

THIRD BOOK
**AMONG
FRIENDS**



EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF VICTORIA

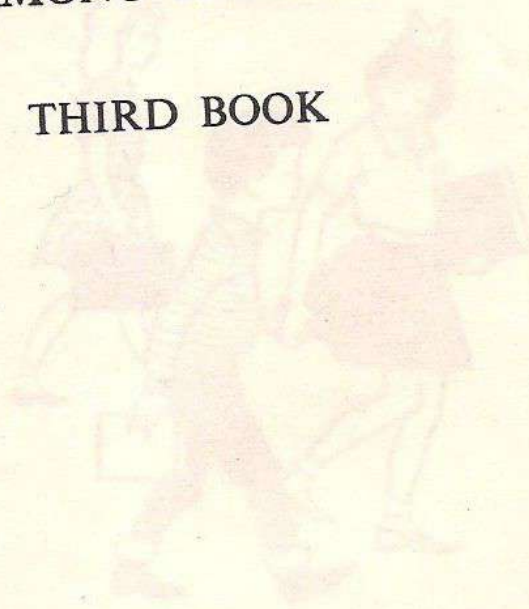
AMONG FRIENDS

THE VICTORIAN READERS

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Illustrated by

HAROLD FREEMAN

DEPARTMENT OF VICTORIA

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Registered in Australia for transmission
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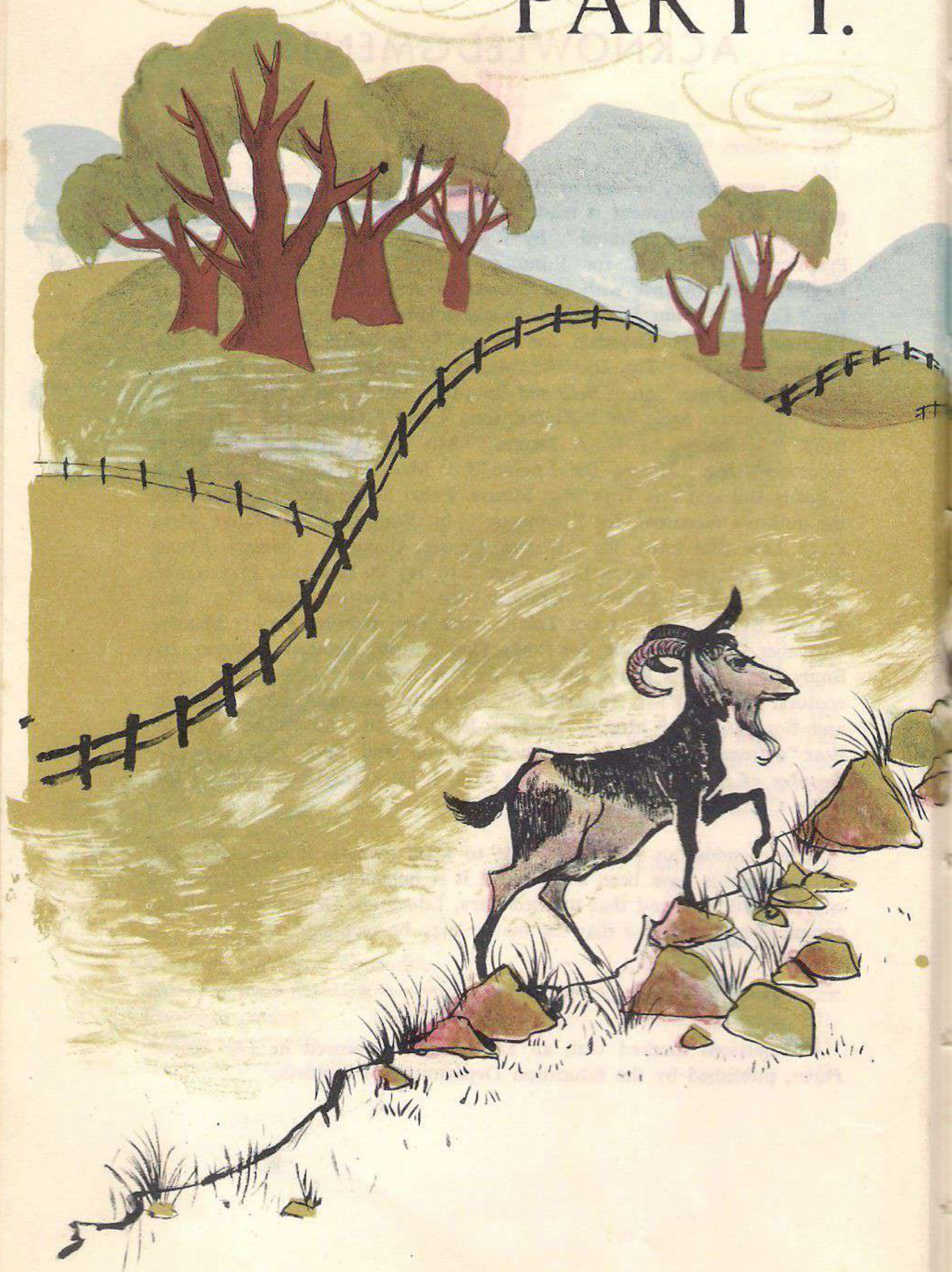
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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* Selections marked with an asterisk first appeared in *The School Paper*, published by the Education Department of Victoria.

