New Place; Shakespeare’s Medieval residence.

William Mitchell
New Place revealed

This diagram's appearance reveals the street, the gate, and terrace, at the corner of Chamber Lane to the chappel. The garden by the parapets, who built it with the Bridge over them.

Besides the front or inner gate, there was before the house itself (that Shakespeare lived in) within a little court yard, grass growing there — before the real dwelling house. This outside being only a long gallery for servants.
Hugh Clopton’s ‘Grete House’

Hugh Clopton 1440-1496
- Belonged to an influential Warwickshire family
- Merchant of the woolstaple
- Became Alderman, Sheriff, Member of parliament and Lord Mayor of London
Hugh Clopton’s ‘Grete House’

Schematic Plan

Grand medieval house.
Built around a courtyard.
Open hall set back from the frontage.
Frontage let as shops.

Ground Floor
First Floor
A Walkthrough of New Place

The front range and cellar (Shops and chambers)
The courtyard

Mid to late sixteenth century pits

The well
The Open Hall Building

Comparative interior example; The Commandery, Worcester
Open Halls
15th Century Background

The Commandery, Worcester

Ightham Mote, Kent

Gainsborough Old Hall, Lincolnshire
The Hall Service Rooms; The Screens Passage, Buttery and Pantry

The Screens Passage

The oven (within the Buttery/Bake-house)

The storage tank (within the Pantry)
The Kitchen (brew-house)

Hearth and Vat bases
An almost identical hall house

New Place

Hams Barton
Devon

Both late fifteenth Century in origin
The house after Hugh Clopton

- 1496-New Place left to Hugh Clopton’s Great Nephew William Clopton (1481-1521)
- 1521-William Clopton dies. New Place left to his wife Rose
- 1543-1549-New Place let to Thomas Bentley at which time it is described as being ‘in great ruyne and decay and unrepyryd’
- 1563-William Bott purchases property
- 1567- Site purchased by William Underhill for £110
- 1583- New Place abandoned by William, William Underhill’s son after ‘family misfortunes’
- 1583-1597-Unknown ownership (abandoned?)
William Shakespeare’s Renovations

• In 1597 Shakespeare purchased New Place, for himself and his family for £60 (probably double this)

• Stratford-upon-Avon was a four day ride by horse from London, so he is very likely to have lived between these two places from this time.

• Many motivations behind his purchase.
Shakespeare’s Renovations

Late 16th to early 17th century ceramics recovered from construction cut
Tudor Brick Pit c.16th-18th century
Excavated in 1922
Shakespeare’s Long Gallery
Continued use of the Hall
Comparative houses

The Shakespeare Hotel, Stratford

New Place

Tudor House, Long Itchington, Warwickshire
Shakespeare’s motivations

- Symbolic associations
- Pursuit of status
- Desire for investment
- Obligation to his family
Symbolic associations and pursuit of status

- Hugh Clopton- merchant’s house, Influence of New place within the town, Shakespeare’s mercantile connection.
- The courtyard inn and performance space possibilities.
Artefacts

- Pins
- Loom weight
- Spindle Whorl
- Thimbles
- Textile working Bobbin

Cottage industries
Artefacts

16th/17th century lead tokens

16th century
Rose and crown
Half groat

15th century
Neuremborg Jeton
Artefacts

- 17th century ceramics
- Bead/ button making and buttons
- Dice
- Eye glass frame
- Instrument tuning pegs
- c.17th century cribbage peg
The story continues- After Shakespeare

- New Place survived, in the same form, for a further 85 years
- Stayed within the Shakespeare family, passed to his daughter Susanna, and then her daughter Elizabeth until her death in 1674 (then sold to Sir Edward Walker)
- Left to his daughter (wife of Sir John Clopton)
- Reverted back into the descendants of the original owners
- Sir John Clopton saw New Place as ‘Old fashioned’
- **Completely rebuilt – but retained the name**
Sir John Clopton’s New Place
Sir John Clopton’s New Place
Archaeological evidence for Sir John Clopton’s New Place
Similar examples

Clopton House

Bishop’s Palace, Lichfield

Stratford Prep School
The end of New Place

- Sir John Clopton’s New Place was sold to Rev Francis Gastrell in the mid 18th Century
- Unappreciative of the history of the site
- Annoyed with the ‘Shakespearean Pilgrims’
- Destroyed Mulberry Tree
- In 1759, after argument with tax rate assessors, Sir John Clopton’s New Place was razed to the ground
- Shakespeare’s New Place had already been dismantled 60 years earlier
The interpretation continues........
Thank you for listening

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