

# **OFF THE BEATEN TRACK**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649660605

Off the Beaten Track by F. St Mars

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**F. ST MARS**

**OFF THE  
BEATEN TRACK**



## Off the Beaten Track

# Off the Beaten Track

BY

F. ST MARS

Author of 'The Wild Unmasked,' 'Pinion and Paw,'  
and 'Snapshots of the Wild'

LONDON: 38 Soho Square, W.1

W. & R. CHAMBERS, LIMITED

EDINBURGH: 339 High Street

1906

Edinburgh:  
Printed by W. & R. Chambers, Limited.  
Printed, Sept. 1920.

961  
S1456  
off

## CONTENTS

---

	PAGE
THE SILENCER . . . . .	9
THE WHITE ELEPHANT . . . . .	48
THE BULLET . . . . .	78
FLIES . . . . .	105
SHADOWS . . . . .	138
BREAD AND BUTTER . . . . .	153
SALVAGE . . . . .	181
WATCHERS OF THE MUD . . . . .	222

M309383



**OTHER BOOKS BY F. ST MARS.**

<b>PINION AND PAW</b> .....	6/- net.
<b>THE WILD UNMASKED</b> .....	6/- net.
<b>SNAPSHOTS OF THE WILD</b> .....	5/- net.

**W. & R. CHAMBERS, Limited, LONDON AND EDINBURGH.**

# Off the Beaten Track.

---

## THE SILENCER.

YOUNG FOWLEY stood looking out over the winking, cold flats, over the blaze of the setting sun, over the steely pools, over the snaky channel, toward the wild, lone, weirdly crying wild-fowl, and the blue-gray haze above the marshes touched with rose from that faintly pink sky that betokens frost.

A smudge that was wild-duck slid down out of the haze, and a wedge of geese went 'honking' across. Food! Yes, food—but not for him. A year ago he could have taken his gun and shot 'two couple o' duck,' or, if the weather was hard enough, Old Fowley's punt, with the huge, ten-foot swivel-gun at bow, and, with a little luck and not a little risk, have bagged ten or twenty fat widgeon. And these he could have sold for money; and money was rent; money was clothes; money was food; money was Old Fowley saved from the terror of the workhouse; money was—

Kate! But now he could not touch a bird; he must not fire a shot. He could see, but could not take. It was the law. The new lord of the manor, a cousin of the old lord, and a commercial man from elsewhere, knowing nothing of local conditions, and caring less, had asserted his right to the foreshore, and his lawyer and his money were at the back of him.

This meant that all shooting by the people, either above or below high-water mark, was stopped. It was nothing to him, of course. He had only claimed his own. Before that the people had looked upon it as their ancient right to shoot anywhere below high-water mark, on the ground that the foreshore belonged to the Crown. He had declared them wrong. To many of the local marshmen the wild-fowling season in the winter ranked as their harvest. Wild-fowling was their calling, as it had been the calling of their fathers before them. Take it away, and they would starve. Taken away, then, it was, and the few that were still left, the remnant of a dying race, were starving in silence. They were too proud to ask.

Moreover, it seemed that poaching was out of the question, for the sound of a gun carries far over those silent, wet solitudes, and the