# SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

# OCMULGEE NATIONAL MONUMENT

# FISCAL YEAR 1939

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The past six years have witnessed a rapid transformation in the appearance of this area. Six years ago all of the land now included within the monument boundaries was privately owned. Part of it was a dairy farm. Other portions were under cultivation. The Indian Mounds were little understood objects of local curiosity. On bright Sunday afternoons crowds gathered around Mound A to watch motorcycle races up its steep sides. Then, toward the close of 1933, the period of extensive archaeological explorations was inaugurated. For five years the area was the scene of exceedingly fruitful digging. Mounds were excavated, long trenches were dug on the plateaus, significant cultural materials were uncovered. On the basis of the importance of these discoveries Ocmulgee National Monument was established in December 1936. At that time the area more closely resembled the site of a recent battlefield than it did a public park. It was recognized that a tremendous amount of work was needed to further transform this area into the important center for scientific research and popular education that it rightfully should be. In the past two and a half years the area has been the scene of many varied activities made possible by the cooperation of several emergency agencies of the Federal Government, all working toward this objective.

In this, the second full fiscal year of the monument's existence, steady progress has been made toward that goal.

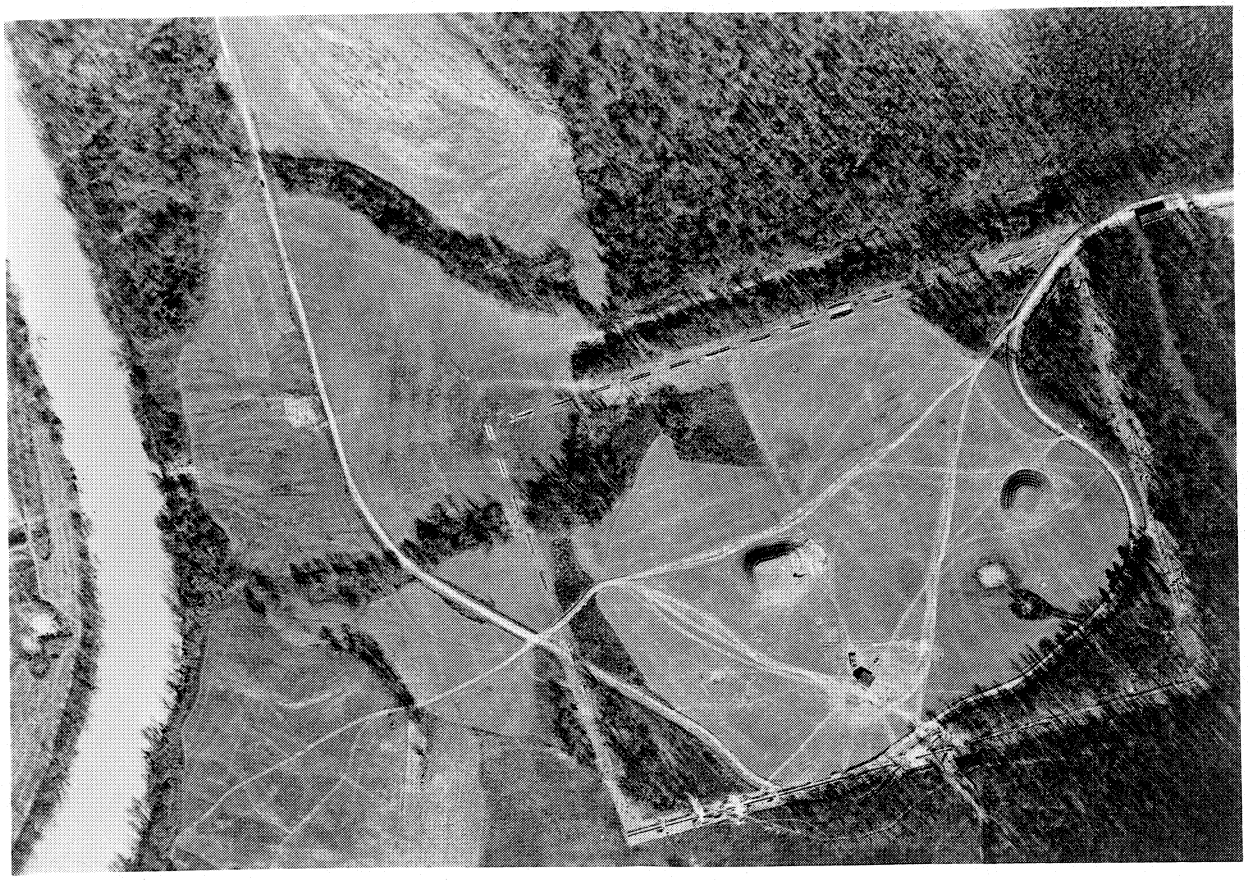
THE MONUMENT FROM THE AIR



View toward the South, showing restored council chamber in center, and trading post area, mounds A, B, and C in distance.

February 1939

THE MONUMENT FROM THE AIR



View of the Lamar unit showing clearly the outline for the Levee which will surround this significant archaeological area.

February 1939

THE MONUMENT FROM THE AIR



Another view of the Lamar unit showing the spiral mound in the foreground.

February 1939

## ADMINISTRATION

Throughout the year an Acting Superintendent served as the monument's administrative officer. Until May 12, 1939, this position was held by Jesse D. Jennings, Junior Archaeologist. From June 19-30, it was held by John C. Ewers, Field Curator. In the intervening period Frank Lester, CCC Engineer, served as Acting Superintendent.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Three emergency agencies, ERA, PWA and CCC cooperated in the program of physical improvement and development of the monument in the fiscal year 1939: Their accomplishments were:

Construction on Museum and Administration Building:

The construction of this building was begun in the previous year during which the excavations and wall footings for Unit 1-A were completed. Unit 1-A was finished by ERA in November of this year. PWA built storage units C and D of unit 1-B, and ERA completed the remainder of unit 1-B. The portion of the building now completed comprises 55% of the total basement. It will be used to house a laboratory and workshop for the processing and study of archaeological collections and specimens. The work of this laboratory will serve to constantly increase our scientific knowledge of Southeastern prehistory. In addition this portion of the basement will provide storage facilities for the extensive artifact collections belonging to the Monument, with ample space for the expansion of collections through future acquisitions.

MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT

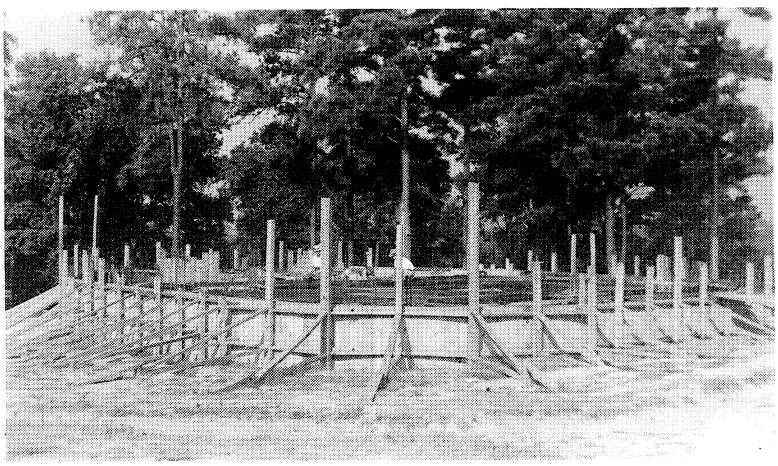


The new museum will provide 65 times the exhibit space available in this present temporary structure.

# A MUSEUM IN THE MAKING

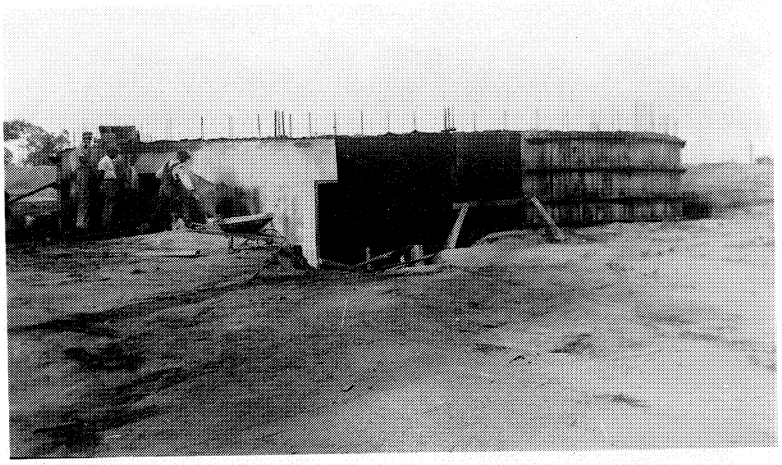


Excavating for unit 1-A -- Rotunda

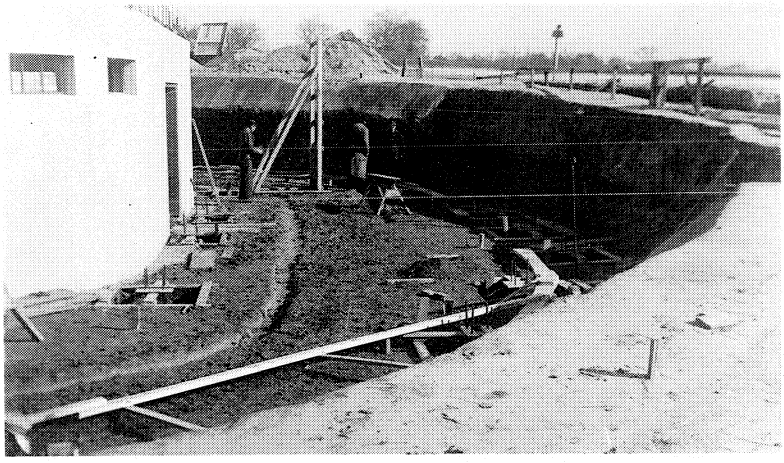


Forms erected for unit 1-A

A MUSEUM IN THE MAKING



Stripping forms unit 1-A

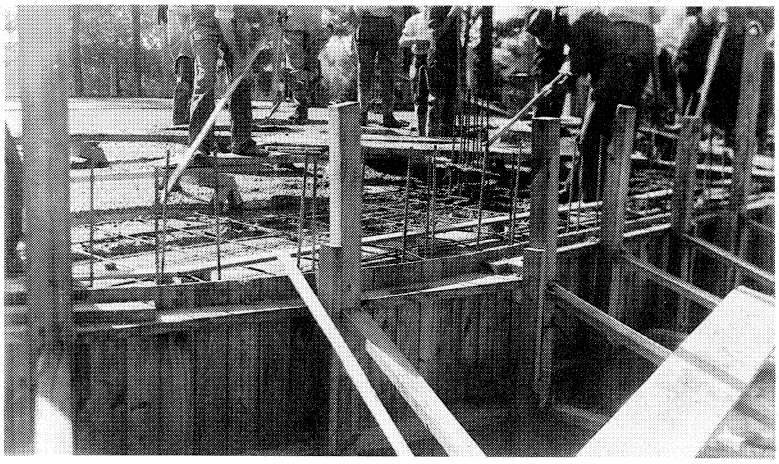


Completed 1-A and excavation for unit 1-B

A MUSEUM IN THE MAKING

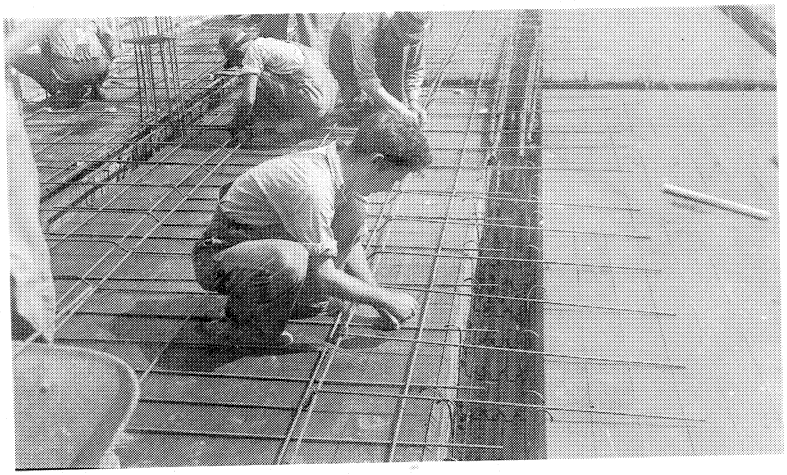


Excavating for unit 1-B



Pouring concrete unit 1-B

# A MUSEUM IN THE MAKING



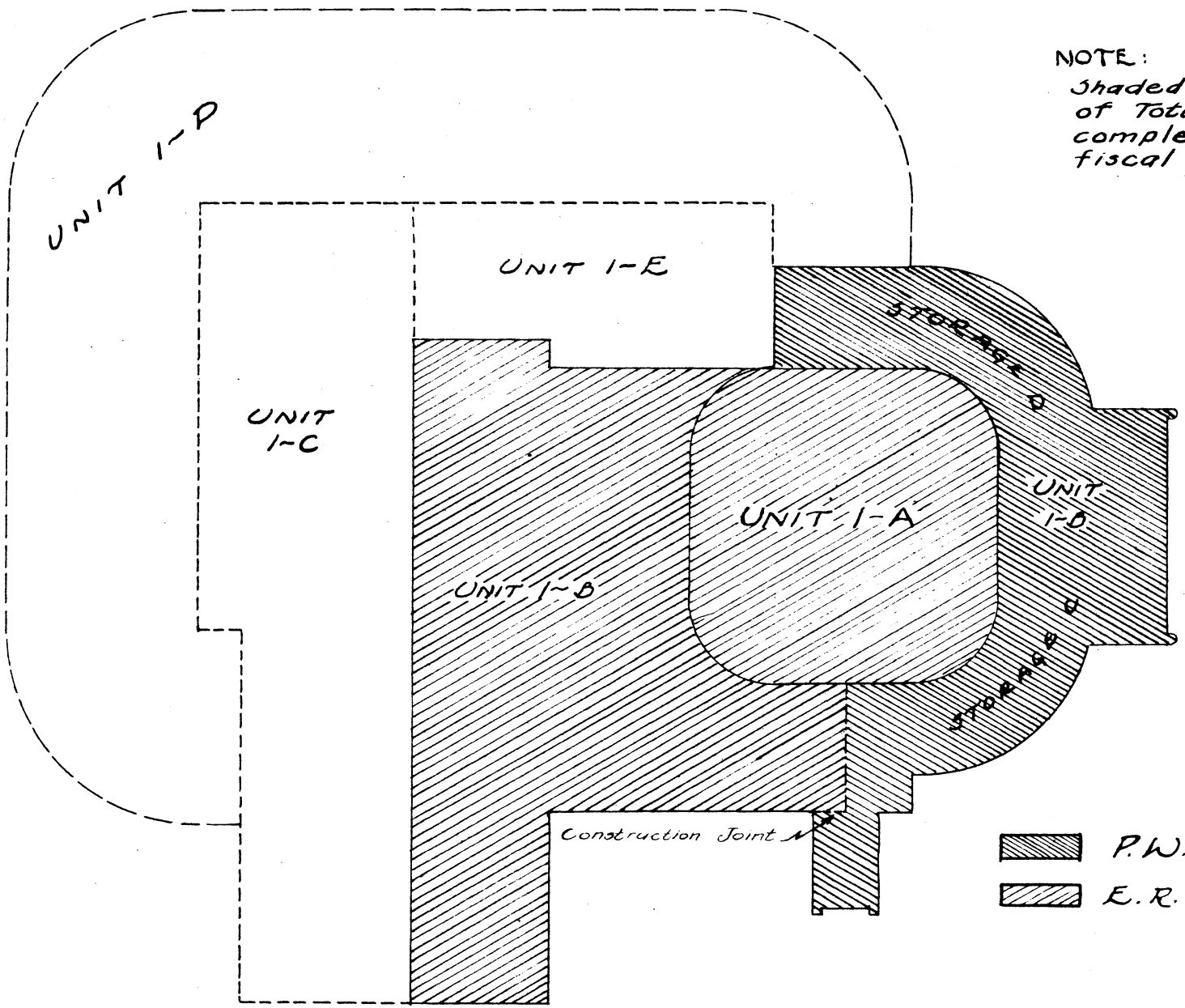
Setting reinforcing rods unit 1-B



Pouring slab and beams unit 1-B

# CONSTRUCTION ON MUSEUM & ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

## FISCAL YEAR 1939




OCMULGEE NATIONAL MONUMENT — MACON, GEORGIA

Construction of the Lamar Levee:

A second large scale construction job was undertaken, when, in the month of May, CCC began work on a levee which will completely encircle the forty acre detached Lamar unit. This levee, rising approximately eleven feet above the river flat, will require approximately 100,000 cubic yards of material in its construction. It is designed to protect the archaeologically rich Lamar area from periodic floods which have inundated it and prevented extensive exploration of what should prove to be a significant prehistoric Indian village site which can be reconstructed as a popular exhibit. By the close of the fiscal year nearly all trees and underbrush had been removed from the levee site and approximately 2,500 cubic yards of earth had been taken from a borrow pit one-half mile distant, hauled by truck, and placed on the levee.

