FIRST FINANCIAL BANCORP /OH/
Form 4
January 22, 2003

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person
   Pontius, Stanley N.
   8 Churchill Street
   Hamilton, OH 45013
2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol
   First Financial Bancorp (FFBC)
3. IRS or Social Security Number of Reporting Person (Voluntary)
   308-48-1245
4. Statement for Month/Day/Year
   01/17/2003
5. If Amendment, Date of Original (Month/Day/Year)
6. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer (Check all applicable)
   (X) Director ( ) 10% Owner
   (X) Officer (give title below) ( ) Other (specify below)
   Executive Officer
7. Individual or Joint/Group Filing (Check Applicable Line)
   (X) Form filed by One Reporting Person
   ( ) Form filed by More than One Reporting Person

TABLE I -- Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

1. Title of Security	2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year)	2A. Execution Date (Month/Day/Year)	3. Transaction Code		4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D)			5. Amo Securi Benefi Owned Follow Report Transa
			Code	V	Amount	A/D	Price	
Common Stock	01/17/2003		J		7180	A	$0.0000	65129