

# GUNNER DEPEW

By  
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## FOREWORD.

"Gunner Depew" is not a work of fiction, but it is more thrilling than any fiction you ever read. It is the true story of the experiences of an American boy who had a fighting career that is unique in the annals of the great war. It is a story crowded with fighting and adventure—big with human courage and endurance. It is the first war narrative that tells the true story of conditions in the German prison camps. It is a story that every American should and will read to the end.

## CHAPTER I.

### In the American Navy.

My father was a seaman, so, naturally, all my life I heard a great deal about ships and the sea. Even when I was a little boy, in Walston, Pa., I thought about them a whole lot and wanted to be a sailor—especially a sailor in the U. S. navy.

You might say I was brought up on the water.

When I was twelve years old I went to sea as cabin boy on the whaler *Therius*, out of Boston. She was an old square-rigged sailing ship, built more for work than for speed. We were out four months on my first cruise, and got knocked around a lot, especially in a storm on the Newfoundland Banks, where we lost our instruments, and had a hard time navigating the ship. Whaling crews work on shares and during the two years I was on the *Therius* my shares amounted to fourteen hundred dollars.

Then I shipped as first-class helmsman on the British tramp *Southern-down*, a twin-screw steamer out of Liverpool. Many people are surprised that a fourteen-year-old boy should be helmsman on an ocean-going craft, but all over the world you will see young lads doing their trick at the wheel. I was on the *Southern-down* two years and in that time visited most of the important ports of Europe. There is nothing like a tramp steamer if you want to see the world. The *Southern-down* was the vessel that, in the fall of 1917, sighted a German U-boat rigged up like a sailing ship.

Although I liked visiting the foreign ports, I got tired of the *Southern-down* after a while and at the end of a voyage which landed me in New York I decided to get into the United States navy. After laying around for a week or two I enlisted and was assigned to duty as a second-class fireman.

People have said they thought I was pretty small to be a fireman; they have the idea that firemen must be big men. Well, I am 5 feet 7½ inches in height, and when I was sixteen I was just as tall as I am now and weighed 168 pounds. I was a whole lot huskier then, too, for that was before my introduction to kultur in German prison camps, and life there is not exactly fattening—not exactly. I do not know why it is, but if you will notice the navy firemen—the lads with the red stripes around their left shoulders—you will find that almost all of them are small men. But they are a husky lot.

Now, in the navy, they always have a newcomer until he shows that he can take care of himself, and I got mine very soon after I went into Uncle Sam's service. I was washing my clothes in a bucket on the forecabin deck, and every garby (sailor) who came along would give me or the bucket a kick, and spill one or the both of us. Each time I would move to some other place, but I always seemed to be in somebody's way. Finally I saw a marine coming. I was nowhere near him, but he hauled out of his course to come up to me and gave the bucket a boot that sent it twenty feet away, at the same time handing me a clout on the ear that just about knocked me down. Now, I did not exactly know what a marine was, and this fellow had so many stripes on his sleeves that I thought he must be some sort of officer, so I just stood by. There was a gold stripe (commissioned officer) on the bridge and I knew that if anything was wrong he would cut in, so I kept looking up at him, but he stayed where he was, looking on, and never saying a word. And all the time the marine kept slamming me about and telling me to get the hell out of there.

Finally I said to myself, "I'll get this guy if it's the brig for a month." So I planted him one in the kidneys and another in the mouth, and he went clean up against the rail. But he came back at me strong, and we were at it for some time.

But when it was over the gold stripe came down from the bridge and shook hands with me!

After this, they did not haze me much. This was the beginning of a certain reputation that I had in the navy for fist-work. Later on I had a reputation for swimming, too. That first day they began calling me "Chink," though I don't know why, and it has been my nickname in the navy ever since.

It is a curious thing, and I never could understand it, but garbles and marines never mix. The marines are good men and great fighters, aboard and ashore, but we garbles never have a word for them, nor they for us. On

shore leave abroad we pal up with foreign garbles, even, but hardly ever with a marine. Of course they are with us strong in case we have a scrap with a liberty party off some foreign ship—they cannot keep out of a fight any more than we can—but after it is over they are on their way at once and we on ours.

