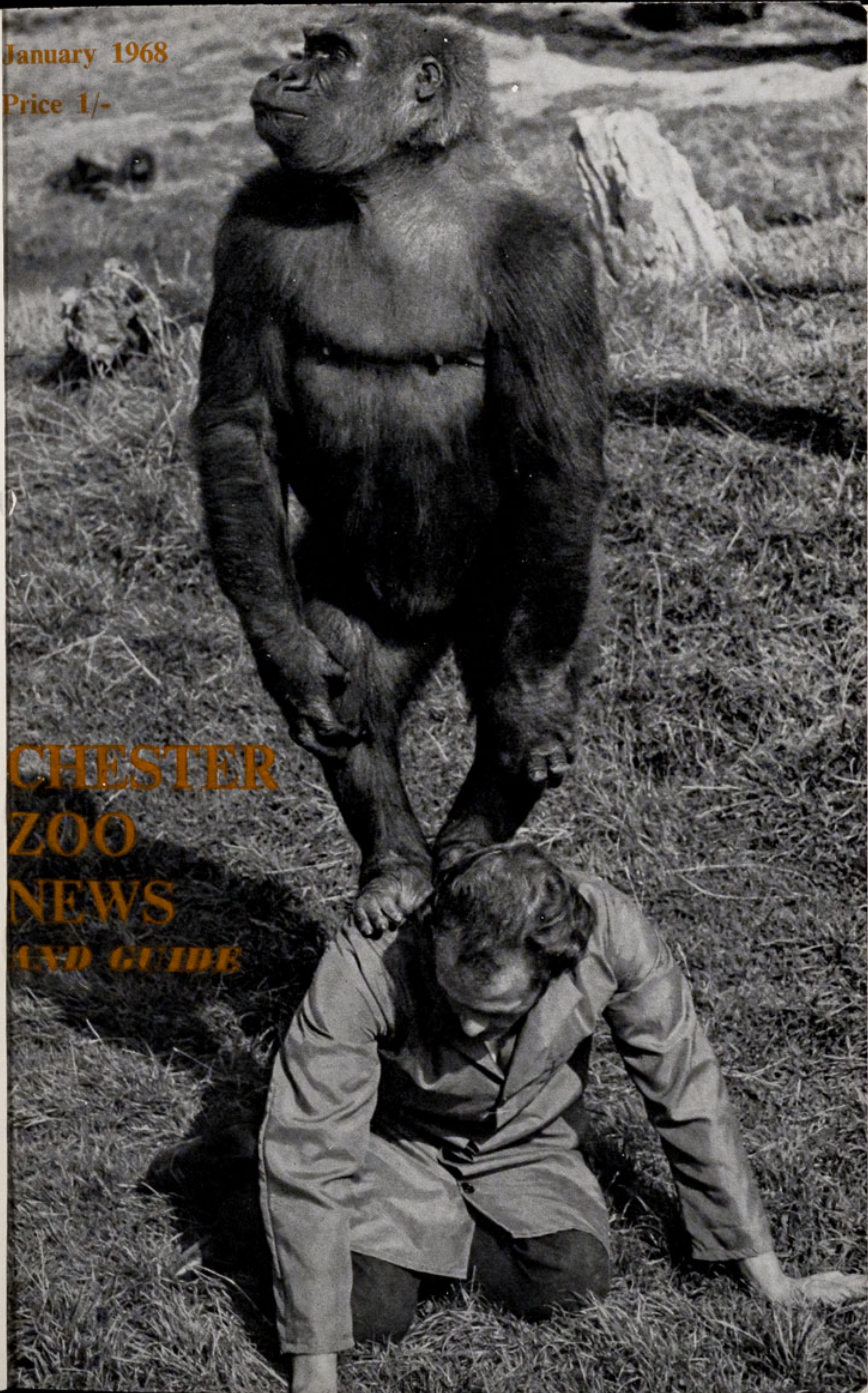
