

Even Nikolaus Pevsner, who rarely recorded non-architectural detail, was sufficiently impressed to note that '4 old yew trees stand close to the church, two W, two E'. The church is a little way from the present village and is thought to mark the site of the older and now deserted village. Today it is approached down its own green lane.

1866: 'One of the four magnificent trees in the churchyard measures 20 feet in girth and the smallest 15. The spot is well worth a visit. The church is very small and very old. It stands in a secluded spot at a little distance from the village and from the road. Two yew trees stand at the W. and two at the E. of the church, far surpassing the bell turret in height and all but hiding it from view. The huge spreading branches rival those of the cedar in their graceful sweep, and are interlaced with each other in the most curious and intricate manner'. *Woolhope Transactions*

1876: 'In the churchyard are at the east and west ends of the church four fine old yew trees, very much admired'. *Littlebury's Directory and Gazetteer of Herefordshire*

2000: Tree 1 grows at the south west corner of the church. The removal of a branch has left a gaping hole at about 3'. An area of dead wood with a fine silky lustre is about 2' wide and 5' high. New wood is beginning to grow over it. A 'gap' is being created on the church side where the interior is rotting; when this is gone the yew will have the characteristic thickened horse shoe shape. Many upright branches grow alongside the main branch from 15' upwards.

Girth: 1866 - 17' at 5' and 16' at the ground      2000 - 19' 3" at 2'

Tree 2, smallest of the 4, grows at the west end of the church. Only the first 2' of its red bole are visible below a covering of twiggy growth; this is green and copious on the side of the tree showing in the photograph, but looks less healthy on the side facing the church. Its main branch leans considerably. Girth: 12' 2" at the ground, swelling to 18' 4" at 4'.



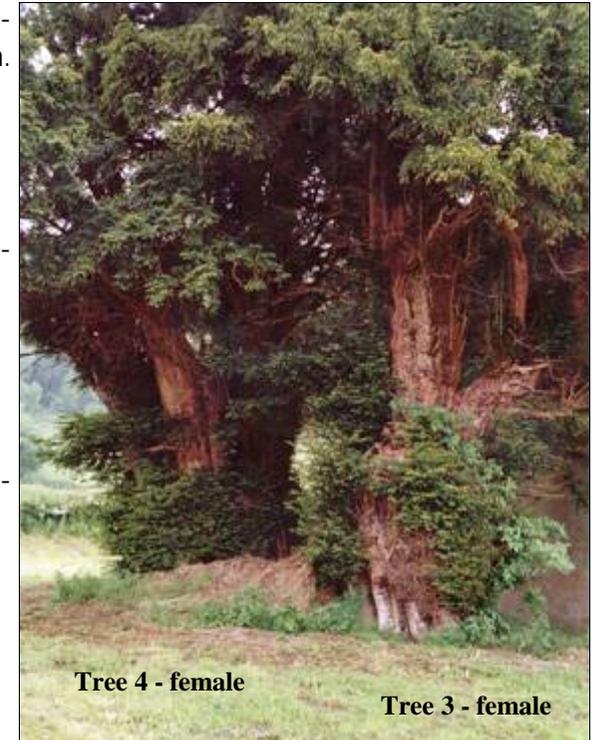
Tree 3 grows at the north east corner of the church. Its solid bole leads into a straight main branch. One further significant area of growth faces the church. From 2'/3' upwards most of the bole is concealed behind twiggy growth. Girth: 16' 5" between 1' and 2'.

Tree 4 grows at the east end of the church. It consists of 3 main areas of growth and large dead branches in the centre. On the church side a hole reveals internal growth in the heart of the tree.

Girth 1866: 20' 6" at 5'.

2000: 19' 1" at the ground.

I was informed by Ruth Perkins, church treasurer, that trees 1 and 4 had both recently had branches removed following storm damage.



© Tim Hills 2014