

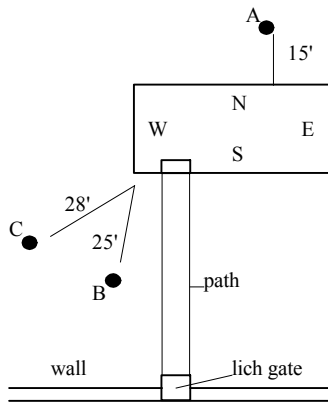
# Yews in Northumbria

Graham Wilkinson

1995-1998

## 1. Beltingham. St Cuthbert (GR: 789639 sheet 87)

20/9/1995



**A.** Male. 17' 2.5" at 3', 18' 11" at 4'. Iron bands at approx. 3' and 8', the tree growing over these, absorbing them into the bark. Branch supports and other "iron-mongery" above, seemingly designed to point the growth upward. Marked hollowing of the trunk. A fine, gnarled and obviously old tree.

**B.** Female. 16' at 3', 14' at base (ground level), 15' 11" at 4'. Dead section to the west side of the trunk. A fine old tree. (Hodgson: 12.5 feet at 16" c.1839. Now 14' 7".)

**C.** Male. 13' 7" at 3', 11' 5" at base (ground level), 13' 10.5" at 4'. A nice gnarled tree, multi-branched from above 5'. (Hodgson: 9.5 feet at 16" c.1889, now 11' 11".)

**Tomlinson:** "Originally a domestic chapel of the Riddleys". "Around the church is an ancient burial ground, at the east end of which stands an ancient cross." "There are three venerable yew trees here, supposed to be upwards of 400 years

old. The one that stands on the north side of the church facing the river is indeed a patriarch among Northumbrian trees: 17 feet in circumference at six feet from the ground." (note: Tomlinson's Guide was first published in 1888. The tree now measures 19' 7.5" at six feet.) Perpendicular church.

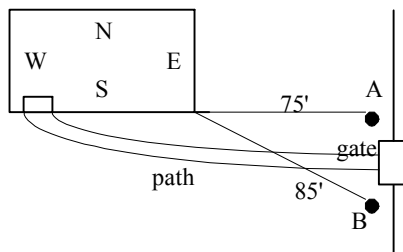
**Pevsner:** "Seems to date from C15." "Over-zealously restored in 1884."

**Mee:** "In the churchyard are three fine old yews, the one to the north being a mighty hollow veteran bound with iron bands; it measures 17 feet round at 6 feet from the ground." (This figure undoubtedly taken from Tomlinson.) A plain, round 15th century font. Curious carvings at the top of the inner splays of the south windows — two suns, leaves, "a surprised-looking human head and a strange animal with large ears." A Roman altar was found in 1835 by one Anthony Hedley. It is dedicated to Sattada and is now in Newcastle.

**Watson:** "In the church-yard stand three enormous yew-trees, 500 years old if they are a day."

Notes: A secluded, "hidden" gem. On our second visit on 22-11-95, rabbit carcasses had been laid out neatly under trees "A" and "B" as if in offering.

## 2. Stanington. St Mary (GR: 210794 sheet 88) 5/7/1995



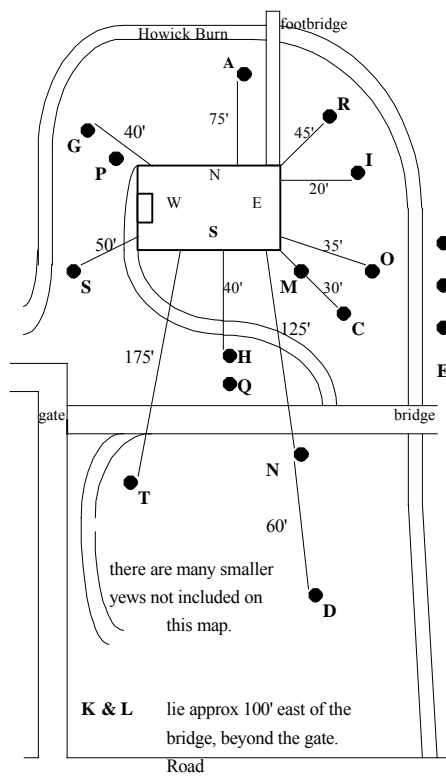
**A.** Female. 12' 10" at 3', 11' 3" at base. A six branch split from 3'. A fine mature tree.

**B.** Male. 9' at 3', 8' at base. A multi-branched split from 3'. Obviously contemporary with tree A, but stunted by comparison. Both trees are 35' in height.

**Tomlinson:** the church was erected in 1871, incorporating the EE piers and arcades of an older structure.

**Pevsner:** Built in 1871. C12 Norman parts. Medieval glass with figures in the vestry.

**3. Howick. St Michael** (GR: 248175. sheet 81) 28/2/1996



**A.** Female. 12' 10" at base including a grounding SE branch. A virtual basal split, the main trunk 8' 5" at split, 9' 11" at 4', then a six-branch split at 4.5'. Pruned on the side facing the stream and path. Fine mature tree, with a 30' grounding branch to the east.

**B.** Male. 12' 9" at 3', 12' 5" at base, 12' 11" at 4'. A fine mature tree with a clean trunk, branching properly at 5'.

**C.** Female. 12' 7" at base, branching thereafter, the main trunk being 10' 4" at 6 inches.

**D.** Female. 12' at base. A three-branch basal split, one of the two largest measuring 6' 4" at 4'. A nice, large tree clear of all competition beneath it's dark canopy of branches.

**E.** Male. 10' 10" at base. A fine mature tree with a multi-trunk split at 3'. An awkward branch emerges from the base on the north side. Some ivy.

**F.** Female. 10' 8" at base. A nice, mature tree with a clean trunk. An outlying branch to the west prevents other measurements. Grounding branches to the east.

**G.** Female. 10' 1" at base, with a four-branch split at 1', with grounding branches on the west side.

**H.** Male. 9' 8" at base with multi-branched split at 1'. An impressive tree.

**I.** Female. 9' 7" at base, overhanging on the stream side and splitting into five main branches at 3'. An impressive, gnarled tree.

**J.** Female. 8' 7.5" at 3', 9' 7" at base, 8' 6" at 4'. Impressive mature tree with a clean trunk, branching properly at 7'.

**K.** Male. 8' 2" at 3', 9' 3" at base. Nice mature tree with a clean trunk.

**L.** Male. 8' at 3', 9' 1" at base. Mature tree with a clean trunk, branching at 5' 6" approx.

**M.** Female. 8' 10" at base, branching at 2', a second trunk cut off on the south side.

**N.** Male. 8' 3" at 3' & 4' and at base.

**O.** Male. 7' 6" at 3', 8' 7" at base, 7' 7" at 4'. Branching at 10'. A tall, upright tree.

**P.** Male. 8' 5" at base. Two-branch basal split, becoming three higher up.

**Q.** Female. 7' 9" at 1'. A branch shoots out east thereafter.

**R.** A two-trunk gnarled tree, seemingly contemporary with the others but of a much smaller girth.

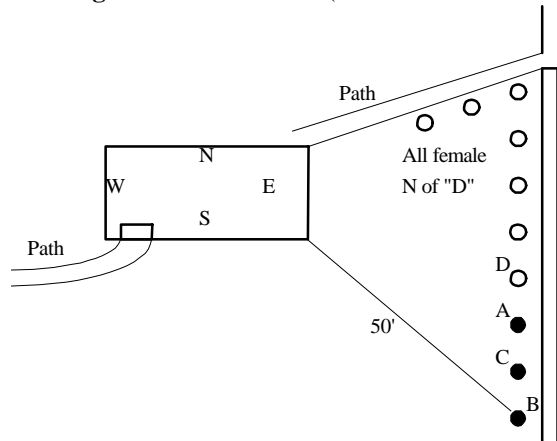
**S.** Female. 6' 10" at 3', 6' 9" at base. A branch split above 3'. A nice, gnarled tree next to a huge impressive beech tree, measuring 13' 7" at 5'.

