

= Lemmons =

Lemmons , also known as Gladsmuir and Gladsmuir House , was the home of novelists Kingsley Amis ( 1922 ? 1995 ) and Elizabeth Jane Howard ( 1923 ? 2014 ) on Hadley Common , on the border of north London and Hertfordshire .

The couple bought the Georgian house and its eight acres of land at auction for £ 48 @, @ 000 in 1968 , and lived there until 1976 . The house had been registered as a Grade II listed building in 1949 under the name Gladsmuir , previously known as Gladsmuir House . Jane Howard restored its previous name , Lemmons ; the next owners changed it back to Gladsmuir .

Jane and Kingsley lived at Lemmons with Jane 's mother and brother , two artist friends , and Kingsley 's three children , Philip , Martin and Sally . Several of the family 's novels were written at Lemmons , including Kingsley 's *The Green Man* ( 1969 ) and *The Alteration* ( 1976 ) , Jane 's *Odd Girl Out* ( 1972 ) and *Mr. Wrong* ( 1975 ) , and Martin 's *The Rachel Papers* ( 1973 ) and *Dead Babies* ( 1975 ) .

Cecil Day @-@ Lewis , the poet laureate , his wife , Jill Balcon , and their children , Daniel Day @-@ Lewis and Tamasin Day @-@ Lewis , stayed at Lemmons in the spring of 1972 , when Cecil was dying of cancer . He wrote his last poem in the house , " At Lemmons , " and died there shortly afterwards . Ian Sansom writes that , for the brief period that the Amises , Howards , Day @-@ Lewises and others were in residence , Lemmons became " the most brilliantly creative household in Britain . "

= = History of the house = =

= = = 16th ? 19th century = = =

The land and an earlier house were owned by Henry Bellamy in 1584 . The Quilter family owned the land from 1736 to 1909 ( it was an estate of 23 acres in 1778 ) . A Major Hemery appears to have lived in the house in or around 1881 . Captain Thomas Hall Rokeby Plumer , the 2nd Viscount Plumer , lived there in the 1920s .

The writer Frances Trollope , mother of novelist Anthony Trollope , rented a house on Hadley Common from January 1836 until the early summer of 1838 , possibly Gladsmuir , shortly after the death of her husband and one of her sons . According to Robert Bradford 's biography of Martin Amis , Jane Howard discovered the Trollope connection from the house 's papers and maintained that Frances Trollope had purchased it , although a purchase seems unlikely given the Trollope family 's finances .

Frances Trollope , her daughters , Emily and Cecilia , and two of her sons , Anthony and Tom , moved to Hadley Common from Bruges , Belgium , where they had fled to escape debtors ' prison in England . When Trollope 's husband ( the debtor ) died , the threat of prison receded . Emily had tuberculosis and her doctor advised that winter in England would benefit her .

Trollope described the property as a " pleasant house with a good garden on the common at Hadley , near Barnet , " and her " pretty cottage . " R. H. Super writes that she invited eight guests to stay with her one Christmas , in addition to her family , so referring to it as a cottage was somewhat misleading . The move did not , in the end , help Emily , who died in February 1836 . She was buried in the nearby churchyard at the Church of St Mary the Virgin . Anthony Trollope later placed one of his characters in *The Bertrams* ( 1859 ) in a dull country house in Hadley .

= = = 20th century = = =

Jane Howard found that the house had previously been called Lemmons , and decided to restore that name . It was known as Gladsmuir when they bought it ? from Gladsmuir Heath , the former name of Hadley Common , site of the Battle of Barnet in 1471 during the Wars of the Roses . The house had been registered under that name as a Grade II listed building in 1949 , previously known

as Gladsmuir House , with an address in Hadley Wood Road . As of 2014 the address was listed as Hadley Common .

