

St Mary the Virgin is of Norman origin. In 1811 'two fine yew trees, of which one is very large' were noted. Mee, writing in *The King's England*, considered the site 'so old.....that the earthworks near the church were thrown up by Caesar's men on the way from the sea to their camp at Barham Downs'.

Saunders' 1853 drawing shows a circular seat around the tree, a tradition maintained to the present day. Cox's *Little Guides* of 1903 described 'a fine old yew tree with a girth of 19'.

1999: Two male yews still grow here. The largest is now encircled by a more comfortable seat, though twiggy growth on the lower trunk prevented its use. Numerous lateral branches dipped almost to the ground. The trunk bulges outwards from the ground to a height of about 4'6" before narrowing. Recording girth was not possible.

The second yew, also surrounded by twiggy growth, forms 2 main branches from a 6' bole. On the day of the visit soil and garden waste were piled against it. Girth was estimated at about 16'.

