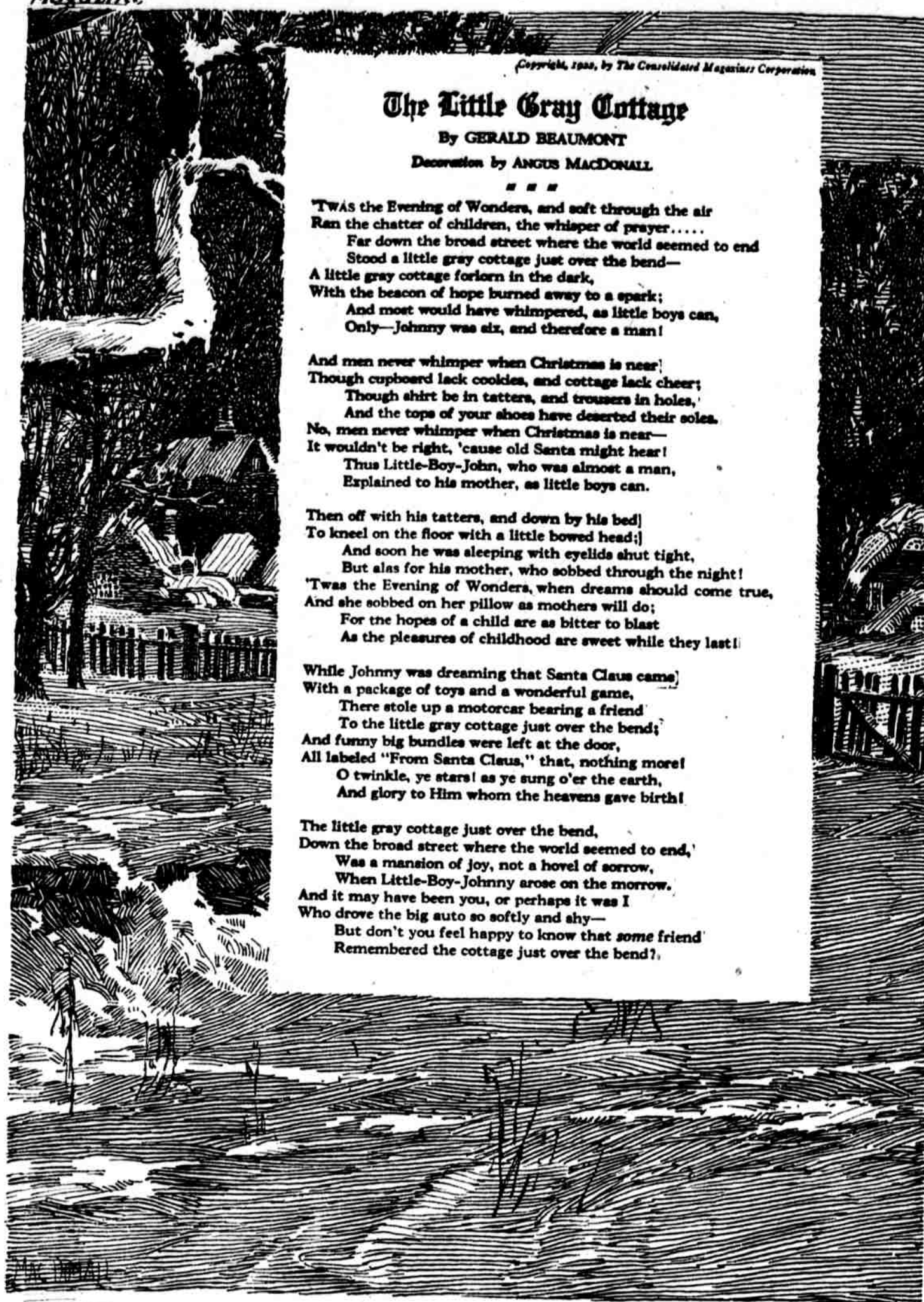
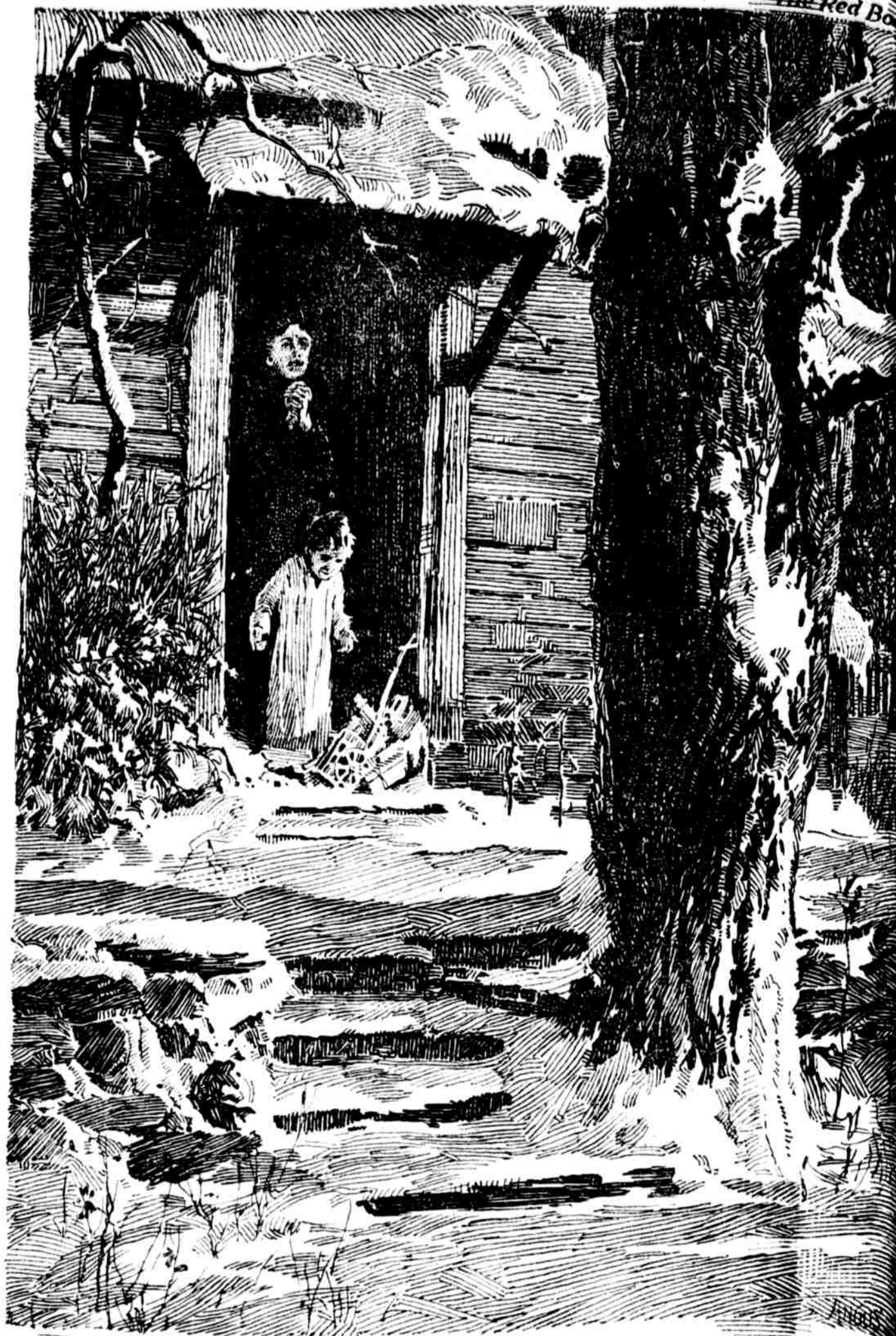


