

The flint church is the oldest building in the village, founded in the 12th century. It is a mystery why *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent: Volume 10* of 1800 recorded only one 'remarkable fine yew tree, which measures upwards of twenty feet round', when two similarly proportioned trees grow so close to each other in the same churchyard.

By 1811 Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary of England* had corrected this, noting that: 'in the churchyard are two remarkably fine yew trees, one of which is 21 ft in girth'.

Petrie's watercolour (b/w half plate) of 1807 shows the yew that grows at the eastern end of the church while Saunders' 1853 drawing from the north shows both trees.



Arthur Mee 1936 wrote in *The King's England* of 'two magnificent yews which were probably planted about the time that Henry V came sailing home from Agincourt'. This would make the trees about 600 years old. It is possible they might be older still, perhaps coeval with the church.

March 1999: Of the two large male yews, number 1 grows NW of the church. Its thickly fluted bole consists of live wood for almost its entire circumference and it was almost clear of twiggy growth to a height of 6/8'. Its crown appeared to have suffered damage, and the yew has renewed itself with much new growth radiating from about 8'. A main branch had also been truncated at about 14'. Girth: 21' 8" at the ground; 21' 2" at 1'; 22' 3" at 3' ; 23' 7" at 5'.

Tree 2 also has a fluted and visible bole which bulges above 3½'. In contrast this is a hollow tree, large enough to get inside and see one large and many smaller internal stems whose pathways could be followed high into the tree. A large central branch appears to have been truncated at a height of about 15' and most of its growth is recent.

There was little dead wood visible, only a small amount at the entrance to the hollow. As with so many hollow yews, fires have been lit in the space. Apart from that, the tree was in good health.

Girth: 23' 4" at the ground; 22' 10" at 1'; 24' 2" at 3' .

