

MILLIONS OF CATS



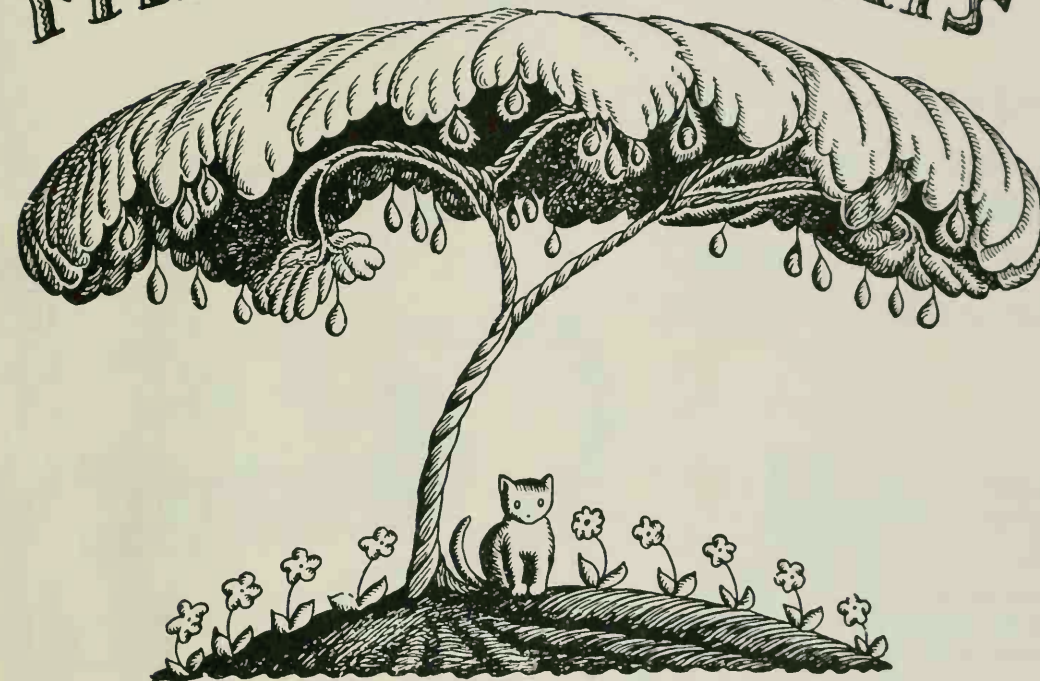
"The first true 'picture book' by an American artist"

✧ Cornelia Meigs
*A Critical History of
Children's Literature*

"Beauty at the heart of all life is the keynote to the work of Wanda Gág and the source of its power, whether expressed in one of her memorable prints or in an intimate picture of the home of the very old man in MILLIONS OF CATS. Clear memory of her own happy childhood and a kinship with all children made her respect their intelligence, and gave them at once ease and joy in her company."

✧ Anne Carroll Moore
The Horn Book Magazine
An issue "In Tribute to
Wanda Gág" / May-June 1947

MILLIONS OF CATS



BY WANDA GA'G

Coward-McCann

New York

Published by
COWARD-McCANN, INC.
51 Madison Avenue/New York, New York 10010

Copyright 1928 by Coward-McCann, Inc.;
renewal copyright © 1956 by Robert Janssen.
All rights reserved. This book, or parts thereof, may not
be reproduced in any form without permission in writing
from the Publishers.

First hardcover edition published September, 1928
First paperback edition published September, 1977

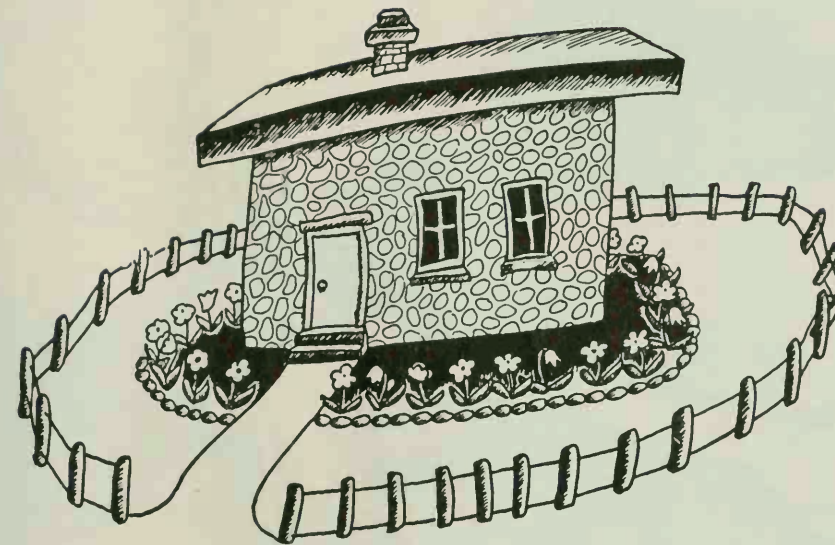
ISBN 0-698-20091-8 (hardcover trade edition)
ISBN 0-698-20434-4 (paperback edition)
Library of Congress Catalogue Card Number: 28-21571

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Fifty-Seventh Impression (hardcover trade edition)
Thirteenth Impression (paperback edition)

MILLIONS OF CATS

Once upon a time there
was a very old man and
a very old woman. They
lived in a nice clean
house which had flowers



all around it, except where
the door was. But they couldn't
be happy because they were
so very lonely.

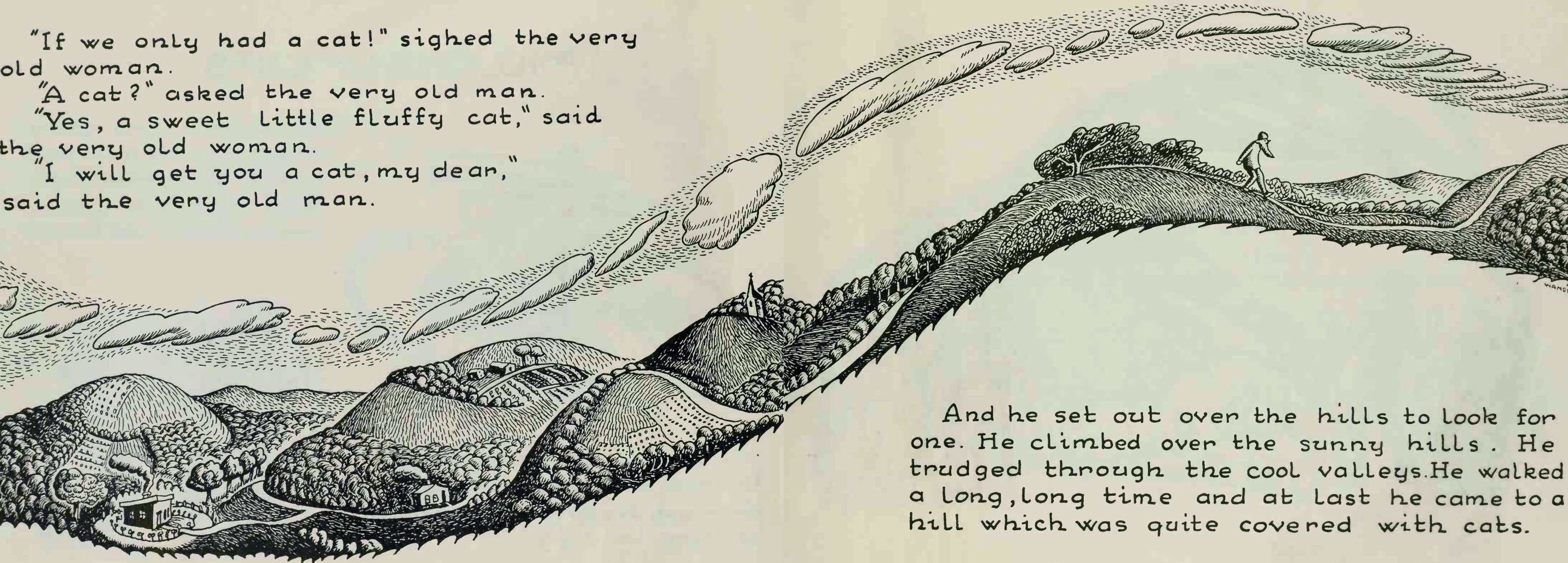


"If we only had a cat!" sighed the very old woman.

