

October 2007: The old yew here is a hollowed out female growing on a small mound SW of the church. Its central stem was at some time cut off at a height of about 20ft and much recent growth rises vertically from just below this point. Girth was 12' at 6", though it bulges dramatically to nearer 17' at 3'. On the west face of the tree can be seen a portion of the original trunk. From inside it is possible to look upwards and see sky through its hollow and cylindrical top.



The Clifton upon Teme yew is sometimes mistaken for the yew in the following story, related to me by Bert Bradley:

'There is an effigy, in the Woodmanton Chapel in the Parish of St Kenelm, which is said to be Sir Ralph Wysham. The lion at his feet, which looks more like a dog, gave rise to a legend, current among the peasantry to this day, that as Sir Ralph was one day walking with his dog from Woodmanton to Clifton he fell down dead under a yew tree, where he was found lying on his back with his legs crossed and his dog lying at his feet.....The yew in question, is on the NOW main road from Ham Bridge to Clifton. Woodmanton Lodge at the bottom of the Old Road, could have been the beginning of the private drive up to Woodmanton. The Old Road, as the name suggests was the old main road to the village'.

On a frighteningly busy B road I was taken to see what at first appeared to be a spindly young yew tree. Searching among the bramble covered roots we were able to ascertain this to be new growth on the edge of a larger tree that once stood on this spot. Was this the tree in the story?