PART I.





THE FOX AND THE GOAT

When the animals were told how sly the fox was, only the goat did not think the stories could be true. He was, however, to find out how true they were.

One hot, sunny day, the fox was very thirsty. He tried all day to find water, and

at last he passed a well in the middle of a paddock. The water in the well was low, and the thirsty fox tried many times to reach it. At last he reached over too far, and down he fell.

At first, he was glad enough to stay there and drink the cool water. When he was no longer thirsty, however, he tried to get out. Then the fun began.

He stood up on his back legs and tried to reach the top, but his front legs came only half-way. Then he tried to spring out into the paddock, but the well was not wide enough for him to make a run first. As night came on he grew tired of trying, and there he had to stay.

The next morning was still hot, and the goat, being thirsty too, came across the paddock to the well. As he came near he heard the splash of water. He looked down and saw the fox.

“Good morning, Brother Fox,” he said. “I’m thirsty. Is that water very good down there?”

“Good?” said the fox slyly. “Come down, come down, Brother Goat. This water is so beautiful that I cannot stop drinking.”

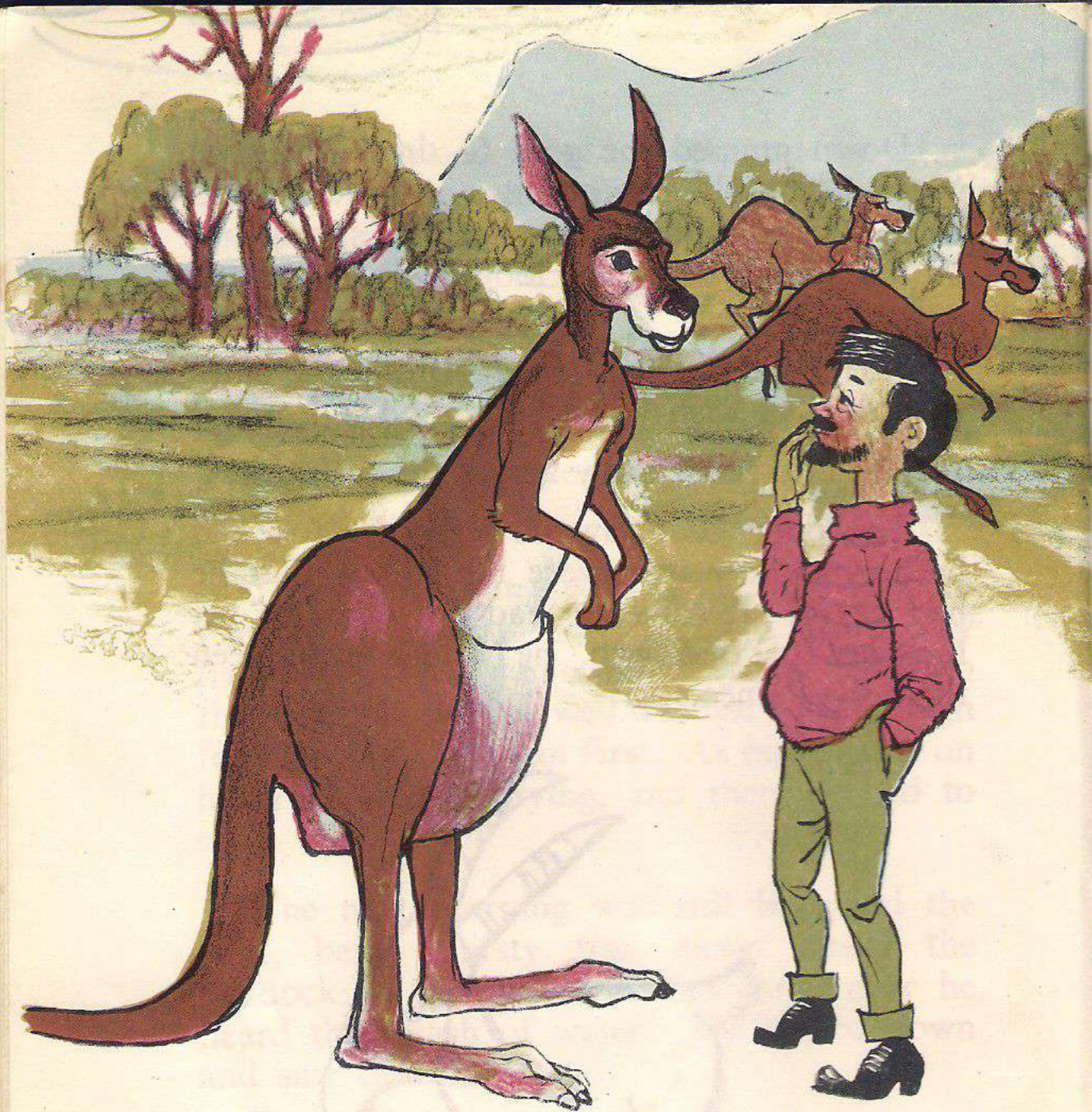
