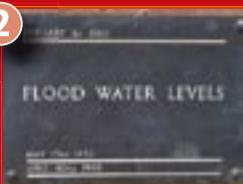




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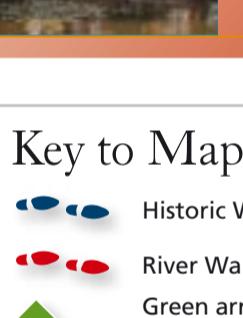
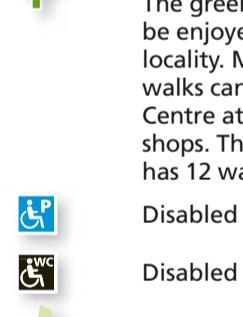
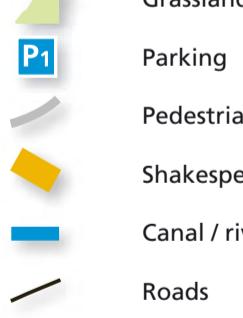
# River Walk

This is a circular walk of just under 2 miles starting and finishing at the Bancroft Gardens.

-  1 Start the walk from The Encore public house, once The Anchor, which was the hub of the wharf activity when the canal basin was the centre of commerce on the river.
-  2 During the 18th century the Bancroft Gardens and Waterside often flooded. Look for the flood level markings.
-  3 Opposite is an open public space known as The Bancroft. This land has never been developed due to flooding but was in the past used as Common Land for grazing pigs and sheep. It became the centre of commerce with the arrival of the canal in 1816 with two canal basins here and many busy wharfs dealing in coal, lime and timber.
-  4 The red brick, Art Deco Royal Shakespeare Theatre, designed by Elisabeth Scott, was opened in 1932. It was a replacement for the elaborately decorated 1879 building which burnt down in 1926.
-  5 Opposite the theatre is a row of 18th century cottages, once described as 'residences of the humbler sort'. The brick façades cover the earlier timber framed structures.
-  6 The Swan Theatre, to the back of the main theatre, sits inside the ornate Victorian structure that survived the 1926 fire.



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-  7 Walk past the row of larger 18th century houses to your right, including The Black Swan - locally known as The Dirty Duck - The Ferry House and The Malt House, once a granary. All took advantage of the river views for wealthier residents of the town. Many are timber-framed with stone, brick and stucco frontages added at a later date.
-  11 Cross the river by the little footbridge, turn left and follow the bank back towards the town centre taking in the views of the church, town, and on a fine day in the summer maybe a cricket or bowls match.
-  12 The Boat Club were given a couple of boat houses on Waterside in 1875 by Charles Flower, a local benefactor. The present Boat House, close to the Tramway Bridge, was built in 1897.
-  13 Cross back over the river by the Tramway Bridge. This was built in c.1826 for a horse drawn tramway to haul coal, lime and timber from the wharfs in Stratford to Shipston-on-Stour and on to Moreton-in-Marsh.
-  9 Stop for a moment where you have an excellent view, to the right, of Clopton Bridge. The bridge was built in the early 1490's and paid for by Hugh Clopton. To the left is the classic view of the river, theatre and church.
-  14 Cox's Yard, formerly Cox's Timber Yard, was established in 1830. The property remained in the family as a wood yard until 1990 when it was purchased by Stratford-on-Avon District Council in order to preserve the last reminder of the once thriving commercial waterfront.
-  15 Turn left onto the wide pavement with the Gower Memorial to the left. This was presented to the town by Lord Ronald Gower in 1888. It depicts Shakespeare surrounded by characters from his plays - Hamlet, Prince Hal, Lady Macbeth and Falstaff, representing philosophy, history, tragedy and comedy.

## Official Historic Walking Guide



£1.50

Welcome to the Stratford-upon-Avon walking guide. The sights in our historic town are best appreciated on foot and our two short walks give you a chance to experience some of 'hidden' Stratford that might otherwise be missed. The Red Route takes you around the Avon, which has played a crucial part in the commercial history of the town, as you will discover, while the Blue Route will lead you through the town and focus on the many ancient buildings that can be enjoyed. Both are circular walks of just over two miles.

Stratford-upon-Avon is an ancient market town famous not only as the birthplace of William Shakespeare but also for its half-timbered buildings. It has many other interesting buildings too which tell the story of the town's growth and development over the centuries.

The town's present street plan, a regular grid pattern, is the result of an early town planning decision by the Bishop of Worcester around 1196. His 'new town' was situated close to the river crossing used by the Romans. The line of the Roman Road can still be traced today through Bridge Street, Wood Street and Greenhill Street. The older settlement, clustered around Holy Trinity Church, then dwindled away.

Some of the historic buildings within the town provide an insight into the lives of William Shakespeare, the world's most famous playwright, and other members of his family. Of the five Shakespeare houses owned and cared for by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, three are in the town centre and within easy walking distance. These are his Birthplace, where he was born on 23rd April 1564, Nash's House which includes the site of New Place where he died on 23rd April 1616, and Hall's Croft, the house of Dr John Hall who married Shakespeare's daughter Susanna in 1607. There is a frequent bus service to the other two houses - Anne Hathaway's Cottage in the village of Shottery, where Shakespeare courted his future wife, and the childhood home of his mother, Mary Arden in the village of Wilmcote.

Stratford-upon-Avon is also home to the Royal Shakespeare Company, one of the most renowned ensemble acting companies in the world. The RSC is currently undergoing a major transformation of its Stratford home in a project that will create the best modern day playhouse for Shakespeare in the world. During the construction work, due for completion in 2010, you can see the Company perform on stage in the temporary award-winning Courtyard Theatre on Southern Lane. Tours of the building take place each week, free of charge. If you would like to take a look behind the scenes please ask for details at the Courtyard Theatre.

We hope you enjoy your visit to our much loved town and that you will come back again.

### Key to Map

- Historic Walk
- River Walk
- Green arrow – indicates an extended walk. The green arrows indicate longer walks to be enjoyed around the town and the wider locality. More information about these longer walks can be found at the Tourist Information Centre at Bridgefoot and in the town book shops. The Ramblers booklet 'Stratford Walks' has 12 walks with maps and instructions.
- Disabled Parking
- Disabled Toilet
- Grassland areas
- Parking
- Pedestrian areas
- Shakespeare Places of Interest
- Canal / river
- Roads
- Toilets
- Train Station
- Baby Changing Facilities

Please note: parts of the walks described in this leaflet are unsuitable for people with disabilities. However, if you would like further information relating to the walks please telephone 01789 299011.

If you find the text in this leaflet difficult to read we can supply it in a format better suited to your needs. Telephone 01789 260645.

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### Sources of further information

If you would like more information on the town's built heritage visit the Public Library in Henley Street, or the Shakespeare Centre Library and Archive, adjoining Shakespeare's Birthplace, which has the best collection in the world of books and pamphlets relating to Stratford as well as an immense archive of photographs and documents relating to the town. A recently-published book, *Stratford-upon-Avon: a History of its Streets and Buildings*, by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust's former Head of Archives, Robert Bearman, is designed as a guide to the Town's history through a careful examination of its surviving features.

Useful contacts for further information about the town, its past, present and future.

**Shakespeare Birthplace Trust** – [www.shakespeare.org.uk](http://www.shakespeare.org.uk)

**Stratford Society (the local Civic Society)**  
[www.stratfardsociety.co.uk](http://www.stratfordsociety.co.uk)

**Stratford Town Trust**  
[www.stratfordtowntrust.co.uk](http://www.stratfordtowntrust.co.uk)

**Town Management Partnership**  
[www.visitstratforduponavon.co.uk](http://www.visitstratforduponavon.co.uk)

**South Warwickshire Tourism**  
[www.shakespeare-country.co.uk](http://www.shakespeare-country.co.uk)

**Stratford upon Avon Town Council**  
[www.stratforduponavontowncouncil.com](http://www.stratforduponavontowncouncil.com)

