

# The New USS WAKEFIELD

*T*HE Government declared the charred Manhattan "a constructive total loss," and purchased the crippled giant's remains from the United States Lines.

Soon blow torches flamed and air hammers roared, day and night, cutting away the deformed and twisted superstructure, as far down as the waterline.

Hundreds of Navy Yard welders, riveters, plumbers, electricians, tin-knockers, carpenters, and other workmen skilled in ship construction swarmed aboard the vessel, to raise up a new modern all-out troop transport. The converted vessel was no more. A troop transport was in the making, the first and finest of its kind—the USS WAKEFIELD. A transport equipped with the most modern safety devices known.

The vessel was to be more than a transport. It must travel alone across the ocean. Powerful surface and anti-aircraft guns demanded prominent places on every weather deck. A chain of heavy life rafts encircled the ship's railing, ready for any emergency.

On February 10, 1944, the new WAKEFIELD was commissioned. Commodore W. N. Derby, U.S.C.G. (the first commanding officer of the vessel), District Coast Guard Officer, Boston, Mass., reviewed the history of the transport. Captain Ronan C. Grady, U.S.N., Captain of the Yard, Navy Yard, Boston, handed over the command of the new vessel to Captain Roy L. Rancy, U.S.C.G.