

## Southern Green Farm

Mr Alfred Thomas Rowley bought Southern Green Farm in 1936. He owned and ran his own building firm in Tottenham, N. London. The farm was a family home and running the farm more of a secondary interest in which he took great pleasure.



AT Rowley construction site, London.

In WWII Alf Rowley was the Captain of the Rushden Home Guard, aid by his farm manager Sergeant Harry Phillips. The farmyard at Southern Green was used as the parade ground and Edward Bygrave though under age was permitted to join the Home Guard. All the local Home Guard groups in the surrounding area engaged in military exercises, training for invasion and enemy watch. Edward Bygrave recalls the only one in their Home Guard group who had any really military training was Mr Harry Phillips, he had served in the first war and suffered in the gas attacks on the front.

One story I was told, was that Southern Green Farm became the centre of one of the hottest debates at the highest levels of command in WWII.

On buying the farm in 1936 my grandfather set about repairs. One of which was to improve the farm yards which he did by getting them concreted. WWII began in 1939 and by 1940 Southern Green Farm was a serious problem both militarily and politically. The farm had inadvertently become a key navigational way marker for the German bombers on there way to and from the northern cities. These German bombing raids were conducted on clear and mostly moonlit nights. At this date they had to navigate by the stars or land features.

My grandfather only heard about this after the war.

Apparently the concreted yards acted like a bright beacon on the moonlit nights standing out clearly against the dark surrounding countryside. The debate had been whether to have the concreted yards tarred over. In the end it was decided to leave them as they were because that way the RAF would always know where they could intercept the majority of incoming and retreating German bombers.

On the death of Alfred Rowley the farm was sold in 1967.



Alfred T Rowley & Dorothy Rowley [nee Ayres] & their daughter Pamela.



1967 Southern Green Farm



1965 Pond in front of the Milking Parlor (to the right – not in the image) & Barns Southern Green Farm.



1965 Nigel agricultural student & Barns Southern Green Farm.



1965 Barns Southern Green Farm.



1967 Southern Green Farm



1965 Sun Insurance plaque on the front of Southern Green Farm.



1967 Southern Green Farm



1967 Dining room Southern Green Farm



1967 Living room Southern Green Farm. The wooden cabinet in the middle of the room was a television set, on which Alfred Rowley loved watching the horse racing, especially if his bet won.



1967 Main bedroom Southern Green Farm. The white door in the left- hand corner was a lift from the living room. Alf Rowley had it installed after his wife Dorothy suffered a stroke.



1967 Yard behind the milking parlor from the left to the middle & calving stables.



1965 Cows waiting in the Milking Parlor Yard before going back out onto the fields Southern Green Farm.



1965 The concreted yards, Milking Parlor & Barns at Southern Green Farm. The Rushden Home Guard parades were held here behind the farmhouse.



1969 Mrs Phillips the wife of Harry Phillips Farm Manager.  
She worked at the farm as House Keeper and Cook.



1965 Alfred T Rowley in the garden at Southern Green Farm.