On August 12, following a meeting of around 3,000 cotton workers on the site that is now Preston covered markets, Preston workers began their strike. The strike continued on 13 August and moved into the town centre. It was on Lune Street where the crowds were met by police and soldiers, leading events to become escalated. Strikers gathered and threw stones at the police and military, resulting in the military opening fire into the crowd. By the time the crowd had scattered, four workers had been shot dead and three others had been injured.

This memorial, which stands on the site where these sad events took place, depicts the four factory workers being shot. It was designed by Gordon Young and was unveiled on the 150th anniversary of the shooting. The memorial’s design was inspired by Goya’s painting “The Third of May 1808” and aims to remind people “Never without sacrifice have gains been made towards justice and democracy”.

Preston Martyrs

Situated outside the old Corn Exchange (now the 1842 restaurant) is the Preston Martyrs memorial statue.

This statue marks the site of the Lune Street Riots in 1842. The riots took place during the 1842 General Strike, also known as the Plug Plot Riots. These were prompted by a depression in 1841-2 that resulted in workers’ wages being cut by over 25%.

Follow the trail for the Peace Gardens

Facing away from the Corn Exchange/1842, cross over the road and follow the footpath towards Friargate. At the end of the footpath you will see the Peace Gardens opposite you.
Peace Gardens

The Peace Gardens were opened in 1991 and designed by Graham Mort. The gardens originally housed the praying hands sculpture which now resides on Fylde Road.

The Peace Gardens are a place to sit and watch the world go by. They include outdoor seating, surrounded by pieces of poetry and depictions of doves.

Follow the trail for the Cenotaph

With the Peace Gardens on your left, walk along Friargate towards St George’s Shopping Centre. Keep going until you come to Preston Flag Market. The Cenotaph stands on your left, outside the old Post Office building.

Preston Flag Market, Cheapside, PR1 2AP.

Cenotaph

The Cenotaph was paid for by public donations in memory of the men of Preston who lost their lives in WWI. The structure underwent a restoration project in 2013 and stands proud over the Flag Market in memory of some 2,000 men who tragically lost their lives in the Great War.

It was designed by architect Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, whose father Sir George Gilbert Scott designed Preston’s first town hall, before it mysteriously burned down. Sir Giles Gilbert Scott also designed the iconic red telephone box; a design which can also be seen to the left of the Cenotaph, down the side of the old Post Office building, in the longest row of red telephone boxes in England.

Follow the trail for the Obelisk

With your back to the Cenotaph, you will see the Obelisk opposite, on the other side of the Flag Market.
Obelisk

The Obelisk sits opposite the Cenotaph on Preston’s Market Square/Flag Market. The monument dates back to 1782 and was originally installed for the Guild celebration the same year.

In 1816 a gas lamp was fitted to the top of the Obelisk, making it the first outdoor location outside of London to be lit by gas.

The structure was removed in 1853 and remained in storage until 1979, when it was restored back to its home on the Flag Market. This re-erection was to mark and celebrate the 800th anniversary of the city being granted the charter by King Henry II.

Follow the trail for Sir Robert Peel statue

With the Obelisk on your left, turn left at Turtle Bay and right onto Fishergate High Street. Continue on the high street until you come to Winckley Street on your left. Walk down Winckley Street and enter Winckley Square Gardens at the end. As you come to the centre of the gardens you will see an entrance/exit to your left, this is where the Sir Robert Peel statue sits.

Sir Robert Peel

This statue was erected in memory of Sir Robert Peel and his achievements. It was sculpted by a local sculptor Thomas Duckett Senior.

Sir Robert Peel is known as the “Father of policing” after he established the Metropolitan Police Force for London in 1829. After this proved successful in cutting crime in London, all cities in Britain were obliged to form their own police forces by 1857.

Sir Robert Peel, however, was most admired in Preston for abolishing the Corn Laws in 1846, during his time as Prime Minister. The Corn Laws were tariffs and other trade restrictions on imported food and grain which raised food prices for the British Public. Abolishing the Corn Laws was beneficial to the less wealthy and it was because of this that Sir Robert Peel was held in great esteem by the poor. The erection of this statue by public subscription went ahead in 1852, after his death in 1850.
Follow the trail for the Cotton Reel
Facing away from the statue, cross over the road to Cross Street and continue down this street until you come to Avenham Road on your right. Turn down Avenham Road and note the Gold Thread Works building on your right. At the end of Avenham Road you will see the Cotton Reel on your left.

Cotton Reel

Featuring a large bobbin and sewing needle, this inviting statue was designed by Van Nong and local residents. It commemorates the former Simpsons Gold Thread Works and marks its importance in the city's history.

The Gold Thread Works was home to Stephen Simpson Ltd. – a company which advanced the science of gold thread manufacture and ran in this building 1839 – 1991. They produced gold and silver wire embroidery for the military, royalty, cruise ships, and Freemasons. They also produced other important pieces for uniforms of the staff on the Titanic and German Military badges for English Spies in WWII.

The company was established by Isaac Simpson and was continued by his son Stephen Simpson.

Follow the trail for the Sevastopol Cannons
Turn right from Avenham Road onto Avenham Lane and continue until you come to the colonnade on your left (parallel to Bushell Place). Walk down the colonnade and down the first set of steps. Continue to the second set of steps where you will find the Sevastopol Cannons on either side of these steps.

Sevastopol Cannons

Sitting either side of Avenham Park’s steps, overlooking the River Ribble, are two 36lb Sevastopol Cannons. The original cannons they represent were brought back from the siege of Sebastopol and presented to Preston in 1858 following the Crimean War. The Preston-based 30th and 47th army regiments played a crucial role in the siege of the Russian port of Sebastopol, the capture of which virtually ended the war.
Follow the trail for the Miller Park fountain
Continue down the steps and bear right towards the bridge. Keeping the bridge on your left, continue down the tree-lined path and under the bridge into Miller Park. Follow the path until you see the fountain on your right, here you can follow the path to get closer to the fountain.

Miller Park, South Meadow Lane, PR1 8JP.

Miller Park fountain
This fountain is Grade II listed and was designed by Edward Milner, responsible for the design of Miller Park. It dates back to 1865 and depicts the four elements of Earth, Water, Fire, and Air.

Follow the trail for the Earl of Derby Statue
Overlooking the fountain, up the steps, you will see the Earl of Derby statue.

Earl of Derby Statue
The Earl of Derby statue overlooks the picturesque Miller Park. The statue is in memory of Edward George Geoffrey Smith-Stanley, the 14th Earl of Derby and British Prime Minister 1866 – 1868. He was the longest running Conservative Party leader to date.

Stanley was born to Lord Stanley, who was later the 13th Earl of Derby. The Stanleys were a long-established and wealthy land-owning family. Their principal residence was Knowsley Hall, Lancashire.
Follow the trail for the Boer War Obelisk
With the Earl of Derby statue on your left, walk along the path and under the bridge into Avenham Park. The Obelisk sits on your left, overlooking the park.

Finish point: Avenham Park, PR1 8JT.

Boer War Monument
This monument is dedicated to the servicemen who died in the 1899 – 1902 Boer War. It is made of polished pink and red granite, sculpted by T. Hodgkinson of Preston. It was originally erected on Preston Flag Market in 1904, before being moved to its current location in 1925, with the current Cenotaph replacing its place on the Flag Market.

Preston Statue Trail map

1. Preston Martyrs statue
2. Peace Gardens
3. Cenotaph
4. Obelisk
5. Sir Robert Peel statue
6. Cotton Reel
7. Sevastopol Cannons
8. Miller Park fountain
9. Earl of Derby Statue
10. Boer War Obelisk