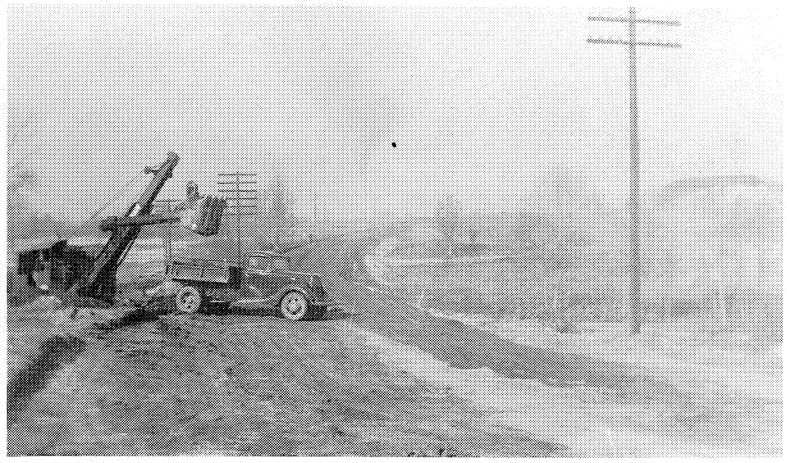
Entrance Road Construction:

Work on the entrance road, over which visitors now pass in driving to the various exhibits on the monument, was begun prior to July 1938. However, the greater part of this job, approximately 75%, was accomplished this year. The years work included the widening of cuts north of the underpass, and east of Mound A, completion of the road through to Mound C, sloping and sodding of roadside banks and provision of adequate road drainage. During the next fiscal year it is proposed to surface this road. Then it will be possible for visitors to enjoy their ride over the monument under even the most adverse weather conditions.

CCC WORK ON ENTRANCE ROAD



Building a drainage culvert



Completing road to Mound "C"

CCC BANK SLOPING ON ENTRANCE ROAD



BEFORE



AFTER

Parking Areas:

During the year CCC began work on the three parking areas planned for the monument. The museum parking area was laid out, graded and surfaced. Mound A parking area was laid out and graded. Mound C parking area has been completed except for the placing of curbing and concrete drainage pipe. It will be possible to complete these three parking areas in the next fiscal year.

Mound C Shelter:

CCC worked upon a 48 feet addition to the shelter over Mound C. This addition was approximately 25% complete at the close of the year. After its completion, ends will be added, and a profile cut to exhibit to the public the extremely colorful strata of this large ceremonial mound.

Fortification Restoration:

A section of the ditch around the Macon Plateau village, located on the north side of Mound D, which had been lying open, and was badly eroding, was restored and sodded over by EMA to protect this feature and preserve it as a public exhibit.

Nature Trail:

The first section of the proposed trail system for the monument was completed by EMA during the year, with the construction of 2000 feet of nature trail leading from Mound A parking area through a typical

southern swamp south of the proposed lake development. In the future typical plants used by the Creek Indians will be planted along this trail and appropriately labeled. The nature trail will thus serve as another interesting outdoor exhibit.

Mosquito Control:

ERA began the work of draining low swampy areas on the monument where stagnant water collects and mosquitos breed. This work will be continued in the next fiscal year.

Area Beautification:

Both ERA and CCC performed a number of types of work intended to remove the ugly scars caused by soil erosion and archaeological excavations in the past. Grading of banks, obliteration of trenches and pits, and sodding of bare areas helped greatly in improving the appearance of many sections of the monument. CCC began the sloping of badly eroded banks along highway 80 on the approaches to the monument. This area will be sodded in the next fiscal year in order to greatly improve the appearance of this portion of our area first seen by the approaching visitor.

SOME OTHER CCC JOBS



Constructing museum parking area



Restoring partially excavated McDougal mound

ERA BUILDS A NATURE TRAIL



Opening the trail at base of Mound "A"

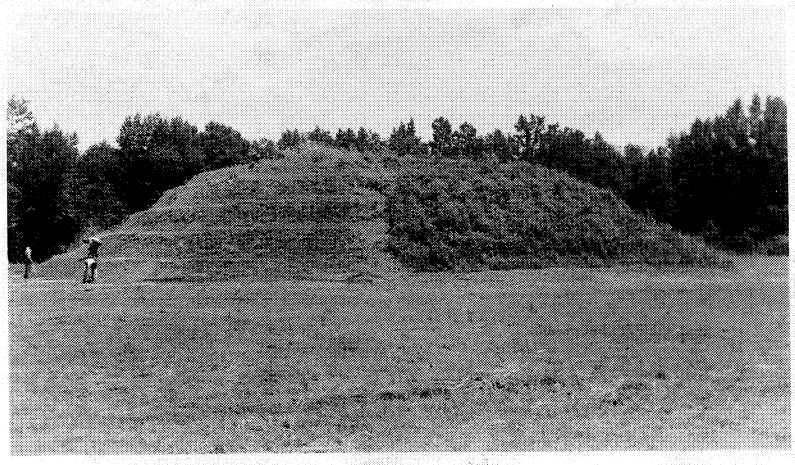


Building a bridge along the trail.

ERA RESODS AN INDIAN MOUND



Before resodding the spiral mound at Lamar.



Left half resodded so as to emphasize the spiral incline.

ERA IMPROVEMENTS AT MOUND "A"



Temporary stairway on Mound "A"



Strip sodding near Mound "A"

Protection:

In the absence of a ranger staff Ocmulgee National Monument has relied upon CCC and ERA for the protection of its valuable property.

Guards furnished by the ERA Non Construction Project were stationed at strategic points on the main monument area and at Lamar to prevent theft or molestation of government property, prevent hunting on the area, and to keep a sharp lookout for fires. Six men were on duty at all hours of the day and night, seven days a week.

Our fire fighting organization under the leadership of Fire Chief Byram efficiently put out the two small fires occurring in the area during the year. Fire School was held for CCC enrollees at two periods during the year--once in the fall and again in the spring.

Construction of a combination fire break and truck trail through the heavily wooded section of the monument along the southwestern boundary was begun by CCC during the year. It is to be completed in the next fiscal year.

# RESEARCH IN ARCHAEOLOGY

The existence of vast collections of artifacts, unearthed during five years of extensive excavations on and near the monument, requiring cataloging and careful analytical study, necessitated that emphasis be placed upon laboratory research rather than extensive field work during the year. Throughout the year the laboratory occupied temporary quarters in the Macon Municipal Auditorium. A staff of 35 clerical workers was employed. From September through June the laboratory was under the direction of Charles H. Fairbanks, Senior Foreman Archaeologist, CCC.