**T.** Female. 6' 8" at base.

**Tomlinson:** "Erected in 1849...by Henry, third Earl Grey, on the site of two former buildings — one the early medieval edifice, the other a Greek temple, built in 1746." Howick Hall, seat of the Earl Grey, built in 1782 on the site of the "Turris de Howyke" (mentioned in 1416).

**Pevsner:** 1746, Normanised in 1849. 1688 chalice and paten.

4. Ellingham. St Maurice (GR: 176257 sheet 75) 2/8/1995



- A. Male. 10' 10" at 3', 9' 11" at base, 11' 11" at 4'. Thick spray prevents 3' and base measures. A mature tree, which *could* be a multiple planting, but this is doubtful.
- B. Male. A mature tree with a three-trunk split from below ground level.
- C. Male. A much smaller tree, 4-5'. (Another smaller male tree between trees A & B, near the wall.)
- D. Appears dead.

All other trees are female.

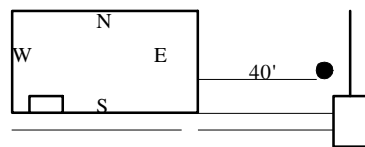
**Tomlinson:** Founded in the Norman period by Randolph de Guagy.

**Pevsner:** Rebuilt in 1862, + 1864 stained glass. Only the

head of a window remains from the previous building.

Notes: An eroded pinnacle and an old font bowl also remain. Early stones too, one dated 1728.

5. Ingram. St Michael (GR: 019163 sheet 81) 17/5/1995



- A. Male. 11' 11" at base (1'), then a three-trunk split at 2', two branches to the west having been removed. An impressive, mature tree. Some higher branches are merging.

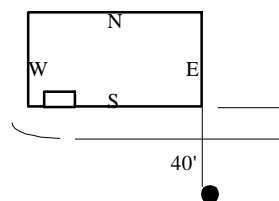
**Tomlinson:** Norman plus EE.

**Pevsner:** The lower west tower is early Norman, the upper part C13.

Chancel arch of C14, font of 1662. Pyramidal roof of 1884. Greves Ash: the remains of a prehistoric settlement, covering twenty acres is 900 feet above the village.

**Hay:** (Leaflet.) Saxon origin, restored 1060, plus 12th & 13th century additions.

6. Wark. (GR: 858775 sheet 87) 22/11/1995



- A. Male. 11' 7" at 3', 11' 4" at base. Branching messily at 3' 6. Height 30'. Some branches are beginning to ground. A nice, untouched, mature tree.

**Tomlinson:** the church was dedicated to St. Matthew in 1815 and opened in 1818.

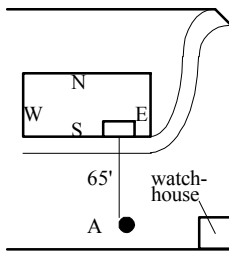
Wark was once the capital of North Tynedale and boasts an antiauity reaching back to prehistoric times.

**Pevsner:** The church was built 1814 - 1888.

**Watson:** the original St. Michaels used to stand in Kirk Field, North of the village

by Houxy burn.

**7. Doddington.** (GR: 996322 sheet 75) 17/5/1995



**A.** 11' 6" at 3', 13' 4" at 4', 9' 8.5" at base. An impressive tree with an old, clean, single trunk, branching at about 7' into five main trunks. In a fenced-off area surrounded by C19 stones. A rabbit warren disrupts the roots. C18 stones without.

**Tomlinson:** On the site of a previous chapel probably built by the monks of Holy Island prior to the Conquest. Now EE and enlarged in 1838. "There is a watch-house at the south east corner of the church-yard...built when the resurrectionists were abroad." (1826.) Nearby is Dod Well: an ancient spring by the side of the main road.

**Pevsner:** "The extremely strange thing about this c13 church is that it consisted originally of nave and chancel plus a west chamber the width of the nave. The chancel was replaced in 1838. Later still the use of the church was turned around and the west chamber converted into the chancel. So today nothing seems odd." (Note: Oh yes it does — the altar is still in the west!) Also in vicinity: A ruined L-shaped bastle house of 1584, 3-storeyed and gabled; Ringses Camp, NE of Dod Law and S of the village. Centre of a concentration of cup-and-ring marked stones.

Lateral stone On "Dod Law, above a cave called Cuddy's Cave. A natural crag with a small cave under it and curious carvings on the stone, which also has vertical grooves on the top."

Rowting Lynn Camp "In a miniature gorge. Important earthwork with four 3-6 ft ramparts and 40 ft ditches. Nearby is a grey sandstone outcrop, 60 ft long with striking cup-and -ring marks"

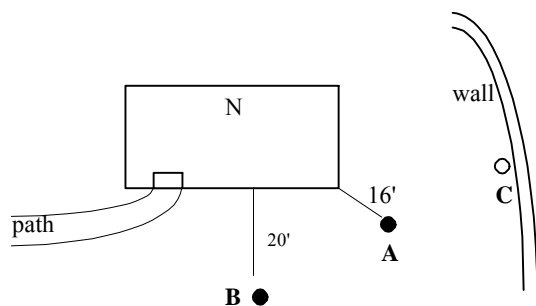
Humbleton Heugh Prominent contour camp. Also, a strange "cup & saucer" mound.

**Mee:** the watch-house was built in 1826. The church restored in 1838 by Ignatious Bonomi, brother of the Egyptologist Joseph. The church was rearranged about 1890, and the chancel installed at the west end. The oldest object is the massive, early Norman font, its round bowl carved with pilasters. The pointed arch at the west end "reconstructed from Norman work."

**Watson:** The church "...erected 20 degrees off the usual west-east line." "Turned completely around in Victorian times.

Notes: Two cross-slabs built into the porch: male (sword) and female (shears). The font is from the earlier building, the north aisle of the 13th century, when the tower was demolished.

**8. Old Bewick. Holy Trinity Chapel** (GR: 068222 sheet 75) 17/5/1995



**A.** Female. 11' 4" at 1'. (Narrowest point.) 15' 8" at 3', but hardly a valid measure, then a multi-trunk split. A fine, gnarled old tree.

**B.** Male. 7' 1" at base.

**C.** Much smaller yew.

**Tomlinson:** A Norman chapel, probably built between 1110 and 1120 by the monks of Tynemouth.

Damaged by Cromwellian troops and repaired in 1695 by Ralph Williamson. The roof blew off early in 18th century,

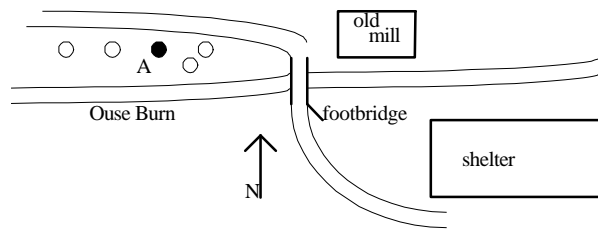
the building being restored 1866-87, with every Norman and Dec fragment carefully preserved.

