

## Foreword

If you have found yourself in possession of this book, whether through purposeful seeking or random happenstance, I thank you dear reader. For we now share a unique and sacred bond. As author and reader we are now locked in timeless dialogue. We have bridged the gaps of geography and time to exchange ideas. And of course while this may not be a dialogue in the traditional sense as you can not reach me through the page in the same way I am reaching you, it is a dialogue in the fact that you can take what I say and do with it as you please. This is my half of the story, my half of the conversation, laid out end to end. I implore you to devise its counterpart, to interject where you want. Write in the margins of this book. Share your thoughts with friends, family, strangers, anyone whom you wish and who is willing to listen. Take the knowledge I supply within these pages and set it free. Throw back the cage door of your mind and let your questions, thoughts, and fancies live happily in the shining sun.

## Introduction

While many of you will no doubt trust my credentials as a historian, many more among you keen readers may ask what real knowledge an obviously well educated man as myself could have on the worldly topic of piracy. Well let me put you at ease. I do not come from a background of noble privilege. My education came about not through a private tutor at Ulmbridge nor nepotistic stint as a clerk at the Royal Academy, rather it came through decades of work and travel. My education is a testament to the wayward spirits of the world, one wrought not only through great perseverance but boundless luck.

I, Llewellyn Wallsup, am the son of a wickie. My father kept a lighthouse five leagues South of Blackcliff on an island too small to have a name. He tended the flame there for twenty-five years. He and my mother, a woman of such substance and constitution that I could fill three volumes detailing only half her virtues. They raised my sister and I on this rock in the sea. My childhood was one of hardship. One of hard labor and little means. But it was also one of simple joy. It was there after all, watching merchant cogs roll over the horizon that I developed my deep love of the sea and all the boundless mystery and beauty wherein.

## Sargosa, the Shanty Isle

Doubtless most reading these words know of Sargosa. Colorful tales have spread far and wide of the little island. Tales of debauchery, tales of sin and blood magic, of brutal pirates and cunning privateers. I caution you to temper your expectations, for the truth of Sargosa is done a

disservice painted in these broad strokes. Yes, there are scoundrels abound on the island. Yes, they take to drink and vice with vigor and enthusiasm, the likes of which I have not observed elsewhere on the globe. But what the dime novels and yellow papers leave out about the Shanty Isle are the true stories. The stories of the lives of the people who live there...