**Stratford District Council** – [www.stratford.gov.uk](http://www.stratford.gov.uk)

**Warwickshire County Council** - [www.warwickshire.gov.uk](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk)

**World Class Stratford** - [www.worldclassstratford.net](http://www.worldclassstratford.net)

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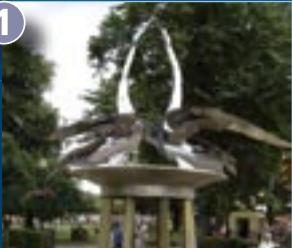


In Partnership with  
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON  
TOWN MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP

Stratford  
- up on -  
Avon

# Historic Walk

This is a circular walk of just over 2 miles. The walk begins and ends on Waterside and takes you through the busy market town past buildings that record the history of the town from the 12th to 21st century.



Start by The Swan Fountain, designed by Christine Lee in 1996 to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the town's first charter granted in 1196.



Walk up Sheep Street, once the site of a sheep market dating from 1265, a pretty street with shops and restaurants housed in a variety of buildings dating from the 15th century to the present day. To the right, note No. 40 Shrieves' House; an impressive 17th century merchant's house. Note the wide side entrance through to a range of original outbuildings.

On the left No. 4, dated 1492, now a wine bar, has an original interior but the front was rebuilt in c.1900.



The present Town Hall stands on the site of the first market hall, built in 1643, damaged during the Civil War and rebuilt in 1767. David Garrick, the foremost Shakespearean actor of his age, helped to celebrate the opening of the Town Hall by presenting a statue of Shakespeare and leading a three day festival in 1769 which marked the beginning of Stratford's tourist industry.



The small open space opposite the Town Hall has a complicated history. It was a medieval trading centre, referred to as the Corn Market in 1851. The Victorian Corn Exchange building on this site was demolished in 1958.



To the left on the corner of Ely Street stands a fine example of high Victorian architecture built in 1883. Note the fine terracotta frieze depicting scenes from Shakespeare's plays.



On the opposite corner stands a half-timbered building, now a restaurant. In 1600 this was the home of the Woolmers, one of the wealthiest local families. Close by stands Harvard House with its carved timbers dated 1596 and the initials of its builder, Thomas Roger, a wealthy local butcher. Note the carved bull's head. Thomas was the grandfather of John Harvard founder of Harvard University, USA.

