English Judicial Recognition of a Right to Privacy
David John Seipp

Program on Information Resources Policy
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ENGLISH JUDICIAL RECOGNITION OF A RIGHT TO PRIVACY
David John Seipp
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Standard treatises on English law will say that England has no right of action comparable to the American right to privacy. But, since 1979, decisions of the English courts have invoked an explicit "right to privacy" in many contexts:

* **Private Property.** Searches stop at the Englishman's "castle" door when statutory authorization does not specifically allow entry into homes and offices. Concern for privacy also curtails court-ordered "surprise" searches on behalf of civil litigants.

* **Confidential Communication.** Courts restrain and punish the publication of secrets communicated in the course of marriage, employment, and court proceedings. Official wiretapping, permissible under English law, is being challenged under the European Convention on Human Rights.

* **Personal Information.** Financial and employment records of non-parties are safe from exposure in civil suits. Courts hint at the availability of a remedy for excesses of investigative journalism.

This report traces the development of the English judiciary's role in the protection of privacy from the nineteenth century to the present day. It also considers proposals for a statutory right to privacy in England and the role of international conventions protecting privacy. The report concludes with an analysis of the "new" right to privacy in England, and a comparative look at privacy protection in other English-speaking jurisdictions.
Some thirty inches from my nose,
The frontier of my Person goes,
And all the untilled air between
Is private pagus or demesne.
Stranger, unless with bedroom eyes
I beckon you to fraternize,
Beware of rudely crossing it:
I have no gun, but I can spit.

-- W.H. Auden, Prologue:
The Birth of Architecture
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ENGLISH JUDICIAL RECOGNITION OF A RIGHT TO PRIVACY

I. INTRODUCTION

The average Englishman's habits of reserve and regard for his own privacy are legendary. It is surprising, therefore, that English courts have, shown great reluctance to recognize privacy as an interest worthy of legal protection in its own right. The experience of other common law countries has not been the same; privacy law has flourished in the United States and has gained a foothold in Australia and Canada. Moreover, a right to privacy has received international recognition in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the European Convention on Human Rights. Yet in England, Parliament has refused on a number of occasions to enact broad privacy protections, and the courts have been slow to find a grounding for privacy in the common law and in constitutional principles, as the American courts have done. Judicial pronouncements in the past few years, however, have come closer and closer to recognition of a general privacy interest protected by the common law, as one of the rights of every English subject. It is instructive to compare the state of American law on the verge of its acceptance of a right to privacy.

When, in 1890, Samuel D. Warren and Louis D. Brandeis published their now famous article entitled The Right to Privacy, American courts had already recognized a legally protected interest in personal privacy in a number of contexts. Doctrines of trespass, eavesdropping, defamation, unreasonable search and seizure, sanctity of the mails, and confidentiality of census information were among those extended by state and federal courts to protect what they explicitly denominated the "privacy" of the individual. Warren and Brandeis wanted the courts to carry this existing protection one step further, to restrain the publication of truthful information of a personal nature (in particular of candid photographs) in the newspaper press. The gradual extension of legal doctrines toward greater
protection of privacy had stopped short of restraining the newspapers because the competing interest of freedom of the press had a secure constitutional niche and zealous advocates of its own. A catalyst was needed, other than the steady pressure of litigants seeking to vindicate their invaded privacy, and the article by Warren and Brandeis provided that catalyst.

In England, however, scholarly legal periodicals did not have this creative effect. Spurred on by calls for the recognition of a right to privacy from Canadian\(^16\) and Australian\(^17\) legal writers, Percy H. Winfield contributed an article to the *Law Quarterly Review* in 1931\(^18\) strongly urging the House of Lords to enunciate a general right of this kind in a case then before it, *Tolley v. J.S. Fry & Sons, Ltd.*\(^19\) The Law Lords instead exercised their imaginations to devise a remedy for the plaintiff, who had been the subject of caricature in a newspaper advertisement.\(^20\) Since the failure of the Winfield article, English legal writers have looked to Parliament rather than to the courts for the initiative in this field.\(^21\) In Parliament, however, the organized power of the newspaper press has been the chief obstacle to enactment of a broad right to privacy.\(^22\) A further obstacle has been the effort of some legal scholars to demonstrate the intellectual bankruptcy of the "concept" of privacy.\(^23\) Engendered in part by English lawyers alarm at the breadth of privacy law in the United States, this attempt at obfuscation has not deterred recent English courts from building up piecemeal the broad right rejected in the *Tolley* case. The courts make frequent and explicit references to "privacy" as the value they are concerned to protect.\(^24\)

This Paper traces the treatment of privacy in the English courts from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the present day. It attempts to set out the current status of judicial protection of privacy in England and to compare the experiences of the Scottish, Canadian, Australian, South African, and Indian courts with that of England's on the subject of privacy. First, however, the definitional difficulties posed by many legal scholars must be dealt with and a working definition of privacy must be proposed; Part II considers this problem of the definition of privacy. Part III then takes the history of privacy in the English courts up to the beginning of the twentieth century. Part IV, briefly outlines two proposed alternatives to judicial recognition -- parliamentary enactment of a right to privacy.
and domestication of international protections. Part V traces the recent judicial initiatives approaching full recognition of a right to privacy, and Part VI provides an analytical and comparative overview of the English courts' protection of individual privacy.
II. THE DEFINITION OF PRIVACY

A. The Definitional Quagmire

Warren and Brandeis, in their 1890 article, had not thought it necessary to define exactly what they meant by a "right to privacy," other than to equate it with Judge Thomas M. Cooley's formulation "the right to be let alone" and their own phrase, "inviolate personality." Their aim was the narrower one of advocating what they termed "the right to protect oneself from pen portraiture, from a discussion by the press of one's private affairs." This narrower right against the press was hedged about with many of the same limitations as was the right to reputation protected by the tort of defamation. An American magazine editor, writing shortly before Warren and Brandeis, defined the interest in privacy more broadly as "the value attached . . . to the power of drawing, each man for himself, the line between his life as an individual and his life as a citizen, or in other words, the power of deciding how much or how little the community shall see of him, or know of him." This 1890 definition of privacy embodies the concept of individual control over information about oneself central to the now widely accepted formulation of Professor Alan Westin.

Early discussions of the law of privacy in England showed equally little interest in sophisticated attempts at precise legal definition. In suggesting that "offensive invasion of the personal privacy of another is (or ought to be) a tort," Professor Winfield had defined "infringement of privacy" as "unauthorized interference with a person's seclusion of himself or of his property from the public." By mid-century, English lawyers had a wealth of American judicial definitions from which to choose, as well as the formulation of the International Society of Jurists (this remarkably similar to Judge Cooley's). The effort to deny the possibility of any coherent definition of privacy did not begin in English legal literature until attention turned to the possibility of Parliamentary enactment of a statutory right. Proposed statutory language proved much more susceptible to attack on definitional grounds than did the imagined pronouncements of future courts.
Sir Kenneth Younger's Committee on Privacy issued its Report in 1972 advising against enactment of a general right to privacy. In assessing competing claims to privacy and to free flow of information, the Committee majority found one major difficulty to be the "lack of any clear and generally agreed definition of what privacy is." Replying to this objection, Professor D.N. MacCormick pointed out that the enactment of a right "is a fundamentally different procedure and process from the elucidation of a concept," and that in any case, the difficulty of choosing among alternative definitions is not a particularly good reason to avoid the choice. Since then, the project of formulating a coherent legal definition of privacy has been undertaken by very able scholars in American and Australian legal journals. The problem that the Younger Committee saw as definitional -- how to set limits on a right to privacy when it conflicts with other important interests -- was really a problem of lawmaking in a new area. Legislators can provide guidelines, for the courts and occasionally will do so in great detail, but legislators cannot expect more precision. Nevertheless, the argument that privacy is incapable of definition, or at any rate not worth defining, has reappeared recently in a Law Quarterly Review article by Raymond Wacks entitled The Poverty of "Privacy". Wacks urges that the concept "be refused admission to English law," and his reasons are worth examining in some detail.

Wacks finds the debate over contending definitions of privacy to be "sterile" because scholars proposing definitions rarely agree on their premises or objectives, and "futile" because where privacy is recognized, it simply means whatever the legislatures and courts say it means. Neither of these objections goes to the impossibility of defining privacy; together, they indicate only that the confusion among legal scholars has not forestalled the continued use of the concept in courts and legislatures. Wacks relies more heavily on the argument that in America and in England privacy has become "almost irretrievably confused" with a number of other legal concepts. On the constitutional level, the U.S. Supreme Court has expanded the notion of privacy, in the area of sexual freedom, to be synonymous with individual autonomy "or, indeed, with freedom itself"; moreover, the Court has characterized unreasonable searches, forced disclosure of membership in associations, and prohibitions on the possession of
obscene matter as invasions of privacy.\footnote{45} The common law tort of privacy in America has, according to Wacks, become confused with defamation and with the proprietary interest in one's name and likeness.\footnote{46} In England, privacy has become entangled with the action for breach of confidence -- a protection of trade secrets as well as intimate personal details -- and has been confused more generally with governmental claims to secrecy.\footnote{47} Finally, in both countries, computerized information collection has been labeled a privacy problem.\footnote{48} Wacks concludes that he would replace this overworked word with the phrase "personal information."\footnote{49}

The definitional argument put forward by Wacks and developed in detail in his 1980 book, The Protection of Privacy, served only to heighten the fears of many English lawyers opposed to legal recognition of a general right to privacy.\footnote{50} Such fears arise from the uneasy feeling that privacy law in the United States has run rampant and has intruded into older, settled categories of the law.

Wack's is not a jurisprudential argument that the word "privacy" is somehow less capable of bearing definite legal meanings than, say, such overworked words as "reasonableness" or "property."\footnote{51} It is also not a policy argument that people claiming invasions of their privacy are just using that vocabulary to camouflage underlying, illegitimate interests.\footnote{52} Wacks's argument appears to concede that people genuinely want privacy, and even that legal protection of individual privacy may be appropriate where it is incidental to relief for defamation or breach of confidence. But Wacks recoils at the twin prospects of, first, a wave of uncertainty as injuries that would have been remedied by an established doctrine such as defamation are brought to court under a new untested right to privacy, and second, a flood of unprecedented litigation as injuries that would not have been remedied at all under existing English law are brought to court for the first time. Such fear of the unknown has often been voiced before in opposition to proposed new remedies in the common law, remedies that seemed to burst the bounds of established legal categories.\footnote{53} The objection is a weighty one, but it does not go to the problem of definition as such.

E. Toward a Pragmatic Legal Definition of Privacy
As the main sections of this Paper will demonstrate, English courts since at least the mid-nineteenth century and quite frequently of late have referred to a legally protectible interest in "privacy" and even to a "right to privacy" in limited contexts. No elaborate or technical definition of privacy is required to interpret and understand these judicial pronouncements. To the extent that the English judiciary had any theoretical framework for their discussion of privacy, it was the philosophical debate begun by J.S. Mill and later developed by Stephen and Montague. "There is a limit to the legitimate interference of collective opinion with individual independence," wrote Mill in his essay On Liberty, a limit he formulated elsewhere as "a circle around every individual human being, which no government . . . ought to be permitted to overstep," or "some space in human existence thus entrenched around, and sacred from authoritative intrusion." By interference and intrusion Mill meant coercion as well as invasion of privacy, but even critics of Mill's broader principle of noninterference, among them James Fitzjames Stephen, conceded to Mill that "[l]egislation and public opinion ought in all cases whatever scrupulously to respect privacy." A pragmatic legal definition of privacy attempts to discover what that limit has been in different historical periods by reconstructing the different "boundaries" asserted by litigants and judges in cases explicitly mentioning privacy as the interest protected.

Stephen, writing before he himself became a judge, recognized that "[t]o define the province of privacy distinctly is impossible." A claim to privacy, if it is to be treated seriously, must be accepted at face value. To purport to dig behind such a claim for the "real" interest being protected -- hypothesizing sexual prudishness in some cases, concealment of commercially valuable information in others, disdain for inquisitive social inferiors in still others -- is a fundamentally misguided approach. An assertion of a privacy interest, if successful, will conceal forever the nature of the information sought to be kept private. Different people value their privacy to different degrees, and for different reasons. It is possible, nevertheless, to find a general consensus on what facets of personal life are within the ambit of Mill's limit. As Stephen concluded, while precise definition is impossible, "[t]he common usage of language affords a practical test which is almost perfect upon this
subject.\textsuperscript{61}

Three sets of "boundaries," broadly construed, knit together the explicitly denominated "privacy" interests asserted in the English courts over the course of the nineteenth century and up to the present day. The first of these are the physical boundaries around private property, in particular the dwelling house of every individual or family.\textsuperscript{62} Such boundaries create a three-dimensional "private space" given legal protection against some (but certainly not all) unwanted intrusions of outsiders. They are barriers to the penetration of legal analysis: The interest in the privacy of private property may be asserted to prevent intruders from seeing something, from hearing something, or just from rendering the occupants uncomfortable. To the extent that the law respects these boundaries, the motive of concealment behind them is irrelevant. The amount of available legal protection will vary according to other factors, including the means of intrusion and the official or unofficial status of the intruder.

The second set of boundaries, those marking out confidential communications,\textsuperscript{63} are less tangible than the physical boundaries of private property. Property in the contents of a literary work is a concept familiar to the common law, one capable of extension to the contents of a diary and a personal letter. A property basis for the protection of telephone conversations or face-to-face communication is more difficult to imagine. Grounded on a variety of legal doctrines, protections of confidentiality are sometimes dependent on the means of communications employed, sometimes on the relationship between the speakers. Like the protections of physical property, they are never treated as absolute barriers to disclosure.

