



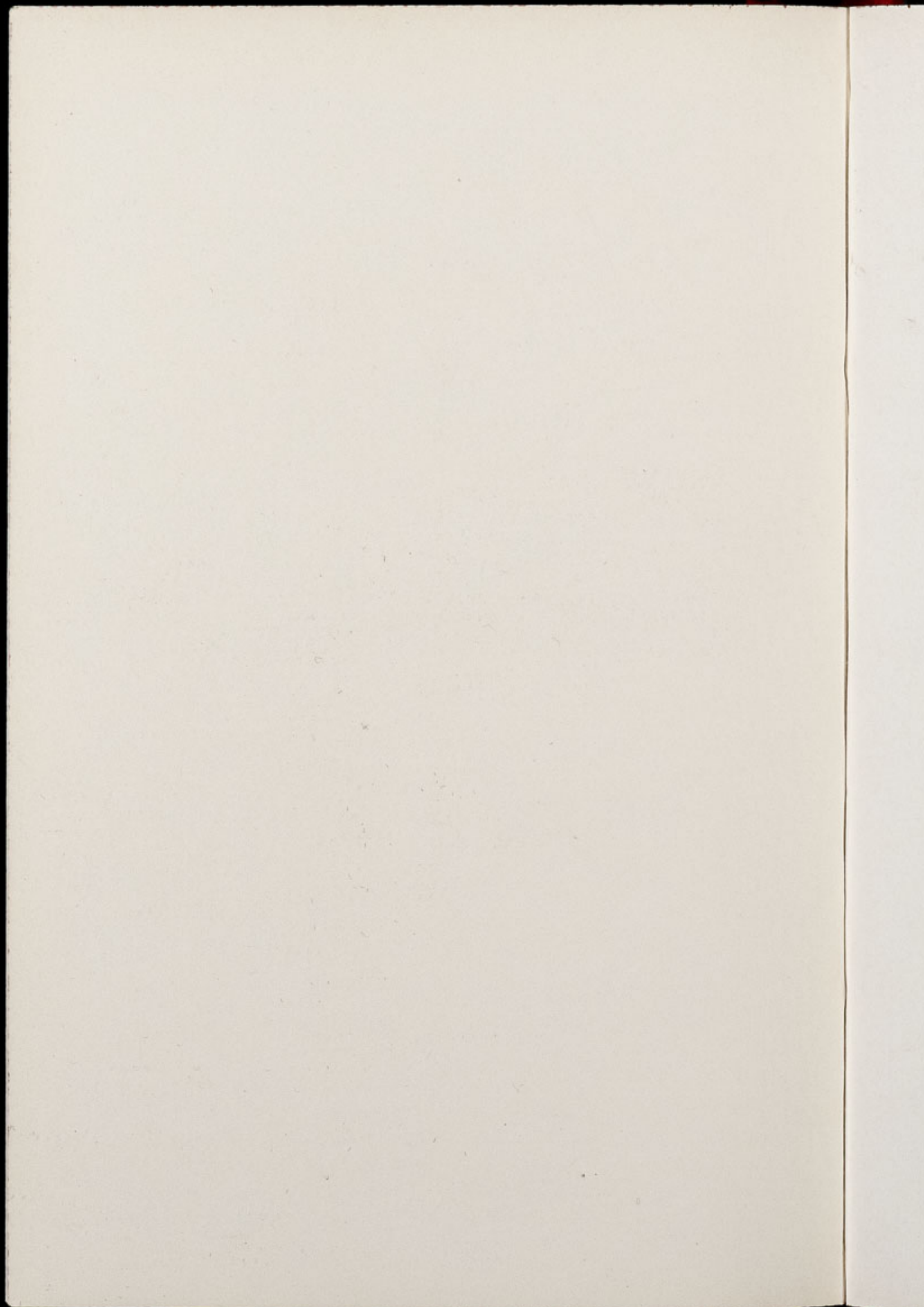
*By Courtesy of K. W. Green, Esq., A.R.P.S.*

# Chester Zoo News

THE NORTH OF ENGLAND ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY  
ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, UPTON - BY - CHESTER

December, 1964

Price 1/-



## Editorial

For the third year in succession we are delighted to be able to wish all readers of "*Chester Zoo News*" a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Perhaps readers will excuse us taking this opportunity of sending our Director-Secretary and his wife a special greeting from all the Staff at Chester Zoo. Mr. and Mrs. Mottershead will be spending the festive season in Pretoria and Nairobi, before returning to Chester early in the New Year.

Chester Zoo suffered very mixed fortunes during 1964, but attendance figures were more than satisfactory and we are looking forward to breaking new records and an even better year in 1965.

