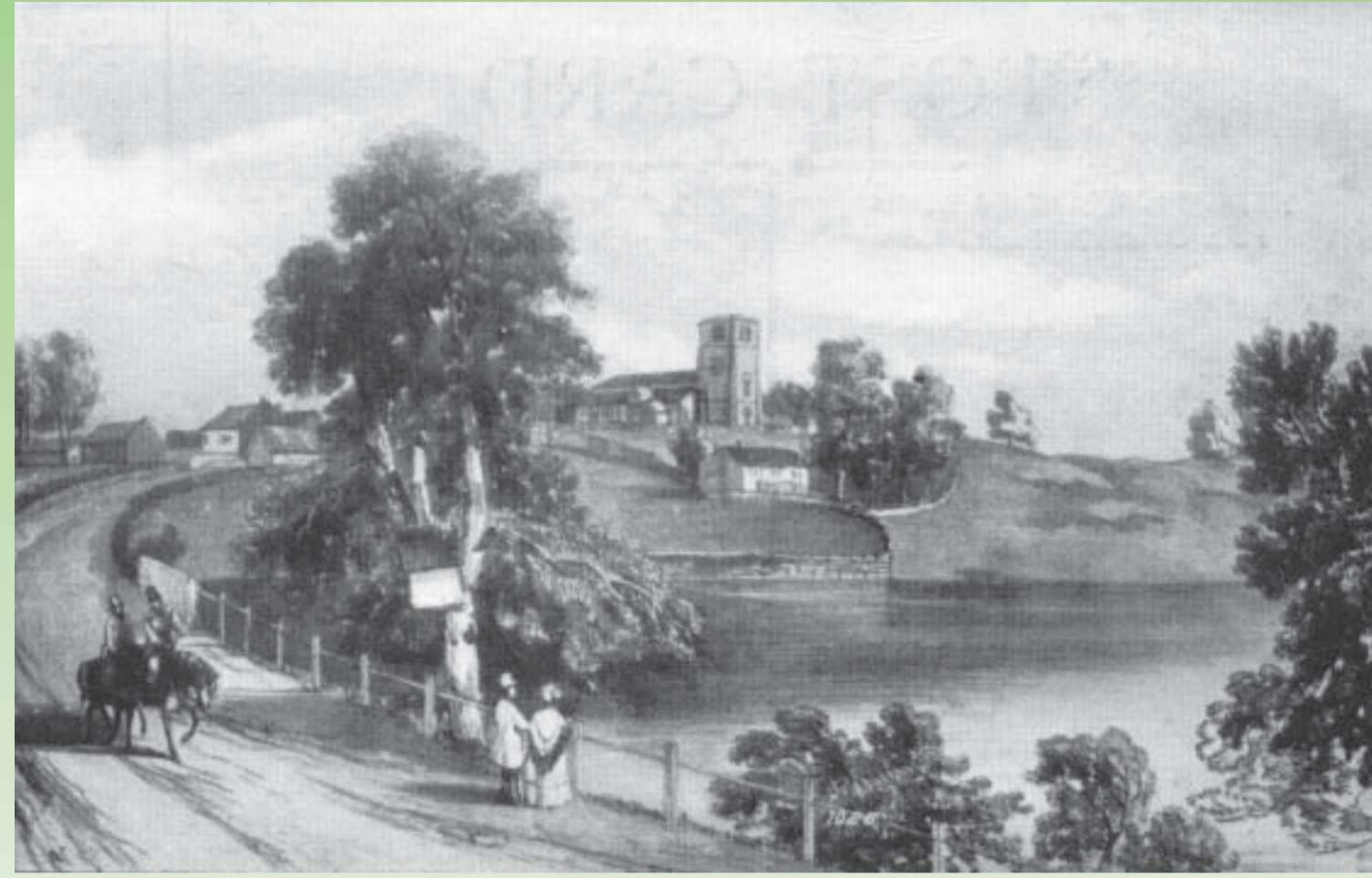


Lymm Dam



A view of Lymm Dam in the 1850's. At this time a school stood below the church. Virtually no visible sign of the school remains, though you may just be able to make out the base of the wall which curves towards the water's edge. The church itself has a different appearance to the present day, the current tower was built in 1890. Notice also the absence of the tall poplars on the horizon which would form a conspicuous part of this view today.

