

# TOM HUGHES QC

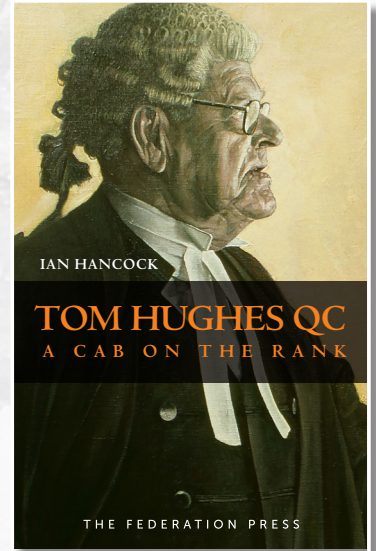
## A Cab on the Rank

Ian Hancock

Tom Hughes is a scion of a notable Sydney family of high achievers. His grandfather was the first Lord Mayor of Sydney, his brother was noted art critic and writer Robert Hughes and his daughter Lucy Turnbull, herself Lord Mayor of Sydney, is married to the current Australian Prime Minister. Admitted to the Sydney Bar in 1949, until his retirement in 2013, Hughes was an icon of the Sydney and Australian Bar. Renowned, respected and sometimes feared for his dominating presence in the courtroom, he appeared in a raft of celebrated cases, became the subject of many media profiles and was, from the '70s to the '90s, the country's most expensive advocate. Equally at home in all jurisdictions, his theatrical style, command of language and forensic skills filled public galleries, exposed witnesses, persuaded juries and ensured that judges paid attention.

Hughes was also a WWII pilot, a politician, an activist federal Attorney-General, a grazier, and a racehorse owner. He survived a broken marriage, a spiteful sacking from ministerial office and a prolonged though not permanent loss of an inherited Catholic faith. He endured years of frustration before finding the right partner to replicate the perfect marriage of his beloved parents. Even in dark times, however, a thorough professional and a prodigious worker, Hughes remained focused on his first love, the law, always upholding its traditions and processes.

In addition to published material, the book draws on a huge trove of personal records, including fee books, intimate diaries, autobiographical jottings and private correspondence, supplemented by interviews with Hughes, his family, friends and colleagues. Using these sources, the book provides insights into a many-sided character – telling the story of how Hughes and his immediate forebears embraced more of their English than their Irish heritage while becoming distinctively Australian. Ian Hancock's book provides a personal perspective on Australian political, social and legal history from before WWII to the present.



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## About the Author:

**Ian Hancock** is an Editorial Fellow of the Australian Dictionary of Biography, part of the National Centre of Biography located in the College of Arts & Social Sciences at the ANU. A graduate of Melbourne and Oxford Universities, he has researched, taught and published in several areas, including African and Australian history and politics, and British imperial history. For ten years he was the historical consultant to the National Archives for the annual release of Cabinet records and has been a member of the National Archives Advisory Council and of the Editorial Advisory Board for the Documents on Australian Foreign Policy.

## From the Preface:

"Many books and chapters have been written about Australian judges who were once barristers, but very few about barristers who never became judges. Although barristers influence decisions, they do not deliver the judgments that become the subject of analysis, criticism or approbation. The legal fraternity, however, frequently identifies them with great victories, and Tom Hughes has had several of those. After six decades at the Bar, Tom Hughes secured a better than the 60 per cent success rate he modestly claims and, more importantly, was considered a role model for a particular kind of advocacy and attained a legendary status as being perhaps the last of his kind. The case for a biography is substantial on these grounds alone, and reinforced because Tom Hughes' story comprises many other narratives." — *Ian Hancock, 2016*

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