## Cataloging of Collections:

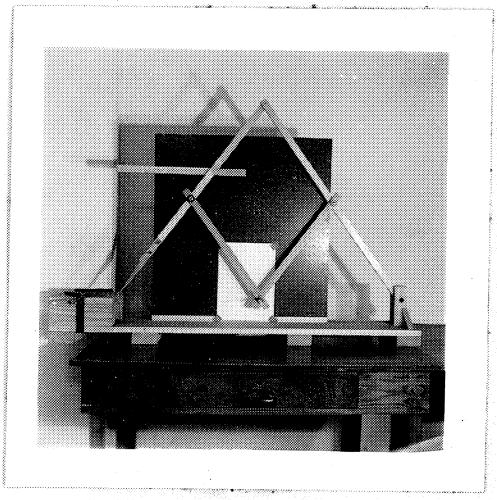
Cataloging of all collections was begun early in the year, and was virtually complete at the end of the fiscal year with the numbering of about 900,000 articles with permanent catalog numbers. This involved removing all previous numbers and cleaning of many sherds not previously washed. All notes for excavation were checked, typed and placed in loose-leaf notebooks, which were indexed and numbered serially. Photographic prints and negatives were checked for Middle Plateau, Mound D and Mound C. Where necessary, new prints were acquired, all prints being placed in uniform loose-leaf notebooks, captioned, and indexed. The negative file was brought up to

date; all negatives were placed in uniform glassene envelopes bearing permanent catalog numbers. The card index file was made out in duplicate by master series and by site series for all negatives. 23,000 catalog cards were made for artifacts or collections. These catalog cards were filed in series by master number, by site and by material, thus using from three to six cards. This system of filing by site, master number and material has resulted in a catalog file which is accessible from three angles and has proved to be very valuable in the final analysis of pottery and artifacts. The virtual completion of cataloging places the collections, together with all pertinent data, at the disposal of any qualified worker and makes possible the further analysis of the materials. The archaeological collections are now available for detailed studies by the staff with the immediate objective of preparing manuscripts for publication.

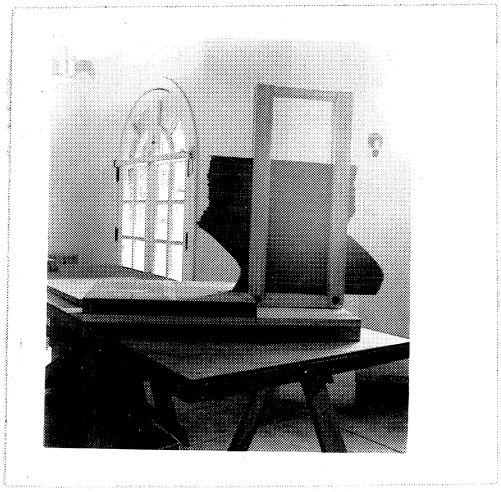
Reconstruction and Preservation of Specimens:

A reconstruction and preservation unit was set up which has completed the reconstruction of 50 pottery vessels by the use of pottery wheel and profile guage. In addition, numerous small objects such as pipes, bone awls, etc., were restored by the use of plaster of Paris or nitro-cellulose cement. All historic copper artifacts from the Trading Post area on the Middle Plateau were chemically treated to remove patina and halt decomposition. Shell collections and bone

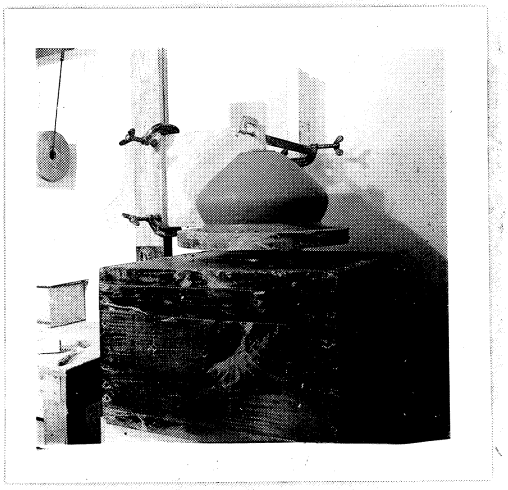
# IN THE LABORATORY



Special Pantograph
used in drawing pottery



Metal profile guage
used in pottery recon-
struction



Wheel used in pottery
reconstruction



A few of many recon-
structed pots.

tools were preserved by the use of a thin solution of nitro-cellulose cement as cataloging proceeded. The treatment of skeletal material in a similar manner was also begun and about two-thirds of the available skeletal material has already been preserved. A beginning has been made at the restoration of skulls, but has not proceeded rapidly due to the lack of a trained physical anthropologist in the laboratory and the generally poor preservation of skeletal material. Three individuals were trained to carry on the work in the restoration division, under the general supervision of the archaeologist. These trained workers are available to carry on the work of restoration in the laboratory and of construction of models, replicas of tools, and museum exhibits.

Scientific Analysis of Portions of Collections:

The analysis of the Swift Creek pottery was carried on by Mrs. A. R. Kelly, the flint and ground stone artifacts were typologically analyzed by Dr. A. R. Kelly, with the assistance of Mr. Fairbanks. Complete trait inventories were also prepared for the Swift Creek site summarizing information on artifacts.

Mr. Fairbanks, under the direction of Mr. Jennings, has prepared a manuscript report for Mound C excavations. This involved the completion of field data from notes, critical analysis of burials and mound states and a complete analysis of pottery and artifacts.

The Mound C report is intended to serve as the first of a series of reports on the various units of the Macon Plateau. A number of very interesting problems arose during the analysis of Mound C and extensive correspondence was undertaken with various individuals throughout the country who are interested in these problems. The information from Mound C was compared with the materials excavated by the Tennessee Valley Authority in the Norris Basin of Eastern Tennessee and the various excavations in Georgia conducted by various institutions with the object of ascertaining the relationships of the Macon Plateau occupation. The presence of large log tombs under Mound C was very interesting as these features were not known to occur with cultures of this type.