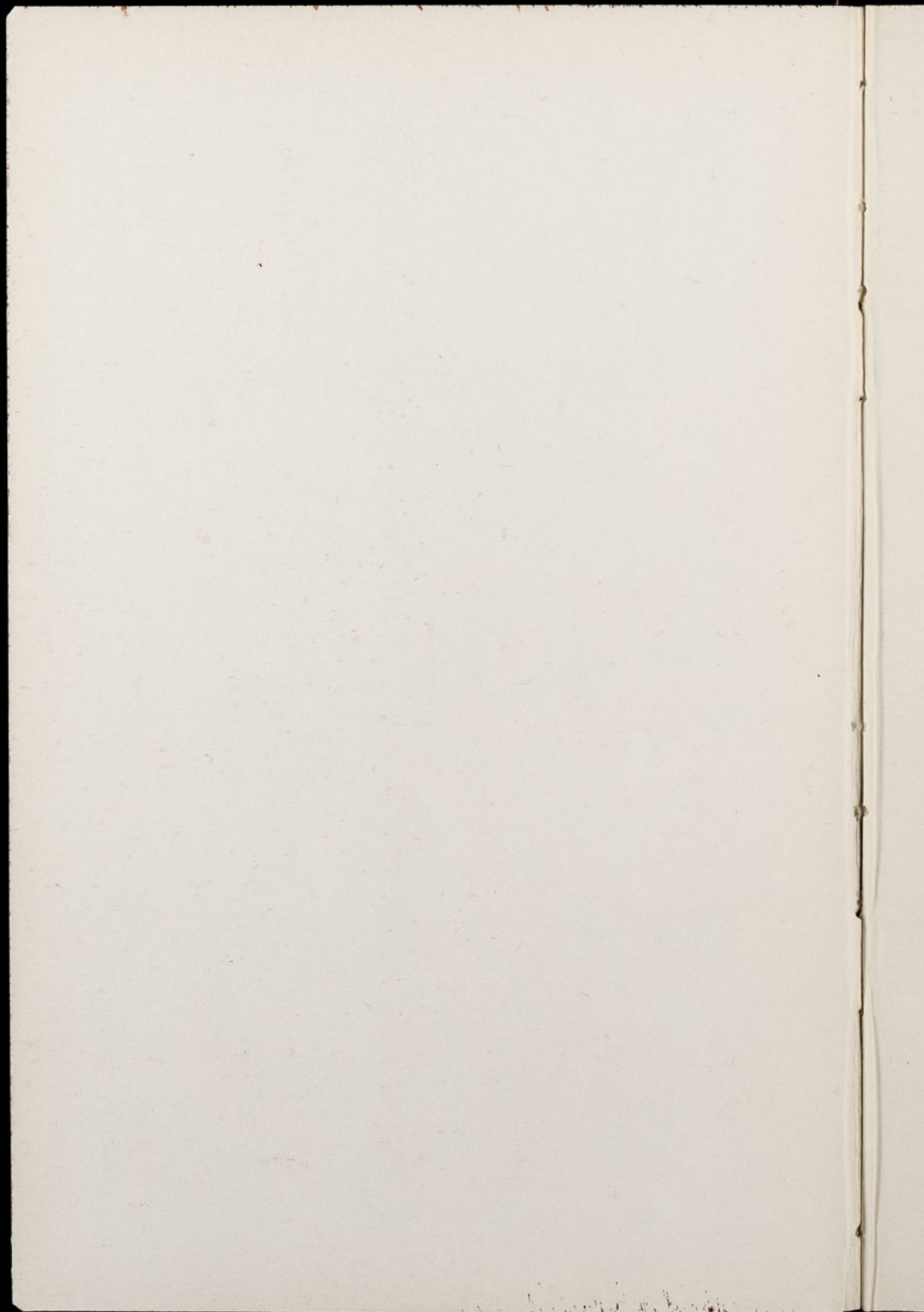


