetstone facility found on the banks of the River Wear

<https://greekreporter.com/2026/01/07/ancient-roman-factory-england/>

Roman marching camps found in parts of Germany

<https://arkeonews.net/roman-marching-camps-discovered-in-saxony-anhalt-for-the-first-time/>

Is this part of a sacred helmet?

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/01/staffordshire-hoard-mystery-object/>

Princely grave found in Suffolk, England, early medieval

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/01/princely-early-medieval-burial-discovered-in-england/>

Beasts of assorted varieties... (let's start with the whales...)

Whale hunting 5000 years ago in South America

<https://phys.org/news/2026-01-whale-began-years-south-america.html>

New games - whale or mammoth bone....

https://phys.org/news/2026-01-case-mistaken-identity-mammoth-fossils.html?utm_source=nwletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=daily-nwletter

Nantucket Historical Association's Whaling Museum unveils scrimshaw exhibition

<https://artdaily.com/news/190306/Nantucket-Historical-Association-announces-2026-featured-exhibition>

Oldest cave art found in cave in Indonesia

<https://theconversation.com/humanitys-oldest-known-cave-art-has-been-discovered-in-sulawesi-273364>

What wolves ate in the ice age

<https://www.livescience.com/animals/land-mammals/one-of-the-last-woolly-rhinos-to-walk-earth-was-eaten-by-a-wolf-pup-and-scientists-have-now-sequenced-its-genome-from-the-undigested-meat>

Medieval hunting poems

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/01/new-medieval-books-a-demon-spirit/>

Grave stories

Update on the Hungarian warriors' DNA

<https://www.livescience.com/archaeology/1-100-year-old-burials-of-elite-warriors-and-their-ornate-weapons-discovered-in-hungary>

Update on graves of seven Roman soldiers in Croatia

<https://the-past.com/news/roman-soldiers-found-in-mass-grave-in-croatia/>

Through the arrow-slit . . .

Mongolia's Great Wall

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202601/1352248.shtml>

Mettingham castle up for sale

<https://www.domain.com.au/news/the-700-year-old-fairytale-castle-you-can-actually-own-1474624/>

Through the gunloop...

Fort Kuchi in danger of collapse

<https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/kochi/2026/Jan/07/last-bastion-of-fort-emmanuel-on-the-verge-of-collapse-in-kochi>

Update on Hull's south blockhouse project

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cr57z210700o>

Cannons to the left, cannon to the right

Hyderabad neglects its artillery heritage

<https://www.siasat.com/qutb-shahi-era-cannon-that-once-guarded-hyderabad-now-lies-unprotected-3325932/>

Alamo acquire another cannon for its collection

<https://www.kristv.com/news/texas-news/alamo-adds-rare-1836-battle-cannon-to-growing-historic-collection>

Miscellany

France gets back two bits of the Bayeux tapestry

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c8x95nrg882o>

Piece on the sword through history

<https://theconversation.com/seeking-honor-is-a-double-edged-sword-from-ancient-greece-to-samurai-japan-thinkers-have-wrestled-with-whether-its-the-way-to-virtue-262005>

Investigating Chinese cowboys in Oregon

<https://www.opb.org/article/2026/01/07/eastern-oregon-chinese-cowboys-trail/>

Article about the BM's upcoming exhibition on Samurai

<https://www.thecollector.com/samurai-british-museum-book-review/>

Back to the front

Copy of an autobiography of redcoat Shadrach Byfield discovered

<https://phys.org/news/2026-01-british-redcoat-lost-memoir-reveals.html>

American's founding documents to go on plane tour

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2026/01/21/us-national-archives-historic-documents-freedom-plane>

Café Basiliscoe

150-year-old alcohol from Utah

<https://www.fox13now.com/news/local-news/summit-county/150-year-old-bottle-of-utah-alcohol-opened-studied-by-archeologists-and-distillers>

Perhaps a last round at the Ordnance Arms?

<https://www.fromthemurkydepths.co.uk/2026/01/18/former-woolwich-pub-beside-beresford-square-up-for-rent-at-75000-a-year/>

Princesses and Amazons

Get the Mongolian look

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/01/clothing-and-hair-of-medieval-mongolian-women/>

Walk like an Italian nun

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/travel/article/20260108-italys-new-nun-mapped-pilgrim-trail>

World Heritage

Digitally reconstructing ancient Chinese armour

<https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202601/1353193.shtml>

How oceanic cultures made armour

<https://aeon.co/videos/how-islanders-of-oceania-built-fearsome-armour-without-metal>

5th century bronze armour found in Japanese tomb

<https://greekreporter.com/2026/01/07/japan-kofun-tombs-dragon-gilt-bronze-armor/>

