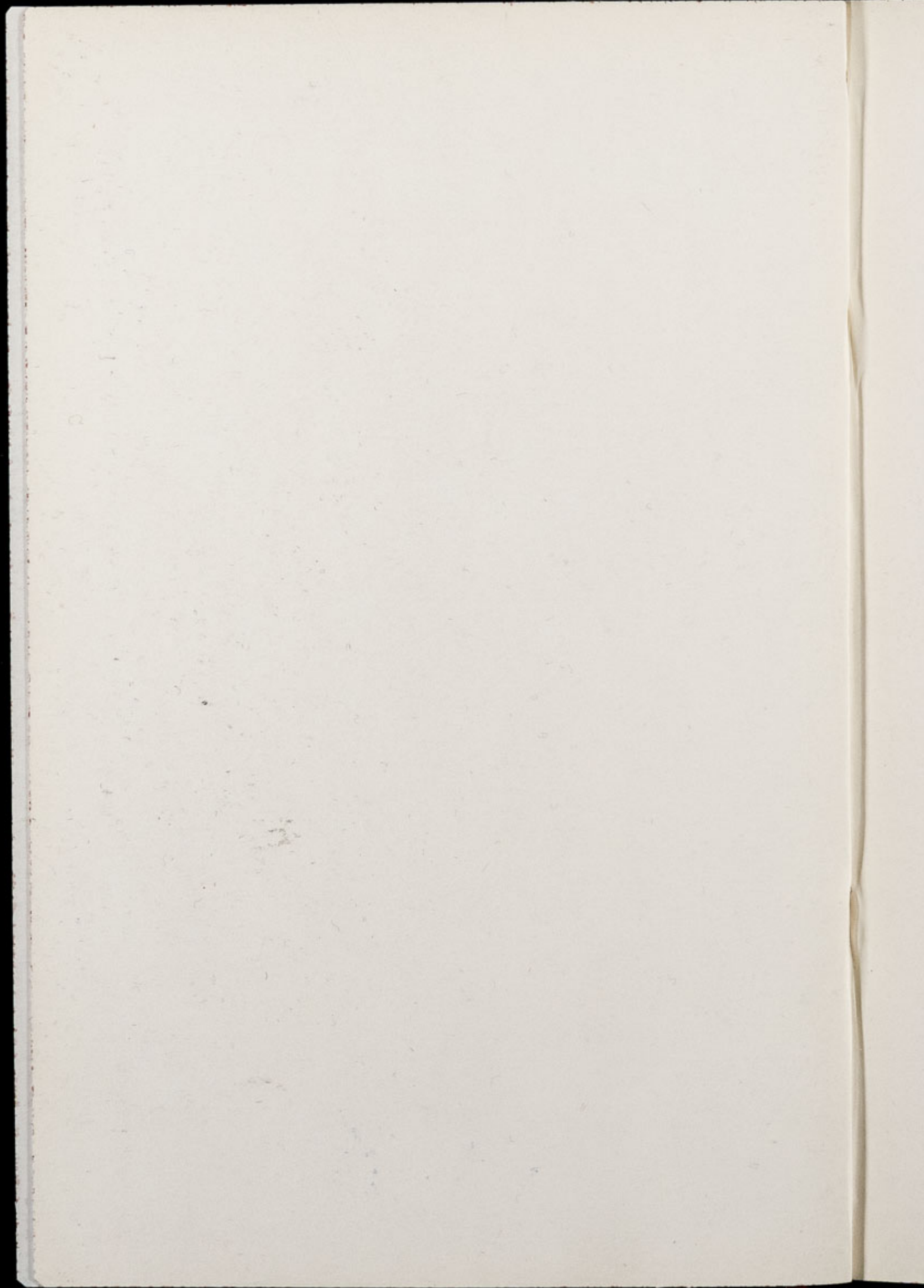




CHESTER ZOO NEWS *AND GUIDE*

February 1968

Price 1/-



The North of England Zoological Society

ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, UPTON-BY-CHESTER

Editorial

The Zoo is now back to normal after the closure due to foot and mouth disease which has been prevalent in this area. Since re-opening the weather has been very poor with deep snow and fog most of the time. However, Sunday, 18th February, was very Spring-like and over 2,000 visitors passed through our turnstiles.