History of Lymm Dam

In the early 19th century, the Warrington and Stockport Turnpike Trust constructed the road which became the present day A56. It seems that even back then there was concern over traffic congestion as local opposition prevented the road from coming through the centre of the village. The Trust then, had to find an alternative and they chose to cross what was then 'a pool and stream' in the valley below St Mary's Church. In order to do this, an earth dam was constructed across the valley in 1824. As a consequence, the lake we now call Lymm Dam was created. A toll bar was situated on the church slope and some locals this section of the road is still sometimes referred to as 'Penny Hill'.



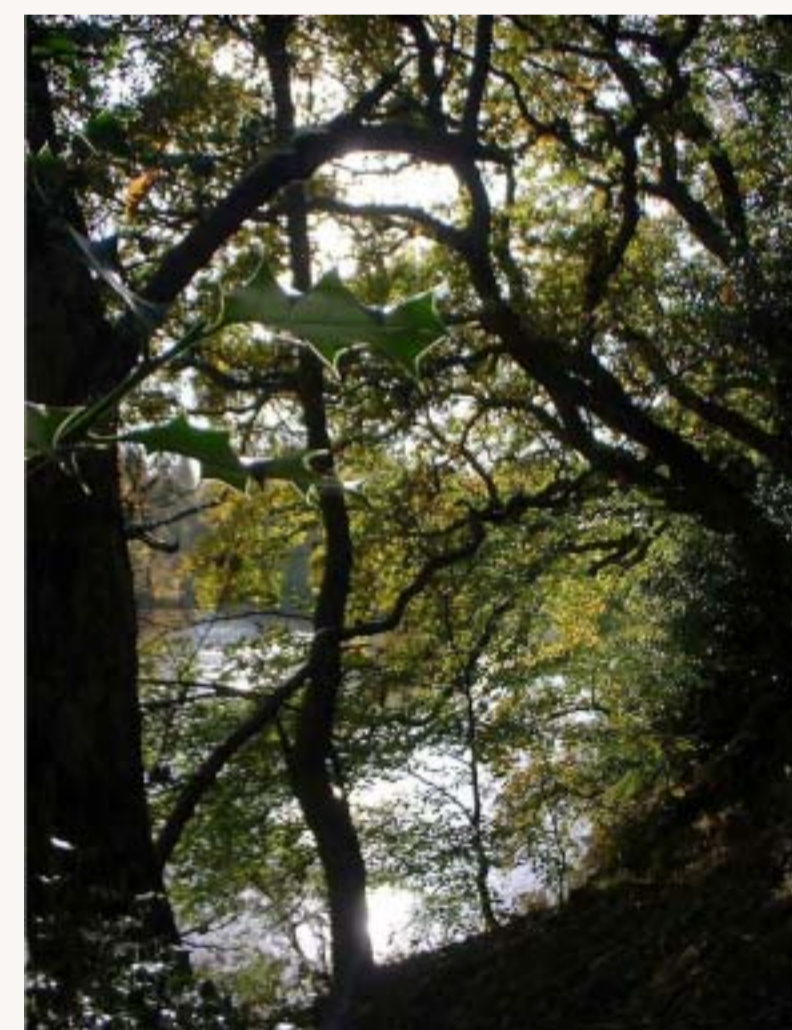
Beechwood, built by Thomas Ridgeway and home of the Dewhurst family for many years. The former entrance to the estate is marked by the archway which still stands on Crouchley Lane.