Down jumped the goat to drink the cool water. The sly fox at once jumped on his back. From there he managed to spring out of the well. Then he looked down at the goat.

“Thank you very much, Brother Goat,” he said. “I wish you a very good morning.”

Then he raced away across the paddock.

The poor goat saw how sly the fox had been, and how true were the stories that he had heard. If someone had not come to get him out of that well, he would have been there ever since.





SMALL MAN

Once there was a very small boy who lived in the bush. He grew older but not much bigger. Nothing he ate made him bigger or



stronger. Everyone he met called him Small Man, and this made him most unhappy. He longed to be as big and strong as other men.

One day, as he walked in the bush, he met a kangaroo.

“Please, Kangaroo,” said Small Man, “could you tell me how I may become bigger and stronger?”

“Well,” said Kangaroo, “if you jump along as I do, your legs will become stronger, and that may help.”

“ Thank you, Kangaroo,” said Small Man, hopping off into the bush just like a kangaroo.

When his legs became tired, he sat on a log to rest. Then he saw a koala bear in a gum-tree near by.

“ Please, Koala Bear,” said Small Man, “ could you tell me how I may become bigger and stronger ? ”

“ I think,” said Koala Bear, blinking a little, “ that if you could climb trees as I do your arms would become stronger, and that would help you.”

