

HIDDEN GEMS AND FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

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FREEMAN WILLS CROFTS (1879-1957) - Writer

Freeman Wills Crofts was born in Dublin on 1 June 1879 and brought up in the vicarage in Gilford, Co. Armagh. He was a nephew of Wise, and at the age of 17 was apprenticed to him, rising to the position of Chief Assistant Engineer of the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway in 1922, living in Coleraine, Co. Londonderry. However, it was as a writer of detective fiction that Crofts came to international fame. In 1919, during his absence from work due to illness he wrote his first novel *The Cask* and several others in his home at Coleraine, before moving to Jordanstown, Co. Antrim. In all, he wrote 33 novels and several collections of short stories. In his day, he was known as one of the 'Big Five' writers of the 'Golden Age of Detective Fiction' alongside personalities such as Agatha Christie.

Freeman Wills Crofts died on 11 April 1957