

## HIDDEN GEMS AND FORGOTTEN PEOPLE



### ALEXANDER IRVINE (1863-1941)

#### Writer

Irvine was born, the ninth of twelve children, in Pogue's Entry in the town of Antrim - the street he was later to make famous. As a young man he worked as a newsboy, a miner and a soldier before emigrating to the United States in 1888, where he acquired an education. He graduated from Yale University as a minister of religion and preached for some years in the Church of the Ascension, Fifth Avenue, New York.

During the First World War Irvine served as a morale officer on the western front, reputedly at the request of Lloyd George himself. Irvine's publications include *The Souls Of Poor Folk* (1921) and *The Man From World's End* (1926), as well as the celebrated *My Lady Of The Chimney Corner* (1913), a tribute to his mother, Anna Irvine nee Gilmour.

In 1910 he published an account of his early life *From the bottom up*, in which he recalled that "The world in which I found myself was world of hungry people. My earliest sufferings were the sufferings of hunger - physical hunger. It was not an unusual sight to see the children of our neighbourhood scratching the offal in the gutterways for scraps of meat, vegetables, and refuse. Many times I did so myself."

Alexander Irvine is buried in Antrim Church of Ireland graveyard

**Wesley McCann**