

Box 19-9



The "Delta Queen," 285-foot, paddle-wheeled steamboat moves up Mississippi River. Edwin J. Quinby, Summit engineer, is co-owner of 33-year-old craft.

Summit Engineer-Organist Purchases Mississippi River Boat So He Can Spend Days Playing Calliope

By JOHN T. CUNNINGHAM

NO ONE laughed when a very young electrical engineer sat down to the calliope keyboard aboard the showboat "Lulu Belle" in Huntington, W.Va., 43 years ago. They were so eager to get a replacement that even this lean, unlikely-looking kid could be tolerated if he could make those keys respond. A showboat might better lose its paddlewheels than its calliope player, and the "Lulu" had lost hers.

The keys responded, the 22-year-old engineer promptly took a two-week vacation he had coming, and he floated down river for 14 glorious days and nights of calliope playing. Then he returned to his job, never again to be No. 1 steam organ man on the river.

But the wheel of life has swung full cycle for Edwin Jennys (Jay for short) Quinby, an electronics engineer at Shepard Laboratories in Summit. This summer, if all goes well, Mr.

Quinby once more will be playing (part-time) a genuine uprarious steam calliope aboard a Mississippi River steamer.

Who is to stop him? He owns the boat (at least, he's a partner).

TODAY, the steamboat, the "Delta Queen," on her first cruise of the season, is moving up the Ohio River after two weeks on the Mississippi and a stopover at New Orleans. Mr. Quinby, naturally, is aboard.

But most weekends he is reluctantly at his home in Summit, a converted carriage house on Blackburn Rd. Naturally, he lives in a carriage house — he is a complicated man. He needs wide-open spaces for his full organ and two consoles and a half dozen other space-consuming hobbies.

But if guests drop in, today or any day, Mr. Quinby almost surely will talk about the "Delta Queen," that big beautiful steamboat on the Mis-

issippi River. The "Queen," last surviving overnight sternwheeled cruise boat on the river, has been owned since February, 1958, by the Summit man, his son, Jack (a marine engineer) and Richard C. Simonton of Los Angeles.

It isn't difficult to get Mr. Quinby to discuss the boat. He reels off the dimensions—285 feet long, 58 foot beam, seven foot draft, paddle wheel 26 feet in diameter. But dimensions don't do much more for the "Delta Queen" than tape measure statistics do for a beauty queen. They give a clue, but that's all.

THE big ship is gleaming white all over with a bright red paddle wheel. Travel writers and newspaper editors have enthused enough about her to make her charm clear. Jay Quinby tells visitors about her beauty, too, and even if you discount, say 50 per cent, for the fact that he's an owner

and a steamboat enthusiast from away back, the "Delta Queen" still emerges as something very special.

"We figure this boat as a way to escape the jet age, away from radios and television sets and speeding automobiles," Mr. Quinby declares. "This has rung a sympathetic bell; we've kept the Queen's 200 air-conditioned staterooms filled. We've run the pants off the old girl."

Last season the Delta Queen was fully booked, right from its first trip in April to its last in November. This year the prospects for full booking seem assured. Four 20-day cruises (including the present trip) between the home port of Cincinnati and New Orleans are scheduled. Thirteen other trips, of varying distances and to various ports along the Ohio, Tennessee and Mississippi rivers, are mixed between the glamorous junkets to New Orleans.

(Continued on Following Page)

NEWARK SUNDAY NEWS

REPRINTED BY PERMISSION