Third, and least tangible of all, are the boundaries around personal information concerning private individuals,\textsuperscript{64} information that may not be reduced to written or spoken form until the very act of privacy invasion complained of by the subject. Again, the boundaries are permeable and the protections they afford are variously grounded. Information about which a person could not be compelled to testify may be given up by that person for statistical, financial, or medical purposes on the understanding, enforceable by law, that the information shall not be used for any other purpose. There is also some legal recourse if personal information is published broadly to the subject's embarrassment or annoyance, through extensions of the
law of defamation and that of breach of confidence. As in the era of Warren and Brandeis, this set of boundaries is the focus of the greatest concern and the greatest uncertainty.
III. THE NINETEENTH CENTURY ENGLISH LAW OF PRIVACY

A. Private Property

For Sir William Blackstone, the core of the institution of property was the ability to exclude others, and no other species of property was so well hedged about with legal guarantees of exclusiveness than the dwelling house. At the outset of the nineteenth century, that bulwark of Parliamentary rhetoric, the popular maxim "an Englishman's house is his castle" summed up three lines of legal doctrine defending the householder against intruders. In its original application, the maxim embodied a broad privilege of self-defense for the occupant who met a felonious assault with deadly force. According to Sir Edward Coke in Semayne's Case, a man's house was his castle "as well for his safety as for his repose," and therefore no sheriff executing a creditor's writ of attachment could break down the door to gain entrance. By the 1760s and 1770s, moreover, the Court of Common Pleas was protecting the subject's castle against the king himself, by striking down general search warrants and upholding large fines against revenue agents who committed unlawful trespass.

The nineteenth century Englishman thus had legitimate recourse to physical violence in defense of the dwelling house, as well as a legal remedy in trespass. Violent self-help could only be justified when a threat to the occupants' physical safety was feared, but the popular imagination took the law of self-defense much further in this regard, to protection of "the privacy and security that [made] possible all life, industry, and order." The courts applied the trespass remedy to all unwelcome intrusions, howsoever motivated. Exemplary damages of 500 pounds were awarded in one trespass case of 1814, for ungentlemanly conduct likened by the court to that of an intruder who "walks up and down before the window of [one's] house, and looks in while the owner is at dinner." The high value placed by the law on "the private repose and security of every man in his own house," as Lord Chief Justice Ellenborough phrased it in 1811, was in large measure an expression of a legally recognized interest in privacy.
Visitors to England in the nineteenth century remarked at the
overwhelming preference for single family dwellings, high garden
walls, and heavy locks.\textsuperscript{80} Even so, every house needed windows for
light and air, and inevitably houses might be situated so that the
activities of neighbors in front rooms and gardens were visible from
adjoining property without any actual trespass. Householders who had
long enjoyed freedom from curious eyes sought legal protection
throughout the nineteenth century when neighbors opened windows
overlooking them. A longstanding doctrine of "ancient lights" had
been applied to this situation. In a cryptically reported case of
1709, Cherrington \textit{v.} Abney,\textsuperscript{81} the court announced that windows could
not be altered to overlook of a neighboring owner, "if before . . .
they could not look out of them into the yard, . . . for privacy is
valuable."\textsuperscript{82} Still earlier, an equally cryptic report had provided
the counterargument to be used by nineteenth century courts, "Why may
not I build up a wall that another may not look into my yard?"\textsuperscript{83} The
uncertain state of the law was discussed by Mr. Justice LeBlanc in
Chandler \textit{v.} Thompson, an 1811 decision.\textsuperscript{84} He had known of actions for
privacy,\textsuperscript{85} but had "heard it laid down by Lord Chief Justice Eyre that
such an action did not lie."\textsuperscript{86}

Litigants persisted with actions based on doctrines of ancient
lights, nuisance, and easements of privacy, but by the 1860s the
courts' attitude had hardened against all such claims by neighbor
against neighbor. Said Baron Bramwell in the 1865 case of Jones \textit{v.}
Tapling, "It is to be remembered that privacy is not a right.
Intrusion on it is no wrong or cause of action."\textsuperscript{87} With this judicial
remedy thus foreclosed, householders enlisted the courts to help
achieve private solutions: Potts \textit{v.} Smith in 1868 allowed one neighbor
to build a twenty-three foot wall cutting off his neighbor's
vantage,\textsuperscript{88} and Manners \textit{v.} Johnson in 1875 enforced a covenant "that
[an] act shall not be done the doing of which causes the invasion of
privacy."\textsuperscript{89} Yet in the absence of such independently initiated
protections, the English householder at the close of the nineteenth
century was at the mercy of curious and resourceful neighbors. A
leading casebook on tort mentions a Balham dentist's unsuccessful
complaint in 1904 against neighbors who arranged large mirrors in
their garden in order to observe all that went on in his study and
operating room.\textsuperscript{90} To twentieth century commentators, such an absurd
situation pointed out the existence of a gap in the legal protection of private property.  

Property owners had greater success in preventing observation of their houses and grounds by curious strangers and the public generally. In 1867, for example, a plaintiff invoked the law of nuisance to enjoin his neighbor from holding fetes attracting large crowds of people, some of whom sat on the walls of the plaintiff's grounds, "destroy[ing his] privacy." The lessor of a house on the Thames was granted compensation in 1872 for loss of privacy from the construction of a public road along the river bank. The law of trespass was extended in the last decade of the century to cover "unreasonable" user of the highway adjoining the plaintiff's land, an activity that encompassed observation of the plaintiff's activities on his own land. The criminal law supplemented these remedies with longstanding prohibitions against peeping Toms and eavesdroppers as well as against new offenses of "watching and besetting" aimed primarily at trade union picketers.

E. Confidential Communications

A second set of legal doctrines gave more sketchy protection to the privacy of letters, telegrams, and certain privileged conversations. One of these doctrines was grounded in the right of an author to forbid publication of manuscript works on grounds of "literary property." When this legal protection was extended to the writers of personal letters seeking to enjoin their publication by the recipients or by third parties, the grounds of property protection soon became a convenient fiction. In 1813, the decision of the Vice-Chancellor in Perceval v. Phipps recognized that "correspondence between friends, or relations, upon their private concerns ..., could be made public in a way, that must frequently be very injurious to the feelings of individuals," but expressed doubts that every private letter merited protection as a literary work. Lord Eldon, in his judgment in the 1818 case of Gee v. Pritchard, laid such doubts to rest by stating frankly that he did not forbid publication "because the letters are written in confidence, or because the publication of them may wound the feelings of the Plaintiff," but that he could do so on the ground of property in order
to prevent such "mischievous effects."

The principle stated in a dissenting judgment in 1769 had become the rule, that "every man has a right to keep his own sentiments" and "a right to judge whether he will make them public, or commit them only to the sight of his friends." In the ultimate formulation of the doctrine, a writer of a letter retained a property right in the words, while giving only a property right in the paper and ink to the recipient. By the beginning of the twentieth century the letter writer's property right was so easily identified with a privacy interest that one High Court judge, in upholding a 1905 judgment of 400 pounds against the publisher of a personal letter, admitted that "in cases of this kind the property in a thing like a letter may be mainly valuable because it gives the plaintiff the right to keep it private." Disclosure of private letters would only be allowed if it was necessary to vindicate an important interest of the recipient.

"One instance," an eighteenth century tract pointed out, "of the legislature's regard to the privacy of papers and correspondence" was the enactment in 1710 of a criminal penalty for unauthorized opening of letters in the post office. The nineteenth century courts stiffened the penalty by treating interception of letters in the mails as larceny. Rumors of systematic letter opening by government agents alarmed the English public in the mid-nineteenth century, though the subject did not come to the attention of the courts. An official inquiry revealed that the practice existed, but the issue of six or seven warrants annually was thought by the Select Committee of the Lords not to interfere with "the sanctity of private correspondence." As a result of the public outcry, one of the secret offices conducting such work was disbanded and in the other one, specific warrants from the Secretary of State were henceforth required.

Messages sent along telegraph wires, unlike letters in the mail, were necessarily read by the sending and receiving operators. Post office regulations imposed confidentiality requirements on telegraphers, as did statutes forbidding disclosure of the contents of any telegram. Subpoenas in civil suits ordering wholesale production of telegrams were refused in the 1870s on the basis that "the necessary confidence of a sender of a telegram in the Post Office
should not be violated." Later in the century, this legal protection of telegraph messages from unofficial interception was carried over to the newly invented telephone. Official interception remained possible, however, on the basis of the Secretary of State's authority to open letters.

Evidentiary privileges safeguarded the confidentiality of all communications, by whatever means conducted, when they took place within certain specific relationships. For example, it had long been "undoubted law, that attorneys ought to keep inviolably the secrets of their clients." This privilege, extending to any matter "in its nature private" communicated to an attorney by his client, was explained by Vice Chancellor Knight Bruce as follows:

[S]urely the meanness and mischief of prying into a man's confidential consultations with his legal advisor, the general evil of infusing reserve and dissimulation, uneasiness, and suspicion, and fear into those communications which must take place, and which, unless in a condition of perfect security, must take place uselessly or worse, are too great a price to pay for truth itself.

While the same legal protection did not extend to communications with doctors or clergymen, courts did recognize the public's expectations of confidentiality from these professionals, and judges expressed unwillingness to extract secrets from them on the witness stand.

One other relationship attained a protected status in nineteenth century common law. For the first half of the century, husbands and wives were not considered competent witnesses to testify for or against each other, even in civil cases. When statutes removed the absolute barrier to spousal testimony, a privilege remained for communications made confidentially between husband and wife. This "social policy" to hold marital confidences "sacred" was explained in an 1824 decision: "The happiness of the marriage state requires that the confidence between man and wife should be kept for ever inviolable." Jeremy Bentham, who fulminated against all evidentiary barriers to truthfinding, reserved particular scorn for this protection, but it was entrenched in the law.

In other contexts as well, nineteenth century courts sought to
minimize their interference with "the private affairs of the people" and their "domestic life."\textsuperscript{130} The doctrines of literary property in personal letters, sanctity of the mails, and evidentiary privilege, though variously grounded, combined to accord a limited protection for the communications deemed most deserving of confidentiality in the nineteenth century.

C. Personal Information

Nineteenth century English courts afforded only a precarious protection to intangible personal information but showed some of their greatest legal inventiveness when they did act to protect this privacy interest. As James Fitzjames Stephen wrote in 1873: "Privacy may be violated not only by the intrusion of a stranger, but by compelling or persuading a person to direct too much attention to his own feelings" and to "strip his soul stark naked for the inspection of any other."\textsuperscript{131} Personal secrets of past wrongdoing had long been protected from forced disclosure in court by the maxim nemo tenetur prodere seipsum.\textsuperscript{132} This privilege against self-incrimination, assured by statute since the seventeenth century,\textsuperscript{133} also extended to revelations that would lead to civil forfeiture.\textsuperscript{134} Judicial interpretations varied on the degree of likelihood of prosecution\textsuperscript{135} and the subjective or objective determination of its gravity,\textsuperscript{136} but the privilege remained secure. A related doctrine threw cases out of court when they needlessly introduced "indecent" evidence tending to injure a person's feelings.\textsuperscript{137}

With the onrushing complexity of nineteenth century industrial and commercial life, however, individuals gave up more and more sensitive personal information about themselves to governmental and private institutions.\textsuperscript{138} The census, for example, widened its inquiry (and thus had to overcome fresh public opposition) with each passing decade.\textsuperscript{139} Since customary local remedies against "gossiping" had long since vanished,\textsuperscript{140} the legal ramifications of this loss of individual control had to be worked out anew by the courts. An Englishman's banker, it was held, might be forced to disclose his exact financial status in court upon a proper and necessary inquiry,\textsuperscript{141} but the bank\textsuperscript{142} and its employees\textsuperscript{143} had a duty not to disclose such information to third parties.\textsuperscript{144}
Englishmen seeking damages for an offensive disclosure of personal details in print\textsuperscript{145} would look first to their remedies in defamation. The difficulty with civil actions for libel and slander, however, was that the truth of the matter published had become a complete defense.\textsuperscript{146} When the real cause of injury was an invasion of privacy, the truth of the matter disclosed was precisely its sting.\textsuperscript{147} The little-used criminal libel prosecution, by contrast, had as its watchword "the greater the truth, the greater the libel."\textsuperscript{148} Courts and juries sympathetic to privacy interests in civil libel actions could nevertheless look for inaccuracies of detail in an otherwise truthful account of the private character of a private individual\textsuperscript{149} and could interpret disclosures of personal information as "comment" that was not "privileged."\textsuperscript{150}

When an invasion of privacy could be prevented or contained, a court of equity's order to enjoin the invasion offered a means of judicial protection much more satisfying than that of libel damages after the fact. Plaintiffs seeking such relief for the disclosure of personal information had to surmount Chancery's unwillingness to issue injunctions except in protection of property.\textsuperscript{151} The first assault on this jurisdictional barrier to effective privacy relief expanded the concept of property to include privacy interests. Judicial solicitude for the sensibilities of the Queen and her Prince Consort provided the occasion when a Mr. Strange offered the public a catalogue describing the amateur artistic efforts of the royal couple. In \textit{Albert v. Strange},\textsuperscript{152} the Solicitor General asked the court to find that the defendant had abstracted "one attribute of property, which was often its most valuable quality, namely, privacy,"\textsuperscript{153} and Vice Chancellor Knight Bruce issued the injunction against what he called "sordid spying into the privacy of domestic life."\textsuperscript{154} On appeal, Lord Chancellor Cottenham also said that privacy was the right invaded, though property was the basis of relief.\textsuperscript{155} Chancery's rule limiting injunctions to protection of property led a later vice-chancellor to find property in land, goods, business, skill, and "even in a man's good name."\textsuperscript{156}

Toward the end of the century, Chancery's rule was circumvented in other ways to affirm privacy interests. In \textit{Pollard v. Photographic Co.}, an 1888 case, a woman whose photographic portrait was exhibited for sale by the photographer obtained an injunction on two grounds:
breach of an implied term in the photographer's contract and abuse of the confidence placed in him by his customer. In the 1894 case of Monson v. Tussauds, Ltd., a man acquitted of murder succeeded in having an effigy of himself removed from a London waxwork exhibition on the basis of defamation. Two of the judges in the latter case delivered denunciations of the practices of exhibitors and newspaper journalists in portraying truthful incidents of private life. Unless some prior relationship of the parties or defamatory innuendo could be shown, however, publication of a person's likeness or description would not give rise to an injunction at the end of the nineteenth century. The legal regime in place by 1900 -- piecemeal protection of acknowledged privacy interests through a variety of other legal doctrines -- was to remain largely unchanged in England until the second half of the twentieth century.
IV. OTHER ROUTES TO RECOGNITION

A. Statutory Proposals

In 1961, thirty years after Percy Winfield had urged the courts to recognize a right to privacy, Gerald Dworkin remarked in the pages of the Modern Law Review that in default of judicial creativity, legislation was the only avenue open. Thus began nearly two decades of Parliamentary temporizing and judicial buck-passing. The first comprehensive legislative proposal on the subject, Lord Mancroft’s Right of Privacy Bill, was introduced in the House of Lords in March of that year. It provided a remedy against publication without consent of a plaintiff’s personal affairs or conduct unless the defendant established one of a number of defenses, including “reasonable public interest” in the publication. Though the newspapers bitterly fought the measure, focusing their attack on its “reasonable public interest” standard, Lord Goddard (a former Chief Justice) and Lord Denning supported the bill, and a strong majority of the Lords sent it on to a Second Reading. The Lord Chancellor, however, thought the subject unsuitable for legislation, and without the Government’s support it died in Committee. It is worth remarking that in the debate on Lord Mancroft’s bill, both Lord Denning and Lord Chancellor Kilmuir expressed their confidence that judicial recognition of an action for infringement of privacy was not far off.

