

Lewis's 1834 *Topographical Dictionary of Wales* described the churchyard as having 'some of the finest yew trees in south Wales, one of them 9 and a half yards and another 7 and a half in girth, and though generally of very great age, their trunks are most perfectly round'.

By 1970 the Brecon Survey was only able to record three yews, with girths of 18', 17' and 12', noting two of them to be hollow.

By 2001 only one of these had survived, this male with a girth of 19' 1" at 1'. It has a thick shell of flaky, richly coloured bark and internal stems in the hollow, one of which had been badly burned. Its main rising branch leans slightly away from the church and divides at about 20'.

Geoff Garlick's 2006



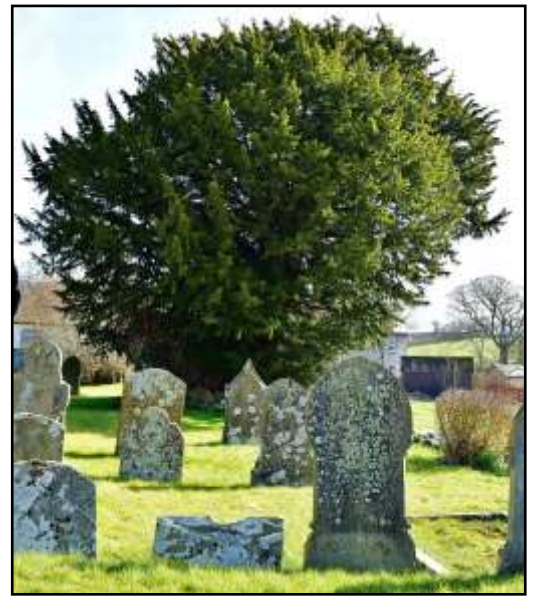
Paul Wood 2016



The 2 smaller trees which grew side by side are now stumps, one measuring 13' 7" at 2', the other incomplete but with a girth of about 15'. The larger stump is seen in 2001.



Paul Wood 2016: The well kept churchyard and its yew should have been a visit to remember but as with so many Powys churchyards the yew had become a focus for any rubbish the churchyard could gather, even though a new shed has been recently constructed under it. After spending ten minutes clearing rubbish from around the tree and inside its hollow I could see that it looked in fairly good condition, in spite of evidence of a fire around the tree. About 15 to 20 feet up into the tree this was clear to see. Much twiggy growth has covered the bole almost to the ground but we were able to record a girth of 18' 6" (5.64m) at the root crown.



In 2019 the veteran yew was found in this state, its branches removed, apparently as a prelude to felling. It was fortunate that this misdemeanour was discovered in time and the yew has a good chance of recovery.

Gerard Manley Hopkins, writing about the Binsey Poplars felled in 1879:

O if we but knew what we do
When we delve or hew —
Hack and rack the growing green!