There are lots of things like that in the navy that you cannot figure out the reason for, and I think it is because sailors change their ways so little. They do a great many things in the navy because the navy always has done them.

I kept strictly on the job as a fireman, but I wanted to get into the gun turrets. It was slow work for a long time. I had to serve as second-class fireman for four months, first-class for eight months and in the engine room as water-tender for a year.

Then, after serving on the U. S. S. *Des Moines* as a gun-loader, I was transferred to the Iowa and finally worked up to a gun-pointer. After a time I got my C. P. O. rating—chief petty officer, first-class gunner.

The various navies differ in many ways, but most of the differences would not be noticed by any one but a sailor. Every sailor has a great deal of respect for the Swedes and Norwegians and Danes; they are born sailors and are very daring, but, of course, their navies are small. The Germans were always known as clean sailors; that is, as in our navy and the British, their vessels were ship-shape all the time, and were run as sweet as a clock.

There is no use comparing the various navies as to which is best; some are better at one thing and some at another. The British navy, of course, is the largest, and nobody will deny that at most things they are top-notch—least of all themselves; they admit it. But there is one place where the navy of the United States has it all over every other navy on the seven seas, and that is gunnery. The American navy has the best gunners in the world. And do not let anybody tell you different.

## CHAPTER II.

### The War Breaks.

After serving four years and three months in the U. S. navy, I received an honorable discharge on April 14, 1914. I held the rank of chief petty officer, first-class gunner. It is not uncommon for garbles to lie around a while between enlistments—they like a vacation as much as anyone—and it was my intention to loaf for a few months before joining the navy again.

After the war started, of course, I had heard more or less about the German atrocities in Belgium, and while I was greatly interested, I was doubtful at first as to the truth of the re-



Gunner Depew.

ports, for I knew how news gets changed in passing from mouth to mouth, and I never was much of a hand to believe things until I saw them, anyway. Another thing that caused me to be interested in the war was the fact that my mother was born in Alsace. Her maiden name, Dier-vieux, is well known in Alsace. I had often visited my grandmother in St. Nazaire, France, and knew the country. So with France at war, it was not strange that I should be even more interested than many other garbles.

As I have said, I did not take much stock in the first reports of the Hun's exhibition of kultur, because Fritz is known as a clean sailor, and I figured that no real sailor would ever get mixed up in such dirty work as they said there was in Belgium. I figured the soldiers were like the sailors. But I found out I was wrong about both.

One thing that opened my eyes a bit was the trouble my mother had in getting out of Hanover, where she was when the war started, and back to France. She always wore a little American flag and this both saved and endangered her. Without it, the Germans would have interned her as a Frenchwoman, and with it, she was sneered at and insulted time and again before she finally managed to get over the border. She died about two months after she reached St. Nazaire.

Moreover, I heard the fate of my older brother, who had made his home in France with my grandmother. He had gone to the front at the outbreak of the war with the infantry from St. Nazaire and had been killed two or three weeks afterwards. This made it a sort of personal matter.

But what put the finishing touches to me were the stories a wounded Canadian lieutenant told me some months later in New York. He had been there and he knew. You could not help believing him; you can always tell it when a man has been there and knows.

There was not much racket around New York, so I made up my mind all of a sudden to go over, and get some for myself. Believe me, I got enough racket before I was through. Most of the really important things I have done have happened like that: I did them on the jump, you might say. Many other Americans wanted a look, too; there were five thousand Americans in the Canadian army at one time they say.

I would not claim that I went over there to save democracy, or anything like that. I never did like Germans, and I never met a Frenchman who was not kind to me, and what I heard about the way the Huns treated the Belgians made me sick. I used to get out of bed to go to an all-night picture show, I thought about it so much. But there was not much excitement about New York, and I figured the U. S. would not get into it for a while, anyway, so I just wanted to go over and see what it was like. That is why lots of us went, I think.