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COVER: *This month's cover photograph shows "Tammy", the baby Chimpanzee, who is living with the Curator's family, and has frequently appeared on "Zoo Time".*

By Courtesy of A. Markey, Daily Mirror.

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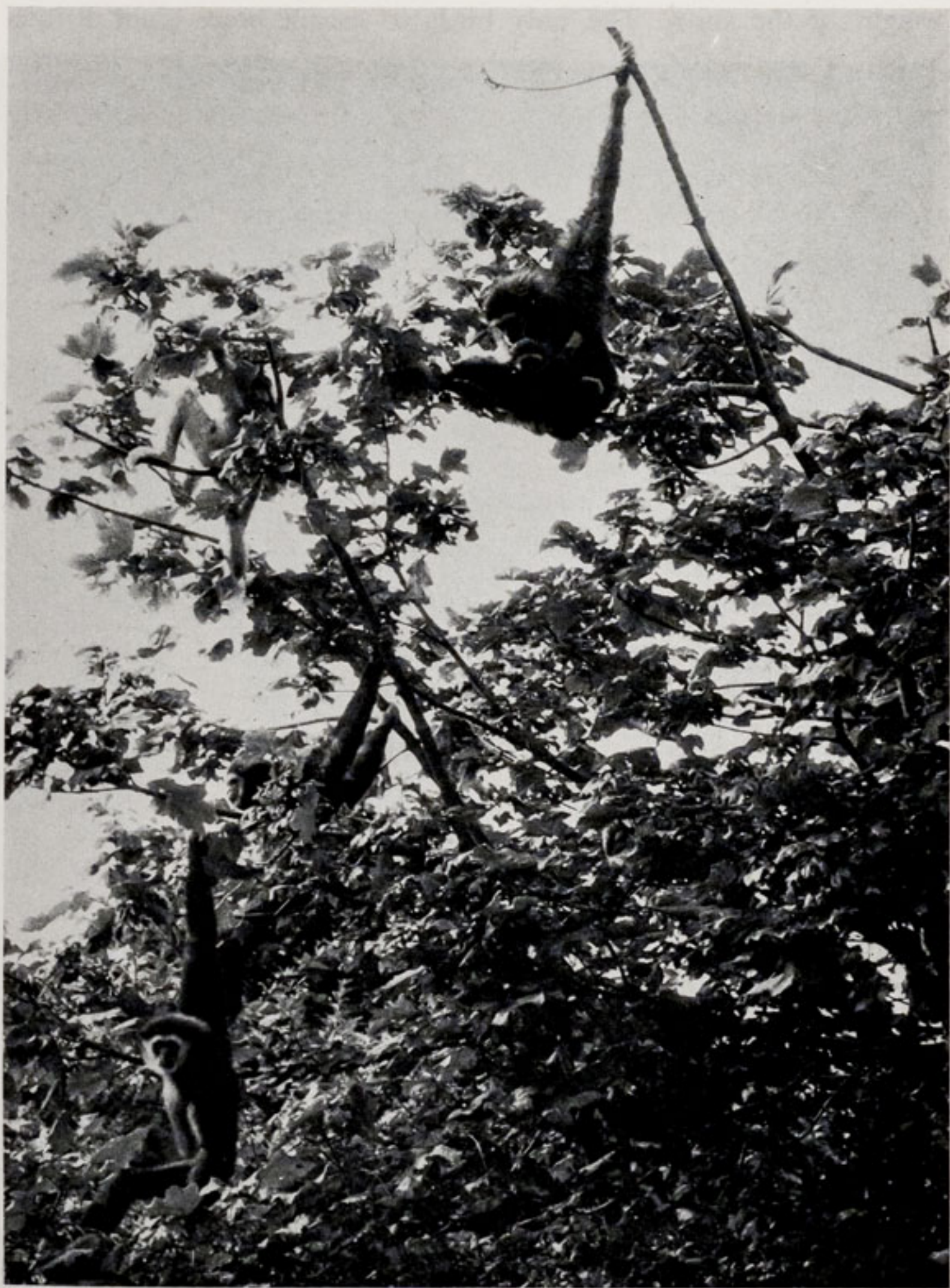
The Gibbon Island (No. 41 on the Plan) has become a veritable jungle, with the growth of all the bushes and trees. This is ideal for the Gibbons but not quite so good for the public as the animals are visible only when on the outer periphery of the island. For this reason all the Gibbons have been trapped and keepers and gardeners have made their way by boat on to the island to cut down the undergrowth. Unfortunately this looks like being at least an annual event as the bushes seem to thrive on severe pruning.

