

History of Tarrant Wharf

To start with, here is a section of the Ordnance Survey 25 inch to 1 mile map of Arundel published in 1876 which shows the site of Tarrant Wharf and the area around it. The only buildings there then were Nos. 83 and 85 (then one house called Troy House), and to the east of it the Co-op shop which in the 1980s sold clothing and shoes. Between these two ran a lane down to the river where the Co-op coal store and coal wharf was situated. The western boundary of the site was marked by the old Gunpowder Store, now converted into two houses and part of Surrey Wharf. The rest of the site was an orchard and garden.

Arun Street and Tarrant Street appear on maps of Arundel going back into the 18th century - Troy House is on the 1785 Paving Map of Arundel - and Arun Street gave access to the row of little houses on River Road which lay on the river to the east, and beyond which was the Shipyard. The front half of Troy House, on the street, is 18th century, the rear half was added in the 19th century.

The Co-op shop was demolished by the developer, Ian Cheal, when he bought the site in the early 1980s; he intended to demolish Troy House also but it was listed Grade II so he was unable to do so,

Before starting to build there was an extensive archaeological investigation of the site. The archaeologists, led by David Rudling, lived in the basement of Troy House and used a large shed in the old gardens at the back to store their finds, which included many Roman tesserae, a section of painted Roman plaster, a section of a Roman hard by the river and a medieval well beside Tarrant Street to the west of Troy House (this latter find was not stored in the shed!). I enclose a photograph given to me by Rupert Brooks of the Museum Society showing the dig, Troy House and the houses on the north side of Tarrant Street. I am told by John Mills, Assistant Archaeological Officer to the W.S.C.C., that in 1896 the remains of a Roman villa were found by workmen digging a drain at the western end of Tarrant Street, and that the existence of this villa had been suspected for some time since a fragment of pavement was found many years earlier in Mrs. Emberson's garden (Sussex Archaeological Collections 40, 283 for 1896).

Troy House was so called because of Mrs Ellen Emberson, who lived there from at least 1862; she was the widow of Professor William Emberson, a Professor of Music, and lived there until her death in 1899. She was a friend of the Schliemanns, excavators of Troy in the 1870s, and had from them many relics from there exhibited in her drawingroom - hence the name of the house. I have from John Mills a photocopy of the West Sussex Gazette published at the time of Mrs. Emberson's funeral with a detailed description of all this which you are welcome to see if you wish, but it is a bit long-winded for your history. After Mrs. Emberson's death Troy House was lived in by Dr. Pearson in 1912 and at this time was enlarged by the addition of a waiting room and surgery on the eastern end of the house, which was entered from the street by a door in the eastern wall. From 1928

- until 1938 Dr. Maurice Townshend and his family lived there. Dr. Townshend served in World War II and died in India in (I think) 1945 (he is on the War Memorial in Arundel), but at that time his family were living in Sefton House in the High Street and Mr and Mrs. Baker were in Troy House, then No. 63 Tarrant Street. By 1946 the house was divided into two as it now is, and by 1954 it had become Nos. 83 and 85, as now. Mrs Baker died some years before Mr. Cheal bought the house for, as he thought, re-development in about 1980.