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*COVER: "Jackie," one of Chester Zoo's female Orang Utans, poses for this month's Cover Picture.*

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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FIFTEEN SHILLINGS POST PAID

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### NEWS FROM MR. AND MRS. MOTTERSHEAD

*As reported in the previous issue of "Chester Zoo News", Mr. and Mrs. Mottershead arrived in Sydney, New South Wales on Thursday, 22nd October. The main purpose of their visit to Australia was to allow Mr. Mottershead to attend the Nineteenth Annual Conference of the International Union of Directors of Zoological Gardens — held this year at Taronga Park Zoo. The 1963 Conference was, of course, held in Chester and the venue for 1965 will be West Berlin.*

Both Mr. and Mrs. Mottershead were full of praise for the programme arranged by the Executive Director, Board of Trustees and Staff of the Taronga Zoological Park Trust. Apart from the instructive and fruitful Business and Scientific Sessions attended by the Members of the Union, Members and their wives also enjoyed many interesting excursions. These included a boat trip on Sydney Harbour, a visit to Canberra (The Australian National Capital) with lunch at Parliament House and a tour of Sir Edward Hallstrom's sanctuary at Mona Vale.

Mr. Mottershead has now come to the end of his term of office as President of the I.U.D.Z.G. and Dr. Ernst Lang of Basle Zoo, Switzerland was elected to be the new President. On the last day of the Conference Mrs. Mottershead celebrated her birthday and everyone attending made sure that she had a day to remember.

At nine forty on the evening of Saturday, 31st October, Mr. and Mrs. Mottershead and twelve of their friends and colleagues, flew out from Sydney to the island of New Guinea. The last part of their flight, from the mainland of Australia to New Guinea, was completed in a light aircraft with members of the party sitting round the sides of the plane — their luggage piled in the centre. Upon landing they were driven fourteen miles into the interior of the island by truck and reached their final destination in time for lunch on Sunday, 1st November.

We have had glowing accounts of Mr. and Mrs. Mottershead's short stay in New Guinea. They described the scenery and flowering vegetation as being absolutely beautiful and said the Birds of



MR. MOTTERSHEAD, DR. CHARLES SCHROEDER OF SAN DIEGO AND "FRIENDS" PHOTOGRAPHED AT TARONGA PARK

Paradise in particular had to be seen to be believed. Many were flying free and others were in Sir Edward Hallstrom's New Guinea sanctuary. Sir Edward is, of course, the Executive Director of Taronga Zoological Park Trust. The party also attended two "Sing Sings", given by the people of New Guinea in their colourful native dress.

On Thursday, 5th November, the party returned to Sydney and the following day Mr. and Mrs. Mottershead said goodbye to all their friends at Taronga Park Zoo (including Bill Timmis — once a member of the Staff at Chester Zoo), before flying on to New Zealand on the Saturday.

Most of their time in New Zealand was spent at the home of their daughter, son-in-law and young grandson, Robert, in the North Island. Here, midway in their trip, Mr. and Mrs. Mottershead were able to take a well-earned holiday. Prior to returning to

Australia once more, Mr. and Mrs. Mottershead visited the South Island, Wellington Zoo and renewed acquaintanceship with a number of friends in New Zealand.

From the 28th November to 7th December, Mr. and Mrs. Mottershead were in Melbourne. Their engagements there included visits to a Bird Sanctuary, the Royal Botanic Gardens and Melbourne Zoo — Mr. Mottershead also gave an illustrated lecture on Chester Zoo. At Healesville, near Melbourne, they were particularly interested to see Koala Bears in their natural habitat.

In the January issue of "Zoo News" we hope to conclude our commentary on Mr. and Mrs. Mottershead's trip.

### RECENT PRESENTATIONS

- 29th October — three Green Toads presented. These amphibians are natives of south and central Europe, north Africa and west Asia. Our three specimens were collected in central Europe.
- 30th October — male Patas Monkey presented.
- 17th November — an Indian Ring-necked Parrakeet and a pair of Peach-faced Lovebirds presented.
- 12th December — newcomers to our Pheasant collection on this date were pairs of Lady Amherst and Reeve's and a cock Golden Pheasant.
- 13th December — Indian Hill Mynah presented.

### ZOO BABIES

**YELLOW BABOON** — The yellow Baboon born in the Zoo hospital on 10th November is a female. She has now been transferred to the Monkey House with her mother and her Keepers have named the baby "Tivvy".

**CARACAL LYNX** — On the 22nd of November, our third Caracal Lynx baby (*Felis caracal*) of 1964 was born. The parents had already presented us with twins (male and female) on the 19th of May. After previous births the father has had to be separated from his family, but on this occasion it has not been found necessary.



*E. Kirkland, F.R.P.S.*

CARACAL LYNX

cranes and guineafowl. In parts of India, Caracals are trained to hunt, but in South Africa the hunter becomes the hunted — Caracal skins being highly prized by the Zulus for making into their karosses or mantles.

### NEW BABOON AND DRILL PENS

The male and three female Drills (*Mandrillus leucophaeus*) were moved to their new pen alongside the Monkey House on the 21st of November. Three days later a male and two female adult Baboons were transferred to the adjoining pen. There they will be joined by the remainder of the family in due course.

