

The Basiliscoe Mercury 467

The Internet newsletter for the arms and armour community

Possible medieval hand gun fragment found (although doubts have been expressed on the identification), lots of animal and sword related stories and the National Army Museum gain a large number of VCs.

Arms and armour in the news

Ancient arms

Arrowheads and the presence of humans in Central Asia

<https://theconversation.com/arrowhead-points-found-in-central-asia-could-prove-the-presence-of-homo-sapiens-80-000-years-ago-276550>

Bronze age spearhead mould found in Moravia – good picture

<https://arkeonews.net/3000-year-old-bronze-age-spearhead-mould-discovered-in-south-moravia-backyard/>

Greek helmets provoking rethink

<https://greekreporter.com/2026/03/12/rare-greek-helmets-magna-graecia/>

Battles, towers and forts

Roman fort found in Bearsden gardens

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c62gk5864rdo>

Lincoln's roman arch to be repaired

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cg4g0x0glg6o>

Gladiator sculptures found in southern Italy

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2026/03/gladiatorial-reliefs-discovered-near-the-appian-way/157415>

Beasts of assorted varieties...

When mammoths roamed Anglesey

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c62gw127d27o>

When Neanderthals hunted giant elephants

<https://www.sci.news/paleontology/straight-tusked-elephant-paleoecology-14625.html>

Aurochs on a stick

<https://www.labrujulaverde.com/en/2026/03/an-aurochs-skull-impaled-on-a-wooden-post-10500-years-ago-reveals-the-earliest-animistic-rituals-in-northern-europe/>

Tors pony cap goes to Boston

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c5yjy1yj2ko>

Hunting in Khakassia

<https://arkeonews.net/ancient-stone-slabs-with-hunting-scenes-discovered-in-burial-mounds-of-khakassia/>

Whaling in medieval Norway

<https://www.sciencenorway.no/archaeology-culture-hunting/large-man-made-belt-of-stones-discovered-underwater-in-norway-very-unusual/2628978>

Grave stories

Violence in ancient Serbia

<https://theconversation.com/a-2-850-year-old-mass-grave-in-serbia-reveals-a-shift-in-prehistoric-violence-277115>

Who killed Princess Ulyania (spoiler alert- natural causes...)

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2026/03/archaeologists-reveal-new-findings-into-the-death-of-princess-ulyania/157342>

Through the arrow-slit . . .

Early medieval fortress found in Poland- with arrowheads

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2026/02/lost-medieval-stronghold-discovered-in-wlodawa-forest/157145>

Medieval tower in Toledo collapses

<https://euroweeklynews.com/2026/03/14/mediaeval-tower-collapses-at-historic-escalona-castle-in-toledo-visitors-escape-with-their-lives/>

The Hague's lost gate investigated

<https://nltimes.nl/2026/03/12/archaeologists-uncover-13th-century-city-gate-hague-parliament>

Excavating Kajiwara Battery, Osaka

<https://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/16380799>

Cold war bunker found in Scarborough Castle

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c78xg81jj34o>

Cannons to the left, cannon to the right

Piece on Rhode Island's artillery collection

<https://eu.providencejournal.com/story/news/local/2026/03/09/ri-state-house-civil-war-cannons-gettysburg-gun-bull-run-stuck-cannonball/88690795007/>

US Civil War cannon upended in traffic accident

<https://eu.eveningsun.com/story/news/local/2026/03/08/historic-civil-war-cannon-damaged-in-york-county-pennsylvania-pa-crash/89055592007/>

Saudi Arabia's Ramadan cannon

<https://news24online.com/photos/life-style/why-saudi-arabias-ramadan-cannon-fell-silent-the-150-year-old-tradition-linking-mecca-and-medina-to-open-the-fast-774879/from-mecca-to-medina-774879/>

Cairo's Ramadan cannon

<https://flair-magazine.com/2026/03/08/the-story-of-the-ramadan-cannon-a-sound-that-signals-home/>

Kilburn church loses its two WW2 anti-aircraft guns

<https://www.hamhigh.co.uk/news/25904385.royal-navy-second-world-war-guns-leave-kilburn-tin-tabernacle/> <https://www.ianvisits.co.uk/articles/the-church-with-anti-aircraft-guns-kilburns-unusual-naval-relics-removed-88029/>

Miscellany

Fragment of medieval handgun found in Germany

<https://arkeonews.net/possible-oldest-handgun-in-germany-discovered-near-kletzke/>

Medieval sword unveiled in Poland- (I think this is new one)

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2026/03/rare-medieval-bastard-sword-unveiled-at-museum-of-miechow-land/157214>

New thoughts on Valencia's Excalibur

https://www.futura-sciences.com/en/heres-why-the-excalibur-sword-discovered-in-spain-could-have-islamic-origins_27751/

Halifax to rebuild its guillotine

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/ceqv3nyy85qo>

Café Basiliscope

Neolithic diet back on the menu

<https://www.sci.news/archaeology/neolithic-european-cuisine-14602.html>

Do you want wine with your round of golf?

