

# 'Completely Drawn Apart' Is Feeling of Carillonneur

From bell tower's top comes word of how it feels to play the biggest musical instrument in the world, the carillon.

## Absolutely Unique

"It's an absolutely unique experience for a musician," says Kamiel Lefevere, the 59-year-old Belgian carillonneur who introduced the art to the United States. Lefevere gave a recital last night from the tower of Trinity Methodist Church.

"When you go up into the tower," said Lefevere, "you feel that you have completely drawn apart from the world. I wish I could describe to you what it is like to ring out Christmas carols on Christmas eve with a whole town spread out before you. It's—well, there is no other feeling quite like it, I am sure."

It is also a physical workout, said Lefevere. The sheer exertion of climbing the stairs to the top has forced many carillonneurs to cut their careers far short of their musical powers. And playing the carillon's outsized keyboard is just as tough.

Trinity Church's 48-bell carillon, for example, has a keyboard about twice as wide as a piano's and set up row upon row like an

organ's. A carillon's keys or levers are attached by wires to the clappers of the bells.

"After an hour at the carillon," said Lefevere, "you are likely to be nearly worn out."

Lefevere was trained by Belgium's master carillonneur, Jef Denyn. He was born about 100 yards from the Cathedral of St. Rombouts in Mechelen, Belgium, and heard Denyn almost every time he played.

## Gave Up Art Career

Lefevere made friends with the cathedral tower watchmen, eventually became a lifelong friend of Denyn himself. Schooled as a painter and etcher at the Belgian Academy of Fine Art, Lefevere gave up a fulltime career in art for the carillon.

He and Denyn founded the Belgian International Carillon School in 1922, the only such school in the world. In 1924 Lefevere introduced the carillon as a professional instrument into the United States at Cohasset. He dedicated many new carillons during the following years.

Since 1927 he has been the carillonneur of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Carillon in New York.