The Anteaters have been provided with an infra-red strip heater in their cedarwood inside quarters. Although they originate from South America they are not delicate animals but seem to need some heat during the worst of the winter. At this time of year they are let outside only during mild weather as one of their favourite habits is to dive into their pool and we feel they could contract chills by doing this during the winter.

The recent gales in this area with gusts up to 90 m.p.h. caused some damage in various parts of the Zoo. Two very large branches were blown into the Lions' enclosure and had to be sawn into logs before removal. As a precaution against a tree breaking down the surrounding fence, all our Lions and Tigers are locked inside during stormy weather.

Some storm damage was sustained in the Pachyderm and Tropical Houses, but this has been repaired and we are pleased to say was not of a serious nature. The Gardeners have been busy replacing the polythene insulation sheeting inside the Pachyderm House.

A heavy fall of snow during February caused difficulties to many staff. A number were unable to make the journey into Chester due to the bad conditions on the roads but enough local staff were



Mr. and Mrs. E. Sorby

GIBBON ISLAND DURING SUMMER

available to attend to the animals. Around the Zoo itself conditions were very bad indeed and several aviaries collapsed under the weight of the snow. The only birds to escape were eight British Tawny Owls, which should thrive in the Zoo grounds. Very few animals were inconvenienced by the snow as all but the especially hardy specimens have centrally heated indoor quarters. The Gorillas, Orang-utans and Chimps were not allowed out of doors as their moats were frozen over and they could have escaped by walking over the ice. The Elephants had a very enjoyable time in the snow; "Nobby" the 5½ year old Indian male broke the ice on the pool and went in for a swim.

The Maintenance staff have been busy installing oil-fired central heating at the Giraffe and Camel Houses. Although the coke-fired boiler was perfectly adequate, the oil-fired unit will provide a more constant heat, especially during the night.

The Wreathed Hornbill broke aside his wire aviary and went to visit the South American Trumpeters next door. In the normal way, Wreathed Hornbills can be very aggressive and have even attacked their keepers, but fortunately the Trumpeters were considered friends and even came to preen the Hornbill's feathers. Reluctantly we had to transfer the Hornbill as we felt that in a short space of time he would become less docile.

A new floor is being laid in the Camel House which adjoins the Giraffe House. The flooring for the animals is being treated with a substance described by Mr. F. Williams, Clerk of Works, as being similar to that used on non-stick frying pans. This should make cleaning and hosing down far easier and be of great advantage to the keepers. The whole interior of the house is being re-painted and should look very smart for the forthcoming season.



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

CHIMPANZEE ISLAND — THE MOAT FREEZES OVER DURING THE WINTER

Animal stocktaking has been taking place during the past month. Staff in the Nocturnal House were very surprised to count twelve extra Gerbils or Desert Rats. Although some were known to have bred, we were very pleased at this breeding record as the Gerbils arrived only last year.

The Chimpanzee baby born to "Julie" is doing very well and is just starting to crawl. She has not yet started to eat fruit but is only four months old at the time of writing. "Tammy" the Chimp being looked after by the Curator and his wife is also thriving, after a slight set-back and an oxygen tent being brought to his aid. He is now eight months old and quite a handful, being restrained in a playpen; the photograph on the front cover was taken when he was a little younger.

Some movement of stock is taking place in the Cat House. The young Black Panther and the three young Pumas are to be moved to the far side of the House away from their parents. The adult animals will be moved in with their respective mates, in the hope that they will breed again this year.

The Mammal House at Chester Zoo contains a very interesting collection of animals from Fennec Foxes to Squirrels, Otters and American Badgers. Alan Roocroft, the keeper in charge of this building is busy replacing the branches and sleeping boxes with new ones. Many of the enclosures are also being planted with shrubs and Alan says he is trying to provide a habitat which is ecologically correct in the hopes of an even greater breeding success during the forthcoming season.

Keepers in the Rhino Section, which also contains a number of Antelope Paddocks recently had rather an exciting job. This was to catch and hold down a young Père David's Deer which had an infection in its eye.