The next flurry of legislative interest arose in 1967, sparked by Alexander Lyon’s Right of Privacy Bill establishing an action against unreasonable and serious interference with the seclusion of an individual, his family, or his property, subject again to several defenses. This proposal also drew heavy opposition from the press and founderered for want of Government support. Later that year, the Law Commission held a high-level seminar on privacy legislation but withdrew from the field in expectation of a parliamentary committee. Also in 1967, following a conference of the International Commission of Jurists, “Justice,” the British section of that body, embarked on a long-term study of the privacy issue. Succeeding years saw a number of bills introduced to deal with one or another aspect of privacy invasion, all of them
unsuccessful. Justice emerged with a draft bill in 1969, and with slight changes this was put forward by Brian Walden as a Right of Privacy Bill in 1969.

The Walden bill defined an inclusive "right of privacy" and a "right of action for infringement of privacy" subject as always to certain definite defenses. It attracted such wide support that, despite predictable press hostility, the Home Secretary only averted a Second Reading by promising to set up a Government committee to consider legislation. This Committee, chaired by Sir Kenneth Younger and charged to consider only non-governmental incursions on privacy, labored for two years and made its report in 1972. The Committee members, with two dissents, came out against a general right to privacy. The scheme of parliamentary enactment of comprehensive privacy legislation proposed by Dworkin in 1961 was discredited. Even the Younger Committee's minor recommendations for new criminal offenses have not been enacted. The committee's suggestions for voluntary self-regulation, including an increased lay presence on the Press Council, and complaint procedures in the broadcasting authorities, have had more effect, but comprehensive privacy legislation has not appeared likely since the 1972 report.

Issues of governmental intrusion on personal privacy, a matter beyond the scope of the Younger Committee's report, have since been drawn to Parliament's attention. When the question of official wiretapping was raised in 1979, a White Paper was prepared on the subject but the Government remained opposed to any legislation altering current practices. Interest in proposed "freedom of information" legislation has sparked consideration of what privacy exceptions such enactments would require, again with no tangible result as yet. Parliament has shown more willingness to consider codes of protection for personal information in public and private data banks, no doubt in response to pressure from other European nations. Two reports in 1975 and one in 1978 have addressed the problem, recommending establishment of a permanent Data Protection Authority. In 1981, the Thatcher Government promised a bill to establish clear rules for collection of and access to computer records on individuals, but it has not been forthcoming.

Although the drive for explicit and comprehensive privacy legislation has failed, Parliament did enact, in a piecemeal and
incidental fashion, a number of privacy protections of limited scope. Unofficial mail-opening and disclosure of the contents of telegrams have long been offenses, and it is possible to piece together statutory prohibitions against most methods of wiretapping and bugging. Many statutes, including the Official Secrets Act, make civil servants' disclosures of information obtained in confidence in the course of duty an offense. Beginning in the 1920s, statutes have begun to exclude the press from court proceedings in divorce, wardship, and other highly sensitive matters. Also by statute, fingerprints of arrested minors under the age of fourteen are not recorded, and fingerprint records of acquitted adult defendants are destroyed. The Copyright Act has added a remedy for false attribution of authorship, and television broadcasting authorities have been required to delete programs offensively representing any living person. More recently, Parliament has prohibited intrusive "harrassment" of tenants by landlords, of debtors by creditors, and of any person by means of obscene and menacing telephone calls and unsolicited obscene publications. In the mid-1970s major statutory protections have been the Consumer Credit Act of 1974 providing individuals with access and opportunities to correct credit information compiled on them, the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act imposing criminal and civil penalties on disclosure of spent convictions, and the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act of 1976 securing the anonymity of rape victims and defendants. The parliamentary contribution remains small, however, and the legislative momentum appears to have been lost to the courts.

B. International Protection of Human Rights

British jurists, notably Sir Hersch Lauterpacht, played an important role in the drafting and adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. Among the broad and ambiguous statements of principle in the Declaration, Article 12 provides: "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence . . . . Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference . . . ." Despite the Declaration's unanimous adoption, and despite subsequent resolutions calling upon
states to "fully and faithfully observe" its provisions, its status as a norm of international law has long been doubted. Some enforcement apparatus was created by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, opened for signature in 1966 and brought into force ten years later. Article 17 of the Covenant repeats the Universal Declaration provision on privacy, adding the qualification that interference is only a violation if "unlawful" as well as arbitrary. Parties to the International Covenant, of which the United Kingdom is one, oblige themselves "to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction" all of the rights enumerated and "to adopt such legislative or other measures as may be necessary to give effect" to them. The British Government has denied, however, that any such legislation on its part is necessary, pointing to "safeguards of different kinds, operating in the various legal systems, independently of the Covenant but in full conformity to it." Human rights agreements of world-wide scope have not provided any impetus for the recognition of a right to privacy in English law.

By contrast, the European Convention on Human Rights of 1950 has shown much greater promise. Article 8(1) of the Convention states a general and unqualified right to privacy: "Everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence." The Article goes on to provide that "[t]here shall be no interference by a public authority with the exercise of this right" and adds several qualifications: except such as is in accordance with the law and is necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the right and freedoms of others.

The United Kingdom, as a signatory, is obliged to "secure to everyone within [its] jurisdiction" all the rights defined by the Convention, but the Government makes no specific undertaking to enact such rights or to give the Convention the force of law. In a report to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, the British
Government dealt with Article 8 by stating: "Any power a public authority may have to interfere with a person's right to respect for private and family life, his home and his correspondence must be provided by law." Current interpretation of Article 8 to provide a right against nongovernmental as well as governmental interferences renders such an answer inadequate and promises at least continued consideration of legal protection of privacy by the English domestic courts.

It is standard constitutional doctrine in England that international treaties do not have the effect of domestic law, and the European Convention is no exception to this doctrine. Thus, the Convention provides no basis for bringing an action at law in England. At one time, the courts began to admonish government officials to "bear in mind" the Convention's principles including Article 8's right to respect for family life. Soon, however, the courts cut back on this application of the Convention, on the grounds that Article 8 was "so wide as to be incapable of practical application" to administrative practices. Though the English courts have interpreted other broadly drafted international conventions more flexibly and freely, the Convention's sweeping pronouncements are themselves considered incapable of judicial interpretation and only grudgingly adverted to as guides to the interpretation of domestic statutes. Like the official pronouncements of the Government to the Council of Europe, judicial decisions tend to assume that existing law adequately protects all the rights mentioned in the European convention.

The European Convention does operate of its own force in actions brought directly in the European Court of Justice in Luxemburg. Thus, in 1980 an English company brought before the European Court, albeit unsuccessfully, an action against European Commission inspectors for their surprise search of its office premises and records. The jurisdictional ambit within which such suits can be brought is very limited. The United Kingdom has, in addition, signed the Optional Clause to the 1950 Convention giving its subjects the right to petition directly to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. Although this too provides a route for privacy protection, the administrative obstacles facing a petitioner are truly formidable. Even so, opportunities for adjudication of
privacy claims under Article 8 of the Convention in these international tribunals may have the indirect effect of spurring the creation of domestic remedies to forestall unfavorable world publicity. 247

International pressure of a different sort has recently been put on Britain to catch up with other European Community members in explicit protection of individual privacy. Western European nations with high levels of privacy protection for personal information contained in public and private computer data banks within their borders have threatened to refuse to allow transmission of such information to countries without such safeguards. 248 In response, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has formulated Guidelines on the Protection of Privacy and Transborder Flows of Personal Data, 249 and the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has adopted a Convention for the Protection of Individuals with Regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data. 250 The Data Convention imposes restrictions on the gathering of personal information for automated processing and a right of individual access to automated files; signatories to the Data Convention could refuse to transmit information about an individual's race, politics, religion, sexual life, or criminal convictions to a country whose domestic law lacked "appropriate safeguards." 251 Britain signed the new convention in 1981 252 but has failed to implement it domestically; in the absence of legislation, this highly technical area provides little incentive for judicial innovation.
V. RECENT JUDICIAL INITIATIVES

A. Private Property

In the twentieth century, the Englishman's castle is not the potent symbol of individualism and self-reliance it had once been. The use of violence to ward off public and private invasions of the domestic castle has been closely circumscribed by codification of the criminal law of self-defense. At the same time, legislation has authorized many new penetrations of the family home by national and local authorities for various purposes: to check water and electricity usage, to monitor television licenses, and so forth. New restrictions on the individual owner's use of property have also multiplied with more crowded conditions and the increased role of the state. Nevertheless, the twentieth century has seen a great willingness on the part of the courts to recognize and protect an interest in privacy -- more recently denominated a fundamental right to privacy -- in a number of contexts.

While landowners have continued to complain about overlooking by neighbors, the unwillingness of the nineteenth century courts to find implied covenants of privacy remained in force until the 1950s. Since then, the question has arisen in the Lands Tribunal under statutory authority to discharge or modify restrictive covenants. In that forum, objectors have frequently been able to keep covenants in force on the grounds that loss of privacy would result from the modification. Moreover, court action has successfully challenged a public promenade that would overlook hitherto private estates. The actions of the Lands Tribunal have in effect reversed the earlier judicial attitude of ignoring privacy interests, while at the same time the privacy of neighboring landowners has become a consideration guiding local authorities in their grants of planning permission.

Intrusions by strangers falling short of physical trespass have twice failed to elicit injunctive relief from the English courts in the past decade. The claim of invasion of privacy was central to the plaintiff's argument in Bernstein v. Skyviews & General Ltd. in 1977. Lord Bernstein of Leigh brought an action for damages for trespass and injunctive relief when photographs of his country estate
were taken by the defendants' airplane flying over his property. Mr. Justice Griffith found the single overflight to be neither a trespass nor a nuisance, though he recognized that "constant surveillance" of a plaintiff's house from above would be a "monstrous invasion of privacy" for which a court might well grant relief. The privacy claim was more incidental in the "cricket case," Miller v. Jackson, decided by the Court of Appeals in the same year. Landowners adjoining a playing field sought an injunction against the local cricket club when, season after season, a few long drives would invariably send cricket balls flying into their garden, threatening damage and necessitating retrieval by the players. Though damages would have been awarded on grounds of negligence and nuisance, the injunction was not issued because, as Lord Denning put it, the plaintiff's private interest "in securing the privacy of his home and garden" was outweighed by the public interest in preserving the institution of village cricket. Privacy has not found a place among actionable nuisances, at least when injunctive relief is sought.

Since 1921, the English courts have narrowly construed police powers of entry, search, and seizure in the interest of "the privacy of the Englishman's dwelling house." As Lord Denning announced in Ghani v. Jones in 1970, the requirement of reasonable grounds for searches and seizures was based on the principle that the individual's "privacy and his possessions are not to be invaded except for the most compelling reasons." Alongside the line of decisions following Ghani v. Jones, another series of cases has invoked the privacy interest to forbid any official search whatever under statutes not explicitly allowing entry into homes. As most recently stated, "Parliament should not be presumed to have authorized any greater invasion of privacy than was expressly sanctioned."

Recent decisions in the House of Lords have developed each of these lines of authority with explicit reference to the right to privacy. In Inland Revenue Commissioners v. Rossmiriner Ltd., although the judgment reversed a Court of Appeal decision holding a broad search of documents unlawful, Lords Wilberforce and Scarman in the majority and Lord Salmon in dissent all appealed to the citizen's "right to privacy," an important "human right" limiting the state's power of search into homes, offices, and papers. Morris v. Beardmore construed sections 8 and 9 of the Road Traffic Act 1972
to forbid intrusion into the home but to allow the trial judge discretion in excluding evidence so obtained. Lord Edmund-Davies, Lord Keith of Kinkel, Lord Scarman, and Lord Roskill all made mention of the right, Lord Scarman describing it as "fundamental" both in the common law and under the European Convention. In the Rossminster decision, moreover, the Law Lords explicitly charged the courts with enforcing this right to privacy against police searches.

A new threat to the privacy of private property, the "Anton Piller" order, has made the surprise tactics of police search and seizure available to plaintiffs in civil suits, on a showing that evidence in a defendant's possession is likely to be destroyed if subpoenaed by regular means. The procedure traces its origin to Chancery's circumvention of the householders' protection in Somayne's Case. Invasion of the defendant's privacy was a concern expressed in one of the first Anton Piller cases. This concern has surfaced again in two 1980 decisions, one of them grounded explicitly on the "rights of privacy" and on the maxim that "an Englishman's home is his castle."

B. Confidential Communication

The security of communications by letter, telegram, and telephone from official and unofficial interception remains a subject of concern in England. Although criminal prosecutions and damage actions have succeeded against detectives for unofficial acts of wiretapping, courts have held admissible evidence obtained by tapping and by other forms of electronic eavesdropping. In the 1979 Malone decision, Vice Chancellor Megarry rejected a challenge to police wiretapping based on an asserted right to privacy, but he held out the possibility of judicial recognition of such a right against unofficial interception. Megarry's opinion also suggested that future scrutiny of England's official wiretapping practices may well proceed under the European Convention.