January 1968

Price 1/-

CHESTER  
ZOO  
NEWS  
AND GUIDE





# The North of England Zoological Society

ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS, UPTON-BY-CHESTER

## Editorial

The Zoo will open to the public on Saturday, February 3rd, after being closed for the past 10 weeks due to the Foot and Mouth Disease epidemic which has been prevalent in this area.

This is the first time in the history of Chester Zoo that we have had to close for any reason.

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**COVER:** *This month's cover photograph is of "Gogal" the Lowland Gorilla and her keeper Michael Colbourne.*

*By Courtesy of A. Markey, Daily Mirror.*

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### NEWS FROM VARIOUS PARTS OF THE ZOO

The Red or Lesser Pandas in enclosure No. 4, close to the Main Entrance recently had a worm infestation and were moved inside for treatment; two have now been returned to their enclosure after making a complete recovery and the others will soon follow suit. Pam Logan, their keeper who also looked after them whilst they received treatment, was amazed at the variety of sounds they made whilst hospitalized. In the normal way these animals are silent except for a few hisses and snarls when annoyed. Pam noted why these Pandas make these noises and hopes to tape record them in the near future. When worried they produce a soft whinnying sound and when frightened a shrill screaming whistle. The large female in particular barks when frightened and all spit and snarl like a cat.

Also being looked after by Pam Logan is a baby Arabian Gazelle born during April 1967 and abandoned by its mother. The Gazelle has grown rapidly and the horns which she uses to bang on the door at feeding time have just developed. When first deserted she was bottle fed but was soon weaned to a solid diet. Recently, however, when a Highland calf was being given milk from a bucket the young Gazelle also started to drink. It was therefore decided to resume the bottle feed in addition to solid food and this should prove beneficial especially in the cold weather.

In the large outside enclosures of the Cat House the sand flooring is being replaced by smooth pebbles. These dry out much quicker after heavy rain and improve the general appearance of the building.

The baby South American Tapir bred in the Pachyderm House is thriving and eats all the normal Tapir diet including a drink of yogurt each day. The more rare Malayan Tapirs show no sign of



LESSER PANDA

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

breeding, but it is intended to separate them for a short while to see, in the words of Keepers Mottershead and Hills, if 'absence makes the heart grow fonder'. The Hippo born two years ago is now quite a size and thinks nothing of taking a bite at his parents. Despite being born in captivity he is very timid and keepers envisage a struggle when he has to be boxed when eventually moved away from his parents.

John Willis, Keeper in charge of the Rhino House and paddocks had a unique present on December 25th; the Père David's Stag cast his antlers. The Père David's is the only species of deer which shed antlers twice each year.

Three young Brindled Gnu or Wildebeeste calves have been kept in their inside quarters for the worst of the winter.

The baby Black Rhinoceros, the first to be born at Chester Zoo, is maintaining excellent progress. In addition to feeding on mother's milk he is also taking a good amount of solids; corn, cabbage, lucerne, etc. We estimate he has almost trebled his weight since birth when we thought he weighed somewhere in the region of 100lbs. The horn on the end of his nose is now about one inch long and obviously he is not lacking in spirit, being aggressive towards his keepers.

At the Bear Pits (No. 11 on the Plan) a new sliding door has been erected between the inside dens and the outside pit. The old door was completely ruined by the Bears. John Sumner the keeper of this section said that the two Himalayan Bears would fight in a friendly way and the Canadian Bear would become frightened and run and lock himself inside the den by pulling down the door. The Himalayan Bears would then decide to go inside and try to pull up the door. Consequently, the door was reduced to



PERE DAVID'S DEER

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

fragments but the new one has a locking mechanism to prevent this happening in the future.

The young Talapoin Monkey which is on exhibition with both parents in one of the smaller cages in the Monkey House is now almost one year old. It is very difficult to check without contacting every Zoo, but as far as we know, ours is the only youngster to be reared to this age in a British Zoo. In a recent discussion on the ages reached by Monkeys in captivity, the oldest inhabitant of our Monkey House was found to be a brown Capuchin which has been at the Zoo for 20 years and was several years old on arrival. She looks her age and walks in a rather hunched up manner but seems to keep remarkably fit.

The Prairie Marmots on the Eland Paddock have proved a very popular exhibit. Although not in evidence quite as much as during the summer, they do not seem to have hibernated. However, our other Marmots opposite the Owl aviaries (No. 5 on the Plan) have surfaced only recently after hibernating for the previous six weeks.

