BASIC PROPERTY LAW

Fifth Edition

Olin L. Browder
Roger A. Cunningham
Grant S. Nelson
William B. Stoebuck
Dale A. Whitman

American Casebook Series



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Fifth Edition

 $\mathbf{B}\mathbf{y}$

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Preface

BASIC PROPERTY LAW is like the old axe: it has had a number of new handles and several new heads—but it is the same old axe. This Fifth Edition is the latest edition of a title that goes back to 1966. Now, with three new editors added to two of the editors from the Fourth Edition, the process of evolution continues. We have tried to make this the most up-to-date of any of the national casebooks and yet have been mindful that we build upon a casebook whose leadership has been proven over many years.

We have examined every page of the Fourth Edition, with an eye to improving and updating it. Substantial revisions have been made in those areas of property law that are changing most rapidly. Major updating is present in the subjects of landlord-tenant, title assurance, concurrent ownership, finders, bailments, gifts, and, most of all, government control of land use. Important new Supreme Court decisions have been added on the "taking issue." We have kept approximately the same number of principal cases as in the Fourth Edition, but have, if anything, actually reduced the length of the book. And we believe we have done this without weakening coverage of the framework of property law.

The basic organization and topical coverage are the same as formerly. Students are grounded in the analytical tools of property law—the nature of property, possession, ownership, estates in land—before they take up specific subjects such as landlord and tenant and easements. However, the material is arranged so that teachers who prefer a less orthodox arrangement may vary the order, as some of us do ourselves. The amount of material is ample for a six-semester-hour course, but it will serve nicely for a shorter course by selective deletion of sections or chapters.

Everything we have done, organization of the casebook, selection of principal cases, and inclusion of note material, is geared to the needs of the students who will use this book. We have kept in mind that they are first-year students, who must walk before they can run. This is a book that is written to serve their needs, not to impress our teaching colleagues around the country.

We are particularly proud of the rich selection of note material. Through many years this book has built up what we believe is the best collection of supplemental material of any American casebook. Aided by West Publishing Company's resources, we have been at special pains to review that material, to winnow it, to update it, to make it more useful. Not only is the note material useful for its obvious purposes for class discussion and supplemental study, but the note material, in

Table of Cases

The principal cases are in bold type. Cases cited or discussed in the text are roman type. References are to pages. Cases cited in principal cases and within other quoted materials are not included.

Abbott v. Bob's U-Drive, 599, 604 Abbott House v. Village of Tarrytown, 1145 ABC Builders, Inc. v. Phillips, 991 Academy Spires, Inc. v. Brown, 439, 443 Adams v. Fleck, 726 Adams v. Johnson, 71 Adams County Ass'n for Retarded Citizens, Inc. v. City of Westminster, 1146 Agency of Administration, State Buildings Division, In re, 1307 Agins v. City of Tiburon, 1082, 1081, 1082, 1104, 1105 Ailes v. Decatur County Area Planning Com'n, 1122 Akau v. Olohana Corp., 117 Albano v. Mayor and Tp. Committee of Washington Tp., 1167 Albiani v. Loudd, 801 Albright v. Fish, 674 Albright v. Town of Manlius, 1211 Aldridge v. Aldridge, 788, 831 Alexander v. Andrews, 822 Alexander v. United States Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, 478 Alexander's Dept. Stores of N. J., Inc. v. Arnold Constable Corp., 662 Allen v. Hyatt Regency-Nashville Hotel, 105 Alphonzo E. Bell Corporation v. Bell View Oil Syndicate, 138 Alukonis v. Kashulines, 78 Ambler Realty Co v. Village of Euclid, Ohio, AMG Associates v. Springfield Tp., 1358 AMG Realty Co. v. Warren Tp., 1293 Anderson v. Denny, 177 Anderson v. Gouldberg, 39, 40, 41, 105 Anderson v. Messenger, 796 Anderson v. Ries, 359 Anderson v. Yaworski, 978 Anderson Drive-in Theatre v. Kirkpatrick, 407 Angle v. Slayton, 840 Ansorge v. Kane, 926 Anthony v. Brea Glenbrook Club, 652, 679 Appeal of (see name of party) Application of (see name of party) Arant v. Board of Adjustment of City of Montgomery, 1178 Arastra Ltd. Partnership v. City of Palo Alto, 1169, 1170

