



## ARCHIVE UPDATE No 30

### POTTERIES



This magnificent photograph was discovered during a recent visit to the Local History Unit at Bruce Castle Museum and depicts a posed group of the employees at Samuel South & Sons. A hand written note on the back suggests that the date is circa 1880. The date is wrong, however, because the South pottery did not move to White Hart Lane until 1886. Samuel South(2), born 1876, standing to the right of the picture, looks in his late teens/early twenties. A more accurate estimate of the likely date would be circa 1895.

There are 81 people in the photograph posed in front of the outside kilns the location of which can be identified from the Ordnance Survey extract included in Update No.5.

## SOUTH LORRY



A chance meeting with another researcher at Bruce Castle has resulted in receiving a copy of a photograph that appeared in a commercial vehicle magazine. The photograph is of a Guy lorry, probably late 1920s, owned by Samuel South & Sons.

## SOUTH WEBSITE

There have been over 800 “hits” recorded on the South website and since the last report in Update 29 contact has been made with the following:

Tim Sankey – Tim is engaged on a Sankey One Name Study <[www.sankey.demon.co.uk](http://www.sankey.demon.co.uk)> and has provided, presently unsupported, information about Richard Sankey who occupied the site in White Hart Lane before Samuel South – “.....folk-lore has it that Richard was adopted by two maiden Sankey sisters living in Church Gresley. He may well have been apprenticed with my ancestor Matthew [1815 (abt)-1866], or some of his sons who were also potters. In appreciation for the start in life they gave him Richard adopted the surname Sankey and later moved to Nottingham to start his own business.”

John M South of USA who is researching the South name generally.

Roger Davis – Roger’s grandfather, James Arthur Harrison (1883-1969), was a General Smith and Farrier with three forges in the Brentford area and between the wars travelled to such places as Oxford, Southend and Tottenham to shoe the Atora bullocks (Update No. 17). It is possible that he visited the South pottery for this purpose.

Alan Smith – Alan is interested in the Band of Hope poster (Update No 7) – his great-great grandfather married Caroline Edwards, both were non-conformists, and “.....legend has it Caroline Edwards had two brothers who went to America and founded the Band of Hope there.”

## NEW RIVER

The following article appeared in the Summer edition of the New River News.

### **Clay Hill and the New River A Family Connection**

In 1805, Sir William Curtis (1752-1829), a prominent parliamentarian and businessman of his day, acquired the Combined Manors of Tottenham (Bruces, Pembrokes, Dawbines and Mockings). The manorial estates included land and property at Clay Hill (later Devonshire Hill Lane), North Tottenham through which a section of the Tottenham loop of the New River flowed. The loop was abandoned in 1852 following the construction of the tunnel between Middleton Road and Wightman Road.

On the death of Sir William, the estates passed in trust to his descendants and by 1881 the beneficiary was his great great grandson, Sir William Michael Curtis (1859-1916). In that year this Sir William enfranchised the Clay Hill land of some 35 acres and sold the freehold interest for £1,178 to the tenant Frederick Alderton. Alderton, who had previously paid £7,500 for the copyhold tenure earlier in 1881, had acted on behalf of a John Edward Ford to whom the enfranchised land was immediately conveyed including:

**"Firstly all that piece or parcel of land situate at Tottenham in the County of Middlesex containing by admeasurement one rood five perches forming a portion of the abandoned channel or bed of the New River and bounded on each side by the lands hereafter described and intended to be hereby granted Together with pipes fences and bridge in or upon the said piece or parcel of land"**

The parcels of land passed through several owners and in 1912 my great-grandfather, Samuel South(1) (1853-1919), purchased River House at Clay Hill. There seems to have been a misconveyance since the 1881 enfranchisement because in 1915 Samuel(1) found it necessary to separately purchase the section of the abandoned loop which ran through the grounds of River House for the sum of £10. Samuel South(1) was the owner of Samuel South & Sons, flower pot manufacturers supplying the Lea Valley Nursery Industry. He had moved the business to White Hart Lane, some half mile from River House, in 1886 where it traded until closure in 1960.

River House was occupied by tenants until Samuel's eldest son, Samuel South(2), moved in with his family in 1917. His youngest child (my mother) was born at River House in 1918. At that time the area continued to retain a rural environment which was eroded by public and private housing developments in the late 1920's/early 1930's. Fred Fisk in his "History of the Ancient Parish Of Tottenham" 1923 (Second Series) provides the following description:

"Bending round to the left [*Devonshire Hill Lane*] we are quite in the country; here is River House, and a part of the New River.....The river used to run across the road, under a wooden bridge into the grounds of River House; the latter part, and the termination, of this river can be seen from the narrow pathway [*Ash Path*], a little further on, leading to White Hart Lane."

This section of the abandoned New River remained in water when Samuel(2) arrived at River House. His elder children recall watching the wildlife attracted by the river and children brought into the house to dry out after they had fallen in catching tadpoles! However, the channel was gradually filled in with spoil from the White Hart Lane pottery as the claypit was enlarged and became part of the kitchen garden.

River House was a rambling house. The wing was formerly a separate cottage that immediately abutted the bank of the New River and, possibly, indicating that it existed before the construction of the loop. The property was demolished in 1936 and a smaller, more manageable house, New River House, 139, Devonshire Hill Lane, Tottenham, N17 was erected on the site.

The family interest in the property ceased in 1970. Today the route of this section of the abandoned loop can be readily identified; through the alleyway connecting Empire Avenue with Devonshire Hill Lane; past the front garden wall of 139, Devonshire Hill Lane and between that property and 141, the first in a terrace of houses originally known as River Terrace when erected circa 1930.

In the late 1890's, Samuel(1) and his family lived at the nearby Devonshire Hill Lane farm leased from the New River Company. Another family connection!

KLB August 2001