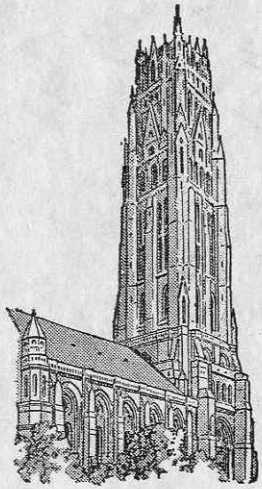
The

LAURA SPELMAN ROCKEFELLER

Memorial Carillon

of

THE RIVERSIDE CHURCH



A Brief Story of Its History, Structure and Use

by

Kamiel Lefévere, *Carillonneur*
Grace H. Patton, *Raconteur*

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IN making the tour of Riverside Church, you surely must not miss seeing the Carillon. Elevators will take you to the twentieth floor, after which you will have a few flights of stairs to climb, and you may be greeted by some of Morningside's buffeting breezes. But you will find the trip well worth the effort. Gazing outward you will gain one of the most remarkable views in New York City. Peering inward you will see the largest Carillon in the world, a marvelous piece of musical mechanism which has aroused the admiration and appreciation of thousands of visitors.

If you happen to be in the Carillon Chamber at certain times when the quarters announce the time, or during a recital, you will get a closeup of this great Carillon in action. At any time during visiting hours you will be given a brief lecture on the Carillon by the guide who will tell you something of the structure and function of this superb "Singing Tower"; and you will come away with your mind bristling with questions.

It is for you who have these questions, and for the many inquirers throughout the country who so often write to Riverside Church, or to its carillonneur, asking about this famous Carillon, that this story has been prepared. It will not only give desirable data, but will also serve the visitor as a souvenir of the occasion.

The Carillon's Ancestry

Visitors from across the water will know without being told that this Carillon traces its ancestry to European predecessors. The history of bells on that

continent is a fascinating one; and it was out of the use of the smaller, less pretentious bells that the larger, more conspicuous ones came. Around the middle of the fourteenth century a record showed how a man was appointed, for the first time, to the duty of hand manipulation of church bells, "to perform on these bells by hand, for every need of the community." For, in those days, the church was the center of the community's activities.

Later in that century a big mechanical advance was made in the use of bells and clocks, the latter being installed in many church belfries to strike off the hour. And a definite beginning of the use of bells in a more musical way was made by the appearance of the "voorslagh." This consisted first of a simple little melody mechanically played from the clock on the bells, and was often used before the striking of the hour on the largest bell, to call the attention of the hearers to the fact that the hour was about to strike. Out of this grew the striking of the half hour and the quarters.

As music took its place more and more in the life of the community, the church tower with its clock and its various tunes became increasingly appreciated parts of the people's everyday existence. This development was most dominant in those countries where the bells were becoming a regular and beloved part of local living, in what is now known as the northern part of France, Belgium, Holland, England and the northwestern section of Germany. The musical possibility of bells was greatly augmented when, around the latter part of the fifteenth century, keyboards made their first appearance.

Chimes were the next stage in development and, as the interest in such music grew, these were created with infinite care so as to produce the utmost beauty and purity of tone. The chime covers the range of less than twenty-three bells, and is usually diatonic in

scale. Most chimes, however, consist of but eight bells, a single octave without any semi-tones, and are used for simple tunes and the ringing of "changes." Chimes have been very popular in England, and an octave of eight bells is considered a "perfect peal."

Third in this process came the carillon, mightiest and farthest reaching in its effectiveness of all the bell family. Its use started around the end of the fifteenth century and has been steadily increasing. A carillon consists of twenty-three bells or more, chromatic in range and played from a keyboard or clavier located in the center of the bells, preferably having the bass-bells below the clavier-room level, with the medium and smaller bells near and above the room itself. This arrangement will allow for the shortest wire connections from key to bell as the means of obtaining an easy and flexible touch, necessary for easy action, brilliant interpretation, and great virtuosity in playing.

So it is seen that the Riverside Carillon has come out of the evolutionary process, along with most created things. The order followed was the bell, the chime, and the carillon — and the greatest of these is the carillon.

In modern times increased interest in carillon art came shortly before and directly after the World War, when the distinguished Joseph ("Jef") Denyn, the great Belgian "Master of the Carillon," was the world's outstanding carillonneur; and thousands of people, especially from America, made pilgrimages to the battlefields of France and Belgium to kneel at the graves of those who had been killed during the conflict. Passing through the torn and tattered remnants of European towns and villages, they were stirred and fascinated by the music of these giant bell-instruments, called carillons.

Following this interest, a phenomenal development of carillon art took place on this side of the Atlantic.

Starting in 1922 with the erection of the carillon at Gloucester, Massachusetts, which was soon followed by the installation of the Cohasset Carillon in the same State in 1924, 49 carillons were put up in this country. These were given chiefly by private donors in the form of Singing Memorials — ranging from 23 to 72 bells. Of these the largest is the one at Riverside Church.

The Carillon's History

The Carillon at Riverside has its own special and very interesting history.

During those early days of rising interest in the carillon in this country, one of the most prominent and interested persons among the donors and patrons of carillon art was Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Junior. As a member of the Park Avenue Baptist Church in New York City, he gave to that institution, in 1924, a carillon consisting of 53 bells which would ring out its music in memory of his beloved mother. The Bourdon, or largest bass-bell (weighing 20,510 pounds) was, at that time, the largest tuned bell in the world. On its metal side it bore the inscription:

In loving memory of my Mother,

Laura Spelman Rockefeller
1839-1915

Whose gentle kindly Spirit
and steadfast Devotion
to Christ and His Cause
will ever be
an Abiding Inspiration,
This Carillon is given.

John D. Rockefeller, Junior,
Anno Domini 1925.

It was soon found, however, that the Park Avenue location was far from ideal for a carillon. Surrounded by a rapidly increasing number of tall apartment houses and submerged in the endless din of nearby traffic, the Carillon had a hard time to convey its message to people under these unfavorable circumstances. So, when it was decided that the Park Avenue Congregation would find a new home on Morningside Heights, those interested in the Carillon were glad that it would have one of the most advantageous positions possible, high up on one of the highest points of the new location. Lifted far above traffic, untroubled by lofty buildings, and housed in a cathedral-like structure where such buildings would never be likely to come near to it, the Carillon would have a chance to come into its own.

Of the original Park Avenue Carillon of 53 bells, 28 were sent back to their famous manufacturers, Gillett and Johnston of Croydon, England, to be recast into the new Carillon. To this were added 15 smaller bells and 4 bass-bells, to complete the 72 bell Carillon of 6 chromatic octaves.

And so the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Carillon took up its abode in the great tower of Riverside Church. To put the huge Bourdon bell, weighing more than 20 tons, into place in the top of the tower, over 300 feet from the ground, was a feat of engineering long to be remembered by those who saw it lifted, on the outside of the tower, by a miracle-working electrical contrivance. The Carillon, when set up and adjusted was the extended, enlarged and perfected gift of the original donor. Mr. Rockefeller had found a fitting place for the permanent memorial to his mother. The Carillon gave its first public recital December 24, 1931, and its music could be heard far across the river into New Jersey.

The Carillon's Abode

The Carillon occupies the vast belfry at the very top of The Riverside Church Tower (the whole of which was also a gift of Mr. Rockefeller to the new church). The tower is 100 feet square at its base and 392 feet high. Since the church itself is on one of the highest points of New York City, it will readily be seen that the Carillon chamber soars high above Riverside Drive traffic and has no adjacent buildings to interfere with its functioning. On the pinnacle of the tower is a red light, burning all night and during times of fog or heavy weather, which warns airplanes of its nearness. The Carillon dwells in majesty above the haunts of men, having the great sweep of air and open spaces all to itself. For only in such a home can it adequately give its message to the world.

The architectural outside of the massive stone tower which is the Carillon's abode, reveals a wealth of sculptural decoration and fanciful imagery so well known to the Middle Ages. Archangels stand like sentries at the corners, each sheltered by a canopy, while characteristic gargoyles and grotesques make their appearance at regular as well as unexpected places.

The twenty-two floors below the great belfry are devoted to specialized uses of the various church school groups and to modern offices and studies. (This, by the way, is the first time in history that a church tower has been so utilized.) If the visitor sees these and then enters the carillon chamber — a realm mysterious and exciting to most people, with its ancient atmosphere of centuries gone by — he is likely to wonder in what time of the world's history he is really existing. But a glimpse at the modernized mechanism and intricate facilities of the Carillon soon convinces him that he is an inhabitant of the present age of science. The intermingling of the old and the new,

the atmosphere of ancient music and modern musical mechanism furnish an increased sense of thrilling adventure.

The Carillon looks out on some of the most interesting sights in New York City. It has some distinguished neighbors. Below it to the east are the buildings of Teachers College, Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University and the Jewish Theological Seminary. Lifting its eyes, it can see the outline of Hellgate and the new Triborough Bridge in the distance.

Quite close to it at the north the Carillon sees Claremont Park, the Juilliard School of Music, International House and Grant's Tomb. Farther to the north are seen the buildings of the Medical Centre and the Presbyterian Hospital, and the famous George Washington Bridge where it spans the Hudson.

Westward the Carillon has no near neighbors except Riverside Park and the Hudson River. It looks across the river to the Palisades along the Jersey shore and, on clear days, can discern the mountain ranges in Pennsylvania, sixty miles away.

Turning to the south the Carillon sees more of Columbia University's extensive grounds and buildings, those of Barnard College being in the foreground. Then, gazing farther south it gains a typical New York view of skyscrapers and narrow, pointed outlines including the Chrysler Building, the towers of Radio City and the pinnacle of the Empire State Building. In between lies a panorama of parks, drives, long avenues and busy streets.

Description of the Carillon and Its Operation

After ascending two and a half flights of stairs we reach the first level of the open bell-chamber, about 302 feet above the street. From the platform above this

level we look down on five of the larger bass-bells of the Carillon. The one located in the centre of this group is the Bourdon, the name always given to the largest bell in the Carillon. It is the largest and heaviest tuned bell in the world, weighing 40,926 pounds, is 122½ inches in diameter and is about the same in height. The inscription around the base of the bell records the fact that: "For the first time in history a carillon compass of five octaves is here achieved and exceeded. This bell, together with low D, D# and F, also certain treble bells, were added to the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Carillon, when the carillon was removed from the Park Avenue Church to The Riverside Church, New York, 1928 A. D."

There are three clappers that strike this bell, each for a separate purpose. At the left side, east near the base, a huge clapper weighing 1000 pounds and arranged at an angular position about five inches off the bell, is actuated by the carillonneur from the clavier in the carillon playing, and strikes down on the bell. Diametrically opposite and also on the outside of the bell is another and similar clapper, which seems to rest on the bell itself, although it is actually one-fourth of an inch away, which shows the delicate adjustment necessary for these tremendous clappers. This hammer, also weighing a half ton, is used exclusively for striking the hours by the most powerful clockwork ever made and operated by a four horse power motor. This clapper is raised about five inches by this clockwork and drops down on the bell. The musical note is low C, three octaves below middle C in the musical register.

Observing this bell more closely, we notice that it is suspended from the center of a steel framework likened to a yoke, the ends coming around the side of the bell almost to the middle, and secured through bearings which make it possible for the bell to swing. Arranged on the outside of this yoke, in an upright

position, are narrow-channeled wheels. In these channels is fastened a driving chain which is connected to the sprocket of a mechanism operated by a five horse power motor. When each of these two five horse power motors is started, putting these mechanisms into operation, the bell starts to swing with an oscillating motion. One motor and mechanism pulls the bell a few degrees to one side of center, then the other mechanism starts to function and pulls the bell up to the other side of center. This operation is repeated and each time pulls the bell up a little higher. When the bell has attained an arc of approximately 100 degrees, the swinging clapper or inside tongue starts to strike. The mechanisms continue to work until the bell attains an arc of approximately 120 degrees, which is as high as is necessary to create a true tolling effect on this bell.

The inside clapper weighs two tons and is counterbalanced in such a way that it follows the oscillation of the bell and strikes just as the bell is reversing its motion, thereby getting the force of a swinging clapper in one direction, and a swinging bell in the other direction. The steel frame necessary to suspend this bell weighs 48,974 pounds. Bell, yoke and inside clapper constitute an approximate weight of 26½ tons, that is actually in motion when this bell swings. And this Bourdon, in its special framework, totals an approximate weight of 47 tons. A remarkable fact, significant of the perfect balance and adjustment, is that this bell and yoke can actually be put in motion by hand, with no real amount of effort.

Among the larger bass-bells of this Carillon five have been installed for swinging, and can easily be distinguished from the others by the wheels and special frame, like the Bourdon. However, during the playing of the Carillon, these bells remain stationary and are struck by clappers arranged on the outside. The other sixty-seven bells are installed in a station-

ary position, with their clappers arranged and striking on the inside of the bell. This inside arrangement of clappers is the most natural and the best way to give a more perfect quality of tone, plus a more delicate and easy action from the clavier, thus enabling the carillonneur to have facility for an easier interpretation and a more brilliant virtuosity.

Directly behind the Bourdon on the south side is bell No. 71, weighing 28,588 pounds, and 109 inches in diameter. Its musical note is D and represents the fourth largest tuned bell in the world. This is a stationary bell and is struck by a clapper arranged on the inside, weighing a little less than a half ton, and the framework on which it is suspended weighs 8,960 pounds.

Behind and almost under this platform to the north of the Bourdon is bell No. 70, musical note D#, weighing 26,385 pounds, and having a diameter of 105 inches, the clapper on the inside. The frame of this bell weighs 9,520 pounds.

To the extreme right of the Bourdon, west, is bell No. 68, note F, weight 17,024 pounds, 92 inches in diameter. This is also one of the five swinging bells, which are all arranged like the Bourdon. It has two three horse power motors to bring it into swinging motion. The frame for this bell weighs 27,440 pounds.

To the left of the Bourdon, on the east, is bell No. 66, weighing 11,346 pounds, 81 inches in diameter, musical note G, and belonging also to the group of swinging bells. Its steel frame weighs 22,176 pounds, and two three horse power motors are used to bring the bell into swinging motion. The five bells and most of their mechanism can be easily observed from this platform, and it is not often that a visitor is afforded the opportunity of walking up through a carillon installation to observe its mechanical intricacy, as it is possible to do in this spacious bell-chamber.

Directly overhead from this platform are bells No. 69 to the west, and No. 67 to the east. Here one can plainly see the way the huge clappers are arranged on the inside. These two large bells are suspended in one frame; bell No. 69 weighs 20,510 pounds, is 98 inches in diameter, note E; and bell No. 67 is 87 inches in diameter, weighs 14,560 pounds, and is tuned to note F#. The weight of the steel frame for these two bells is 11,760 pounds.

All of these large and heavy bass-bells are arranged and suspended in a framework of their own. These frames are in turn mounted and secured to the main structural framework of the Carillon itself, which in turn rests on the structural foundation of the bell chamber. The primary reason for this kind of construction is that any vibration or possible swaying movement is taken up first in the individual frame and then in the main carillon frame and is not carried below the bell chamber's structural foundation. The entire carillon structure represents one large steel framework, suspending a little over one hundred tons of bells, making a total weight of over *five hundred thousand pounds!*

Continuing further up the staircase, broken into small landings and platforms, the visitor will pass close by bell No. 69, which was the original Bourdon in the 53 bell carillon at Park Avenue Church, and reads the memorial inscription on the bell's south side. Then the Carillon Machine Room is passed. In this room, which is really the heart of the mechanics of the whole installation, is housed all the necessary operating machinery such as motors, generators, compressors, quarter-barrel, electric-pneumatic pistons, electric relays, controls for the swinging bells, and the like.

On the next landing above this level and to the south is the smallest of the five swinging bells in this Carillon. Bell No. 61, weighing 4,891 pounds, 61 inches in diameter, is note C, one full octave above

the musical note of the Bourdon. The weight of its frame is 9,632 pounds. This bell has three clappers and can be swung, played automatically, or from the clavier. This bell is swung by a two horse power motor.

On this same level and to the south side of the motor-room is bell No. 64, also a swinging bell, operated by a two horse power motor. It weighs 8,064 pounds, is 72 inches in diameter, has note A, and its frame weighs 8,512 pounds. In it three clappers are arranged and operated in the same way as mentioned above.

Continuing up the staircase, skirted from the rails down with copper wire mesh, one passes so close to the west opening of the tower that at this point one can almost look straight down to Riverside Drive and the Hudson River. On the next platform, 335½ feet above the street level, are the remaining 63 bells, conveniently grouped around and above the clavier-room, which is advantageously placed in the center. West of the cabin are bell No. 65, weight 9,225 pounds, note G#; bell No. 59, weight 3,431 pounds, note D; and bell No. 58, weight 3,003 pounds, note D#. Directly above these are three tiers of medium-sized bells, with six, five and four bells respectively. On the east side of the clavier-cabin are bell No. 60, weight 3,997 pounds, note C#; bell No. 63, weight 6,759 pounds, note A#; and bell No. 62, weight 5,927 pounds, note B.

Above these are two tiers of medium bells, with respectively six and four bells on each tier. Directly above the clavier-room are 32 treble or smallest bells, grouped in three and four tiers.

A large oak sounding-board, 11½ by 12½ feet, has been placed above the 32 smaller bells in the centre, to reflect their sound in a downward direction. Above the upper tiers, on each side of the clavier-room and level with the oak sounding-board, are accoustical

sounding-boards arranged to absorb the high frequencies of the overtones of the medium bells and blend in a better balance with the smaller ones.

The metal of which the bells are made is approximately 75 per cent copper and 25 per cent tin; and the clappers are of cast iron.

Inside the central cabin is the clavier, from which the full Carillon is played by the carillonneur. The length of the clavier is 7½ feet. Two rows of oaken levers, chromatically arranged, represent the keys; the long levers, comparable to the white keys on the piano or organ, project 5½ inches beyond the clavier frame; the short ones, representing the black notes, project 3½ inches from the clavier. The pedalboard has a range of 33 notes, or almost three chromatic octaves, concentric and concave, with almost every pedal accessible from the center of the bench. The six largest bells are played with electric-pneumatic-assistance, and the remaining 66 bells are played by hand and foot without any electrical assistance — the best means of securing a fine and personal interpretation of the music.

On the front and centerpart of the clavier are mounted various buttons and controls. The three white buttons, P, F, and FF, give the three values of volume, namely *Piano, Forte* and *Fortissimo,* for the six larger bass-bells, which are operated electric-pneumatically. The two narrow brass strips, on each side of these button controls, are used to turn the "damper system" on or off.

On the east wall of the room are mounted different buttons to start and stop the air-compressors, generators and multi-gang switches which are each operated by a small motor. The keys of the clavier are connected to the clappers of the bells by means of steel wires which go through the roof of the clavier room and, by means of steel arms, cranks, shafting and the like, operate the clappers of the bells mechanically by manual effort.

The mechanism from which the bells are played electric-pneumatically — announcing automatically the hours and quarters at certain times of the day — is a large drum, or cylinder, often referred to as the quarter-barrel and resembling a large music-box. The quarter-barrel of this Carillon is the first automatic, electric-pneumatic installation in the world. The second and only other one is in the tower of the Chapel of the University of Chicago, also a "Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Carillon," given by Mr. Rockefeller. The barrel at Riverside is 5 feet in diameter and 3 feet across, made of cast iron and weighs 2½ tons. The outside is sheathed with brass plating, ½ inch thick, into which is arranged, in even rows, 36,472 tiny tapped holes for mounting the electric contacts, and covering the four lowest octaves of this six-octave Carillon. However, only the mechanisms for the two lowest octaves of the Carillon have been installed. When completed to four octaves, any musical composition, fully harmonized, can be played from this barrel.

When the barrel, or drum, revolves, these little electric contacts, 3/16 of an inch wide and 1/32 of an inch thick, pass by an electric keyboard; and when the contact touches a finger or note on this keyboard, a magnet is energized and a clapper strikes a bell. Three different values of volume — *Piano, Forte* and *Fortissimo* — can also be given in the automatic playing.

The bell chamber, housing all the bells and its mechanism, is 52 feet high and 40 by 40 feet wide, and the inside walls are octagonal and made of red brick. There are 60 openings or windows in the belfry, approximately 3 by 4 feet wide and 15 feet high, on the different levels. All these openings are covered with a strong copper wire mesh. The openings constitute about 3,644 square feet of space, and the brick walls between these openings about 2,195 square feet, or 1,449

square feet more of open space than of brick walls. This allows ample open area on all sides for the bell tones to reach the listeners on the street. All the openings in the belfry can be closed by copper rolling curtains, and 24 hydraulic lifts are used for this purpose. These curtains are used in winter to prevent snow from getting into the bell chamber, and rain and sleet freezing on the bells in sub-freezing temperatures. The floor of the bell-chamber is made of hard tiling, with the special purpose of reflecting sound outward.

In the dome of the tower, 20 feet above the highest tier of bells, accoustical boards have been installed which absorb overtones and clarify music. This is a beehive-like construction, used because it is necessary to provide as much area as possible for the absorption of over-lapping harmonics or overtones.

The "damper system" of this Carillon, the first of its particular kind ever applied in a carillon, is operated electric-pneumatically from the clavier. Each damper is operated by the same lever that operates the clapper of the same bell. The normal position of the damper is up against the bell, and presses against the same circular node as that which the clapper strikes. As the clapper advances to strike the bell, the damper drops free of the bell. After the clapper has struck, and the tone, with all its harmonics, has emanated, the damper is pressed up against the bell and damps off the lengthy overtones. The damper system can be turned off or on as often and as fast as the nature of the music may require. This is done by the carillonneur with a slight touch of the hand during the playing. Dampers have been arranged on 30 of the larger bells, the Bourdon not included.

The following is a list of the electric and pneumatic equipment that is necessary to this Carillon installation for the various uses of the bells: — carillon play-

ing, swinging of the five larger bells and the automatic playing from the quarter-barrel: —

48 electric air valves for the bell clappers
31 electric air valves for the damper system
36 electric relays
36 mercury switches
36 hand operated switches
19 electric motors from ¼ h. p. to 12 h. p.
16 magnetic switches and motor starters
2 electrically driven air compressors
48 air cylinders and pistons for the bell clappers
30 air cylinders and pistons for the damper system
32 air reducing valves
1 electric air dryer for the compressed air system

Carillons are played in two different ways: automatically, by means of the mechanism and in time with the clock; and from the keyboard or clavier, by the carillonneur.

The automatic playing, an extended development of the early and simple "voorslagh," is done by means of a large drum or cylinder, formerly of wood and latterly of metal. Rows of holes are punctured through the cylinder wall, and spikes or pegs, called notes, are put in their proper places by the carillonneur and held in position by nuts on the inside. The revolving drum brings each peg in contact with a metal tongue which pulls a wire connected with a hammer, raises the hammer and lets it fall on the outside of the bell, as in almost every carillon in the "Old Country."

This musical effect is very characteristic, although mechanical in time and expression, and is used in announcing the time with the clock. In such music, this sort of playing occurs: — at the hour, when a fully harmonized composition or arrangement is played, lasting three to four minutes before the striking of the hour on the largest of the bass-bells; then at the half hour it plays again a fully harmonized song or classi-

cal number for two to three minutes; again a few bars of music will announce each quarter, and a flourish of notes — often in the form of the extended arpeggio up and down the whole scale will mark the eighth of the hour. The character of this music varies from classical compositions to a combination of well known folk tunes, old or new. This type of automatic music is not especially a contribution of expressive art, but sings the time away in a very delightful atmosphere.

The regular playing of a carillon, done by a professional musician, or carillonneur, is by far the best and only way to bring out the full beauty and artistic expression of the instrument. A Carillonneur works within a very unique situation in that no music other than such compositions as are used in a Carillon School is printed for carillon playing. All his music has to be rewritten, rearranged and transposed from printed music or be composed by himself to fit the particular instrument on which he is performing. In adapting music to a technique so different from others, where it is physically impossible to play certain musical passages given in standard music, and where hands and feet, rather than fingers are employed, the skill demanded is very great.

Uses for the Carillon

Throughout the years, especially in Europe, it has been customary to play the carillon regularly on Sundays and certain weekdays, usually at the middle of the day, and on the weekly market day when the country and town people mingle and are enlivened by the carillon's playing. The music on such occasions is usually of the lighter, popular variety, though, through a process of musical education, the groups who listen to the street songs and folk tunes are led to appreciate the better forms of music.

Carillon playing has usually been employed on national holidays, Feastdays of the Church, Holy Days and occasions of more or less festive character. This music carries with it a feeling of celebration, of appreciation of hymns and of patriotism and a sense of festivity. Where the occasion has been national or communal in type it has often been followed by the illumination of the whole tower in the evening while the National Anthem is played and the Bourdon Bell is tolled.

Recitals given either in the afternoon or evening, (the latter during the summer months) are always a favorite use for the carillon. Such programs need to be carefully chosen and in good musical taste, artistically leading up to a climax of fine interpretation and brilliancy. To win the attention and interest of the audience it is necessary and appropriate to start the recital with such introductory numbers as a Preludium, Cavatine, Fantasia or Theme with variations, numbers that require great ability, virtuosity and brilliancy, bringing out the full musical value and possibilities of the instrument, and captivating the audience at once. This should be followed, by way of contrast, with a couple of well known folk songs, simple in character. Then the program may continue with two well-chosen hymns which will show the religious expressional possibilities of the carillon as well as its rhythmic qualities. The middle of the program may carry a classical composition, then there may follow some finer folk songs, or perhaps a delicate old bergerette, closing with a composition of great beauty.

Memorial programs have always had an important place in the playing of the carillon in the "Old Country," marking the passing of a ruler or leader; while the birth of a new member of the ruling family, a royal wedding, or some special occasion for rejoicing always brings forth a note of congratulation from the local carillon.

The Riverside Church Carillon finds many uses for its music. On Sundays it precedes the morning service with a program of sacred music, part of which is amplified down into the nave of the church as a prelude to the regular church music. (The church organist can, if he so desires, operate certain parts of the Carillon from the organ console.) On Sunday afternoons the Carillon gives an hour's recital in which sacred and secular music are intermingled. Recitals are given each Saturday afternoon, and national holidays always find the Carillon celebrating with appropriate selections. Christmas brings forth especially fine programs from the "Singing Tower," and more than once the music has been sent by radio to distant places of the earth. Easter also is a time for special programs of rejoicing from the church's Carillon.

In addition it peals forth its blessings at weddings and bespeaks its sorrow at funerals, thus joining in the joys and griefs of the community. For instance, it gave a joyous little program at the wedding of the son of its donor, and intoned deep notes of sorrow while the funerals of both Mr. Frank Damrosch and Madame Sembrich were conducted across the way at Juilliard School of Music. It sent forth its mourning voice at the death of Queen Astrid of Belgium, and devoted a requiem program to the passing of King Albert of the same country. It celebrated the wedding of Princess Juliana of Holland and made merry at the birth of Princess Beatrix. A most appropriate recital was given at the time of the Coronation of King George VI of England, and expressions of appreciation came to Mr. Lefévere both from the King and his mother, former Queen Mary. Queen Wilhelmina of Holland also acknowledged the honor paid to her daughter.

These expressions from the Carillon range from respects paid to royalty to those offered to plain, democratic Americans. The untimely death of the

American humorist, Will Rogers, was mourned by the Carillon; and the most unusual use of the instrument was when the carillonneur took it upon himself to ring forth a very delightful program of welcome when the grandchild of one of the ministers at Riverside Church made his advent! Another unusual use of the Carillon was the furnishing of background music for the screen version of Shakespere's "Romeo and Juliet."

So it is seen that the uses for Riverside's Carillon are many and varied; and the future will no doubt hold an increasing number of possibilities for its contribution to American music. The Carillon is enjoyed, especially during the summertime, by those residents of Morningside Heights who are devoted to that type of music. And it is always an interesting fact, to those who know about it, that on Sunday afternoons while the minister of Riverside, Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, broadcasts, from the eighteenth floor of the church, his radio sermon across this country and into other lands, the Carillon is pealing forth its music (in its regular Sunday afternoon recital) not many yards above the preacher's head. Yet no sound of the tremendous music penetrates the broadcasting room, and the two messages, going out across the same ether waves, from the same tower, at the same time, do not in the least interfere with each other! Miracles are classed as a thing of the past, yet they surely have a strange way of suggesting their continued existence in these modern days.

Concerning the Carillonneur

The musician who plays the Carillon at Riverside Church, keeps track of special occasions, and plans the programs, is Mr. Kamiel Lefévere, pioneer of carillon playing in America and distinguished carillonneur of Europe. He came to us from Belgium where

carillon playing has long been popular and reached its heights of greatness under the noted Joseph ("Jef") Denyn, the greatest of living carillonneurs and probably the greatest who ever lived.

Mr. Lefévere started his study of the carillon under the personal tutelage of this great "Master of the Carillon"; and his learning was done on the carillon of St. Rombold's Cathederal—the church of the late Cardinal Mercier—in Mechelen (Malines) in Belgium, which is the finest of all carillons in Europe. This was before the Belgian National Carillon School was founded in 1922; so Mr. Lefévere received all his professional training under the personal supervision of M. Denyn, to whom he afterward served as assistant.

Later, when he had acquired the art for himself, he travelled through Europe, giving recitals on almost every carillon on the Continent, also in England.

Knowing of the arousal of interest in carillon art in America, and hearing of the beginning of the installing of carillon towers and memorials here, Mr. Lefévere came to the United States in 1924. He first played on the Memorial Carillon in Cohasset, Massachusetts, giving summer recitals before great gatherings of people who came not only from the surrounding towns and cities, but also from distant places, even Canada.

During this time the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Carillon had been installed in the Park Avenue Baptist Church in New York City, and in 1927 Mr. Lefévere was engaged as its carillonneur by Mr. Rockefeller. He was, of course, to serve in the same capacity when the carillon was transferred to The Riverside Church.

During the time that Riverside Church was being built, and the place for the new Carillon was being

prepared, Mr. Lefévere returned to Europe, giving recitals there and teaching in the Carillon School at Mechelen, where he served as Professor of Technique. He returned to New York at the opening of Riverside Church in 1931 and has served as its carillonneur ever since that date, although he has also given recitals on other carillons in this country, and in Canada.

Since his residence in the United States, Mr. Lefévere has been made Honorary Carillonneur of Mechelen and Honorary Professor at the Belgian National Carillon School. He has been decorated by the Belgian Government and made Chevalier of the Order of Leopold, for his pioneering in carillon art and for making it known throughout the world.

Mr. Lefévere will serve as carillonneur at the Belgian Pavilion during the New York World's Fair. He is an enthusiast for this form of music and is doing all in his power to further the art of carillon playing in this country, and the installation of carillons in this land which is just beginning to know and appreciate this great form of music.