

The Basiliscoe Mercury 469

The Internet newsletter for the arms and armour community

Good news that the golden helmet has been recovered, if a little battered. Our run of important books continues with the Met's volume on Greenwich armour. Otherwise, the usual mixture of Roman remains, talk at the Royal Armouries and little romance.

Arms and armour in the news

Ancient news

Roman swords found in Swiss lake

<https://nypost.com/2026/03/31/science/divers-find-gladius-swords-other-treasures-in-roman-shi-pwreck/>

Roman camp discovery linked to Battle of Pydna

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2026/04/roman-camp-discovered-linked-to-battle-of-pydna/157662>

Frankfurt's lost Roman heritage uncovered

<https://arkeonews.net/frankfurt-uncovers-its-oldest-known-roman-military-camp-in-hochst-excavations/>

Byzantine fort discovered in Iberia

<https://www.labrujulaverde.com/en/2026/04/a-byzantine-fort-discovered-in-elda-built-by-the-garrison-of-the-eastern-roman-empire-on-the-visigothic-frontier-of-southeastern-iberia/>

Beasts of assorted varieties...

More on the evidence of mammoth hunting

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/after-nearly-80-years-of-doubt-scientists-say-a-spear-lodged-between-elephant-ribs-offers-evidence-that-neanderthals-hunted-big-game-180988522/>

Is this a stirrup I see before me?

<https://arkeonews.net/archaeologists-discover-1600-year-old-engraving-that-could-push-back-stirrup-use-in-europe-by-over-a-century/>

Managing forests in medieval Normandy

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/04/how-medieval-normandy-managed-its-forests/>

Asian news

Update on Japanese armour research

<https://arkeonews.net/ancient-japanese-armor-reveals-strong-links-to-koreas-baekje-kingdom/>

More thoughts provoked by the BM's Japanese exhibition

<https://www.thecollector.com/rethinking-samurai-british-museum-experts/>

Investigating China's meteorite axes

<https://www.scmp.com/news/people-culture/trending-china/article/3349780/celestial-craftsmanship-discoveries-china-sanxingdui-veil-secrets-meteorite-axe>

Broken weapons in Chinese graves

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2026/04/broken-weapons-in-chinese-tomb-reveals-enduring-philosophy-of-peace/157731>

Lucknow scroll goes on display at Yale

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2026/04/06/monumental-indian-scroll-goes-on-public-view-for-the-first-time-at-yale>

Grave stories

Skeltons with sword wounds found under French school

<https://nypost.com/2026/04/11/world-news/mystery-deepens-as-skeletons-with-sword-wounds-found-beneath-elementary-school/>

Mass Viking grave found outside Cambridge

<https://the-past.com/news/viking-age-mass-grave-found-outside-cambridge/>

Death of US soldier in the 1870s

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/this-soldier-died-of-yellow-fever-during-a-hurricane-153-years-ago-archaeologists-just-found-his-grave-180988484/>

In the lists

Romance in the lists

<https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/people/a-beautiful-surprise-how-a-12-year-bond-over-medieval-jousting-led-to-a-fairytale-engagement-6570957>

Through the arrow-slit . . .

Resoring ancient walls and towers in Turkey

<https://www.dailysabah.com/arts/historic-tower-walls-restored-at-turkiyes-sillyon-ancient-city/news/amp>

Recent work at Durham castle

<https://the-past.com/news/renovation-reveals-hidden-secrets-of-durham-castle/>

Cumbria's mysterious Henry's Castle gets listing

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cwywgz5wx2vo>

Through the gunloop...

Feature on one of South Africa's old arsenals

<https://www.citizen.co.za/middelburg-observer/news/2026/03/30/middelburg-heritage-this-week-in-middelburgs-history-march-30/>

Piece on Bahrain fort

<https://www.ad-hoc-news.de/boerse/news/ueberblick/bahrain-fort-unveiling-qal-at-al-bahrain-s-ancient-secrets-in-manama/69051026>

Cannons to the left, cannon to the right

Historic cannon found in Tenerife roadworks

<https://tenerifeweekly.com/2026/04/08/historic-cannon-discovered-during-cabildo-de-tenerife-construction-works/>

And an update

<https://tenerifeweekly.com/2026/04/12/the-mystery-of-the-two-metre-cannon-in-tenerife-sixteenth-or-eighteenth-century/>

French cannon goes on display at Saratoga

<https://capitalregionchamber.com/news/french-cannon-from-revolutionary-war-on-display-at-saratoga/>

Piece on Guernsey's Noonday Gun

<https://guernseypress.com/news/2026/04/06/50-years-of-the-second-round-of-the-noonday-gun>

Miscellany

Travelling round England's chalk figures

<https://www.theguardian.com/travel/2026/apr/07/walk-through-mysterious-giant-chalk-figures-southern-england>

Searching for the identity of two boys - one carrying a sword

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cm2rwpmwkqgo>

Glencoe massacre hoard to be displayed in local museum

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c1d9zxgzk3zo>

Mortar shell recovered from Culloden field

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c8x7dxr7lgxo>

Princesses and Amazons; this week all fabrics

Queen Elizabeth's costume

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cd9ke9j445jo>

History of paisley shawls

<https://www.nts.org.uk/stories/something-worth-keeping>

World War 2 but in wool – coming to Lichfield soon

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cn4320w7vzjo>

Into the 20th century

Solving a Polish WW2 mystery

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2026/04/archaeologists-solve-a-wwii-mystery-near-zdanow/157667>

