

The parish church dates from the 13th century, but it is thought possible that the present church is on the site of a much earlier place of worship. In the surrounding hills are Saxon and Bronze age burial grounds, and it is known that Stowting was a Roman settlement.

The yews were first noted in *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent: Volume 8* (1799) as follows: 'In the church-yard, which is on higher ground than that round it, seemingly thrown up in former times as a place of defence, are two fine large yew trees, of great age, and three others, younger and more flourishing, near them'.



This 1855 Saunders sepia drawing shows the yew that grows SSE - right in photo.

The site was visited in 1999 and 2013. A pair of very fine straight trunked female yews grow on the south side of the church. The larger of these grows SW, an impressive cylindrical bole which divides into two growth areas at 12/15'. There are hollow sections with internal growth visible through holes in the trunk. Away from the church branches had – in 1999 - been allowed to dip close to the ground, but by 2013, when all of these photos were taken, these had been removed.



Girth	1895(Lowe)	1999	2013
Ground	22' 6"	22' 9"	23' 2"
At 1'		22' 1"	22' 7"
At 3'	20' 8"	21' 7"	21' 9½"
At 5'		20' 11"	20' 11½"
Height of bole	14'		

I noted that all measuring heights would be hard to replicate except for 5'. This is partly caused by a build up of soil on one side of the tree so that the tape does not easily remain at the ground, and also by slight bulging at 1ft.

The smaller of the pair grows SSE of the church. It too has a clean bole, which divides at 8'. There is one gap at a height of about 6' where the tree's centre, filled with old and new growth, can be seen. It is a good example of a tree filling up on the inside.



TREE 2

Girth:	1895 (Lowe)	1999	2013
Ground	19' 6"	not possible - bulgy roots	
At 6"		19' 2"	
At 3'	17' 5"	19' 4"	19' 8½"
At 5'		19' 6"	19' 7½"

In 2013 I noted embedded nails at the height of 2'.