Evidentiary privileges have been supplemented by new legal protections for communications made in judicial proceedings. Court-ordered discovery creates obligations of confidentiality on the basis of a "public interest in preserving privacy," announced by Lord Denning in Riddick v. Thames Board Mills, a 1977 decision. This
principle has prevented the use of discovered information in other suits against the party making discovery and has provided limitations on the scope of discovery. Most recently, in Harman v. Secretary of State for the Home Department, the House of Lords upheld a Court of Appeal decision in which Lord Denning elevated the "public interest" of the Riddick case to "one of our fundamental human rights" and Lord Justice Templeman joined him in an appeal to this "right to privacy." Discovery, said Lord Blank, "involves invasion of an otherwise absolute right to privacy," but neither this supposed right nor a "right to freedom of information" could be rigidly applied in this area. Just as communications between client and attorney earned legal protection because of their central importance to the conduct of litigation, documents made available to the opposing party in litigation now bear strict safeguards formulated explicitly in privacy terms.

Two attempts in the mid-1970s to restrain the publication of matters disclosed in the privacy of wardship proceedings failed to win over the Court of Appeal, although one of them did provoke Lord Denning to express the need for a "general remedy for infringement of privacy." Suits for breach of confidence, relying on Albert v. Strange and the trade secret cases, have met with more success in preventing public disclosure of communications made confidentially. A pair of cases on public relations employees disclosing information about their principals in breach of confidence show the close relation of this new action to privacy interests. In one case, the injunction was refused on the ground that the publicity-seeking plaintiffs "were in no position to complain of an invasion of their privacy" by the defendants' disclosures. In the other decision, that "fundamental human right," the "right of privacy," outweighed the right of the press to keep the public informed, and the injunction issued.

The action for breach of confidence extends to intimate details of domestic affairs as well as commercial secrets. It prevents disclosure not only by those in whom the confidence has been reposed but also by third parties who acquire the sensitive information. In the twentieth century counterpart to Albert v. Strange, the Duke of Argyll was restrained from publishing details of his divorce proceeding, including his estranged wife's private diary.
Ungoed-Thomas, in issuing the injunction, quoted Lord Cottenham’s 1849 pronouncement that "privacy is the right invaded." Argyll v. Argyll sums up the legal protection of confidential communications in England: the property interest of the writer in sentiments confided to paper, the implied bond of confidentiality in the marital relationship, the limitations on testimony and documents discovered in judicial proceedings, and the privacy interest at the heart of the action of breach of confidence.
C. Personal Information

Collection, storage, and use of sensitive personal information in public and private organizations has accelerated in twentieth century England,\(^{310}\) and with it has increased the level of privacy concerns reaching the courts. As government's information demands have multiplied, fears of gossip by local enumerators\(^{311}\) have given way to court challenges directed against the entire regime of data collection.\(^{312}\) The potential for unauthorized access to recorded information about individuals was highlighted in *Director of Public Prosecutions v. Withers*, an unsuccessful prosecution of a detective agency for "conspiracy ... to invade privacy" by impersonating bank officers to obtain confidential financial reports.\(^{313}\) More recently, again in the name of privacy, courts have protected bank records from government "fishing expeditions" of various kinds.\(^{314}\) But the impact of the courts on public and private recordkeeping practices has on the whole been negligible.\(^{315}\)

English courts have made more of an effort to minimize the intrusions on privacy caused by their own proceedings, thus adding to the small arsenal of legal protections for personal information. For example, a strong showing of necessity must be made to justify invasions of a party's privacy by medical examinations,\(^{316}\) body searches,\(^{317}\) and blood tests.\(^{318}\) Litigants are also given some protection through requirements of confidentiality in wardship\(^{319}\) and divorce cases,\(^{320}\) as well as for documents disclosed in discovery. Moreover, in a number of recent cases, courts have acted to prevent disclosure of the private affairs of non-parties. On grounds of privacy protection, courts have refused to compel the parents of divorcing spouses to disclose the testamentary provisions they have made\(^{322}\) and have refused to order disclosure of confidential employee records in employment discrimination suits.\(^{323}\) Likewise, they have sought to prevent "jury vetting," the collection of official record information about members of jury panels by prosecution and defense lawyers, again in the name of the jurymen's "right of privacy."\(^{324}\) Most recently, the Court of Appeals has applied the "individual's right to privacy" in limiting statutory powers to inspect individual bank accounts of non-parties for litigation purposes.\(^{325}\)

Having put its own house in order, the English judiciary remains
reluctant to enforce broad privacy protections against the press. The House of Lords rejected an explicit privacy remedy against the press in Tolley v. Fry,\textsuperscript{326} and since that decision actions for damages on the explicit ground of privacy have not been successful,\textsuperscript{327} although the courts have on occasion upheld awards of damages for the publication of truthful information about private persons and of photographs.\textsuperscript{328} There remains hope, however, for judicial creativity in this area as well. In the 1980 case of British Steel Corp. v. Granada Television Ltd.,\textsuperscript{329} Lord Denning assumed the availability of a privacy tort against the excesses of irresponsible "investigative journalism";\textsuperscript{330}

[T]he plaintiff has his remedy in damages against the newspaper -- or sometimes an injunction; and that should suffice. It may be for libel. It may be for breach of copyright. It may be for infringement of privacy. The courts will always be ready to grant an injunction to restrain a publication which is an infringement of privacy.

Led by Lord Denning, the English courts from highest to lowest have expressed in recent years a willingness to speak of the right to privacy, and in the appropriate case to give it force, even when this nascent right comes into conflict with existing rights to free expression and the vested interest of a powerful press.
VI. ANALYTICAL AND COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW

A. The Scope of the Right

How far have the English courts taken their fledgling right to privacy? In a dozen or so reported decisions, all within the last three years, English judges have explicitly invoked such a right, though without indicating any intention of creating a new legal right of action in. \(331\) The House of Lords has made three such pronouncements. First, through the power of the courts to hold searches and seizures unlawful, the right to privacy prevents abuses of statutory powers of search by government officers.\(332\) Second, as a tool of statutory construction, the right forbids government officers to force their way into private homes without explicit authorization of an Act of Parliament and further gives judicial discretion (at least in some circumstances) to exclude evidence obtained in an unauthorized entry.\(333\) Third, in the context of civil litigation, the right limits a party’s use of documents obtained through discovery, making wider disclosure of such documents a contempt of court.\(334\) In the Court of Appeal, the right to privacy has grounded even more restrictive constructions of statutory powers of search,\(335\) as well as injunctions against the publication of information obtained in confidence,\(336\) and refusals by the court itself to assist litigants in obtaining criminal records of jury members\(337\) and bank records of other nonparties.\(338\) In the Chancery Division, the right has occasioned refusal to order surprise searches of defendants’ premises in civil cases,\(339\) and in the Queen’s Bench Division it has struck down police regulations on body searches of arrested persons.\(340\)

Finally, in dicta of the Court of Appeal quoted with approval in the House of Lords, some English judges have assumed the existence of a remedy for infringement of privacy by publication of confidential information.\(341\) This judicial recognition of a right to privacy in a broad range of contexts, the culmination of a decade or more of decisions focusing explicitly on privacy interests,\(342\) delineates the present scope of a healthy, exuberant new branch of English common law. Privacy law, no longer the piecemeal and incidental by-product of other doctrines, has finally come into its own.

Needless to say, the Englishman’s right to privacy is not
absolute. It remains in conflict with other rights, values, and interests. The cases recognizing the right show this inherent tension. One countervailing consideration is "the interest which the public has in preventing evasions of the law," phrased more particularly in these cases as "the public interest in the detection and punishment of tax frauds" and "its desire to stamp out drunken driving." Another interest limiting privacy in civil litigation is "the public interest in discovering the truth so that justice may be done between the parties." Finally, there is of course the "freedom of expression" embodied in "the right of the press to inform the public, and the corresponding right of the public to be properly informed." It is in conflict with this lattermost right, the robust freedom of the English press, that the right to privacy shows its true vigor and promise. Its victories over interests in effective law enforcement and in the courtroom search for truth would not be nearly so impressive if the right to privacy did not also prevail occasionally over the well-guarded liberty of the press.

On first sight, the litigants who have won for the Englishman his right to privacy appear to be an unlikely assortment of characters. Just as the principal beneficiaries of an explicit right to privacy in the nineteenth century were the royal family, it would seem fair to say that the rights most often vindicated by the recent cases have been those of limited companies and governmental entities. An international drug company, a nationalized industry, and the Home Office have joined the householder, the individual shopkeeper, and the disorderly conduct defendant as successful contenders for a right to privacy. Perhaps these vast institutions could better absorb the legal costs for what must have appeared at the outset of their cases an almost hopeless line of argument. Perhaps the courts have simply seized upon the first cases to come before them in which the right could be recognized. The language of all the decisions, at any rate, consistently treats privacy as a "human" right, one belonging to the "individual." Thus, in a case involving the search of a company's offices, Lords Wilberforce, Scarman, and Salmon were all careful to invoke the individual citizen's right to privacy in his own home, an important and basic human right. Despite the character of the litigants so far successful in asserting this right in the courts, it is evident that the English judiciary are
keeping the central focus of the nascent right to privacy on the individual Englishman, his home, and his private life.

E. Sources of the Right

What influence has the American right to privacy had on its English counterpart? American privacy cases are discussed only rarely in the opinions, when counsel are willing to cite them and judges to consider them. Vice Chancellor Megarry, for instance, gave extensive consideration to leading American cases on wiretapping in his rejection of a privacy argument in the *Malone* decision.¹³⁵⁸ Lord Denning, in his Court of Appeal decision in *British Steel Corp. v. Granada Television Ltd.*,¹³⁵⁹ brought many American decisions on privacy and the press to the attention of the House of Lords. The Law Lords had earlier adopted the privacy language of a New Jersey case on the legality of compulsory blood testing.¹³⁶⁰ Most recently, in the 1982 *Harman* decision, Lord Scarman referred to American cases balancing the confidentiality of discovered documents and the freedom of the press.¹³⁶¹ By and large, however, the American law of privacy informs the English debate only indirectly, as a background presence not fully understood in detail but felt nevertheless to lend some credibility to claims of legal protection for privacy in England.

Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights¹³⁶² has likewise played only an indirect role in the formulation of an English right to privacy. In the *Malone* decision, Megarry weighed and rejected an argument from the European Convention.¹³⁶³ Lord Denning, on the other hand, referred to Article 8 of the Convention in *Schering Chemicals Ltd. v. Falkman Ltd.*, in support of the contention that the right to privacy is a "fundamental human right,"¹³⁶⁴ as did Lord Scarman in *Morris v. Beardmore.*¹³⁶⁵ Terming a right "fundamental," Scarman admitted, "has an unfamiliar ring in the ears of common lawyers,"¹³⁶⁶ but the language of fundamental human rights is frequently encountered in recent English decisions on privacy. The European Convention is a background force, an international legal norm of uncertain weight and uncertain scope. Its promise of an external forum for privacy claims rejected by the English courts¹³⁶⁷ does, however, provide an extra spur to recognition of the new right that the American example can never supply.
Ultimately, as Lord Scarman noted in the 1982 Harman decision, "neither American law nor the European Convention can be decisive . . ., but both are powerfully persuasive -- the Convention because its observance is an obligation of the United Kingdom, and American law because of its common law character" -- yet each of these sources, he added, "reinforces conclusions which we draw independently from our own legal principles." The common law of England has itself given birth to the right to privacy. Authority for limiting the intrusions of the state has been found in the strongly-worded judgments of the Court of Common Pleas in the eighteenth century cases striking down general search warrants, principally Entick v. Carrington. Authority for limiting the inroads of the press and other unofficial intruders has been found in Albert v. Strange. When neither of these precedents seems appropriate, the courts are thrown back on the still vigorous maxim "an Englishman's house is his castle." All this is not to say that the right must have some constitutional force of its own. In all the recent cases applying a right to privacy, English judges have not been embarrassed by the constitutional difficulties encountered by proponents of a Bill of Rights. Their privacy protections extend to civil actions, limitations on their own court procedures, and construction of statutes, but not to abrogation of statutes altogether. Even so, members of the House of Lords have had considerable experience with constitutional rights to privacy. In their role as judges of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the Law Lords have on many occasions had to interpret written constitutions of commonwealth members guaranteeing a right to privacy. The English courts, as comparative latecomers to privacy law, have an abundance of sources upon which to draw.

B. Privacy in Other English-Language Jurisdictions

A quick review of the extent of privacy protection in other English-speaking countries will show that England's recognition of a right to privacy has, by comparison, come very late indeed. Scottish decisions since the nineteenth century have gone beyond the English cases toward recognizing an explicit right of action for invasions of privacy. In addition to warrantless searches and the activities of peeping Toms, police surveillance of a dwelling-house without
probable cause has been considered to give rise to a cause of action.\textsuperscript{376} Scottish courts based their refusal to allow publication of private letters on the grounds of injury to reputation and to feelings rather than on the property grounds maintained by English courts\textsuperscript{377} and awarded damages for breach of an "obligation to secrecy" against a doctor who divulged intimate medical information.\textsuperscript{378} Scottish law carried privacy protection furthest in opposition to press intrusions, settling by the mid-nineteenth century that damages could be awarded for publications of truthful information about "some old and generally forgotten immoral act or act of impropriety"\textsuperscript{379} or "some physical deformity or secret defect."\textsuperscript{380} Personal ridicule was only allowed, according to one Scottish judge, "so long as the privacy of domestic life is not invaded."\textsuperscript{381} In a 1916 decision of the House of Lords interpreting Scottish law, Lord Chancellor Haldane invoked "the right of a private individual to have his character respected" and reminded the press that "people should not as private persons be exposed to unjustifiable and arbitrary comment."\textsuperscript{382} These cases proceed on the broad principle of the actio injuriarum, which affords remedies for affronts to reputation, honor, and feelings.\textsuperscript{383} Privacy has fit well within this scheme of values in Scottish law.

