

Institut Européen des Jardins & Paysages

*Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes of England*

**Inventory of Great Britain**

**ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE**

Auteur(s) : Historic England <https://historicengland.org.uk/>

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**ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE**

Name:	ANNE HATHAWAY'S COTTAGE
County:	Warwickshire
District:	Stratford-on-Avon (District Authority)
Parish:	Stratford-upon-Avon
label.localisation:	Latitude: 52.190391 Longitude: -1.7322870 National Grid Reference: SP 18398 54717 <a href="#">Map: Download a full scale map (PDF)</a>
label.overview:	Heritage Category: Park and Garden Grade: II List Entry Number: 1001184 Date first listed: 01-Feb-1986

## Details

An early C20 flower garden and orchard developed by Ellen Willmott to accompany a C15 cottage with Shakespearean associations.

### HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The core of the present cottage was constructed by the Hathaway family in the mid C15 as a farmhouse. The family were prosperous farmers, and John Hathaway, described as an archer in a muster of 1536, served as town constable of Stratford-upon-Avon in the mid C16. The Hathaway family were the social equals of John Shakespeare, the father of William, a prosperous glover with premises in Henley Street, Stratford. Anne, the daughter of Richard Hathaway, was born at the family's farmhouse in Shottery (known as Anne Hathaway's Cottage since the early C19) in 1556, and appears to have spent her childhood there. Richard Hathaway died in 1581, leaving his eldest daughter ten marks for a dowry. The farm and other holdings amounting to some 120 acres (50ha) passed to his eldest son, Bartholomew (d 1624), who extended the farmhouse in the early C17. Anne Hathaway married William Shakespeare on 27 November 1582, but by 1592 William Shakespeare was resident in London. Anne Shakespeare appears to have remained in Stratford, and in 1601 is mentioned as residing at New Place, Stratford (qv), which her husband purchased in 1597.

The farmhouse at Shottery continued in the Hathaway family, passing from Bartholomew to his son Richard in 1624. Richard Hathaway served as town bailiff in 1626, and left the farmhouse to his son John, who made alterations in the late C17. The Shakespeare Jubilee which was held at Stratford in 1769 under the patronage of David Garrick encouraged interest in Shakespeare, and by the late C18 the farmhouse at Shottery had become a place of literary pilgrimage (Ireland 1795). The arrival of the railway at Stratford in 1864 increased the number of visitors and in the second half of the C19 the farmhouse was occupied by Mrs Mary Baker, whose mother had been a Hathaway. In 1892 the property, which had remained a working farm throughout the C19, was sold to the Trustees of the Shakespeare Birthplace. The laying of a new sewer for Shottery across the garden of the Cottage in 1923-4 enabled the Trustees to undertake the remodelling of the garden, on which they were advised by Ellen Willmott (1858-1934) (Trustee Minutes). The Trustees acquired additional land around Anne Hathaway's Cottage in the 1920s and 1930s to protect its setting: land to the north was purchased in 1925, while two cottages to the north of Anne

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Hathaway's Cottage were bought in 1926. The Shottery Lodge estate to the south was acquired in 1931 (Fox 1997). In the C20 the cottage garden at the Cottage has become an enduring image of the English cottage garden. Today (2000), Anne Hathaway's Cottage remains the property of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

**DESCRIPTION**

**LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING** Anne Hathaway's Cottage is situated in the village of Shottery c 1.5km west-south-west of Stratford-upon-Avon. The site is bounded to the east by a minor road which leads north from the B439 Evesham Road through the village of Shottery to the A422 Alcester Road. The road frontage to the east of the Cottage is closed by a timber pale fence and informal hedge, while the orchard west of the Cottage is enclosed by hawthorn and blackthorn hedges. Ellen Willmott advised on the improvement of the orchard hedges in 1924-5 (Trustee Minutes). To the south, the site adjoins the gardens and orchard of Shottery Lodge, a C19 villa c 100m south-south-east of the Cottage, while to the north-east, Hewlands Cottage and its garden, which was purchased by the Trustees in 1926, adjoins a late C20 coach park. To the north-west the orchard adjoins the Shakespeare Tree Garden, an informal area planted with trees and shrubs mentioned in Shakespeare's works which was created in 1985(8). The western boundary of the orchard adjoins agricultural land which rises gently to the south-west towards Bordon Wood, and west towards Hansells Farm and Gretel House. The site slopes gradually west up from the roadside boundary to the west boundary of the orchard, and there are significant views west across the adjacent farmland from the orchard, and east from the cottage garden across the adjoining road to woodland on the banks of the Shottery Brook, and beyond to an area of meadow. The woodland adjoining Shottery Brook, outside the area here registered, was laid out as the Jubilee Walk in 1977.

**ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES** Today (2000) the site is entered from the minor road which forms its eastern boundary at its south-east corner. A low timber gate leads to an irregularly paved stone walk, to the south of which stands a late C20 single-storey visitors' ticket office of timber construction with a pitched timber roof. In the early C20 the site was entered from the road through a gate c 5m south-east of the Cottage. A simple timber wicket gate opens on to an irregularly paved stone path which is enclosed by box hedges. The north hedge terminates to the west in a simple topiary cone, while the south hedge terminates in a simple topiary bird.

**PRINCIPAL BUILDING** Anne Hathaway's Cottage (listed grade I) stands towards the north-east corner of the site, with its east gable wall parallel to the road which forms the eastern boundary of the site. The Cottage, a farmhouse until the late C19, was constructed in two principal phases: the eastern, lower section dates from the mid C15, while the higher, western section was built, probably by Bartholomew Hathaway, brother of Anne, in the early C17. There is a C17 stone, brick and timber extension at the eastern end of the east range. The Cottage is a single-storey, timber-framed structure with attic dormers set in the thatched roof. The timber frame is set on a limestone plinth, and two flights of stone steps ascend to doors set in the south facade of the C15 and C17 ranges. Tall chimney stacks are of brick construction. The Cottage was restored in the late C19 after its acquisition by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust; the west range was further restored in 1969 following a fire.

Hewlands Cottage, which is included in the area here registered, stands c 15m north-west of Anne Hathaway's Cottage. Originally a pair of C18 single-storey brick and timber cottages with attic dormers, the building was converted into a visitors' shop in 1950 (Fox 1997).

**GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS** The gardens lie principally to the south of the Cottage, with further small areas of garden to the north and north-west adjacent to Hewlands Cottage.

The cottage garden is divided into three flower beds of varying area by irregularly paved stone paths which are bordered by stones set on edge. A further stone-paved path extends west from the gate parallel to the south facade of the Cottage; the Cottage walls are planted with roses and flowering shrubs which grow in a narrow, stone-edged bed.

At the east side of the garden, a square flower bed is planted with herbaceous subjects. It is enclosed by stone-paved paths, and its corners are marked by low clipped box bushes. To the north, a narrow herbaceous border is backed by the box hedge which encloses the south side of the entrance path. The path enclosing the west side of the herbaceous border is aligned to the north on steps ascending to the door in the C15 range of the Cottage, and to the south on stone steps which ascend to a raised terrace which runs parallel to the southern boundary of the garden for some 15m. The terrace is retained by a brick wall to

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the north. Its eastern end forms a rustic arbour with roses trained over hooped hazel boughs, and its northern side is enclosed by a low balustrade of hooped hazel. The surface of the terrace is paved with irregular stones, and to the south-east a timber seat is set on a raised area which is enclosed by roses, flowering shrubs and mature trees on the southern garden boundary. To the west the terrace leads to a late C20 brick single-storey building c 30m south-west of the Cottage, which contains visitors' toilets. From the terrace a second flight of stone steps descends to a further stone-paved path which, running north from the terrace to the Cottage, divides two further rectangular herbaceous borders. The north end of the eastern border is marked by a simple geometrical topiary shape in box, and by mature flowering shrubs. The west side of the western border is marked by an informal hedge of box and flowering shrubs, beyond which is a third north/south stone-paved path. To the south, this path leads to a late C20 curved flight of stone steps which ascends to the visitors' toilets and a path leading into the orchard; to the north the path leads to a stone-flagged area at the south-west corner of the Cottage. West of this third path is a small area of vegetable garden enclosed by hazel hoops and entered through a rustic hazel arch opposite the south-west corner of the Cottage. Four beds separated by wood-chipped paths are planted with vegetables, while a central circular bed contains herbs.

