



## 5 Charlie Robbins

Frome's war memorial is one of many cast by J.W Singer & Sons for towns, villages, schools, churches, businesses, the military and governments, home and abroad after the First World War. One of Singer's employees, Charlie Robbins, had himself served in the war and modelled for this statue. Charlie's statue was moved to its current location outside the Memorial Theatre in 2014 to mark the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War.

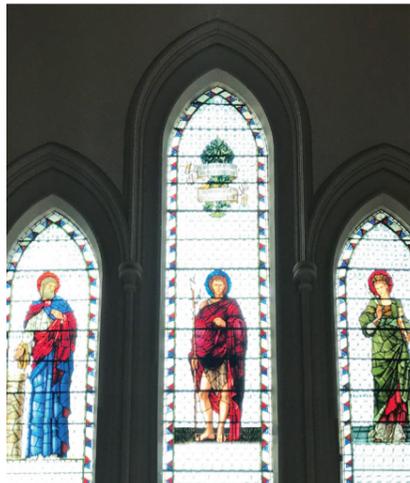
J.W.Singer & Sons cast war memorials until 1927 when this side of the business was sold to the Morris Art Bronze Foundry in London.

Nearby, at the top of Park Road, Frome Art School opened in 1865, and although now closed, it was founded by Singer to give his apprentices a good art training - skills that they would go on to use in the business.

## 6 Holy Trinity Church

Holy Trinity Church was built during John Webb Singer's lifetime in 1836. The wrought iron screen that Singer's designed and manufactured for the church was originally in a position that separated the entrance from the pews. Having been split into sections in 2015, part of it can now be seen at the entrance to the side chapel.

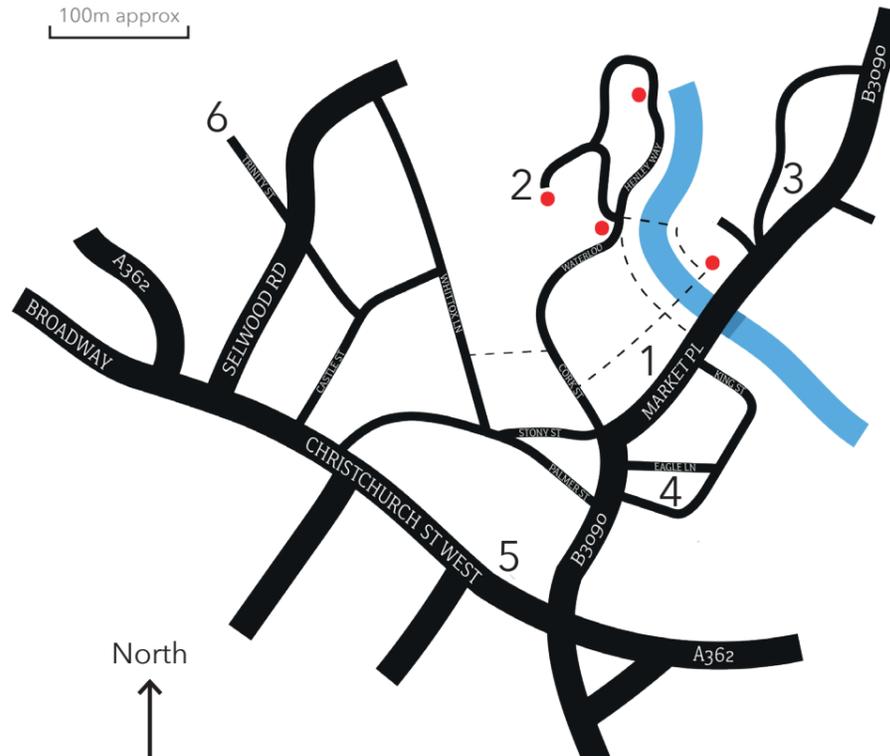
It is a fine example of ecclesiastical metalwork that compliments the thirteen stained glass Burne-Jones windows, made by Morris and Company, installed between 1880 and 1921.