In Canada, experimentation with privacy remedies at the provincial level has led to growing acceptance of a right to privacy nationwide.\textsuperscript{384} Quebec has extended its version of the civil law actio injuriarum to invasions of privacy\textsuperscript{385} and Ontario\textsuperscript{386} and Alberta\textsuperscript{387} have allowed damage actions and injunctive relief based on a right to privacy. Three provinces, British Columbia,\textsuperscript{388} Manitoba\textsuperscript{389} and Saskatchewan\textsuperscript{390} have enacted statutes making willful violation of privacy a tort. Under these statutes, the Canadian courts have begun to work out the scope of the new statutory right.\textsuperscript{391} The federal legislature has made wiretapping and electronic eavesdropping criminal offenses under a 1973 Protection of Privacy Act.\textsuperscript{392} The federal statute applies to official interceptions, rendering them unlawful and inadmissible in evidence unless specifically authorized by a judge applying very narrow criteria of overriding public interest.\textsuperscript{393} The Act further provides that punitive damages may be awarded to the victim of an unlawful interception.\textsuperscript{394} As one recent commentator has concluded, "Although many provinces lack general privacy legislation, the combined effect of the extant common law, and provincial and
federal legislation, grants Canadians a fair measure" of privacy protection, "perhaps as great as the United States" where the common law right to privacy originated.395

The Australian High Court rejected a right to privacy in 1937. The decision in Victoria Park Racing & Recreation Grounds Co. Ltd. v. Taylor refused relief to a racetrack owner whose races were being watched, reported, and broadcast to the public from a platform on the neighboring defendant's land.396 Prior to this decision, Australian courts had indirectly come closer to privacy protection than their English counterparts, by providing that truthful publications could be found defamatory if they were not for the "public benefit."397 Since 1937, Australian courts have given recognition to privacy interests against peeping Toms,398 eavesdroppers,399 and wiretappers,400 but most of the recent developments have been on the legislative front. In the past three years, the Australian Law Reform Commission has pressed forward with proposals for statutory rights of action for invasions of privacy by publication of "sensitive private facts" concerning the plaintiff,401 by intrusion into or secret surveillance of a plaintiff's home,402 and by breach of privacy safeguards in personal information systems.403 Some states have already enacted privacy protections,404 but much will depend upon the vigor with which the Australian Law Reform Commission pursues its mission.405

Among other commonwealth and common-law jurisdictions, South Africa was early to recognize a right to privacy.406 Like Scotland, it had long interpreted its actio injuriarum to remedy, for example, shadowing of the plaintiff by a private detective.407 Several cases in the 1950s, all involving photographs of the plaintiffs published to accompany newspaper gossip-column material, held that invasions of "the right of the plaintiff to personal privacy" constituted an

injuria.408 English judges in British India gained familiarity with a "customary right of privacy" necessitated by religious rules about the seclusion of women.409 More recently, the Supreme Court of India, with a nod to the American case of Griswold v. Connecticut,410 has held that "the right to personal liberty, the right to move freely throughout the territory of India and the freedom of speech create an independent right to privacy as an emanation from them," though this right found in their "penumbral zones" is subject to restrictions in the public interest."411
inheritor of the English common law, have recently held that "since privacy is as important to protect as peoples [sic] other property in the light of the zeitgeist there is nothing as a matter of principle to hinder us from receiving the American concept as to the invasion of privacy." So forthright a judicial recognition could hardly be expected from the English courts, but the comparison once again is instructive.
VI. CONCLUSION

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, tort law came into its own as a doctrinal category of the common law. It was the synthesis of a number of disparate actions, with a general principle of negligence informing most of its applications. This development of tort law has since been explained as the necessary response of the legal system to threats to life, limb, and property brought on by the mechanical inventions of the industrial revolution. Of course, developments in the realm of legal thought also played a part in the emergence of a general theory of tort law. Once the subject had come into being through a conjunction of material forces, human motives, and legal ideas, it took on a life of its own, working a powerful transformation on the ways the law is conceived, taught, and practiced.

Privacy law is a new doctrinal category in the making. In England and elsewhere, it is coming to be perceived as a unified body of rules determining the boundaries we may rely upon to keep out an intrusive world. Privacy law recognizes that ours is not a world of hermits. Much privacy is freely waived, and much is traded for benefits of other kinds. Nevertheless, some privacy is retained by those who do not thrust themselves into the public eye, and courts are more and more willing to recognize that that retained minimum of personal privacy gives rise to legal obligations on the part of those who would intrude upon it.

Like the law of torts, privacy law has arisen in part as a response to new inventions and modes of organization. If tort law was the product of the industrial revolution, privacy is the result of a communications and information revolution. Photography, microphones, telephones, and computers have all increased our vulnerability to unwanted intrusion without erasing our expectations of privacy, confidentiality, and security. Legislative proposals in England and legislation elsewhere have tended to focus on the new machines themselves, while the courts, viewing problems on a case-by-case basis, have reminded us of the human motives giving rise to privacy invasion and privacy protection. These motives do not seem to have changed very much as new ways of creating, transmitting, and storing information have replaced the handwritten letter and the
manila file folder.

New legal ideas also contribute to the growing importance of privacy in the courts. The language of human rights permeates legal discourse from the international level to the confines of the family. Everybody has rights, and privacy is one of the fundamental human rights gaining widespread acceptance. Critics of the right to privacy point out its "newness," but as this paper has shown, the common law roots of the right run deep in the realms of private property and confidential communications. By recognizing a unified law of privacy, the courts can gradually develop and define the newly-important boundaries around the private life in these realms and the realm of personal information. The requirement of a search warrant can be rendered more effective if the police are not permitted to join peeping Toms at the window sill. The exclusion of marital confidences in testimony can be extended to a privilege against their disclosure through eavesdroppers and intercepted letters. The action for breach of confidence can be made strengthened by establishing that the press, in publishing such confidences, is not completely immune to restraint. The right to privacy, now a fixture of English law, will prove fruitful for decades to come.
NOTES

1 An opinion survey ranking privacy concerns most important among "social issues" (including race and sex discrimination, free speech and free press) was conducted in 1971 for the Younger Committee. See REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PRIVACY app. E, at 230 (Cmd. 5012, 1972) (Sir Kenneth Younger, Chairman) [hereinafter cited as YOUNGER COMMITTEE]. For more impressionistic accounts from the past, see, e.g., J. GLOAG, THE ENGLISHMAN'S CASTLE 4 (1944); Aide, English Criticism of American Society, 8 OUR DAY 94, 101 (1891); Cobbe, The Love of Notoriety, 8 FORUM 170, 174-75 (1889); Thomas, An Englishman's Castle, 4 HOUSEHOLD WORDS 321, 323 (1851); The English, the Scots, and the Irish, EUR. REV., Oct. 1824, at 63. One social historian has identified the 17th and 18th centuries as the period of greatest advance in privacy interests at all levels of society. See L. STONE, THE FAMILY, SEX, AND MARRIAGE IN ENGLAND, 1500 - 1800 at 255-57, 395 (1977). See also A. Westin, Privacy in Western History 153 (May 1965) (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation on file at Harvard University Archives) (social origins of 17th century legal developments).

3See, e.g., Developments in the Law -- The Interpretation of State Constitutional Rights, 95 Harv. L. Rev. 1324, 1430-44 (1982) (ambit of privacy protection in state courts); pages 7-8 infra.


introduced, 787 id. at 1519 (1969); pages 25-26 infra.

10 See, e.g., Griswold v. Connecticut, 381 U.S. 479 (1965)
(recognizing a "penumbral" constitutional right to privacy); Pavesich v.
New England Life Ins. Co., 122 Ga. 190, 50 S.E. 68 (1905) (recognizing a
common law right to privacy in tort).

11 See, e.g., Harman v. Secretary of State for the Home Dep't, [1982]
1 All E.R. 532, __, __, [1982] 2 W.L.R. 338, __, __ (H.L.) (opinions
of Lord Roskill, & of Lord Scarman dissenting), dismissing appeal from
283, 294, 296-97, 298 (1980) (opinions of Lord Keith, Lord Scarman, &
Lord Roskill); Inland Revenue Commissioners v. Rossminster Ltd., [1980]
2 W.L.R. 1, 36, 56, 59 (1979) (opinions of Lord Wilberforce & Lord
302, 308, 309 (C.A. 1981) (opinions of Shaw & Oliver, L.J.); Schering
848, 864 (C.A.) (Lord Denning, M.R., dissenting in part); R. v.
R. v. Crown Court at Sheffield, ex parte Brownlow, [1980] Q.B. 530, 542,
1 All E.R. 473, 476-79, [1980] 3 W.L.R. 275, 279 (C.A. 1979) (opinion of
Cumming-Bruce, L.J.); Thermax Ltd. v. Schott Indus. Glass Ltd.,
7 Fleet St. 289, 298 (Ch. 1980) (opinion of Browne-Wilkinson, J.);
(opinion of Donaldson, L.J.). See also R. v. Withers, Times, June 17,


14 See id. at 1895-909.

15 See id. at 1893, 1909-10; Warren & Brandeis, supra note 12, at 196, 206, 213.

16 See Falconbridge, Desirable Changes in the Common Law, 5 CAN. B. REV. 581, 602-05 (1927) (proposing a common law "right to privacy" protecting one's "face, personal appearance, sayings, acts and personal relations" subject to some reservation in favor of the public interest).

17 See The Unauthorised Use of Portraits, 3 AUSTL. L.J. 359, 359 (1930) (suggesting for Tolley v. J.S. Fry & Sons, Ltd. a remedy "against persons or corporations who, without authority, make use of another's name or portrait for advertising purposes").

18 See Winfield, Privacy, 47 LAW Q. REV. 23 (1931). The lack of a legal remedy for press invasions of privacy had been noted in lay periodicals. See, e.g., Ervine, The Invasion of Privacy, 138 SPECTATOR 937 (1927).

19 In the Court of Appeals, Tolley v. J.S. Fry & Sons, Ltd., [1930] 1 K.B. 467, 478, Lord Justice Greer announced his regret at having to overturn the jury award of damages, adding that "the defendants in publishing the advertisement in question, without first obtaining Mr. Tolley's consent, acted in a manner inconsistent with the decencies of life, and in so doing they were guilty of an act for which there ought to be a legal remedy."


See cases cited supra note 10; pages 34-43 infra.

T. COOLEY, LAW OF TORTS 29 (2d ed. 1888).

Warren & Brandeis, supra note 12, at 205.

Id. at 213.

Id. at 214-18.

Godkin, The Rights of the Citizen. IV. -- To His Own Reputation, 8 SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE 58, 65 (1890). Warren and Brandeis did quote in passing a similar notion expressed in an English decision of 1769: "[E]very man has a right to keep his own sentiments" and "a right to judge whether he will make them public, or commit them only to the sight of his friends" Millar v. Taylor, 4 Burr. 2303, 2379, 98 Eng. Rep. 201, 242 (K.B. 1769) (Yates, J., dissenting).

See A. WESTIN, PRIVACY AND FREEDOM 7 (1967) ("Privacy is the claim of individuals, groups, or institutions to determine for themselves when, how, and to what extent information about them is communicated to others.").

See pages 9-11 infra.

See Winfield, supra note 18, at 24.


See International Commission of Jurists, Conclusions of the Nordic Conference on the Right to Privacy 2-3 (1967), quoted in The Legal


37 See YOUNGER COMMITTEE, supra note 1.

38 Id. at para. 658.

39 MacCormick, Privacy: A Problem of Definition?, 1 BRIT. J. L. & SOC'Y 75 (1974). See also Baxter, Privacy in Context: Principles Lost or Found?, 1977 CAMERIAN L. REV. 7, 9 ("[I]t is not a definition which is needed but a general right, since otherwise the ingenuity of the modern invader of privacy cannot be taken into account . . . . [A] definition in the comprehensive sense is neither possible nor necessary.").

Another basis for the majority's conclusion was that Parliamentary legislation "has not been the way in which English law in recent centuries has sought to protect the main democratic rights of citizens," in particular, the rights of free speech and assembly. Professor MacCormick took issue with the Committee on its analogy between "liberties" such as free speech and the "claim-right" of privacy, concepts differentiated by Wesley Hohfeld's analytical categories.
MacCormick, _A Note upon Privacy_, 89 LAW Q. REV. 23 (1973). MacCormick's attack drew a reply from minority member Norman Marsh, saying essentially that the Committee knew what they were doing. Marsh, _Hohfeld and Privacy_, 89 LAW Q. REV. 183 (1973).


42 See Wacks, _supra_ note 23.

43 Id. at 74.

44 Id. at 75-77.

45 Id. at 79-81.

46 Id. at 83-86.

47 Id. at 81-83.

48 Id. at 86-87.

49 Id. at 88-89.


53 See, e.g., Reynolds v. Clarke, 1 Strange 634, 635, 93 Eng. Rep. 747, 748 (K.B. 1726) (opinion of Lord Raymond, C.J.) (opposing the use of case for a trespass) ("We must keep up the boundaries of actions, otherwise we shall introduce the utmost confusion."); Y.B. Mich. 21 Hen. 7, fo. 30, pl. 5 (1504) (argument of Sgt. Pigot) (opposing the use of assumpsit for debt) ("[O]ne can never have an action on the case where one can have another action at common law ... ").; Watkin's Case, Y.B. Hil. 3 Hen. 6, fo. 36, pl. 33 (C.P. 1425) (opinion of Martin, J.) (opposing the use of assumpsit for an unsealed covenant) ("[I]f this action be maintainable ... for every broken covenant in the world a man shall have an action of trespass ... ").

54 On the difficulty of measuring the influence of contemporary economic and philosophical trends on the nineteenth century judiciary, see P. ATIYAH, THE RISE AND FALL OF FREEDOM OF CONTRACT 370-74 (1979) (influence of Mill's political economy and Benthamite utilitarianism at mid-century).


56 J.S. MILL, ON LIBERTY 63 (1st ed. London 1859) (G. Himmelfarb ed. 1974). Mill was quick to admit that "the practical question where to place that limit -- how to make the fitting adjustment between individual independence and social control -- is a subject on which nearly everything remains to be done." Id.

WORKS OF JEREMY BENTHAM 187, 351-80 (J. Bowring ed. 1843) [hereinafter cited as WORKS].

58 J. STEPHEN, LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY 160 (1st ed. 1873) (R. White ed. 1967). See also F. MONTAGUE, THE LIMITS OF INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY 196 (1885) ("[A] public opinion which did not respect the privacies of life would make life intolerable to all men . . . .").

59 J. STEPHEN, supra note 58, at 160.

60 See, e.g., The Taste for Privacy and Publicity, 61 SPECTATOR 782 (1888); Secrecy, 60 NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE 224 (1840). The pragmatic approach to a definition of privacy recognizes that claims to privacy are never absolute but are made for the very reason that some strong opposing interest is already in sight. This recognition avoids the philosophical objection that total and perfect privacy would be humanly intolerable.

