

# THE IRON TSAR

THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JOHN HUGHES

## THE BOOK

Born in Merthyr Tydfil in South Wales, John Hughes was a self-made Victorian entrepreneur and inventor, running a complex foundry in Newport by the time he was 36. He then moved to London where despite being only semi-literate he became a very successful industrialist.

In 1870 aged 55, he left his family behind, sailing to Russia with one hundred British workers and all the equipment to build a

This is the remarkable story of a dynamic Welsh entrepreneur who at 55 left his family and success behind in London sailing to the barren Ukrainian Steppe where at the invitation of the Tsarist government, he set up a modern iron and steel complex and built a new city. In so doing, he introduced modern capitalism to Russia and played an important role in industrialising the country.

modern iron and steel works. The company he founded became an important foundation stone in the industrialisation of Russia.

As well as the iron works, he built coal mines, railways and a whole town for his workers where he took a keen interest in their welfare. The town he established became

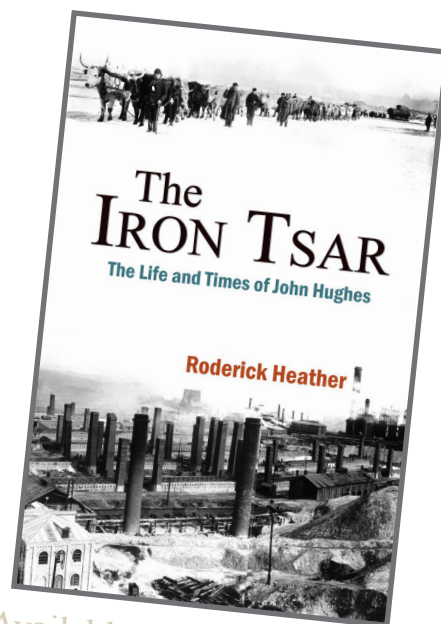
known as Hughesovka and is now the modern Ukrainian city of Donetsk with a population of over one million. This extraordinary story of Hughes' life and times is interwoven with links to some of the most famous people of the period.

## EXCERPT

*In the late summer of 1870, having carefully checked all his preparations, Hughes left England for Ukraine with eight chartered ships. They were full not only with all the initial equipment necessary to establish the works and mines – a group of about a hundred ironworkers and miners mostly from South Wales, plus all their*

Although only semi literate, Hughes' achievements stand comparison with other better known Victorian entrepreneurs

*immediate day-to-day living requirements. Their route was down through the Bay of Biscay, across the Mediterranean then on into the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov. Hughes was around 55 years old when he sailed from England for his new life in Russia. He was moving from the centre of the world's largest empire to the*



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outer reaches of an empire in the world's largest country.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Although Roderick Heather grew up in Leamington Spa he has lived and worked all over the world including Canada - his father's home nation - and Russia. He currently is a Welsh Assembly appointee on the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Management Committee for Wales. He is married with three adult sons.



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Roderick Heather

is available for interviews

Call 01273 261434

or email

[danny@penpress.co.uk](mailto:danny@penpress.co.uk)