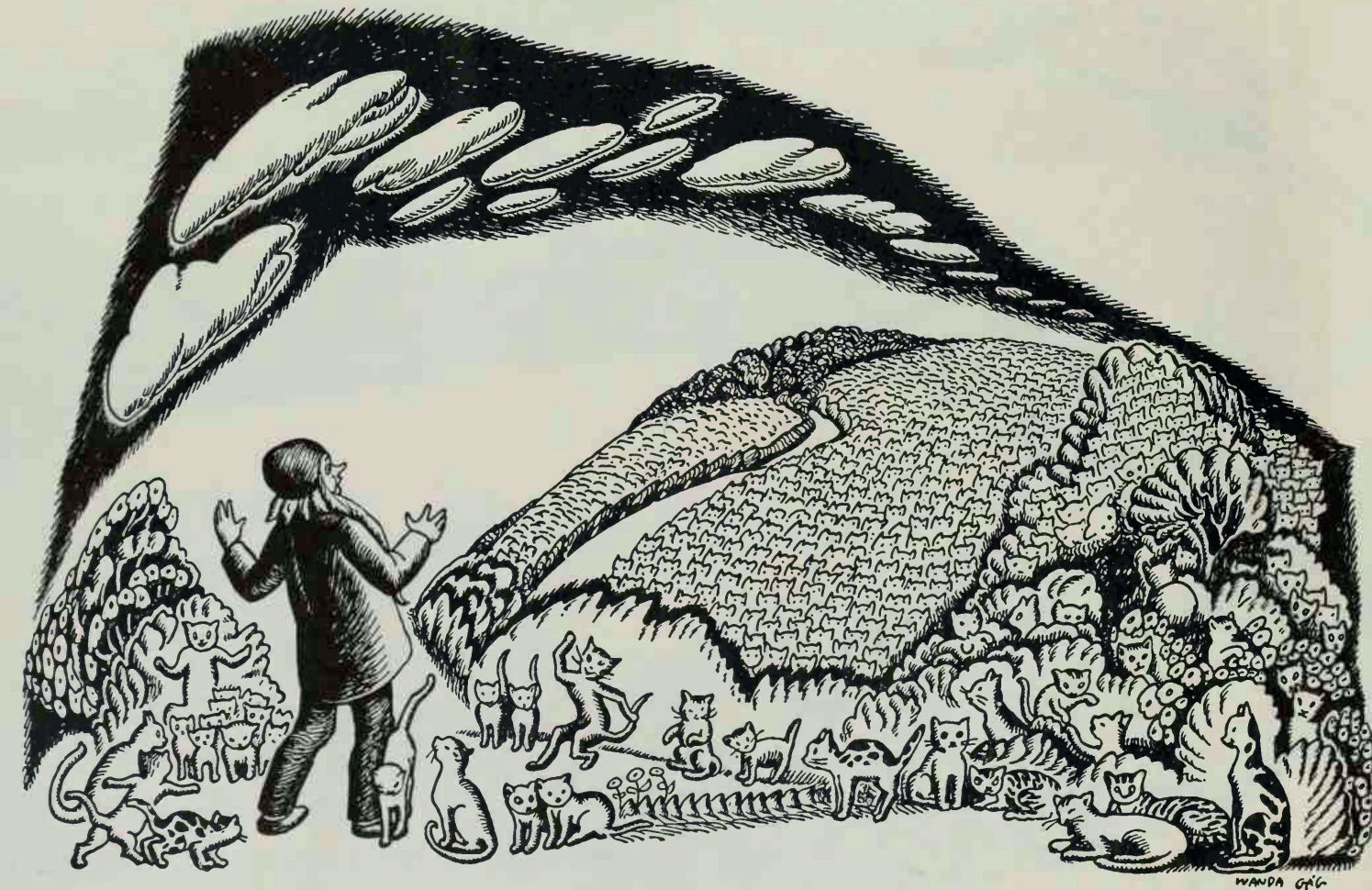
"A cat?" asked the very old man.

"Yes, a sweet little fluffy cat," said the very old woman.

"I will get you a cat, my dear," said the very old man.



And he set out over the hills to look for one. He climbed over the sunny hills. He trudged through the cool valleys. He walked a long, long time and at last he came to a hill which was quite covered with cats.



Cats here, cats there,
Cats and kittens everywhere,
Hundreds of cats,
Thousands of cats,
Millions and billions and trillions of cats.



"Oh," cried the old man joyfully, "Now I can choose the prettiest cat and take it home with me!" So he chose one. It was white.

But just as he was about to leave, he saw another one all black and white and it seemed just as pretty as the first. So he took this one also.



But then he saw a fuzzy grey kitten way over here which was every bit as pretty as the others so he took it too.



And now he saw one way down in a corner which he thought too lovely to leave so he took this too.





And just then, over here, the very old man found a kitten which was black and very beautiful.

"It would be a shame to leave that one," said the very old man. So he took it.

And now, over there, he saw a cat which had brown and yellow stripes like a baby tiger.

"I simply must take it!" cried the very old man, and he did.



