

Nottingham Evening Post
Tuesday July 10th 1928

WITH THE KIDDIES AT WOODTHORPE GRANGE



Who would of thought that they would be among the first of Nottingham citizens to greet the King and Queen, 17,000 school children assembled in Woodthorpe Grange Park to give their majesties a rapturous welcome.

The transportation of many thousands of children from all parts of the city was itself a major task. It spoke volumes for all the arrangement that were required by many departments to carry out such a task.

The credit for this must be shared by the Department of Education (Mr. A. H. Whipple) and Mr. W. E. Davis Headmaster of Bosworth School and general secretary for the occasion.

The task adopted was to split the army of youngsters up into three sections. Thus 4,492 children and 156 teachers within a comfortable short distance marched to the park. Twenty-six special tramcars did a special journey from various parts of the city. Altogether 18,528 pupils in the charge of 226 teachers were transported.

The points of departure for these special tramcars was Ilkeston Road junction, Lenton, Ilkeston Road, Bentinck Road junction, Wilford Hill Cemetery and Wilford Bridge.

With the will help of the London and North Eastern Railway thirteen special trains conveyed 6,550 children and 284 teachers to the old Sherwood Station on the Suburban Railway from Basford and Bulwell, Thorneywood and London Road (low level) station. This involved the reopening of Sherwood and Thorneywood stations, which were closed in the early days of the war and never re-opened. The station premises had to be overhauled and specially staffed for the occasion.

The usual place of assembly for a school was at the school itself, although the idea was not rigidly adhered to if a more favourably situated venue suggested itself.

The ages of the children who participated in the proceedings at Woodthorpe Park were from 10 to 14.

Sir Jesse Boot, who was the host of the kiddies on this occasion, had 25,000 special medals struck for the occasion, so that every school child of eight and upwards received one.

The medals had previously been distributed in the schools.

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The first contingent of youngsters arrived at the park from Sherwood Station a few moments after 11 o'clock.

From that hour onwards until nearly 1.30 the juvenile battalions continued to enter the park from all points of approach, and take up their stations to await the great moment.

The long period of waiting by the earliest arrivals was enlivened with selections by the Clifton Colliery Prize Band and music by wireless.

The dais was draped in scarlet and overhung with the awning in scarlet and white stripes. There were three entrances to the platform from Woodthorpe Drive, the intervening space being banked with a profusion of hydrangeas, maiden hair fern and other plants. About 20 yards away was a wooden tower some 30 feet in height and also draped in scarlet, from which the conductor directed the singing.

KING ARRIVES

THE PROCEEDINGS AT WOODTHORPE

CIVIC WELCOME

HONOUR CONFERRED ON THE CITY

One thousand ticket-holders were privileged to occupy seats in an enclosure. They began to take their places shortly after 12:30 by which time many thousands of excited children had arrived.

In front of the rows of garden chairs, alone in its glory, was in office armchair reserved for the use of Nottingham's oldest inhabitant Mr William Walker.

At twenty minutes to two Mr Walker, who was 106 last January, was borne into the park on an ambulance and placed in his chair. He was accompanied by Mrs Truman, a daughter. Lord Henry Bentinck, M.P., Mr A. J. Bennett M.P., Mr C. E. R. Brocklebank, M.P., and several members of the City Council all shook hands with the old man and chatted for a moment or two. Mr C. L. Rothera was introduced to Mr Walker with the observation, "This is Mr Rothera, the Coroner."

Mr Walker is deaf and was unable to hear the speaking, but Mrs Truman said he had been greatly looking forward to the afternoon. She was afraid, however, owing to deafness, that he would not be able to hear much, although she could make herself understood. With the position allotted to him, however, he would be able to see all that took place on the dais.

By this time the sun was shining brightly, and the afternoon was delightfully warm, so that the old man was able to enjoy the proceedings in comfort.

At this stage the photographers climbed the tower by means of a ladder, and secured a number of snaps of the busy scene, directions being given through a megaphone.

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Shortly before two o'clock the Mayor of Nottingham (Alderman Edmund Huntsman), the Mayoress, the Sheriff (Councillor Arthur Pollard), and Mrs Pollard, the Recorder (Mr H. H. Joy K.C.) and Mrs Joy, the Town Clerk (Mr W. J. Board), and Mrs Board, the Under-Sheriff (Alderman H. G. Ford) and Mrs Ford, Alderman J. E. Pendleton (Chairman of the Reception Committee), and Mrs Pendleton, Alderman Sir Bernard Wright (Vice-Chairman of the Reception Committee), and Lady Wright, and Alderman H. Bowles (member of the Reception Committee), and Mrs Bowles, left the Guildhall, arriving at the city boundary on Mansfield Road at Woodthorpe Grange Park practically on the stroke of the hour.

This ensured an expectant wait of half an hour for the arrival of their Majesties from Welbeck. Unable to gain admission to the Park itself a large crowd of parents and other sightseers had assembled around the railings.

A burst of cheering from these and the children, together with a great waving of coloured papers, denoted the arrival of the Royal party, as did the distant firing of a Royal Salute of 21 guns from Nottingham Forest, and the breaking of the Royal Standard over the dais in the Park.

A guard of honour of the 7th (Robin Hood) Battalion, the Sherwood Foresters, under the command of Captain E. J. Melville was mounted in Woodthorpe Drive. The regimental band played the National Anthem.

