

According to the *Topographical Dictionary of Wales* (1849) Rudry's name (Yr-yw-dre) is derived from the number of yew trees in the vicinity of the village.

In an article read to Cardiff Naturalists' Society in February 1880, Thomas Henry Thomas reported as follows: 'The Yews of Rudry, near Caerphilly, present a group of an exceedingly interesting character. One girths 17' 6" at 2' from the ground, and in height surpasses any we have described. The great peculiarity of the tree is the clear way in which the phenomena of adventitious roots is shown. The lower part of the trunk is a mere shell, partially alive; through the rent sides a mass of internal roots may be seen, varying in size from 2' diameter to mere rods, all covered with clean, ruddy bark; they twist around each other and form curious adhesions, which remind one of the vagaries of the banyan. Another tree exhibits the same character even more fantastically. From a vast stool 21' girth and 2' 6" in height, branches start from around a central trunk which is one mass of canker and decay. In spite of this the tree bears a great pyramidal canopy, and the reason is apparent on ascending the trunk, when it is found that every cranny of the dead wood is pierced with a multitude of small roots, many dry and dead, but others sending nourishment to the branches'.

By 1930 only one remained, and a girth of 16½' at 2' was noted in the *The Glamorgan County History*. In 1988 J.Daryll Evans recorded a girth of 567cm (18' 7") at 1m. In his *Churchyard Yews of Gwent* he describes it as having 'the remains of a single trunk, now splitting into six parts'.

1999: The female yew, growing SE of the church, is clearly the one described in 1880 with the 'pyramidal canopy'. Its vast hollow space was filled to a height of 4' with decaying material that has built up over centuries. It is a most impressive sight with large and small branches spreading outwards from the edges of the bole to a height of no more than 25 feet. Girth in 1999 was 18' 6" at 1' rising to almost 28' at 4'. In 2018 Peter Norton recorded a girth of 18' 11" at the root crown.

Five younger yews also grow here, including a fine fluted tree that almost blocked the entrance to the churchyard.



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