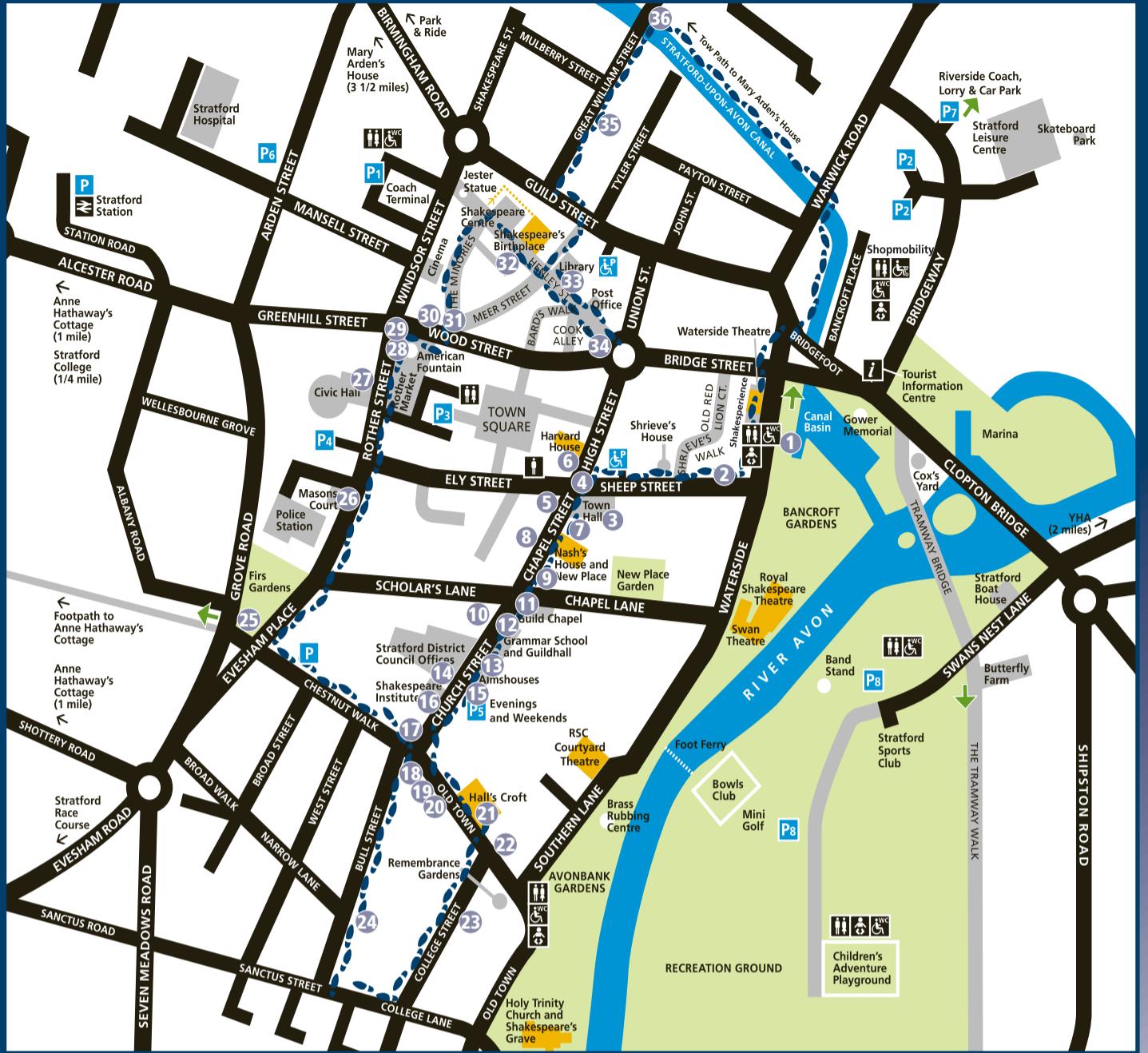
The Garrick Inn next door has a reconstructed façade over an original 17th century interior.



Turn left and walk past the Town Hall to the nine-gabled Shakespeare Hotel, originally two 16th century houses, a reminder of the sort of houses wealthy Tudor citizens would have had the means to build.



Most of the west side of Chapel Street was destroyed by the Great Fire of 1594. The street was rebuilt in brick, replacing the half-timbered and thatched structures. Bricks were made locally from 1670. One of the buildings that escaped the fire was the Falcon Hotel. Originally a two storey building dating from 1500, an additional storey was added in the 17th century.



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Opposite the Falcon is Nash's House, c.1600, the home of Thomas Nash who married Shakespeare's grand daughter. Next door is an open space, New Place Gardens. This was the site of a splendid 5-gabled house bought by Shakespeare for his retirement. He died here in 1616. The house was demolished by an aggrieved resident in 1759, much to the anger of the townspeople.



On the corner of Scholar's Lane is No. 16 Church St, a building where you can see the early 16th century timber back and the later stucco frontage with ogee windows dating from 1768. The parapet and crenellations were added in 1840.



The Guild Chapel was begun in 1269 by the Guild of the Holy Cross. The nave and the tower date from 1495, paid for by Hugh Clopton, a native of the town who later became Lord Mayor of London. Enter to see the remains of medieval wall paintings and learn more about the Chapel's history.



Adjoining the Chapel is the Guild Hall, now part of the school, which dates from 1417. The Guild also built the Pedagogue's House, situated behind the Guild Hall. Shakespeare reputedly received his education here. The fine house, glimpsed through the gate, was built in 1702 as a vicarage and is now the headmaster's house.



The Almshouses were also Guild properties, built in 1427 to house the aged and infirm of the town. They are still lived in today.



Opposite the Almshouses are two cottages, No. 8 and No. 9, the only two remaining from a row of timber framed, brick fronted cottages taken down to make way for the Head Offices of the National Farmers Union Mutual Insurance built in 1927, now Stratford-on-Avon District Council Buildings.



Further down the road on the left is The Windmill Inn. The Windmill holds the longest unbroken licence in Stratford dating from Shakespeare's time. This house was built in 1599 and became an ale house a year later.



Opposite is Mason Croft, now the Shakespeare Institute, a part of Birmingham University, built 1724. It was owned from 1899 – 1924 by Marie Corelli, an eccentric best selling author of her era.



On the corner is Trinity College, an 18th century house; originally of two storeys with the third added in 1872. Once a school, it is now divided into apartments.



Opposite is No 1 Church Street, now a school. It was built c. 1690 by tobacconist William Warry, as a speculation.



Turn left into Old Town; the name is a reminder that this was the centre of the original settlement before the Bishop of Worcester's new planned town of 1196. Only the church remains of the Anglo-Saxon settlement on the banks of the Avon.



The houses in Old Town are elegant. Nos 1, 2, 3, and 4 can be dated from 1760. No 5 Old Town Place is a particularly fine building. No. 6 dates from 1841 as do Nos 17, 18 and 19. These were the homes of well-to-do town gentry.



Hall's Croft, a fine timber building of the early 17th century, was home to Susanna, Shakespeare's daughter, and her husband Dr John Hall.



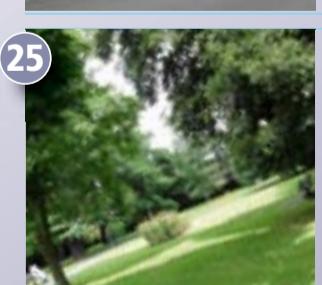
The Dower House and Avon Croft, once a single house, dates from the 16th century and was owned by the Clopton family.



To see the 19th century domestic extension of the town and 20th century additions turn right into College Street. The 20th century developments on the east side stand in what were the grounds of the original College of Holy Trinity. Turn right into College Lane.



From College Lane turn right into Bull Street where the houses were originally the tenanted homes of poorer people but are now highly desirable town centre properties. Turn left into Chestnut Walk where the houses facing the Paddock, were home to more prosperous citizens.



Turn right at the end of Chestnut Walk into Rother Street. The Firs Garden opposite belonged to a 17th century farmhouse that stood here. The dovecote is all that now remains.



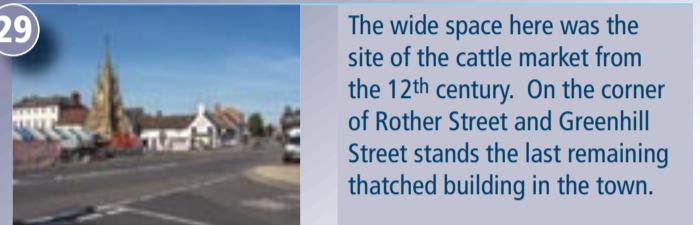
Next to the police station is Mason's Court, a 15th century building. The original central hall open to the roof can still be seen with a two-storeyed jettied wing on each side.



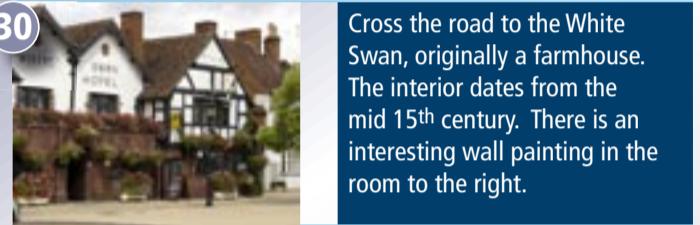
The Civic Hall built in 1830 as two substantial Regency Villas has been a Roman Catholic Chapel, a nursing home, a children's hospital and now a Civic Hall.



