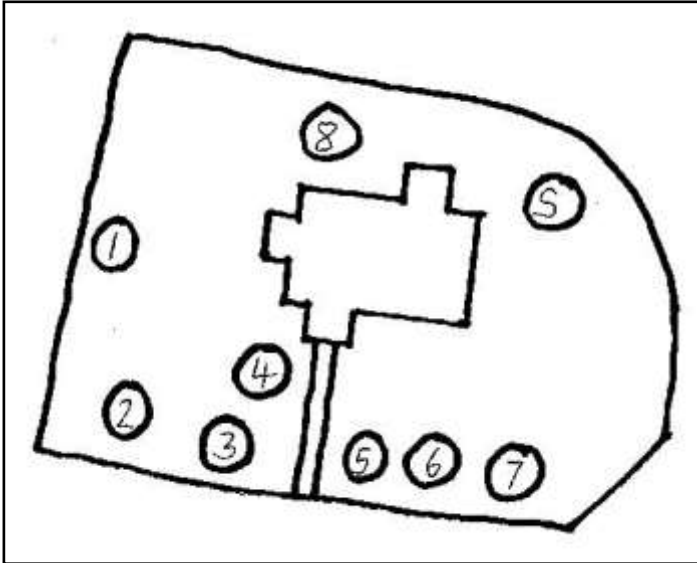


In Collinson's 1791 *History of Somerset* he described West Harptree churchyard as having "10 of the finest yew trees perhaps in the kingdom. They are clipt into cones and the diameter of the largest is at the bottom 36', the height 40', the body of the tree 13' round."

The 1869 *Handbook for Travellers in Wiltshire, Dorsetshire and Somersetshire* also noted that "the yew-trees in the churchyard, some of them of great age and size, are cut into curious shapes."



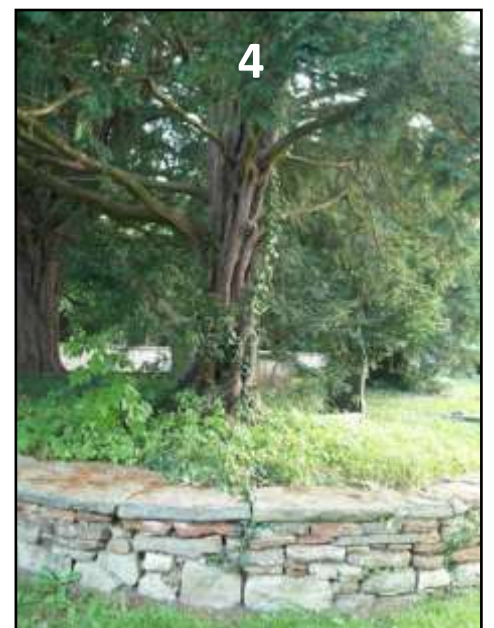
Although no longer clipped into cones and other curious shapes, the signs of previous management of the trees can still be seen in the trunks and branches of several of these yews.

1: Male, with ivy covering its trunk and extending into its upper branches. Girth 7' 4" at 1' above high ground on wall side of tree (no photo).

2: Male, 3' bole, then an outpouring of adventitious growth which fills all the branches. Girth 9' 8½" at 1'.

3: Female, fine visible bole branching above a height of 10'. Girth 9' 9½" at 2'.

4: Female, the only tree not on the perimeter, this has a vast circular stone wall around it, so presumably there was once a more important tree in the space. Numerous tall upright stems and some small lower lateral branches. Girth 5' 5" at 1' 6".



5: Female, becoming hollow. Tall, straight stems from 6' upwards. Girth of 8' 1" at 2'.

6: Female, hollow on the west side. Girth of 7' 11" at 2'.

