

It is said that St Erfyl's staff was planted at this site and that the tree we can see today resulted from that occasion. Such happenings are not uncommon in yew tree legend. This is without doubt a most extraordinary tree, considered in the 1849 *Topographical Dictionary of Wales* to be 'one of the finest yew-trees in the principality'.

It grows in a raised circular churchyard in which the principal old church remnants are thought to be about 1400. Inside the church can be seen a 5th/6th century stone, removed from beneath the tree in 1915 and placed in the safe keeping of the building. The stone bears the following inscription: 'Here lies in this grave Rustece, daughter of Paterninus, aged thirteen years. May she rest in peace'.

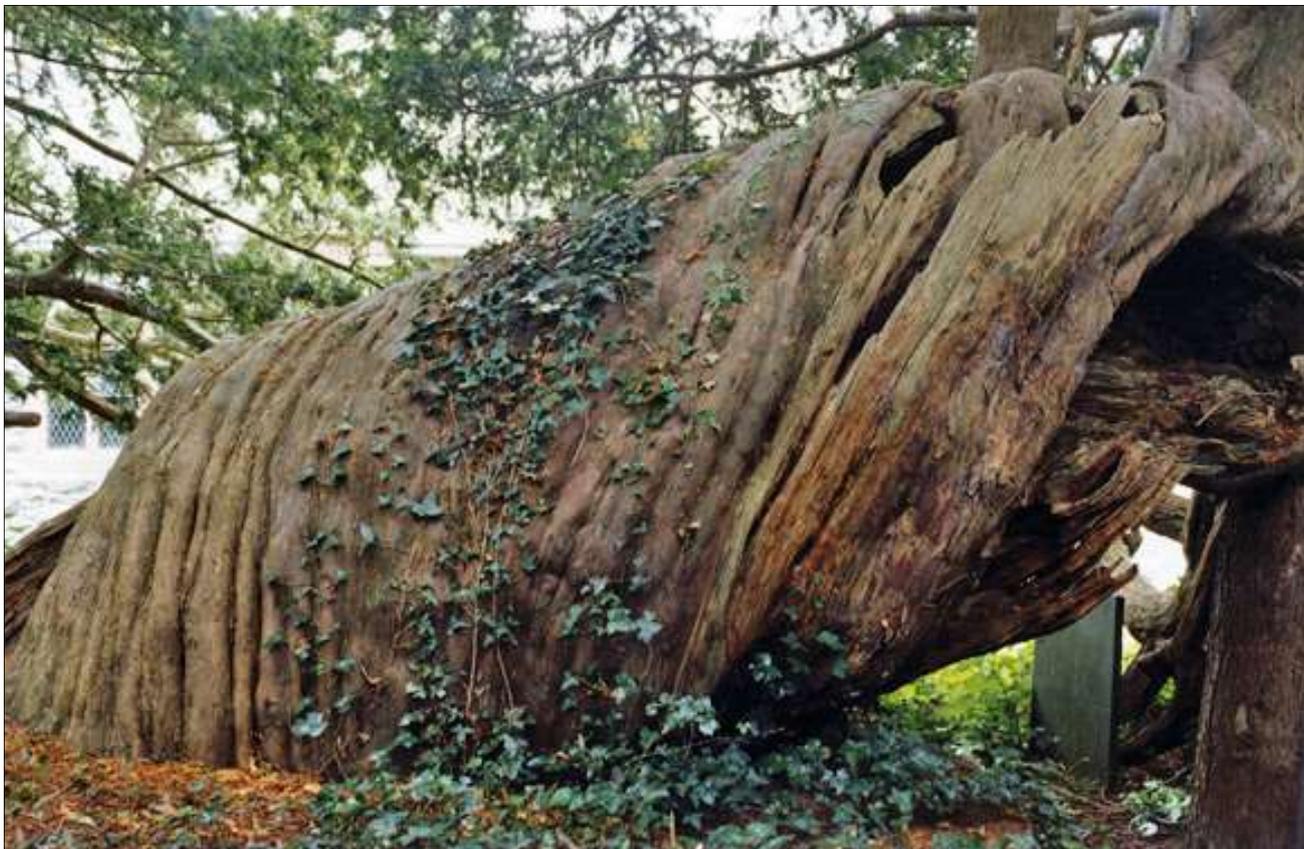
The tree was described in *Bygones* of 1872: 'In St. Erfyl's Churchyard, Llanerfyl, is the mother yew tree of Montgomeryshire. This old tree is encompassed by a stone wall about a yard high. This renders it impossible to take the measurement at the base, but on the level of the wall there are three branches spreading out which measure in circumference, respectively, 19ft. 6in., 16ft 9in., and 7ft. The total measurement round the tree where these branches out is 43ft. 3in. These branches are hollow where they leave the tree, and one of them is held up by a prop. Under the shade of the tree there is a stone bearing the following inscription:-

Hic in
Tvmvlo ia
Cit Ri.....ste
C....E...Filia Pa
Ternini
An IXIII In pax.



1998: Four huge twisting fragments make up this unforgettable tree. Since three of these are female and the fourth is male, there is inevitably argument over whether this is one or more than one tree.

The photos were taken in 1998





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