Down in Cincinnati, at the public landing, at least during the summer, floats a grand anachronism...a relic, not of an era, but of a century. In quiet splendor, moored high on the levee that harbors the Ohio River, is the Queen. She's a sternwheeler, pushed along by steam; reminiscent of Mark Twain himself, all dressed up in gingerbread and brass and mahogany, with a promenade off the Texas deck that'll put a strut in the gait of any woman old enough to know how to walk. She's a beauty, this Queen...Delta Queen, to be polite. And she has a strange effect on all who go aboard. Set one foot on her broad white stage, and she's in your blood.

Wait a minute Rooster. Got to get the Volks-wagon on. (PAUSE)
Wait a minute, Rooster! Volkswagon comin' on!

ATC in background (#1, General Riverfront Noise)

C Sound continues full

LEIF:

That's Captain Ernest Wagner, master of the Delta Queen...if she has one. As big and burley a riverman as you'd ever want to meet. Journalists, of the last fifty years at least, have most always attempted to stay impartial in their reports...like many, Montage is known for that. This time, we did not succeed.

C Sound continues

WAGNER:

Okay Don. Pick it up about a foot. Hit it hard in and come about dead slow.

C Sound continues

LEIF:

We went aboard for a three day cruise because people told us this old boat ought to be a national shrine...or at least a kind of wandering landmark that churns the waters of the Ohio and Mississippi all the way to New Orleans. We ought to report on it, they said.

WAGNER:

Tighten up your headline. Keep your headline tight.

LEIF:

But our journalistic intuition and a bit of
LEIF CONTINUED:

reality told us it was just an old boat...doomed by Congress. And old boat, that, however fanciful she might seem, didn't really matter at all. Aboard, nostalgia saw with a clearer eye, and she is what she is...a touch of Americana the way it was...before we grew super sophisticated...before we were blackmailed by change.

WAGNER:

We'll wait 'til he gets by...we'll keep working our stern out a little bit.

LEIF:

By one of those quirks of law that seems to be most numerous nowdays, the Delta Queen will die at her moorings this November of 1970...doomed by a law she cannot obey because she is what she is. This report is not a history of steamboats...or of the good ole days...or of river traffic...or of the failings of Congress.

This is about a grand old lady who could quite literally live forever, were it not for the confusion of values that seems to infect Washington.

This might be, as well, an open letter to Congress...an appeal to change what it has done. If not, perhaps we can lamely appeal
DISSOLVE TO B ROLL
BOW OF QUEEN

DISSOLVE TO A ROLL

DISSOLVE TO B ROLL
MATTE TITLE

MATTE MONTAGE

FADE TO BLACK

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LEIF CONTINUED:

with the British...in all sincerity...

God Save the Queen.

(ATC OUT)

WAGNER:

Pull 'er back. All Gone.

All gone, Billy.

C SOUND FULL (Caliope Music)

BEGIN VERY, VERY SLOW FADE OUT OF MUSIC
ON C ROLL (:14 FADE OUT TIME)

ALL SOUND OUT

END SEGMENT A
GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

SEGMENT B

MUSIC FULL CART #1

SLOW CROSSFADE FROM MUSIC TO A ROLL SOUND

C SOUND FULL, A SOUND UNDER

LEIF:

Like the Delta Queen, the problems that face her are one of a kind...a quirk...an oddity that could apply only to such an apparition from the past.

A SOUND FULL, C SOUND OUT

FADE A SOUND UNDER

C SOUND FULL

LEIF:

And those aboard her are one of a kind as well...neither blind to the present, nor bound to the past. This is the story as we found it...an impression, an essay...and it is certain, such people as this may never be found again.

