

The earliest reference to the Itchen Abbas yew is found in *A short history of the church and its community in the Upper Itchen Valley* by Claisse and Taylor. In 1839 it was described as venerable and of enormous size. The writer speculated that the yew 'may have been planted when the old church was built.....some written sources date it as 1092'.

1939: *The King's England* described 'an ancient yew of great beauty'.

1955: Rev. Boyd Wilson measured it for Swanton and recorded a girth of 25' 4" at 3'.

1994: In *The Sacred Yew* the tree is reputed to appear 'in an Anglo-Saxon charter of AD 939. In the charter the position of the tree is described in relation to a river with a small island, and these landmarks are still seen in the same position from the tree today, so it is highly likely that the yew there now is the one described in 939.' I have been unable to verify this information.

1999: Tim Hills - A 3' thick carpet of dried grasses covered the ground beneath its branches. This had been removed by the time the tree was visited by 40 members of Eibenfreunde in 2006.

The main branch can be clearly seen, rising to one side of the tree from its 6' high bole. The photograph also bears the marks of many removed branches.



Measurement was not possible due to thick twiggy growth extending up to 8' outwards from the lower bole. Foliage was thin. Later in 1999 Russell Cleaver was able to record a girth of 25' 6" (7.77m at 0.45m).

