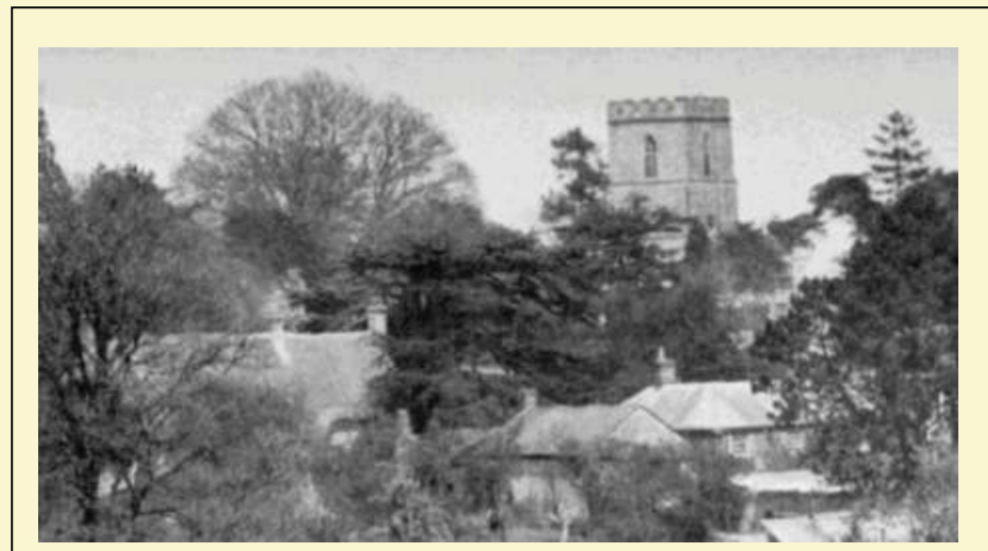
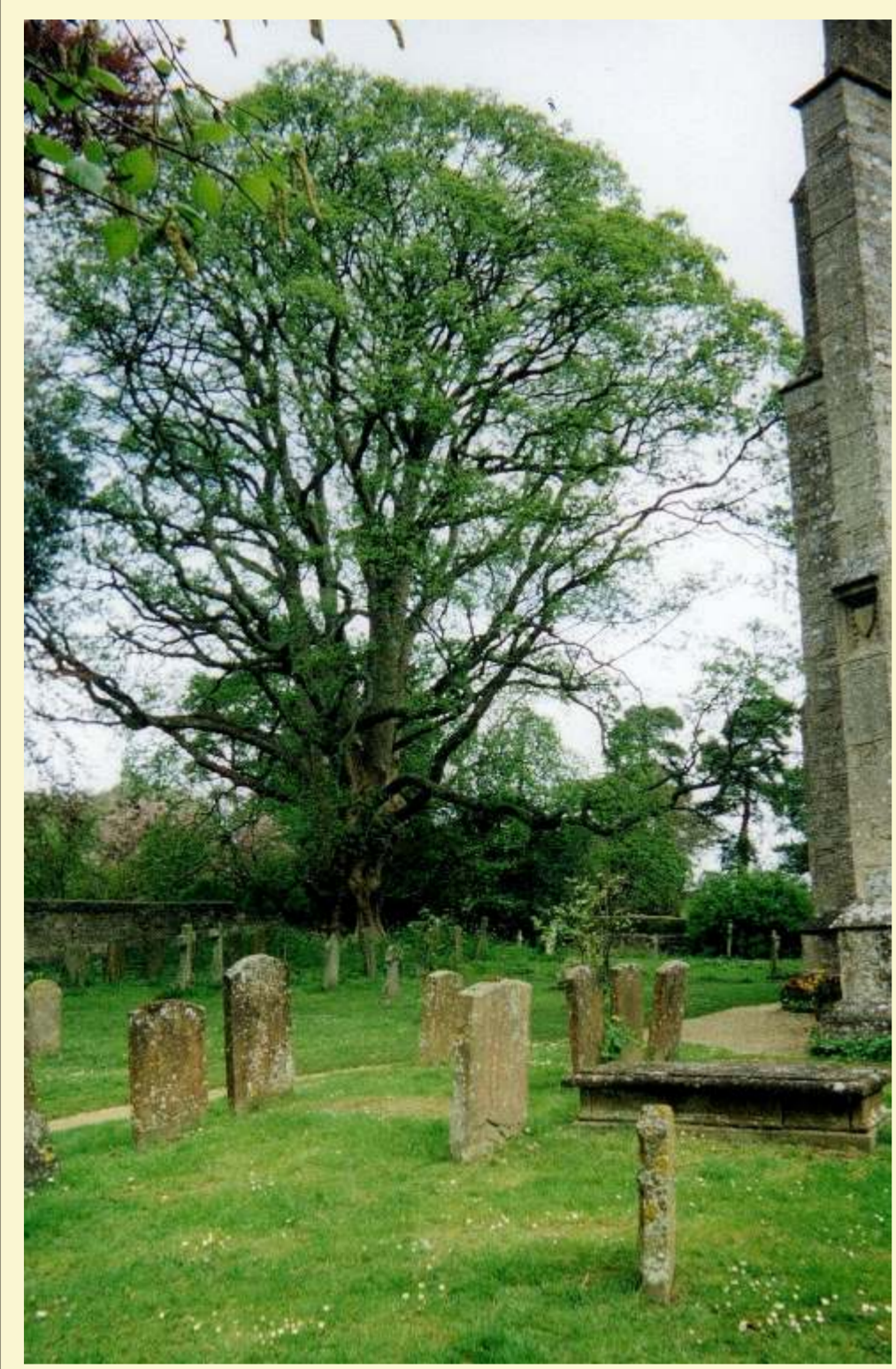


# THE GREAT SYCAMORE



*"The great sycamore overtopping the church tower which is 66 feet high, by a good 10 feet or more. It is about 23 feet around the trunk at its narrowest point and has a spread of 40 yards." So wrote Michael Hayter in his book: The Rector of Steeple Aston.*



Steeple Aston's great sycamore was probably planted around 1806.

The beginning of the end came in 2001, when a large branch fell into the churchyard. Luckily, no-one was hurt, but it did damage some gravestones. Much the same thing happened again in January 2007, and later that year tree surgeons reduced its bulk by about 40%. This made it safer, but failed to halt its decline. By the Spring of 2011 it was showing signs of death. It was reduced to a magnificent stump in August 2012.



*This 2007 wedding photo was posed against the taped-off danger area in front of the sycamore. Stephen M'Caw, Matthew Keates and Samantha Gardner.*



*An oak tree was planted near the stump together with a plaque celebrating the longevity of the sycamore tree and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. Colin Fletcher, Bishop of Dorchester, came to Steeple Aston to preach at the church service. He blessed the little oak tree on 2nd June 2013.*

