Shirley Jackson was born on December 14, 1916 in San Francisco, California. She went on to become a short story writer whose work ran in magazines like Redbook and The New Yorker, which first published "The Lottery." The highly controversial and famous tale featured a village that took part in an annual death ritual.

Jackson also wrote novels like *The Haunting of Hill House* and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* as well as the witty, embellished memoir *Life Among the Savages*, about her domestic experiences. Often relying on supernatural themes, she was known for tackling provocative, chilling subject matter that was culturally incisive and held metaphors for how people dealt with difference. She was married to critic Stanley Edgar Hyman, with the couple having four children.

Shirley Jackson died on August 8, 1965 from heart failure. Decades later, two of her children, Laurence Jackson Hyman and Sarah Hyman Dewitt, have become editors for a collection of her unpublished works, *Garlic in Fiction*. The book will be released in 2015, helping to mark the 50th anniversary of her death.

The relationship of Shirley Jackson and her family to the village was uneasily nuanced. She wrote the script for a neighborhood production at North Bennington Graded School, and her fictionalized memoir of family life in the village, *Life Among the Savages* (1952), remains a well-loved classic.

Yet her biographer, Judy Oppenheimer, describes a strained relationship between Shirley Jackson and the villagers of North Bennington. She writes that Shirley's children recall a drumbeat of anti-Semitic comments directed at their father, Stanley Edgar Hyman. Ralph Ellison, a regular visitor to the Hyman household in the 1950s, described tense moments of interaction for a black man in a wholly white village. The Hymans engaged in the rituals of Little League yet endured swastikas soaped on their windows.

Shirley Jackson's biographer concludes that despite the difficulties, Shirley most appreciated the villagers' respect for individual privacy. The biography quotes Shirley's son, Barry Hyman:

> You meet [people] in town... You don't ask questions about what goes on in their land, their house, their clan. That's sort of why she wanted to live there. She figured she could be anonymous and just write and be happy and sit out in the sun with the dogs and the cats.

There is currently a revival of interest in Shirley Jackson's work. A recently discovered short story – "Paranoia" – was published in The New Yorker on July 29, 2013. A new biography is being written by the critic Ruth Franklin. All her work is back in print.