Both species were rather too large and strong for their previous accommodation in the Monkey House and to make way for other and smaller species of Monkey, it was decided to build entirely new outdoor enclosures for the Drills and Baboons.

Each pen (similar in construction to the Barbary Ape cage near the Waterbus Terminus) has six heated indoor sleeping dens, with

The adult Caracals have had an extremely successful breeding record since their arrival at Chester Zoo—the male in December 1958 and the female in April 1960. Twin kittens were also born in May 1962 and June 1963 and have found homes in other Zoos. The 1964 babies will eventually be accommodated in the new Cat House.

Caracal Lynxes live in the deserts and open country of Africa and western Asia, as far east as India. Their food consists of small deer and antelope, also birds such as peacocks,

modern trapping devices. Members of the Zoo Staff were responsible for the entire design and construction of the pens and all the animals already 'in residence' have settled down very happily in their new homes. With the improved facilities now at their disposal, the animals are of course very much more active. Two further pens are still in process of being completed.

In the photograph on the opposite page "Toby", the male Drill, sits at the entrance to the sleeping quarters of his new home. As with many of the Zoo's buildings, large blocks of sandstone have been used in the construction of the house.

### FENNEC FOXES

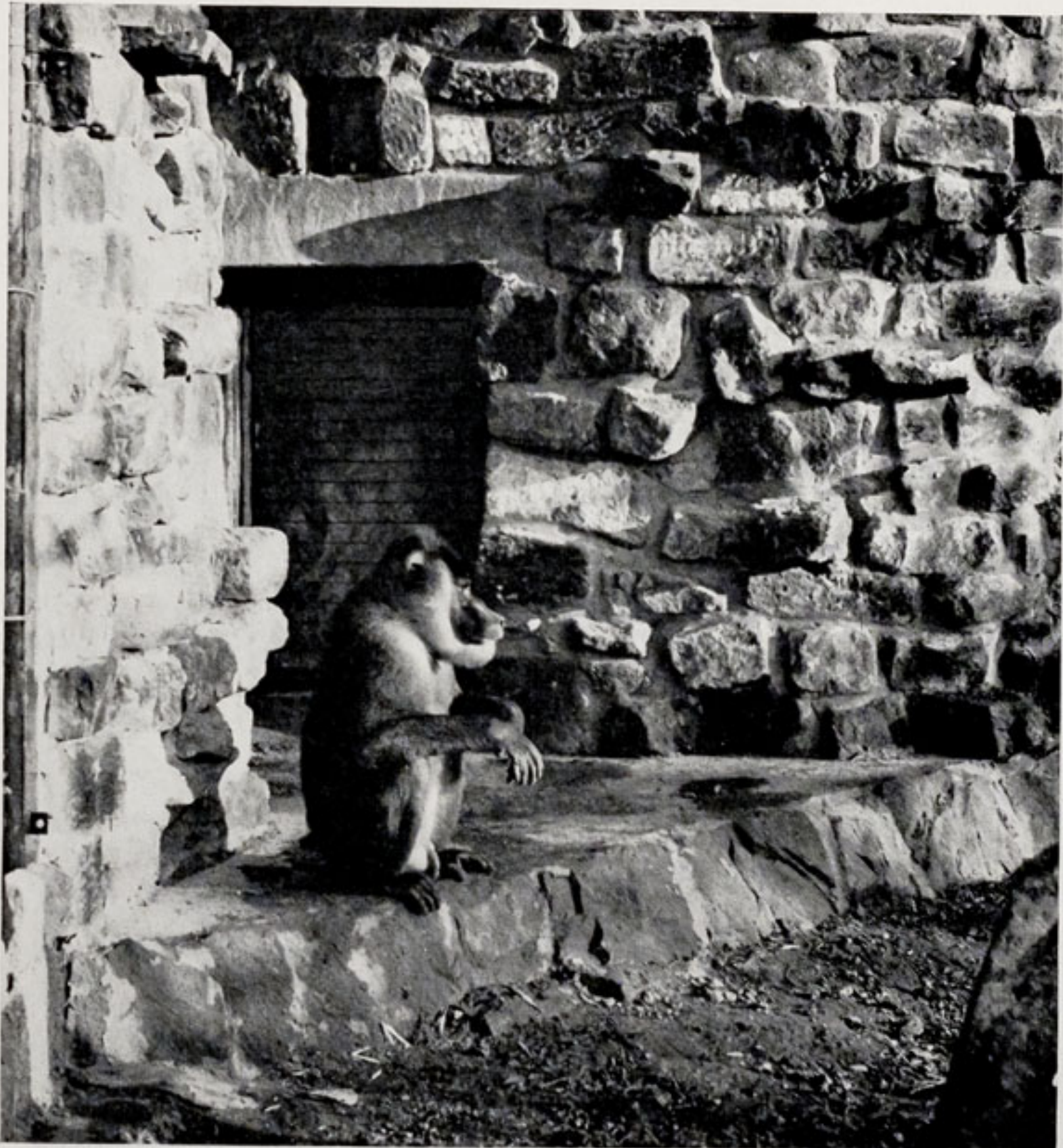
The Fennec (*Fennecus zerda*) is the smallest known species of Fox, being no more than two feet in length from the tip of its nose to the tip of its tail. However, these charming little animals more than make up for the small size of their bodies by having the most enormous ears. (See photograph on page nine). These can be turned to almost any position and are invaluable when the Fennec is attempting to elude enemies.