61 J. STEPHEN, supra note 58, at 160.


63 See pages 16-20, 38-40 infra.

64 See pages 20-24, 40-43 infra.

65 See Note, supra note 13. It should be obvious that the three sets of boundaries just described can sometimes offer overlapping protection to a unitary interest in privacy. Personal information may be communicated confidentially within the private property of the subject. If, for example, a husband communicates some matter of great delicacy concerning himself to his wife in the bedroom of their home, the law may afford protection from physical or mechanical eavesdroppers on the basis of private property, while it may allow the wife to refuse to testify to (and permit the husband to enjoin the wife from publishing) the confi-
dental communication; moreover, the law it may shield the husband from
forced disclosure himself on the basis of personal information. In
evolving all of these legal protections, however, English courts have
treated the categories as distinct ones and have applied the language of
privacy to all three.

65  W. BLACKSTONE, COMMENTARIES ON THE LAWS OF ENGLAND *4.
67  id. at *223.
68  See 15 PARL. HIST. ENG. 1307 (1763) (remarks of Sir William Pitt).

There is no official record of the much quoted version of this speech:

The poorest man may in his cottage bid defiance to
all the forces of the Crown. It may be frail -- its roof
may shake -- the wind may blow through it -- the storm may
enter -- the rain may enter -- but the King of England
cannot enter! -- all his force dares not cross the
threshold of the ruined tenement!

H. BROUGHAM, HISTORICAL SKETCHES OF STATESMEN WHO FLOURISHED IN THE TIME
OF GEORGE III, 1st ser., at 41-42 (London 1839). See also A. DALRYMPLE,
PARLIAMENTARY REFORM 10-11 (2d ed. London 1792) (continued veneration of
the maxim in a time of conservative reaction to the French Revolution);
1793) (same). For an earlier objection to excisemen entering
dwelling-houses, using much the same rhetoric, see 8 PARL. HIST. ENG.
1317-18 (1733) (remarks of Sir John Barnard).

69  See Y.B. Mich. 21 Hen. 7, fo. 39, pl. 50 (1499). On the dating of
this case to 1499, see Baker, Introduction, in 2 THE REPORTS OF SIR JOHN

70  Semayne's Case, 5 Co. Rep. 91a, 91b, 77 Eng. Rep. 194, 195 (K.B.
1605). Coke used the maxim on many other occasions, sometimes with
stronger privacy overtones. See, e.g., The Case of the King's Prerogative in Saltpetre, 12 Co. Rep. 12, 13, 77 Eng. Rep. 1294, 1296 (Sergeants' Inn 1606) (royal ministers mining for this strategic resource could not dig under any houses) ("[N]y house is the safest place for my refuge, safety and comfort, and of all my family; ... and it is very necessary for the weal public, that the habitation of subjects be preserved and maintained.").


74 See Meade's Case, 1 Lewin Cr. Cas. 184, 185, 168 Eng. Rep. 1006, 1006 (York Assizes 1823) (instructions of Holroyd, J.) ("A civil trespass will not excuse the firing of a pistol at a trespasser . . . ."); R. v. Scully, 1 Car. & P. 319, 319-20, 171 Eng. Rep. 1213, 1213 (Gloucester Assizes 1824) (instructions of Garrow, B.) (servant's shooting of trespasser in garden or yard only justified if servant's life endangered); Dakin's Case, 1 Lewin Cr. Cas. 166, 167, 168 Eng. Rep. 999, 1000 (Lancaster Assizes 1828) (instructions of Bayley, J.) ("If the prisoner had known of the back-way, it would have been his duty to have gone out . . . ."); Wild's Case, 2 Lewin Cr. Cas. 214, 214, 168 Eng. Rep. 1132, 1132 (Liverpool Assizes 1837) (instructions of Alderson, B.) ("A kick is not a justifiable mode of turning a man out of your house . . . ."). For later cases moderating the householder's defense, see R. v. Symonds, 60 J.P. 645, 646 (Cent. Crim. Ct. 1896) (instructions of Kennedy, J.) ("You must not shoot a trespasser merely because he is a trespasser."); R. v. Dennis, 69 J.P. 256, 256 (Cent. Crim. Ct. 1905) ("It may be an unlawful act if the person deliberately fires at the burglar.").

75 See, e.g., R. v. Moir, 72 ANN. REG. 1830 at 344, 347 (Chelmsford Assizes, July 30, 1830) (unsuccessful claim "my land is my castle"); Shooting Burglars, 76 SATURDAY REV. 534, 534-35 (1893) (advice from Mr. Justice Willes).


77 Entick v. Carrington, 19 Howell St. Tr. 1029, 1066, 2 Wils. K.B. 275, 291, 95 Eng. Rep. 807, 817 (C.P. 1765) (opinion of Lord Camden, C.J.) ("Our law holds the property of every man so sacred that no man can set his foot upon his neighbour's close without his leave. If he does, he is a trespasser, though he does no damage at all; if he will
tread upon his neighbour's ground, he must justify it by law.


80. See, e.g., The English, the Scots, and the Irish, EUR. REV., Oct. 1824, at 63; Letter from William Austin, London, Aug. 30, 1802, in W. AUSTIN, LITERARY PAPERS 142 (J. Austin ed. 1890); R. EMERSON, WEALTH, in ENGLISH TRAITS 92-93 (London 1856); H. HEINE, ENGLISH FRAGMENTS n.p. (from ALLGEMEINEN POLITISCHEN ANNALEN, 1828) (S. Norris trans. 1880);

R. COLLIER, ENGLISH HOME LIFE 13 (1885).

81. 2 Vern. 646, 33 Eng. Rep. 1022 (Ch. 1709).


84, 5 Camp. 80, 82, 170 Eng. Rep. 1312, 1313 (N.P. 1811).


was one such action.

86. 3 Camp. at 82, 170 Eng. Rep. at 1313 (opinion of Le Blanc, J.).

87. 31 L.J.C.P. (n.s.) 342, 347 (Exch. Ch. 1862), aff'd sub nom Tapling v. Jones, 11 H.L.C. 290, 305, 11 Eng. Rep. 1344, 1350, 12 L.T. Rep. 555 (1865) (opinion of Lord Westbury, L.C.) (invasion of privacy by opening windows "is not treated by the law as a wrong for which any remedy is given."). See also Turner v. Spooner, 30 L.J. Ch. (n.s.) 801, 803 (1861) (opinion of Kindersley, V.C.) ("[N]o doubt the owner of a house would prefer that a neighbour should not have the right of looking into his windows or yard but neither this Court nor a Court of law will interfere on the mere ground of invasion of privacy...".).
88 L.R. 6 Eq. 311 (1868).
89 1 Ch. D. 673, 681 (1875).
90 Editor’s Note, in C. KENNY, A SELECTION OF CASES ILLUSTRATIVE OF
91 See Victoria Park Racing & Recreation Grounds Co. Ltd. v. Taylor,
[1937] Argus L.R. 597, 611, 58 C.L.R. 479, 520-21 (Austl. 1937) (Evatt,
J., dissenting); Winfield, supra note 17, at 27.
92 Walker v. Brewster, L.R. 5 Eq. 25, 26 (1867).
418, 439 (1872) (recovery under the Land Clauses Act, 1845, 8 & 9 Vict.,
ch. 18, § 63, and the Thames Embankment Act, 1862, 25 & 26 Vict.,
(Q.B. 1857) (no recovery under the Land Clauses Act, supra, and the
Railway Clauses Consolidation Act, 1845, 8 & 9 Vict., ch. 20, § 6, for
loss in value of property overlooked by railway platform).
94 Harrison v. Rutland (Duke), [1893] 1 Q.B. 142, 145-46, 152 (C.A.
1892) (opinion of Lord Esher, M.R.).
96 See 4 W. BLACKSTONE, supra note 56, at *168.
97 J. Lyons & Sons v. Wilkins, [1899] 1 Ch. 255, 267 (C.A. 1898)
(opinion of Lindley, M.R.).
681, 745 (1854) (opinion of Lord St. Leonard’s) (distinguishing common
law property in a manuscript and statutory copyright); Southev v.
Sherwood, 2 Mer. 435, 438, 35 Eng. Rep. 1006, 1007 (Ch. 1817) (opinion
of Lord Eldon, L.C.); Queensberry (Duke) v. Shebbeare, 2 Eden 329, 330,
28 Eng. Rep. 924, 925 (Ch. 1758) (injunction to restrain printing of
unpublished manuscript).
1741) (opinion of Lord Hardwicke, L.C.) (Letters give "only a special property in the receiver," not "a license to any person whatsoever to publish them to the world."); 3 R. WOODDESON, A SYSTEMATICAL VIEW OF THE LAWS OF ENGLAND 415 (1792).


103 2 Swan. 402, 426, 36 Eng. Rep. 670, 678 (Ch. 1818). See also Lytton (Earl) v. Devey, 54 L.J. Ch. (n.s.) 293, 295-96 (1884) (opinion of Bacon, V.C.).


107 See Lytton (Earl) v. Devey, 54 L.J. Ch. (n.s.) 293, 295-96 (1884) (opinion of Bacon, V.C.).


110 See 75 PARL. DEB. (3rd ser.) 892-906, 1264-1305 (1844) (remarks of Mr. Duncombe and ensuing debate); 77 id. at 668-97, 738-45 (1845) (remarks of Mr. Duncombe and Mr. Wakley); Opening Letters at the Post Office, 33 LAW MAGAZINE 248, 256 (1845); Post-Office Espionage, 2 N.
BRIT. REV. 257, 260 (1844) ("[T]he English feeling that this was a
disgraceful business spread all over the country."); The Post Office
Inquiry, 2 LITTELL'S LIVING AGE 407, 411-12 (1844). See also A. HARLOW,
OLD POST BAGS 468 (1928); W. TEGG, POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS, PAST AND
PRESENT 66-67 (1878). For an earlier outcry, see 9 PARL. HIST. ENG.
839, 842 (1735) ("Complaints were made by several Members . . . that the
liberty given to break open letters at the post-office could now serve
no purpose, but to enable the little clerks about that office to pry
into the private affairs of every merchant, and of every gentleman in
the kingdom."). For later objections, see 267 PARL. DEB. (3rd ser.)
289-93 (remarks of Mr. O'Donnell and Mr. Sexton); 258 PARL. DEB. (3rd
ser.) 1080-81 (1881) (remarks of Mr. Labouchere); Letter-Opening at the

109 See REPORT FROM THE SECRET COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS
RELATIVE TO THE POST OFFICE, (H.L. Rep. No. 601), in 14 PARL. PAPERS
1844 501, at [2]; Post-Office Espionage, supra note 108, at 284
("[W]herever a free Government exists, the sanctity of private
 correspondence going through the Post-office is the subject of special
enactments."). Predictably, Jeremy Bentham opposed the notion of
sanctity of correspondence. See J. BENTHAM, Anarchical Fallacies, in 2
WORKS, supra note 57, at 489, 532.

110 See E. KENNETH, THE POST OFFICE IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY 141
(1958).

111 The introduction of the post card posed a similar problem. See
Post-Cards v. Envelopes, 47 CHAMBERS'S J. 565, 566-67 (1870). One
solution for securing both new forms of communication was widespread
resort to codes and ciphers, such as had been used in times of rampant
letter spying. See J. WILKINS, MERCURY, OR THE SECRET AND SWIFT
MESSENGER (London 1641) (early code book); Post-Cards v. Envelopes,
supra.


113 See Post Office Protection Act, 1854, 47 & 48 Vict., ch. 76,
{ 11; Telegraph Act, 1868, 31 & 32 Vict., ch. 110, { 20.

114 Borough of Stroud, 2 O'M. & H. 107, 112 (Election Petitions 1874)
(opinion of Bramwell, B.) ("[P]ersons who correspond by telegram are
obliged to repose confidence in the Crown, and I believe it will be for
the public good if it is found that that is a confidence that the Crown
cannot be compelled to violate."). This holding expanded the decision
in Borough of Taunton, 2 O'M. & H. 66, 73 (Election Petitions 1874)
(opinion of Grove J.) (no compulsion to produce telegrams without strong
specific grounds) and contradicted Ince's Case, 20 L.T. (n.s.) 421
(Election Petitions 1869) (opinion of Willes J.) (subpoenaed telegram
not privileged).

115 See Attorney-General v. Edison Telephone Co., 6 Q.B. 244 (Exch.
1880).

116 Letters, to be protected from compulsory disclosure in court, had
to come under one of these privileges. O'Shea v. Wood, [1891] P. 286,
290 (C.A.) (opinion of Kay, L.J.); R. v. Derrington, 2 Car. & p. 418,
419, 172 Eng. Rep. 189, 190 (Hereford Assizes 1826) (opinion of Garrow,
B.) (prisoner's letter intercepted by gaoler is admissible unless within
a privileged relationship)."

117 Annesley v. Anglesea (Earl), 17 Howell St. Tr. 1139, 1241 (Ir.
1577) (accord).

(Ch. 1833) (opinion of Lord Brougham, L.C.).

119 Pearse v. Pearse, 11 Jur. 52, 55 (Ch. 1847).


See Evidence Amendment Act, 1853, 16 & 17 Vict., ch. 83 (husbands and wives competent to testify in civil cases); Criminal Evidence Act, 1898, 61 & 62 Vict., ch. 36 (husbands and wives competent to testify for defense in criminal cases).


Wennhak v. Morgan, 20 Q.B.D. 635, 639 (1888) (per Mannisty, J.) (disclosure of libel to wife held not evidence of publication).


See 7 J. Bentham, supra note 57, at 486 [5:340] (while the law "make[s] every man's house his castle," the privilege "convert[s] that castle into a den of thieves.").

In re Agar-Ellis, 24 Ch. D. 317, 335 (C.A. 1883) (opinion of Bowen, L.J.) (custody proceeding).

J. Stephen, supra note 58, at 160, 162.


Official seizure of private papers was also condemned by English judicial authority, partly on this ground and partly as trespass to goods, since "where private papers are removed and carried away, the secret nature of those goods will be an aggravation of the trespass and demand more considerable damages in that respect," Entick v. Carrington,

133 See Abolition of the Court of High Commission, 1641, 16 Ch. 1, ch. 11, § 4, reconfirmed in Ecclesiastical Commission Act, 1661, 13 Ch. 2, ch. 12, § 4; Law of Evidence Amendment Act, 1851, 14 & 15 Vict., ch. 99, § 3. But see Langbein, The Criminal Trial before the Lawyers, 45 U. CHI. L. REV. 263, 283 (little use of the privilege in 18th century practice).