Recently most newspapers have carried articles about our animals being lonely due to the closure of the Zoo because of Foot and Mouth Disease in this area. This seems to have caught the imagination of the general public, many of whom have written telling us of their concern and offering us advice. One gentleman told us he thought it a good idea to wire up the animal houses for sound and play music all day. We are not by any means convinced of the therapeutic value of this suggestion and the thought of the Zoo with music blaring from all corners does not fill us with joy.

We have had a number of letters from young schoolchildren and a large proportion have also written to the animals concerned, *i.e.*, Dear Mr. Gorilla. Although our Gorillas look very intelligent



PAUL, THE ORANG-UTAN, ONE OF THE ANIMALS WHO MISSED THE PUBLIC

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

# GUIDE TO ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

## ANIMAL FEEDING TIMES

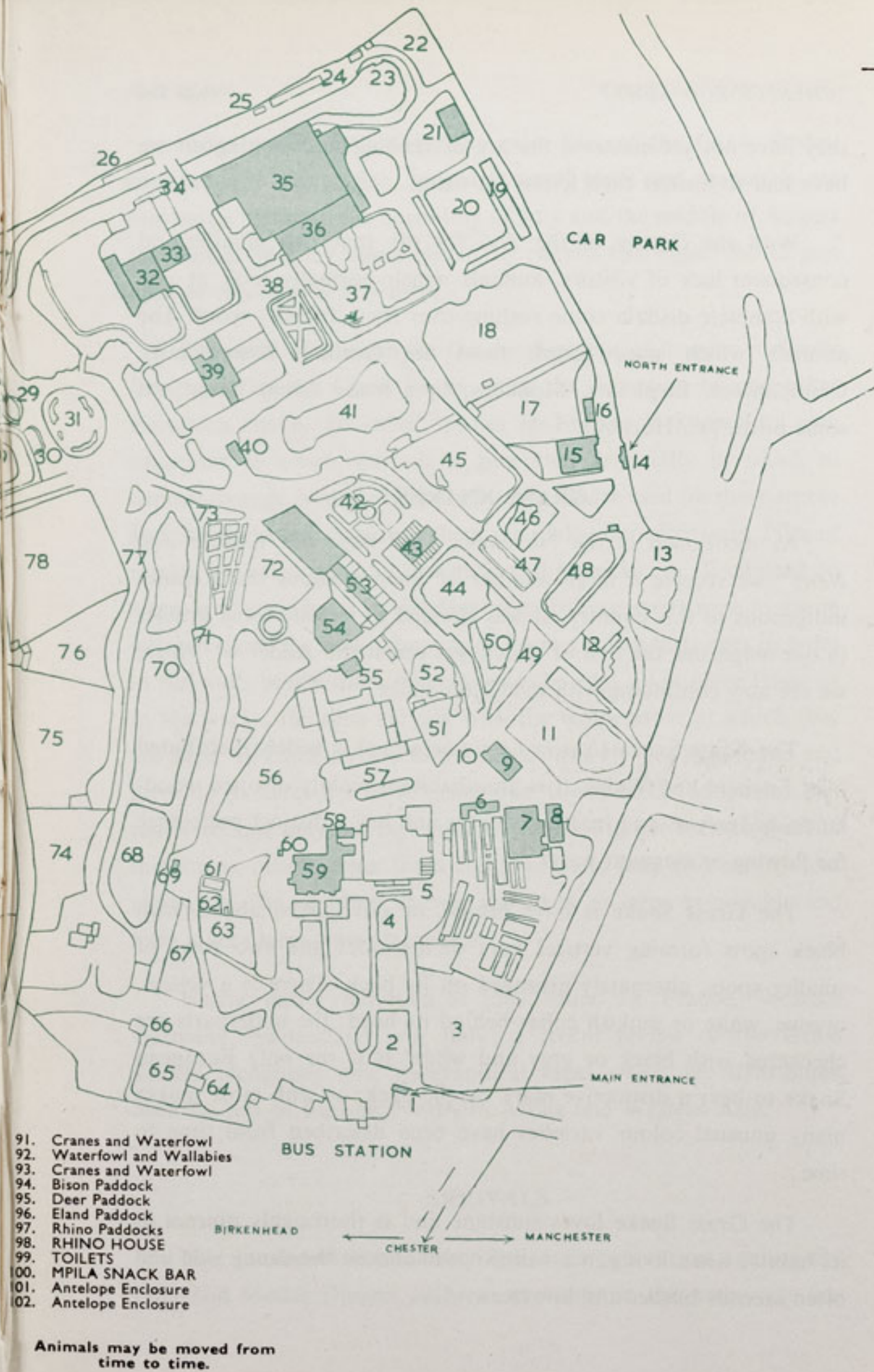
LIONS—3 p.m. except Fridays

SEA LIONS—2-40, 3-40, 4-40 p.m.