**Pevsner:** Norman, plus C14. Norman chancel arch and apse arch. From 1110 the chapel belonged to Tynemouth priory. C14 effigy. Promontory fort on the hill above. Hut circles & cupmarks.

**Mee:** "Norman, too, is the lofty chancel arch, with two grinning faces on one of its capitals. This capital is most interesting, for between the faces is a tree which, with twisted moulding below and the diamonds above, identifies the work as that of a sculptor who worked in the chapel of Durham Castle shortly before AD 1000." 14th century figure of a woman in the chancel, her head on a cushion, her feet on a lion. "In a corner of the porch is a worn fragment of an Anglian cross." Medieval handbells in the vestry (chained to the wall) were found under the apse. Restored 1695 "at the charge of Ralph Williamson Esq."

Notes: Two grinning faces, a tree between them, at the head of the N chancel arch column. An isolated, atmospheric spot. Yew "A" an impressive tree, which appears "old".

**9. Jesmond Dene** (GR: 255673 sheet 88) 2/2/1996

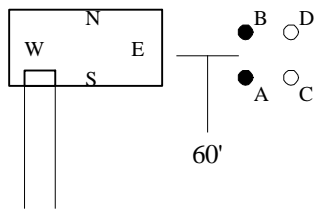


**A.** Male. 11' 4" at base. A two-trunk split from 1' with a grounding branch to the west. The tree leans south, towards the burn, and is suffering some root exposure from the erosion of many feet drawn to this scenic spot. An impressive, mature tree.

There are two smaller female yews to the east and two to the west.

Notes: The corn mill of the Ridley family was on site by 1739, known as Mabel's Mill. (Heaton Mill from 1848.) Other mature yews are to be found to the south west and on the left of the path before the eastern entrance to the dene. Another large yew north of the dene at Jesmond Bridge on private ground.

**10. Norham. St Cuthbert** (GR: 897474 sheet 74) 23/8/1995



**A.** Female. 9' 8" at base. An impressive, mature tree, with a clean trunk, branching under 3' into three main trunks. Numerous branches thereafter.

**B.** Female. 10' 7" at 3', 8' 3" at base. Four-trunk split from 3', but one has been cut off, under 4'. Contemporary with tree A.

**C.** Male. 7' 2" at 3'. 7' 6" at base. Mature tree with a clean trunk, branching properly from 6'.

**D.** Female. 4' 10" at base, 4' 7" at 3'. Appears to be contemporary with tree C

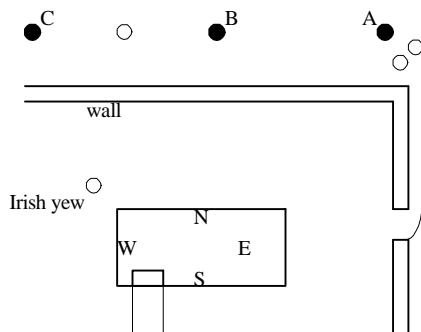
despite being much smaller in girth. The tallest tree on site.

**Pevsner:** Norman parts, but mostly 1846 - 1852 rebuild.

**Tomlinson:** Build by Bishop Flambard, on or near the site of a Saxon edifice, and probably the same date as the castle (1121).

Notes: A worn knight's effigy and an old piscina inside. A stump of a similar size to tree C lies between trees D and C.

**11. Netherwitton. St Giles** (GR: 102904 sheet 81) 22/11/1995



**A.** Male. 9' 10" at 3', 9' 11" at base, 9' 3" at 4'. A fine mature tree with a single, clean trunk, splitting properly at around 7'. (Cut trunk under 4'.)

**B.** Female. 9' 7" at 3', 9' 5" at base, 9' 10" at 4'. Three-trunk split at 5'. Fine, mature tree.

**C.** Female. 10' 10" at base. Branching messily from the base.

All the above trees are in the hall grounds. On our second visit a "private grounds" notice had appeared at the eastern gate!

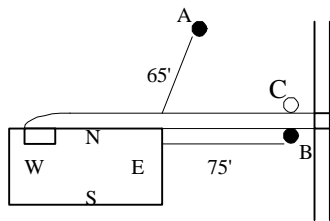
**Pevsner:** All C18 save the 1886 bellcote. Effigy inside, C14?

**Tomlinson:** "Not a vestige remains of the ancient chapel which preceded the present structure."

**Hall:** Probably c.1700 - 1710. Gate piers are c.1700 or earlier.

Notes: The Irish yew is 9' 6" at base.

12. St John Lee. St John (GR: 933657 sheet 87) 29/11/1995



**A.** Female. 10' 10" at base. Height 35'. A dramatic two-trunk split above 18". Nice mature tree.

**B.** Male. 9' 9" at 3', 9' 4" at base, 9' 3" at 4'. Height 40'. (A sawn-off trunk at 4'.) Nice mature tree.

**C.** Male, much smaller. (2-3' at best.)

**Pevsner:** 1818 by Dobson, plus 1885. Coffin lids and effigies built into the walls from the earlier church. A large slab with Latin inscription and indent of

C14 brass in the outer east wall.

**Tomlinson:** One the site of "...a small ancient structure on a woody headland...identified as Erneshaw or Eagle's Mount." "Where St. John of Beverley lived for some time in retirement."

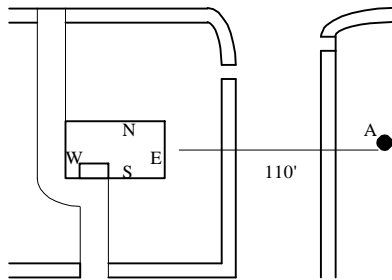
A 1655 tombstone complete with a Latin inscription lies below the mount.

**Watson:** "On the site of an oratory that St. Wilfrid erected in the seventh Century."

**Canon S.E.Pritchard,(leaflet by,):** St. John of Beverley, educated at Canterbury under the Archbishop Theodore. (668-690) His stay at Hexham was short-lived.

Notes: A nice, wooded spot. The dark spire of the church is very prominent for some distance around.

13. Ulgham. St John (GR: 234924 sheet 81) 7/12/1995



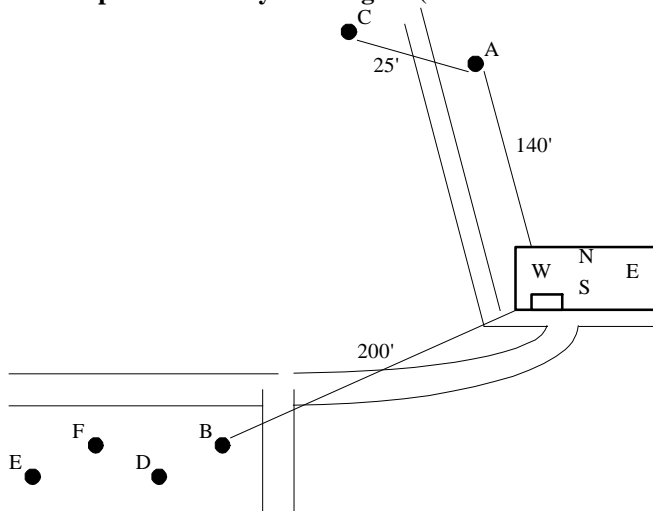
**A.** Female. 10' 3" at 3', 8' 6" at base, 11' 5" at 4'. Mature tree with a single, clean trunk, branching into nine trunks at 5'. 30' high.

