

1625/1649: Parish Church records show that the yew was 10 yards in girth at the time of Charles 1st.

1820s: Mrs Pamela Cook (1990) writes 'The tree was hollowed out in the 1820s when a door was put into the side of the trunk. A wooden bench seat was put inside the tree (believed to seat 12 persons) also a small wooden table. It is understood that this was done to provide shelter for those attending the annual Palm Sunday Fayre in the Churchyard. When the tree was hollowed out, a cannon ball was found embedded in the side of it, which was assumed to date from the time of the Civil War (about 1652). Mansion House, opposite the road from the church, is believed to have been a Royalist stronghold'.

JH Wilks in *Trees of the British Isles in History and Legend* tells it slightly differently, 'In 1820 some villagers apparently found a cannon ball in the earth around the base of the trunk'. According to Swanton (1958) 'the cannon ball subsequently became enclosed'.

1838: A yew was mentioned by Evelyn as growing in the churchyard of Crowhurst, in Surrey, with a trunk 10 ft. in diameter. *Arboretum and Fruticetum Part 111*

1845: There was 'a large destruction of the top of the tree'. Lowe *The Yew Trees of Great Britain and Ireland*.

1850: Brayley's *History of Surrey* noted that 'the roof, as it may be termed, has fallen in'.

1924: 'At Crowhurst is a much mutilated yew. The hollow of the trunk was foolishly enlarged in 1820, when it was made to hold a round table capable of seating a dozen people; at the same time a doorway was fitted into the opening. This barbarously vulgarised tree is said to have a girth of 32½', but this is partly artificial, it has been repaired with several pieces of tin or iron'. *Unknown Surrey* by Don Maxwell

1955: In *The Yew Trees of England* Swanton describes seeing the yew and noting that the door was padlocked. Mr Giltrow got in 'through an opening 2' from the ground on the right side of the door and found all the furniture had been removed'. He noted 'no laying down of new wood in the hollow, but the edges of openings are being sealed over with living wood'. Swanton considered the tree looked 'unhealthy', Mr Giltrow used the word 'unhappy', though 'with much life in its branches and a good amount of spray'.

3 years later in 1958 Swanton wrote of it as 'an unhappy yew with early 19th century gravestones within 10' of the trunk'. It is one of 3 Surrey trees he considered to have suffered from excessive root pruning. He goes on to say that the burials, and perhaps cutting away of living wood when the hollow trunk was drastically scooped out about 1820, may also have checked its growth.



July 1999: Two gaps break the bole's continuity, one containing the door, which is only 4' high.

There is much dead wood, if this decays before new wood envelops it the tree's appearance will be much altered. The structure leans slightly towards the church and wires and chains must have been in place for some time, since one piece of chain has been almost 'swallowed' by new layers of wood. One branch, still attached to the tree, has splintered and rests on the ground.



The tree has been measured on many occasions, below are some of these taken from Lowe, Cornish, Meredith, Swanton and other sources.

Dates visited	Girth measurements	By
1630	30'	Old parish record
1650	30' at 5'	John Aubrey
1664	30'	John Evelyn
1833-45	30' at 5'	Samuel Lewis
1850	30' 9" at 5'	Brayley's <i>History of Surrey</i>
1874	30' 9" at 5'	<i>Gardner's Chronicle</i>
1877	31' at 5'	Mr Jennings
1880	30' 6" at 5'	E. Straker
1890	31' 8" at 4'	Rev Curteis
	32' 6" at 5'	.. ..
1955	30' 3"	Allen Mitchell (Bean)
1955	33' 9" at ground	Swanton
	33' 2" at 3'	Swanton
1984	31' 6" at approx 5'	Allen Meredith
1994	31' 6" at 5'	Gwyneth Fookes