

THEY WERE THE LAST OCCUPIERS OF THE ROSSETTI BUNGALOW

[Article written by a reporter for the Isle of Thanet Gazette : 25 Feb. 1966]

My note and photograph last week about **Rossetti Bungalow** in Birchington – where the world-famous painter died in 1882 – brings a letter from Mr A. H. Tregear, of Ellsmere, Burlington Gardens, Westbrook, who tells me that he and his wife were the final occupiers of the site that is now to be developed with an estate of ‘town houses’.

Mr and Mrs Tregear lived at Rossetti Bungalow from late 1958 to December 1961, when the site was sold for building. Mr Tregear says that Rossetti Bungalow, which was built about 1870, was divided by partitions into three bungalows, numbered 1 to 3 for postal purposes.

No: 1, the largest, consisted of three bedrooms (the walls of which were covered with rich tapestries), a very large, picturesque lounge with a huge red brick fireplace, a library, a large kitchen and a bathroom and toilet.

No: 2 also had three bedrooms, a large lounge with a beautiful mosaic fireplace and a bathroom and toilet.

No: 3 bungalow, which was occupied by my wife and me, and previously used as servants’ quarters, contained three bedrooms, a large lounge with an ornamental fireplace and a bathroom and toilet. Almost the whole of Rossetti Bungalow was constructed of picturesque oak panelling and beading, with parquet flooring.

“A large framed certificate, which hung in the main hall, denoted that, during the 1914-18 War, the bungalow was used as a Red Cross Hospital for wounded servicemen. In addition, an air-raid shelter 65 feet deep, had been suitably constructed under the whole length of the grounds, from Rossetti Road to Beach Avenue, to accommodate about 100 stretcher cases. I took great pleasure, during my tenancy at Rossetti, in conducting numerous visitors down and through the shelter.

“The large garage in the grounds was constructed to house two horses and a carriage. In fact, harness and carriage wheels were found by me in the spacious loft (fitted as a bedroom) over the garage.

“One final point of interest is that, during the occupation of Manston Aerodrome by the U.S.A.F. (in World War 2), Bungalows 1 and 2 were occupied by the American C. O. and his Aide-de-camp.”