Arbenz v. Exley, Watkins & Co., 370, 373, Arkansas State Highway Commission v. Mc-Neill, 686 Arlington Heights, Village of v. Metropolitan Housing Development Corp., 1232, 1256 Armory v. Delamire, 42 Arnel Development Co. v. City of Costa Mesa, 1203, 1202 Arnold v. Hanson, 780 Aronson v. Town of Sharon, 1168 Arverne Bay Const. Co. v. Thatcher, 1176 Asian Americans for Equality v. Koch, 1294, 1295, 1296, 1382 Associated Home Builders of Greater Eastbay, Inc. v. City of Livermore, 1297, Atlantic Coast Line R. Co., United States v., Atlantic Discount Corp. v. Mangel's of North Carolina, Inc., 414 Aztec Ltd., Inc. v. Creekside Inv. Co., 580 Bahler v. Doenges, 318 Baker, State v., 1142 Baker v. Weedon, 262 Baker's Estate, In re, 969 Balch v. Arnold, 841 Banach v. Lawera, 566 Banks v. Korman Associates, 102 Bankston v. Pulaski County School Dist., 991 Barash v. Pennsylvania Terminal Real Estate Corp., 415, 420 Barber v. Barber, 713 Barrows v. Jackson, 919 Bartell v. Hollinshead, 79 Bartlett v. Zoning Com'n of Town of Old Lyme, 1358 Barton Contracting Co., Inc. v. City of Afton, 1187, 1191 Bartram v. Zoning Commission of City of Bridgeport, 1200 Barwick v. Barwick, 41, 42 Basiardanes v. City of Galveston, 1160, 1161 Basore v. Johnson, 844, 845 Battaglini v. Town of Red River, 1122 Batten v. United States, 146 Bauer v. Crummy, 744 Beall v. Montgomery County Council, 1199 Beard v. Henn, 83

Beck v. Loveland, 69

Caruthers v. Board of Adjustment of City of Bunker Hill Village, 1167 Cassidy v. Triebel, 1141 Catalina Groves v. Oliver, 618 Catholic Family & Children's Services, State ex rel. v. City of Bellingham, 1144 Caulfield v. Improved Risk Mutuals, Inc., Causby, United States v., 139, 144, 145, Caywood v. January, 71 CEEED v. California Coastal Zone Conservation Commission, 1342 Celentano, Inc. v. Board of Zoning Appeals of New Haven, 1179 Central Nat. Bank of Cleveland v. Fitzwilliam, 314, 318 Chadrow v. Kellman, 747 Chaffin v. Solomon, 823 Chalmers v. Chalmers, 274, 275 Chambers v. North River Line, 409, 414, Chandler v. Cameron, 824 Chandler v. Kroiss, 1213 Chaplin v. Sanders, 69, 70 Chapman v. Montgomery County Council, 1193 Charles E. Burt, Inc. v. Seven Grand Corp., 420, 442, 510 Chase Federal Sav. and Loan Ass'n v. Schreiber, 760 Chelmsford, Town of v. DiBiase, 1301 Cheney v. Village 2 at New Hope, Inc., 1203, 1210, 1211, 1212 Chesapeake Ranch Club, Inc. v. C.R.C. United Members, Inc., 663 Chicago, B. & Q. R. Co. v. City of Chicago, 1000 Chillemi v. Chillemi, 798 Chrinko v. South Brunswick Tp. Planning Bd., 1212 Christensen v. Hoover, 101, 102 Chrysler Corp. v. Fedders Corp., 822 Cincinnati Finance Co. v. Atkinson's Adm'r, Citadel Corp. v. Puerto Rico Highway Authority, 1105 Cities Service Oil Co v. Dunlap, 773 City of (see name of city) City of Bellingham, State ex rel. Catholic Family & Children's Services v., 1144 City of Missoula, State ex rel. Thelen v., Clancy v. Recker, 822 Claridge v. New Hampshire Wetlands Bd., 1350, 1357 Clark v. Maloney, 42 Clark v. Town Council of Town of West Hartford, 1198 Clarke v. Di Dio, 1176 Clary v. Borough of Eatontown, 1167 Clear Lake City Water Authority v. Clear