These Foxes vary a great deal in their colouration — some are pure white, with the exception of the black nose and dark eyes, whilst others may have yellowish or light brown coats. The most common colour is a sandy yellow and the majority of animals seen in captivity seem to be of this colour.

Fennec Foxes come from North Africa, Palestine and Arabia and inhabit the desert regions of this area. To escape the heat, most of their day is spent deep in communal burrows in the sand, but towards dusk they venture out in search of food. When there is little water Fennecs can often be found congregating in large colonies around water holes or oases.

The food of the Fennec Fox in the wild consists of small mammals, birds and insects, with the addition of some fruit. Our Foxes receive fresh, raw meat and fruit such as dates, with the addition of mice, chickens and raw eggs once a week.

At Chester we have three Fennec Foxes — one male and two females. All three have been transferred into a large breeding



*K. W. Green, A .R .P.S.*

"TOBY" OUTSIDE HIS NEW HOME

compartment in the Small Mammal House and have settled down well. Their natural habitat has been reproduced by the use of sand, soil, rocks and grass turf. The Foxes look very much at home and have already dug their burrows. In fact the Fennecs spend so much of their time in the burrows that often the only proof the Keeper has of their existence is an empty feeding dish.

In the future we hope to be successful in breeding this species. Last year youngsters were born but, unfortunately, they died soon after birth.

## GARDENING NEWS

We are making the most of the very open weather experienced this year. At the time of writing, during the last week in November, we have had only one night of frost and the weather has been mainly very mild and dry.

It was always our intention to plant a first class herbaceous border in the Zoo gardens, but during all the developments of recent years a really suitable site has not presented itself. Although we have kept the original border, round the pond below the Polar Bear enclosure, it has never been a good one. This autumn it was decided to improve and make a feature of the existing border. All the plants were cleared and the border trenched and well manured. It has now been transplanted with the best of material which we already had and with plants bought especially for this purpose.

On the site of the new cafe, adjacent to the Rhinoceros House, we are carrying out new plantings. A border has been made along one side and at the back of the new building. This is being planted with a collection of shrubs, lifted from our nurseries. All of these have been grown on from cuttings, rooted in the gardens. Climbers are being planted against the walls of the building, including *Ceanothus dentatus*, *C. veitchianus*, *C. Gloire de Versailles*, *Clematis Jackmanii superba*, Honeysuckle Late Red, Honeysuckle *flexuosa* and *Hydrangea petiolaris*.

The border running alongside the picnic lawn in front of the cafe was originally planted with laurel bushes, to make a wind break. This was before the lawn was laid and the laurels have now been taken out to make way for the planting of a mixed collection of floribunda roses.

There is always a lot of routine work in the gardens at this time of year, such as forking over of all the shrubberies and light pruning of roses. We always do this to prevent the rose bushes being loosened at the roots by the strong winds which we experience here. All the rose beds have had a good mulching of manure and the nursery, now clear of spring bedding plants, is being prepared for digging and ploughing ready for next years crops.



FENNEC FOX

*E. F. Kirkland, F.R.P.S.*

This is rather a static time of the year in the greenhouse nursery, although there is still plenty to be done. The greenhouses are all having a good wash-down — cleanliness being so important for the growing of healthy plants. Full advantage is being taken of the suitable weather to get the new greenhouses glazed.

We can see ahead quite an area of landscape work in the region of the new Cat House — when the building staff have completed their work. But this will be for the New Year.

### AQUARIUM NEWS

We are shortly to commence work on a row of tanks, which we hope will form the basis of our collection of Tropical Marine Fish for 1965. Several methods of rock and coral display, new to the Aquarium, are being worked out at present.

The basic pattern for each tank will be to build up layers of rocks of compatible geological structure and set them into interlocking blocks of concrete, which in turn will fit in the backs and sides of the tanks. Crevices will be left between some of the rocks and into these various corals will be fitted, to give a more natural effect. This is, of course, important in displaying fish of any sort, but it becomes particularly so with salt water fish, when one considers the lack of suitable plant life with which one can normally decorate tanks. Of course there are an infinite number of variations we can make on the basic pattern and these, combined with the use of other materials such as plastic, wood, and glass waste, offer interesting possibilities.