“ Thank you, Koala Bear,” said Small Man, and he began to climb trees as the koala bear had done.

When his arms were tired, he had to rest. Once again he sat down on the log. Soon a kookaburra flew to the tree near by, and began to smooth his feathers.

“ Please, Kookaburra,” said Small Man, “ could you tell me how I may become bigger and stronger ? ”

“ Why,” said Kookaburra, “ I think if you put your head back and laugh as I do your head and neck will become stronger, and that may help you.”

“Thank you, Kookaburra,” said Small Man, putting his head back and laughing as the kookaburra had done. When his head and neck grew tired, he had to stop.

Small Man was now so tired that he could hardly walk. When he got home, he fell fast asleep. He slept and slept until late next morning.

When he tried to get out of bed, he was so stiff that he could hardly manage to do so. Then he saw that he had begun to grow. He was so pleased that once again he did all the things that Kangaroo, Koala Bear, and Kookaburra had told him. He began to feel less stiff.

Each day he grew a little taller, until at last he was as big as other men. To-day he is one of the biggest and strongest men in the bush, and no-one calls him Small Man any more.





Trying to Please Everybody

A man and his son were driving their donkey along the road to market. Not far along the road they met a party of girls coming from the market.

“Just look,” cried one of the girls. “Those two fellows are walking when one of them could be riding on the donkey’s back. How foolish they are!”

“It is well to please people, Son,” said the father. “You ride on the donkey, while I walk beside you.”



So the son got on the donkey's back. Soon they met some old men who had been to market too.

“Did you ever see such a foolish thing?” said one old man. “The son rides while his poor father has to walk. Get down, you good-for-nothing, and let your father ride!”

“It is well to please people, Son,” said the father; so the son came down off the donkey's back, and the father took his place.

Not long after this they met a woman and some children on the road.

“Why, you lazy man!” said the woman. “How can you ride while your son has to walk?”

To please the woman, the father told his son to get up behind him and ride on the donkey's back too. Nearing the market town, they met a man who looked at the father and said, “Surely that donkey is not your own!”

“Oh yes, it is,” said the father. “We are selling him at the market.”

“Then why try to break his back with such a heavy load?” said the man. “You two lazy fellows are much stronger than he is. Since you wish to sell him, you had both

better carry him to market. No-one would wish to buy a broken-down donkey."

"We may be too heavy for him," said the father. "We had better get down and carry him."

So both got off the donkey's back. They found some rope with which they managed to tie the donkey's legs together. Then they tied the donkey to a strong pole from which he hung upside down. Each taking one end of the pole, they set off to carry the donkey the rest of the way to market.

They looked so funny that a crowd came to look at them. The people thought how foolish the man and his son were.

"How funny," they said, laughing, "to carry a donkey on a pole! Soon he will break that pole and his back, and you foolish fellows will have no donkey at all."

"Well, Son," said the father, looking surprised, "we have tried to please everybody, and see what has come of it! We should have done much better just to please ourselves."

So they both untied the donkey and threw away the pole. Then they drove the donkey along the road just as they had done at the very first.

The Rooster, the Hen, and the Duck

Once a hen and a rooster lived happily in a little house by the bank of a deep river, where they found plenty of good food. Not far away lived a little grey duck. She did not like the hen, and the hen did not like her. They wouldn't look at each other if they passed on the river bank.

On the hill not far away were some fine nut-trees. The hen, the rooster, and the duck all liked the nuts that grew there. One day the hen and the rooster thought they would go to get some nuts. They took their little cart along with them, so that they could get a good store for the winter.

There were plenty of the nuts spread thickly on the ground, and the hen and the rooster first ate all they wanted. Then they started to fill their cart. They could only pick up one nut at a time, so both were tired when the cart was full.

"I cannot walk another step, so I will ride on the cart. Please pull the cart home, Rooster," said the hen.

"Indeed, I will not!" said the rooster. "I am just as tired as you are."

