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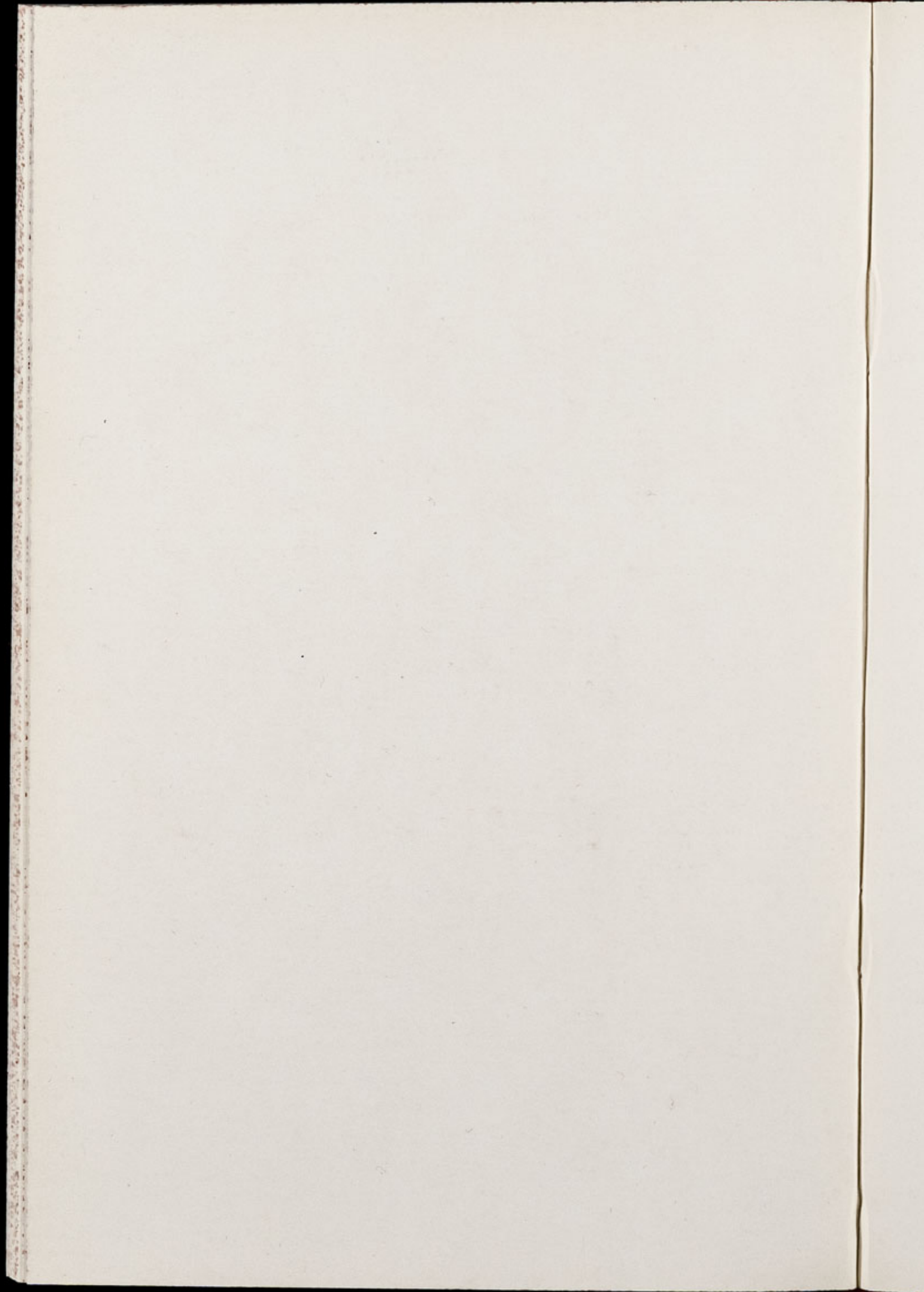
Chester Zoo News

AND GUIDE

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

November 1969

Price 1/-



The North of England Zoological Society

ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, UPTON-BY-CHESTER

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COVER: Otter Group.

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DISTRIBUTION OF CHESTER ZOO NEWS

Originally the Zoo magazine was published in November 1937 under the title of '*Our Zoo News*', but since this time has increased enormously in distribution and has been published in its present form since 1962.

This magazine is now sent all over the world, copies being issued to Zoos as far as Japan, America and New Zealand. In exchange, Chester Zoo receives many publications from other Zoos enabling a library to be built up which is both interesting and informative.

