

Sugnall's History



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The Badger's land was a small part of this, but was to gain great importance under Thomas's son, John. It was a wonderful situation for a house on a hill overlooking Copmere. The old hall at Horseley was inadequate and so he built a new hall here at Sugnall. John purchased one of the very first baronetcies in 1611 and became a major figure in Staffordshire society.

There are no pictures of his house, but it is easy to imagine it being in the Jacobean style. Sir John (as he became) also flattened the top of the hill for formal gardens. The lower area, where the walled kitchen garden was to be built, was used for orchards. The chain of pools towards Copmere were dammed by Sir John.

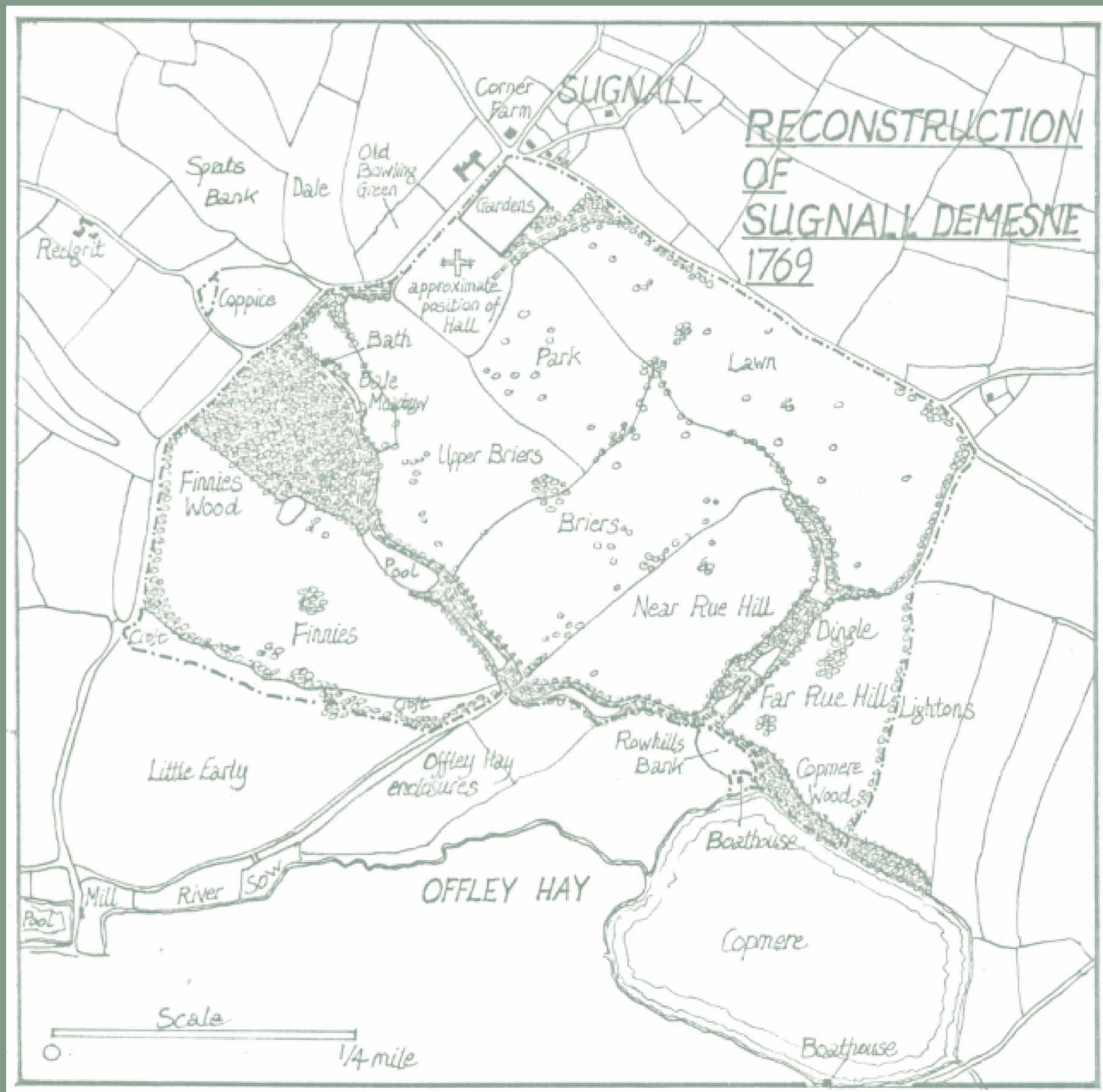
1600s-1700s

The third baronet, another Thomas, was probably the builder of the old hall's kitchens (around 1680) which survive to this day. Sir Thomas's heir was his granddaughter, Arabella, who in 1730 married John Campbell, the son of a Scottish Earl, and who was known by the courtesy title of Lord Glenorchy

Glenorchy was a great improver of the estate, rearranging fields and planting. He decided to establish a walled kitchen garden in the dip between the old hall and the main road. In 1737 brickmakers set themselves up not far away and supplied over 250,000 bricks. He purchased plants and seeds from a London nurseryman and by the summer of 1738 he had a fully functioning kitchen garden. The walls remain completely intact after over 280 years in remarkably good condition, and two of the original doorways remain.

Another of Glenorchy's improvements was the planting of woods from the hall to Copmere, where he built a Gothic boathouse. These woods were a long thin strip, wide enough for a ride from which he could observe what was going on in his fields. This type of layout was called an ornamented farm, or ferme ornée.





Arabella died in 1754, thus ending the link between the Pershalls and Sugnall, When Glenorchy was an old man he decided to sell it. The demesne (i.e. land in hand) was only 200 acres, but this was sold to John Turton soon after 1770. The walled kitchen garden had had no glasshouses, and Turton decided not just to rebuild the hall, but also to build a vinery with backsheds.



The Sugnall Estate took the kitchen garden back in hand from the start of 2006 and spent that year sorting out the paths, electricity and water, ready for planting 200 apple and pear trees in the spring of 2007. The walled garden started having weddings in 2014 and in 2015 the tea room and weddings business were let to Old School Wines of Tittensor. In addition to weddings, the garden hosts plant fairs and other events, and even held a jazz and blues festival in 2016.

That year it was decided to renovate the present hall for weekend stays, which involved a new wood-pellet boiler providing hot water and central heating for the hall and several other properties.

Nine new bathrooms had to be created, and eleven bedrooms refurbished, so that house parties of up to 28 could be catered for. The reception rooms remained in their late Victorian and Edwardian form, so the house was once more capable of hosting traditional house parties.