

**General Hodges welcomed aboard
by Captain Baker**



The Sturgis was not in at the beginning of the war but it was destined to be on the scene for the end of it. We had finished our mission in Manila and everyone waited anxiously for the word to go back to the States. Orders came, but they were not for San Francisco. Our new orders were "Destination Tokyo". The passenger list was to carry many names which were to appear on the document accepting the surrender of Japan.

Most of the twenty Generals came on board a few hours before sailing. As they came up the gangway amid the flashing of cameras we could follow in the uniforms and faces the course of the Pacific War. General Courtney Hodges whose First Army had fought so brilliantly in Europe was a symbol of the full force of America's power which Japan had begun to feel after the defeat of Germany. China's heroic struggle against a merciless foe was made more real in the persons of General Hsu Yung Chang. Lt. General Van Oyen recalled to us the days when we watched the crimson blot of Japan's bloody conquest spread over the maps of the East Indies. Australia's magnificent stand against almost impossible odds flashed before us as we watched Rear Admiral Moore and Air Vice Marshall Jones come aboard. In all their faces we could see the signs of the past lighted now with joy of Victory and diffused with the tranquility of peace. It was a turning point in history they were to witness but for many the greater happiness lay in the knowledge that their people were at last free. We watched as Major General Valdez, Commanding General of the Philippine Army, said goodbye to his family. Our two visits to Manila had shown us what they and their people had suffered during the war. This farewell had no sorrow in it. He was coming back.

Those who watched these men who had played such important roles in the war found a deeper understanding of what it meant and thought of the millions who had suffered so much. These men were the people of China and Australia and the East Indies.

