

In 1880 Straker recorded three yews in Sanderstead churchyard as follows:

16' 3" at 5'	SSW	670 yrs
7' at 5'	SSE	240 yrs
12' 3" at 5'	E	500 yrs

Cox's *Little Guides* (1903) ignored the smaller yew, but described the others as "2 fine old yews."

By 2001 only one of these yews continued to grow in the churchyard. There was no trace of the tree growing SSE and in the SSW corner, where the largest tree once grew, I found a young yew with the following notice: "This English Yew was presented by the Sanderstead Preservation Society to replace one felled in 1962. It was planted on 27<sup>th</sup> April by Rev V.L. Tucker Harvey MA, rector of this parish." There is no explanation of why it was felled.

The tree growing to the east still flourished. Its bole was about 6' high and from it developed three large areas of growth, with healthy foliage. Ivy covered the lower part of the tree and there was some filling of hollow spaces with concrete. I was unable to remeasure at Straker's 5' because of a leaning branch, but recorded 13' 11" at 1' and 14' 11" at 3'.

In a report in 2009 prepared for the Ancient Tree Hunt, it states that the tree was severely lopped about 5 years ago earlier and that there were no signs of regrowth. It is almost certain that it was this drastic action that killed the last of Sanderstead's trio of old yews.



Photos—Steve Waters



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