**Pevsner:** 1862. C17 monument fragments built into the churchyard wall.

**Tomlinson:** The church rebuilt "within recent years" (c.1888). "The original building was doubtless erected by the Cistercians." The Ugham Oak two miles north of the village in the middle of Park Wood: 21' 7" at 7'.

Notes: the Ugham Oak no longer exists, having succumbed to souvenir hunters. Access to Park Wood, *if it still exists*, is cut off by mine workings.

14. Morpeth. St Mary the Virgin (GR: 197852 sheet 81) 23/8/1995



**A.** Female. 10' at base, with a three-trunk split below 3'. Nice mature tree.

**B.** Male. 8' 4" at 3', 7' 9" at base, 8' 6" at 4'. Clean trunk branching from 6'. *May* have merged, multiple trunks.

**C.** Male. 8' at 3', 6' 11" at base, branching from 3'. Mature tree.

**D.** Female. 8' at 3', 7' 3" at base, 8' 6" at 4'. Clean trunk.

**E.** Male. 7' 11" at 3', 7' 10" at base, 8' at 4'. A nice mature tree with a clean fluted trunk.

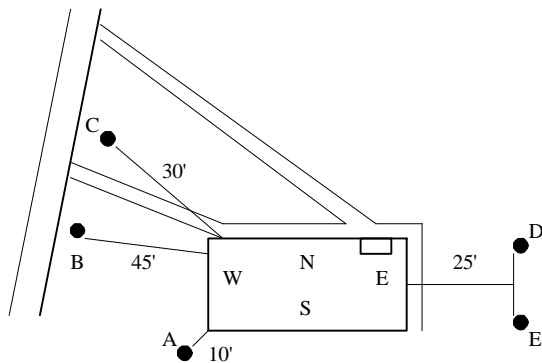
**F.** Female. 6' 6" at 3', 5' 11" at base. Clean trunk.

**Tomlinson:** Chiefly 14th century on an earlier site. The tower is Transitional in the lower, and Decorated in the upper part.

**Pevsner:** Essentially a C14 church plus some EE.

Notes: An extensive, wooded churchyard, full of imposing trees. More smaller yews are to be found by the west wall.

**15. Whitfield. Holy Trinity** (GR: 779569 sheet 86) 24/1/1996



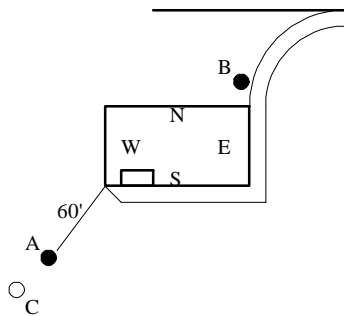
- A.** Female. 9' 11" at base. Multi-branch split from base. Height 45'.
  - B.** Below-ground trunk split. Height 28'. Appears to be a multiple planting.
  - C.** Female. 9' 7" at base. Height 25'. A multi-branch split from the base.
  - D.** Female. 8' at base, splitting thereafter. Height 36'.
  - E.** Female. 9' 6" at base, splitting at 18". Height 36'.
- Pevsner:** Built 1859-60 by Higham. **Tomlinson:** "...erected in 1860."

**Donnelly, Rev. A.F.** (Booklet: *The Parish of Whitfield.*)

Mention of "stone from the demolished tower and bays of the old church." (Note: The old Parish church of St. John lies by the village and was itself rebuilt on the site of an earlier building in 1782.) **Hodgson:** Published in 1840, refers to "the present church" built in 1782 or 1783, meaning the old church. No mention of the new church. (p 108)

Notes: If there was a previous building on the site nothing remains of it now. The gravestones offer no clues to an earlier structure, the oldest dated 1926. (Presumably the older village churchyard was used until this time.) The trees may indeed be contemporary with the present church: they do not appear to be "old", simply to have thrived in their enviable sheltered position in the valley.

**16. Ilderton. St Michael** (GR: 017218 sheet 75) 17/5/1995

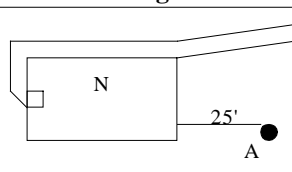


- A.** Male. 9' 6" at 3", 8' 6" at base. Two-trunk split at 3', the larger south trunk splitting into three thereafter. Clean mature tree.
- B.** Male. 8' 10" at base, then a four-trunk split.
- C.** Smaller male yew.

**Tomlinson:** Rebuilt during the Georgian period. Two stages of the tower remain of the ancient edifice. (Transitional. EE.)

**Pevsner:** The present building C18. The tower C13 in its lower parts.

**17. Humshaugh. St Peter** (GR: 920714 sheet 87) 7/1/1998



- A.** Male. 9' 6" at base. A basal trunk-split: four main trunks plus smaller ones. Appears to be from one root-stock.

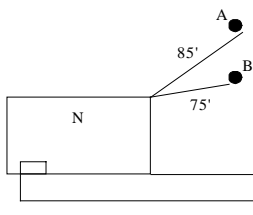
**Pevsner:** 1819 by Seward.

**Mee:** "...church dates from 1818 and was one of the early works of John Dobson of Newcastle." (p 138)

"On a low sandy knoll near the castle are the remains of a chapel which fell into disuse in the early years of the 19th century when, on the enclosure of the park, a number of cottages were destroyed." (p. 139)

Notes: All of its period.

**18. Simonburn. St Mungo** (GR: 871736 sheet 87) 16/ 8/1995



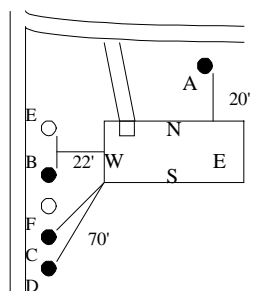
**A.** Female. 9' 2" at base. Branching soon after. A fine, mature tree, the base measure not doing it justice.

**B.** Male. 8' 10" at base. A mess of branches above this.

**Tomlinson:** "Hardby in Rector's Dene is Holy Well, to which for nearly twelve centuries has been attached the name of St. Mungo's Well." Saxon cross fragments in the church porch. C12 chancel. Double piscina found in the 1864 restoration. EE.

**Pevsner:** Rebuilt 1860/1866. AS cross-shaft in the porch. Early coffin lids and a coped stone. Nearby is Black Dyke, an earthwork of uncertain age and purpose and four standing stones known as the "Goat Stones".

**19. Longhirst. St John** (GR: 223891 sheet 81) 2/2/1996



**A.** Female. 8' 11" at base and a six-trunk split from 18". 27' high.

**B.** Female. 8' 2" at 3', 7' at base.

**C.** Male. 7' 1" at 3', 8' at base. 42' high.

**D.** Male. 7' 2" at base. Trunk split soon after.

**E.** Male. 5' 11" at base.

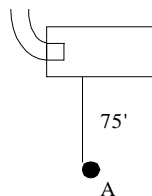
**F.** Male. Basal trunk split. 42' high.

**Tomlinson:** opened in 1875.

**Pevsner:** Built in 1876 by Sir Arthur Blomfield.

Notes: Four more yews of approx 5-6' girth by the west wall of the churchyard. The earliest headstone is dated 1883. The trees appear contemporary with the present building and no earlier use of the site is evident.

