

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your church 4

The funds to build our church were provided by Sir Oliver Riddell who was one of our original members. He also gave the rectory to the church. Lady Riddell donated the font with its ornate cap to St Cuthbert's. The window at the west end is dedication to Sir Oliver and his wife. It was gifted to the church by their friends and bears the date, 1923. Sir Oliver spent all his working life with Andrew Usher & Co. who were distillers and brewers. He became chairman of the company succeeding Andrew Usher who provided the funds for the building of the Usher Hall. Sir Oliver was deputy-Lieutenant of the city and the county of Edinburgh as well as being a Justice of the Peace in Midlothian. Colinton did not become part of the city until after 1920. He was also a member of the Royal Company of Archers, the Queen's (or king's) Bodyguard in Scotland. This was a ceremonial role which had outlived its military purpose.

Sir Oliver was a generous supporter of the N.S.P.C.C., the lifeboats and the university (particularly the Students' Union). The University of Edinburgh awarded him an honorary L.L.D. and in 1904 he received a knighthood for his services. He was also a member of the Liberal Unionist Association. The party governed the country in the years leading up to World War I.

In the grounds, outside the church, stands a memorial cross dedicated to the memory of Sir Oliver and his wife. Sir Oliver died in November 1918.

John Peacock