

## SQUATTERS IN 'RUN' TO STAKE RICH CITY LAND

Abandoned Rail Right-of-Way Is Homesteaded Under Act of 1890.

BY GEORGE B. ROSCOE

United Press Staff Correspondent

OKLAHOMA CITY, Dec. 3.—Police today patrolled a valuable strip of abandoned railroad right-of-way in the shadows of Oklahoma City skyscrapers to prevent squatters from staking claims and homesteading the property.

Men who made a "run" for the strip Tuesday were evicted after they had filed claim notices, the same as did their forefathers decades ago when the federal government opened this territory to settlement.

The land, abandoned when Rock Island officials decided to re-route their tracks, lies within the city's business district. It is six blocks long and 100 feet wide.

\$4,000 Bond Is Posted

After the tracks were torn up, the land lay idle. It was to have been turned over to the city to day for use as a parkway. But squatters, acting under the almost-forgotten congressional townsite act of 1890, staked out their claims.

Sam Bartell, United States deputy marshal, who forty-one years ago represented "the law" when Oklahoma still was Indian territory, led the "run."

M. W. McKenzie, city attorney, said Rock Island officials had posted \$4,000 bond to guarantee delivery of the land to the city.

W. A. Wallace, resident Rock Island engineer, appealed to police officials who evicted the squatters. They cleared the strip several times, only to have the claimants return to set more stakes and file new notices.

Court Battle Is Probable

Wagoner, assistant United States district attorney, said the claims probably would be recorded if sent to the Washington land office and that legal contests might follow.

It was possible, officials agreed, that transfer of the land to the city scheduled for today, might be postponed while the right of the squatters is contested in court.

Many of the squatters maintained their rights to the land. The claims were filed legally and the strip was open to settlement, they contend.

Although police guarded the area, no violence was expected, Police Chief Charles Becker said.

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Survivors are two sisters, Miss Helen Petersdorf and Miss Martha Petersdorf, both of Riverton, Wyo.; a brother, Julius Petersdorf of Idaho, and a niece, Mrs. Grace Haas, Indianapolis.

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Northern Baptist President Will Address Ministers' Union.

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**COLDS**  
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