I disappeared on the night before my twelfth birthday. July 28 1988. Only now can I at last tell the whole extraordinary story, the true story. Kensuke made me promise that I would say nothing, nothing at all, until at least ten years had passed. It was almost the last thing he said to me. I promised, and because of that I have had to live out a lie. I could let sleeping lies sleep on, but more than ten years have passed now. I have done school, done college, and had time to think. I owe it to my family and to my friends, all of whom I have deceived for so long, to tell the truth about my long disappearance, about how I lived to come back from the dead.

(Kensuke’s Kingdom)

.. . Already the storm had continued six days; on the seventh its fury seemed still increasing; and the morning dawned upon us without a prospect of hope, for no one on board even knew where we were. My four boys clung to me in their fright, while my wife wiped the tears from her cheeks.

At this moment a cry of ' Land, land!' was heard through the roaring of the waves, and instantly the vessel struck against a rock so violently as to drive everyone from his place; a tremendous cracking succeeded, as if the ship was going to pieces.

I hurried on deck, and saw a terrible sight. The crew had crowded into the boats till there was no room for us, and even as I appeared they cut the ropes to move off. I cried to them frantically not to leave us, but in vain, for the roaring of the sea prevented my being heard.

(Swiss Family Robinson)

I was born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family, though not of that country, my father being a foreigner of Bremen, who settled first at Hull. He got a good estate by merchandise, and leaving off his trade, lived afterward at York, from whence he had married my mother, whose relations were named Robinson, a very good family in that country, and from whom I was called Robinson Kreutznaer; but by the usual corruption of words in England we are now called, nay, we call ourselves, and write our name, Crusoe, and so my companions always called me.

I had two elder brothers, one of which was lieutenant-colonel to an English regiment of foot in Flanders, formerly commanded by the famous Colonel Lockhart, and was killed at the battle near Dunkirk against the Spaniards; what became of my second brother I never knew, any more than my father and mother did know what was become of me.

(Robinson Crusoe)

My first sight of England was on a foggy March night in 1973 when I arrived on the midnight ferry from Calais. For twenty minutes, the terminal area was a swarm with activity as cars and lorries poured forth, customs people did their duties, and everyone made for the London road. Then abruptly all was silence and I wandered through sleeping, low-lit streets threaded with fog, just like in a Bulldog Drummond movie. It was rather wonderful having an English town all to myself.

(Notes from a Small Island)

Squire Trelawney, Dr. Livesey, and the rest of these gentlemen having asked me to write down the whole particulars about Treasure Island, from the beginning to the end, keeping nothing back but the bearings of the island, and that only because there is still treasure not yet lifted, I take up my pen in the year of grace 17—, and go back to the time when my father kept the "Admiral Benbow" inn, and the brown old seaman, with the saber cut, first took up his lodging under our roof. I remember him as if it were yesterday, as he came plodding to the inn door, his sea-chest following behind him in a hand-barrow; a tall, strong, heavy, nut-brown man; his tarry pig­tail falling over the shoulders of his soiled blue coat; his hands ragged and scarred, with black, broken nails; and the saber cut across one cheek, a dirty, livid white. I remember him looking round the cove and whistling to himself as he did so, and then breaking out in that old sea-song that he sang so often afterward:

"Fifteen men on the Dead Man's Chest— Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!"

(Treasure Island)