

Nehemiah Grew
Musaeum Regalis Societatis
London
1681

MUSÆUM REGALIS SOCIETATIS.

OR A
Catalogue & Description
Of the Natural and Artificial
RARITIES
Belonging to the
ROYAL SOCIETY
And preserved at
Gresham Colledge.

MADE
By Nehemjah Grew M. D. Fellow of the Royal Society,
and of the Colledge of Physitians.

Whereunto is Subjoyned the
Comparative Anatomy
OF
Stomachs and Guts.

By the same AUTHOR.

LONDON,
Printed by W. Rawlins, for the Author, 1681.

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Part of the Upper JAW of a strange HEAD, toge=ther with some fragments of other Bones, and three very Great Double TEETH, or Grinders, all supposed to be of the same Animal. Found, about twelve years since, seventeen feet under Ground, in Chartham a Village three miles from Canterbury. The Ground within twelve Rods of the River running thither, and so to Sandwich-Haven. An Account hereof is written by Mr. William Somner: yet without a Description of the Jaw. But supposing it to be part of

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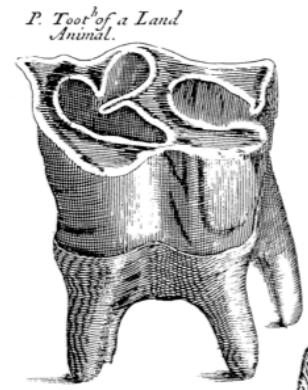
the Head of an Hippopotamus, takes occasion thence for a Discourse, wherein he endeavours to prove, That all the low Ground from the East-Kentish shore, to Romney-Marsh, was once under Water, and an Arm of the Sea. Published, since his Death, by his Brother Mr. John Somner: in whose Ground these Bones were dig'd up; and by whom they were bestowed upon this Musæum.

This Jaw-Bone, is only part of the far Cheek; about fifteen inches long, and seven where deepest: yet part of both the ends, and the Sockets of the Teeth are broken off. The Orbit of the Eye, neither so round, nor so big, as in the Hippopotamus: yet the Teeth far bigger. For the biggest Grinder in the Head of the Hippopotamus here preserv'd, is less than six inches about: one of these, near eight. And 'tis much, if they belonged to that Animal, that none of the long Cutters which grow before (as is represented in Tab. 1.) should be found with them.

Besides, in that Skull of the said Animal, the Orbits of the Eye stand so high, and the Forehead lies so low, that it looks like a Valley between two Hills: whereas in this Bone, the

Forehead evidently stands higher than the Eye. The Knob also at the Corner of the Eye in this Bone, is six times as big, as in the said Skull. Although this perhaps, as well as the tuberosness of the Bone in some places, may be the effect of its lying so long under ground; as if it were there= by a little swell'd in those places: for they are more rare and soft, than the other, and the whole Bone, than the Skull of any grown Animal not bury'd. Considering all together, it seems to me more likely to belong to a Rhinoceros, for the being whereof in this Country, we have as much ground to suppose it, as of the Hippopotamus. See Wormius's Description of the Double Tooth (a) of a Rhinoceros.

(a) Mus. lib.
3.



<detail from Tab. 19>

<This is an excerpt from the catalogue compiled by Nehemiah Grew in 1678–81. The hippopotamus skull referred to here was a modern specimen, described (without any note of its provenance) at pp. 14–15 and illustrated in Tab. 1. – C.F. April 2011.>