

In the mid 1800s W.W.Wheatley (1811/1885) recorded numerous Somerset churches. Many of his paintings are now in private collections.

Trees are not always included but in this instance it is possible to see clearly the male yew at the west end, while the female yew which grows NW is just seen at the right edge of the painting.



In 1889 Revd. C. Houghton sent information to Lowe for his *Yew Trees of Great Britain and Ireland*, in which he described them as 'very fine trees, but a heavy snowstorm, followed almost immediately by a very severe frost, broke down the largest stem, and the trees are in consequence much disfigured'.

Mee, writing *The King's England* c1940 thought Ashill would be more appropriately named Yewhill 'for the sake of the twins in the churchyard'.

**The male yew** was described by Collinson in his 1791 *History and Antiquities of the County of Somerset* as having a 'vast spread of branches extended north and south 46ft' and with a girth of 15'. One hundred years later, in 1895, Lowe was given girths of 14' 7" at the ground and 15' at 3'.

In 1999 I noted that although several large branches had been removed, this was a green and vigorous tree, supporting two large areas of growth from its 7' bole. Girth was 16' 7" at the ground and 18' 3" at 3' over ivy.

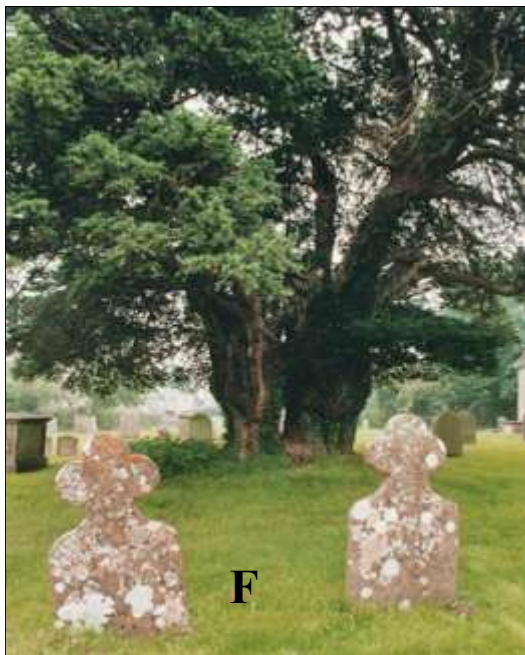
In 2015 I recorded a girth of 17' 2" at or close to the ground, but over ivy, which will have added an inch or two. I also recorded exactly 18' at 2' 6".

The male yew - 1999



The female yew was described by Collinson in 1791 as dividing into 'three large trunks just above the ground, but many of the arms are decayed'. It was recorded for Lowe in 1895 with a girth of 17' 9" at the ground and 20' at 3'.

In 1999 I recorded a bole dividing at 1', from which point several large branches rise and spread to form a fine expansive crown. It was in good health and covered in arils. The lower part of the trunk was clad in ivy over twiggy growth. Girth was 19' 9" at 1', 21' 4" at 2' and 26' 9" at 5'.





The yews are seen here in 2015. The amount of ivy is becoming out of control and the fine looking trunks are almost hidden.