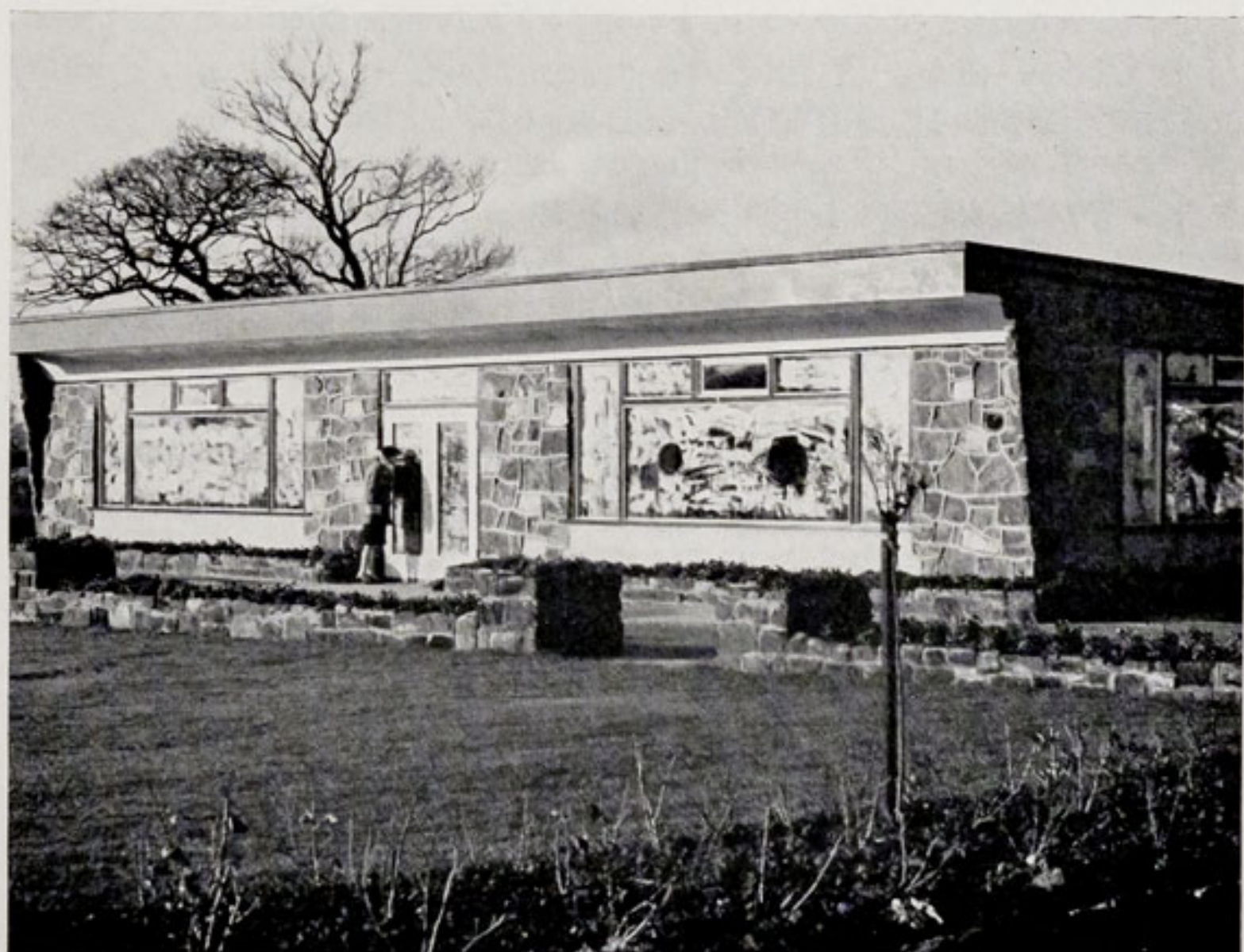
Improved methods of storing large quantities of live food will have to be investigated, as it would be most desirable to be able to lay up stocks of such things as Shrimps, Prawns and Crabs, as well as various species of fish.

The numbers have diminished somewhat, but there are still various species of English Marine life on exhibition, including Prawns, Shrimps, Hermit Crabs, Shore Crabs, Lobsters, various species of sea Anemone and two Species of Wrasse. Recently we were surprised and extremely pleased when the larger of the two



