A Guide to London's Ten Oldest Buildings

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As historical a city as London is, there are plenty of buildings and structures that date back centuries, if not thousands of years. While London had long been spotted with settlements, the first organized building came with the Romans after their invasion in 43 AD. The coming of the Christians in the Middle Ages led to the construction of several churches that see many worshippers each Sunday. Even more buildings that still exist today followed the Norman invasion in 1066 AD. So what are the ten oldest buildings and structures in the city?

1. Thames Timbers – Approximately 5,000 – 4,000 BC

Possibly the oldest structure in London, archaeologists conducting a survey of the Thames in 2010 discovered six timber piles on the shore of the river under the shadow of MI6's Vauxhall building. The structure dates back to the Mesolithic Period, at a time when the Thames was thinner and deeper than it is at present, a fact confirmed by the finding of stone tools nearby as well as Neolithic pottery. It's unknown exactly what the purpose of the pillars was, whether it was a structure used like Stonehenge or something entirely different.

2. Temple of Mithras – 2nd/3rd Century AD

One of the oldest surviving Roman structures, it was constructed as a mithraeum, or a small temple for the worshippers of Mithras, the Persian god of light adopted by some Romans. It was discovered after World War II during the rebuilding caused by the London Blitz. Evidence suggested it was converted from Mithras to Bacchus worship around the 4th Century. After its discovery, it was relocated to Temple Court, Queen Victoria Street, for the construction of Bucklersbury House. Bloomberg intends to move the temple to its original site near the covered-over River Walbrook, with a plan to complete the project next year.

Vokabeln:

to spot	bemerken, erkennen, entdecken
worship	Gottesdienst, Anbetung, Verehrung
to conduct	führen, benehmen, leiten
timber	Holz, Schnittholz, Nutzholz
pile	Haufen, Stapel, Pfosten
to relocate	umsiedeln, verlagern, neu errichten, verlegen