

Start Farringdon



When you think about London rivers, there's one that comes to mind straight away – The Thames, right? On this walk, we're going to explore two of the City's LOST rivers – the Fleet and Walbrook!

In Roman times, the Fleet was a major river – a hundred metres wide and bustling with mills, meat markets - and hundreds of people.

The source of the River Fleet is actually two springs in Hampstead Heath, which feed a series of ponds. Those springs come together in Camden Town and then flow under Kings Cross, down here past Farringdon before falling into the Thames under Blackfriars Bridge – as we will see later!

There are 26 main rivers in London. This includes the River Thames, plus 25 tributaries which flow into the Thames.

How many can you find?

Keep count – we've started for you!

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Lost Rivers

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The Walbrook crossed the wall just west of the church and fed a swampy defensive ditch that surrounded the City in the Middle Ages! The eastern stretch of the ditch was supposedly nicknamed Houndsditch because it was a suitably murky place for dumping dead dogs and other waste...



Yuck! End All Hallows on the Wall

The Walbrook flows under the foundations of this church, as it heads towards the Bank of England.

St Margaret's Church



Walbrook Wharf

III Cannon Street

The Walbrook is formed from several sources - one from Shoreditch, another from the Barbican, joining in Finsbury Circus and then flowing through the City underneath the Bank of England, through Poultry and joining the Thames in a little inlet called Dowgate between Southwark and Cannon Street Bridges.

The name is thought to originate from the fact the river ran through the London Wall. Now, whilst it might be one of the shortest rivers, it was viewed as a major waterway since it carved a route right through the City. When the Romans established Londinium, it's likely that the Walbrook influenced their choice of location. It was an ideal transport link and water source.