BEARS—3-15 p.m.

POLAR BEARS—4-0 p.m.

- |  |  |                                 |
|--|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. MAIN ENTRANCE                                   | 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             |
| 20. Aviaries and Picnic Lawn                       | 53. BIRD HOUSE                             | 83. Tapir Paddock               |
| 21. TOILETS  | 54. FOUNTAIN RESTAURANT                    | 84. Small Mammal House          |
| 22. Peccaries                                      | 55. TOILETS                                | 85. Waterfowl Enclosure         |
| 23. Waterbus Halt                                  | 56. Lions                                  | 86. Ankole Cattle               |
| 24. Birds of Prey Aviary                           | 57. NEW ZOO SHOP                           | 87. Stork Enclosures            |
| 25. Birds of Prey Aviary                           | 58. TOILETS                                | 88. Monkey Enclosures           |
| 26. Owls   | 59. OAKFIELD RESTAURANT                    | 89. Cat House                   |
| 27. Jackal Enclosures                              | 60. G.P.O. Telephone Kiosk                 | 90. MONKEY HOUSE                |
| 28. Wolverines                                     | 61. Animal Enclosure                       |                                 |
| 29. Porcupines                                     | 62. Animal Enclosures                      |                                 |
| 30. Coypus   | 63. Cheetahs                               |                                 |
| 31. Beavers  |  |                                 |
| 32. Giraffe House                                  |  |                                 |
| 33. Camel House                                    |  |                                 |



Animals may be moved from time to time.

they have not yet mastered the art of reading and writing so we have had to answer their letters for them.

With the closure of the Zoo for the past two months and consequent lack of visitors, animals which normally look at one with complete disdain come rushing over for a friendly word. The animals which miss people most are Gorillas, Orang-utans, Chimpanzees, Elephants, Monkeys; to a lesser extent Bears and some birds, *i.e.*, Hornbill.

### GRASS SNAKES

As mentioned in the November 1967 issue of "*Chester Zoo News*" we receive a large number of queries about the Reptiles indigenous to this country. It was decided to include some articles in our magazine, the first of which was about the Adder or Viper; we are now continuing with the Grass Snake.

The Grass Snake (*Natrix natrix helvetica*) is widely distributed over England and Wales. It is an inhabitant mainly of open woodlands, hedgerows and marshy country and has a distinct preference for flowing or stagnant water.

The Grass Snake is olive brown, or olive green above, with black spots forming vertical bars on its sides and two rows of smaller spots, alternately arranged on its back. There is a yellow, orange, white or pinkish collar behind its head; the underparts are checkered with black or grey and white. It is the only European Snake to bear a distinctive mark on the neck; as with most snakes many unusual colour varieties have been described from time to time.

The Grass Snake loves sunshine and is thoroughly diurnal in its habits; when living in a valley it will choose the sunny side and often ascends bushes and low trees.

Frogs undoubtedly form the main diet of the Grass Snake, together with newts, fish, tadpoles; small birds and mammals are also eaten. Between the beginning of July and the middle of August the female will lay some eleven to twenty five eggs; the largest number recorded is fifty three.

