

as many as sixteen. All the birds were wild round the fields and in the hedges and on Saturdays we girls would have such fun going round with my father and Mr Meadows looking up the eggs. Mr Meadows would give us a few pence for the nests we found.

My father used to have a lot of the younger pheasants to look after. You know the gateway on the ride as you go down to Water Wood? There were no trees there then and up at the top there used to be a great big shed with all the meal and the crumbs.

Outside there were two big coppers on a fireplace with a bar across. There would be a dozen or so rabbits stewing away and in the big



Another lost country house. The rear elevation of Sudbourne Hall, designed by James Wyatt. It was demolished after World War II.

shed there was a trestle all the length of it. When the rabbits were cooked, we girls would strip all the meat off and that would go through the huge mincer in there. We would have our sleeves rolled up mixing it with the crumbs and



Alfred Decaen: detail of a grand al fresco luncheon in the Park; the table is laid with silver and Richard Wallace watches as his butler carves a Strasbourg pie and a keeper tends his dog.

The sporting heyday of the Sudbourne estate was in the 19th century. Its absentee owners, the 3rd and 4th Marquesses of Hertford and the latter's illegitimate son, Sir Richard Wallace, held large shooting parties there. These are commemorated in a series of paintings in Orford Town Hall. The polygonal game-larder is now a house. It held some 5,000 birds on steel racks with facilities below for dressing them. Wallace's 23 keepers wore green velvet livery.