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## WEEKEND CHORAL SCHOOL

14th and 15th June  
Adult Education Centre  
Auckland

Directed by  
**STANLEY OLIVER,**  
O.B.E., Hon. F.T.C.L.

Apply to Director of Adult Education,  
P.O. Box 3457, Auckland, C.I.

Applications close Friday, 31st May.

# Are You a Composer?

"ARE you a composer?" "Well, actually, I'm a school-teacher, but I do a bit of composing in my spare time."

If you talk like this to Anthony Elton Williams you'll hear an outburst that sounds more like Taranaki than his native Essex. "If a man's a composer," he says, "he's that first, last and always. For his bread and butter he may sweep the streets or he may whack children, but he says to himself all the time, 'I'm a composer—that's all I live for.'"

This young man, who writes under the name of Anthony Elton, knew when he was nine that he was a composer. He was then a chorister with a scholarship to Magdalen College, Oxford, attending the Magdalen College School under the eye of an organist who encouraged his composition. All true New Zealanders will look with envy on his record here, because he retired on a pension at the age of 14½! He couldn't stay at the school, however, in spite of the pension, but had to go to an unhappy school experience at Bournemouth, whose most important fruit was his first published composition, the part-song "Come Away, Death," which he wrote when he was 16. He went on to the Royal Academy of Music, where he worked at piano and clarinet, and let his mind seethe with musical ideas until in 1953 he won an Academy Composition Scholarship with an overture for orchestra and a song cycle for tenor.

"My professor suggested I should write something for clarinet because I played it," Anthony Elton says, "but I didn't fancy clarinet and piano, and I didn't feel comfortable with the idea of two clarinets alone, until one day in a Lyons cafeteria over tea and a bun, in that strange way the mind works, the vague and nebulous musical ideas I had been grasping at seemed to come together,

The case of Anthony Elton,  
by D. W. McKENZIE

and the first movement of a sonata for two clarinets took shape in my brain, and I wrote it down then and there. It's a movement of questioning uncertainty—you'll be able to hear it later in the year from the YC stations. The second movement is of hushed escape from reality into a dream world, and the third is of harsh rebellion bordering on hysteria. It reflects, I suppose, the fact that I was going into the Royal Air Force and bitterly resented it. When it was performed at the Wigmore Hall in January, 1956, one man was quite heated in a discussion afterwards about my using a beautiful instrument to make harsh sounds. Incidentally, though a movement seems to take its shape frequently in a short burst of mental activity, of course constant alteration goes on. This sonata had four completed versions before the first performance and two after."

However heated the member of the Wigmore Hall audience may have become, the *Musical Times* says of this sonata:

This was a very gifted work indeed, excellently written for the instruments, with invention that was consistently interesting. Mr Elton has a real talent for formulating thematic ideas which will yield memorable continuations and furnish lively parts for two players. Each of his three movements had its own character, and the flexibility and polish of his technique auger well for the future.

Chester's have published this work.

Elton went into a Royal Air Force Band and promptly wrote a Symphony for Military Band which, perhaps not surprisingly, proved too difficult for the band he was playing in. The Nottingham

(continued on next page)

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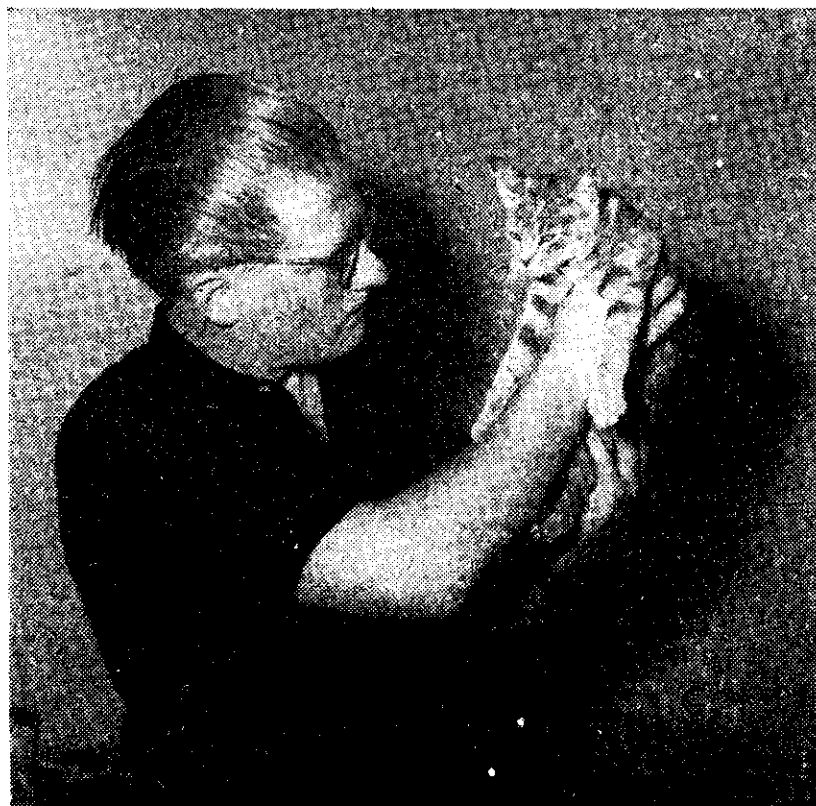


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ANTHONY ELTON: "I'm very fond of cats"

N.Z. LISTENER, MAY 24, 1957.