The value of warmth for the development of its eggs is clearly recognised by the Grass Snake; with the exception of one other European snake, no other species in Europe is known to seek situations in which warmth is generated artificially in which to deposit its eggs. Manure heaps in farm yards are used for this purpose and the snake will return to them regularly year after year. Piles of rotting leaves, sawdust in saw mills and hayricks are all selected on account of their heat. In the days when baking ovens were in use in village houses the snakes have been known to lay their eggs in holes in the walls beside them. Hatching of the eggs takes place from six to ten weeks, the time varying with the temperature at which they are kept. In captivity the Grass Snake quickly becomes tame and gives up its fierce defensive behaviour. It eats well, though the diet that suits one may not suit another. Many will get used to meat in thin strips, others prefer frogs and toads, and may also eat fish and newts, etc. The vivarium or cage should be as large as possible and have a very large water receptacle.

*Natrix natrix helvetica* is also found in France, Western Germany, Switzerland and Italy; a recent review of the Grass Snakes recognises nine geographical races which are distributed over the rest of Europe, Northern Africa and Western Asia.

### ARRIVALS

Due to the closure of the Zoo as a precaution against the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak prevalent in this area, very few

animals have arrived during the past month. In fact the only new arrivals were a young pair of Cheetahs, which have been accommodated in the Cat House. These animals are estimated to be in the region of one year old and the female especially is quite friendly.

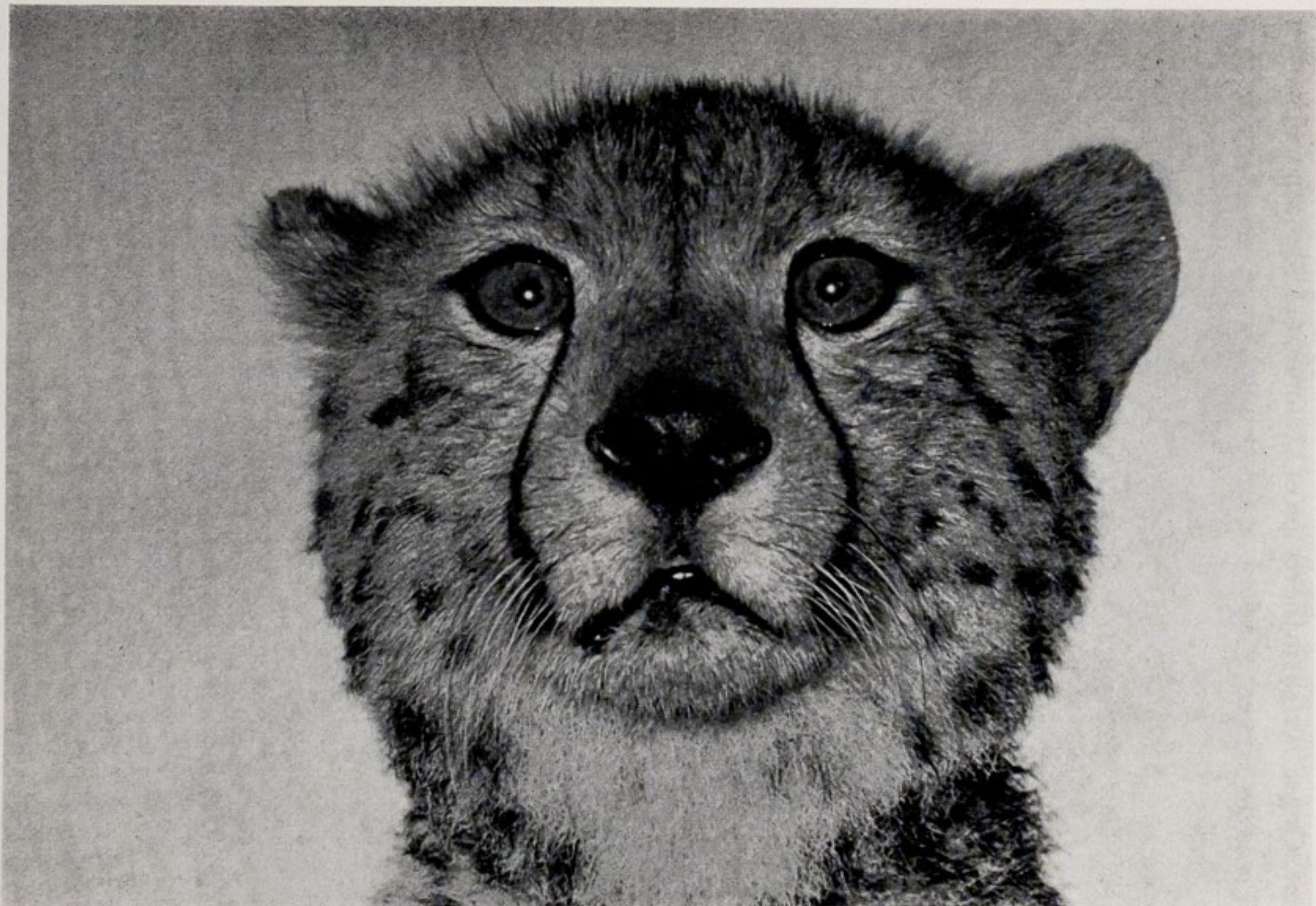
Although members of the Cat Family, Cheetahs have some dog-like features, notably non-retractable claws. They are the fastest four-legged animals and can reach speeds of up to 60 miles per hour but only for short distances; if the prey is not caught after 400-500 yards the Cheetah will abandon the chase altogether.

