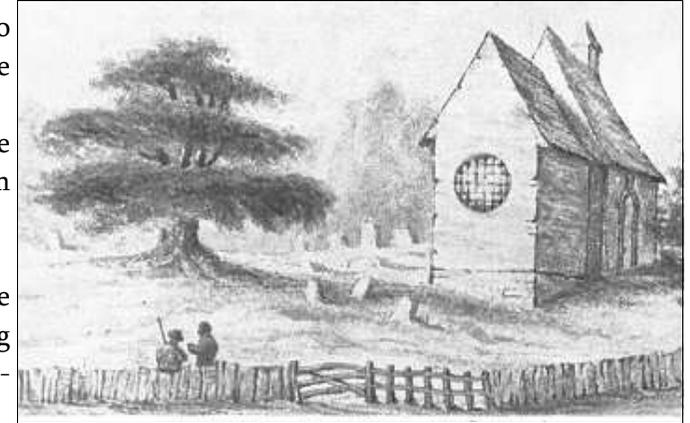


Corhampton Church has no dedication. It remains largely unaltered from its Late Saxon beginnings and appears to be built on an artificial mound, suggesting that it replaced an earlier site of worship. 'Sanguine antiquarians ascribe some parts of it to the date of St Wilfred, who first preached the gospel in this region'.¹

The earliest record of the yew is this b/w copy of an early 18th century water colour believed to be owned by the church. A thick trunk above spreading roots is clearly seen. These have since been covered in soil, no doubt from the many graves dug since that time. Many travel writers who visited this churchyard described its yew:

1865 'a singularly fine yew-tree'¹; 1897 'a grand yew tree'²; 1904 'a magnificent old yew'.³

Mee's 1939 description is worth repeating in full. A 'great yew throwing its shade on the porch.....has seen the people come into this church for perhaps 20 generations. Grouped about it when we called were fierce-looking gargoyles rescued from a well nearby, and not far off lay a huge stone coffin which must have been here for centuries when the Saxons put the sundial on the wall'.⁴



1999: Branches from this tall female tree stretch across the path, where some dip and have become embedded in the ground, providing the tree with extra support. The bole is clean and visible and the foliage was a healthy green. It has a large leading branch (A) and a second (B) of smaller dimensions. These divide from the bole at a height of about 7'. At (C) is a section of the original trunk, with secondary growth gradually closing over. According to the church guide fifteen props once supported its outlying branches; at the time of my visit a single support was considered sufficient.

Girth records

1895: 22' at the ground and 25' at 3'.⁵

1906: 26' in circumference⁶

1999: 23' 4" at the ground and 25' 1" at 3' - Tim Hills

1999: 23' 4" (7.11m at 1.1m) - Russell Cleaver

2010: 24' exactly near to ground (below the bulge) and 23' 6" at 5' (above the bulge) - Peter Norton

2011: 716cm at 1.4m - Steve Waters



- 1 *A handbook for travellers in Surrey, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight* by Richard John King and John Murray
- 2 *Black's Guide Book* (1897)
- 3 *Cox-Little Guides* 1904
- 4 *The King's England*
- 5 Lowe - *Yew Trees of Great Britain and Ireland* - information received from Rev H.R. Fleming in 1895
- 6 *Parishes: Corhampton', A History of the County of Hampshire: Volume 3* (1908), pp. 246-54