

*We all have something that becomes our touchstone. We all have that mythical, proverbial rock or stump that we must return to for more of what makes us whatever we are or whatever we wish we are or whatever we hope we are perceived as being. We all maintain that search. Or, we rekindle our searches.*

*For me, that search for those moments of rekindling comes through recollections--one of those recollections springs from my memory of the house where I spent the first 20 years of my life.*

### *Home, the Big Red House*

*by Herman Hugh Morris Gay*

*Big red house!*

*In wonder, we look upon you now. You tell our family's story. Your rooms whisper  
Of love, joy, longings, hopes And disappointments.*

*Big red house:*

*Our sanctuary of peace, of calm;  
Our carnival of laughter, of tears; Our cocoon of growth, of change. Our refuge, after  
daily wars  
Against enemies of gardens, corn, cotton, and tobacco.*

*Big red house !*

*You met those who first came: and theirs you first became.  
Bob's and Lillie's, and George's, Lou's, Erma Dell's, Rob's and Dave's. And all others;  
doubtless, you know us by name.*

*Big red house!*

*To us divine, once red, Now browned by time.  
Though three of your first are gone, You stand, still.  
No world monument,  
A single mark on the slate of time.*

*Big red house!*

*In us, you reside  
In us, you always live.*