The main aim of the magazine is to interest people of all ages from children to Zoologists and even the press, who often contact the Zoo if they read anything slightly unusual in the magazine.

BIRTHS, PURCHASES AND PRESENTATIONS

As reported in last month's magazine, an Agouti was born in the Mammal House and appears to be progressing favourably. The youngster already has the typical Agoutis' colouring with their thick, coarse orangy-brown coats and whitish or yellowish underparts. Their external limbs are modified to facilitate running, the hind legs being lengthened and the lateral toes reduced in size.

Basically these animals are diurnal but in areas where they have been preyed upon excessively, they will often stay in their burrows until dusk. As yet Agoutis are still fairly common in their native lands but they prove the victims of many carnivores, although it is known that they have been kept as household pets by man.

The Agoutis' diet is vegetarian, consisting of fruits, vegetables and succulent plants which they usually eat whilst sitting erect with



AGOUTI

Mr. & Mrs. E. Sorby

the food clenched in their fore-paws. If the food which they are about to devour has an outer layer they will peel it off before beginning to eat.

The baby Talapoin Monkey born on 29th September is causing a great deal of public interest in the Monkey House. So far the mother appears to be caring extremely well for her offspring and it is hoped that the young Talapoin will continue to thrive.

Earlier this month a Grison was presented to the Society. These animals are relatives of the Tayra and have a black face and flanks, the top of the head and back being grey with a distinct white borderline separating the two colours.

There are two species of Grison, found from South Mexico and as far as Argentina and Chile. One species, the Lesser, is confined mainly to the mountainous areas whereas the Common Grison is at home even in the Equatorial Forests.

These animals live in groups and communicate by a series of barks and cries, a deep growling bark being used as a warning. In the wild state one often finds that they will live in burrows which usually have been commandeered from other animals, or under tree roots and rocks.

Grison are somewhat unusual in their habits in that they are good climbers and swimmers and may be active during both day and night.

Their diet is mainly carnivorous but they also eat a variety of foods including fruits. If they are able to overcome any bird or small vertebrate they will kill and eat it, wild Guinea Pigs in Peru often falling victims to them.

In native countries they have been kept as pets as they tame



LESSER GRISSON HELD BY HEAD KEEPER

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

readily; at one time they were known to be trained and used in the same manner as a Ferret to drive Chinchillas from their burrows.

BIRD ACQUISITIONS

Among the most recent acquisitions for the various Bird Houses throughout the Zoo are seven Cattle Egrets, two Sun-bitterns and a Vermiculated Fishing Owl.

The Cattle Egrets arrived at the Zoo on 20th November and at present are to be found in the Temperate Bird House where they appear to be settling in extremely well. Eventually however, they will be moved into the Flight Aviaries which are still under construction near the New Ape House.

In the wild state these birds have spread rapidly in distribution and are to be found in Southern Portugal, Southern Spain, Africa, Asia and as far as the Atlantic Seaboard of the U.S.A., New Jersey and Ontario.

Cattle Egrets will linger wherever Zebras, Antelopes and other herd animals are found grazing, eating not only the insects stirred up in the grasses as the cattle feed but also the flies which settle on their backs.

The pair of Sun-bitterns was presented on the 28th November, and have been housed in an Aviary in the Tropical House, later they will be transferred to the new Flight Aviaries.

They are extremely elegant birds, being found along the wooded margins of streams and ponds in the tropical rain-forests of Central and South America. Here these timid birds usually hunt minnows, insects and small riparian life, either singly or in pairs, for they are never found in flocks.



OSTRICH

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

GUIDE TO ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

ANIMAL FEEDING TIMES

LIONS—3 p.m. except Fridays

SEA LIONS—2-40, 3-40, 4-40 p.m.