Members of Queen Alexandra's Imperial Nursing Service Reserves, Territorial Army Nursing Service and Voluntary Aid Detachments were also stationed in Woodthorpe Drive.

Mr William Walker, the Nottingham centurion who he is reputed to be the oldest man in England, was conveyed by ambulance to the Park.

The Duke of Portland at once made the following presentations to their Majesties:

Aldermen Edmund Huntsman (Mayor of Nottingham).
Mrs Edmund Huntsman (Mayoress of Nottingham).
Councillor Arthur Pollard (Sheriff of Nottingham).
Mrs Arthur Pollard.
Mr Henry Holmes Joy, K.C. (Recorder).
Mrs Henry Holmes Joy.
Mr William John Board, O.B.E. (Town Clerk).
Mrs William John Board.
Mr H. Gover Ford (Under Sheriff).
Mrs. H. Gover Ford.
Aldermen J. E. Pendleton (Chairman Reception Committee).
Mrs J. E. Pendleton.
Alderman Sir Bernard S. Wright, Kt. (Vice Chairman, Reception Committee)
Lady Wright
Alderman Herbert Bowles (member of the Reception Committee)
Mrs. Herbert Bowles.
Lieut-Col. F. Brook (Chief Constable)
Miss Barbara Wright (daughter of Sir Bernard Wright) presented a bouquet to the Queen.

The Mayor asked their Majesties to receive an address from the City Council, which the Town Clerk proceeded to read out in a clear, distinct voice.

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The address read:

TO THEIR MOST GRACIOUS MAJESTIES KING GEORGE V. AND QUEEN MARY

May it please Your Majesties.

We, Your Majesties faithful and loyal Subjects the Mayor Aldermen, and Citizens of the City of Nottingham and County of the same City, beg respectfully to offer to Your Majesties a hearty and sincere welcome to this ancient City.

The City of Nottingham has from the earliest times been greatly honoured by Your Majesty's predecessors, and many Royal Charters have from time to time been granted to the Burgesses. The Office of Mayor was created by King Edward I in the year 1284, the Borough was created a County of itself by King Edward VI in the year 1448, and the dignity of the title of City was conferred by your illustrious Grandmother, Queen Victoria, on the occasion of her diamond jubilee in the year 1897.

We recall with great pleasure the visit of Your Majesties to our City on 24 June, 1914, and the interest taken by Your Majesties in our industrial undertakings on that occasion.

Your Majesties visit was followed almost immediately by the Great War. We rejoice at the glorious example of courage and devotion set by Your Majesties in that terrible conflict, and we are proud of the part which the Citizens of this City took in defence of their King and Country, as evidenced by the fact that from 40,000 to 50,000 joined the Colours.

We are thankful to be able to inform Your Majesties that, since the conclusion of hostilities, your subjects in this City have devoted themselves energetically to the task of making up for the stagnation caused by the years of War. In all matters of Local Government, and particularly in matters affecting the health of the people, great progress has been made. The question of the housing of the working classes has received special attention, no less than 5,300 houses having been erected at a cost of over two-an-a-half millions sterling, whilst 2,000 more are in the course of erection, and plans for a further large scheme are now being prepared.

We are delighted that Your Majesties have thought it fit to visit our City for the purpose of opening the new University Buildings, erected with such great generosity by a respected Citizen, Sir Jesse Boot, Bart., And we rejoice at your presence and the further evidence which it affords of Your Majesties great interest in all that appertains to the well-being and happiness of your people.

We trust Your Majesties will derive much pleasure from your visit, and that you may live for many years in the possession of good health and happiness, and enjoying to the full the esteem and affection of the people of this City in common with your loyal and devoted Subjects.

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THE COMMON SEAL of the Mayor, Aldermen and Citizens of the City of Nottingham and County of the same City was hereunto affixed this 10th day of July in the year of Our Lord, One Thousand nine hundred and twenty-eight, in the presence of:



E Huntsman, Mayor/
W J. Board, Town Clerk

The King made his reply:

His Majesty the King replied as follows:

"I thank you for your loyal and dutiful address, and for a hearty welcome to the Queen and myself."

"We retain very pleasant memories of our last visit to Nottingham, and of the interesting and instructive inspection then made of some of its industries. The prosperity of your manufactures and commerce will always be a matter of deep concern to us, and I congratulate the City upon the zeal and determination shown in regaining the ground lost during the years of the war, and especially in grappling so successfully with the ever absorbing housing question.

The energy displayed by the Corporation in dealing with this most difficult pressing duty is worthy of the past history of Nottingham and of the part played by her citizens in the war.

"The main object of our visit today, however, is not to study the industries or municipal Administration Nottingham, but to inaugurate the splendid buildings, provided by the munificence of a generous and public spirited citizens of your University College. The foundation and growth of the college are a striking testimony to the wisdom and foresight of the Corporation in recognising the value of a high and wide mental training in industry no less than in civic life.

"In consideration of the antiquity and importance of your city, I have great pleasure in declaring that from this time forward the Chief Magistrate of the city shall bear the style and title of Lord Mayor of Nottingham.

"It is my earnest hope and prayer that the City of Nottingham and its University College may grow and prosper together, and that the work of the college may prove an everlasting and inspiring influence in every branch of the life and labour of the city."