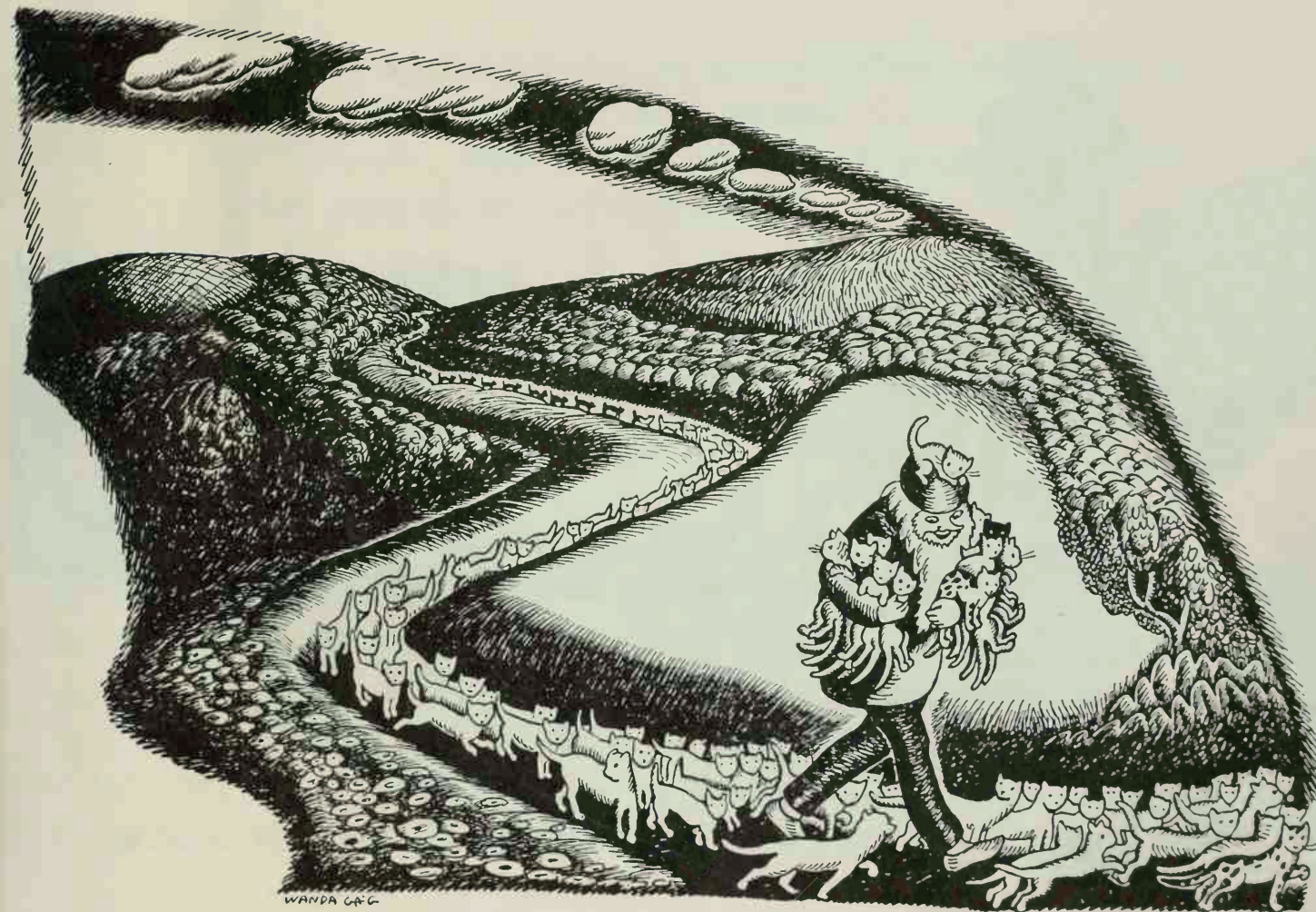


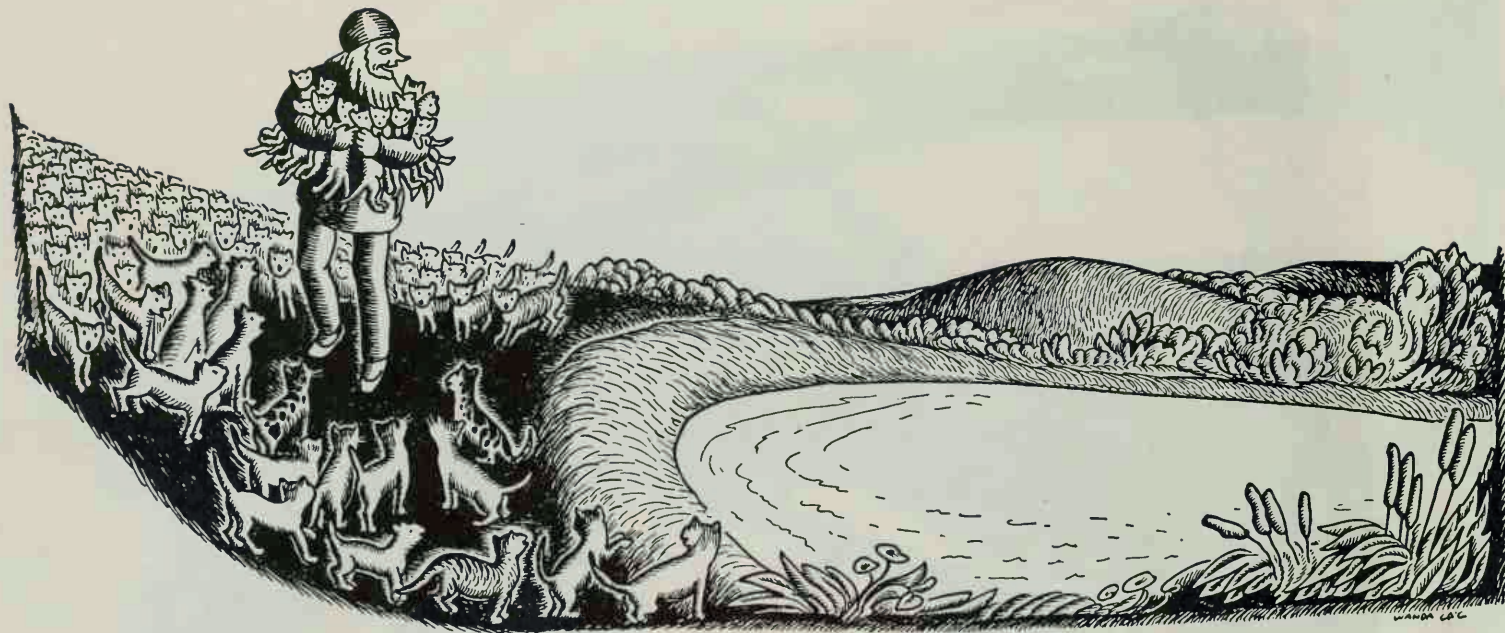
So it happened that every time the very old man looked up, he saw another cat which was so pretty he could not bear to leave it, and before he knew it, he had chosen them all.



And so he went back over the sunny hills and down through the cool valleys, to show all his pretty kittens to the very old woman.

It was very funny to see those hundreds and thousands and millions and billions and trillions of cats following him.