A SOUND UP SLIGHTLY, C SOUND OUT

A SOUND CONTINUES...(MAYBE HOT)

C SOUND FULL, A SOUND UNDER
MUSTER:

Yeh, I think the Congress figured that they were really doing a good service for Americans by passing a law that would keep unsafe and substandard foreign vessels from calling on our ports. I think they really let it get out of hand when they included the Delta Queen in the law. After all, the Delta Queen is a riverboat, and it's never more than a few feet from shore. It doesn't encounter any of the risks and rigors of the ocean. The biggest wave we ever hit is from a motorboat. They did include us nevertheless, and they say that because our superstructure is made partly out of wood, that we can't continue to operate after November second. There's no way to make the Delta Queen conform to the act. The act pertains to construction standards, and they're based upon modern materials; they say that we have to use completely fire-retardant material, that means materials that weren't available when the Delta Queen was built. The Delta Queen's kind of a great boat. It's the last one of a breed that no longer exists. We'd like to see it continue just as it is. We think it's got a right to. We believe that people ought to have the decision of whether or not it runs.
Steamboat isn't exactly a going business anymore. And we've got pilots who are in their 60's, 70's and even their 80's, who come on board just to run the boat, for the fun of it, who sit up there in the pilothouse and swap yarns and talk about landmarks and landings that were built or destroyed 15, 20, 30, 40 years ago.

But it does bring back memories to it... Uh, there is two more, three more in existence... the Belle of Louisville, used at the City of Louisville, for operating dayli...excursions, but not carrying any passengers...overnight. And there's two more, one at New Orleans, Louisana, which is the President, and the Admiral at St. Louis. Both of those are sidewheelers, they're not sternwheelers. The only other sternwheeler left is the Belle of Louisville, other than this one.
CAPT. WAGNER CONTINUED:
when I was 17 years old...that was an
excursion boat, it was the Island Queen, was
a, a sidewheeler...I started out as a deckhand,
watchman, got my mate's license, then I got
my master's papers.

A SOUND OUT, C SOUND CONTINUES BKG

SEAGUE C SOUND TO MUSIC FULL (CART # 3)

C SOUND FULL, MUSIC IN BKG

CAPT. WAGNER:
Well...they told me that when I washed my
hands in the Ohio River water, that was the
end of it.

MUSIC FULL, C SOUND OUT

CAPT. WAGNER:
I'd never get away from it. Well, that's
been just about it.

C SOUND FULL, MUSIC UNDER

CAPT. WAGNER:
When I washed my hands in it back in 1928,
why that's what I've did ever since.

C SOUND OUT, MUSIC FULL

CAPT. WAGNER:
And naturally, I love a steamboat...and of
course, the Delta Queen is the last of this
type of operation.
CAPT. WAGNER CONTINUED:

And it's a shame to see the old American way of life completely vanish, and that's what's gonna happen when the Delta Queen goes operation.

C SOUND OUT, MUSIC FULL

MUSIC UNDER, C SOUND FULL

CAPT. WAGNER:

I mean the people on here...you, different class of people...you'd be surprised at how many people that ride this boat among the passengers that make lifetime friends.

C SOUND OUT, MUSIC FULL

C SOUND FULL, FADE OUT MUSIC AFTER C IS IN

C SOUND CONTINUES FULL

OPEN POT ON A ROLL EARLY, SOUND WILL COME IN ON CUE

A ROLL SOUND FULL (WHISTLE), C SOUND UNDER (BALANCE BETWEEN TWO...) SLIGHTLY

C SOUND OUT (GOES OUT ON CUE ON FILM), A SOUND CONTINUES FULL (SECOND WHISTLE)

A SOUND OUT, C SOUND FULL

RADIO CONVERSATION:

WO 8987 (STATIC).. Harry, who owns that boat now, an airline company?

HAMILTON:

Yeh. It's the Overseas National Airways out of New York.
RADIO VOICE:
Yeh. Well, I shore hope they don't
decommission her. I'd like to see her run.
That's ridiculous, that law they passed.
Over.

HAMILTON:
Well. I go along with that too, with you
Bill. I think it's a ridiculous thing, but
I...maybe that's the way the ball bounces,
you never know.