(K.B. 1778) (opinion of Lord Mansfield) (refusing to hear an action brought on a wager as to the sex of a third party); Ditchburn v. Goldsmith, 4 Camp. 152, 153, 171 Eng. Rep. 49, 49 (N.P. 1815) (opinion of Gibbs, C.J.) (refusing to hear an action brought on a wager as to the sex of a child about to be born to an unmarried woman).

For a proposal to record names, ages, addresses, and occupations, under oath, in the Census of 1801, despite "those suspicions which ignorance is so apt to harbour," see Letter from Jeremy Bentham to Charles Abbott, Nov. 1800, in 10 WORKS, supra note 57, at 351, 351-52, 355-56. For proposals to compile registers of identifying characteristics, see A. BERTillon, Signaletic Instructions vii-ix (1896) (anthropometrical identification); Galton, Identification by Fingertips, 30 Nineteenth Century 303, 305 (1891) (fingerprints used by British magistrate in Bengal to identify natives).

See, e.g., The Census, 23 CORNHILL Magazine 415, 424 (1871); Census Curiosities, 5 All the Year Round 15, 15-16 (1861); Curiosities of the Census, 22 N. Brit. Rev. 401, 402-03 (1855). Earlier opposition is recorded in Census of England and Wales and of the United Kingdom, 1881, 44 J. Statistical Soc'y 398, 399-400 (1881).

See Confession of Elizabeth Bowltell, May 26, 1595, quoted in Hall, Some Elizabethan Penances in the Diocese of Ely, 1 TRANS. ROYAL HIST. SOC'Y (3d ser.) 263, 272 (1907) (ecclesiastical offense of gossiping).


See Tipping v. Clarke, 2 Hare 383, 393, 67 Eng. Rep. 157, 161 (Ch. 1843) (opinion of Sir James Wigram, V.C.) (clerk's implied contract
not to reveal what he learns in the course of duty).  

144 But see Hardy v. Vesey, L.R. 3 Ex. 107, 111-13 (1868) (violation of duty justified when motive is to assist customer).

145 The appetite of the newspaper-buying public for scandalous personal information can be taken as constant over the period. See Perkins, The Origins of the Popular Press, 7 HIST. TODAY 425, 434 (1957). For complaints, see Phillipps, The New Journalism, 13 NEW REV. 182, 184 (1895) ("private persons" subject to "constant spying and badgering of the society papers"); Newspaper Libels, 67 SATURDAY REV. 462 (1889); The Taste for Privacy and Publicity, 61 SPECTATOR 782 (1888); Secrecy, 60 NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE 224 (1840). But see The Privilege of Privacy, 69 SPECTATOR 733 (1892) (poorer classes intolerant of individual privacy concerns); The Defence of Privacy, 66 SPECTATOR 200 (1891) (little hope for effective legal remedies).

146 See, e.g., McPherson v. Daniels, 10 B. & C. 263, 272, 109 Eng. Rep. 448, 451 (K.B. 1829) (opinion of Littledale, J.) ("[T]he law will not permit a man to recover damages in respect of an injury to a character which he either does not, or ought not, to possess.").

147 See J. BENTHAM, Rationale of Judicial Evidence, in 6 WORKS, supra note 57, at 189, 269-70.

148 See, e.g., J. FISHER & J. STRAHAN, THE LAW OF THE PRESS 175-76 (1891); "The Greater the Truth, the Greater the Libel", 26 CAN. L. TIMES 394, 394-95 (1906). The common law rule was modified by Lord Campbell's Act, 1843, 6 & 7 Vict., ch. 96, § 6 (publication of a defamatory truth not criminal if jury determines publication was for public benefit).

(n.s.) 470, 472 (1878) (opinion of Brett, L.J.), holding the appellation "felon" to be untrue of one whose sentence has been served and finding it "wicked and malignant" to thus "rake up the past misdoings of others."

150 See, e.g., Pankhurst v. Hamilton, 3 T.L.R. 500, 505 (Q.B. 1887) (Grove, J., instructing the jury) ("Matters discussed between gentlemen at clubs, dinner parties, or in the lobby of the House of Commons ought not to be seriously repeated.").


For another expression of deference to royal sensibilities, see Wyatt v. Wilson, 1 Mac. & G. 46, 41 Eng. Rep. 1179, 1 H. & Tw. 25, 47 Eng. Rep. 1311 (Ch. 1820) (opinion of Lord Eldon) ("If one of the late King's physicians had kept a diary of what he heard and saw, this Court would not, in the King's lifetime, have permitted him to print and publish it.").

153 De G. & Sm. at 670, 64 Eng. Rep. at 301.

154 De G. & Sm. at 698, 64 Eng. Rep. at 313.


157 See Pollard v. Photographic Co., 40 Ch. D. 345, 349, 352, (1888) (opinion of North J.) (married woman's photograph sold as Christmas card). See also Stedall v. Houghton, 18 T.L.R. 126 (Ch. 1901) (opinion of Swinfen Eady, J.) (on the same double grounds, husband restrained the exhibition of photographs of his estranged wife and children.). It was much doubted whether the courts could have reached this result under the Copyright (Works of Art) Act, 1862, 25 & 26 Vict., ch. 68, { 1. See Williams, The Sale of Photographic Portraits, 24 SOLIC. J. 4, 4-5 (1879).


159 See [1894] 1 Q.B. at 678 (opinion of Matthew, J.) (For a newspaper "to shadow a man who had been acquitted of a crime, to take portraits of him and to publish them . . . would be a sharp instrument of torture, and an outrage on the man's comfort and peace."), id. at 687 (opinion of Lord Halsbury) ("Is it possible to say that everything which has once been known may be reproduced with impunity in print or picture; . . . every incident which has ever happened in private life, furnish material for the adventurous exhibitor . . . ?").


161 See generally pages 34-43 infra. For example, courts continued to reject claims based on publication of photographs in Sports & Gen. Press Agency, Ltd. v. "Our Dogs" Publishing Co., Ltd., [1916] 2 K.B. 880, 889 (dictum of Horridge, J.) (no right to prevent publication of a photograph or description "not libelous or otherwise wrongful"), aff'd.

162 See Winfield, supra note 18.
163 See Dworkin, supra note 21, at 188-89.

The House of Commons may have considered taking measures against press activities following the press's hounding of Colonel and Mrs. Lindbergh during their stay in England. See Adam, Freemen of the Press?, 144 FORTNIGHTLY (n.s.) 34 (1938); Ervine, Privacy and the Lindberghs, 139 FORTNIGHTLY (n.s.) 180 (1936). See also POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PLANNING, REPORT ON THE BRITISH PRESS (1938) (call for legislation). Privacy concerns also played a part in Lord Reading's Preservation of the Rights of the Subject Bill, 1947, introduced, 147 PARL. DEB. H.L. (5th ser.) 762, 767 (1947) (clause 6 on powers of search), and Lord Samuel's Liberties of the Subject Bill, 1950, introduced, 167 PARL. DEB. H.L. (5th ser.) 1041, 1051-52 (1950) (clause 6 on same). Several committees had considered and rejected the possibility of privacy legislation. See REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON POWERS OF SUBPOENA OF DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNALS para. 30 (Cmdn. 1033, 1960) (Viscount Simonds, Chairman) (allowing evidence from telephone wiretapping); REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF PRIVY COUNCILLORS APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO THE INTERCEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS (Cmdn. 283, 1957) (Lord Birkett,
Chairman) (approving government wiretapping procedures despite lack of express statutory authorization) [hereinafter cited as BIRKETT COMMITTEE]; ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PRESS, 1947-1949, REPORT paras. 489-91, 642-43 (Cmd. 7700, 1949) (Sir William Ross, Chairman) ("extremely difficult to devise legislation" on intrusion by reporters); REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE LAW OF DEFAMATION paras. 24-26 (Cmd. 7536, 1948) (Lord Porter, Chairman) (invasion of privacy merely an "offense against good taste"); Lloyd, Reform of the Law of Libel, 5 CURRENT LEGAL PROBS. 168, 176-77 (1952).


165 See 228 PARL. DEB. H.L. (5th ser.) 716 (1961); Times, Feb. 16, 1961, at 17, col. 4.

166 See Right of Privacy Bill, 1961, reprinted in YOUNGER COMMITTEE, supra note 1, App. I at 273-74.


168 See 229 PARL. DEB. H.L. (5th ser.) 621-24 (1961) (remarks of Lord Goddard) ("It has always seemed to me a blot on our jurisprudence that there is no remedy for a person whose privacy is invaded . . . ."); 229 id. at 637-40 (1961) (remarks of Lord Denning) ("[I]f the law does not
give the right of privacy, the sooner this Bill gives it the better.").  

169 The vote was 74 to 21. 229 id. at 660 (1961).  

170 See 229 id. at 625-30; 232 id. at 293-96 (1961) (remarks of Lord Chancellor Kilmuir).  


172 See 229 id. at 639-40 (1961) (remarks of Lord Denning) ("But would not our own courts give a remedy in infringement of privacy? ... [T]hey ought to."); 232 id. at 295 (1961) (remarks of Lord Chancellor Kilmuir) ([W]hether there is already a right of privacy in Common Law is a matter which "Judges ... might have at any time to decide.".")  


176 See LAW COMMISSION, THIRD ANNUAL REPORT: 1967-68 para. 70 (No. 15, 1968). See also LAW COMMISSION, FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT: 1968-1969 para. 76 (No. 27, 1969) ("[E]arly comprehensive examination of this subject by a widely based commission or committee is essential.").  


179 See, e.g., Bill of Rights (No. 2) Bill, 1969, introduced, 787 PARL. DEB. H.C. (5th ser.) 1519, 1520 (1969) (Clause 10 provided: "Every person is entitled to protection from arbitrary interference in his

180 See JUSTICE, supra note 177, at 59-62.
182 See Right of Privacy Bill, 1969, reprinted in YOUNGER COMMITTEE, supra note 1, App. I at 276-78.
185 See YOUNGER COMMITTEE, supra note 1, at paras. 1, 3-5.
186 See id. at paras. 661-67 (majority recommendation); id. at 208-15 (minority reports).
187 See, e.g., 343 PARL. DEB. H.L. (5th ser.) 104-78 (1973) (inconclusive debate on the Younger Committee report).
189 In 1971, the Independent Television Authority set up its Complaints Review Board, see Times, Oct. 4, 1971, at 1, col. 4; and in
1972 the British Broadcasting Corporation established a Programmes Complaints Commission, see Adjudications, 88 LISTENER 83, 83-84 (1972). The Younger Committee report expressed hope that the developing law of breach of confidence could encompass an adequate substitute for a privacy remedy, but the Law Commission's report on breach of confidence carefully distinguishes privacy protection from the statutory remedy it recommends for disclosures in breach of a duty of confidence and for "unlawfully obtained" information. See LAW COMMISSION, BREACH OF CONFIDENCE 5-7 (Law Comm. No. 110, 1981). See also ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE PRESS, FINAL REPORT paras. 19.9-19.18 (Cmnd. 6810, 1977) (Prof. McGregor, Chairman) (reluctantly recommending against a statutory right to privacy); REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONTEMPT OF COURT para. 216 (Cmnd. 5794, 1974) (Lord Phillimore, Chairman) (recommending minimum interference with the press); REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON DEFAMATION paras. 137-40 (Cmnd. 5909, 1975) (Justice Faulks, Chairman) (rejecting a public benefit component in the defense of justification).

See 963 PARL. DEB. H.C. (5th ser.) 750-51 (1979) (remarks of Home Secretary Rees).

See THE INTERCEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS IN GREAT BRITAIN (Cmnd. 7873, 1980) (disclosing the issuance of nearly 1000 warrants for interception annually).


See pages 32-33 infra.

See COMPUTERS AND PRIVACY (Cmnd. 6353, 1975) (promising future legislation); COMPUTERS: SAFEGUARDS FOR PRIVACY (Cmnd. 6754, 1975) (reviewing Britain's computer systems and legislation abroad).
See REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON DATA PROTECTION (Cmnd. 7341, 1978) (Sir Norman Lindop, Chairman) (recommending a Data Protection Act establishing a Data Protection Authority) [hereinafter cited as LINDOP COMMITTEE].


See Post Office Act, 1969, ch. 48, § 64; Post Office Act, 1953, 1 & 2 Eliz., ch. 36, §§ 52, 56, 58(1); Telegraph Act, 1868, 31 & 32 Vict., ch. 110, § 20; Post Office Protection Act, 1884, 47 & 48 Vict., ch. 76, § 11.

See Wireless Telegraphy Act, 1949, 12, 13, & 14 Geo. 6, ch. 54, §§ 1(1), 5(8); Theft Act, 1968, ch. 60 (stealing electricity).

See, e.g., Finance Act, 1978, ch. 42, § 77; Population (Statistics) Act, 1938, 1 & 2 Geo. 6, ch. 12, § 4; Census Act, 1920, 10 & 11 Geo. 5, ch. 41, § 8(2); Official Secrets Act, 1911, 1 & 2 Geo. 5, ch. 28, § 2.


Copyright Act, 1956, 4 & 5 Eliz. 2, ch. 74, § 43; infra note 382.

See Television Act, 1954, 2 & 3 Eliz. 2, ch. 55, § 3(1).

entered with a pass-key and furniture left disturbed and windows opened so that tenants should know that their privacy had been invaded.

207 See Administration of Justice Act, 1970, ch. 31, \(1\) 40.

208 See Post Office Act, 1953, 1 & 2 Eliz. 2, ch. 36, \(1\) 66.

209 See Unsolicited Goods and Services Act, 1971, ch. 30, \(1\) 4.

210 Consumer Credit Act, 1974, ch. 39, \(1\) 158-60.

211 Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, 1974, ch. 53.

212 Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act, 1976, ch. 82, \(1\) 6.

213 See pages 34-43 infra.

214 See H. LAUTERPACHT, AN INTERNATIONAL BILL OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN (1945).

215 Universal Declaration, supra note 5.

216 Id.


219 International Covenant, supra note 7.

220 Id.

221 Id. at art. 2(1) & (2). But see UN Doc. E/CN.4/SR.427 at 10 (1954) (U.K. representative denying that treaties could impose requirement of domestic legislation).

