

1921 Woodthorpe Grange is purchased by the Nottingham Corporation

With a £10,000 donation from Sir Jesse Boot the Nottingham Corporation purchased the whole of the 52-acre Woodthorpe Estate in 1921 for £15,000, which included Woodthorpe Grange with carriage drives, which are still there to this day, conservatory, glasshouses, garage, stabling and a gardener and chauffeurs' cottages.

The sale documentation, which is held in Nottinghamshire Archives, shows that the auctioneers anticipated selling the estate as five separate lots, separating the Grange and pleasure gardens from the farm, the market garden, and the meadows to be sold for housebuilding. However, it was purchased as one lot by Nottingham City Council, facilitated by the donation from Sir Jesse Boot on the condition that the whole site becoming a public recreation area.

As reported in the Nottingham Guardian for the 23rd July, 1921: "The Council has not had time as yet to deliberate on the best purposes to which the place can be put, but as we understand the idea is to use it as a park and recreation ground, and not for building." The report then goes on to say: "There is no lack of uses to which the house can be devoted. It might be used either as refreshment rooms, as a home for the Natural History Museum, or as a health resort."

The report is concluded by saying: "all these questions will have to be thrashed out later. In view of the insistent demand for more spaces for tennis, bowls, cricket and football, the grounds will prove an immense boon to that part of the city."

In celebration of the purchase of the site, a month later on 22nd August the Mayor, Alderman H. Bowles and Mayoress Mrs. Bowles gave a garden party, which was held outside the Grange and amongst the invited guests was Sir Jesse Boot who in all gave £350,000 (£14.1m), which enabled the Nottingham Corporation to purchase not only the Woodthorpe Estate but also the Highfields Estate, the home of the University of Nottingham, and the park land adjacent to what became the Victoria Embankment and Memorial Gardens.



The Mayor welcoming Sir Jesse Boot, who has contributed largely to the funds for purchasing the estate.



The Mayor (Ald. H. Bowles) and Mayoress, the Sheriff (Councillor J. Freckingham). And Mrs. Freckingham receive their guests on the terrace.