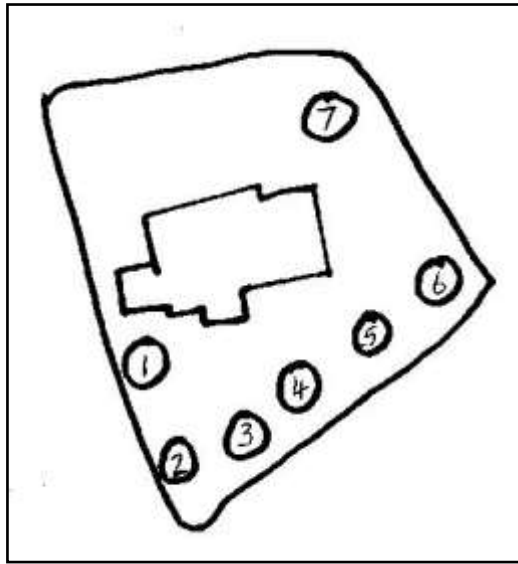
7: Male with an ivy clad trunk. A strong looking tree with fine main stem. It was measured in 2001 with a girth of 12' 4" at 2'. In 2013 measurements will have been affected by the thick ivy and 12' 11" at 1' and 13' 2" at 2' were recorded. A true comparison would need removal of ivy or threading the tape behind it.



8: Male, on its own on the north side, close to perimeter wall. Much epicormic growth from 5' upwards. Has had chicken-in-the-woods recently. Girth 7' 4" at 2'. (no photo)

The yew stump NE of the church, with pieces remaining having a girth of 16' is without doubt what remains of the tree described in 1791.





Seven yews grow here. Tree 1 is an ivy clad male SW of the church. Some of the ivy stems are so thick they will have affected the measurement. In 2007 a girth of 12' 3" at 2' was recorded but twiggy growth prevented remeasuring at this height in 2015. The tape had to be moved above or below twiggy growth

leading to an exaggerated girth of 12' 11". The yew has many thick branches above a height of 6' 8' both around the edges and from the centre of the tree. Considerable lower growth on the west side of the tree will change the nature of the trunk if left to develop.

Tree 2 is the most westerly of the line of five on the southern perimeter. It is male with a girth of about 8'. Like many of the trees here it becomes twin stemmed.

Tree 3 is female with a girth of about 7' 6".

Tree 4 is female and divides into two at the height of about 4'. Girth was 13' 9" at 1' in 2007 and 13' 10½" at 1' in 2015.



Tree 5 (no photo) is female with many tall straight stems and an ivy affected girth of about 10' 6" at between 1' and 1' 6".

Tree 6 is female. It gives the impression of having once been twin stemmed and that these have grown together/fused. Above a height of about 8' it divides into straight and upright branches. Girth was 11' 10" close to the ground.

Tree 7 (no photo) is female growing NE of the church. It leans slightly towards the church and had a girth of about 6' 6".



The church in an idyllic setting by a weir. The place also calls itself Lydford-on-Fosse, but the Ordnance Survey is less extravagant, naming it West Lydford.



The notable male yew (left) grows SW of the church. Girth was 13' 2" at 2'. Twenty yards further west is a young yew (no photo) growing close to the water. In the centre of a long walk west of the church is the rather scrappy looking female yew (right).

A fourth yew (centre) grows on the other side of the wall is presumably not the church's responsibility.

One yew grows in this fine setting at the east end of the churchyard on the south side. It is an expansive tree with plenty of space to expand further. At about 12' are many angled branches with a vertically rising central branch thicker than the others. Girth was 14' 5" at 1' and 14' 4" at 2' over thin ivy.



2 notable yews grow here, one whose age exceeds 300 years and another with a known planting date. The site, only a few miles from the coast, was visited in February 2004 and June 2015.

Southwest of the church, taking the full force of the prevailing winds, this windswept yew has a bole height of about 6' and supports many thick branches. Some of these were removed following storm damage in early 2015. Girth was recorded as 14' 8" at 3' in 2004 and 15' 1" at 3' in 2015.



Northeast of the church is a yew (below) with a known planting date of 1842. An informative booklet available in the church notes that it was planted on the 4th of March 1842 by the churchwardens 'to obliterate the site of a former cockfighting pit'. In 2004 it had a girth of 8' 4" at 1', which increased to 8' 9" at 1' in 2015. It also measured 9' 1" at 2' in 2015.



The History and Antiquities of Somersetshire (1836) described 'a fine yew-tree'.

It grows on the south side of the church, on raised ground. Measured at the root crown was 12' 5". At a height of 4¹/₅' is a platform from which rises a thick central branch surrounded by smaller ones around the edges. Stones were piled against the east side of the trunk. There was some internal growth to be seen in one of the sawn off branches.

4 rather unkempt small Irish Yews grow on the north side of the church. They were presumably planted to form a square marking a tomb, but this has not been looked after for many years now.

