

The present church building is 14th Century, though an earlier chapel is known to have stood on this site. The yew growing here was noted as early as 1846 in *The Ecclesiologist*, which said that ‘the visitor should not overlook the majestic yew at the South-west angle of the church’.

Jennings 1884 *Field Paths and Green Lanes in Surrey and Sussex* reported that ‘there is a very old yew-tree at the west end of the churchyard, much decayed and weatherbeaten, but fighting time gallantly, as its family have a way of doing. When I was last there in March the simple country graves were covered with homely bunches of primroses and “Lent lilies,” and the thrushes and blackbirds were keeping up the sweetest of all choruses in the neighbouring bushes and trees. It was the lambing season, and great was the bleating going on in all directions. At the east end of the churchyard there is a smaller yew, and beyond this point the ancient manor-house once stood, also moated. The great yew, which is the pride of the churchyard, is about eighteen feet in circumference, and has a seat all round it for the convenience of the rustics’.

In 1895 Rev.AR Lamplugh informed Lowe that the tree had been ‘much broken by storms’.

In 1999 I was unable to find any trace of an old seat in the dense undergrowth which filled the 4m of space between the SW corner of the church and the yew. A large section of dead sapwood at (A) will eventually decay and leave a gap to the hollow interior, revealing its many internal stems—one of which is seen at (B).

A substantial portion of the tree leaned outwards in the direction of the road. A supporting prop was so weakened by woodworm that it served no useful purpose. Foliage was green and plentiful on a healthy tree.

Girth:

1895: 18' at 3' Horsfield

1993: Height of 14m x 216cm diameter @ 1.5m *The Sussex Tree Book* - Owen Johnson

1999: 24' 2" around the base Tim Hills

© Tim Hills 2014

