

HARRIETSHAM

St John the Baptist

Diocese of Canterbury

TQ87485299

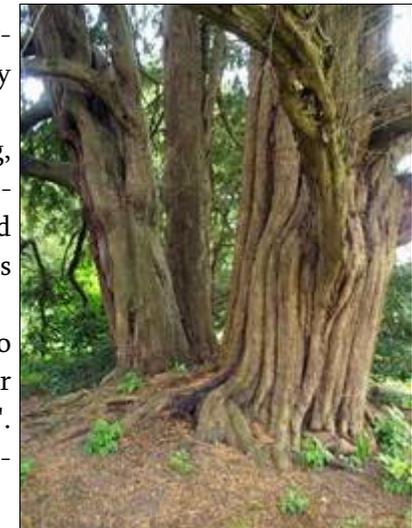
Harrietsham's ancient yew grows SSE of the church. It was measured in 1889, when the Rev. J. Durst recorded a girth of 30' at 3'. This vast girth ensured it a place in Lowe's 1896 list of the 30 largest girthed yews in Britain. By 1954 it had become impossible to remeasure at the same height. Rev.F.W.Phillips tried but was unsuccessful 'because the trunk was covered with small shoots and branches'. Phillips also observed how it was 'divided into two parts'. Today the area around and between the two sides of this male yew is a haven for rabbits. Weakness in each of the separated tree fragments suggests further subdivision is likely to take place and create a tree of up to four fragments, as is seen at Payhembury in Devon.



The yews seen left and right have in the past created uncertainty as to whether they might be fragmented remains of very old trees.

Seen on the left are three trees, two upright and one leaning, growing on a mound north of the church. A fourth has been reduced to a piece of stump. They do not look like fragmented and since both sexes are represented would seem to be several trees planted close to each other.

On the right, growing on a mound ESE of the church, is this trio of yews. It is clear that these are three individually planted or self seeded trees. The largest is male with a girth of 11' 10" at 3'. Of the two smaller adjacent trees one is male, the other is female.





The 2nd yew of note is female growing NW of the church. In 1999 I was able to measure at 1', recording a girth of 19' 10". Above this height it is slightly vase shaped to a height of 4'. Most of its growth is carried of young branches. As with tree 1 it has been undermined by rabbits. In 2013 a girth of 18' 9" at the ground was recorded.