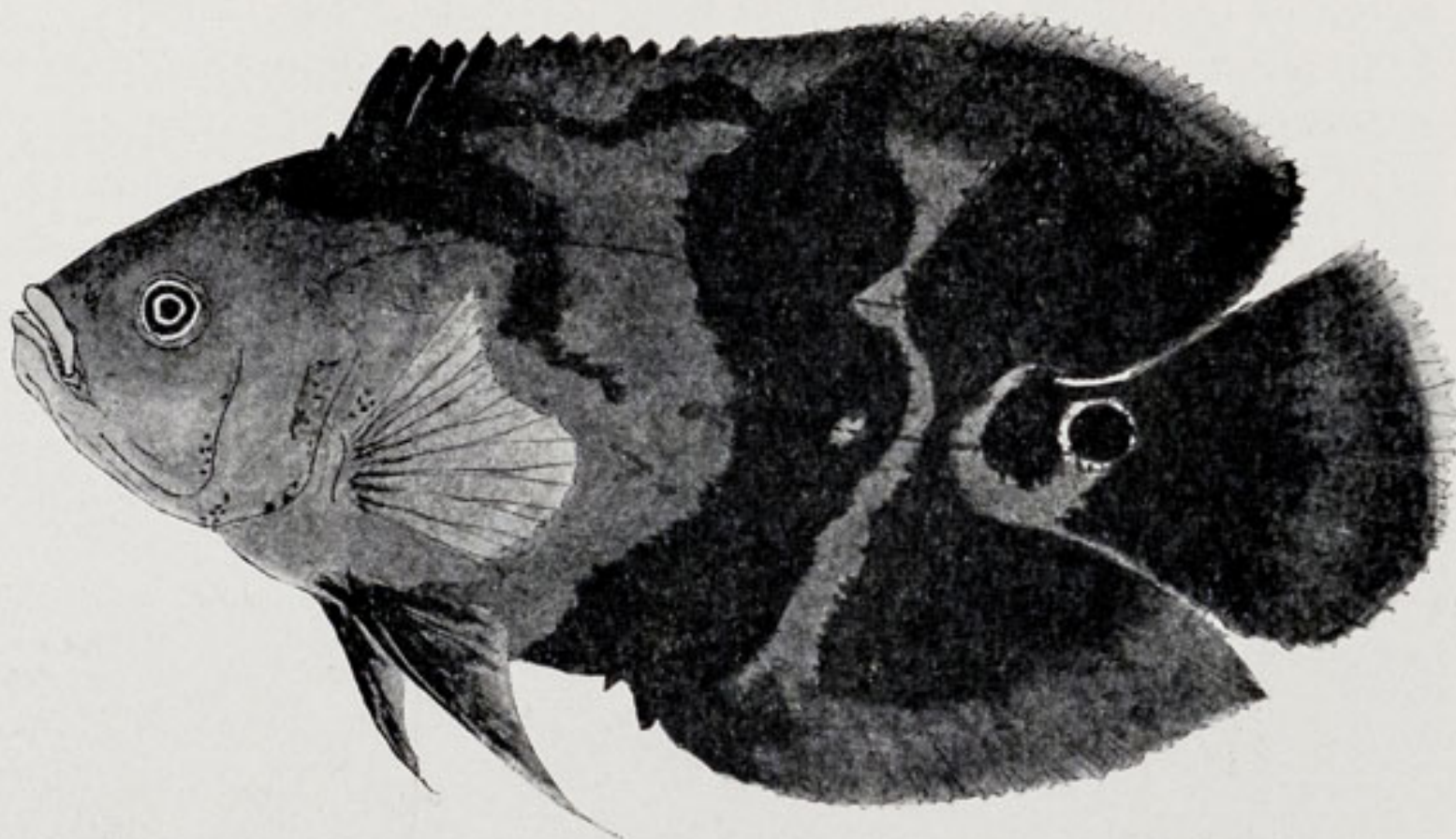
*G. Kerr*

SITE OF THE NEW CAFE—WITH THE WHITE RHINOS IN THE FOREGROUND  
PHOTOGRAPHED IN THE SPRING OF THIS YEAR



*K. W. Green, A.R.P.S.*

THE COMPLETED CAFE PICTURED IN DECEMBER 1964



ASTRONOTUS OCELLATUS

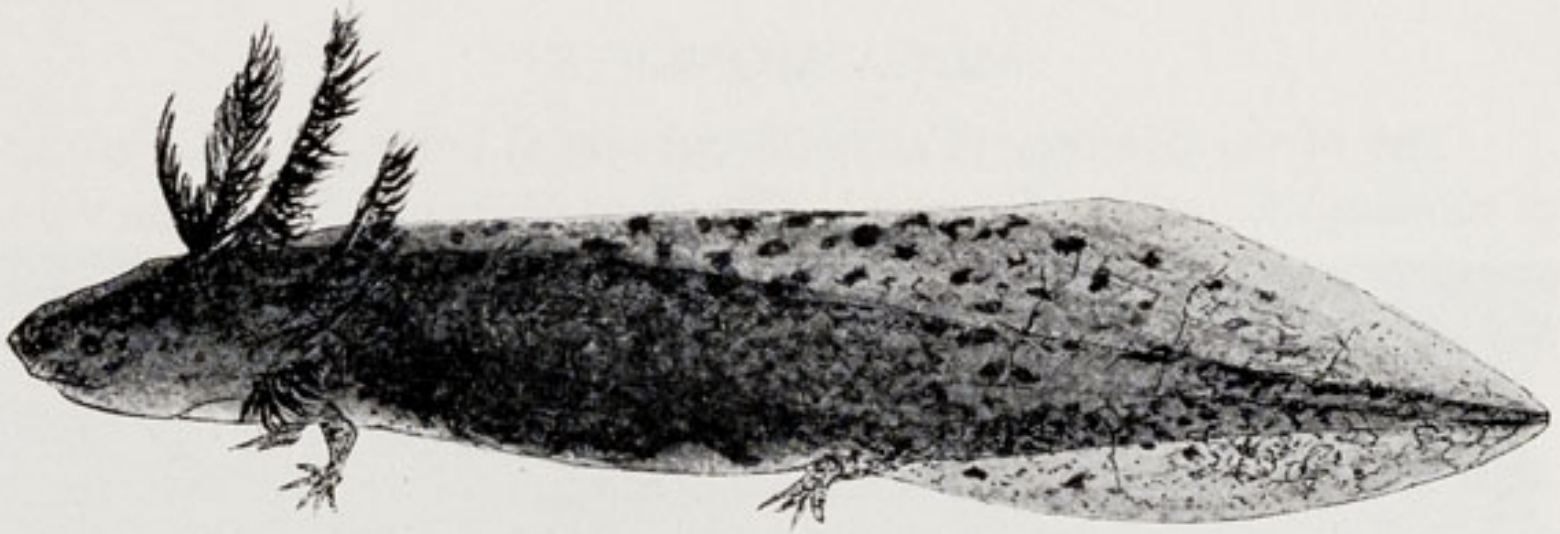
*M. D. Murphy*

Lobsters on exhibition was successful in casting its skin. Until now all attempts at this have ended in the death of the Lobster concerned. We think this may have been due to the incorrect osmotic pressure of the water having an adverse effect on the fluids of the body which, it must be remembered, is in a very spongy condition after the skin has been shed.

Before work gets under way on the marine section the "behind the scenes" area of the Aquarium is being brightened up with a coat or two of paint. It is also hoped to repaint the outside of the Aquarium in the spring of next year.

Whilst all this work is in hand the fish collection must still be looked after and the normal routine of feeding and cleaning continued. However, this was temporarily interrupted when it was discovered that our *Astronotus* Cichlids had laid approximately six hundred eggs on the concrete base of the community tank which they occupy at present.

In an attempt to give the parents a chance to hatch the eggs, a light was left burning over the tank each night, to enable the parents to spot any would-be attackers in time to protect the eggs. After the first day a few eggs were dislodged from the concrete and



YOUNG BLACK AXOLOTL

M. D. Murphy

siphoned into a hatching tank. It was obvious that even if the parents did hatch the eggs, they would almost certainly not be able to protect them all from the other fast moving fish in the tank. Unfortunately, on the third day, when the eggs were due to hatch, the entire batch was eaten by the parents. Obviously they had been disturbed too much by the other fish.

