

TAKE HEART

A Conversation in Poetry

*Edited & Introduced by Wesley McNair,
Maine Poet Laureate*

Edwin Arlington Robinson is one of Maine's most famous poets, and this week's poem is perhaps America's best-known villanelle. Some biographers have speculated that the subject of the poem is the Robinson house in Gardiner, following the death of the poet's mother and father and the decline of the family fortunes.

The House on the Hill

by Edwin Arlington Robinson

They are all gone away,
The House is shut and still,
There is nothing more to say.

Through broken walls and gray
The winds blow bleak and shrill:
They are all gone away.

Nor is there one to-day
To speak them good or ill:
There is nothing more to say.

Why is it then we stray
Around the sunken sill?
They are all gone away,

And our poor fancy-play
For them is wasted skill:
There is nothing more to say.

There is ruin and decay
In the House on the Hill:
They are all gone away,
There is nothing more to say.

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