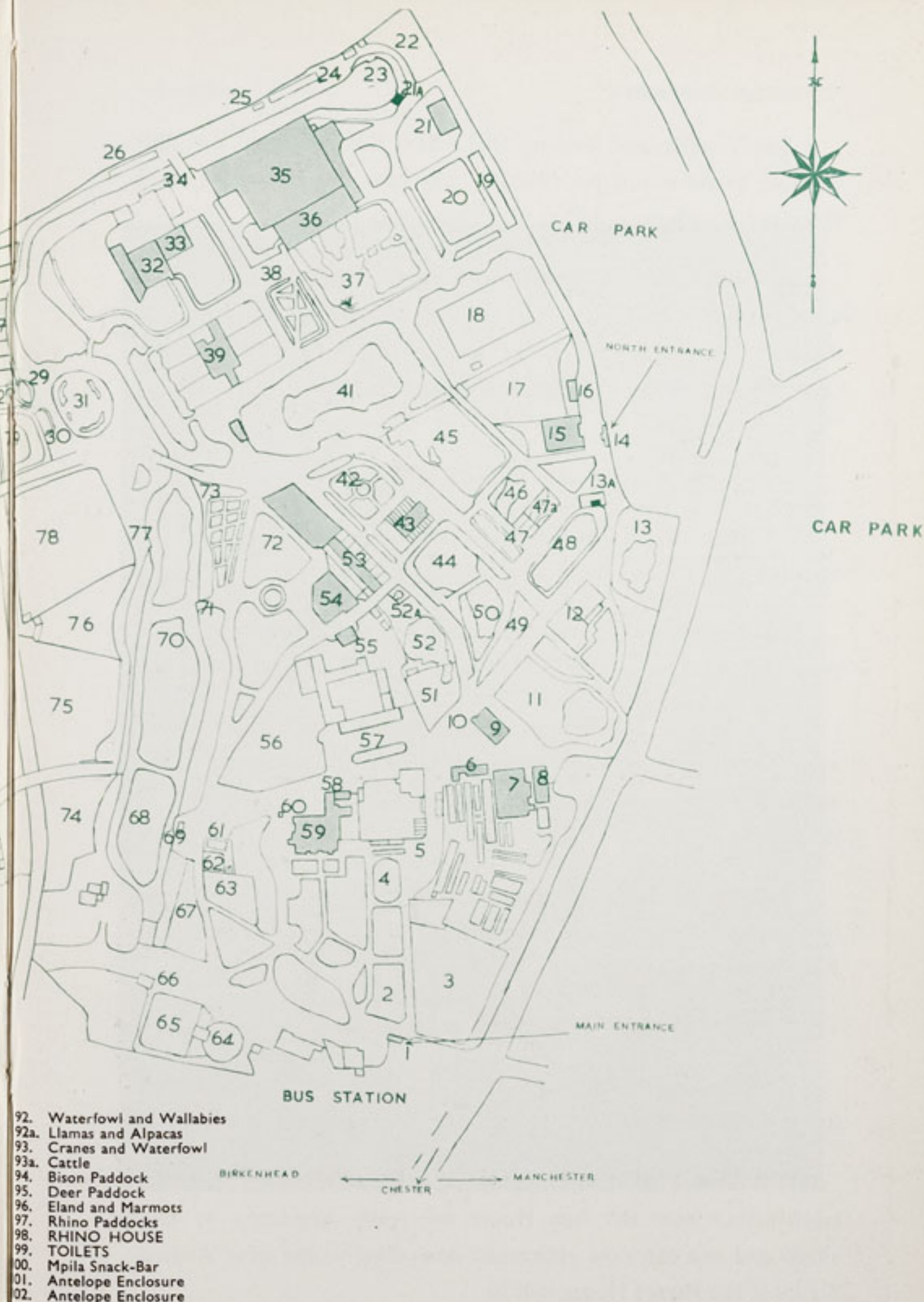
BEARS—3-15 p.m.

POLAR BEARS—4-0 p.m.

1. MAIN ENTRANCE
2. Bird Enclosure
3. Wapiti Paddock
4. Lesser Pandas
5. Aviaries
6. Milk Bar
7. CORONATION HALL
8. CLOAKROOM, TOILETS, FIRST AID AND LOST CHILDREN
9. CAFETERIA
10. CAFETERIA
11. Picnic Lawn
12. Bears
13. Animal Enclosure
- 13a. Kiosk
14. NORTH ENTRANCE
15. AQUARIUM
16. Push Chairs and Wheel Chairs
- 17.† Parrot House
18. APE HOUSE No. 2
19. RAINBOW CAFE AND SHOP
20. Aviaries and Picnic Lawn
21. TOILETS
- 21a. Tuatara House
22. Peccaries
23. Waterbus Halt
24. Birds of Prey Aviary
25. Birds of Prey Aviary
26. Owls
27. Jackal and Hyena Enclosures
28. Wolverines
29. Porcupines and Raccoons
30. Coypus
31. Beavers
32. Giraffe House

