

PETER BIRKS

AN INTRODUCTION
TO THE LAW OF
RESTITUTION

CLARENDON



PAPERBACKS

AN INTRODUCTION
TO THE
LAW OF RESTITUTION

PETER BIRKS

CLARENDON PRESS • OXFORD

Oxford University Press, Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6DP
Oxford New York Toronto
Delhi Bombay Calcutta Madras Karachi
Petaling Jaya Singapore Hong Kong Tokyo
Nairobi Dar es Salaam Cape Town
Melbourne Auckland
and associated companies in
Berlin Ibadan

Oxford is a trade mark of Oxford University Press

Published in the United States
by Oxford University Press, New York

© Peter Birks 1985

First issued as a paperback (with revisions) 1989

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Birks, Peter

An introduction to the law of restitution.

1. Restitution—Great Britain

I. Title

344.207'77 KD1605

ISBN 0-19-876074-4

ISBN 0-19-825645-0 (Pbk)

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Birks, Peter.

An introduction to the law of restitution.

Includes index.

1. Restitution—Great Britain.

2. Unjust enrichment—Great Britain. I. Title.

KD1924.B57 1985 346.41'029 84-20639 344.10629

ISBN 0-19-876074-4 (Oxford University Press)

ISBN 0-19-825645-0 (Pbk)

Printed in Great Britain by
Courier International Ltd,
Tiptree, Essex

Dia 55.61

AN INTRODUCTION
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L20,
L9m

2000

For Jack
Deine Treu' erhielt mein Leben

PREFACE TO THE PAPERBACK EDITION

This is not a new edition, but I am grateful for the opportunity to include updating endnotes and to make some corrections. For the future, the aim is first to produce a larger and more fully documented textbook, after which this *Introduction* will perhaps be able to fall back in its second edition to a more introductory length and level.

The bibliography has been revised and updated. The most important of the new entries is without question the third edition of *Goff and Jones*, extraordinarily generous in its reception of this book. Also extremely useful for its firm judgment and clear exposition of a difficult subject is A. S. Burrows's excellent *Remedies for Torts and Breach of Contract*, especially chapter 6, 'Restitutionary Remedies'.

The endnotes, which are identified by asterisked markers in the text, do not pretend to call attention to every recent event in the law of restitution; their aim is to bring in new material which develops, or in some cases confounds, the book's structural themes. Some items deserve a mention in advance. It is, for instance, particularly fitting to the year which marks the tercentenary of the Glorious Revolution and the Bill of Rights that we should seem to be on the brink of a leading case on the question whether the subject has a right to restitution of money unlawfully demanded by public authorities (see Endnote 22). The question whether English law is well enough equipped to deal with profitable wrongdoing has been pushed into greater prominence by, *inter alia*, the *Spycatcher* affair (see Endnotes 23 and 25). And an important development in relation to those who receive misapplied trust funds has for the moment turned the law away from the direction pointed to in the text. It has been decided, though at the cost of un-noticed contradictions, that the personal liability of such recipients to make restitution in the first measure (value received) must depend on proof of a high degree of fault (see Endnote 32). Cutting across individual topics, another notable recent theme has been the contribution of the High Court of Australia to the case-law of this subject (see Endnotes 2, 6, 14, 25, 28).

I am grateful once again to Jack Beatson, Fellow of Merton College, and to Andrew Burrows, Fellow of Lady Margaret Hall, both of whom saved me from some errors of omission and commission. As the endnotes reveal, both disagree quite strongly with parts of what is said, especially about 'free acceptance'.

Southampton,
9 August, 1988

P.B.H.B.

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