Some of the eggs which had been removed did hatch and two youngsters reached the free swimming stage, but it was obvious that the majority of the eggs had been irreparably damaged when they were removed from the tank.

A new system of transferring eggs is now being tried out. This entails the use of sheets of asbestos, laid on the base of the tank and covered with gravel. Already the original pair of *Astronotus* Cichlids have uncovered one of these sheets and we hope that if they spawn again, they will do so on the asbestos. The sheet can then be removed to the hatching tanks, without damaging the eggs. Perhaps we will then have more success.

At the end of November the black form of our Mexican Axolotls, *Amblyostoma tigrinum*, spawned. The eggs, which numbered approximately two hundred, were laid in batches and attached to the plants decorating the tank, in much the same way as frogs and toads deposit their eggs. All the Axolotl eggs have since been removed to another tank and are in the later stages of hatching. It is hoped that sufficient food can be obtained from the Zoo ponds to rear the majority of the expected youngsters for next year, thus maintaining a constant breeding stock of Axolotls.

### MONA MONKEYS

The Mona Monkey (*Cercopithecus mona*) belongs to the group of monkeys known as Guenons. The word Guenon means one who grimaces, and this is indeed appropriate, especially in the case of the Monas.

Mona Monkeys are to be found in the tropical forests of West Africa and have been introduced successfully into St. Kitts and Grenada in the West Indies. They spend most of their time high up in the trees in search of food. In common with all other Guenons they have cheek pouches, which serve as temporary storage places for food. Their diet in the wild state consists of fruit, berries and sometimes a small bird.

