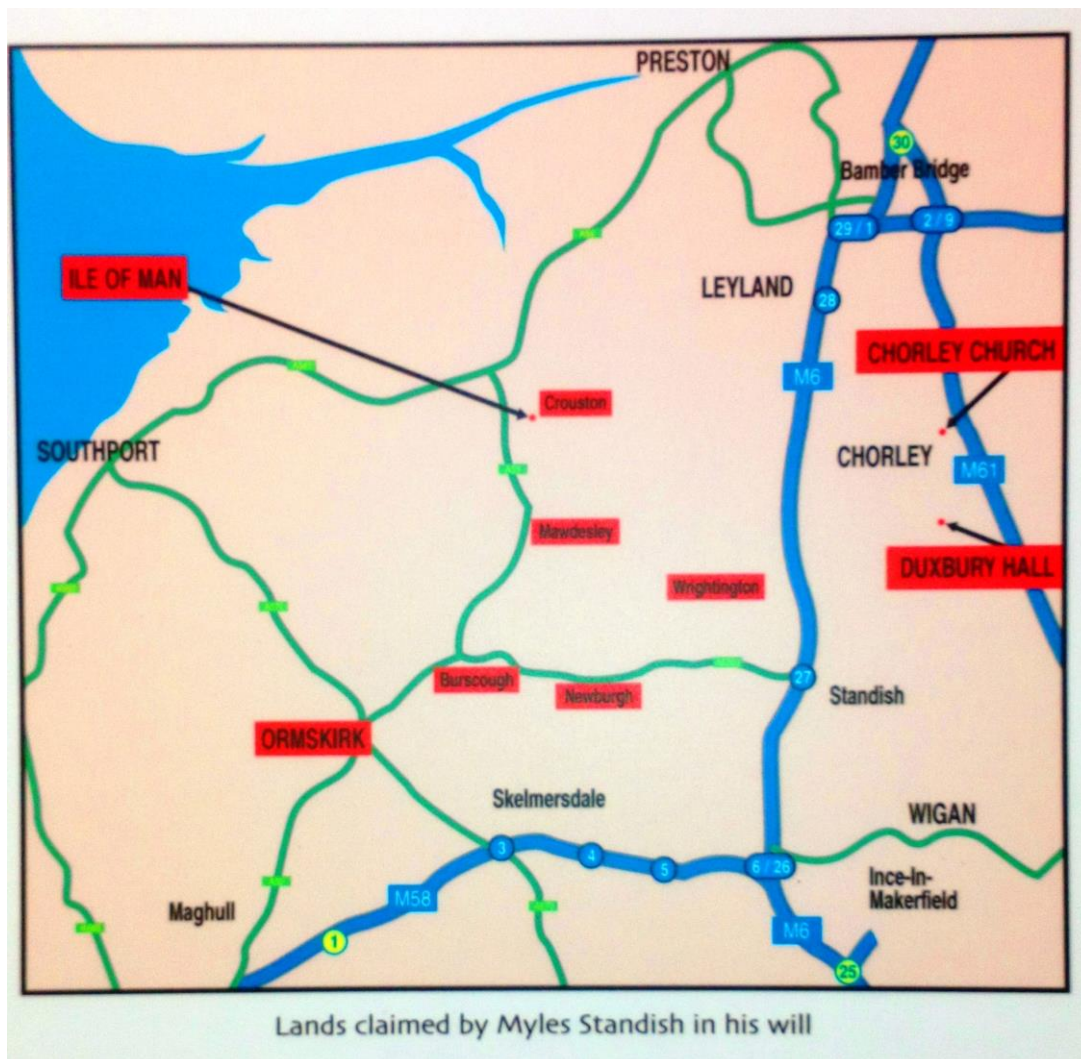


Chorley Celebrates Myles Standish, 1620- 2020 + 1

The Virtual Coach Tour



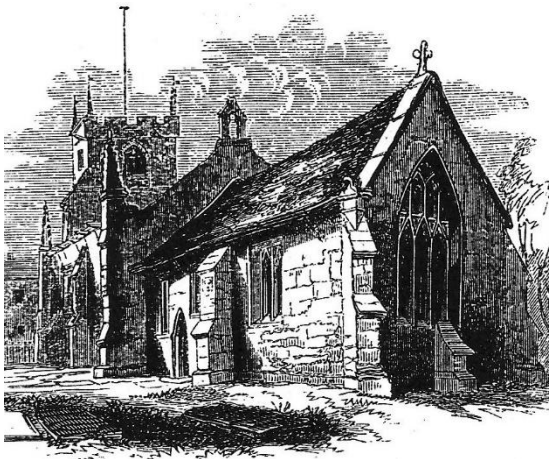
The Myles Standish Working Group hoped to take people on coach tours to sites associated with Myles Standish (c.1583-1656), the military adviser who sailed with the Pilgrim Fathers on the Mayflower in 1620 and who is seen as one of the founding fathers of modern America. The Covid epidemic, covering virtually the whole life of the project, prevented this. However, this short guide will assist future coach parties and any interested individual in visiting the locations linked to Myles.



This project is supported by the National Heritage Lottery Fund

1. **St Laurence's Church, Chorley** (*at the very centre of the Town, at the head of Union Street.*)

Myles Standish named his own farm in America "Duxbury". The Standish Family of Duxbury were associated with the Chorley Church of St Laurence. In the early seventeenth century the Standish Pew was installed; this can now be viewed to the left of the south west porch. The family members of Myles' day are buried in the crypt which is under the old chancel, now the Lady Chapel. Plaques recording the later Standish family can be seen on the walls.