RADIO VOICE:
Well, what I'm afraid of, if anything happens,
you know there'll never be another one built,
and it's something to really keep. Al-righty,
I'll quite bothering you. Thanks a million..
WO 8987 (Static)
A SOUND IN BACKGROUND, C SOUND OUT
(A SOUND IS HOT...KEEP DOWN)

C SOUND FULL

CAPT. WAGNER:
It's gonna be a sad situation if it does go
completely out of operation. It really is.
C SOUND OUT, A CONTINUES BKG, MUSIC FULL
(CART # 4)

FADE TO BLACK

A SOUND AND MUSIC OUT WITH VIDEO

END OF SEGMENT B
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GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

SEGMENT C

C SOUND FULL (MUSIC)

CROSSFADE FROM C SOUND TO B SOUND (PADDLEWHEEL)

C SOUND OUT (THIS HAS NATURAL FADE ON IT)

(SOUND CHANGE ON B ROLL)

C SOUND FULL, B SOUND UNDER

LEIF:

Just out of Louisville, relaxed in a deck chair perched out on the promenade, looking at the Ohio River where it bends its way in every direction but up, you get the feeling that everything worthwhile is here...on the river. The air seems clearer, the breeze cooler, the sun warmer...

SEAGUE FROM B SOUND BKG TO MUSIC FULL (CART C SOUND OUT (VERY SLOW SEAGUE) # 5)

C SOUND FULL, MUSIC TO BKG

LEIF:

Anyway...people on the Delta Queen don't ask much of a person. They feel that if you are aboard in the first place, there must be something good about you...and you become part of the family, yet an individual... important, and genuine.

Out here, or most anywhere on the Queen,
there is almost no noise...no bother...little evidence of movement...little evidence of time.

C SOUND OUT, MUSIC FULL

C SOUND FULL, MUSIC UNDER

LEIF:
Maybe if there ever was a real time machine...this is it. Almost as though you stepped back about a century.

C SOUND OUT, MUSIC FULL

LEIF:
The feel of an antique gets in your bones...after all, the boat and the crew are almost one. Lots of them are older than the Queen...and most all of them have been on the river for so long...

SEAGUE FROM CART # 5 to CART # 6 (ALL MUSIC) IN BACKGROUND

...they don't remember doing anything else.

Like Harry Louden...a pilot...the man responsible for keeping the hull clear and riding straight down the channel. With a little prodding, Harry could draw the shoreline of this Ohio River from Cincinnati clear down to Cairo, Illinois, and maybe
LEIF CONTINUED:

more than that. Dress him a little different, and maybe with a boost from the bar... you might see him coming right out of Mark Twain's pen... right off the Mississippi. C SOUND CONTINUES, MUSIC OUT
WHISTLE (MAY BE HOT), THEN

HARRY LOUDEN:

I don't know about Mark. Well, I never knew him. He wrote a lot of stuff. I read everything about, that he wrote, I guess, that is, all his funny stuff. I never wrote... read some of that other stuff. But about his boatin', I read all that. He was, anyhow, he got his name on a lead line.

(LAUGHS)

I started the 15th day of May in 1927. They needed a dishwasher on that government towboat so I got the job. Flunky, they call it... because I couldn't, wasn't no way to go to school very much. And I guess I done all right by stayin' with it. Oh, I went in the pilot house, went to steering (Radio in BKG) got in with a good man and he took me in the pilot house, started me out and then left and went in the office and left me his job. So, (RADIO IN BKG) I recon I had more good breaks than anybody.
HARRY LOUDEN CONTINUED:

I worked thirty eight years, seven months and thirteen days for the Army Engineers. You see that boat out of Louisville. The big dredge working down, that was one of my old homes. It's something you like to do so...you gets scared sometimes, when things gets tough...you wish somebody else was doing it, but of course when it's pretty then you wanna come back yourself. It gets foggy...windy, nights gets dark. Oh, Lordy, I don't know. Fog, I hate fog worse than anything else. Certain places we just keep on running with that radar, and if it gets too bad, we land, find a place we can...like if you got bad bridges or locks comin' up or something...we'll stick our nose in somewhere. (RADIO IN BKG) Well, you can do better now than you used to could...you could, there's more water now than there used to be, years ago, you'n get in most places on the channel side, get in easy. You know, may not be the best water in the world (RADIO IN BKG) but it won't hurt you...you always get out again.

