

## LEXINGTON BUSY ON DAY OF RUN

LEXINGTON - The peaceful little town which today is Lexington was populated quickly after the start of the land run in 1889, because it is just across the South Canadian River from Purcell, a major starting point for the April 22 race for homesteads.

The area's history dates back, however, to more than 50 years before the run of '89. Lexington was the general site of an early military camp and trading post, established by the Chouteaus after a great tribal council in 1835.

The council between the Five Civilized Tribes and the Plains Indians came in the late summer of 1835, at a place known then as Camp Mason. Terms for tribal peace were laid at the council, and the treaty worked out by some 5,000 Indians present was valid until after the Civil War.

The army officer who sounded the bugle for start of the run from Purcell stood on the river bluff just south of the site of Purcell's Santa Fe depot. Spring rains had deepened the water in the east channel of the South Canadian, and homesteaders who rode horseback across the river had an advantage over others who raced on foot into the chest-deep water.

Purcell, in Indian Territory, was in a prohibition area. Lexington saloons did a land office business with Purcell drinkers, who crossed the river day and night to buy liquor.

Population of Lexington was only 225 in 1895, but climbed to 1,500 in 1900. A majority of the business people were barkeepers and saloon owners. By 1910, Lexington's population had dwindled to a little more than 800.

Lexington survived its trials of territorial days and early statehood. There are 50 business establishments along the main east-west thoroughfare (SH 39), and the population is back up to an estimated 1,500. The bond issue will be paid off in 10 years.

The Lexington Sun, weekly newspaper, is published by H. O. Wilson. Lexington Public Library opened about 1953. President of the four-man board of trustees for Lexington is Neal Black, decorator and contractor.

The town is getting "quite a few" Oklahoma City residents who have moved here either to escape growing city congestion or to retire.

Baxter Heights Addition was annexed by the town board of trustees in 1961. In the south east part, the addition has six new homes, built by the most part by townspeople seeking better houses. Trustees also annexed a tract

north of the school, on the northeast side of town, in 1961.

A nursing home is under construction, near on West Broadway, to the old U. S. 77. The brick and frame structure will have accommodations for 55 residents, and will be ready for use this summer.

One bank, First State Bank, stands in the heart of a town which at one time had two banks. Deposits are approximately \$1.8 million.

A new high school building was completed in early 1960.

The town budget is something like \$50,000 annually. Most of the revenue comes from the sale of electricity. Ample city water comes today from two city wells. Only town indebtedness is the unpaid portion of \$25,000 in bonds voted in 1961 for a new sewage disposal plant.