Mr. & Mrs. E. Sorby

FENNEC FOXES

GUIDE TO ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

ANIMAL FEEDING TIMES

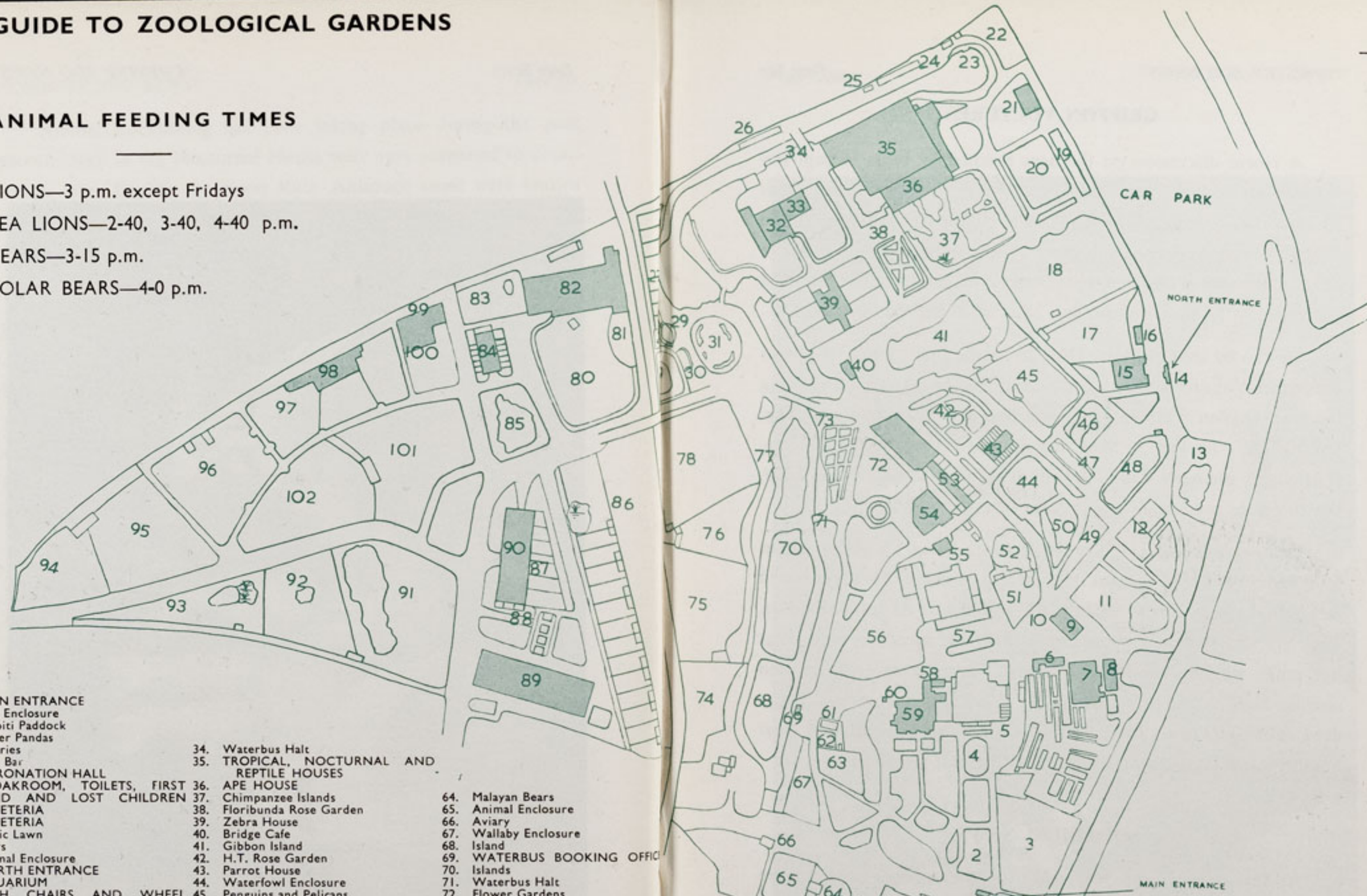
LIONS—3 p.m. except Fridays

SEA LIONS—2-40, 3-40, 4-40 p.m.

BEARS—3-15 p.m.

POLAR BEARS—4-0 p.m.

