

## PREFACE

This essay was written primarily for members of my family, both current and future, upon reaching an age to understand the vicissitudes of human existence. If others are interested in this record of life in rural England and particularly the Second World War period, they are very welcome. It is a recollected retrospective from the view point of a child growing up in the closeted countryside and atmosphere of an English country estate and experiences during the Second World War, from the standpoint of a young boy and-teenager.

To understand the configuration of West Dean House, Park and Estate, it may be necessary for an explanation to readers, who are unfamiliar with the way the British country estates are owned, established, organized and operated. They are still rather medieval and feudal in concept.

An estate can range from a few thousand acres to over one hundred thousand acres; like the estate of the Prince of Wales, called the Duchy of Cornwall. Commonly a family would have owned their estate for generations and it is often headed by a Duke or Lord or other Landed Gentry.

The estate usually includes a very large house, mansion or castle, where the owners live. It is financially supported by farms rented to tenant farmers and rented houses that are not used as rent-free workers homes.

In the case of West Dean House, Park and Estate; the owner's main house had over three hundred rooms, about four hundred windows and a floor area of about sixty five thousand square feet. Contrast this floor area with the Duke of Marlborough's Blenheim Palace; which is reputed to have a floor area of three hundred thousand square feet

