

Gunner Depew

than for speed. We were out four months on my first cruise, and were badly battered, especially in a storm on the Newfoundland Banks, where we lost our instruments, and had a hard time navigating the ship. I got knocked about, too, for there was a big whaler aboard, who used to beat me up almost every day. He thought I did not put on enough style in bringing the grub to the forecabin. I was not a very fancy waiter, I guess. Later, I often used to think of that big bruiser when I was in the navy and my fists were making a reputation for themselves. Whaling crews work on shares, and during the two years I was on the *Therifus* my shares amounted to fourteen hundred dollars (£280).

Then I shipped as first-class helmsman on the British tramp *Southerndown*, 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 turn at the wheel. On a sailing ship like the *Therifus*, they have four men to the wheel; on a steamer, one; it is the steam steering-gear that makes the difference. I was on the *Southerndown* two years, and in that time visited most of the important ports of Europe—Spezia, Bilbao, Cadiz, Brest, Liverpool, Odessa, Archangel, Hamburg, Rotterdam. There is nothing like a tramp steamer if you want to see the world. The *Southerndown* is the vessel which, in the fall of