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|--|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. MAIN ENTRANCE | 34. Waterbus Halt | 64. Malayan Bears |
| 2. Bird Enclosure | 35. TROPICAL, NOCTURNAL AND REPTILE HOUSES | 65. Animal Enclosure |
| 3. Wapiti Paddock | 36. APE HOUSE | 66. Aviary |
| 4. Lesser Pandas | 37. Chimpanzee Islands | 67. Wallaby Enclosure |
| 5. Aviaries | 38. Floribunda Rose Garden | 68. Island |
| 6. Milk Bar | 39. Zebra House | 69. WATERBUS BOOKING OFFICE |
| 7. CORONATION HALL | 40. Bridge Cafe | 70. Islands |
| 8. CLOAKROOM, TOILETS, FIRST AID AND LOST CHILDREN | 41. Gibbon Island | 71. Waterbus Halt |
| 9. CAFETERIA | 42. H.T. Rose Garden | 72. Flower Gardens |
| 10. CAFETERIA | 43. Parrot House | 73. ROSE GARDENS |
| 11. Picnic Lawn | 44. Waterfowl Enclosure | 74. Deer or Antelope Enclosures |
| 12. Bears | 45. Penguins and Pelicans | 75. Deer or Antelope Enclosures |
| 13. Animal Enclosure | 46. Flamingos | 76. Deer or Antelope Enclosures |
| 14. NORTH ENTRANCE | 47. Waterfowl Enclosure | 77. Waterbus Halt |
| 15. AQUARIUM | 48. Sea Lion Pool | 78. Zebra and Deer Enclosure |
| 16. PUSH CHAIRS AND WHEEL CHAIRS | 49. Rock Garden | 79. Kamchatka Bears |
| 17. Animal Enclosure | 50. Polar Bears | 80. Elephant Paddock |
| 18. Animal Enclosure | 51. Tigers | 81. Hippo Paddock |
| 19. RAINBOW CAFE AND SHOP | 52. Anteater and Penguin Enclosure | 82. PACHYDERM HOUSE |
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| 21. TOILETS | 54. FOUNTAIN RESTAURANT | 84. Small Mammal House |
| 22. Peccaries | 55. TOILETS | 85. Waterfowl Enclosure |
| 23. Waterbus Halt | 56. Lions | 86. Ankole Cattle |
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| 25. Birds of Prey Aviary | 58. TOILETS | 88. Monkey Enclosures |
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| 91. Cranes and Waterfowl |
| 92. Waterfowl and Wallabies |
| 93. Cranes and Waterfowl |
| 94. Bison Paddock |
| 95. Deer Paddock |
| 96. Eland Paddock |
| 97. Rhino Paddocks |
| 98. RHINO HOUSE |
| 99. TOILETS |
| 00. MPILA SNACK BAR |
| 01. Antelope Enclosure |
| 02. Antelope Enclosure |

Animals may be moved from time to time.

GRIFFON VULTURES

A recent discussion on the ages reached by birds in captivity led staff to find out the oldest bird at Chester Zoo. Many birds which come to the Zoo are several years old on arrival and it is often difficult to accurately assess their age. There is however no problem in deciding which bird has been longest in residence, as the bird concerned, a Griffon Vulture was hatched at the Zoo in 1940.

He can be seen in aviary (No. 24 on the Plan) which he shares with other Vultures and two Eagles and has the distinction of being the first Griffon Vulture to be hatched and reared in captivity. During 1957, he had a slight mishap and received a broken leg. Fortunately recovery was swift, although he still has a slight limp, but this does not inconvenience him in any way.

Griffon Vultures are very large birds being about 40 inches long and having a wing span of eight feet or more. They are found in South Europe, West Asia, North and South Africa and India. They are said to prefer mountainous districts, breed on high crags but range widely over lowland areas. Normally several are seen soaring high in the sky looking for food which consists of any dead animals. When a large carcass is found they assemble in great numbers, jostling each other to obtain the best portions.

AQUARIUM NEWS

At this time of the year many of the Aquarium tanks are re-furnished for the forthcoming season. One tank which is particularly attractive is close to the exit door of the building. This has been designed with natural slate rockwork and the flooring covered with smaller slate pieces. The background has been left a plain, pale green, as we feel that exotic backgrounds detract from the natural colours of the fish. In this particular tank, Jack



Mr. & Mrs. E. Sorby

GRIFFON VULTURE HATCHED AT THE ZOO DURING 1940

Dempseys, Bichirs, Siamese Tiger Fish, Snake Heads and Gunther's Cichlids are all exhibited. Aquarium staff always keep a look out for attractive looking rocks for the tanks and special ones often accompany holiday luggage on their return journey.