**20. Seaton Deval. St Mary** (GR: 322764 sheet 88) 11/8/1997



**A.** Female. 8' 8" at 3', 9' 5" at 4', 8' 4" at base. A nice, mature tree, with a clean trunk, branching from 10'.

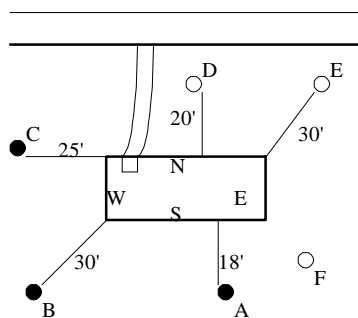
**Pevsner:** A Norman church, a chancel extension of c.1330, the west porch added in 1895. C14 effigies.

Notes: A quiet, hidden spot with a fine yew tree, the above measurements not doing it justice.

An impressive beech lies 80' south of the yew: it is 9' 10" at 5', 11' 10" at base. A hollow beech stump lies by it, 11' in girth.

C18 stones by the south wall.

**21. Dalton. Holy Trinity** (GR: 112719 sheet 75) 22/12/1995 and 13/3/1996



**A.** Male. 8' 1" at 3' and at base, 9' 5" at 4'. Six branches from 5'.

**B.** Female. 8' 7" at 3', 8' 5" at base. Tight, two-trunk split at 3'.

**C.** Female. Branching at ground level. 9'?

**D & E** are smaller male trees. Branching and general twiggyness prevent access for a measure.

**F.** Male tree felled and uprooted in March 1996. A ring count revealed an age of 91 years.

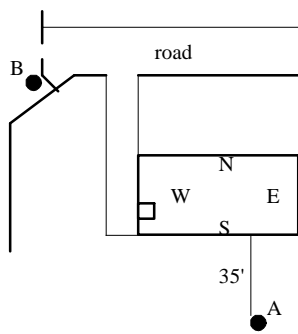
**Tomlinson:** "A small chapel dedicated to the Holy Trinity."

**Pevsner (Current edition.):** 1836 by John Green.

Notes: The earliest gravestone, by tree B, is dated 1853. The church appears to be all early-mid Victorian. Mature trees, all apparently from single root stocks.



**22. Rock. SS Phillip & James** (GR: 202203 sheet 75) 2/8/1995



**A.** Male. 8' 6.5" at 3', 8' 6" at base, 8' 8" at 4'. Nice mature tree, with a three-trunk split above 3', with two main trunks. Clean trunk.

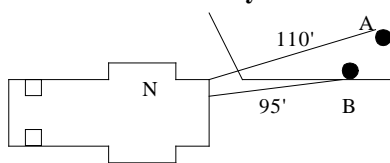
**B.** Smaller, low-branching tree.

**Pevsner:** A mid C12 church, the north aisle of 1866.

**Tomlinson:** "A Norman edifice with modern additions." Rebuilt in 1866.

**Notes:** The 1866 rebuild has resulted in the cloning of the original Norman building to form a duplicate covering the northern aisle.

**23. Brinkburn Priory.** 1/4/1998



**A.** Female. 8' 5" at 3', 8' 4" at base. Large mature, gnarled tree with a trunk split just below 4', branching properly around 8'.

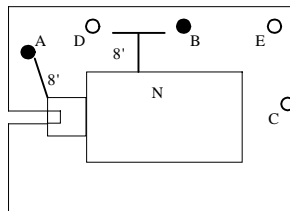
**B.** Female. 7' 3" at base. Mature tree with trunk-split below 3'.

Many other yews on and around the site, most notably a double-trunked female, 60' sw by the wall near the river. The two trunks have merged but were planted side by side. A fine tree but no valid measure possible. Three other trees, two female and one male, lie to the nw, and conform to the same double-planting pattern.

**Pevsner:** Founded in 1135 by the Augustinian Canons. C12, C13. Retored in 1858 by Thomas Austin at the expense of the Cadogon family.

**Notes:** An impressive shell of a building nestling in a sheltered, wooded spot on the Coquet.

**24. Gt. Swinburne. St Mary Catholic.** (GR: 937756 sheet 87) 7/1/1998



**A.** Female. 8' 5" at base. Mature, solid tree.

**B.** Male. 8' 5" at base. Trunk split at 2'. Trunk sawn off at 5' on the church side.

**C.** Male. 5' 11" at base. Branching properly at 3', but a branch below this prevents a 3' measure.

**D.** Male. Two trunks from below ground level, merging higher up. A branch on the church side has been clipped into a freakish "poodle tale".

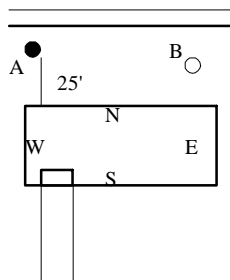
**E.** Smaller tree, clipped so severely as to prevent sexing!

**Pevsner (Current edition.):** 1841. "tithe barn" (it isn't,) C18, lies to the west.

**Notes:** A small, early Victorian building, squeezed onto a wee plot. The equally tiny church-like building, referred to as the "tithe barn", lies disused to the west.

All trees save C have had their outer branches trained into a bizarre hedge atop the north and east walls.

**25. Bolam. St Andrew** (GR: 093826 sheet 81) 22/2/1995



**A.** Female. 8' 3" at base. Twiggy and difficult to measure, with 4-trunk split at 9'.

**B.** Smaller yew with a mass of twiggy growth. A multi-branched basal split.

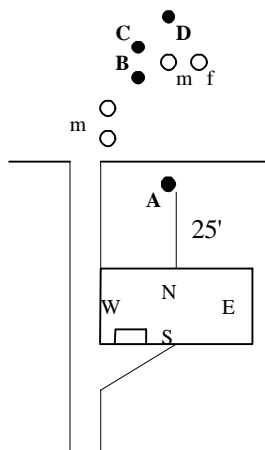
**Pevsner:** Late Saxon west tower, Norman chancel arch. Early coffin lids and crosses. A 1342 effigy of a knight.

**Tomlinson:** Saxon, Norman, EE.

**MacDonald. Rev. A.:** the original church C. 960 AD. The Iron Age Devil's Causeway is nearby. Bolam is "Viking" for "Place of the trees".

**Notes:** An unhealthy female tree lies 40' east of the church. A small female lies 18' from the SW corner of the church.

26. Ford. St Michael (GR: 945374 sheet 74) 23/8/1995



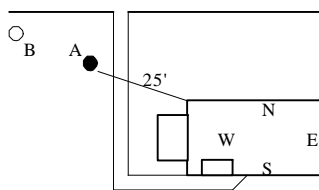
- A. Female. 8' at 3', 8' 3" at base, 8' 9" at 4'. A trunk split at 3', not separating until 4'. Nice, mature tree, with a clean trunk.
- B. Male. 8' at base. A mature tree, branching properly just under 3', into two trunks. (There is a minor, lower branch.)
- C. Male. 7' 5" at base. A five-trunk split at 2.5'.
- D. Female. 5' 9" at 3'. Clean trunk.

**Tomlinson:** Restored in 1853. (Originally EE and Dec.) "A few years ago, there was discovered in the church a fragment of an effigy on which could be traced the letters: QUONDAMDNATRIX."

**Pevsner:** The church is earlier than the present castle, and is an early C13 building, restored in 1853 by Dobson.

Notes: The yews are fine robust trees but appear of no great age. The church is particularly well placed to take in the fine views of the Cheviots to the west.

