

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00365-0 - Across the Plains: With other Memories and Essays

Robert Louis Stevenson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE LIBRARY COLLECTION

Books of enduring scholarly value

History

The books reissued in this series include accounts of historical events and movements by eye-witnesses and contemporaries, as well as landmark studies that assembled significant source materials or developed new historiographical methods. The series includes work in social, political and military history on a wide range of periods and regions, giving modern scholars ready access to influential publications of the past.

Across the Plains

The celebrated Scottish writer Robert Louis Stevenson arranged for his friend the art historian Sidney Colvin to select and organise the essays in this volume, many of which had originally appeared in 1888, though some date back to the early 1880s. It was published in 1892, two years before Stevenson's untimely death. Colvin obtained many of the pieces from their original publishers, including magazines such as Fraser's, Longman's, The Magazine of Art and Scribner's. What is particularly noteworthy about this collection is that although Stevenson had settled in the South Seas well before it appeared, all the items included were written prior to his journey there. Colvin mentions that the concluding pieces in particular were written during a period of considerable gloom and sickness for Stevenson, who himself claimed to "recover peace of body and mind" after moving to the Pacific in 1890.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00365-0 - Across the Plains: With other Memories and Essays

Robert Louis Stevenson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press has long been a pioneer in the reissuing of out-of-print titles from its own backlist, producing digital reprints of books that are still sought after by scholars and students but could not be reprinted economically using traditional technology. The Cambridge Library Collection extends this activity to a wider range of books which are still of importance to researchers and professionals, either for the source material they contain, or as landmarks in the history of their academic discipline.

Drawing from the world-renowned collections in the Cambridge University Library, and guided by the advice of experts in each subject area, Cambridge University Press is using state-of-the-art scanning machines in its own Printing House to capture the content of each book selected for inclusion. The files are processed to give a consistently clear, crisp image, and the books finished to the high quality standard for which the Press is recognised around the world. The latest print-on-demand technology ensures that the books will remain available indefinitely, and that orders for single or multiple copies can quickly be supplied.

The Cambridge Library Collection will bring back to life books of enduring scholarly value across a wide range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences and in science and technology.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00365-0 - Across the Plains: With other Memories and Essays

Robert Louis Stevenson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Across the Plains

With Other Memories and Essays

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00365-0 - Across the Plains: With other Memories and Essays

Robert Louis Stevenson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge New York Melbourne Madrid Cape Town Singapore São Paulo Delhi

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108003650

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2009

This edition first published 1892

This digitally printed version 2009

ISBN 978-1-108-00365-0

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00365-0 - Across the Plains: With other Memories and Essays

Robert Louis Stevenson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ACROSS THE PLAINS

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00365-0 - Across the Plains: With other Memories and Essays

Robert Louis Stevenson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

EDINBURGH: PICTURESQUE NOTES

AN INLAND VOYAGE

TRAVELS WITH A DONKEY

VIRGINIBUS PUERISQUE

FAMILIAR STUDIES OF MEN AND BOOKS

NEW ARABIAN NIGHTS

TREASURE ISLAND

THE SILVERADO SQUATTERS

A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSES

STRANGE CASE OF DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE

PRINCE OTTO

THE MERRY MEN

KIDNAPPED

UNDERWOODS

MEMORIES AND PORTRAITS

THE BLACK ARROW

THE MASTER OF BALLANTRAE

BALLADS

FATHER DAMIEN: AN OPEN LETTER

(WITH MRS. STEVENSON)

THE DYNAMITER

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00365-0 - Across the Plains: With other Memories and Essays

Robert Louis Stevenson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ACROSS THE PLAINS

WITH OTHER

MEMORIES AND ESSAYS

BY

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON



London

CHATTO & WINDUS, PICCADILLY

1892

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00365-0 - Across the Plains: With other Memories and Essays

Robert Louis Stevenson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

TO PAUL BOURGET.

TRAVELLER and student and curious as you are, you will never have heard the name of Vailima, most likely not even that of Upolu, and Samoa itself may be strange to your ears. To these barbaric seats there came the other day a yellow book with your name on the title, and filled in every page with the exquisite gifts of your art. Let me take and change your own words : *l'ai beau admirer les autres de toutes mes forces, c'est avec vous que je me complais à vivre.*

R. L. S.

VAILIMA,
UPOLU,
SAMOA.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00365-0 - Across the Plains: With other Memories and Essays

Robert Louis Stevenson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

LETTER TO THE AUTHOR

MY DEAR STEVENSON,

You have trusted me with the choice and arrangement of these papers, written before you departed to the South Seas, and have asked me to add a preface to the volume. But it is your prose the public wish to read, not mine; and I am sure they will willingly be spared the preface. Acknowledgments are due in your name to the publishers of the several magazines from which the papers are collected, viz. *Fraser's*, *Longman's*, the *Magazine of Art*, and *Scribner's*. I will only add, lest any reader should find the tone of the concluding pieces less inspiring than your wont, that they were written under circumstances of especial gloom and sickness. "I agree with you the lights seem a little turned down," so you write to me now; "the truth is I was far through, and came none too soon to the South Seas, where I was to recover peace of body and mind. And however low the lights, the stuff is true. . . ." Well, inasmuch as the South Sea sirens have breathed new life into you, we are bound to be heartily grateful to them, though as they keep you so far removed from

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00365-0 - Across the Plains: With other Memories and Essays

Robert Louis Stevenson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii

Preface

us, it is difficult not to bear them a grudge ; and if they would reconcile us quite, they have but to do two things more—to teach you new tales that shall charm us like your old, and to spare you, at least once in a while in summer, to climates within reach of us who are task-bound for ten months in the year beside the Thames.

Yours ever,

SIDNEY COLVIN.

February, 1892.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-00365-0 - Across the Plains: With other Memories and Essays

Robert Louis Stevenson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

	PAGE
1. ACROSS THE PLAINS	I
2. THE OLD PACIFIC CAPITAL	77
3. FONTAINEBLEAU	108
4. EPILOGUE TO 'AN INLAND VOYAGE'	143
5. RANDOM MEMORIES	168
6. RANDOM MEMORIES CONTINUED	189
7. THE LANTERN-BEARERS	206
8. A CHAPTER ON DREAMS	229
9. BEGGARS	253
10. LETTER TO A YOUNG GENTLEMAN	272
11. PULVIS ET UMBRA	289
12. A CHRISTMAS SERMON	302