Lake Utilities Co., 652, 662

Center, 1146

Cleek v. Povia, 566

Clevenger v. Moore, 803

Cleburne, Texas, City of v. Cleburne Living

Clevidence v. Mercantile Home Bank & Trust Co., 747 Cline v. Johnson County Bd. of Ed., 213 Coast Mut. Building-Loan Ass'n v. Security Title Insurance & Guarantee Co., 881 Cochran v. Long, 685 Cochrane v. Moore, 711 Coderre v. Zoning Bd. of Review of City of Pawtucket, 1179 Coffin v. Left Hand Ditch Co., 161 Coggins v. Mimms, 817 Cohn, In re, 707 Coles v. Belford, 797 Collins v. Pic-Town Water Works, Inc., 657 Commonwealth Dept. of Parks v. Stephens, Commissioner of Natural Resources v. S. Volpe & Co., 1357 Committee to Save the Bishop's House, Inc. v. Medical Center Hospital of Vermont, Inc., 1307 Condrey v. Condrey, 314 Conille v. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, 478 Connell v. Bauer, 748 Conners v. New York State Ass'n of Retarded Children, 1145 Construction Industry Ass'n of Sonoma County v. City of Petaluma, 1297, 1330, Continental Ins. Co. v. Brown, 979 Continental Southland Say & Loan Ass'n v. Jones, 958 Contractors and Builders Ass'n of Pinellas County v. City of Dunedin, 1322 Cook County v. Renaissance Arcade and Bookstore, 1160 Cooks v. Fowler, 443 Cork-Oswalt, Inc. v. Hickory Hotel Co., 618 Corporation of Presiding Bishop of Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints v. City of Porterville, 1147 Corrigan v. City of Scottsdale, 1105, 1106, County Com'rs of Queen Anne's County v. Miles, 1167 County of (see name of county) Cowen v. Pressprich, 103 Crane v. Crane, 534 Cranston v. Winters, 840 Crawford Co. v. Hathaway et al., 162 Crestwood Plaza, Inc. v. Kroger Co., 369 Cross v. Wells Fargo Alarm Services, 502 Crowell v. McCaffrey, 488 Culebras Enterprises Corp. v. Rivera Rios, 1105 Culp v. City of Seattle, 1144 Dame v. Mileski, 822 Danielson v. Roberts, 38 Dapkunas v. Cagle, 486 Darnall v. Day, 442 Dave Herstein Co. v. Columbia Pictures Corp., 510

David Properties, Inc. v. Selk, 347, 353,

354

Davis v. Vidal, 359

Franklin v. White Egret Condominium, Inc., Fred F. French Investing Co., Inc. v. City of New York, 1038, 1039, 1081, 1105 French v. French, 759 Friedberg v. Riverpoint Bldg. Committee, Friedlander v. Hiram Ricker & Sons, Inc., Friend v. Gem Intern., Inc., 341 Friendswood Development Co. v. Smith-Southwest Industries, Inc., 187 Frisbee v. Town of Marshall, 44 Fristoe v. Drapeau, 575 Fritz v. Warthen, 441, 447 Fruitport Tp. v. Baxter, 1119 Frumkes v. Boyer, 653 FW/PBS, Inc. v. City of Dallas, 1160, 1236 F.W. Woolworth Co. v. Plaza North, Inc., 624 Gabel v. Drewrys Limited, USA, Inc., 820 Gable v. Silver, 992 Gaddis v. Consolidated Freightways, Inc., 415, 420 Galin v. Board of Estimate of the City of New York, 1177 Gallagher v. Bell, 639 Ganter v. Kapiloff, 28, 32 Garcia v. Siffrin Residential Ass'n, 1146 Gardner v. Downtown Porsche Audi, 111 Garrison v. Blakeney, 758 Garrison v. Grayson, 712 Garton v. Title Ins. and Trust Co., 886 Gerber v. Pecht, 615 Gerhardt v. Sullivan, 275 Gibson v. Buice, 567 Gifford v. Yarborough, 771 Gignoux v. Village of Kings Point, 1166 Gilbert v. Chicago Title and Trust Company. Gillen-Crow Pharmacies, Inc. v. Mandzak, 662 Gillota v. Gillota, 742 Gilman v. McCrary, 567 Glyn v. Title Guarantee & Trust Co., 879 Gin S. Chow v. City of Santa Barbara, 161 Giorgi v. Pioneer Title Ins. Co., 822 Girsh, Appeal of, 1132, 1297 Gladwyne Colony, Inc. v. Lower Merion Tp., 1225 Glasoe v. Trinkle, 437 Glenn v. Poole, 576, 580 Glyco v. Schultz, 437, 443 Goldberg v. Kelly, 20 Goldblatt v. Rosenwasser, 926 Goldblatt v. Town of Hempstead, N. Y., 1037 Golden v. City of Overland Park, 1202 Golden v. Planning Bd. of Town of Ramapo, 1346, 1347 Gorbics v. Close, 767 Gorieb v. Fox, 1020, 1161 Gorton v. Schofield, 194 Goss v. Lopez, 20 Gottstein v. Hedges, 727 Gower v. Postmaster General, 615 Graham v. Estuary Properties, Inc., 1037, 1356, 1357, 1358

