

among the yews and in the gardens of many old manor houses can be seen the trees cut into birds, pyramids, peacocks, pots and cans, and other fanciful designs. The children eat the luscious and sticky red berries of the yew and cattle have been known to die from the effects of a full meal of the foliage of the baleful tree.

Lysons mentions several old churchyard yews in Berkshire of venerable age and girth, but fails to make mention of what is perhaps the "facile princeps" of them all—the remarkable tree at Aldworth, an old-world village pitched high upon the back of the Berkshire Downs. This immense tree, a veritable forest contortionist, celebrated for its extreme age and remarkable growth, is said at one time to have shaded an acre of ground. That it is no infant among the *taxus baccata* tribe may be gathered from the fact that the girth of its trunk three feet from the ground was the same 150 years ago as it is now, 27 feet. But its growth has dwindled sadly and now only a small portion is alive, securing its succour from a tiny section of living fibre in the herculean and twisted bole. A chain hangs from one of its branches, recalling in some small measure the days when short shrift was meted out to those malefactors who came under the displeasure of the great feudal rulers of those parts, the de la Beches, who are enshrined in stone in the neighbouring church. Many put the age of this huge tree at considerably over a thousand years. Some of the means adopted for calculating the age of the yew tree are, however, not very convincing. De Candolle was of opinion that the diameter of the yew increased a line a year throughout its life, and upon this basis he concluded that a yew of 27 feet and over in girth had reached and even passed the age of 2,000 years. One is not obliged to identify one's opinion with that of de Candolle, but there is considerable opinion to support the theory that the Aldworth yew is coeval with the oldest portion of the present church, which no doubt dates from the earlier part of the reign of the third Henry.

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TIDMARSH MANOR.—This manor has been in the possession of the Hopkins family since the year 1798 when Mr. Robert Hopkins purchased it from Mr. Charles Butler. There has recently been a sale of the contents of the house, including some valuable and interesting furniture, fine walnut framed Stuart chairs, Chippendale bookcase, chairs and settee of the Louis XVI period, Empire tables, curios, books and pictures, including Newenham's portrait of Milton.