There were five of us who went to Boston to ship for the other side: Sam Murray, Ed Brown, Tim Flynn, Mitchell and myself. Murray was an ex-garby—two hitches (enlistments), gun-pointer rating, and about thirty-five years old. Brown was a Pennsylvania man about twenty-six years old, and had served two enlistments in the U. S. army and had cut with the rank of sergeant. Flynn and Mitchell were both ex-navy men. Mitchell was a noted boxer. Of the five of us, I am the only one who went in, got through and came out. Flynn and Mitchell did not go in; Murray and Brown never came back.

The five of us shipped on the steamship *Virginian* of the American-Hawaiian line, under American flag and registry, but chartered by the French government. I signed on as water-tender—an engine room job—but the others were on deck—that is, seamen.

We left Boston for St. Nazaire with a cargo of ammunition, bully beef, etc., and made the first trip without anything of interest happening. As we were tying to the dock at St. Nazaire, I saw a German prisoner sitting on a pile of lumber. I thought probably he would be hungry, so I went down into the officers' mess and got two slices of bread with a thick piece of beefsteak between them and handed it to Fritz. He would not take it. At first I thought he was afraid to, but by using several languages and signs he managed to make me understand that he was not hungry—had too much to eat, in fact.

I used to think of this fellow occasionally when I was in a German prison camp, and a piece of moldy bread the size of a safety-match box was the generous portion of food they forced on me, with true German hospitality, once every forty-eight hours. I would not exactly have refused a beefsteak sandwich, I am afraid. But then I was not a heaven-born German. I was only a common American garby. He was full of kultur and grub; I was not full of anything.

There was a large prison camp at St. Nazaire, and at one time or another I saw all of it. Before the war it had been used as a barracks by the French army and consisted of well-made, comfortable two-story stone buildings, floored with concrete, with auxiliary barracks of logs. The German prisoners occupied the stone buildings, while the French guards were quartered in the log houses. Inside, the houses were divided into long rooms with whitewashed walls. There was a gymnasium for the prisoners, a canteen where they might buy most of the things you could buy anywhere else in the country, and a studio for the painters among the prisoners. Officers were separated from privates—which was a good thing for the privates—and were kept in houses surrounded by stockades. Officers and privates received the same treatment.

## CARED LITTLE FOR POLITICS

President Cleveland, However, Had Real Liking for the Law, and Loved to Fish.

"President Cleveland loved the law better than he did politics," remarked R. O. Brown, a former resident of Buffalo, to a reporter of the Washington Post. "Had he considered his own duties he would never have left his practice for political office. I doubt if even the prospect of becoming president would have induced him to enter politics."

"It was my privilege to know Mr. Cleveland when he was practicing his profession before he entered politics. He was not what might be termed a glittering success as a lawyer. He had no business instinct so far as the law was concerned, but he delighted in intricate legal problems, and much preferred to take a case that involved apparently hopeless questions. It could not be said he was a good pleader, and while the average person was not attracted by his addresses in court, judges on the bench had the greatest respect for them, because they were profound and logical."

"When he was not engaged in law, Cleveland delighted in utter abandonment of all things that required thought; above everything else he loved to fish. I recall that when some of his Democratic friends wanted him to become a candidate for mayor he said: 'I don't want any more of politics. I want to stay right here in Erie county, where I can go fishing occasionally. I do not care if I never get outside the borders of Erie.'"

Shields have been invented to prevent the propellers and rudders of powerboats being tangled in fishermen's nets.

however, and all were given exactly the same rations and equipment as the regular French army before it went to the front. Their food consisted of bread, soup, and vino, as wine is called almost everywhere in the world. In the morning they received half a loaf of Vienna bread and coffee. At noon they each had a large dish of thick soup, and at three in the afternoon more bread and a bottle of vino. The soup was more like a stew—very thick with meat and vegetables. At one of the officers' barracks there was a cook who had been chef in the largest hotel in Paris before the war.

All the prisoners were well clothed. Once a week, socks, underwear, soap, towels and blankets were issued to them, and every week the barracks and equipment were fumigated. They were given the best of medical attention.

Besides all this, they were allowed to work at their trades, if they had any. All the carpenters, cobblers, tailors and painters were kept busy, and some of them picked up more change there than they ever did in Germany, they told me. The musicians formed bands and played almost every night at restaurants and theaters in the town. Those who had no trade were allowed to work on the roads, parks, docks and at residences about the town.