Made of red brick with a stucco trim , the house has five @-@ bays , two @-@ storeys , sash windows , and a central Doric porch with fluted columns and entablature with triglyphs . There is a later extension and a detached housekeeper 's cottage , Gladsmuir Cottage . The panelled double doors lead to two internal staircases and over 20 rooms , including eight bedrooms , three reception rooms and a large kitchen ; one room contains late @-@ 18th @-@ century medallions .

In the three @-@ acre garden , when Jane and Kingsley lived there , there was an old barn that was itself a listed building , a conservatory and a gravel drive , three descending lawns , a rose garden , cedar trees , a mulberry tree ( where Lucy Snowe , their cat , was buried ) , and a weathervane dating to 1775 . At the end of the garden , through a five @-@ bar gate , there lay a five @-@ acre meadow that also belonged to the property and had been let out to two local women for their horses .

= = Lemmons household = =

= = Residents = =

Kingsley and Jane married in 1965 after meeting two years earlier at the Cheltenham Literary Festival , which she had helped to organize . In 1947 she had left her first husband , Peter Scott , with whom she had a daughter , and in 1963 divorced her second , Jim Douglas @-@ Henry . Kingsley was still married to his first wife , Hilly Bardwell , when he and Jane began an affair .

The couple first lived together in an Edwardian house at 108 Maida Vale , London , W2 . They bought Lemmons at auction for £ 48 @, @ 000 in 1968 , and lived there from 28 November that year . Kingsley wrote to the poet Philip Larkin in April 1969 :

This is a bloody great mansion , in the depths of the country though only 15 miles from the centre , and with lots of room for you to come and spend the night . "

The core household consisted of Jane and Kingsley ; Jane 's mother , Katherine ( " Kit " ) , a former ballerina , who died in the house in 1972 ; one of Jane 's brothers , Colin ( " Monkey " ) ; and artists Sargy Mann and Terry Raybould . The housekeeper , Lily Uniacke , lived in Gladsmuir Cottage . Kingsley 's children , Philip , Martin and Sally lived in the house from time to time , mostly outside term time , or at weekends in the case of Philip and Martin ; the children were 17 , 16 and 12 when Kingsley and Jane married . Sally moved into Lemmons in 1970 when Martin was in his second year at Oxford .

It was Jane who encouraged Martin to start reading . When she and Kingsley married , Martin was reading comics and Harold Robbins ; she recommended Jane Austen , Charles Dickens , Scott Fitzgerald , Evelyn Waugh , Graham Greene and William Golding . She also advised him to try for a place at Oxford , for which he said he owed her an " unknowable debt . " After 12 months at Sussex Tutors ( a crammer in Brighton ) in 1967 ? 1968 , he passed six O @-@ levels and 3 A @-@ levels , and won an exhibition to Exeter College , Oxford . He graduated in 1971 with a congratulatory first in English .

Martin lived at Lemmons until Christmas that year , after which he started work at The Times Literary Supplement and moved to central London , visiting his father and Jane at weekends . He shared a maisonette in or near Pont Street , SW1 , with a friend , Rob Henderson ? Henderson was Charles Highway in The Rachel Papers , Gregory Riding in Success ( 1978 ) , and Kenrik in The Pregnant Widow ( 2011 ) . When they ran out of money , Martin found himself a " dust @-@ furred bed @-@ sit in Earls Court . " He described Lemmons in Experience ( 2000 ) :

The house on Hadley Common was a citadel of riotous insolvency ? not just at Christmas but every weekend . There was a great sense of in @-@ depth back @-@ up , a cellar , a barrel of malt whisky , a walk @-@ in larder : proof against snowstorm or shutdown . I think it was that Christmas morning [ 1977 ] , that all four Amises , with breakfast trays on their laps , watched Journey to the Centre of the Earth ? then the visit to the pub , then the day @-@ long , the week @-@ long lunch .

And with Kingsley the hub of all humour and high spirits , like an engine of comedy ... I felt so secure in that house ? and , clearly , so insecure elsewhere ? that I always experienced a caress of apprehension as I climbed into the car on Sunday night , any Sunday night , and headed back to the motorway and Monday , to the flat or the flatlet , the street , the job , the tramp dread , the outside world .

