

Miss Margaret Affleck, Principal Teacher of Music at Madras College.

Miss Affleck was born in 1912. Her father was Rev David Affleck, the last Free Church minister in Ladybank and she was born in the manse there.¹

She trained at the Royal Academy of Music in London from which she graduated in 1931 with an LRAM (Licentiate of Royal Academy of Music). She qualified as a teacher in 1933 with a 'Chapter VI' Qualification.² It is thought she taught in a girl's school in Edinburgh before her appointment to Madras.³

The *Madras College Magazine* for June 1939 records that Mr Easson, the previous teacher of Music, left in Autumn 1938 to become Supervisor of Music for Dundee. Miss Affleck started in Madras on 1.11.38.⁴ The magazine comments on her enthusiasm and energy and notes that the annual school concert which she organised was of the usual high standard. The two part singing which she introduced for the senior boys was very popular and this encouraged her to try another innovation, a four part chorale, 'Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring'.⁵ It was at this time also, according to the school magazine, that a school song was introduced, the words of which were written by Mr Blue, an English teacher,⁶ and the music by Mr Easson. It was to be sung on Prize Day 1939. In 1947 a report by HM Inspectors of Schools records that the work of the of the music department was 'on the whole very satisfactory'. It was suggested that 'more use should be made of Scottish song' and that 'The singing of part songs in the upper classes was very pleasing.'⁷

Several ex-pupils remember 'Fleckie' with affection. She was ladylike, dressed smartly usually in black and had a middle parting and wore a handkerchief at her wrist. She was described by one present resident of Ladybank, who was a pupil at Madras in the 1950s as his 'favourite teacher' and as 'a lovely lady'. She always ended her annual school concerts by conducting the senior boys in a rousing rendition of 'The Fishermen of England.'

When she retired from her post as Principal Teacher of Music in Summer 1974 the *St Andrews Citizen* noted that Miss Affleck had kept music alive and flourishing in the school for thirty years, thirty years which included the Second World War. She had built up the instrumental side of teaching and worked hard to obtain instruments and to find instructors who also worked in both Madras and in the primary schools. Her efforts led to the formation of the school orchestra from which many pupils went on to study music. She encouraged pupils of all ages whether they were starting their first bagpipe tune or were senior members of the orchestra. The *Citizen* concludes that 'None who came through the school will forget her friendliness and the happy atmosphere of her classroom.'⁸

¹ Info from Mr Seeley, Hawick.

² *Madras College Log Book* for 29.8.49. Ref in archive MDRS/9

³ Info from Mr Seeley.

⁴ *Madras College Magazine*, June 1939, p1; *Madras College Log Book* for 1.11.38 ref in Archive MDRS/9

⁵ *Madras College Magazine*, June 1939 p 19.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Aug 1948, p2.

⁷ *Madras College Log Book*, for 1947 p 472

⁸ *St Andrews Citizen*, 28 September 1974.

Miss Affleck appears in the staff photographs of 1959 and 1964 which are on the archive website.⁹

⁹ Madras College Archive, www.madrascollegearchive.org.uk