

The yew was first noted in The Woolhope Papers of 1894 in an article by Rev S Bentley: 'The approach to Castle Frome church from the much higher ground of the Rectory, crosses near the churchyard the ancient trackway leading to the Castle Tump. The trackway surrounds the churchyard on its eastern and northern sides, assuming, upon its northern side, the character of a very deep moat, now dry. On the south side of the churchyard is a yew tree'.

In *The King's England* 1938, Mee described simply a 'fine yew'.

1998: The male yew grows SE of the church. Its clean bole is about 10' in height. It is hoped that by now the heavy tombstones leaning against it have been removed. Its two main branches each enclose portions of the old dead branches they replace. At about 6' a limb appears to be pulling away from the tree; this may at some later stage become detached and create two fragment yews. Foliage was thick and plentiful.

Around the lower bole are many examples of the characteristic shape that develops when new wood is laid down around the edge of spaces left following the removal of large branches.

I was told that when mysterious scratch marks began to appear on the bole, a watch was kept to discover the culprit. It turned out to be nothing more exciting than a dog!

Girth: 1894: '21ft in girth at the height of 5ft from the ground'. Woolhope

1998: Exactly 21' at 1' and 23' at 3' - Tim Hills