You get familiar with everything, and you don't worry about it. You think about everything...you really think about...like this place down here, where this headless horseman
rides across this ravine down here. (RADIO BKG) Haunted Holler. There'a a, there's a guy rides a big horse across there, and he wears a sort of a flamin' red coat, no head on him. And you see him in...about three o'clock in the morning usually...if you've been down at the bar, that's, huh, that's when you see him mostly, see. (LAUGHS)... Huh, that's, oh I know people who have seen him. I have never saw him. But there, right...that ravine right there...Haunted Holler...is where he crosses. Rides across... he just, that horse just flies across there in the sky. He wears a flamin' red coat. No head. A headless horseman. Supposed to be a true story. Now, I wouldn't swear to that but...(LAUGHS SOFTLY)

MUSIC FULL (C SOUND CONTINUES)

B SOUND UNDER, MUSIC (C SOUND) OUT (GOES OUT ON CUE. OPEN POT ON B ROLL EARLY) (THIS SOUND IS HOT....)

FADE ALL SOUND OUT WITH VIDEO

FADE IN A ROLL

MUSIC FULL (CART # 7)

C SOUND FULL

LEIF:
The story of the Delta Queen is simple. She is an old relic of the past. Her major fault is that she is old. Her superstructure has a lot of wood...like the grand staircase up to
LEIF CONTINUED:

The Salon...or the mahogany panels...or the wooden doors to staterooms.

But she is ultimately doomed...by a safety-at-sea law applied to a riverboat because she carries 192 passengers, overnight. If she carried only fifty, the law would not apply. Some 250-thousand people have written letters to Congressmen asking for a permanent exemption for this old boat...18 Governors have asked...26 Congressmen introduced bills to save her, so did four Senators. But one way or another, most of the legislation was stymied...

Perhaps the Congress will give her another three year extension to ply these waters...

And with it, Congress may authorize a subsidy to help build another of glistening steel and imitation walnut and synthetic splendor. But all that safe, charmless stuff will cost ten million dollars they say...and it would be akin to replacing a garden with a plastic flower...like having a plaster imitation of the Pieta. All this because there are some who believe the Queen is a fire hazard...who see teak hand rails and walnut tables as kindling. So, even with an exemption for three years, the ultimate fate of this grand old Queen
LEIF CONTINUED:
is uncertain. Maybe she might be stripped of her overnight accommodation and become an excursion boat...or a floating restaurant... or maybe even go back to California or to South America as a working boat. After all she pays her own way. For the past five years every space has been sold...fire hazard or no. The fact is, there is more fire-fighting equipment aboard than the Coast Guard requires...regular fire drills... even a sprinkler system, unheard of on American boats...and there has never been a major fire on a Green Line boat in 80 years.

Even engineers in the Space program say she can be fireproofed with new paints and material. But....

C SOUND OUT, MUSIC UP SLIGHTLY, BUT REMAINS IN BKG
SEAGULL FROM MUSIC TO C SOUND UNDER (NAT.SOF)
B SOUND FULL

LEIF:
It was here, at Lock 48, below Evansville, when Montage discovered just what effect this grand old lady has. We were on land again, intending to photograph her departure before rushing off to other, more important problems. But in the three days aboard the
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LEIF CONTINUED:

Queen, the people had come to know us, and we
them...and they could not understand how we
could leave.

B SOUND OUT, C SOUND FULL (NAT SOF) (STARTS
WITH WHISTLE AND MAY BE HOT)

PEOPLE SHOUTING TO CAMERA...

DISSOLVE TO B ROLL
Queen in Lock

DISSOLVE TO A ROLL
Queen starts out of lock

DISSOLVE TO B ROLL
as above

A SOUND FULL, C SOUND UNDER

LEIF:

So, here is this old antique...who pays her
way, who gives all who come aboard a chance
to walk back in time...who knows where she
will go...or what she will do?

(SLOWLY FADE OUT C SOUND ON WORDS..Somehow.)

Somehow, it seems we have forsaken her.

God Save the Queen.

FADE IN C SOUND, MUSIC: A SOUND OUT

MUSIC FULL CONTINUES

BEGIN SLOW FADE OUT OF MUSIC

MUSIC OUT WITH VIDEO

END SEGMENT C
SEGMENT D

FADE UP ON A ROLL
Calliope at night

MATTE TITLES

God Save the Queen
Ancker
Robinson
Schwartz
Goulden
Mrzena
Schneider
Moravek
Montage
Public Affairs
MRA

FADE TO BLACK

C SOUND FULL, CALLIOPE MUSIC

ALL SOUND OUT WITH VIDEO

END SEGMENT D