St John

The site can be seen from the main road, marked by a row of 22 young yews growing west of the church. It is approached along a farm track and freely accessible. In Lost Churches of Wales and the Marches by Davis and Lloyd-Fern, the old parish church is described as 'one of those unfortunate sites where only part of the building has been retained for ecclesiastical use, the remainder being allowed to fall into decay'. It is only recently that the transept was repaired for use as a small chapel, but today it is little used and falling into disrepair.

A three weeks tour into Wales 1817 by Paul Hawkins Fisher provides the following description: 'We saw two large and flourishing yew-trees in the church-yard of this place, whose aged trunks intimated that they had witnessed many successive generations of men pass beneath their extended arms to worship or to revels'. After this only one yew is ever mentioned. In The Woolhope Transactions of 1866 this tree is 'very hollow and much shattered', with a girth of 22ft.

In the 1938 King's England it is described as 'a great yew with a hollow trunk 27' round'.

1998 Tim Hills (left): A prominent internal stem (A) has developed in this 'shattered' yew. Though fires have been lit in the tree and some damage done, there is no reason why it should not survive. These are fragments of what must have once been an even larger tree that now measured 25' 8" at 1'.

2006 Russell Cleaver (right): It looks a sad and broken tree, matching the ruined church beside it. The central stem looks like it was once an internal, aerial root. Its girth alone measured 8' (2.44m) but it, like the other stems are blown out at about 25ft high. I measured the tree's full girth as 25' 11" (7.90m) at 3'.





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