

Rossetti and Birchington

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The Rossetti Bungalow was sold on Monday 18th August 1952 for £4,500.

“In 1882 Rossetti was given the use of the bungalow by an architect. His health was failing and his friends thought that it might be improved if he moved to the seaside.”

Hall Caine writing in his book, “Recollections of Rossetti” says, “Birchington was not a holiday resort in those days ----- It was merely an old fashioned Kentish settlement on the edge of a hungry coast.

“The village stood back from the shore the better part of a mile, consisted of a quaint old Gothic church – grey and green – a winding street, a few shops, and a windmill, while the bungalow we were going to live in stood alone on the bare fields to the seaward side.”

He goes on “The land around was flat and featureless, unbroken by a tree or a bush, and one felt as if the great sea in front, rising up to the horizon in a vast round hill, dominated and threatened to submerge it.”

Hall Caine also mentions that a telescope was installed at the bungalow, and through it they could see Reculver. It is now impossible to do this because houses have been built round the bungalow.

The house was bought by Mr. F. Osbourne O’Hagen the millionaire shortly after Rossetti died. Mr. O’Hagen changed the name from Cliffside to Rossetti in about 1890.

Described as a Napoleon of finance Mr. O’Hagen was a power in the City from 1869 to 1924. Mr. O’Hagen made some alterations but the actual bungalow remained very much the same.

To enter the drawing room – Rossetti’s studio – is to enter another world. The room is furnished with beautiful carpets and tapestries worth hundreds of pounds. There are valuable paintings, bronzes and priceless works of art. After Mr. O’Hagen died in 1930 his daughter Miss Agnes Greenwood O’Hagen lived in the bungalow until her death early in 1952.



Rossetti Bungalow – 1952, for sale brochure