Dedicated to the Spirit of Christmas



The Little Gray Cottage

By GERALD BEAUMONT

Decorated by ANGUS MACDONALD

'Twas the Evening of Wonders, and soft through the air
 Ran the chatter of children, the whisper of prayer
 Far down the broad street where the world seemed to end
 Stood a little gray cottage just over the bend—
 A little gray cottage forlorn in the dark,
 With the beacon of hope burned away to a spark;
 And most would have whimpered, as little boys can,
 Only—Johnny was six, and therefore a man!

And men never whimper when Christmas is near;
 Though cupboard lack cookies, and cottage lack cheer;
 Though shirt be in tatters, and trousers in holes,
 And the tops of your shoes have deserted their soles.
 No, men never whimper when Christmas is near—
 It wouldn't be right, 'cause old Santa might hear!
 Thus Little-Boy-John, who was almost a man,
 Explained to his mother, as little boys can.

Then off with his tatters, and down by his bed!
 To kneel on the floor with a little bowed head;
 And soon he was sleeping with eyelids shut tight,
 But alas for his mother, who sobbed through the night!
 'Twas the Evening of Wonders, when dreams should come true,
 And she sobbed on her pillow as mothers will do;
 For the hopes of a child are as bitter to blast
 As the pleasures of childhood are sweet while they last!

While Johnny was dreaming that Santa Claus came,
 With a package of toys and a wonderful game,
 There stole up a motorcar bearing a friend
 To the little gray cottage just over the bend;
 And funny big bundles were left at the door,
 All labeled "From Santa Claus," that, nothing more!
 O twinkle, ye stars! as ye sung o'er the earth,
 And glory to Him whom the heavens gave birth!

The little gray cottage just over the bend,
 Down the broad street where the world seemed to end,
 Was a mansion of joy, not a hovel of sorrow,
 When Little-Boy-Johnny arose on the morrow,
 And it may have been you, or perhaps it was I
 Who drove the big auto so softly and shy—
 But don't you feel happy to know that some friend
 Remembered the cottage just over the bend?

ONE WONDERS if Mr. Beaumont, when he wrote his poem, may not have had all of us in mind and employed Little-Boy-John as a symbol of the universal heart. For upon that heart, now and again, fall evil days. Garments of happiness are displaced by spiritual rags, and mankind becomes hungry of soul and wonders that the joy of life should have departed. Yet, all the time, deep in the heart of humanity, still burns the candle of faith. So, dawns at last a New Day, when upon the doorstep of our house of life we find the gifts left there, for us, in the night. And among these gifts are wonderful pictures, and beautiful poems and transporting stories, whereby, as on a magic carpet, we are conveyed to all the

corners of the world and given clearly to understand the springs of human action and to behold the dreams of life—realized.

So comes to you today, in the form of The Red Book Magazine for January, from which Mr. Beaumont's poem is here reproduced, a pack of magic gifts in story and picture—gifts created by the most famous writers and artists to dispel all gloom from your heart, all weariness from your eyes; to convert the hovel of your spirit, if in such it dwell, into a mansion of joy, and to give back to you that which is worth more than all else—the hopes, the dreams, and the faith of youth.



THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

JANUARY ISSUE AT ALL NEWS STANDS