Dendrochronological Research:

Mr. Jennings and Mr. Willey attended the Kincaid Archaeological Conference during July, 1938, during which it was ascertained that the dendro-chronological charts prepared by Mr. Willey showed a correlation with areas to the north from which large amounts of archaeological wood specimens were available. During the year archaeological and modern wood specimens were submitted by the Ocmulgee National Monument to Dr. Florence Hawley, of the dendro-chronological laboratory at the University of Chicago, in the hope that tree

ring dates for various horizons could be obtained. Mr. Willey resigned from the staff of the Ocmulgee National Monument September 15, 1938, and the dendro-chronological laboratory formerly at the Macon City Hall was closed, all specimens being placed in storage at the City Auditorium.

Bibliographic Research:

A bibliographic research worker was assigned to the University of Georgia Archaeological Survey in cooperation with the Ocmulgee National Monument and the Chatham County Archaeological Survey, for the purpose of preparing reference cards on ethnological, archaeological and historical publications in the Atlanta libraries. It is planned to extend this bibliographic research to include the major libraries in Georgia and eventually to undertake investigations of the unpublished archives and manuscripts throughout Georgia. Duplicate cards of standard form are prepared for use of the three cooperating agencies.

Publication:

During the year, Dr. A. R. Kelly published "A Preliminary Report on Archaeological Explorations at Macon, Georgia", Anthropological Paper #1, Bulletin 119, Bureau of American Ethnology. This report covers the period of preliminary excavations on the Macon

Plateau and at Lamar, as well as a summary of the results of the stratigraphic survey conducted by Mr. Willey. This report was distributed to the Monument mailing list.

Archaeological Field Explorations:

Trench exploration at Lamar was carried on in the area to be covered by the levee. These trenches completely encircled the Lamar area and revealed a number of interesting phenomena, perhaps the most important of which was the fact that the Lamar village site in aboriginal times was an island lying in the river swamps. This is demonstrated by the presence of a residual red clay dome surrounded by muck deposits of considerable depth. All these features were overlain by one to four feet of comparatively recent river silt. The second important phenomena at Lamar was the discovery of an extensive palisade composed of vertical posts in one or two rows paralleling the edge of the original island. This palisade was traced for a considerable distance, both under the levee and outside of the Monument area. No general excavation was attempted at Lamar during the year. The results of these excavations were discussed by Mr. Jennings in a paper before the annual spring meeting of the Society for Georgia Archaeology, held in the Laboratories at the Macon City Auditorium. Mimeographed re-prints of this paper and a paper by Mr. Fairbanks on the classificatory problems of Georgia archaeology before the same

society, were distributed to an extensive mailing list of anthropologists and archaeologists throughout the United States.

In an attempt to locate additional burials for preservation and exhibition to the public, exploratory trenching was undertaken by Mr. Jackson. A few burials were found, but were all in extremely poor condition and no attempt at in situ preservation was made.

Cooperation on Problems of Southeastern Archaeology:

Mr. Jennings, Jr. Jackson and Mr. Fairbanks attended the second Southeastern Archaeological Conference held at the Tennessee Valley Authority-Alabama State Museum Laboratory in Birmingham, Alabama. Mr. Jennings served as chairman of the meetings. Pottery types from the Ocmulgee National Monument were presented for discussion and plans were made for the publication of a news letter by the Conference. Three numbers of this news letter have been published, giving descriptive information on the pottery types of various institutions cooperating. The illustrations for this publication have been furnished through the courtesy of the National Park Service and have been very favorably received by all of the cooperating institutions.

Mr. Jennings visited the Marksville excavation of the Louisiana State University Archaeological Survey and the laboratories located New Orleans with a view toward ascertaining the need for preservation

of the Marksville site. At the laboratories of the Louisiana State University Archaeological Survey, Mr. Jennings observed the technique of analysis and classification in use by those laboratories. Mr. Fairbanks also visited the L. S. U. Laboratory in New Orleans and observed the laboratory technique in use there, as well as the large amounts of comparative material excavated in Louisiana. These two visits were for the purpose of observing laboratory techniques in use by other institutions in order that the laboratories of the Ocmulgee National Monument may conform, where possible, to standards of other institutions. In this way it is hoped that cooperation between various institutions in the Southeast will be facilitated. Ocmulgee National Monument has begun the exchange of study collections of sherds and other materials with various institutions and has undertaken to supply information requested by students. Mr. Fairbanks supplied culture outlines to various institutions and a tentative chart for the classification of Southeastern cultural manifestations. It is apparent that the Monument is not only assuming a position as a major research point, but also that it is rapidly becoming a center for Southeastern archaeological studies.

Mr. Fairbanks received annual leave for the purpose of visiting laboratories and museums in Chicago, Milwaukee, Springfield, Illinois, New York and Washington. At these institutions he received

much valuable information as to laboratory and museum technique. He also used annual leave to attend the joint meeting of the Central Section of the American Anthropological Association and the Society for American Archaeology held at Ann Arbor, Michigan. Mr. Fairbanks and Mr. Jennings attended the third Southeastern Archaeological Conference held at Birmingham during June 1939. They cooperated with the University of Georgia Archaeological Survey throughout the year in the matters of archaeological information, field and laboratory technique. A number of trips were made to excavations of the University of Georgia Archaeological Survey in the company of members of the Society for Georgia Archaeology. Among the sites visited were Ball Ground, Sandtown, Shoulderbone, Masseys, and an un-reconstructed rock eagle effigy mound in Putnam County. Photographs of these sites were filed with the Monument records.

## RESEARCH IN BIOLOGY

Field observations by Mrs. Jane Jennings on the monument area during the first ten months of the year resulted in the identification of 98 bird species frequenting this area at various periods of the year. These observations have suggested the advisability of developing the section around the lake in the southwestern portion of the monument into an attractive wild life reserve.

Preliminary planning was begun in connection with the specification and placement of nature trail planting using native plants

known to have been used by the historic Creek Indians as medicines, in ceremonies, etc.