St Laurence's pre 1859, when the aisles were added



The Standish Pew with Fr. B. Standish

After visiting the church take the A6 in a southerly direction, for a mile and a half. Turn right at the lights by Fredericks' Ice Cream shop and next right into Duxbury Hall Road. Continue on the route when it becomes a narrow drive to the Duxbury Golf Course.

2. **The Duxbury Hall** of the Standishes, from 1623, stood where the lawns to the east of the modern golf clubhouse are. Myles may have known of the Hall or, just possibly, belonged to this branch of the family. The barn (now Gilling Dod Architects) dates from about 1600 and the stable and coach house from about 1780. You can learn more about the Hall and the estate by following the trails produced by the Chorley Historical and Archaeological Society.



the Hall site

Rear of the Hall site- it was demolished in 1956



The Hall c. 1890

3. *Retrace your route to the A6, turning north towards Chorley at the traffic lights by Fredericks'. At the next traffic lights turn left onto **Myles Standish Way**, so named after a research project by the St Laurence's History Society 2004-7. The Society honoured the link to Myles, without claiming to be certain he came from Chorley or Duxbury.*

Follow this ring road until you meet the B5251 at the fourth roundabout. Turn left here towards Coppull. Almost immediately a narrow road on the left signposted for Chorley Council Refuse Depository leads past Lower Burgh Hall, the seat of another local branch of the Standish Family and partly dating to the early seventeenth century when Myles was alive. (The road is not suitable for coaches or large parties and the Hall itself is private property.)

4. Lower Burgh Hall



Lower Burgh Hall

Continue through Coppull until you meet the A49 Preston to Wigan Road. Turn left into Standish. Just left of the central crossroads and traffic lights in Standish you will see St Wilfrid's Standish. This was built in 1586 and Myles may have known the church. Its modern east window includes him in the bottom right corner. In fact he claimed to be the of the main Standish Family branch, a veritable Standish of Standish.

*I give unto my son & heire aparent Allexander Standish
all my lands as heire apparent by lawfull Decent in
Ormistick Borsconge Wrightington Maudsley Newburrow
Crawston and the Ile of man and given to me as right
heire by lawful Decent but Surrptuously Detained from
mee my great G(ran)dfather being a 2cond or younger
brother from the house of Standish of Standish March the
7th 1655 by mee Myles Standish*

5. **St Wilfrid's Standish**

For the present, enjoy a visit to this very fine church.



Follow M6 signs along the A5209 from the Standish crossroads. After half a mile turn left into Arbour Lane. At the end of the houses a cart track is walkable to the site of Standish Hall, many times rebuilt and with now no longer standing. However this is another family home Myles may have known, if indeed he was a Standish of Standish.

6. Standish Hall



The eighteenth century Standish Hall

A close study of Myles' will on the previous page will mention lands in Newburgh, Ormskirk, Wrightington, Croston and the Isle of Man. These are places to the east of Standish and this route takes you close to several of them as it seeks out Croston.

Return to your transport and continue along Arbour Lane which soon rejoins the A5209. Turn left on to it and then soon turn right towards Junction 27 of the M6. Do not use the M6 but continue on the A5209 to Burscough (about 9 miles). Here turn right on the A59 for about 7 miles. After passing through Rufford, take the A581 towards Croston. After a mile the Isle of Man farm appears at a bend on the left. It is possible to park on or just off the road here but take great care and remember the farm itself is private property.



7. The Isle of Man Farm

Glancing around you will see that the farm could form something of an island above the surrounding country. Indeed the fields have frequently flooded. So, could this be the Isle of Man that Myles claimed in his will? If he came from this branch of the Standishes he would be a Standish of Ormskirk.

However, most visitors will know of a much bigger island of Man, as a real island in the Irish Sea. It so happens that a branch of the Standish Family of Ormskirk, some generations before Myles was born, settled **at Ellanbane in the island of Man**. Their family tree contains reference to a son with no recorded name, which for a long time was believed to be a Myles- sized gap. Many Americans believed that Myles did indeed come from the island of Man. However there is no evidence of any member of this branch of Standishes with the name Myles and this theory is not proven.



Ellanbane, Isle of Man

Follow the A581 through Croston and back to Chorley, about 10 miles distant.

You might wish to visit Chorley Town centre or Astley Hall. The Hall grounds contain the Mayflower Tree in the Walled Garden, planted on the fourth centenary of the sailing of the Mayflower. There are also trees planted at the Speakers' Conference of 2021. And, of course, a fine recently restored seventeenth century house to visit.

The whole tour, which is around 35 miles long, could take you an easy day or a more hasty half day. It is worth following up the story of Myles Standish in the "Chorley Celebrates Myles Standish 1620-2020" booklet available in the shop at Astley Hall or in the fine set of books in the Myles Standish Collection at Chorley Library. The website www.mylesstandish.info contains a wealth of material on Myles. The book "Mayflower" by Nathaniel Philbrick is based on thorough research about Myles and the Pilgrim Fathers in America.

You will realise that no-one knows for certain where Myles hailed from. He claimed to be a Standish of Standish, yet he claimed lands belonging to the Standishes of Ormskirk. Their family tree but also that of the Standishes of Lower Burgh contained a great grandson of a second or younger son of a Standish of Standish- another reference in the Will. Myles chose the name Duxbury for his own settlement. But the name "Myles" does not appear in any of the family trees, although DNA evidence to date suggests he came from Lancashire. Truly a man of some mystery!