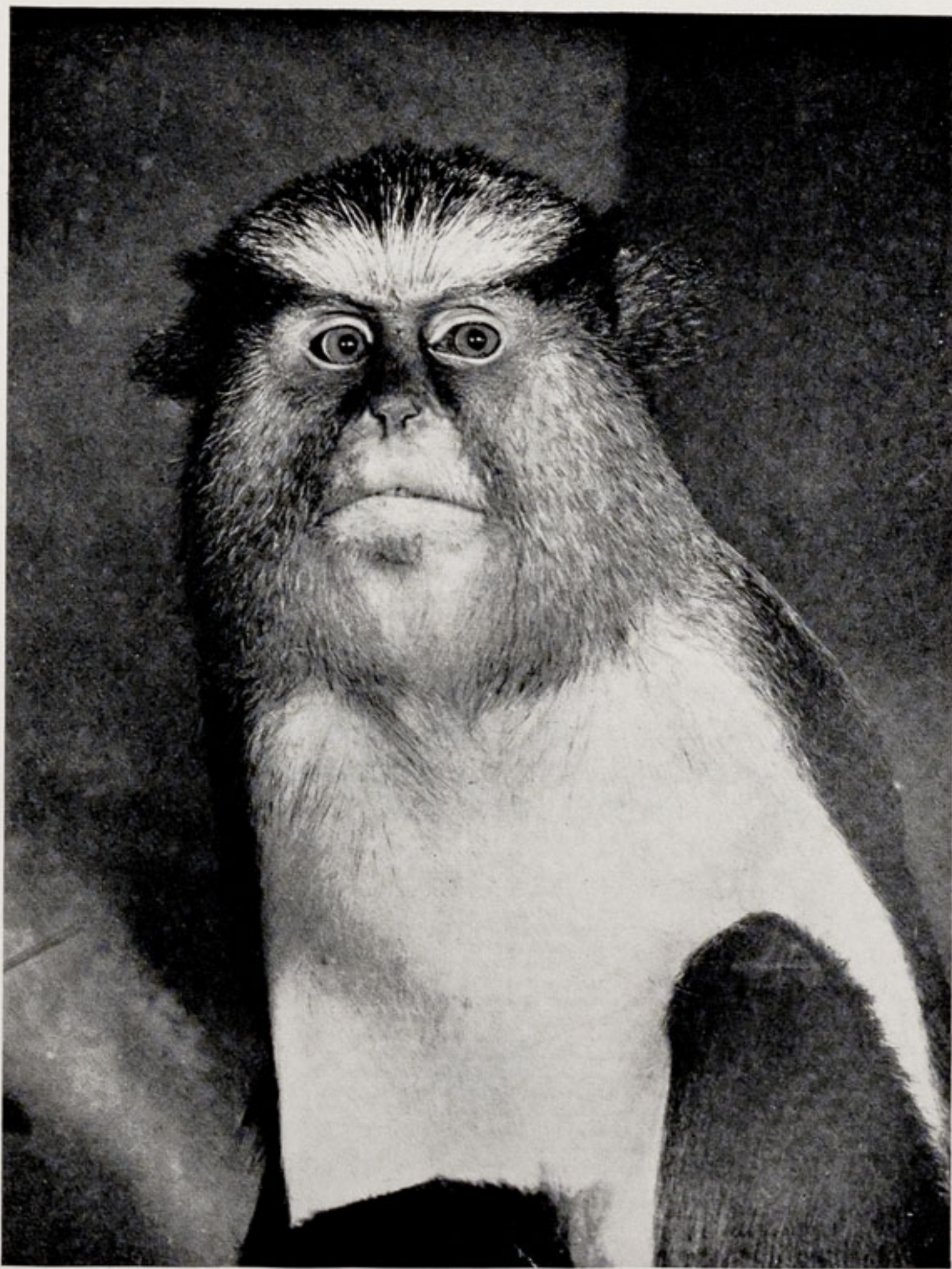


The Mona is not quite as agile as some of the other hundred varieties of Guenons — for example the Diana Monkey. It is however, very strong. The males have long, pointed canine teeth, with which they can inflict a nasty wound.

Like all Monkeys the Monas can often be seen searching through one another's fur. Contrary to popular belief, when thus engaged they are not 'hunting for fleas'. What they are looking for so diligently are the small pieces of salty scurf which adhere to the skin. Monkeys kept on their own often search through the overall of their Keeper and salt sprinkled on a coat will attract them immediately.

Mr. & Mrs. E. Sorby

"CURLY" — DIANA MONKEY



"TOOKIE" — MONA MONKEY

*E. Kirkland, F.R.P.S.*

The curious colour of Mona Monkeys — a grizzled olive-brown on the back — is produced by each hair being circled with alternate rings of different colours. There are many sub-species of the Mona, some of which are extremely colourful. The Wolf's Monkey is one of these — being a reddish brown colour, with a white throat, red markings round the mouth and red tufts of hair at the tips of the ears.

Mona Monkeys, or any other Guenons for that matter, cannot be recommended as household pets. When they are young they are fairly trustworthy, but at an age of four or five years they are liable to turn vicious and can be dangerous. This is particularly true in the case of males.

Mona Monkeys do well in captivity and at Chester we have five — two of which are females. They are given a diet of fruit and vegetables, such as carrots, cabbage, potatoes, apples, oranges and bananas, with the addition of some grain and a small chick once a week.

Our Monas are up to all sorts of mischief. One of their favourite tricks is to chew holes in their Keeper's hosepipe, whenever they get a chance to grab it. They are always pleased to receive visitors and rush to the side of their cage to greet friends with their curious call.



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Printed in England by  
G. R. Griffith Ltd.  
Castle Printing Works  
Chester

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