



In the Matter of Tetsworth Common and The Knapp,  
Tetsworth, Oxfordshire

DECISION

This reference relates to the question of the ownership of land known as Tetsworth Common and The Knapp, Tetsworth being the part of the land comprised in the Land Section of Register Unit No. CL.100 in the Register of Common Land maintained by the Oxfordshire County Council of which no person is registered under section 4 of the Commons Registration Act 1965 as the owner.

Following upon the public notice of this reference Mr F J W Nixey, Mr J E Hope, and the Tetsworth Parish Council each claimed to be the freehold owner of the land in question or part of it and no other person claimed to have information as to its ownership.

I held a hearing for the purpose of inquiring into the question of the ownership of the land at Oxford on 25 November 1982. At the hearing Mr Nixey appeared in person, the Tetsworth Parish Council was represented by Mr W A Stoakes, its Vice Chairman, and I gave leave for Mr Hope to be represented by Mr D Ford, his land agent.

Mr Hope claims to be the owner of the whole of the land the subject of the reference as lord of the manor of Tetsworth, the Lordship of which was conveyed to him by a conveyance made 22 May 1965 between (1) Harold James Wilkins and Frank Percival Wilkins (2) Joseph Hope. By virtue of Section 62 (3) of the Law of Property Act 1925 this conveyance operated to convey to Mr Hope all commons and wastes appertaining or reputed to appertain to the manor.

It appears from the account of the parish of Tetsworth in the Victoria County History of Oxfordshire that there are three manors and several lesser estates in the parish and there is no evidence that any of the land in question is parcel of the manor of which Mr Hope is the lord. The fact that one part of the land is named Tetsworth Common possibly indicates that it is or was at some time parcel of a manor named Tetsworth, but unfortunately two of the three manors mentioned in the Victoria County History are named Tetsworth. I am thus left without any evidence that the land now known as Tetsworth Common is parcel of the manor of Tetsworth of which Mr Hope is the lord.

The other pieces of land the subject of the reference appear to be Waste Land in the technical sense of that expression, but there is no evidence as to which, if any, of the three manors in the parish they are appurtenant.

Mr Nixey's claim related only to Tetsworth Common. Mr Nixey applied for the registration of a right of grazing in gross over this land, and this registration has become final. Similar rights were applied for by Mr G E Claridge and Miss E M Peasley, but Mr Nixey said that Miss Peasley's right had been purchased by his father, who died about ten years ago, so that all the rights are now owned by Mr Nixey and Mr Claridge, who now farms in partnership.