Trinity Church

### TRAIL MAP

100m approx



● Info Board Location  
 - - - - Pedestrian Route

- 1 - Market Place
- 2 - Foundry Barton
- 3 - Frome Museum
- 4 - St John's Church
- 5 - Charlie Robbins
- 6 - Holy Trinity Church

### Useful Times

Discover Frome Information Point	10am - 4pm Tues - Sat ●
Frome Heritage Museum	March - November 10am - 2pm Tues - Sat ●
St Johns Church	9.30am - 3.30pm Everyday
Holy Trinity	9.30am - 12.30pm Sun - Fri

● Also open on market Sundays

[www.discoverfrome.gov.uk](http://www.discoverfrome.gov.uk)

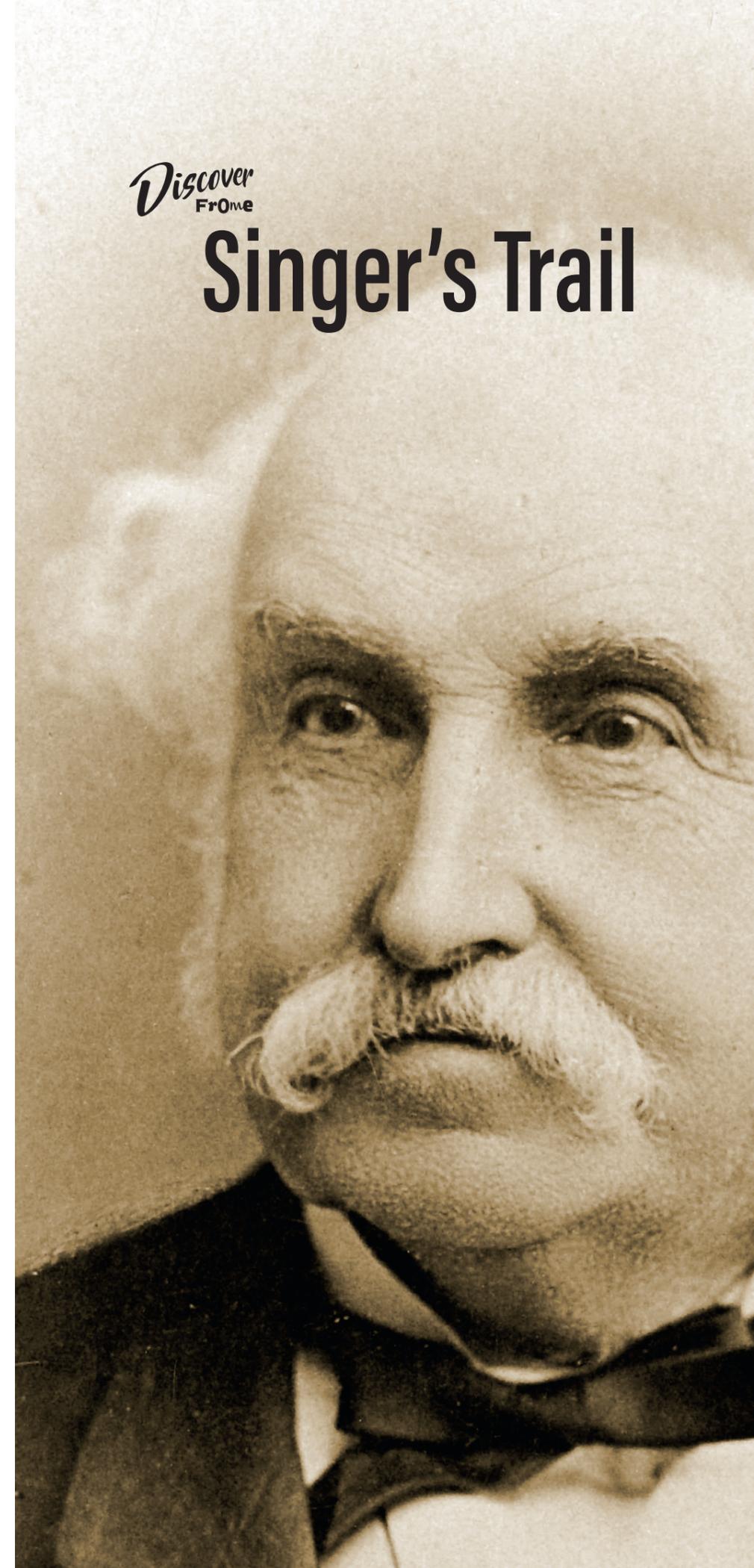
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Made differently

Images courtesy of Frome Heritage Museum  
 Written by Sue Bucklow

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# Singer's Trail



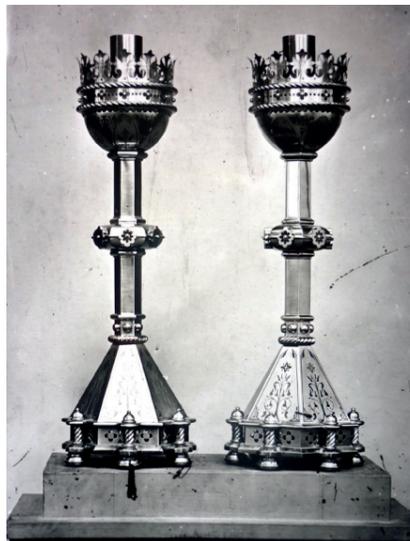
# Singer's Trail

At its height J.W.Singer & Sons Art Metal Works employed up to 700 people and cast statues, war memorials, and decorative metalwork that can be found across the country and around the globe.