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2026/mar/04/thought-it-was-a-collapsed-drain-golf-course-sinkhole-exposes-lost-wine-cellar>

Nautical news

Update on recent Swedish finds

<https://www.su.se/english/news/articles/2026-03-03-shipwrecks-revealing-the-past-its-like-being-a-fly-on-the-wall>

Bits of the Parthenon found on the *Mentor*?

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2026/03/mentor-shipwreck-study-uncovers-possible-fragment-of-parthenon/157420>

Scans of *USS Monitor* released

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/see-a-164-year-old-civil-war-shipwreck-in-stunning-detail-with-these-new-high-resolution-sonar-images-180988323/>

Museum news and exhibitions

News

UK's National Army Museum to house Lord Ashcroft's VC collection

<https://www.nam.ac.uk/press/lord-ashcroft-vcs-gcs>

Bad News

Artefacts being smuggled out of Iran <https://artdependence.com/articles/us-customs-and-border-protection-intercept-bronze-age-swords-and-arrowheads-from-iran/>

New Museums

Banqueting Hall in Whitehall to re-open

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2026/03/09/monumental-rubens-ceiling-painting-opens-to-the-public-after-two-year-renovation>

Museum developments

Prado launches a hub for its audio/visual material

<https://artdaily.com/news/193824/The-Prado-launches-Canal-Prado--a-new-digital-hub-for-art-videos-and-lectures>

Museum Musings

Royal Armouries uncovers hidden stories

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cde46npj3dxo>

Objects

The FT's guide to collecting arms and armour

<https://www.ft.com/content/63064b10-e837-496f-9c42-44b7a12bb52b>

Exhibitions

Trade in Africa and the Asante ewer in London

<https://www.britishmuseum.org/exhibitions/asante-ewer>

Early photographs of Japan in Amsterdam

<https://artdaily.com/news/193606/Echoes-of-the-East--Centuries-of-Japanese-photography-meet-at-the-National-Maritime-Museum>

Celtic art across the Harvard Art Museums

<https://artdaily.com/news/193779/Creative-and-complex-nature-of-celtic-art-explored-at-Harvard-Art-Museums>

Medieval manuscripts in Baltimore

<https://artdaily.com/news/193812/Medieval-Mindscapes-now-on-view-at-the-Walters>

Books

History of cowboy boots

<https://artdaily.com/news/193547/Bata-Shoe-Museum-unveils--Rough-and-Ready---a-definitive-history-of-the-cowboy-boot>

Popular Culture

The Middle Ages and video games

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/03/ways-video-games-have-rewritten-middle-ages/>

Events

9 June 2026 Society of Antiquaries, London

Lunchtime Talk on the *Gribshunden*

<https://www.sal.org.uk/event/gribshunden/>

Conferences

13- 14 March Wallace Collection, London

Conference on Arms and Armour from Asia, Africa and the Ottoman World

https://www.wallacecollection.org/whats-on/events/conference-on-arms-and-armour-from-asia-africa-and-the-ottoman-world-2/?fbclid=IwY2xjawQA-SBleHRuA2FIbQIxMQBzcnRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjlwMzIxNzg4MjAwODkyAAEeCcfE7jg5fV3Ifdp2itrGd3hvlUKxijP_DLeyWJLhInJBUcBBdkHx7ZKZI0A_aem_d_kDWAt4dv2A5zRp_2raQw

International Workshop 'Army of Flanders' (Brussels, 15–16 May 2026)

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Sales, fairs and auctions

Olympia's auctions

<https://www.olympiaauctions.com/auctions-valuations/auction-calendar/>

Barnes Wallis mementoes go on sale

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c5yjm3pn21no>

Websites and Downloads

1066 etc: Manzikert, Othon de Grandson & Stave churches

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/03/betrayal-or-mistake-rethinking-the-defeat-at-manzikert/>

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/03/new-medieval-books-othon-de-grandson/>

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/03/norway-invests-millions-to-preserve-its-medieval-stave-churches/>

Compiled by Ruth Rhynas Brown – 2026

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