Article about the BM's upcoming exhibition on Samurai

<https://www.thecollector.com/samurai-british-museum-book-review/>

Nautical news

Update on the explorations of Lake Champlain

<https://www.adirondackexplorer.org/explorer-news/lake-champlain-maritime-museums-chris-sabick-discussed-archaeological-discoveries-from-revolutionary-war-shipwrecks/>

<https://www.adirondackexplorer.org/community-news/lake-champlains-revolutionary-war-shipwrecks-are-caught-in-a-preservation-debate/>

Museum news and exhibitions

News

British museum hires a specialist to find missing exhibits

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/the-british-museum-plans-to-hire-a-treasure-hunter-duties-include-recovering-missing-artifacts-before-theyre-lost-to-history-180987954/>

More money for British cultural institutions

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2026/01/22/uk-government-tops-up-arts-funding-to-%C2%A315bn-over-next-five-years>

Bad news

Silver collection stolen from Dutch Museum

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2026/01/22/thieves-empty-a-dutch-silver-museum>

Museum developments

Historic Palaces introduces comics for visitors

<https://artdaily.com/news/190059/History-without-barriers--Historic-Royal-Palaces-launches-UK-s-first-wordless-story-series>

With the International Art Rescuers

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2026/01/19/global-taskforce-recovering-stolen-cultural-heritage>

Museum musings

The Autry Museum of the American West exhibition programme for 2026

<https://artdaily.com/news/190127/The-Autry-Museum-of-the-American-West-announces-2026-exhibitions-schedule>

Conservation corner

Reviving tradition of sword making in China

<https://www.thinkchina.sg/culture/3000-years-lost-one-swordsmith-revives-it>

Potter's Bull returns to public view

<https://artdaily.com/news/190093/The-Bull-returns-renewed--Paulus-Potter-s-masterpiece-revealed-anew-after-major-restoration>

Objects

Medieval sword pommel from Co Durham identified

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cp37y674ll5o>

Indian sword sold in Cockermouth auction

<https://www.newsandstar.co.uk/news/25757276.cockermouth-rare-sword-stuns-mitchells-auction/>

Cache of 19th century weapons found in Taiwan

<https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/news/6279934>

Exhibitions

Hawaii at the British Museum

<https://www.britishmuseum.org/blog/introduction-hawaii-kingdom-crossing-oceans>

Malta's Japanese armours go on display in Castle

<https://heritagemalta.mt/news/maltas-japanese-gems-exhibited-together-for-the-first-time-at-himeji-castle/>

East India Company and artists at Yale- looks stunning

<https://britishart.yale.edu/exhibitions-programs/painters-ports-and-profits-artists-and-east-india-company-1750-1850>

Books

Deborah McGrady: *Joan of Arc: The Life of a French Cultural Icon*
<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/01/new-medieval-books-joan-of-arc/>

Edoardo Albert: *The Man Who Stopped the Sultan: Gabriele Tadino and the Defence of Europe*
[The Man Who Stopped the Sultan: Gabriele Tadino and the Defence of Europe: Edoardo Albert: Osprey Publishing - Osprey](#)

Online Book

Interesting article on salt and iron industries in medieval and early modern England
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00076791.2025.2597763#d1e1198>

Popular culture

Still dressing for (weird) medieval times
https://www.aol.com/articles/weird-medieval-trend-might-answer-140000126.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xILmNvLnVrLw&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAJJNIR-jpmZwcBXGRFtFMwNNACnFtU_VWYH8Vgz3ripR_m99HOkDhWhG-8sRuXD_WucfV1jmhTs1Yhg-Jsqfp2SBd8Tb3JZMXaQYZ-BqUIntp-0Q_7_BmNrUXAIZBrEnRoj1a4SbzigTZYK3BjnN4j2TGHY5Tr6rJQRJ-BbhdA5Vy

Events

18 – 28 January 2026; Online only
Skinner Marlborough, Massachusetts
Historic Arms & Militaria
<https://www.bonhams.com/auction/31928/historic-arms-and-militaria/>

13 February 2026 New York
Irene Roosevelt Aitken: The Library, Bedrooms and Objects of Vertu
<https://www.christies.com/en/auction/irene-roosevelt-aitken-the-library-bedrooms-and-objects-of-vertu-31234/>

Websites and downloads

1066 etc: Crusaders, templars, river crossings & Just Wars

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/01/crusader-frontiers-mapping-the-medieval-holy-land/>

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/01/richard-the-lionheart-capture/>

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/01/victory-in-death-the-templars-at-cresson/>

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/01/crossing-under-fire-river-operations-in-early-medieval-warfare/>

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/01/when-was-violence-legitimate-feuds-and-just-war-in-early-medieval-germany/>

Compiled by Ruth Rhynas Brown – 24 January 2026

Check out our publications

<http://www.basiliscoe.com>