222 UN Doc. CCPR/C/1 Add. 17 at 1 (1977). See also CENTRAL OFFICE OF INFORMATION, HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM (R. 3980, 1958).

223 See, e.g., 229 PARL. DEB. H.L. (5th ser.) 628-29 (1961) (remarks of Lord Chancellor Kilmuir) (The 1948 Universal Declaration "aim[s] mainly at physical interference, such as the activities of secret police."); International Commission of Jurists, The Legal Protection of Privacy: A Comparative Survey of Ten Countries, 24 INT’L SOC. SCI. J.
417, 458 (1972) (The Universal Declaration "has no legal effect in English law.").

224 European Convention, supra note 8.

225 Id. at art. 8(1).

226 Id. at art. 8(2).

227 See id. at art. 1.


232 See, e.g., 596 PARL. DEB. H.C. (5th ser.) 333-34 (1958) (remarks of Foreign Secretary Ormsby-Gore).

233 See Golsong, supra note 231, at 446.


235 See R. v. Secretary of State for the Home Dep't, ex parte


243 See Jaconelli, supra note 228, at 230.

244 See European Convention, supra note 8, Optional Protocol.

245 See page 38 infra.


Id. at art. 5-6, 8.


See, e.g., D. WATKINSON & M. REED, SQUATTING, TRESPASS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES 41 (1976); Hewitt, The Englishman's Front Door, 36 NEW STATESMAN 435, 435-36 (1948); Ackerman, Fact or Fancy?, 1 NOTES & QUERIES (12th ser.) 509 (1916) (doubting the legal justification of the maxim "especially since the additions to the statutes during the last decade.").

See Criminal Law Act, 1967, ch. 58, | 3(1) ("A person may use such force as is reasonable in the circumstances in the prevention of crime."); R. v. Barrett, unreported decision (C.A., June 23, 1980) (Defendant's honest belief that his home was his castle to defend by all


257 See cases cited at note 11 supra.

258 An explicit covenant to prevent overlooking would, of course, still be enforced. See Re Henderson's Conveyance, [1940] 1 Ch. 835, 849 (opinion of Farwell, J.).

E.R. 830, 836 (C.A.) (opinion of Cohen, L.J.) (mere interference with privacy no derogation from landlord's grant to tenant); Browne v. Flower, [1911] 1 Ch. 226, 228 (opinion of Parker, J.) (dictum).

See, e.g., Re M. Howard (Mitcham) Ltd.'s Application, 7 Plan. & Comp. 219, 222 (Lands Trib. 1956) (application to modify 1899 restrictive covenant dismissed; avoidance of invasion of privacy was of "considerable importance"); Re Munday's Application, 7 Plan. & Comp. 130, 131-32 (Lands Trib. 1954) (application refused on grounds of loss of seclusion and privacy); Re Berridge's Application, 7 Plan. & Comp. 125, 127 (Lands Trib. 1954) (application granted on condition to provide screen of trees for garden privacy); Re Sloggetts (Properties), Ltd.'s Application, 7 Plan. & Comp. 78, 83 (Lands Trib. 1952) (application refused on grounds of injury to privacy and amenities of surrounding property). The volume of Lands Tribunal cases decided since the mid-1950's on this ground is too large to catalogue, see LEXIS, ENGLOC library, but more recently assertions of "rights of privacy" in this context can be found. See, e.g., Re Davies's Application, 25 P. & C.R. 115, 119 (Lands Trib. 1971).


See, e.g., Wakelin v. Secretary of State for the Environment, 77 Knight's Local Gov't R. 101 (C.A. 1978) (upholding refusal to grant planning permission based on privacy considerations). But see Chelmsford Corp. v. Secretary of State for the Environment, 70 Knight's Local Gov't R. 89, 95 (Q.B. 1971) (opinion of Browne, J.) (planning permission imposing conditions relating to walls and fences for privacy
and decoration held _ultra vires_.


(opinion of Atkin, L.J.) (constable entered warehouse as a trespasser, no liability for his injury in a fall).


So named from the leading case. See Anton Piller KG v.


285 See, e.g., THE INTERCEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS IN GREAT BRITAIN, supra note 190; BIRKETT COMMITTEE, supra note 163; Duffy & Muchlinski, The Interception of Communications in Great Britain, 130 NEW L.J. 999 (1980); Nathan, Eavesdropping (pts. 1-3), 225 LAW TIMES 119, 135, 149 (1958); Wade, Post-Office -- Interception of Messages, 16 CAMB. L.J. 6 (1958).


289[1979] Ch. 344, [1979] 2 All E.R. 620, [1979] 2 W.L.R. 700. The "inalienable human right" to privacy was early invoked against wiretapping in Nathan, supra note 285, at 120.

290[1979] Ch. at 372, [1979] 2 All E.R. at 642, [1979] 2 W.L.R. at 725 ("[T]here has to be a first time for everything.").

291 See [1979] Ch. at 380, [1979] 2 All E.R. at 638, [1979] 2 W.L.R.
at 732-33; Wacks, supra note 23, at 74 n.8. The plaintiff has indeed sought this relief. See Times, July 27, 1981, at 3, col. 3; id., Nov. 5, 1980, at 6, col. 1.

292 The privacy basis of the husband-wife privilege was eroded in Rumping v. Director of Pub. Prosecutions, [1964] A.C. 814, 832, [1962] 3 All E.R. 256, 258, [1962] 3 W.L.R. 763, 772 (1962) (opinion of Lord Reid) (no privilege against "disclosure by a witness who was an eavesdropper or who had intercepted or stolen a letter from one spouse to the other").


W.L.R. 1713, 1714 (P. 1969) (in exercising discretion to proceed in
camera, courts weigh effect of publicity and disclosure of family
secrets). The origin of the protection afforded private and domestic
affairs in wardship proceedings is Scott v. Scott, [1913] A.C. 417,
482-83 (opinion of Lord Shaw of Dunferline).

300 Re X (a minor), [1975] Fam. 47, 58, [1975] 1 All E.R. 697, 704,

301 2 De G. & Sm. 652, 64 Eng. Rep. 293 (Ch. 1848), aff'd, 1 Mac. &

302 Morison v. Moat, 9 Hare 241, 68 Eng. Rep. 492 (Ch. 1851), aff'd,
21 L.J. Ch. (n.s.) 248 (1852) (injunction to restrain former partner
from making medicine by secret method); Yovatt v. Winyard, 1 J. & W.
394, 37 Eng. Rep. 425 (Ch. 1820) (injunction to restrain journeyman from
disclosing recipes of medicines on grounds of breach of trust and
confidence).

303 See G. DWORXIN, CONFIDENCE IN THE LAW (1971); Jones, Restitution
of Benefits Obtained in Breach of Another's Confidence, 86 LAW Q. REV.
453 (1970); North, Breach of Confidence: Is There a New Tort?, 12 J.

760, 764 (C.A.) (opinion of Bridge, L.J.).

305 Schering Chemicals Ltd. v. Falkman Ltd., [1981] 2 All E.R. 321,
dissenting in part).

41, 50 (Ch. 1968) (opinion of Megarry, J.); Fraser v. Evans, [1969] 1
(C.A. 1968).

307 Saltman Eng'g Co. Ltd. v. Campbell Eng'g Co., Ltd., 65 Pat. Cas.
203, 213, [1963] 3 All E.R. 413, 414 (C.A. 1948) (opinion of Lord Greene, M.R.) ("[T]he obligation to respect confidence is not limited to cases where the parties are in contractual relationship... If a defendant is proved to have used confidential information, directly or indirectly obtained from a plaintiff, without the consent, express or implied of the plaintiff, he will be guilty of an infringement of the plaintiff's rights.").


310 See, e.g., COMPUTERS: SAFEGUARDS FOR PRIVACY (Cmd. 6354, 1975); LINDOP COMMITTEE, supra note 197; PRIVACY, COMPUTERS AND YOU (B. Rowe ed. 1972); J. RULE, PRIVATE LIVES AND PUBLIC SURVEILLANCE (1973); P. SIEGHART, PRIVACY AND COMPUTERS (1976); Computers and Privacy, 128 NEW L.J. 423 (1978).


Lord Simon).


More is expected of Parliament and the European Community. See pages 27, 32-33 supra.


See page 39 supra.


See pages 38-39 supra.


R. v. Crown Court at Sheffield, ex parte Brownlow, [1980] 1 Q.B.
practice).


326 [1931] A.C. 333, [1931] All E.R. 131. The case was interpreted
variously by American commentators. See, e.g., Green, The Right of
Privacy, 27 ILL. L. REV. 237, 294 n.23 (1932) (the theory of the case
would give recovery in libel for the invasion of privacy claim in
Roberson v. Rochester Folding Box Co., 171 N.Y. 538, 64 N.E. 442
(1902)); Recent Decisions, 32 MICH. L. REV. 1172, 1172 n.5 (1934) (the
decision "seemingly recognize[s] the right of privacy in England");
Recent Cases, 16 MINN. L. REV. 220, 221 (1932) (the case "somewhat
extend[s] the action for libel to accomplish the result . . . of the
right of privacy").

327 See, e.g., Briant v. Prudential Assurance Co. Ltd., [1976]
1 Lloyd's L.R. 533, 534 (C.A. 1975); Byrne v. Kinematograph Renters

1 W.L.R. 1072, 1082 (C.A.) (opinion of Sellers, J.) (publication of
wedding picture after bride's father was murdered constituted a
violation of copyright an "intrusion into his life, deeper and graver
than an intrusion into a man's property"), discussed in Cline, Invasion
of Privacy, 204 SPECTATOR 880 (1960) ("[T]he court was in effect
punishing the defendant for an unscrupulous invasion of the plaintiff's
(defamatory article not fair comment or privileged if it appeals to "an
interest which is due to idle curiosity or a desire for gossip"); Plumb


331See cases cited in note 11 supra.


339 Thermax Ltd. v. Schott Indus. Glass Ltd., 7 Fleet St. 289 (Ch. 1980).
342 See pages 34-43 supra.
348 Schering Chems. Ltd. v. Falkman Ltd., [1981] 2 All E.R. 321, 333,
The same can be said of the American development. See Note, supra note 13.


3 W.L.R. 366, 386-87 (1970) (opinion of Lord Hodson) (quoting Bednarik v. Bednarik, 18 N.J. Misc. 633, 652, 16 A.2d 80, 90 (Ch. 1940)).


362 See pages 30-32 & note 8 supra.


366 Id.

367 See page 32 supra.


370 See Argyll v. Argyll, [1967] Ch. 302, 320, [1965] 1 All E.R. 611,

371 See, e.g., Thermax Ltd. v. Schott Indus. Glass Ltd., 7 Fleet St. 289, 298 (Ch. 1980) (opinion of Browne-Wilkinson, J.) (citing the maxim).


374 See cases cited in 2 D. WALKER, supra note 373, at 711.


376 See Robertson v. Keith, 1936 Sess. Cas. 29, 48 (Scot.) (opinion of Aitchison, L.J.C.).

A.B. v. C.D., 14 D. 177, 180 (Scot. Sess. 1851) (opinion of Lord Fullerton).


Cunningham v. Phillips, 6 M. 926, 928 (Scot. Sess. 1868) (Lord Deas, dissenting).

6 M. at 929.


See, e.g., 2 D. WALKER, supra note 373, at 708.

See, e.g., ASPECTS OF PRIVACY LAW, supra note 5; Burns, supra note 5. For an early complaint against government intrusion into the home, seizure of papers, and interception of letters, see S. WILCOCKE, A LETTER TO THE SOLICITOR GENERAL ON THE SEIZURE OF PAPERS 12-14 (Montreal 1821) ("[T]here are secrets which, though I would rather have died than have discovered, . . . secrets of thought and of conduct such as not any man has a right to look upon, and . . . no color of law has a right to expose.") (emphasis omitted).


nuisance).


393 Protection of Privacy Act, §§ 178.13, 178.16.

394 Id. at § 178.21.

395 Burns, supra note 5, at 64.

396 Victoria Park Racing & Recreation Grounds Co. Ltd. v. Taylor, 58 C.L.R. 479, 495-96 (Austl. 1937) (opinion of Latham, C.J.) ("[N]o authority was cited which shows that any general right of privacy exists.").


401 AUSTRALIAN LAW REFORM COMMISSION, UNFAIR PUBLICATION: DEFA MATION AND PRIVACY 130 (No. 11, 1979).

402 AUSTRALIAN LAW REFORM COMMISSION, PRIVACY AND INTRUSIONS 96
(Discussion Paper No. 13, 1980).

403 AUSTRALIAN LAW REFORM COMMISSION, PRIVACY AND PERSONAL
INFORMATION 122 (Discussion Paper No. 14, 1980).

404 See, e.g., Queensland Invasion of Privacy Act, 1971; New South

405 See Kirby, The Computer, the Individual, and the Law, 55 AUSTL.

406 See, e.g., D. McQUOID-MASON, THE LAW OF PRIVACY IN SOUTH AFRICA

407 See, e.g., Epstein v. Epstein, 1906 T.H. 87, 88 (Witwatersrand
High Ct.) (opinion of Wessels, J.).

408 See Mhlongo v. Bailey, 1958 (1) S. Afr. 370, 373 (Witwatersrand
Local Div. 1957) (opinion of Kuper, J.) ("[A]n invasion of the
plaintiff's privacy" by the publication of a photograph "constituted an
aggression upon his dignitas."); Kidson v. South Afr. Assoc. Newspapers
Ltd., 1957 (3) S. Afr. 461, 467-68 (Witwatersrand Local Div.) (opinion
of Kuper, J.) (publication of photograph with misleading article
infringed "the right of the plaintiff to personal privacy"); O'Keefe v.
Argus Printing & Publishing Co. Ltd., 1954 (3) S. Afr. 244, 249 (Cape
Provincial Div.) (opinion of Watermeyer, A.J.) (invasion of privacy by
newspaper photograph constitutes an injuria).

409 See, e.g., Maneklal Motilal v. Mohanlal Narotumdas, 44 Indian
customary right of privacy); Gokal Prasad v. Radho, 10 Indian L.R.
Allahabad 358, 385-87 (High Ct. 1888) (opinion of Edge, C.J.) (announcing
recognition of a customary right to privacy after exhaustive review of
previous cases).

410 381 U.S. 479, 484 (1965).


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