Although the Singer's foundry no longer exists in the centre of Frome, the locations and landmarks in this trail tell its story and that of the remarkable life and work of John Webb Singer.

## 1 25 Market Place

Born and educated in Frome, John Webb Singer was apprentice to a local watchmaker before setting up his own business here in 1851. You can just see 'Singer's' engraved above the door.



Singer's casting career began with an order for two brass candlesticks, placed by a local vicar. Singer successfully cast this first order, reportedly using turnips to form the patterns. As more church ornament orders arrived such makeshift arrangements wouldn't suffice and Singer established a workshop, employing 7 men on decorative metal work for which they would gain international renown.

## 2 Foundry Barton

John Webb Singer established a foundry on this site in 1866 and it remained mostly unchanged for nearly 130 years. It was here J.W.Singer & Sons produced some of the world's most iconic public statues, including the Figure of Justice on the Old Bailey and the Boudica Group on the Thames Embankment.

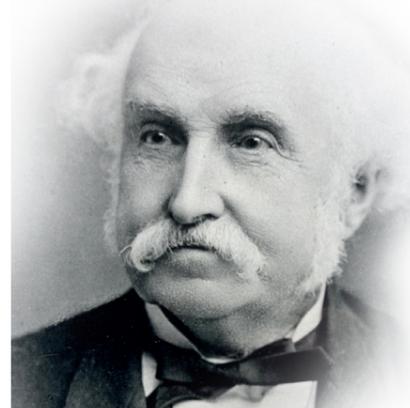
The people of Frome became familiar with the sight of statues heading off by horse and cart up steep Bath Street, on their way to the railway station. Crowds would line the route and cheer them on their way.

The reputation of J.W.Singer & Sons attracted some of the finest craftspeople and sculptors of the time to Frome. The company exhibited at many international fairs and won prizes for their work at the Paris Exhibition of 1878.

One of the largest castings undertaken by Singer's in 1889 was a statue of General Gordon of Khartoum, portrayed riding a camel. The statue was so huge that the mounting shop where it was assembled was forever after known as the 'Camel Shed' by Singer's employees.

The statue of a camel on this site remains a permanent reminder of the foundry, as do the foundry artefacts that remain on display here: the gantry crane, crucibles, air hammer, sand blaster and gas fired hardening furnace.

## 3 Frome Museum



Portrait of John Webb Singer (1819 - 1904) taken in the 1880's.

John Webb Singer was a founding member of the Frome Scientific and Literary Institute in 1869, on the site now occupied by Frome Museum. Singer was responsible for the decorative metalwork that adorns the exterior of the museum, which now houses the Singer's archive including thousands of glass negative images of the foundry and its work.

There is a permanent exhibition here, which, amongst other artefacts, includes the original J.W.Singer & Sons lettering from the works' sign.

The Boudica Group being re-assembled prior to its departure from Singer's. Started in 1850 by Thomas Thornycroft, completed by his son Hamo Thornycroft and cast at Singer's circa 1897. It was eventually erected on the Thames Embankment by Westminster Bridge in May 1902 and remains one of London's most popular and iconic public sculptures.



**J.W.Singer & Sons produced some of the world's most iconic public statues, including the Figure of Justice on the Old Bailey and the Boudica Group on the Thames Embankment.**

General Gordon of Khartoum on his camel, made in 1889.



## 4 St John's Church

John Webb Singer died in 1904 and is buried on the north side of the church. The bell at St John's was tolled to mark his death and hundreds of people came to pay their respects at his funeral.

Singer was closely linked to St John's in his lifetime. He designed the intricate screen which divides the Lady Chapel from the Nave and the chancel gates. He also lived nearby in Knoll House, on Gentle Street.

John Webb Singer with John Goulter, the works foreman and some of the Singer's workforce in 1890. These included highly skilled craftsmen from Belgium who came to Singer's to train the Frome men in the art of the Lost Wax method of casting. The statue is Peace, by Edward Onslow Ford.

