

There has been a church at this site, just beside the old Pilgrims Way, since Norman times. It is thought likely that it replaced an earlier building. A story is told that the Mighty Mynn rests under a yew tree in Thurnham churchyard. Alfred Mynn (1807-1861), known as the "Lion of Kent", was a 17-stone round-arm fast bowler and ferocious batsman.

April 1999: The female yew grows at the entrance to the churchyard, sharing its space with a tap, a compost area and a large shed, erected far too close to the yew, so that they now touch.

Inside the tree's vast hollow is a complete circle of the original trunk, with impressive sculptural features. A few strands of living wood grow inside the tree, but most of its life is on the outside. Of three main growth areas, two face the path while a third grows over the shed. Most of its bole was hidden behind dense low twiggy growth. Foliage, while not thick, was healthily green.

Girth in 1897 was 17' 2" at the ground and 23' 8" at 3'. This was recorded for Lowe's *The Yew trees of Great Britain and Ireland*

In 1999 I recorded 18' 7" at the tree's lowest point.



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