Cheetahs are found on Grasslands and semi-desert areas of Africa and South West Asia but are said to be virtually extinct in Asia and on the decline in Africa. Most cats breed very well in captivity but this is not the case with Cheetahs. It is only in recent years that any have been reared in captivity; during 1967 the first Cheetahs to be bred in this country were born at the Whipsnade Zoo.

### GORILLA ANTICS

Over a million people visit Chester Zoo each year to look at the animals, but we wonder how many realize how much the animals enjoy looking at them. In winter when very few people come to the Zoo the Apes and Monkeys especially are delighted to see visitors.

"Gogal", the 7 years old female Lowland Gorilla, is particularly interested in people and can be seen in this month's cover photograph which was taken during the summer. Unfortunately for her, she is unable to get very close to the public due to a wide moat and the viewing windows being 9 feet above ground level. "Gogal" is only 5 feet tall, so obviously gave this problem some thought and finally decided the only way was to persuade her keeper, Michael Colbourne, to give her a leg up to the viewing windows. By climbing



CHEETAH

*R. Bloom*

upon Michael's back, "Gogal" was able to obtain a very close view of the public, but this became rather tiring for the keeper, as we estimate that "Gogal" weighs in the region of 12 stones. Gorillas can weigh over 30 stones (females a little less) when fully grown, so obviously this procedure will have to stop in the very near future. Anyway most Gorillas are not trustworthy when older but youngsters require a great deal of attention from their keeper to be happy in captivity.

### ADOPTION OF PIGMY HIPPOS

In Hoylake, a town eighteen miles from the Zoo, a committee has been set up to raise funds for a new indoor swimming pool. This is called the Hoylake Indoor Pool Organisation. As the initial letters are H.I.P.O., it was decided that a Hippo would give their publicity campaign quite a boost. The Secretary wrote to the Zoo asking if they could adopt a Pigmy Hippo; when told we had a pair of these animals, it was decided to adopt both "Phyllis" and "Max".

The President of the Organisation is the Rt. Hon. Selwyn Lloyd, M.P., and Mr. Bland who is one of the Council Members of the Zoo is also closely concerned with the project. We feel this is a worthwhile venture and wish them every success.

### AQUARIUM NEWS

We are very pleased to report that the Sea Horses have bred. These fish have been exhibited in the Aquarium for the past year and recently gave birth to about 150 young. We have noticed the females trying to lay their eggs in the male's brood pouch a number of times and found loose eggs in the tank, but this is the first time they have bred successfully. The male Sea Horses do all the work with regard to hatching the young. The females lay the eggs in the male's brood pouch using their ovipositor. The eggs are fertilized in the