Talk about dear old jail! You could not have driven the average prisoner away from there with a 14-inch gun. I used to think about them in Brandenburg, when our boys were rushing the sentries in the hope of being bayoneted out of their misery.

While our cargo was being unloaded I spent most of my time with my grandmother. I had heard still more about the cruelty of the Huns, and made up my mind to get into the service. Murray and Brown had already enlisted in the Foreign Legion, Brown being assigned to the infantry and Murray to the French man-of-war *Cassard*. But when I spoke of my intention, my grandmother cried so much that I promised her I would not enlist—that time, anyway—and made the return voyage in the *Virginian*. We were no sooner landed in Boston than back to St. Nazaire we went.

Gunner Depew, on board the French dreadnaught *Cassard*, gives the Pollux a sample of the marksmanship for which the American gunners are famous. Then he leaves his ship and goes into the trenches. Don't miss the next instalment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## Something to "Greet" About.

Persons casting about for something to worry about may take pleasure in recalling from "The Little Minister" the manner in which the little simple folk in Scotland regard the northern lights—"the devil's rainbow," Waster Lunny called it. "I saw it six times in July month," he said, "and it made me shut my een. You was out admiring it, domine, but I can never forget that it was seen in the year '12 just afore the great storm. I was only a laddie then, but I mind how that awful wind stripped a' the standing corn in the glen in less time than we've been here at the water's edge. It was called the dell's bosom. My father's himmost words to me was, 'It's time eneuch to greet, laddie, when you see the aurora borealis.' Waster Lunny was "greeting" o'er the drought then, but twelve hours later the Quaharty was out of its banks, washing out the corn and with a year's store of wool on its crest was dashing out to sea.

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## Necessity.

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## Slightly Nervous.

Flanagan, a brand new soldier, was placed on guard one dark night. Failing to see another soldier approaching until he was almost beside him, Flanagan nearly jumped out of his skin but managed to quaver: "W-who goes there?" One of the told the fellow's name, and Flanagan got out sure that he wasn't going to be killed right away, says Flanagan, regaining his courage: "Advance then and give the discount."

## Moon by "Earthlight."

When the crescent of the new moon appears in the west the phenomenon called "the old moon in the young one's arms" is often observed. Partly embraced by the horns of the crescent is seen the whole round orb of the moon. The cause of this appearance is that the "earthlight" upon that part of the moon not reached by the sunshine is sufficiently brilliant to render it faintly visible to our eyes.

## Harnesses Sun's Rays.

An experimenter in the Royal College of Science in Toronto claims that he has found a way to harness the sun's heat to industrial tasks of almost any nature. For instance, by his experiments with mirror combinations he has focused reflected rays so as to melt a bar of lead at a temperature below freezing to a depth of one and a half inches in 43 seconds.

## Intended No Harm.

Lucy was playing up on the lawn with her little puppy when the dog next door came up wagging his tail in a most friendly way. The little pup stuck his tail between his legs and started for the house. Lucy caught him, saying: "Don't be afraid, pup; he won't hurt you; he just came over to introduce himself."

## TIME TO PUT ON BRAKES

With the Passing of His Fiftieth Birthday Man Should Take a Few Moments and Think Hard.

When you have passed, say, your fiftieth birthday anniversary, that forty old gent, Mr. Time, puts the skids under you and greases them good and plenty.

It is appalling, then, how quickly the days and the weeks and the months pass. You start in on Monday morning, and before you know it, it is Saturday night again. Even the years slip by as though you were riding through life on a roller coaster.

The thing to do then, brother, is to put on the brakes. Slow up and get a little more enjoyment out of the scenery.

Some men think that just the other way is the best method to adopt, but we are convinced that they are making a mistake. Their idea is that the thing to do when one grows gray and bald is to keep up with the procession, wear pinch-back clothes, silk socks and a sailor hat with a polka-dot band.

But, if you do that, all you achieve is an acceleration of the pace. It is a pathetic form of camouflage that deceives no one, and yourself least of all. When you are fifty and over, you know it, and everyone else knows it.