33. Camel House
34. Waterbus Halt
35. TROPICAL, NOCTURNAL AND REPTILE HOUSES
36. APE HOUSE No. 1
37. Chimpanzee Islands
38. Floribunda Rose Gardens
39. Zebra House
- 40.
41. Gibbon Island
42. H.T. Rose Garden
43. Parrot House
44. Waterfowl Enclosure
45. Pelicans
46. Flamingos
47. Waterfowl Enclosure
- 47a. Penguins and Otters
48. Sea Lion Pool
49. Rock Garden
50. Polar Bears
51. Tigers
52. Anteaters
- 52a. Penguin Pool
53. BIRD HOUSE
54. FOUNTAIN RESTAURANT
55. TOILETS
56. Lions
57. NEW ZOO SHOP
58. TOILETS
59. OAKFIELD RESTAURANT
60. G.P.O. Telephone Kiosk
61. Animal Enclosure
62. Animal Enclosure
63. Cheetahs

64. Malayan Bears
65. Animal Enclosure
66. Aviary
67. Wallaby Enclosure
68. Island
69. WATERBUS BOOKING OFFICE
70. Islands
71. Waterbus Halt
72. Flower Gardens
73. ROSE GARDENS
74. Deer or Antelope Enclosures
75. Deer or Antelope Enclosures
76. Deer or Antelope Enclosures
77. Waterbus Halt
78. Zebra and Deer Enclosure
79. Kamchatka Bears
80. Elephant Paddock
81. Hippo Paddock
82. PACHYDERM HOUSE
83. Tapir Enclosure
84. Small Mammal House
85. Waterfowl Enclosure
86. Antelope and Cattle
87. Stork Enclosures
88. Monkey Enclosures
89. Cat House
- 89a. Jaguars
90. MONKEY HOUSE
91. Cranes and Waterfowl
- 91a. Highland Cattle



Animals may be moved from time to time
 †--Under construction.

The Vermiculated Fishing Owl which was presented on 29th October as yet is not on view but has been placed in the Bird Hospital to undergo a period of acclimatization.

Several other presentations were made to the Society, including a pair of Zebra Finches, Avadavats, Spice Birds, a male Lavender Finch, a male Fire Finch and a female Golden Breasted Waxbill, all of which have been housed in the Oakfield Aviary.

PROGRESS REPORTS

We are pleased to say that the new arrivals mentioned in last month's '*Chester Zoo News*' are thriving.

The Ostriches are growing considerably and the photograph on page 7 shows a close up of one of them.

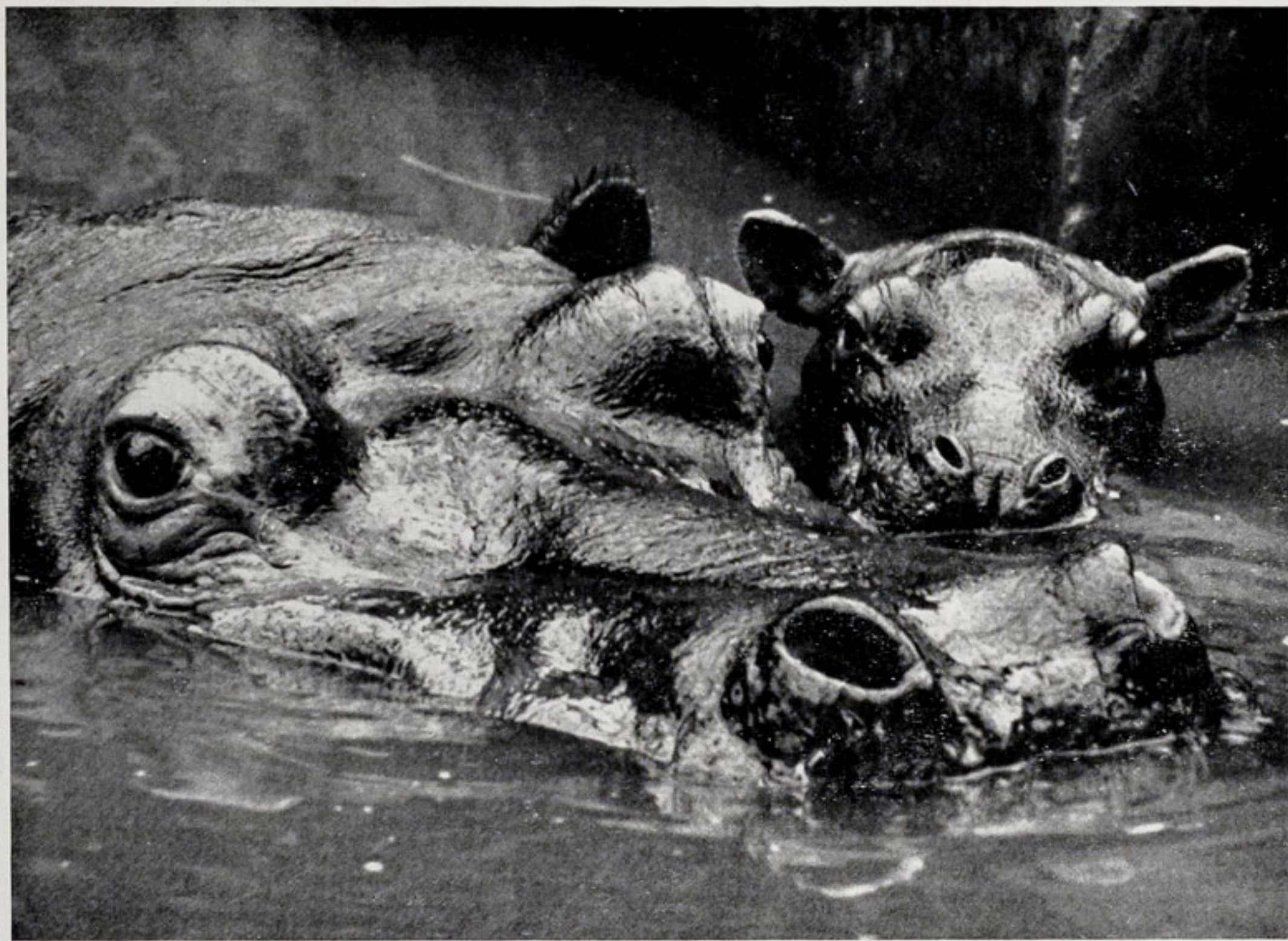
'Rajang' and 'Freddie' the young Orang-utan and Chimpanzee appear to have settled into their new enclosure in the Monkey House and continue to cause most visitors a great deal of amusement with their antics.