27. Warden. St Michael (GR: 914665 sheet 87) 24/6/1996



- A. Female. 8' at 3', 8' 11" at base (1'), 8' 1.5" at 4'. Height 40'. Nice mature tree. Clean trunk.
- B. Male. Multi-branched from base.

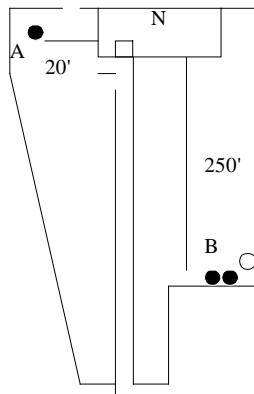
**Pevsner:** C11 tower, C13 transepts. Probably including Roman blocks.

**Tomlinson:** Rebuilt in 1765. The tower exhibits characteristics of Saxon work. the body of the church is thought to be built of stones from the Roman Wall. A

Roman altar and two small stone coffins are preserved inside.

Notes: A stone slab carved with the "Warden Man" inside the porch. Three unusual barred graves by the tree, one of an infant, the bars to protect the occupants from body snatchers.

28. Carham. St Cuthbert (GR: 796384 sheet 74) 19/1/1996



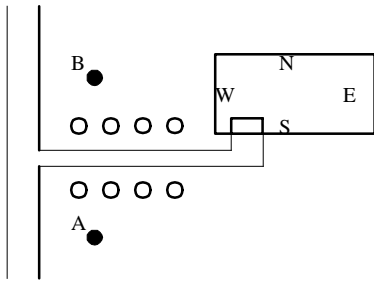
- A. 8' at base. Male. Multi-branched from just below 3'. A nice, mature tree, boxed in by two companion Irish yews.
- B. Two small, male yews by the half stump of a much larger tree, which must have been between 8 and 9 feet in girth.

**Pevsner:** 1790, by an amateur: R Hodgson Huntley (who was lord of the manor).

Notes: "The lands of Carham had been granted by Egford of Northumbria to St. Cuthbert as a reward for his helping in defeating Wulfhere of of Mercia in the year 675 AD. A small abbey of the Black Canons was founded there by St. Cuthbert, probably adjacent to the site of the present church...destroyed by Wallace...in 1296...Later rebuilt but destroyed in the dissolution in the middle of the 16th century." An Anglican church was built near the site, but fell into disuse, to be rebuilt in 1790-91, the tower added in 1862-64. (Info from notice-board.) A large oil painting of the Marriage Feast at Cana hangs in the nave above the west door. (Artist unknown.)

Pale box pews. C18 stones in the churchyard. An exposed spot but nicely situated on the River Tweed.

**29. Haydon Bridge. Old Church** (GR: 843653 sheet 87) 22/12/1995



**A.** Female. 7' 11" at 3', 8' 6" at base, 8' 3" at 4'. Height 26'. Nice mature tree. (1759 stone beneath it.)

**B.** Female. Twiggy and unable to measure.

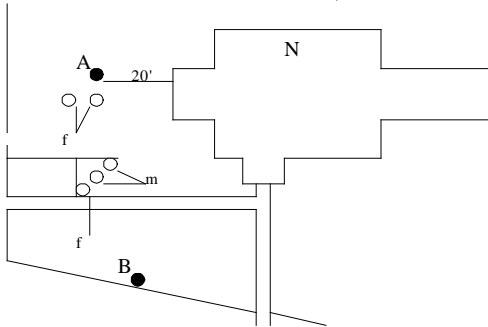
**Pevsner:** "On a hill on which the medieval village of Haydon lay." Trans. + C14, 1882 restoration. The font in the south chapel is a re-used Roman altar.

**Tomlinson:** "Used chiefly as a chapel for funeral services." About 1190 + 14th century chantry chapel. A window at the east end of the chantry is 1315-60. Grave covers are incorporated into the church, one with a curious

wheel design, not a cross.

Notes: An isolated, atmospheric wee church, with an air of long neglect and splendid views over the village to the south. An avenue of fifteen Irish yews shades the path.

**30. Hartburn. St Andrew** (GR: 091861 sheet 81) 22/2/1995



**A.** Female. 7' 3" at 3', 6' 6" at base.

**B.** Male. A large, mature tree on private ground.

**C.** Male. 6' 6" at base.

The other trees are smaller, but all appear contemporary.

**Pevsner:** C12 and C13.

Notes: An impressive building with the added charm of its Knights Templar associations. ( No less than the Northern Headquarters of that body. ) Some mature yews here but nothing "old".

**The most significant Northumbrian Yews in order of girth**

site no.	tree no.	LOCATION	sex	3' GIRTH	OTHER MEASURES	GRID REF & NOTES	POSITION	
<b>1</b>	1	<b>Beltingham</b>	St. Cuthbert	M	17' 2.5"	18' 11" at 4'	GR: 789639 Sheet 87	15' N
	2	Beltingham	St. Cuthbert	F	16'	15' 11" at 4'	14' at base	25' S
	3	Beltingham	St. Cuthbert	M	13' 7"	13' 10.5" at 4'	11' 5" at base	28' SW
<b>2</b>	4	<b>Stannington</b>	St. Mary	F	12' 10"	11' 3" at base	GR: 210794 sheet 88 35' high	75' E
<b>3</b>	5	<b>Howick</b>	St. Michael	F	12' 10"	at base	GR: 248175 sheet 81	75' N
	6	Howick	St. Michael	M	12' 9"	12' 5" at base	12' 11" at 4'	70' SE
	7	Howick	St. Michael	F	12' 7"	at base		30' SE
	8	Howick	St. Michael	F	12'	at base		185' S
<b>4</b>	9	<b>Ingram</b>	St. Michael	M	11' 11"	at base	GR: 019163 sheet 81	40' E
<b>5</b>	10	<b>Wark</b>	St. Michael	M	11' 7"	11' 4" at base	GR: 858775 sheet 87	40' S
<b>6</b>	11	<b>Doddington</b>	St. Mary & St. Michael	M	11' 6"	13' 5" at 4'	GR: 996322 sheet 75	65' S
<b>7</b>	12	<b>Old Bewick</b>	Holy Trinity	F	11' 4"	at base	GR: 068222 sheet 75	16' SE
<b>8</b>	13	<b>Jesmond</b>	Jesmond Dene	M	11' 4"	at base	GR: 255673 sheet 88	110' N
<b>9</b>	14	<b>Ellingham</b>	St. Maurice	M	10' 10"	9' 11" at base	GR: 176257 sheet 75	50' SE
<b>10</b>	15	<b>Netherwitton</b>	St. Giles	F	10' 10"	at base	GR: 102904 sheet 81	75' NW
<b>11</b>	16	<b>St. John Lee</b>	St. John	F	10' 10"	at base	GR: 933657 sheet 87	65' NE
	17	Howick	St. Michael	M	10' 10"	at base		80' SE
	18	Howick	St. Michael	F	10' 8"	at base		60' E
<b>12</b>	19	<b>Normham</b>	St. Cuthbert	F	10' 7"	8' 3" at base	GR: 897474 sheet 74	30' E (approx)
<b>13</b>	20	<b>Ulgham</b>	St. John	F	10' 3"	8' 6" at base	GR: 234924 sheet 81 11' 5" at 4', 30' high	110' E
	21	Howick	St. Michael	F	10' 1"	at base		40' NW

