

Ten Key Facts about Chawton House Library

1. There are records of a manor at Chawton dating as far back as the Domesday Book of 1086.
2. The Knight family bought the estate during the 1500s and when John Knight inherited in 1583 he immediately started to build the house that we see today.
3. Edward Austen inherited the estate in 1794. However, it was not until 1812 that he and his family changed their name to Knight following the death of Edward's adoptive mother, Catherine Knight.
4. Chawton House is now home to a Library of Early Women's Writing in English from 1600 to 1830.
5. The collection was put together by Sandy Lerner, an American business woman. Sandy's admiration of the work of Jane Austen and other, often forgotten, women writers of the period inspired her to assemble the collection.
6. The Library catalogue is available online for researchers to access <http://www.chawton.org/library/index.html>
7. The Library collections include a manuscript of a short play called *Sir Charles Grandison*. It is written in Jane Austen's handwriting and was probably created for family theatricals. The play is based on Richardson's novel *Sir Charles Grandison* (1753-4) which was popular with the Austen family.

8. Edward preferred his house at Godmersham and made it his main home. So there were times when Chawton House was rented out, just like Netherfield Park in *Pride and Prejudice*, or lent to one of his brothers.
9. Towards the end of Jane Austen's life, Edward started to plan a new walled garden on the hill at the back of Chawton House. Jane Austen died in 1817 so sadly did not live to see the garden completed in 1822. The walled garden (with later additions) is still in use today.
10. Jane Austen's mother and sister are buried in the churchyard of St Nicholas Church in Chawton. Jane Austen is buried in Winchester Cathedral. Edward died in 1852 and is buried at Godmersham.