'Bimbo', the baby Hippopotamus is growing rapidly and can be found most days in the mud-bath of her enclosure outside the Pachyderm House.

GENERAL NEWS

The building of the New Lion and Tiger Enclosures is now finished and the animals have been introduced to their new dens.

The new Flight Aviaries and the Parrot House still under construction near the Ape House are really beginning to take shape and one can now appreciate how effective the new 'Angled' flights in the Parrot House will be.



BABY COMMON HIPPO 'BIMBO' WITH HER MOTHER

Jack Smith

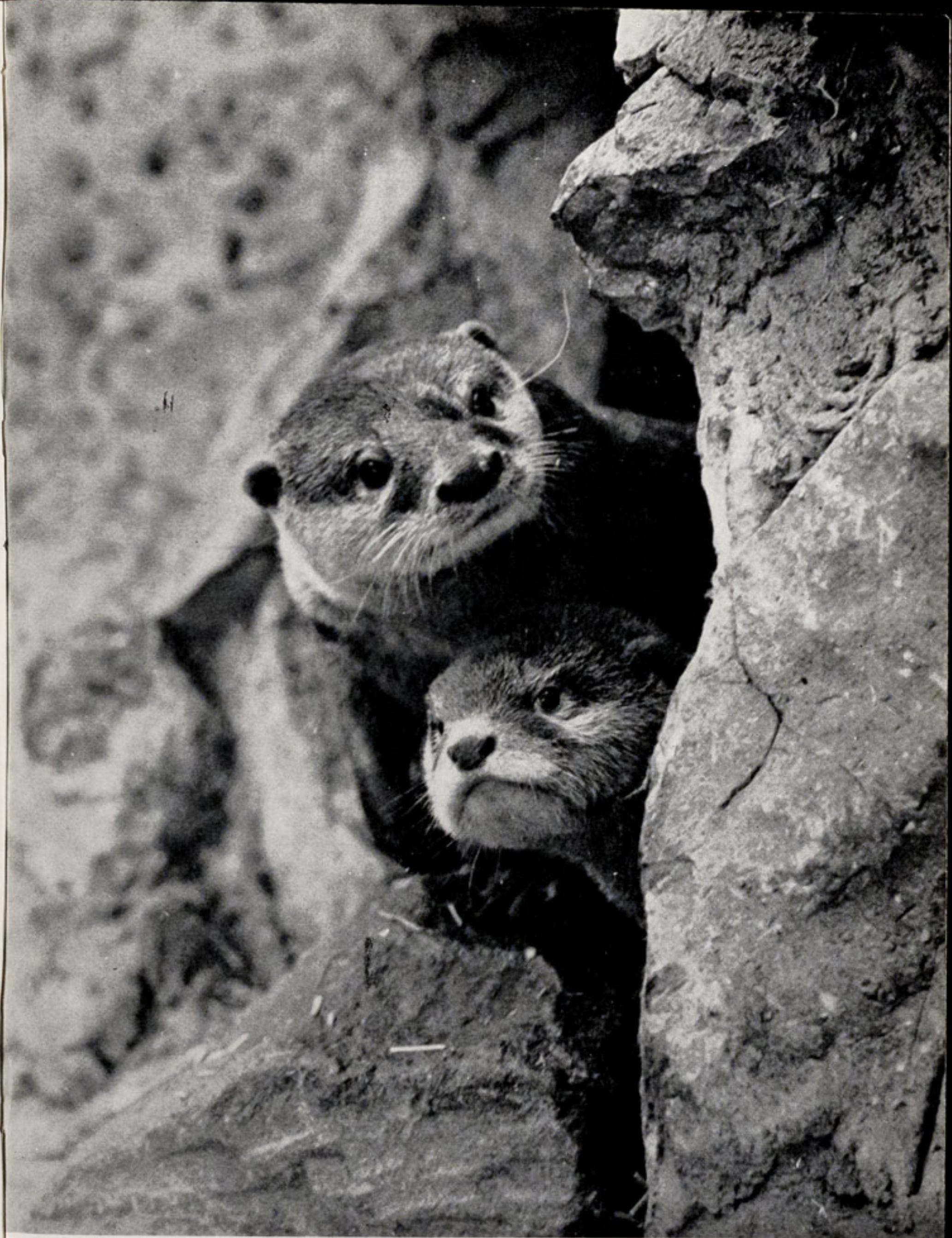
OTTERS AND NICOLE

Nicole Duplaix is in the process of studying Chester Zoo's eight Otters, as part of an extended research programme for her Ph.D. Thesis. Originally Nicole came from New York but has spent most of her life in Paris. For the next three months, however, she will share her time between Chester and Norfolk studying vocalisation and manipulation in Otters.

The task is complex and already she has spent five years trying to improve her understanding of Otter behaviour in Zoos in Europe and the United States. Nicole has taped the calls of over seventy-two Otters, devising a chart where different noises made by varying species are classified into categories such as alarm, greeting or threat.

Otters can be divided into two groups, those which remain solitary during most of the year and the social, (living in communities) each having varied characteristics and abilities. The solitary Otters including the English Otters are excellent swimmers, have few sounds and do not use their fore-feet with the same dexterity as the other social Otters which have a far more varied vocabulary; they use their fore-feet when eating or playing with objects with almost monkey-like movements.

