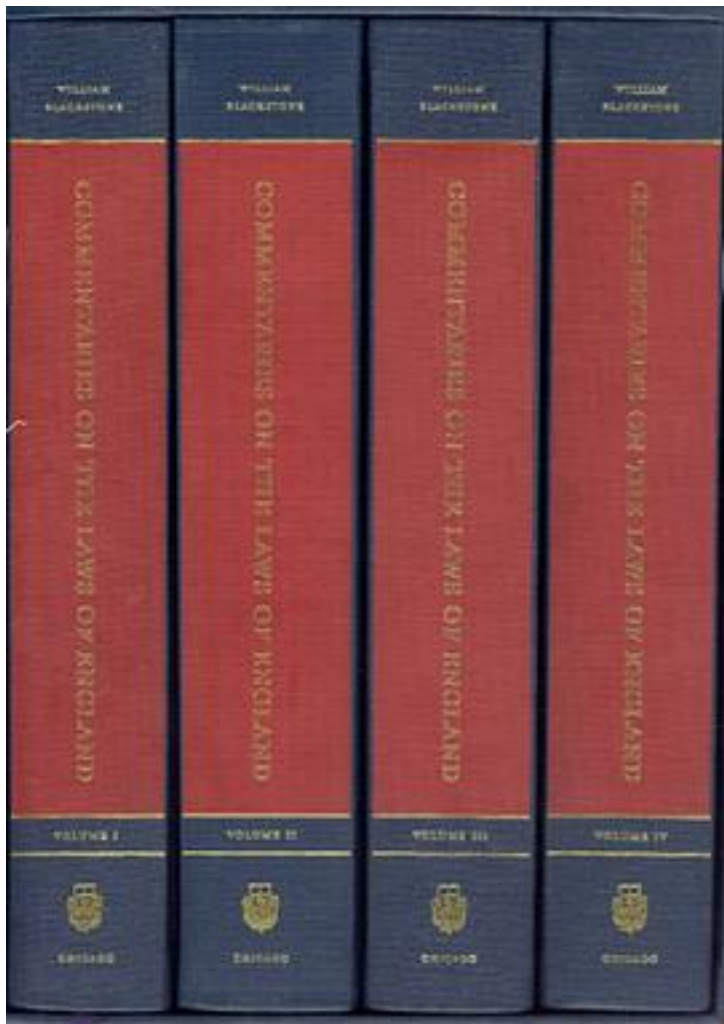


Commentaries on the Laws of England, A Facsimile of the First



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Sir William Blackstone's Commentaries on the Laws of England (1765-69) stands as the first effort to consolidate English common law into a unified and rational system. Clearly and elegantly written, the work achieved immediate renown and exerted a powerful influence on legal education both in England and America. This handsomely produced, slipcased four-volume set is a facsimile of the eighteenth-century first edition, undistorted by later interpolations. The Commentaries is divided into four books. The first, introduced by Stanley N. Katz, deals with what Blackstone called "the rights of persons," what a modern lawyer would call constitutional law, the legal structure of government. Book II includes an introduction by A. W. Brian Simpson and describes the law of property. Book III, introduced by John H. Langbein, analyzes civil procedure and remedies. The last book, which is devoted to criminal law and procedure, includes an introduction by Thomas A. Green. Now regarded as a literary, as well as legal, classic, Blackstone's Commentaries brilliantly laid out the system of English law in the mid-eighteenth century, demonstrating that as a system of justice, it was comparable to Roman law and the civil law of the Continent. Ironically, the work also revealed to the colonists the insufficiencies of the system and became a model for the developing legal system of the American nation in 1789. Supplemented with commentary by experts in the field, these classic facsimile volumes belong in every lawyer's library.

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