



In the 1878 *Gardner's Chronicle* this location was known as Withycombe Raleigh. Its yew was incorrectly recorded with a girth of 30', an error which led to its inclusion in John Lowe's 1897 list of Britain's largest girthed yews, as found in his book *The Yew Trees of Great Britain and Ireland*.

This incorrect girth meant that for some time it was regarded as one of Britain's most significant yews. In 1906 *Some old Devon churches.....* continued the misinformation, describing 'a very fine yew tree in the churchyard, the trunk being about 25 feet in circumference'.

The error was not corrected until 1958, when Swanton's *The Yew Trees of England* carried information supplied by Rev J Hawkins that the 30ft measurement probably

included the base of 3 branches. Hawkins told him that 'the circumference of the base is about 16'. The tree branches into 3 just above ground level'.

In 2000 I recorded 3 substantial branches emerging from a 2' bole, the two largest of which were covered in adventitious growth, making it difficult to measure. Girth at the ground appeared to be no more than 16/18'. By enlarging the 1860 engraving, it is possible to see the 3 branches in Swanton's description.