Chester Zoo's Oriental Small-clawed Otters are a social species. They possess twelve basic calls, some similar to those of solitary Otters, which enable them to communicate should they ever meet. Different species of Otters can understand the fear or anger sounds of the other but usually the vocalisations vary from bird-like chirps meaning 'here I am' to loud splutters meaning 'I am scared', and sounds such as a growl which begins quietly enough but can then build up and intensify into screams if the animal is about to attack.



R. Broster, Liverpool Daily Post & Echo

ORIENTAL SMALL-CLAWED OTTER AND BABY

Generally, the Oriental Small-clawed Otters which Nicole is studying at Chester Zoo have short, dense brown fur with greyish or whitish underparts. In the wild state these Otters are found in the marshes and coastal estuaries in Southern India, the lower Himalayas, Malaya, Borneo, Sumatra and Java.

Their ability to use their fore-feet is of great advantage when locating and feeding on prey which is hidden in mud or under stones. Even in captivity, as at Chester Zoo, these Otters use their fore-feet to manipulate food and have been observed 'washing' food such as minced meat in water before eating it.

Nicole's studies have created a great deal of public interest, both in the Local and National Press, the BBC and Granada Television.

On Friday, 17th October, camera crews from both television stations arrived to film Nicole at work with the Otters. The results were fascinating and showed clearly the great affinity which Nicole has with the Otters, even though she has not yet spent a great deal of time with them. It takes infinite patience and willpower in order to gain the trust of Otters as they show enormous curiosity and yet at the same time are very wary.

Throughout the interviews, the Otters were running around playing at Nicole's feet and trying to climb on her as she sat on the rocks in their enclosure. At one stage, one of the Otters managed to switch off the tape recorder with which she had been demonstrating the sounds of the various otter species. This is where Nicole's ability to imitate the 'warning' sound and scare the inquisitive Otter away before it damaged the delicate recording apparatus was extremely useful.