From the stone-paved area at the south-west corner of the Cottage, stone steps ascend north to Hewlands Cottage. A stone-paved walk extends c 25m north between rustic stone walls to a timber gate which leads to the late C20 coach park. To the east of this path a lawn planted with specimen trees at its north-west corner slopes down towards the road on the eastern boundary of the site. To the south this lawn is enclosed by a slightly sunken stone-paved path which follows the north facade of Anne Hathaway's Cottage; to the east it is enclosed by a timber pale fence and a shrub border. The garden to the south of Hewlands Cottage is laid out with a lawn in which two semicircular flower beds with seasonal planting are cut below the facade of the house. The garden is enclosed to the south by an informal hedge, while to the west there is a late C20 plant sales area which is enclosed by a late C20 brick, barn-style extension to Hewlands Cottage. A stone-flagged path with cobbled edges runs parallel to the south facade of the house, and a narrow border below the house walls is planted with climbing subjects. The front door of the house in the south facade is flanked by clipped box balls.

The stone-paved paths, raised terrace and three herbaceous borders form the cottage garden for which Ellen Willmott provided planting plans in 1924-5. The design and planting with its emphasis on 'old-fashioned' herbaceous plants, roses, flowering shrubs and simple topiary appears to derive from Willmott's design (Trustee Minutes). The stone steps ascending to Hewlands Cottage, the stone paths and possibly the layout of the garden south of Hewlands Cottage was created by Guy Pemberton, architect to the Trustees, in 1926 (Fox 1997).

**OTHER LAND** The orchard which extends c 150m west of the Cottage is separated from the cottage garden by an informal wood-chipped path which extends south from the flagged area at the south-west corner of the Cottage. Adjacent and to the west of this flagged area is a small bed planted with currant bushes. The orchard is undulating and rises quite steeply west from the cottage garden before levelling and rising more gently to its western boundary. At the south-east corner of the orchard, c 40m south-south-west of the Cottage, there is a single-storey timber and thatch tool shed which was designed by Guy Pemberton in 1925 (ibid). The orchard is planted with standard apple trees of various ages, which are arranged in some eight lines running from east to west. A mown grass walk framed by a pair of stone staddle stones extends west along the central axis of the orchard, allowing views across the surrounding country.

An orchard is shown to the west of the Cottage on the late C19 OS map (1886). This was developed as an ornamental feature in the 1920s when Ellen Willmott advised the Trustees on underplanting the apple trees with spring bulbs.

#### REFERENCES

S Ireland, *Picturesque Views on the Upper or Warwickshire Avon* (1795) W H Hutton, *Highways and Byways in Shakespeare's Country* (1914), pp 228-30 C Holland, *Warwickshire the Land of Shakespeare* (2nd edn 1922), pl 24 N Pevsner and A Wedgwood, *The Buildings of England: Warwickshire* (1966), p 397 A Le Lievre, *Miss Willmott of Warley Place* (1980) N Fogg, *Stratford upon Avon Portrait of a Town* (1986), pp 14-29, 35 L Fox, *The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust A Personal Memoir* (1997), pp 60-1 *Anne Hathaway's Cottage*, guidebook, (Shakespeare Birthplace Trust 1998)

Maps OS 6" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1886 2nd edition published 1922 1938 edition OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1886 2nd edition published 1914

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Illustrations E H New, Anne Hathaway's Cottage (in Hutton 1914) F Whitehead, Anne Hathaway's Cottage from the east (in Holland 1922)

Archival items Minutes of the Trustees of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, 1924-6 (Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Record Office)

Description written: January 2000 Amended: May 2000, September 2000 Register Inspector: JML Edited: December 2000

## Legal

This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest.