



For Three Thousand Miles I followed 1930

Ivan M. Levy

Relates how he Caught Fleeting
Glimpses of the Old Year as it
Sped into the West

WHEN the editor of the "Radio Record" commissioned me to follow the flight of the Old Year and the arrival of the New Year over 3,000 odd miles, he set a task which but a few years ago would have possessed a touch of the Arabian Nights. No gigantic projectile, such as Jules Verne sent soaring to the moon, nor magic carpet described so intriguingly by Shahrazad to King Shahriyar was at my disposal. Instead, I turned a switch, and my radio bore me faster than Verne's projectile or Shahrazad's magic carpet, to distant cities where I heard the joyous farewelling of 1930 and the welcoming of 1931.

From a reception standpoint, the Old Year left a kindly memory, for distance reception was almost completely free from static's surf-like crashes. Furthermore, far-off stations were heard with uncommon loudness for this time of the season.

For this boon I thanked the old year as it sped on its last long westward journey to the Tomb of the Past.

To keep in close touch with three or four broadcast stations almost simultaneously was a difficult feat for one person, but I contrived to maintain a sequence of reception from each of the various stations by changing quickly from one to another.

2YA, "the Great Voice of the South," devoted the last minutes of the Old Year to a relay of the Watch Night Service from St. John's Presbyterian Church. Reception was in tone and crystal clear. The service having ushered in the New Year, terminated at 11 minutes past midnight. 2YA then switched over to a microphone placed on the outside parapet of the G.P.O., overlooking the Post Office Square and facing the Queen's Wharf entrance. Even though the New Year was eleven minutes old, pandemonium reigned over a tremendous crowd, and the noise was continuous and overwhelming. No band was present in the Post Office Square, so to compensate for the deficiency two recorded march items were superimposed from the studio.

Whether it was by design or accident, it was a happy coincidence that the records were "Stars and Stripes for Ever," and "Invercargill," repre-

sentative marches, respectively, of two great, friendly, English-speaking powers, the United States and the British Empire, which both border the vast Pacific. It was a cordial gesture which, no doubt, would be heard by many listeners far across the Pacific.

From the Post Office Square 2YA cut back to the studio, and broadcast some enjoyable recorded dance items until 12.30 a.m.

THE Cathedral City rapturously celebrated the passing of 1930 and the birth of 1931. A microphone placed on the balcony of the United Service Hotel, facing Cathedral Square, was connected with 3YA. The first effect when the station was switched over to the Square was the glorious ringing of the cathedral chimes. The bells reverberated sonorously as they flung their voices far out into the night, north, south, east and west, to tell the glad tidings of the occasion. The uproar in the Cathedral Square was tremendous. Loud detonations of fireworks filled the air, which, as the commentator remarked, must have been rather nerve-racking. The chiming of the midnight hour stimulated the tumult three-fold.

The commentator said that all the buildings around the Cathedral Square were brilliantly lighted, sky rockets, catherine wheels and bombs covered the crowd with a dense pall of smoke. Tramway gongs clanged loudly and motor-car horns bellowed lustily. About 800 motor-cars were parked in the vicinity of the Square. The Caledonian bagpipe band marched past the microphone. Scores of people danced gaily, and all was joyous. 3YA switched back to the studio, and the male voice item, "Auld Lang Syne," came through with haunting sweetness.

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THE microphone car of 1YA was located in Ferry Building, at the foot of Queen Street. An extremely festive multitude had assembled in the vicinity of the G.P.O., and the clamour and laughter told of some boisterous doings. The commentator informed us that a Chinaman's cart had been carried up the street by a fun-making mob, and vegetables (Contd. on p. 2.)

Ring Out, Wild Bells!

RING out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light;
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin;
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

—Tennyson.