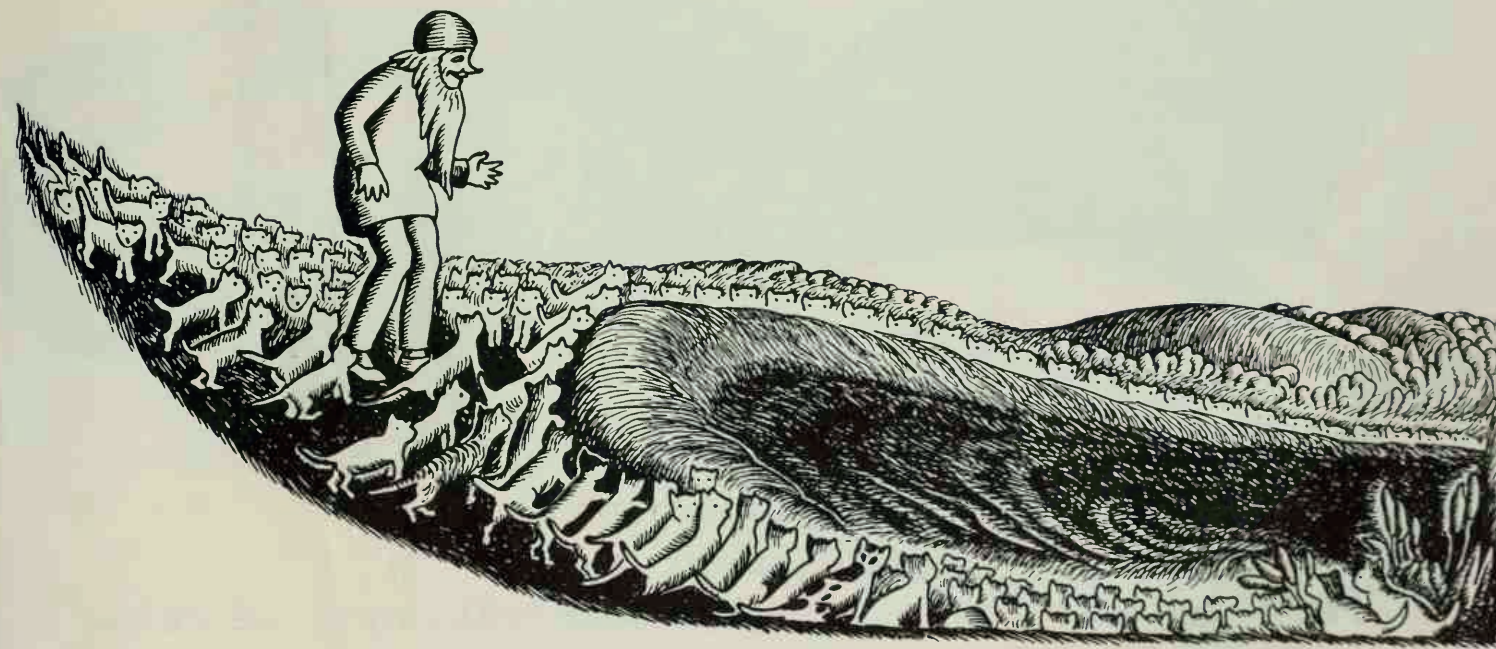


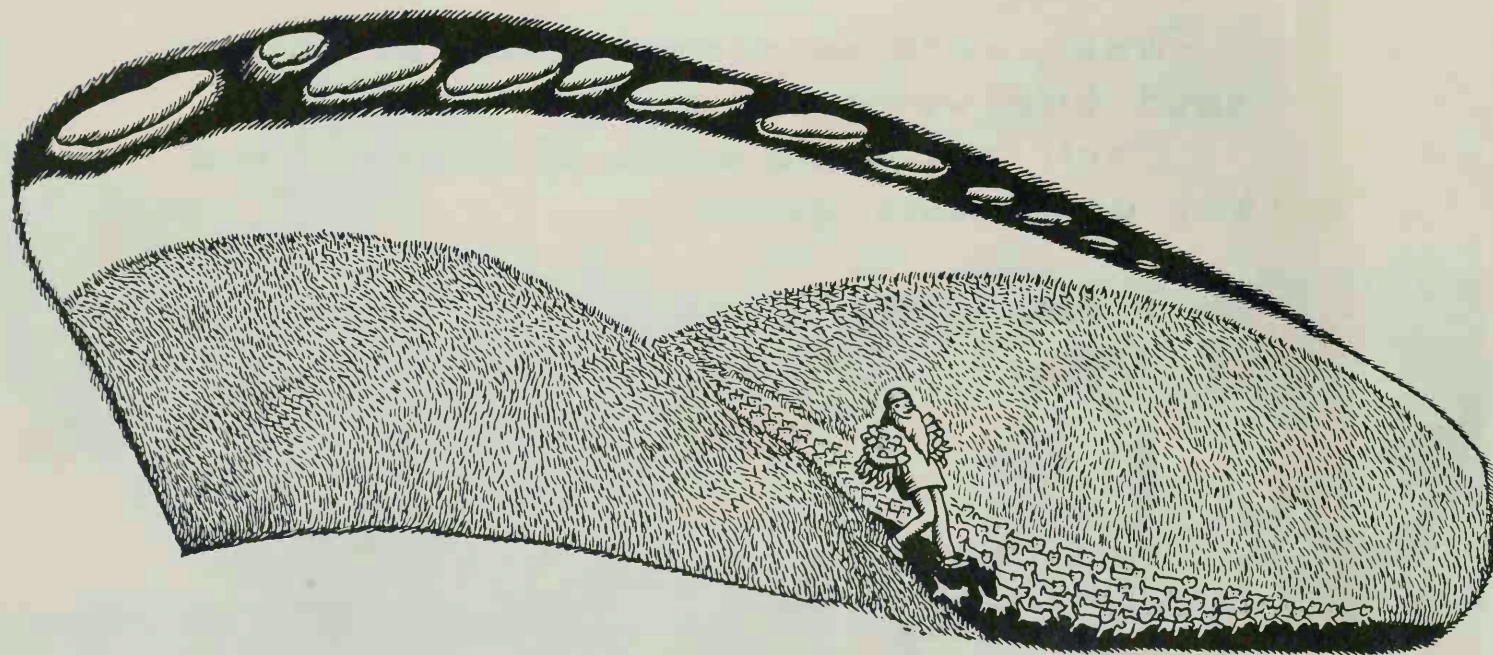


They came to a pond.
 "Mew, mew! We are thirsty!" cried the
 Hundreds of cats,
 Thousands of cats,
 Millions and billions and trillions of cats.

"Well, here is a great deal of water,"
 said the very old man.

Each cat took a sip of water, and
 the pond was gone!

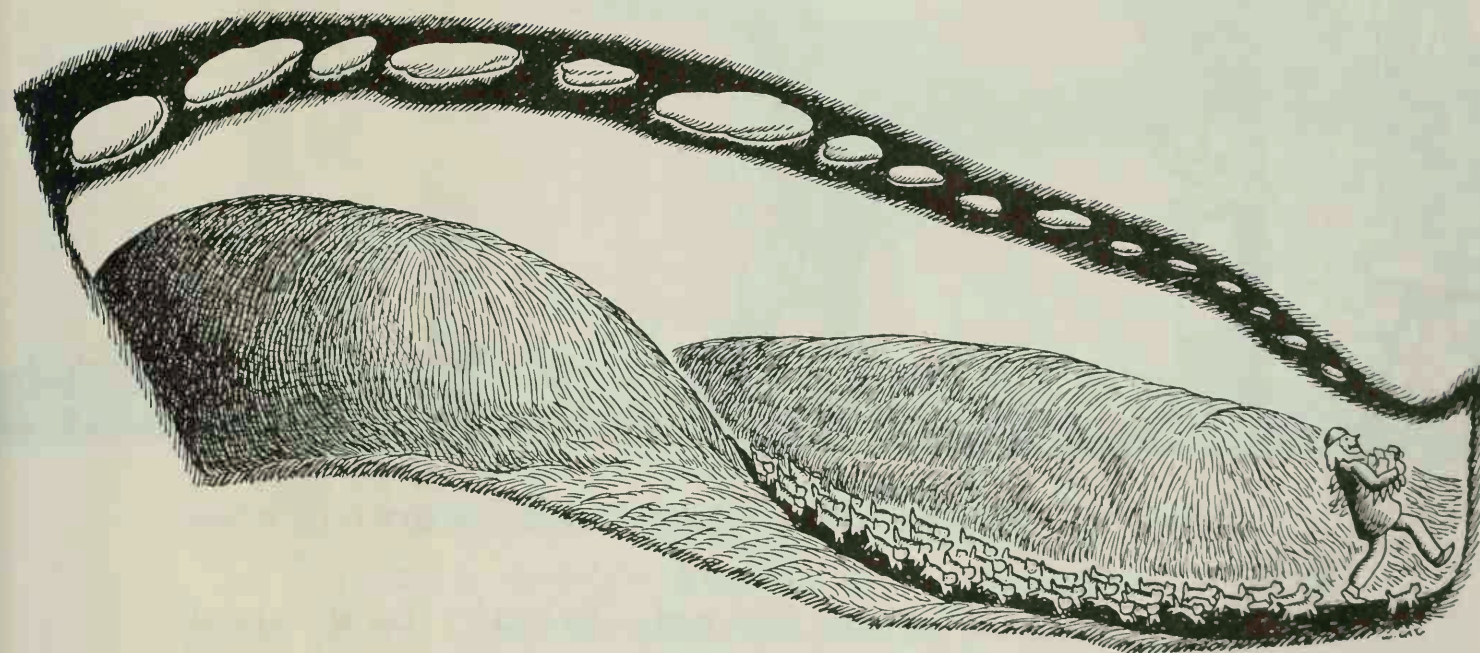





"Mew, mew! Now we are hungry!" said the
Hundreds of cats,
Thousands of cats,
Millions and billions and trillions of cats.

