



COMMONS REGISTRATION ACT 1965

Reference No.1/D/14

In the Matter of St. Peter's Green,
Bedford, Bedfordshire.

DECISION

This dispute relates to the registration at Entry No.1 in the Land Section of Register Unit No.V.G.56 in the Register of Town or Village Greens maintained by the former Bedfordshire County Council and is occasioned by Objection No.33 made by the former Bedford Corporation and noted in the Register on 24th September 1970.

I held a hearing for the purpose of inquiring into the dispute at Bedford on 24th April 1974. The hearing was attended by Mr. M.B. Blackledge, the Secretary of the Bedford Society, on behalf of which the application for the registration was made and by Mr. G.D. Gilmore, solicitor, on behalf of the Bedford District Council.

The land the subject of the reference is a triangular area, surrounded on all sides by roads. On the Inclosure Map made in 1795 the whole of it is coloured in the same way as the roads. It is not clear when the land was laid down to grass, but since the end of the nineteenth century it has been regulated as a public walk or pleasure ground by bye-laws made under the Public Health Act 1875.

Researches made on behalf of the Bedford Society have produced a number of references to St.Peter's Green, but the only reference to its use for sports and pastimes is in Miss Joyce Godber's History of Bedfordshire, p.461, where it is stated in a chapter covering the period 1771 - 1839 that at an unspecified date football was played on St.Peter's Green, "a practice not welcome to the Moravians in their nearby settlement, and they discountenanced it as much as possible".

In my view this is not nearly sufficient to show that the inhabitants of the locality had any right to indulge in lawful sports or pastimes on this land.

For these reasons I refuse to confirm the registration.

I am required by regulation 30(1) of the Commons Commissioners Regulations 1971 to explain that a person aggrieved by this decision as being erroneous in point of law may, within 6 weeks from the date on which notice of the decision is sent to him, require me to state a case for the decision of the High Court.

Dated this 2nd day of May 1974


 Chief Commons Commissioner