When a man is fifty he should have a home in the country, or at least out of the town. He should awake before dawn and say good morning to the sun, sip his glass of water deliberately instead of gulping it down, move serenely, take his time.

When night comes he should be able to say, "Well, this has been a fine, long day," instead of saying, "For the love of Mike, where has this day gone to?" Then, when old age comes, you will be able to say with the sage: "Old age is the night of life, but is the night not beautiful with stars?"—Los Angeles Times.

## Real "Lucky Bone."

One of the most precious possessions of an officer in England, and one which excited much curiosity during a recent short leave, is an ordinary wishbone which he has had mounted in gold and carries about with him as a mascot, it having already, he avers, once saved his life.

It appears that while near the front line in France he was enjoying a rare meal of doubtful chicken with a couple of brother officers, and was just about to try conclusions with the wishbone with his opposite comrade when it slipped from his plate and dropped under the heavy oak table the three had managed to secure from a ruined farmhouse for their barn billet. No sooner had the Birmingham man got under the table to grope for the bone than the barn was reduced to debris by a couple of direct hits from enemy airplanes.

The other two officers were killed outright, but the stout table saved the third from any material injury. The wishbone was firmly clasped in his right hand when he was dug out of the ruins.

## Hit Profiteers in Meat.

Queensland, New South Wales, has found a way to get cheap meat. Its policy, inaugurated by the Queensland labor government in November, 1915, is now past the experimental stage and working well. Convinced that exploitation was going on "on a grand scale," and finding every attempt at price restriction met with bitter complaints from dealers, the government decided to test the situation itself, and set up a state butcher shops. After two years and a half of operation, reports the staff correspondent of the Montreal Star at Queensland, the price of meat, which had increased 100 per cent in war time, under private control has been brought down "to a figure equal to what it was before the war, plus a difference due to legitimate causes, such as droughts." Beef fell nine cents a pound when the first state shop was opened.

## Japan's Early Submarines.

Kamugusu Minakata, in London Notes and Queries, tells of the existence, in the seventeenth century, of far Eastern ancestors of the modern submarine and ironclad. Kuki Morikata was hidden by Ieyasu during the winter siege of Osaka castle, in 1614, to build four "blind boats" to stop the musketry firing from a turret which was annoying his army considerably. Kuki thereupon constructed some "blind boats," manned them with his soldiers, advanced therewith submerged in the moat and crushed the turret with his cannon. Thence was made known how to build a "blind boat" as it had originally been invented by Lord Kuki. This is the evidence of an anonymous writer of the year 1700 or thereabouts.

## Gipsies Came From Far East India.

When the gipsies first appeared in England in the fifteenth century the name gipsy was given to them by the English people, who believed them to have come from Egypt. The French, by similar mistake, called them Bohemians. But a careful study of their race, and especially their language, shows that they came originally from India. The gipsy language is derived from the Sanscrit, as are the other Aryan languages of India. A similar error was made by the English when they called a distinctly American bird a turkey, under the impression that it was an importation from the Ottoman empire, and by the French when they called the same bird cock d'Inde, believing that it came from India.

## Lots to Say.

Three of them had been in one little room for three days, an American, a Frenchman and an Italian. "Come a Red Cross man on the afternoon of the third day."

"Is there anything I can do for you?" he asked.

"Yes," replied the American, "you might get an interpreter. Turkey and Gaston and I have been trading tobacco and showing each other other gipsy pictures and saying 'oui' and 'et' and 'yes' for three days now, and we've got a lot to tell each other, if you can get somebody to help us out."

# FURS PROMISE TO BE IN EVIDENCE

New York.—Once upon a time the Roman warriors pulled over their heads the shaggy hides of animals as they advanced on the enemy. They had the primitive, childlike belief that the sight of the animals would frighten the opposing side. Such is the history of the grenadier caps worn by the British army, and such is probably the inspiration of the new warlike clothes invented in these times of war.

These are worn in Paris, or rather they were worn at the Paris openings, says a fashion writer. They have arrived in this country, and their acceptance is debatable.