The American Fountain was a gift to the town from a millionaire Philadelphian, George W. Childs.



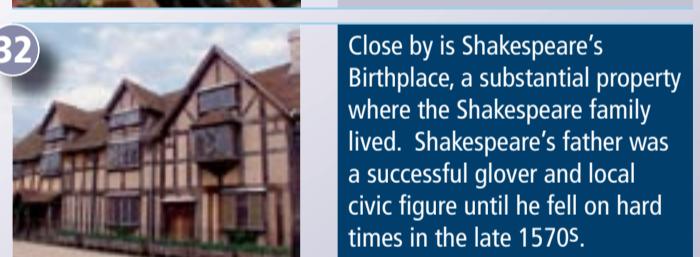
The wide space here was the site of the cattle market from the 12th century. On the corner of Rother Street and Greenhill Street stands the last remaining thatched building in the town.



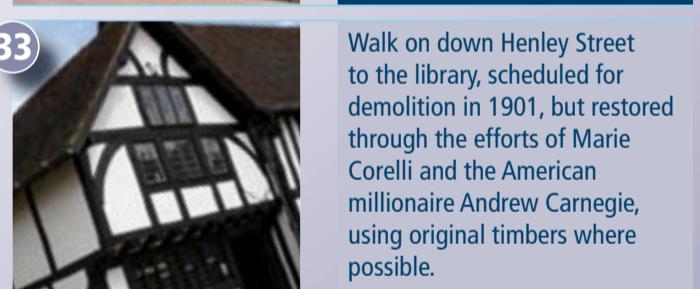
Cross the road to the White Swan, originally a farmhouse. The interior dates from the mid 15th century. There is an interesting wall painting in the room to the right.



Walk through the Minories to Henley Street. The Shakespeare Centre, built in 1964 to commemorate the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth, and extended in 1981, houses a fine library, exhibitions and the local archive.



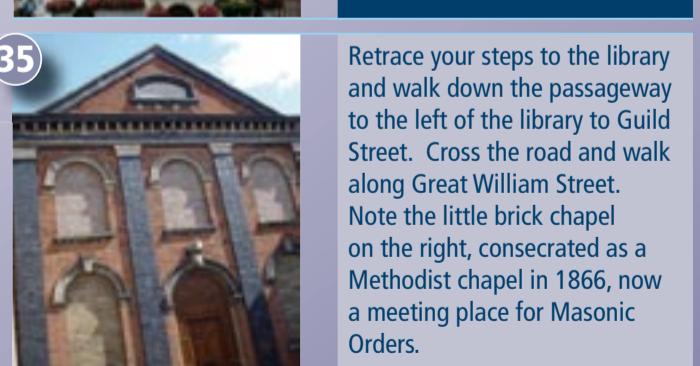
Close by is Shakespeare's Birthplace, a substantial property where the Shakespeare family lived. Shakespeare's father was a successful glover and local civic figure until he fell on hard times in the late 1570s.



Walk on down Henley Street to the library, scheduled for demolition in 1901, but restored through the efforts of Marie Corelli and the American millionaire Andrew Carnegie, using original timbers where possible.



Barclays Bank was built in 1821 as a market hall to replace the medieval market cross.



Retrace your steps to the library and walk down the passageway to the left of the library to Guild Street. Cross the road and walk along Great William Street. Note the little brick chapel on the right, consecrated as a Methodist chapel in 1866, now a meeting place for Masonic Orders.



Leave Great William Street by the canal bridge steps to walk along the tow path back to the Bancroft. The canal came to Stratford in 1816 after a long and difficult process bringing prosperity to the town. The arrival of the railway in 1859/60 further speeded up the development of the town.