DEATH OF BROWN BEAR

The Brown Bear which the majority of visitors to the Zoo must have seen sharing accommodation with two Himalayan Bears, died recently. The animal began to lose condition, did not appear to have a very good appetite and finally died.

A post-mortem examination was performed and the cause of death was attributed to an object which was found lodged in the stomach; this obviously disrupted the animal's digestive system and ultimately caused its death.

This type of accident appears to be inevitable, despite notices throughout the Zoo requesting visitors not to feed the animals or throw objects into the enclosures which could be consumed and cause harm.

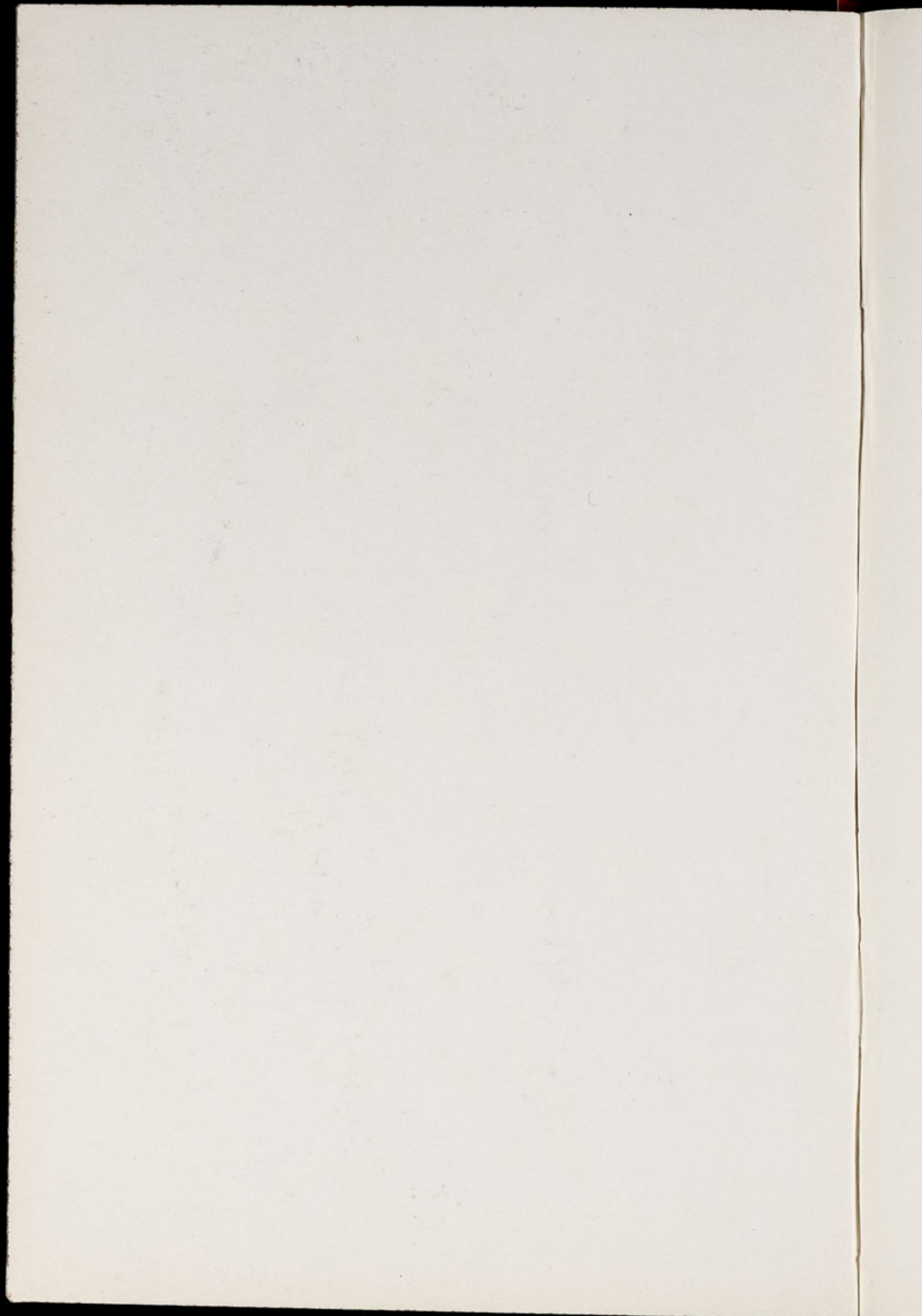
As yet the object found in the Bear's stomach is unidentifiable but it appears to be either a piece of rubber or leather, perhaps from a ball or a purse.