There are women who will wear anything new, regardless of its effect on their appearance, and these women may make the new fabrics fashionable. At first glance, they are rather terrifying. One has a slight creeping of feeling for the opposing side to the legends of Caesar. Even a stout-hearted warrior would hate to face a great rush of animal skins moving toward him with rapidity.

That will be the situation that must be faced by every stout-hearted man this winter, if these shaggy materials take first place in fashion. To the observer they are the leading phase of the season's output. They are purely a French invention, and even if they are not accepted in their entirety of shagginess, they will undoubtedly pave the way for an immediate output of silky materials with rough surfaces.

The first of these materials was called "Lionceau," and was invented late last winter, I think, and then used as a substitute for fur.

## Magnificent as Well as Shaggy.

The majority of those who dip deeply into the sources of fashions and fabrics insist that the entire output of these animalistic materials is due to the recollection of monkey fur. That, however, would not explain the other fabrics which are used in the new French gowns that are arriving in this country, and which have hunting scenes, magnificently ornamental, on a dark background. Jenny uses this material for panels and for large pieces of evening frocks.

Then there are other fabrics which show birds and birds' plumage as the ornamental design, but these are of minor brilliancy as against the animal fabrics, which not only toss about the red and burnt-orange hair of monkeys and orang-outangs, but also the manes of animals such as never existed on land or sea; these are made from five- and six-inch strands of curled silky floss interwoven with metal.

The bird fabrics are called "Oiseau" and the burnt-orange hides are called "Orange-outang." In other gowns, especially one from Balloz, there is used a new material called, "Tolison d'Or," which means "The Golden Fleecce."

Still another material—and the loveliest of all because it is the most practical for American usage—is the imitation of a medieval coat of mail. This fabric, alongside the shaggy ones, seems to be cultured and modern.

I am dwelling in detail on all these fabrics of the hour because I believe that the great masses of women over this continent are going into the shops very soon to buy materials for their new clothes. Every woman does not have an expensive dressmaker or a great department store to furnish her costumes for the season. Such tricks of fortune favor only the few. The war has brought about an immense amount of home dressmaking, for all the seamstresses in the world cannot go into munition factories and earn large wages. Some of them must stick to their trade, and those who do can reap a harvest.

## HIGH NECKS AND NO SLEEVES

New Evening Gown is a Revival of an Old Historical Fashion Exploited Years Ago.

The long skirt has been accepted by America, France and Great Britain for the day as well as the evening, an authority states, regardless of the fact that wartime activities seem to demand the shortest skirt we have ever worn.

Another feature of apparel upon which there is such a general unification of spirit is the introduction in America of a type of gown that many Americans like. It is for the evening, and has a high collar and absolutely no sleeves. This is a revival of an old historical fashion which was exploited in this country over a quarter of a century ago. The same model worn then is restored now from the family album. It is a princess cut, with a train, a high ruche at the neck, after the Medici or the Elizabethan manner, and merely tight ornamental armholes. No gloves are to be worn with this gown; it is intended to show the arm at its best.

France persists in the use of black and white checkboard fabrics for trimming, and they appear in America, but are not greeted with much enthusiasm. It is a difficult design to handle unless the checkboard comes down into such small dimensions that it evaporates into checks. Worth has insisted upon the broad form as an excellent ornamentation for top coats and capes, and the Americans have taken up the idea as a lining for capes with considerable success.

There is to be no end of capes, you know. They belong to the slip-on, slip-off-easily variety of clothes, which all women consider part of the effort toward economy in time.

## One-Sided Bead Embroidery.

One effective frock of black satin has a big design in colored beads worked out at the bottom of the skirt. It is an irregular design, and as it is on only one side of the skirt, near the hem, it gives a one-sided look to the frock—but one-sided look that is highly attractive.

## Fad for Color.

Never before, surely, was there such a fad for color in dress accessories. There are collar and cuff sets of apricot, rose, green, buff, white edged with black or a pastel shade, white embroidered with colored polka dots, white bordered with bands of plaid, white laden with many strips of tape shirring. Every imaginable shade and combination may be seen as well as every possible style of collar or cuff.

Now comes a clever millinery designer who goes even further. If French artificial flowers are high priced, what cares she? All that matters is the appearance. No one cares if the flowers are really there or not.