"There is much grass on the hills," said
the very old man.


Each cat ate a mouthful of grass and
not a blade was left!



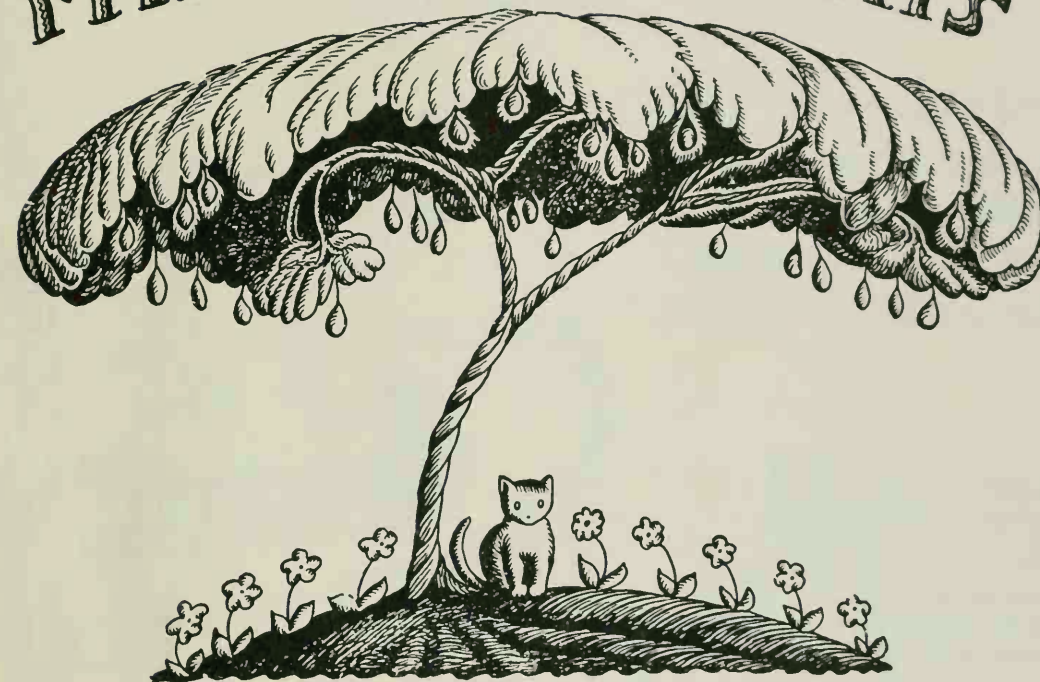
"The first true 'picture book' by an American artist"

 Cornelia Meigs
*A Critical History of
Children's Literature*

"Beauty at the heart of all life is the keynote to the work of Wanda Gág and the source of its power, whether expressed in one of her memorable prints or in an intimate picture of the home of the very old man in MILLIONS OF CATS. Clear memory of her own happy childhood and a kinship with all children made her respect their intelligence, and gave them at once ease and joy in her company."

 Anne Carroll Moore
The Horn Book Magazine
An issue "In Tribute to
Wanda Gág"/ May-June 1947

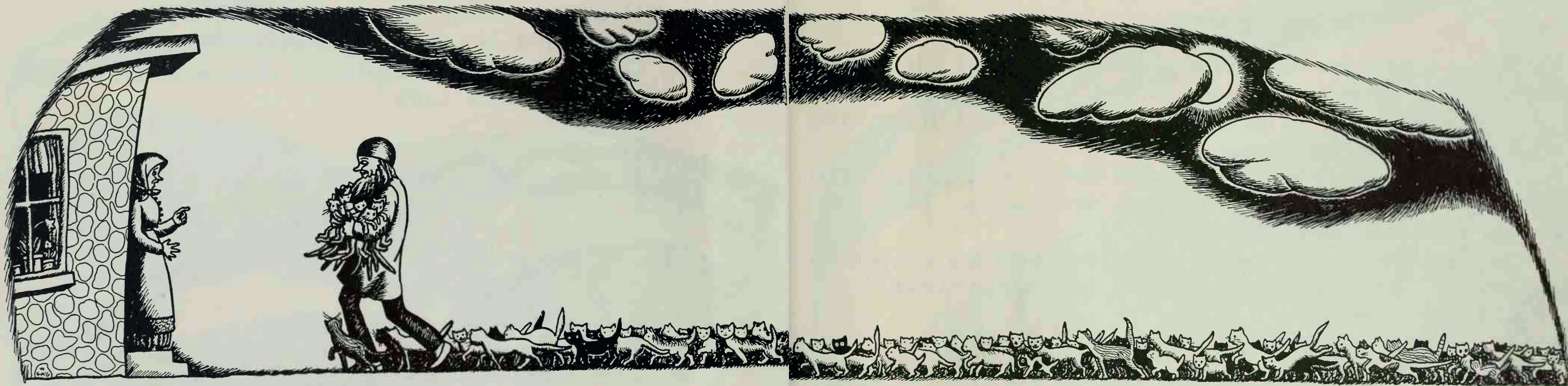
MILLIONS OF CATS



BY WANDA GÁG

Coward-McCann

New York



Pretty soon the very old woman saw
them coming.

"My dear!" she cried, "What are you
doing? I asked for one little cat, and
what do I see?—

"Cats here, cats there,
Cats and kittens everywhere,
Hundreds of cats,
Thousands of cats,
Millions and billions and trillions of cats.

"But we can never feed them all," said the very old woman, "They will eat us out of house and home."

"I never thought of that," said the very old man, "What shall we do?"

The very old woman thought for a while and then she said, "I know! We will let the cats decide which one we should keep."

"Oh yes," said the very old man, and he called to the cats, "Which one of you is the prettiest?"

