

Russell Jones & Walker In Sour Grapes Libel Victory Against Random House



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Leading libel and defamation law firm, Russell Jones & Walker, has won a libel victory against publishers Random House on behalf of internationally renowned wine connoisseur Michael Broadbent, who was from 1966 until 1992 the head of Christie's wine department.

The libel action centred on the book *The Billionaire's Vinegar*, the subject of which was the provenance of a number of bottles of wine said to have been owned by Thomas Jefferson. The book made allegations which suggested that Mr Broadbent had behaved in an unprofessional manner in the way in which he had auctioned some of these bottles and that his relationship and dealings with Hardy Rodenstock, who discovered the original collection, was suspected of being improper.

In a statement read out in open court, Random House apologised unreservedly for making the allegations and accepted that they were untrue. It has given an undertaking not to repeat the allegations and paid Mr Broadbent undisclosed damages.

Commenting on the settlement Sarah Webb, head of Russell Jones & Walker's [Defamation](#) department who acted for Mr Broadbent said:

"The *Billionaire's Vinegar* made highly damaging claims about my client that seriously compromised both his professional and personal reputation. We are delighted that Random House has today accepted that these allegations are totally without foundation and avoided the

need to proceed to a full trial. My client is relieved that the good name he has built up over many years as one of the country's leading wine experts has been fully restored."

Notes to editors
Case number: 606990.1

About Russell Jones & Walker

Russell Jones & Walker is a leading national firm of solicitors dedicated to upholding the legal rights of individuals. From the firms foundation in the 1920s the focus has and continues to be, people and those who represent them.

The firm has grown from its trade union roots into a respected national organisation with nine offices across England and Wales, and an associated office in Scotland. The reputation of Russell Jones & Walker is built on the range of expertise offered by its partners and staff and on the scope of their practical experience.

RJW Solicitors represents clients across a range of areas from [personal injury claims](#) work to commercial and criminal litigation, defamation, reputation management, clinical negligence to family law, as well as providing specialties as [employment lawyers](#) and [fraud lawyers](#).

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