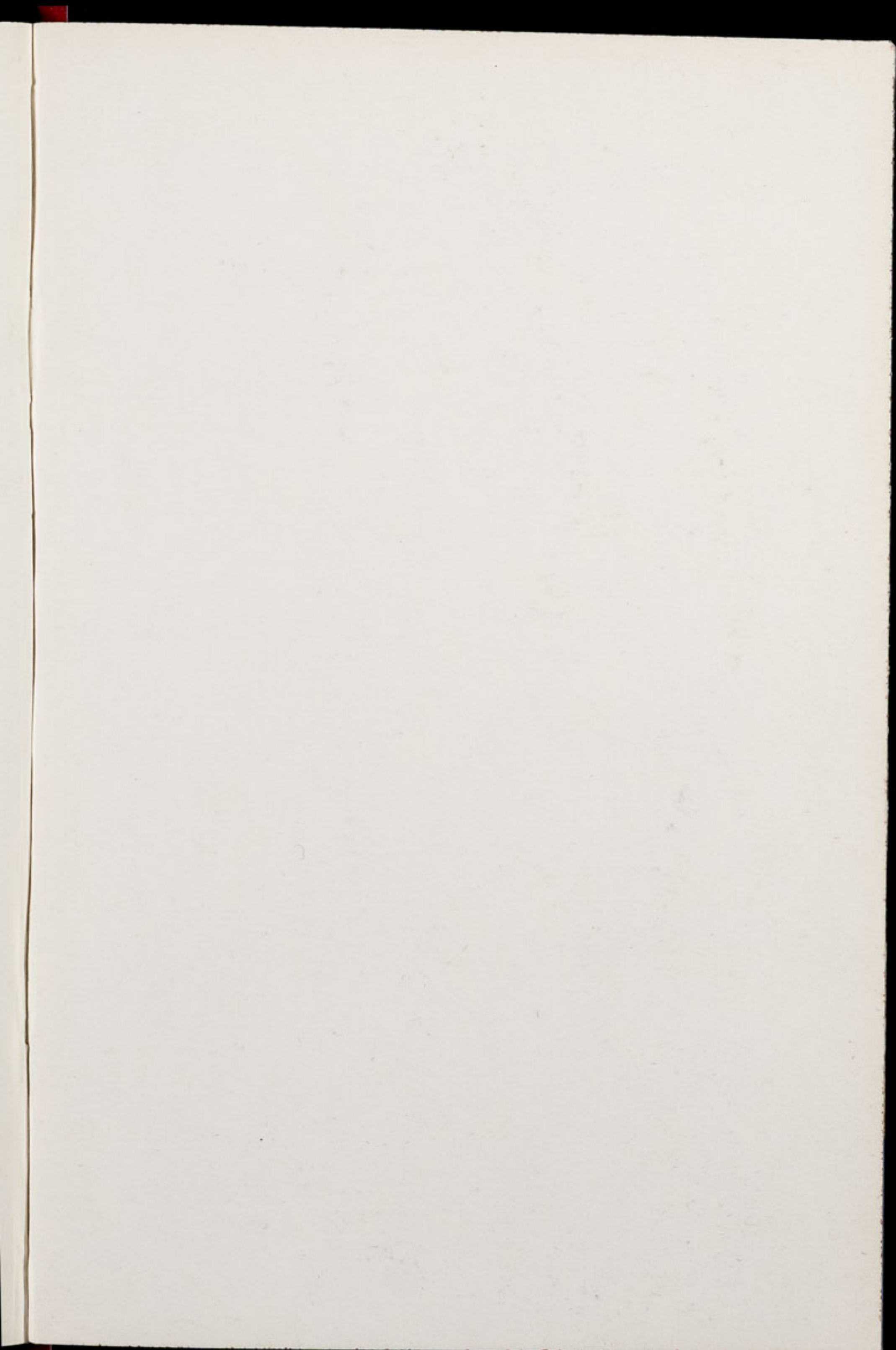
The Bear in question, 'Pat', had lived a good life at the Zoo and was aged twenty-one when he died but without this regrettable incident he could quite easily have lived much longer.

BLUE FOXES

Tucked away in an enclosure near the Waterbus Kiosk are a pair of Blue Foxes which joined the collection in January, 1965. These animals are a blue phase of the white Arctic Fox, but unlike the Arctic Fox they remain bluish grey throughout the year.

In the wild state they are found in Greenland, Iceland, Canada and also northern Norway and Sweden, but in the two latter countries they are now quite a rarity.





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