



Libel Act 1792

1792 CHAPTER 60 32 Geo 3

An Act to remove Doubts respecting the Functions of Juries in Cases of Libel.

Preamble. Whereas doubts have arisen whether on the trial of an indictment or information for the making or publishing any libel, where an issue or issues are joined between the King and the defendant or defendants, on the plea of not guilty pleaded, it be competent to the jury impanelled to try the same to give their verdict upon the whole matter in issue:

.....
Modifications etc. (not altering text)

C1 Short title given by [Short Titles Act 1896 \(c. 14\)](#)

[1.] On the trial of an indictment for a libel, the jury may give a general verdict upon the whole matter put in issue, and shall not be required by the court to find the defendant guilty merely on proof of the publication, and of the sense ascribed to it in the information.

On every such trial the jury sworn to try the issue may give a general verdict of guilty or not guilty upon the whole matter put in issue upon such indictment or information, and shall not be required or directed by the court or judge before whom such indictment or information shall be tried to find the defendant or defendants guilty merely on the proof of the publication by such defendant or defendants of the paper charged to be a libel, and of the sense ascribed to the same in such indictment or information.

2 But the court shall give their opinion and directions on the matter in issue as in other criminal cases.

Provided always, that on every such trial the court or judge before whom such indictment or information shall be tried shall, according to their or his discretion, give their or his opinion and directions to the jury on the matter in issue between the King and the defendant or defendants, in like manner as in other criminal cases.

Status: Point in time view as at 01/02/1991.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Libel Act 1792 (repealed). (See end of Document for details)

3 Jury may find a special verdict.

Provided also, that nothing herein contained shall extend or be construed to extend to prevent the jury from finding a special verdict, in their discretion, as in other criminal cases.

4 Defendants may move in arrest of judgement, as before passing this Act.

Provided also, that in case the jury shall find the defendant or defendants guilty it shall and may be lawful for the said defendant or defendants to move in arrest of judgement, on such ground and in such manner as by law he or they might have done before the passing of this Act, any thing herein contained to the contrary notwithstanding.

Status:

Point in time view as at 01/02/1991.

Changes to legislation:

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