



Bidborough has two significant male yews, a rarely noticed fragmented specimen NE of the church and this impressive veteran close to the path leading to the church entrance.

It appears in Saunders' 1853 sepia drawing and was also noted in Lowe's *The Yew Trees of Great Britain and Ireland* (1897) with a girth of 13' 6" at 3' and a bole height of 8'.

The 2003 photo shows systematic branch removal at a height of 4'5". This has resulted in an abnormally large bulge, so that a girth of 13' at its narrowest waist rises to a massive 23' at 4'. Rising through its centre are large vertical branches, wrapped around dead wood.



It was not until 1936 in *The King's England* that a second yew was even acknowledged. Writing about Bidborough, Mee noted simply 'Its fine yews, so old.....'

2003: The older yew grows NE of the church at the highest part of the churchyard on the edge of a steep bank down to an adjoining garden.

It presents as 3 fragments, the first, wrapped around an old branch, leans over a large tomb. The second is attached to the original trunk, of which a large amount remains, in places up to 14' tall. A small dead piece of wood links this to the third fragment, a new trunk which is not connected to the main tree.

An internal stem crosses the hollow close to the ground, grows through the shell of dead wood, and links to the second fragment. Girth around the base of all these pieces was just below 20'.



The photo on the left shows the yew in 2010 - Steve Young.