At the time of Lymm Dam's creation, the area was part of Lymm Hall Estate, which owned much of the village at that time. In 1848, the estate was divided into sections and several were sold off. The area comprising Lymm Dam was bought by Thomas Ridgeway, a local solicitor. Ridgeway built what was described as 'a large opulent manor house' on Crouchley Lane, at the site which is now Lymm RUFC. The house and the estate itself were known as 'Beechwood'. The house was eventually demolished in the 1930s but some remnants of it remain. Lymm RUFC's changing rooms are the old stable block and the wall along the side of the pitch was part of the exercise paddock. Ridgeway lived at Beechwood for some twenty years before selling the estate to George Dewhurst, a Manchester cotton trader.

George Dewhurst was head of a family which figured prominently in Victorian Lymm. Beechwood Estate was the family home until the early 20th century, by which time they had largely withdrawn from life in the village. Eventually the Estate was purchased by William Lever and the legacy of his time at Beechwood is still conspicuous today. Lever is responsible for the tall Lombardy poplar trees which line the bridleway and the roads to the west of the site. He also built the large concrete bridge at the southern end of Lymm Dam. These are what remains of a housing scheme which Lever planned for the area. As it turned out, the houses were not built (more details of this can be found on the information board at the bridge itself) and the manor house was demolished in the 1930s. After the Second World War, the estate passed into local authority ownership, eventually being inherited by Warrington Borough Council with the local government reorganisation of 1974.

Footpath Network and Wider Countryside

From Lymm Dam an extensive network of countryside footpaths can be accessed. Field systems, country roads, and both the Bridgewater Canal and Trans Pennine Trail can all be used to make enjoyable short walks or long days out in the area. For further details of the local rights of way network contact the Rangers or refer to the Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 276.



Lymm Dam's woodland affords a pleasant waterside setting for the visitor.



A view of Baycliffe, the large manor house which stood on the current site of the road of this name. The house, which was the home of the Bounphrey family, was demolished in the 1950's but the wall and doorway alongside the Dam in the photograph still stand.

Enjoying Your Visit

Whether you enjoy walking, bird watching, horse riding, angling or just relaxing in beautiful surroundings, Lymm Dam makes a great place for a day out. Whilst you are enjoying your visit though please remember that Lymm Dam is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (or SINIC) which needs to be treated with care and respect in order to maintain its ecological value. Please make use of the litter bins and take care not to disturb wildlife.

Cyclists

- Please keep to the paths and meadow areas to prevent erosion and damage to plant life.
- Always give way to walkers and give ample warning of your approach and pass with great care (please be aware that walkers cannot always hear you when you approach from behind).

Anglers

- Please do not use barbed hooks or braided line
- Lymm Angling Club only permits the use of keep nets during matches
- Please treat walkers and cyclists with courtesy and leave footpaths clear
- Please take great care when casting. Discarded fishing line caught in trees and undergrowth around the water's edge can cause enormous problems for wildfowl. Please put any line you see left around your peg in the litter bins.

Dog Walkers

- Please keep your animal under control at all times.
- Please don't allow your dog to swim in the lake as this disturbs wildlife and submerged debris can injure your animal.
- Dog fouling is a particularly unpleasant problem. Please help to reduce this problem by cleaning up after your animal and using the dog bins provided. Free poop scoops are available from the Rangers at their base on the Trans Pennine Trail (see map below)

Horse Riders

- Please keep to the permissive bridleway along the eastern edge of the site

Contact Information

The Ranger Service in Lymm operates from a base on the Trans Pennine Trail (see map below)

Postal address: Ranger Centre
Statham Avenue, Lymm
WA13 9NJ

Telephone: 01925 758195

Email: rangers@warrington.gov.uk

Lymm Heritage Trail

Lymm Heritage Trail is a self-guided trail exploring the built and natural heritage of the village. The route is based on the north/south valley which runs through the village centre (comprising Lymm Dam, The Dingle and Slitten Gorge) and two east/west routes – The Bridgewater Canal and the former Warrington to Altrincham Railway (now part of the Trans Pennine Trail).

The full route is 3 1/2 miles but the trail can be walked in shorter sections if desired. The route is waymarked and route maps can be found on each of the eleven information boards along the trail.