Graham v. Safe Harbor Water Power Corporation, 595 Graham Mortg. Corp., United States v., 943 Gralewski's Estate, State v., 745 Grand Island Hotel Corp. v. Second Island Development Co., 823 Grand Lodge A. O. U. W. of North Dakota v. Fischer, 970 Granite Properties Ltd. Partnership v. Manns, 550, 552 Greco v. Greco, 279 Green v. Copperstone Limited Partnership, Green v. Superior Court of City and County of San Francisco, 437, 438, 439, 441, 443, 447, 454, 455 Greenspan v. Rehberg, 653 Griffin v. Nationwide Moving and Storage Co., Inc., 111 Griggs v. Allegheny County, Pa., 143, 144 Griswold v. State of Conn., 1335 Groden v. Jacobson, 970 Grosz v. City of Miami Beach, Florida, 1147 Guarantee Abstract & Title Ins. Co. v. St. Paul Fire & Marine Ins. Co., 876 Guillette v. Daly Dry Wall, Inc., 845 Gulf Reston, Inc. v. Rogers, 502 Guntersville, City of v. Shull, 1144 G-W-L, Inc. v. Robichaux, 991 Haar v. Daly, 958 Hadacheck v. Sebastian, 1002, 1009, 1037 Hall v. American Oil Co., 658, 662 Hall v. Harris, 796, 797 Hall v. Lawrence, 524 Halladay v. Cluff, 777 Hall Paving Co. v. Hall County, 1202 Hamel v. Schmidt, 488 Hamilton v. Shaw, 310 Hamilton Bank of Johnson City v. Williamson County Regional Planning Com'n, 1083, 1084, 1085, 1086, 1104, 1106, 1107 Hannah v. Peel, 39 Hannan v. Dusch, 402, 406 Hanson v. Zoller, 824 Harbison v. City of Buffalo, 1120, 1122 Harris v. Brooks, 160 Harris v. Neely, 788 Harris v. Woodard, 767 Harrison v. Foley, 723 Harrison, State ex rel. Manhein v., 1113 Harry's Village, Inc. v. Egg Harbor Tp., 373 Hartley v. Williams, 969 Hartman Ranch Co. v. Associated Oil Co., Hash v. Sofinowski, 580 Hatfield v. City of Fayetteville, 1122 Hausfelder v. Security-First Nat. Bank of Los Angeles, 747 Hawkinson v. Johnston, 401 Haywood v. Brunswick Bldg. Soc., 631 Hebb v. Severson, 947, 955 Hellberg v. Coffin Sheep Company, 551 Helmsley v. Borough of Ft. Lee, 472 Henderson v. W. C. Haas Realty Management, Inc., 490 Hendricks v. Lake, 837

Keating v. Cincinnati, 194 Keck v. Scharf, 541 Kell v. Bella Vista Village Property Owners Ass'n, 651, 654, 675, 679, 682, 683 Kellog v. Joint Council of Women's Auxiliaries Welfare Ass'n, 1141 Kelly v. Perry, 822 Kelly v. Tri-Cities Broadcasting, Inc., 604, 618 Kendall v. Ernest Pestana, Inc., 359, 369 Kepley v. Overton, 314 Keppel v. Bailey, 625, 628, 630, 652 Kettle River R. Co. v. Eastern Ry. Co., 652 Keystone Bituminous Coal Ass'n v. DeBenedictis, 1040, 1081, 1108 Kilbourne v. Forester, 353 King v. Moorehead, 437, 438, 439, 441, 443, 444, 447, 456 Kirk v. Tyrone Tp., 1202 Kiser v. Clinchfield Coal Corp., 840 Kit-Mar Builders, Inc., Appeal of, 1169 Kitzinger v. Gulf Power Co., 595 Klatzl's Estate, In re, 282 Kline v. Burns, 437, 438, 439, 440, 443 Kline v. 1500 Massachusetts Ave. Apartment Corp., 493, 501, 502 Klopstock, People v., 370, 619 Klos v. Gockel, 991 Knight v. Knight, 932 Knox Hill Tenant Council v. Washington, Koennecke v. Waxwing Cedar Products, Ltd., 415 Kohl v. United States, 995 Kosena v. Eck, 370 Kotrich v. Du Page County, 1180 Kozesnik v. Montgomery Tp., 1152, 1192 Krahl v. Nine Mile Creek Watershed Dist., Kramer v. Board of County Com'rs for Prince George's County, 1199, 1201 Kramer v. Carter, 853