M. D. Murphy

BICHIR

The Firemouth Cichlids are due to spawn. They have excavated several hollows in the sand on the floor of their tank. The eggs will be laid in one of these hollows and when the young hatch out they will remain there for a little while. The parents will then move them to another hollow; this is thought to be a protection against predators and also against various bacteria and fungus which attack the young fish.

The Axolotls have laid eggs again this year and these are due to hatch in about six weeks time. The Spanner Barbs and the Gouramis started to fight so the Barbs have been transferred to an adjoining aquarium of their own.

One Terrapin seems to have developed an escapologist's act. Although his tank mates, many of which are large sized specimens, cannot climb out, he seems to be extraordinarily agile in this respect. Keepers are completely baffled as to how this Terrapin is escaping, but hope to catch him in the act of climbing out and to take preventative measures.

ZOO KEEPING

Many people ask if Zoo Keepers have to undergo any form of training for their work. Of course Zoo Keeping is a rather specialized profession and principally of a practical nature – in other words the only way to learn about Zoo animals is actually to look after them. Our Zoo Keepers commence as trainees and work their way upwards to become Grade 1 Keepers in charge of an animal house.

From time to time we employ keepers from other Zoos who come to gain experience in our methods of animal management.

John Hulley is from Vancouver, British Columbia in Canada, and although he has no previous experience in Zoo Keeping, holds a degree in Zoology. He has come to Chester Zoo because the Zoos in Canada do not offer sufficient scope for the type of training he wishes to undertake. Initially, John worked in the Monkey House but a recent move has taken him to the Zebra House and he hopes to cover all sections of the Zoo during the next two years.

Bill Amundson was employed at Adelaide Zoo, Australia, for three years and worked in various sections of the Zoo. From there he spent nine months at Bristol Zoo and has been working in our Monkey House for the past eight months. Bill hopes to further his zoological experience by working in other Zoos and is especially keen to visit South Africa.

Both John and Bill were featured in a recent "Zoo Time" programme when they answered questions on the Monkeys. The Granada Television Company are continuing the "Zoo Time" series from Chester Zoo and this is transmitted at 5 o'clock each Monday.

TUATARAS

The pair of Tuataras have settled down well in their new house at the side of the Tropical House. During cold weather they hibernate for most of the time but become active during milder spells. They are provided with a small heater just to protect them from the frost, but are kept in conditions as natural as possible. The photograph on page 15 was taken during October soon after they were introduced into the new house and shows clearly the natural sandstone rockwork which has been used extensively.

Soon after her arrival in September 1967, the female Tuatara laid 9 eggs. Roger Ainsley, the Head Reptile Keeper, says that the eggs are progressing satisfactorily, but we will have to wait eleven months to find out if they will hatch as their incubation period is said to be a full 15 months.

BIRD NOTES

We have a large flock of Chinese and Chinese X Domestic Geese. Although not very spectacular from an Avicultural point of view, they are very good at grass cutting. If left in a small paddock for a few days they soon crop down the grass and are moved around to various parts of the Zoo for this purpose.

At this time of year we begin to divide up our birds into pairs for the forthcoming breeding season. A cock Pennant Parrakeet has been introduced to his mate and a pair of Red-rumped Parrakeets have been moved to the Bird House Aviaries; both species are already showing signs of going to nest. The nest boxes will have to be



TUATARAS

S. W. Jacobsen, Liverpool Daily Post

boarded up to prevent any attempt to nest, as a sudden snap of cold weather could produce egg binding and possible death to the female bird.

David Wardell, one of the Bird Keepers, is also a keen ornithologist and makes a note of any unusual wild bird he observes whilst carrying out his duties around the Zoo. Three rather unusual recent visitors were a Kingfisher, Goldcrest and a number of Tree Creepers.