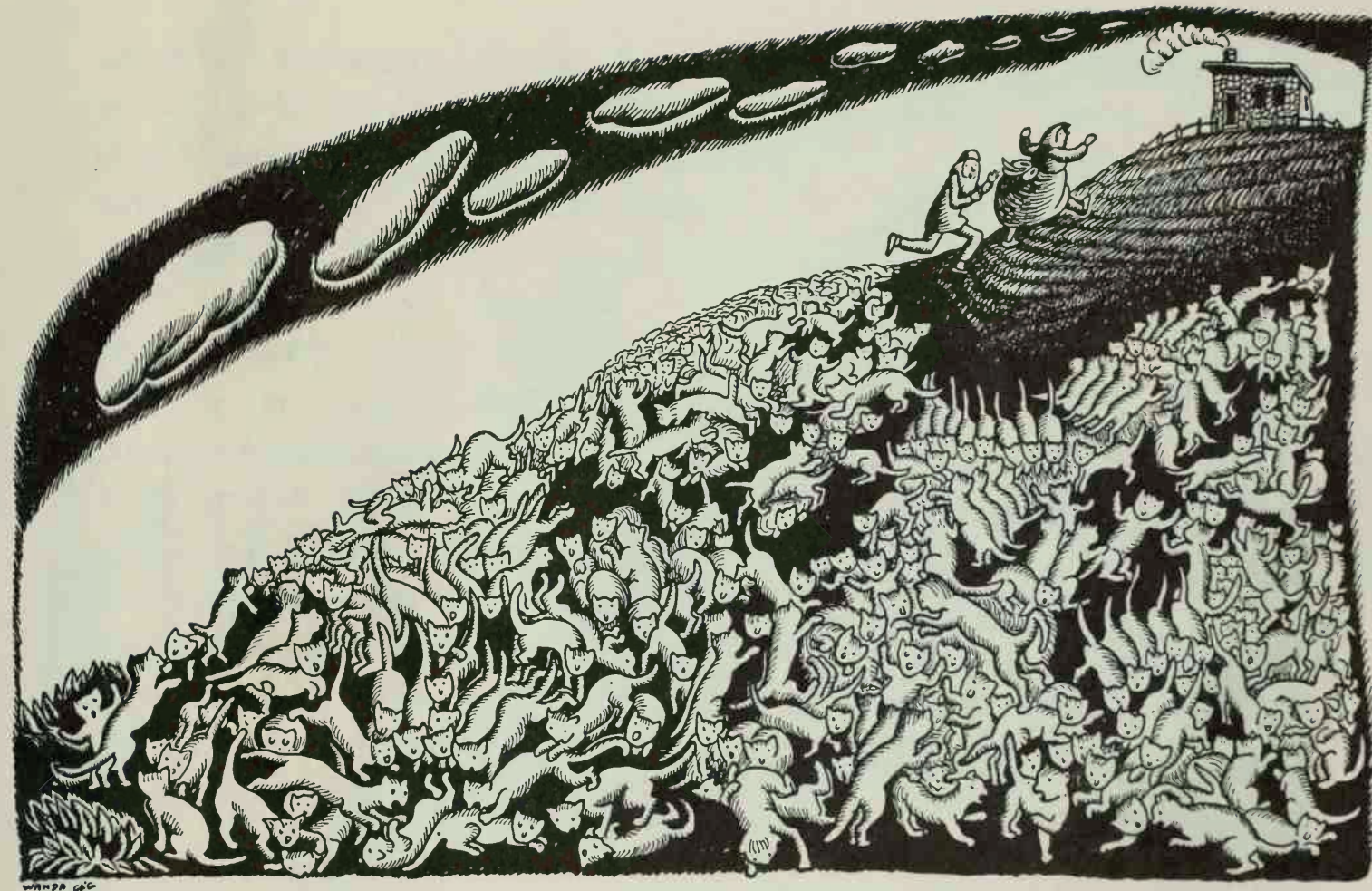
"I am!"

"I am!"

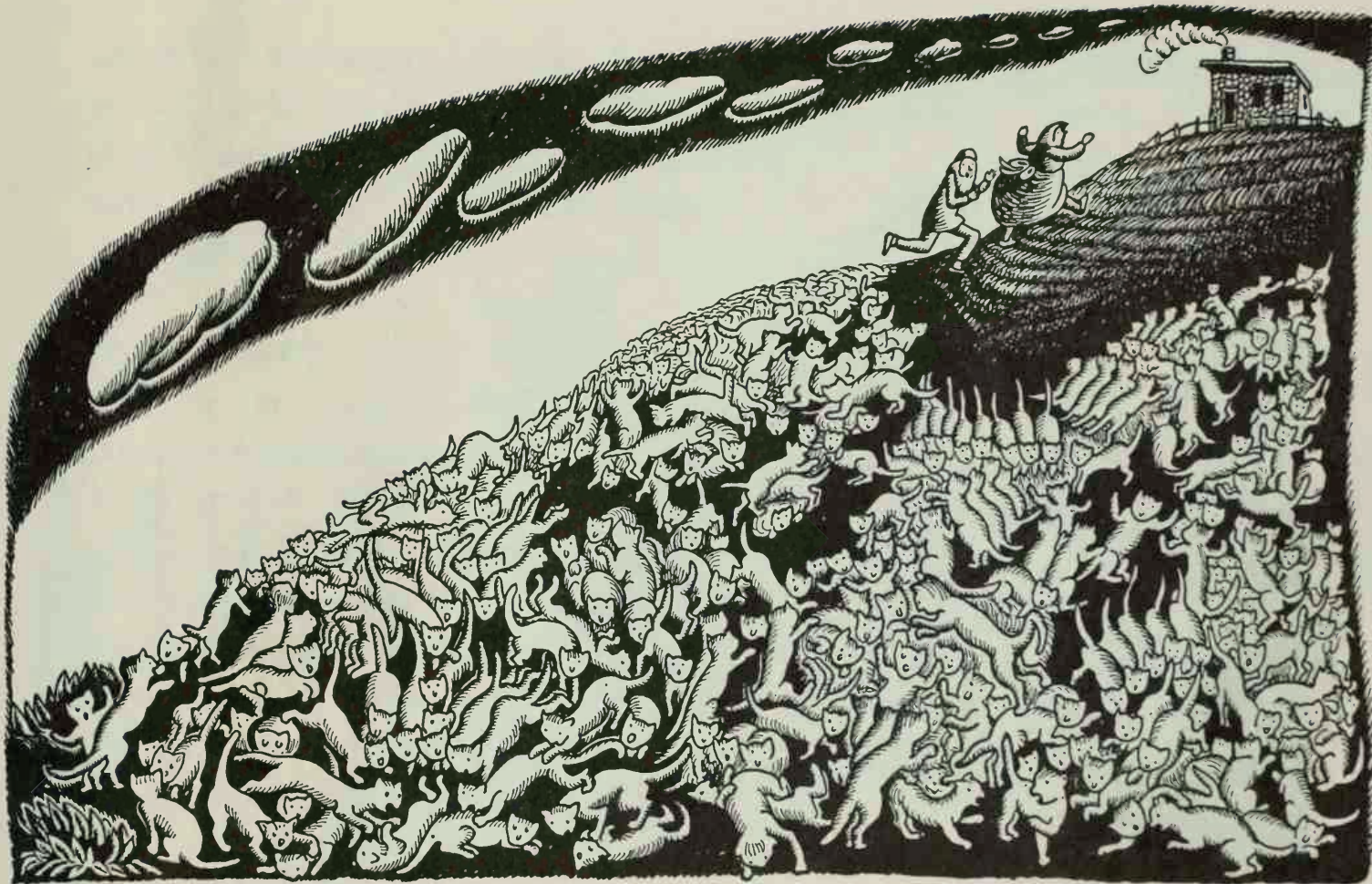
"No, I am!"

"No, I am the prettiest!" "I am!"

"No, I am! I am! I am!" cried hundreds and thousands and millions and billions and trillions of voices, for each cat thought itself the prettiest.



And they began to quarrel.