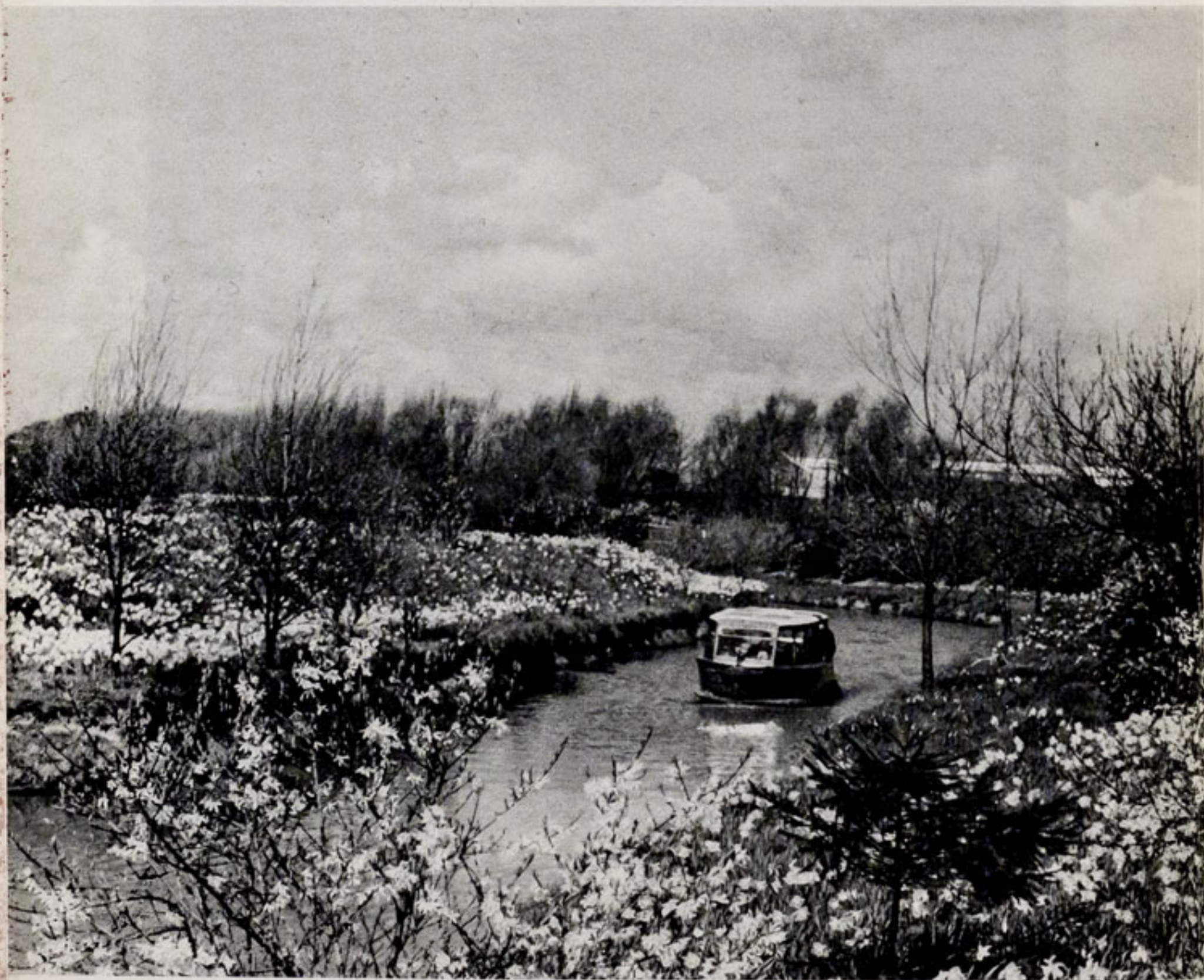
PIGMY HIPPOS

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

brood pouch and eventually the male gives birth to fully formed young Sea Horses about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch long. Unfortunately, the youngsters are difficult to feed so it is highly unlikely that they will be reared.

During the autumn the Blackpool Tower Aquarium presented us with a large collection of fish. These include:—Cuckoo Wrasse, Moray Eel, large *Metynnis* species and *Barbus Schwanefeldii*, also Minnow and Hi Goi Carp which were placed in the pools in the Tropical House. We are very grateful to the Blackpool Tower Company for giving us these excellent exhibits, which are all thriving.

**The recent acquisition of a 150 acre farm has brought the total area of Chester Zoo to a little over 330 acres.**



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

A VIEW WHICH WE HOPE TO SEE ONCE AGAIN IN THE ZOO IN A FEW WEEK'S TIME

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