Japanese WW2 plane raised

<https://www.heritagedaily.com/2026/04/wwii-japanese-shiden-kai-fighter-raised-from-seabed-after-81-years/157706>

Two WW2 properties in Landmark Trust news:

Bofors tower

https://www.landmarktrust.org.uk/properties/bofors-tower/?utm_source=marketo&utm_campaign=april-2026-enews&utm_medium=email&utm_content=lead&mkt_tok=Njk4LU9aSi0yMzA-AAAGhGILrb5PBUFqK9fN7Dstul7eYkSFsZLUy0qJxuiVDGxr0BivlIdgsaqKPwIM28wAqUCcejRiMi1fHVI0p9wqSyHB3nZYr4uA9P6ZA2TD

RAF Ibsey

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cx2el381g3vo>

Nautical news

Update on HMS *Tyger*, lost off Florida in 1747

<https://www.popularmechanics.com/science/archaeology/a70964108/18th-century-british-warship-finally-identified>

Update on gunboat *Philadelphia*

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/gunboat-philadelphia-lasting-one-day-battle-still-telling-us-revolution-250-years-later-180988412/>

Dannebrog, sunk in Nelson's attack on Copenhagen located?

<https://www.scmp.com/news/world/europe/article/3348765/wreck-danish-flagship-sunk-famed-british-admiral-discovered-after-225-years>

Update on HMS *Saldanha* lost off Donegal

<https://www.rte.ie/news/regional/2026/0406/1566625-donegal-shipwreck/>

Museum news and exhibitions

News

The golden helmet recovered (a little damaged)

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2026/04/02/ancient-golden-helmet-recovered-after-dutch-museum-heist>

New museums

Captain Cook Museum re-opens

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cljyr4gjmj8o>

Getty Center to close for redevelopment

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2026/04/10/getty-center-to-undergo-major-renovations-close-for-a-year-beginning-march-2027>

Museum developments

V&A on provenance

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2026/04/09/londons-va-launches-webpage-exploring-provenance-of-its-objects>

Exhibitions

Orientalism in Lens

<https://artdaily.com/news/194480/300-Islamic-artworks-redefine-the-history-of-Orientalism-in-Lens>

Canaletto and Bellotto in Vienna

<https://artdaily.com/news/194510/Constructing-the-city--Canaletto-and-Bellotto-s-visionary-vedute-arrive-in-Vienna>

Medieval; pastimes in Toronto

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/04/game-on-aga-khan-museum/>

Books

One of the books of the Year!

Ian Eaves & Stuart W. Pyhrr: ***Fit For A King; Tudor and Stuart Armors Made in the Royal Workshop at Greenwich***

<https://scalapublishers.com/fit-for-a-king/>

Scotland's air defences

<https://artdaily.com/news/194505/Untold-story-of-Scotland-s-wartime-air-defence-system-revealed>

***Those Who Are About to Die'* -Review: Ancient Martial Artists**

Gladiatorial combat in ancient Rome was carefully managed entertainment. An experienced fighter stood a good chance of making it to the next bout.

https://www.wsj.com/arts-culture/books/those-who-are-about-to-die-review-ancient-martial-artists-9e3cac58?st=eSn4vm&reflink=article_email_share

Online read

Rosen, Daniel: "Cast Over a Doublet": A Military-Style Jerkin"

<https://www.metmuseum.org/met-publications/cast-over-a-doublet-a-military-style-jerkin>

And other titles here:

<https://www.metmuseum.org/met-publications/all?waysToRead=downloadPdf>

Popular culture: this week, all Greek...

Reimagining the Trojan Wars

<https://www.smh.com.au/culture/books/son-of-nobody-yann-martel-review-20260406-p5zlim.html>

And the Odyssey film is a masterpiece

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/entertainment/news/tom-holland-calls-christopher-nolans-the-odyssey-a-masterpiece/ar-AA20rvlh?ocid=BingNewsVerp>

Events

29 April 2026 Royal Armouries Leeds

Catherin Fletcher: The firearm revolution: How handguns changed 16th-century Europe.

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

9 June 2026 Society of Antiquaries, London

Lunchtime talk on the *Gribshunden*

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

Conferences

15–16 May 2026 Brussels

International Workshop 'Army of Flanders'

<https://klm-mra.be/en/activites/armyofflanders>

Armourers and Brasiers/Arms and Armour conference 3 October 2026

Details to follow

ICOMAM conference 2 – 6 November 2026, Lisbon, Portugal

<https://icom-arms-military.mini.icom.museum/>

Sales, fairs and auctions

Olympia's auctions

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

Herman Historica's May auctions announced

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

1066 etc

Sieges & battles

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/04/burghal-hidage-and-assault-forces-in-medieval-siege-warfare/>

<https://www.medievalists.net/2026/04/the-battle-of-tours-732/>

Compiled by Ruth Rhynas Brown – 13 April 2026

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<http://www.basiliscoe.com>