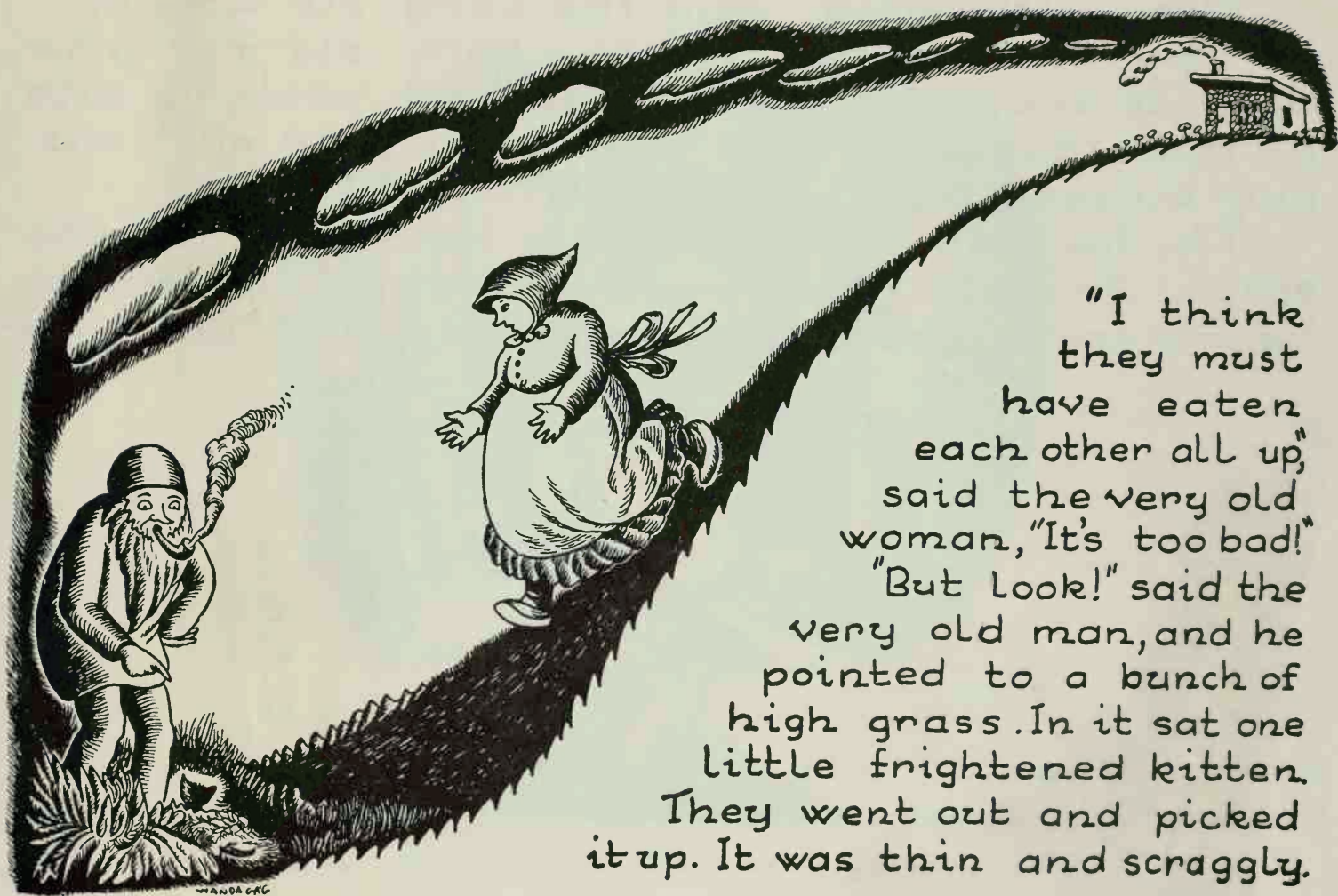


And they began to quarrel.

They bit and scratched and clawed each other and made such a great noise that the very old man and the very old woman ran into the house as fast as they could. They did not like such quarreling.



But after a while the noise stopped and the very old man and the very old woman peeped out of the window to see what had happened. They could not see a single cat!



"I think they must have eaten each other all up," said the very old woman, "It's too bad!"

"But look!" said the very old man, and he pointed to a bunch of high grass. In it sat one little frightened kitten. They went out and picked it up. It was thin and scraggly.

"Doon little kitty," said the very old woman.

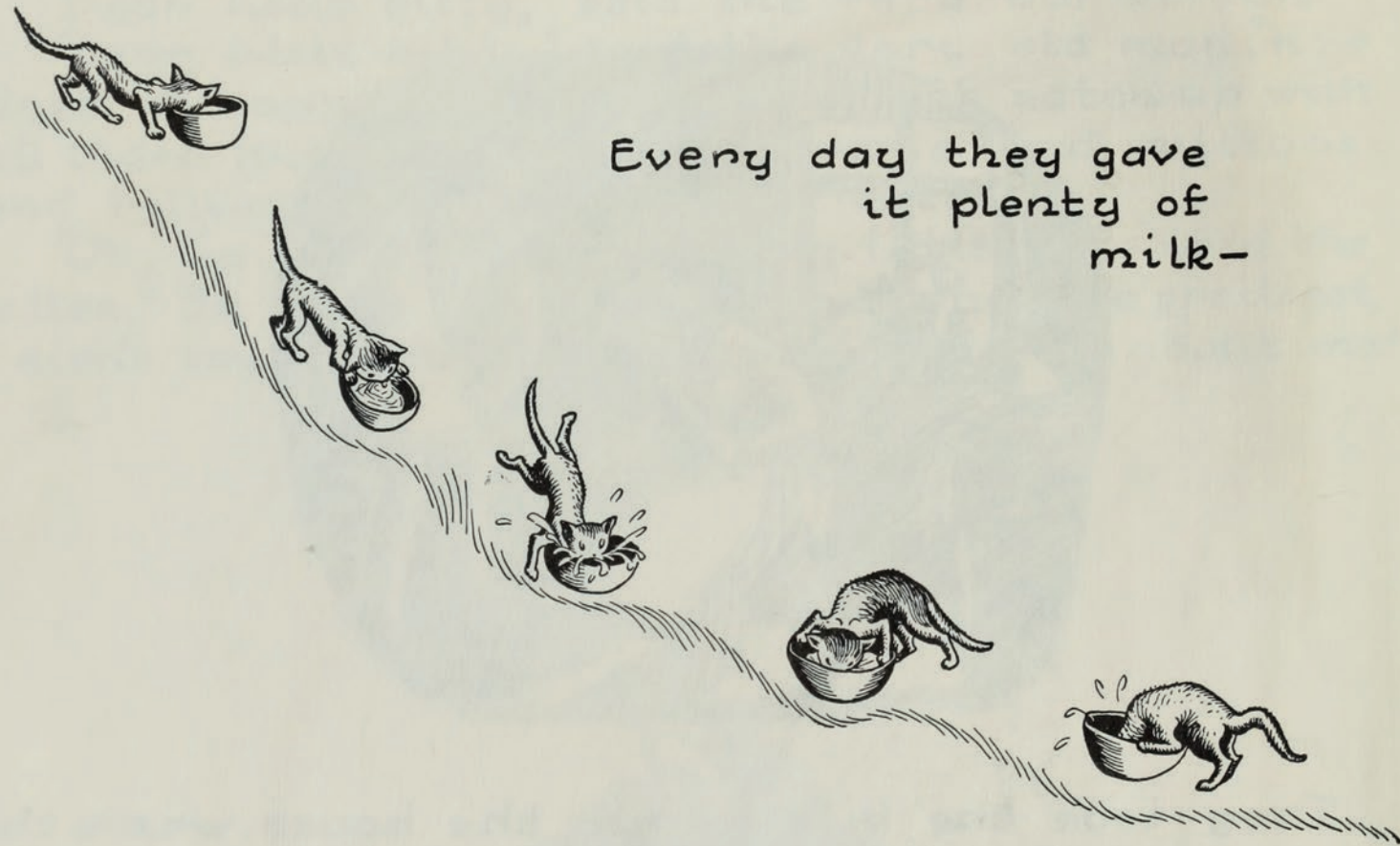
"Dear little kitty," said the very old man, "how does it happen that you were not eaten up with all those hundreds and thousands and millions and billions and trillions of cats?"