<b>14</b>	22	<b>Morpeth</b>	St. Mary	F	10'	at base	GR: 197852 sheet 81	140' N
<b>15</b>	23	<b>Whitfield</b>	Holy Trinity	F	9' 11"	at base	GR: 779569 sheet 86	10' SW
	24	Netherwitton	St. Giles	M	9' 10"	9' 3" at 4'	9' 11" at base	75' NE
	25	St. John Lee	St. John	M	9' 9"	9' 3" at 4'	9' 4" at base	75' E
	26	Norma	St. Cuthbert	F	9' 8"	at base		30' E (approx)
	27	Howick	St. Michael	M	9' 8"	at base		40' S
	28	Howick	St. Michael	F	9' 7"	at base		20' E
	29	Netherwitton	St. Giles	F	9' 7"	9' 10" at 4'	9' 5" at base	65' N
	30	Whitfield	Holy Trinity	F	9' 7"	at base		30' NW
	31	Whitfield	Holy Trinity	F	9' 6"	at base		25' E
<b>16</b>	32	<b>Ilderton</b>	St. Michael	M	9' 6"	8' 6" at base	GR: 017218 sheet 75	60' SW
<b>17</b>	33	<b>Humshaugh</b>	St. Peter	M	9' 6"	at base	GR: 920714 sheet 87	25' E
<b>18</b>	34	<b>Simonburn</b>	St Mungo	F	9' 2"	at base	GR: 871736 sheet 87	85' NE
	35	Stannington	St. Mary	M	9'	8' at base	35' high	85' ESE
<b>19</b>	36	<b>Longhirst</b>	St. John	F	8' 11"	at base	GR: 223891 sheet 81	20' N
	37	Ilderton	St. Michael	M	8' 10"	at base		5' N
	38	Simonburn	St. Mungo	M	8' 10"	at base		75' E
	39	Howick	St. Michael	F	8' 10"	at base		8' SE
<b>20</b>	40	<b>Seaton Deval</b>	St. Mary	F	8' 8"	8' 4" at base 8' 9" at 4'	GR: 322764 sheet 88	75' S
	41	Howick	St. Michael	F	8' 7.5"	9' 7" at base	8' 6" at 4'	60' E
<b>21</b>	42	<b>Dalton</b>	Holy Trinity	F	8' 7"	8' 5" at base	GR: 112719 sheet 88	30' SW
<b>22</b>	43	<b>Rock</b>	St. Phillip & St. James	M	8' 6.5"	8' 8" at 4'	GR: 202203 sheet 75 8' 6" at base	35' S
<b>23</b>	44	<b>Brinkburn (N)</b>	Priory	F	8' 5"	8' 4" at base	GR: 116984 sheet 81	110' E
	45	Howick	St. Michael	M	8' 5"	at base		20' NW
<b>24</b>	46	<b>Gt. Swinburne</b>	St. Mary	F	8' 5"	at base	GR: 937756 sheet 87	8' WNW
	47	Gt. Swinburne	St. Mary	M	8' 5"	at base		8' N
	48	Morpeth	St. Mary	M	8' 4"	8' 6" at 4'	7' 9" at base	200' SW
	49	Howick	St Michael	M	8' 3"	at base		125' S
<b>25</b>	50	<b>Bolam</b>	St. Andrew	F	8' 3"	at base	GR: 093826 sheet 81	25' N
	51	Howick	St. Michael	M	8' 2"	9' 3" at base		180' ESE
	52	Longhirst	St. John	F	8' 2"	7' at base		22' W
	53	Dalton	Holy Trinity	M	8' 1"	9' 5" at 4'	8' 1" at base	18' S
	54	Howick	St. Michael	M	8'	9' 1" at base		190' ESE
<b>26</b>	55	<b>Ford</b>	St. Michael.	F	8'	8' 9" at 4'	GR: 945374 sheet 75 8' 3" at base	25' N (approx)
<b>27</b>	56	<b>Warden</b>	St. Michael	F	8'	8' 1.5" at 4'	GR: 914665 sheet 87 8' 11" at base	25' NW
	57	Morpeth	St. Mary	F	8'	8' 6" at 4'	6' 11" at base	205' SW
<b>28</b>	58	<b>Carham</b>	St. Cuthbert	M	8'	at base	GR: 796384 sheet 74	20' E
	59	Whitfield	Holy Trinity	F	8'	at base		25' E
	60	Ford	St. Michael	M	8'	at base		40' N
	61	Morpeth	St. Mary	M	8'	6' 11" at base		170' NW
<b>29</b>	62	<b>Haydon Bridge</b>	Old Church	F	7' 11"	8' 3" at 4'	GR: 843653 sheet 87 8' 6" at base	20' SW
	63	Morpeth	St. Mary	M	7' 11"	7' 10" at base	8' at 4'	230' SW
	64	Howick	St. Michael	F	7' 9"	at 1'		50'S
	65	Howick	St. Michael	M	7' 6"	7' 7" at 4'	8' 7" at base	35'E
	66	Ford	St. Michael	M	7' 5"	at base		50' N
<b>30</b>	67	<b>Hartburn</b>	St. Andrew	M	7' 3"	6' 6" at base	GR: 091861 sheet 81	15' W
	68	Brinkburn	Priory	F	7' 3"	at base		95' E
	69	Norma	St. Cuthbert	M	7' 2"	7' 6" at base		70' E
	70	Longhirst	St. John	M	7' 2"	at base		70' SW
	71	Longhirst	St. John	F	7' 1"	8' at base		50' SW
	72	Old Bewick	Holy Trinity	F	7' 1"	at base		20' S
	73	Howick	St. Michael	F	6' 10"	6' 9" at base		50'WSW

## More Northumbrian sites where yews are found

**Biddlestone.** A catholic chapel. A mature three-trunked yew (male) grows down the road to the east at the junction.

**Birtley.** St. Giles - a young yew to the NE & Irish yews.

**Bywell.** St Peter - four young yews north of the church, 4-5 ft. in girth. On second visit recorded largest yew as 5' 9" at base.

**Chollerton.** St. Giles - a mature yew NE of the church (? 6-7') plus another on private land to the south, which looks older.

**Cramlington.** St. Nicholas - a couple of yews.

**Etal.** Castle - a tortured yew tree lies outside the south wall: two trunks, one grounding, the other bent into a step shape. No more than 6' at base.

**Gosforth.** St. Nicholas - two yews to the north and east.

**Gosforth.** Sacred Heart of Jesus (Catholic) - yews in the graveyard opposite.

**Greenhead.** St. Cuthbert - Irish yews and two small male yews proper, flank the path in the graveyard, east of the church. Smaller yews lie to the west, many lopped off at 4'.

**Gt. Swinburne.** St. Mary (Catholic) 1841 - the yews on site are anything but dull: *tortured* is the word! Single trees have had their foliage "trained" to form a hedge of sorts along the top of the north and east walls; some have lost major trunks on the church side. One lucky tree to the east has remained untouched. A weird effect!

**Gunnerton.** St. Christopher - small yew by the door (w).

**Haydon Bridge.** One young yew.

**Hebron.** St. Cuthbert - some small yews.

**Henshaw.** All Hallows - one youngish yew on a wee mound with a path dug out around it. Root exposure bodes ill.

**Hepple.** Christ Church - two yews, one NW untouched and doing well (? 6').

**Holystone.** St Mary - one very young yew.

**Kirkheaton.** Chapel - an old yew to SE, with another next to it. Not measured, the intimidating mass of twiggy growth off-putting.

