

HOME OF A WORLD FAMED PAINTER

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An estate of town houses which Margate Town Council was told last week is to go up at Birchington, will provide the new owners with a link with a world-famous artist.

The land to be developed is bordered by Beach Avenue, Shakespeare Road and Rossetti Road and I am reminded this week that it was in a bungalow on this site that Dante Gabriel Rossetti died in 1882.

The ailing painter had left his studio in Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, in January that year, and stayed at the bungalow as a guest of novelist Hall Caine.

Unfortunately the Birchington air was not caught in time to restore his health, for he died on the 9th April 1882. His grave is just outside the door of Birchington Parish Church, the cross having been designed by his friend Ford Madox Brown.

Alderman J. H. M. Thomas, who made the announcement to the council about the plan for town houses on the site, conducted an auction in the bungalow, which was wooden, with an asphalt roof, in 1952. The premises fetched £4,500 and the contents were auctioned later.

It contained six bedrooms and a lounge / dining-room. There was also a room designed as an Eastern-style chapel, and signs that part of the lounge may have been used for painting. The bungalow was pulled down about five years ago (1961).