Krasner v. Transcontinental Equities, Inc., 355, 358

Krause v. City of Royal Oak, 1125, 1131 Kroger Co. v. Chemical Securities Co., 369 Kropf v. City of Sterling Heights, 1297 Krzewinski v. Eaton Homes, Inc., 552 Kubby v. Hammond, 1119

Kuehne v. Town Council of Town of East Hartford, 1188, 1191, 1194, 1198, 1200 Kulawitz v. Pacific Woodenware & Paper Co., 503

Kwaitkowski v. Superior Trading Co., 503

Lafayette Radio Electronics Corp., In re, 358 Lakeside Youth Service v. Zoning Hearing Bd. of Upper Moreland Tp., 1144 Lakewood, Ohio Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, Inc. v. City of Lakewood, Ohio, 1147 Lamken v. Miller, 341

Landmark Universal, Inc. v. Pitkin County Bd. of Adjustment, 1178 Lane v. Travelers Ins. Co. of Hartford, Conn.,

Langmede v. Weaver, 759

Laporte, Application of, 1141

Larsen v. Zoning Commission of City of Norwalk, 1167

La Salle National Bank of Chicago v. City of Chicago, 1161

Latham v. Garner, 533

Lavey v. Graessle, 852

Lawton v. Steele, 1001, 1002

Lawyers Title Ins. Corp. v. Edmar Const. Co.,

LDDC, Inc. v. Pressley, 304

Lehigh Valley Railroad Co. v. McFarlan, 567 Leider v. 80 William St. Co., 510

Lemle v. Breeden, 437, 439, 440, 441

Leonard v. Bailwitz, 551

Lerman v. Levine, 300, 303

Levitt v. Incorporated Village of Sands Point, 1167, 1201

Levy v. Board of Standards and Appeals of City of New York, 1176

Lewin v. American and Colonial Distributors, Ltd., 605

Lewis v. Herrera, 759

Lewiston Pre-Mix Concrete, Inc. v. Rohde,

Lex Pro Corp. v. Snyder Enterprises, Inc.,

Liberty Plan Co. v. Adwan, 391 Liddle, State ex rel. Ellis v., 1143 Lindenmuth v. Safe Harbor Water Power Corporation, 534

Lindsey v. Clark, 589 Lindsey v. Normet, 379

Livingston Rock & Gravel Co. v. County of Los Angeles, 1122

L & M Corp. v. Loader, 624

Loch Sheldrake Associates v. Evans, 524 Lomax v. Pickering, 836

London and South Western Railway Co. v. Gomm, 630

London County Council v. Allen, 631 London & S.W. Ry. v. Gomm, 642, 643

Lopez v. Henry Phipps Plaza South, Inc., 477 Loretto v. Teleprompter Manhattan CATV Corp., 1080

Los Angeles, City of v. California Dept. of Health, 1146

Los Angeles, City of v. City of Glendale, 162 Los Angeles, City of v. Savage, 516

Losey v. Simpson, 838

Love v. Hudson, 713

Lowe v. City of Missoula, 1202

Lowry v. Lowry, 744

Lowry v. Norris Lake Shores Development Corp., 657

Lucas v. Hamm, 246

Lugin v. Dobson, 194

Lund v. MacArthur, 437, 438, 440, 441

Lutz v. City of Longview, 1213

Lux v. Haggin, 161

MacDonald, Sommer & Frates v. Yolo County, 1084, 1085, 1086, 1104, 1106 Maddox v. Astro Investments, 811 Magee v. Walbro, Inc., 111 Mahlmann v. Yelverton, 488 Mahoney v. Martin, 727