**Kirkley Hall.** Chapel, now a private residence. The mature yews testify to its earlier use: some of them fine trees.

**Knaresdale Church.** Yew SW ?4-5'.

**Lesbury.** St Mary - two small yews.

**Long Marton.** SS Margaret & James - twiggy yew to the north ? 8'.

**Longhoughton.** St Peter - young yews

**Middleton.** Chapel - small yew by the door.

**Milbourne.** Young yews.

**Newton Hall.** St. James - small yews, but larger ones in the grounds of the vicarage opposite.

**Ponteland.** Largest tree 6' at base.

**Riding Mill.** St. James - female yew to the north, 6' at best, with a smaller yew next to it.

**Slayley.** St. Mary - a young yew.

**South Charlton.** St. James - two fairly mature yews to the south of the church by the boundary wall.

**Stagshaw.** St. Aidan - lots of young yews.

**Wooler.** St. Mary - nice yews to the east, by the boundary wall, measuring around 5' in girth. Nine in all, plus a very young tree of about 9 inches in girth.

## Northumbrian sites with no common yews

**Acomb.** Primitive Methodist 1871.

**Allendale.** St. Cuthbert - 1807 rebuild on an earlier site. Old, large Irish yews.

**Allenheads.** St. Peter - built 1825, now a private house.

**Alnham.** St. Michael

**Alnmouth.** St. Waleric

**Alwinton.** St. Michael - unusual Norman church.

**Ancroft.** St. Ann

**Appleby.** St. Lawrence - Norman tower.

**Appleby.** St. Michael - no longer a church.

**Bamburgh.** St. Aidan

**Barrasford.** Methodist church of 1877.

**Beadnel.** St. Ebba - c.1714.

**Bedlington.** St. Cuthbert

**Belford.** St. Mary - Norman.

**Bellingham.** St. Cuthbert

**Berwick.** Holy Trinity - 1648-52.

**Bingfield.** St. Mary

**Blanchland.** St. Mary

**Bolton.** All Saints - Norman, 1848 rebuild. Daft topiary to Irish yews flanking the path.

**Bothal.** St. Andrew - extensive graveyard. Irish yews.

**Branxton.** St. Paul

**Byrness Church.** 1786

**Bywell.** St Andrews - a visit prompted by Cornish's comments from his *Churchyard Yew and Immortality* 1946. There was no sign of the 16 yews reported.

**Chillingham.** St. Peter - church near the castle.

**Chipchase.** Chapel 18c.

**Corbridge.** St. Andrew

**Cornhill.** St. Helen -1840-66, on an ancient chapel site.

**Cresswell.** St. Bartholemew - 1836. Irish yews.

**Denwick.** Victorian church.

**Duddo.** All Saints - consecrated sometime after 1870. Two Irish yews.

**Duddo.** St. James - is now part of a school.

**Durham.** Cathedral.

**Earsdon.** St. Bartholemew - 1836-7 on the east end of the site of the former church.

**East Woodburn.** All Saints - 1906-7. Two Irish yews flank the gate.

**Edlingham.** St. John - church next to the ruined castle.

**Eglingham.** St. Maurice - Saxon site.

**Elsdon.** St. Cuthbert

**Embleton.** Holy Trinity

**Eshott.** Church is now the estate office.

**Etal.** St. Mary - 1858.

**Falstone.** Parish Church - Irish yews (yellow variant).

**Felton.** St. Michael

**Greystead.** Consecrated 1818.

**Gt. Bavington.** A 1725 church.

**Gt. Whittington.** Two churches; one gone, the other a private house.

**Halton Chapel.** Lots of mature Irish yews.

**Healey.** St. John - 1860 - Irish yew.  
**Heavenfield.** St. Oswald - 1737 rebuild.  
**Heddon-on-the-Wall.** St. Phillip & St. John, now St. Andrew - Norman.  
**Holy Island.** St. Mary  
**Horsley.** Two yews to the west, one covered in that dreadful climber.  
**Horton.** St. Mary  
**Kielder.** United Refrom Church - late Victorian or later. Irish yews.  
**Kirkharle.** St. Wilfrid  
**Kirkhaugh.** Church of the Holy Paraclete - built 1868-9.  
**Kirknewton.** St. Gregory  
**Kirkwhelpington.** St. Bartholemew  
**Kyloe.** St. Nicholas - 1792 on Norman chapel site. Private Residence.  
**Lambley.** SS Mary & Patrick - 1885. Irish yews.  
**Longbenton.** St. Bartholemew - 1791.  
**Longframlington.** Church  
**Longhorseley.** St. Helens  
**Low Chibburn Hall.** Chapel, now a roofless ruin.  
**Low Gate.** Late Victorian/Edwardian church.  
**Low Gate.** Methodist church, now a domestic dwelling.  
**Lowick.** St. John - 1794 on a Norman Chapel site.  
**Lucker.** St. Hilda - 1874. Small Irish yews.  
**Matfen.** Holy Trinity - 1841-2. Irish yews.  
**Meldon.** St. John  
**Mickley.** St. George. 1867. Small Irish yews.  
**Middleton-in-Teesdale.** St. Mary  
**Mindrum.** Chapel - a tiny, desolate ruin.  
**Mitford.** St. Mary - a wee church under the impressive remains of Mitford Castle.  
**Newbiggin.** St. Bartholemew  
**Newbrough.** St. Peter - on a site of 1242. Surrounded by large trees, including Irish yews.  
**Newcastle.** Christ Church  
**Newcastle.** St. Nicholas Cathedral  
**Newcastle-upon-Tyne.** All Saints - 1786-96.  
**Newminster Abbey.** (Morpeth) - overgrown ruins, no access.  
**Ninebanks.** St. Mark  
**North Shields.** Christ Church - consecrated in 1668.  
**Otterburn.** St. John - 1858.  
**Ovingham.** St. Mary  
**Ovington.** Church marked on the map - nothing on the ground however.  
**Rennington.** All Saints - 1831 on Norman chapel site.  
**Rothbury.** All Saints - EE church.  
**Shilbottle.** St. James  
**Snod's Edge.** St. John - modern church on possibly earlier site.  
**South Chatton.** 1860.  
**Stagshaw.** St. Aidan – disused.  
**Tarset Church.** Now a dwelling house.  
**Thorneyburn.** St. Aidan - consecrated in 1820.  
**Tod-le-Moor.** The map gives us a church here, but not on the ground.  
**Tughall.** Ruined Chapel, reputedly the earliest surviving christian site in Northumberland.  
**Tweedmouth.** St. Bartholemew

**Wall.** St. George - 1897.  
**Wallsend.** Holy Cross - a ruin.  
**Wallsend.** St. Peter - the new church of 1809.  
**Warden.** St. Michael  
**Wark.** United Reform Church(Methodist) - small, golden yew.  
**Wark-on-Tweed.** Castle ruin.  
**Warkworth.** St. Lawrence  
**West Woodburn.** 1894.  
**Whalton.** St. Mary - Saxon origin.  
**Whitfield.** St. John - old chapel.  
**Whitley Chapel.** St. Helen - Irish yews.  
**Whittingham.** St. Bartholemew - Saxon.  
**Whittonstall.** SS Phillip & James  
**Widdrington.** Holy Trinity  
**Woodhorn.** St. Mary - now a museum.

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