

**ANSWER:** Charlotte Jay was the pseudonym of Australian writer Geraldine Mary Jay (1919-1996), who was born in Adelaide, South Australia. She graduated from the University of Adelaide and then worked for twelve years as a shorthand typist in Australia and England, and as a court stenographer in Papua New Guinea before she started writing as a serious vocation.



Jay said when she won the Edgar in 1954, she had never heard of the award, but it later dawned on her that her adventure novel was a departure from the mysteries of Dorothy Sayers (1892-1957) and Agatha Christie (1890-1976), or from American writers who set their crime novels in the backstreets of New York and San Francisco. “I took the crime story out of that arena and put it in the jungle...that struck people as refreshing.”

Geraldine Mary Jay married Albert Halls (1904-1982), an Asian specialist, who worked for UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and traveled broadly with him using the locations as settings for her novels. They married in Lahore, Pakistan in 1951. She said she had the ideal life. “My husband was not a man who wanted a social life. So, he would go off to work in the morning and I would stay at home and write my books.” They had no children and returned to Adelaide, South Australia in 1971 to retire, where Albert became an antique dealer.

Jay said she chose her pseudonym because “Jay” was a family name, and she thought the name “Charlotte” sounded literary.