

This Saxon dedication suggests a chapel as early as the tenth century, probably preceded by a wooden church.

1833: 'In the church yard is a yew tree of large dimensions, which appears to be of equal antiquity with the church'. *The History and Gazetteer of the County of Derby* by Stephen Glover

1857: 'In the Church-yard are two yew trees, one of which is supposed to be nearly as old as the Church'. *White's Directory of Derbyshire*

1896: "Hollow, surrounded by green shoots." *The Yew Trees of Great Britain and Ireland* John Lowe

For a relatively small girthed tree, the Allestree Yew receives more local acclaim than many churchyard yews. It features as part of the church logo, along with the cross and the crown of St Edmund. Many church guides fail to mention the old yews in their churchyard, but at Allestree the tree provides the opening paragraph:

'The yew tree has stood in the churchyard for maybe 1,000 years. Was it the tree under which a missionary monk first preached in pre-Norman times, for the church is dedicated to a Saxon Saint? St Edmund was king in East Anglia, where he was martyred by the Danes in 855. Is the Yew Tree Adelard's tree, or Adelardestrew (a chapelry of Mackworth) as it was named in the Domesday Book? It is doubtful if we shall ever be sure, but the ancient tree, more than 16' in girth, still stands a few paces from the church, and deep grooves on stones at the base of the tower can be seen, where arrows of yew-tree wood were sharpened, when young men did their archery practice in the churchyard many, many years ago'. Enid J. Clarke

1999: The male yew grows south of the church. A large piece of old sapwood (A) partially blocks the entrance to its hollow. About two thirds of its girth is living wood. The limb on the right is pulling away from the bole and metal rods have been fixed at 15/18' to lessen the strain.

Documentation of this yew provides a clear illustration of how erroneous information can be passed on.

1896: 17' 6" at the ground, 17' 8" at 3', bole length 7' 6", height 33' 6". Lowe

1946: Cornish recorded a girth of about 27' with information supplied by Rev. W. Greenhalgh. This incorrect measurement was then published in Hal Hartzell Jnr. *The Yew Tree* published in 1991.

1994: Meredith recorded a more reasonable 17' 8" in *The Sacred Yew*, but added that it measured over 20' a hundred years earlier.

1999: Exactly 18' at 3'.

