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MACMILLAN

Contract Law

Third Edition

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Preface to the Third Edition

My aim in writing the third edition of this book has not changed from the stated aim of the first and second editions: namely, to provide a clear and straightforward account of the basic rules of English contract law. I have also sought to introduce the reader to some of the debates about the nature, the scope and the functions of the law of contract and to discuss some of the wider controversies which surround certain basic doctrines of English contract law, such as consideration and privity. In discussing these issues I have attempted to build a bridge between this introductory work and some of the more advanced and detailed writings on the law of contract by making frequent reference throughout the book to both the periodical literature and the standard textbooks on the law of contract (full citations are contained in the bibliography located at the end of the book). My hope is that these references will encourage the reader to pursue the issues raised in this book in greater detail in the writings to which I have made reference.

When preparing the second edition of the book I took the opportunity to add considerably to its length. This time I have resisted the temptation to add significantly to the size of the book. However a number of major changes to the text have been necessitated by the enactment of the Unfair Terms in Consumer Contracts Regulations 1994, the publication of the Law Commission's report on the reform of the doctrine of privity of contract and a number of decisions of the House of Lords, mostly notably *Ruxley Electronics and Construction Ltd v. Forsyth*. Finally, I must acknowledge the debts which I have incurred in writing this edition. Once again I am indebted to John Winckler at Macmillan for his continued support. I must also acknowledge the assistance which I have derived from colleagues and students who have helped to clarify my thoughts and offered a number of constructive criticisms and suggestions. But my greatest debt is to my wife, Rose, and our children, Jenny, Sarah, Rachel and Katie. I am grateful to them for their encouragement and support.

The book is dedicated to the memory of my grandparents.

I have endeavoured to state the law on the basis of the materials available to me at the end of January 1997.

London, May 21st, 1997

Ewan McKendrick

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