"Oh, I'm just a very homely little cat," said the kitten, "So when you asked who was the prettiest, I didn't say anything. So nobody bothered about me."

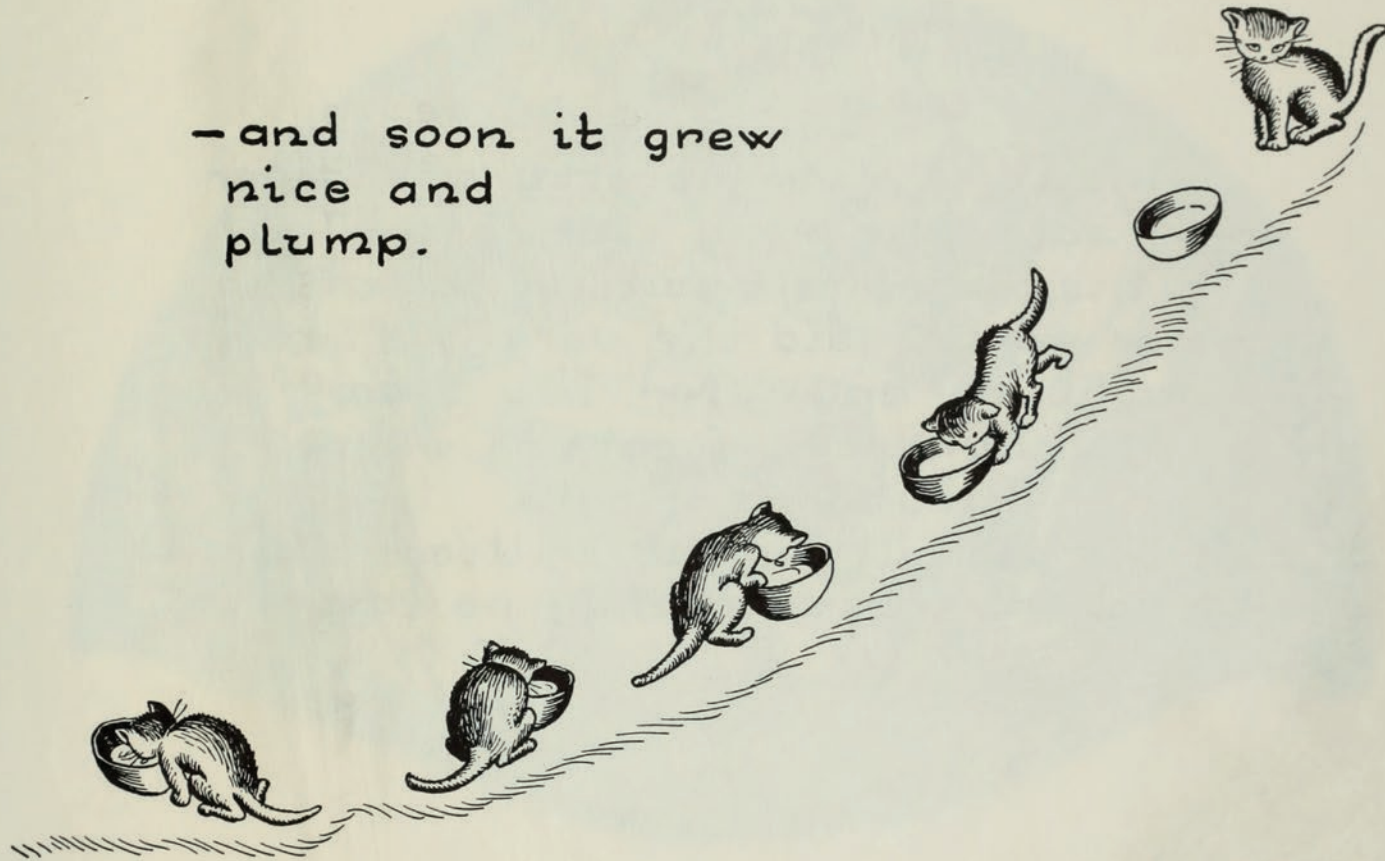




They took the kitten into the house, where the very old woman gave it a warm bath and brushed its fur until it was soft and shiny.



-and soon it grew
nice and
plump.



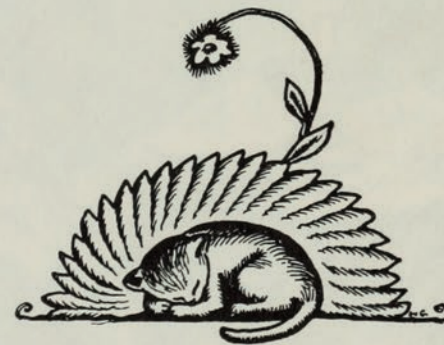
And it is a very pretty cat, after
all!" said the very old woman.

"It is the most beautiful cat in the
whole world," said the very old man.
"I ought to know, for I've seen—

Hundreds of cats,

Thousands of cats,

Millions and billions and trillions of cats—
and not one was as pretty as this one."



WANDA GÁG

(Pronounce it "Gaag—to rhyme with jog, not with bag, please!")

"Life without a drawing mood is miserable, miserable, miserable..."

"I believe it is just the modern children who need [fairy tales] since their lives are already over-balanced on the side of steel and stone and machinery."



In recognition of her rare artistry, Wanda Gág was the posthumous recipient of the 1958 Lewis Carroll Shelf Award for MILLIONS OF CATS and the 1977 Kerlan Award for the body of her work.



THE ABC BUNNY • THE FUNNY THING • GONE IS GONE
NOTHING AT ALL • SNIPPY AND SNAPPY
SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS
TALES FROM GRIMM • MORE TALES FROM GRIMM
are available in hardcover editions.



COWARD-McCANN, INC.
51 Madison Avenue/New York, New York 10010



Hundreds of cats,
Thousands of cats,
Millions and billions and trillions of cats.



WANDA GÁG

(1893-1946) was born in New Ulm, Minnesota. As a child she was surrounded by an almost European atmosphere of old world customs and legends, of Bavarian and Bohemian folk songs and German Turnverein activities.

The daughter of a Bohemian artist and eldest of the seven Gág children, Wanda was a member of a family that sparkled with creativity. Drawing and storytelling were as much a part of her life as eating and sleeping, and she was surprised to grow up and find people who didn't draw at all!

MILLIONS OF CATS began taking shape in her mind around 1920. The text and pictures evolved together and flow in playful harmony. Published in 1928 and named a Newbery Honor Book in 1929, this beloved classic was the first of many treasures to come from Wanda Gág.

MILLIONS OF CATS was quickly seen as another first. Universally recognized as the first American "picture book," it sets a standard which even today has rarely been equaled.



ISBN 0-698-20434-4
>>\$3.95