## MUSEUM DEVELOPMENT

A revised exhibit of typical artifacts from the four principal occupations of the Monument was prepared for the temporary museum near the Council Chamber. Beside the principal types of artifacts a number of reconstructed pottery vessels were placed on display. The enlarged photographs of excavations on display correlate the field and museum exhibits. A synoptic exhibit of artifacts and pottery types was prepared and loaned to the Washington Memorial Library, in Macon. Tentative plans were drawn up for dioramas and exhibits for the permanent museum and submitted to the Museum Division. Mr. Burns, of the Museum Division, visited the Monument and discussed with the staff plans for permanent museum exhibits. It was planned to construct an enlarged temporary exhibit for the basement of the museum upon completion of unit 1-B.

In the closing ten days of the year Mr. Ewers began research and planning in connection with the development of a comprehensive exhibit plan for the permanent museum to be housed in the new building. This plan will be completed in the ensuing fiscal year.

## INTERPRETATION OF THE AREA TO THE PUBLIC

Because of the physically undeveloped condition of the monument the National Park Service has not encouraged efforts to advertise the area or to seek large numbers of visitors. But considerable interest has been arroused, largely the result of word of mouth communication by local people and past visitors who have profited from having seen the area. An efficient guide service has been developed to interpret the area to the public.

Guide Service:

Since November the guide service has been under the direction of Benjamin Bryan, Junior Research Technician. Guides have been furnished by our ERA Non Construction project and CCC. This service has grown steadily in its effectiveness. At the beginning of the year the average party spent 21 minutes in viewing the various exhibits in the field and temporary museum. By the close of the year the average party was spending nearly an hour on the guided tour. The great majority visited all exhibits. Numerous compliments have been received on the courteous and efficient service of our guides.

Guide Training:

Mr. Bryan has conducted a guide training school in which guides are given a thorough course in the story of Ocmulgee, in methods of

meeting and guiding the public, and in English grammar. A Guide Manual was prepared by Mr. Bryan to assist the guides in their study of the monument story to be interpreted to the public. This manual will be revised from time to time to include new information.

Visitation:

The monument was visited by 41,042 persons during the year. Only those persons receiving guide service were registered--a total of 30,305. Registered visitors came from every state but Montana, from the District of Columbia and 10 foreign countries. During the year sixty-five school groups visited the monument. These groups comprised about 7% of the total registered visitors.

# THE VISITOR AT OCMULGEE



Entrance Count



Registration



Ascending Mound "A"



Viewing a Burial

SUNDAY AT OCMULGEE



Stream of visitors moving toward the Council Chamber.



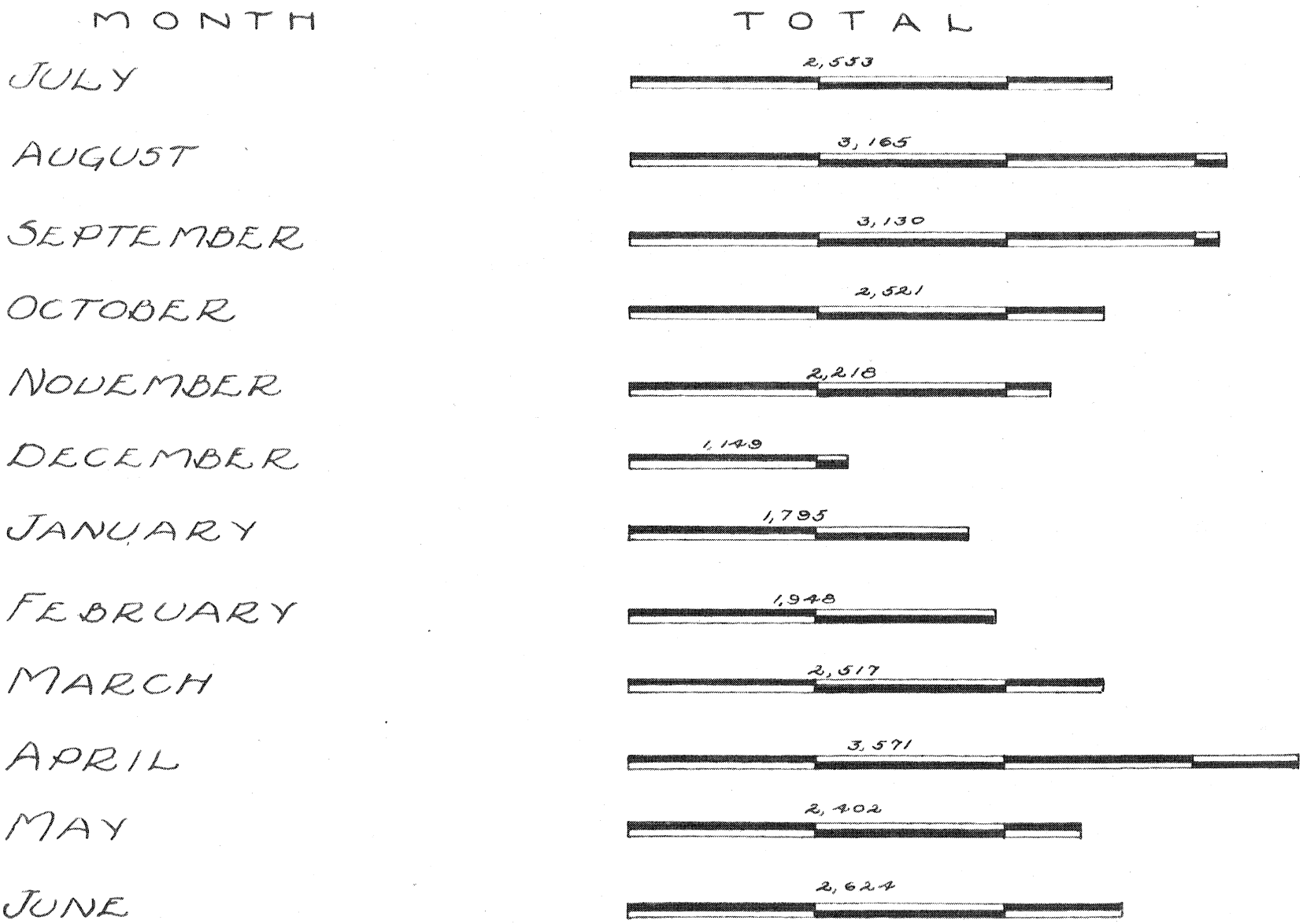
Waiting to enter the Council Chamber.

