

The church is on the private estate of Sir John and Lady Smith, The Manor House, Shottesbrooke Park.

1856: From *The old mansions of England* by Samuel Carter Hall: 'In 1337, soon after it became the property of Sir William Tressell, he founded here a small Religious House, consisting of a College and Chantry dedicated to St. John the Baptist, for a warden and five priests; this College he endowed with the Church of Shottesbrooke. But not long afterwards, having sustained grievous injuries by fire, it was deserted by the whole of the establishment, 'except John Bradford, the warden;' in consequence of which, licence was had (in 1380) to appropriate to it the Church of Battlesden. The result was a considerable accession of revenue; and it continued to flourish until 'the Dissolution.' It is certain that the Church sustained no injury when the College was partially destroyed by fire; inasmuch as it is now in nearly 'the same state in which it came out of the hands of the Founder;' and its escape is further evidenced by the fact that growing beside it is a yew of very venerable antiquity, which measures in girth upwards of twenty feet; planted, no doubt, when the Edifice was erected, four hundred years ago.'

1883: Kelly's *Directory of Berkshire, Bucks and Oxon* : 'Beside the church is a venerable yew tree, planted 400 years ago and measuring in girth 20 feet.'

2000: The churchyard can be reached by road or public footpath. The pollarded yew grows WSW of the church. Its complete 3' high shell makes it an exceptional specimen. Small branches emerge all around the edge forming a dense green canopy. A young ash, which has germinated inside the tree and now grows above it, should be removed. Girth was 20' 7" at its narrowest point.



Photo - Dave Kenny - 2010



© Tim Hills - Ancient Yew Group - 2025