

The church, circa 980, has been described as an almost complete example of a Saxon building. Its yew, which might well be coeval with the first church, has an appearance unlike any other. Almost all trace of the original tree was lost following what Swanton described in *The Yew Trees of England* 1958 as a 'complete destruction of the head'. The many stems that now sprout upwards from the edge of the old bole all appear to be of similar age. It is probable that this destruction occurred some time in the early 1800s, for by 1888 there were '8 or 10 young trunks a foot or more in diameter growing within the old trunk'. *Notes and Queries* Lowe/Shore

Determining the precise number of separate stems has not proved possible, for example in 1909 Bell and Varley's *Hampshire* said that 'the central stem has died away some foot or so above ground and become replaced by 16 or 17 separate stems'.

in 1954 Swanton said there were '15 young trunks.....height approximately 30'.....the tree shows every sign of vigorous life'.

In 1982 Meredith noted that girth of the '12' stems were recorded as varying between 2' and 5'.

We do not know what led to this yew being cut back almost to ground level, but we do know that it was a substantial tree, its girth since 1888 being recorded as 30' and above.

1888: 30' at 3' 6" Lowe *The Yew-Trees of Great Britain and Ireland*

1954: 32' at 3' Swanton *The Yew Trees of England*

1962: 34ft 6ins, measured at 1ft from the ground Alan Mitchell

1999: 36' 6" at 2' Tim Hills

On this occasion I am inclined to agree with Meredith who said that 'no measurement of this tree should be seriously considered due to the many growths'.

Visiting in 1999 I observed the central space which once contained the original yew now filled with roots. The yew is female, but at (A) a male tree had germinated. In centuries to come, expansion of the female parts of the tree surround the male trunk and the tree will present as one having female and male parts. I wonder whether when the female yew was considered to have been destroyed the male tree was planted as a replacement?



2012: Measurement including young male 35' 11", excluding it 35' 6". Measured just above bulbous growth on the southwest side of the tree. Peter Norton - who also provided photos below.



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