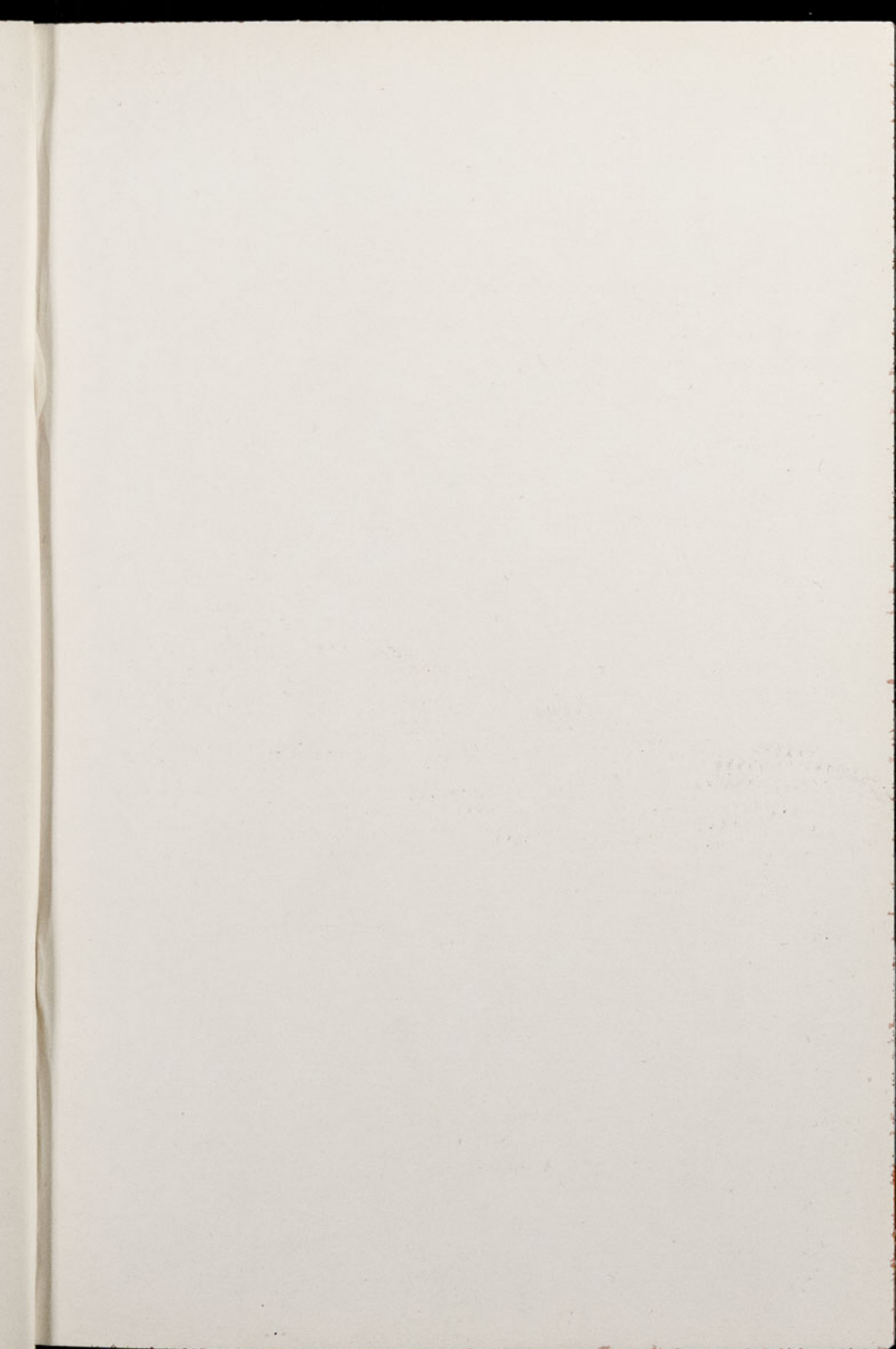
PROGRESS ON NEW ORANG-UTAN HOUSE

In the December issue of "*Chester Zoo News*" reference was made to the proposed new Orang-utan House. Work has now commenced on this project and already the framework has been erected; before this magazine is published we expect the roof will be completed.

The measurements will, however, differ slightly from those given in our original article. This building will now be 106 feet long by 80 feet and approximately 28 feet to 30 feet high.

The site for the Orang-utan House lies between the North Entrance and the Chimpanzee enclosure — in fact when out of doors the animals will be able to see each other at a distance.

A great deal of work will have to be carried out before this house will be in use but gradually we will concentrate as much of our labour force as possible on the construction as we hope the building will be operational before the summer. Once the general outline of the structure has been completed, work will proceed rapidly and we feel sure that our Orang-utans will be pleased with the facilities provided for them. Already we have five of these animals and another three are due to arrive in April.



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