1938

# EDUCATIONAL CONTACTS

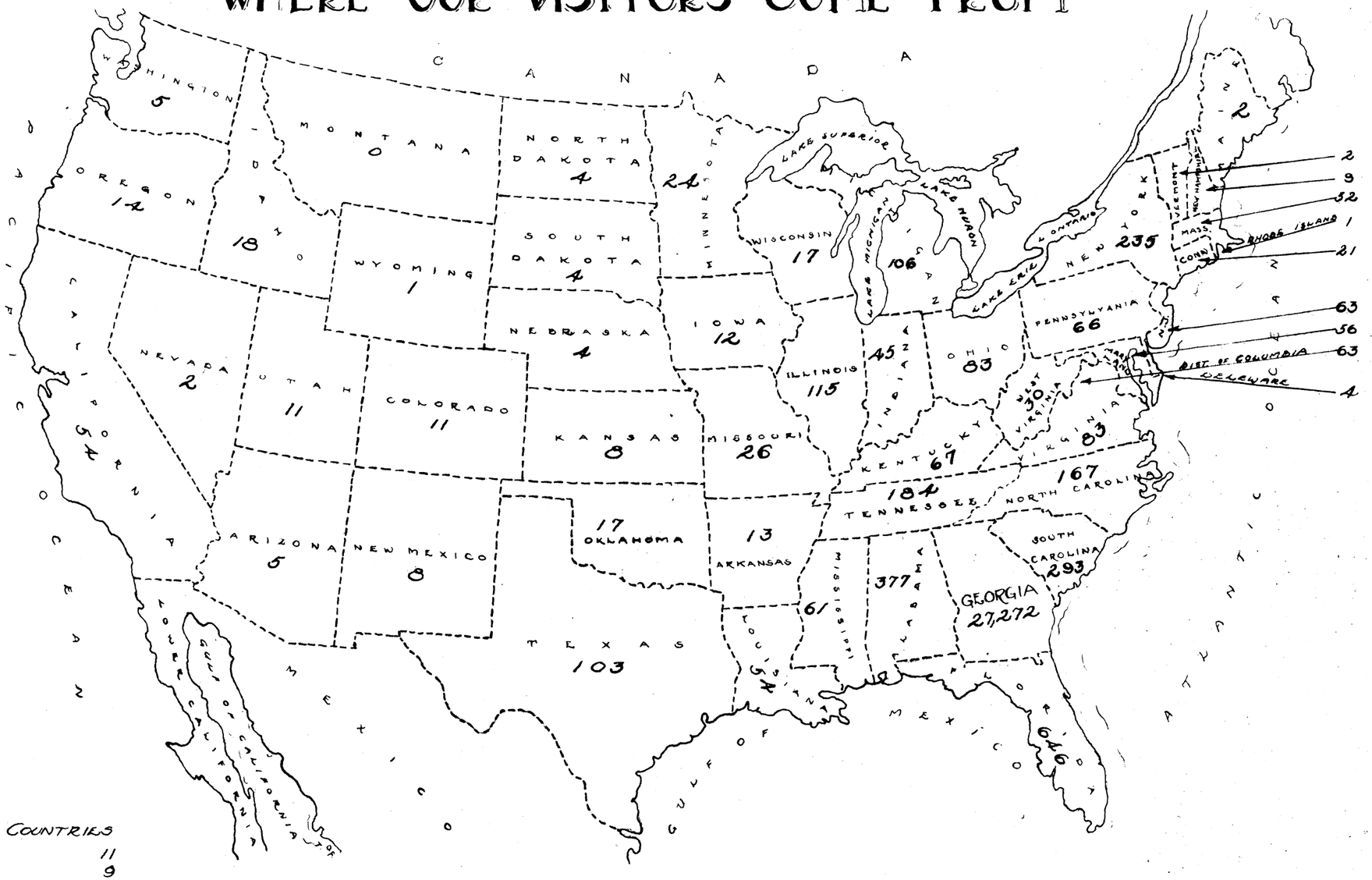
1939

## MONTH BY MONTH




OCMULGEE NATIONAL MONUMENT — MACON, GEORGIA

# WHERE OUR VISITORS COME FROM




| FOREIGN COUNTRIES | |
|---|---|
| Canada | 11 |
| Germany | 9 |
| China | 5 |
| England | 5 |
| Cuba | 2 |
| France | 1 |
| India | 1 |
| Panama | 1 |
| Peru | 1 |
| Switzerland | 1 |

## RECORD OF VISITORS BY STATES
TO
## OCMULGEE NATIONAL MONUMENT
MACON, GEORGIA
JULY 1938 —— JUNE 1939

| | |
|---|---|
| Total registered by States | 30,355 |
| Grand Total | 41,042 |

## LOOKING AHEAD

With the work of the past year in mind it takes very little imagination to look ahead toward the Ocmulgee National Monument of the future -- a beautifully landscaped park area, with paved roads and ample parking areas, with well trained rangers to conduct visitors in large numbers over the trails to the striking field exhibits at the council chamber, corn field, fortification trenches, trading post, Mound A, the spectacular Mound C profile, and to a fascinating restored prehistoric Indian village at Lamar; with a modern museum in which aspects of the story of Indian occupation not easily interpreted in the field will be brought out in a series of attractive, graphic, popular exhibits. It will be a museum where archaeologists can meet and discuss their important problems, process and study materials in the laboratory and study rooms, and consult large collections of safely stored and readily accessible artifacts. Then truly Ocmulgee National Monument will be a center for popular education and scientific research. Toward the attainment of this ideal the accomplishments of the fiscal year 1939 have been a solid contribution.