= = = Novels = = =

Kingsley wrote ten books at Lemmons , in his wood @-@ panelled study on the ground floor , including The Green Man ( 1969 ) , What Became of Jane Austin ? And Other Questions ( 1970 ) , Girl , 20 ( 1971 ) , The Riverside Villas Murder ( 1973 ) , Ending Up ( 1974 ) , The Alteration ( 1976 ) , and part of Harold 's Years ( 1977 ) . Jane finished Something in Disguise ( 1969 ) , Odd Girl Out ( 1972 ) and Mr. Wrong ( 1975 ) , though she spent most of her time looking after the house .

Martin wrote his first two novels , The Rachel Papers ( 1973 ) and Dead Babies ( 1975 ) , in his bedroom above Kingsley 's study . The first draft of The Rachel Papers was started in July 1970 and completed in September 1972 ; it won the Somerset Maugham Award in 1974 , which Kingsley had won in 1955 for Lucky Jim ( 1954 ) . When he heard the prize had gone to Martin , Kingsley said words to the effect that , " Good that it 's back in the family . It should keep the old prig turning in his grave , " a reference to Maugham 's view that Lucky Jim 's characters were illustrative of the country 's moral decline .

= = = Guests = = =

Tamasin Day @-@ Lewis wrote that Lemmons was always full of " impossibly glamorous older people and a core commune of writers , painters and inventors ; even the dogs and cats shared a communal basket , and there were always stray writers and publishers whose marriages were unravelling . " Gully Wells , Martin 's girlfriend and step @-@ daughter of the philosopher A. J. Ayer , said that " a more hospitable household would be impossible to imagine . "

House guests included Martin 's close friends Christopher Hitchens , James Fenton , Clive James and Julian Barnes , and his and Kingsley 's literary agents Tom Maschler and Pat Kavanagh ; Pat 's sister , Julie ( Martin 's girlfriend ) ; the Australian psychiatrist James Durham , Pat 's partner at the time . Pat Kavanagh and Julian Barnes married in September 1979 .

The Lemmons visitors ' book also listed John Betjeman and Philip Larkin ; writers Tina Brown and Paul Johnson , and Johnson 's wife , Marigold ; Iris Murdoch and her husband , John Bayley ; journalist Bernard Levin and John Gross , editor of the Times Literary Supplement ; the broadcaster Huw Wheldon and his wife , novelist Jacqueline Wheldon ; historians Robert Conquest and Paul Fussell ; and , for one visit , novelist Elizabeth Bowen .

The Day @-@ Lewises moved into Lemmons in the spring of 1972 when Tamasin 's father , the poet laureate Cecil Day @-@ Lewis , was dying of cancer . The families were close . Cecil and Jane had been lovers after her first divorce and Jane was Tamasin 's godmother . Tamasin and Martin had also started dating .

Tamasin and her brother , Daniel , and their mother , Jill Balcon , stayed at the house for five weeks , until Cecil died on 22 May . Jane wrote : " Nobody was better at getting the utmost pleasure from the simplest things as Cecil : a bunch of flowers , a toasted bun , a gramophone record ... a piece of cherry cake , a new thriller ... " He dedicated his final poem , " At Lemmons , " to " Jane , Kingsley , Colin , Sargy " : " I accept my weakness with my friends ' / Good natures sweetening each day my sick room . "

= = Move to Hampstead = =

Lemmons was featured in Woman 's Journal in June 1976 in an advertisement for wallpaper by Arthur Sanderson & Sons . The company decorated a room and took a photograph of Kingsley and Jane sitting in it , published under the headline " Very Sanderson , Very Amis . "

The couple sold Lemmons shortly after this , for £ 105 @, @ 000 . They moved to a smaller house , Gardnor House , in Flask Walk , Hampstead , London NW3 . Kingsley was apparently tired of living so far from central London . Jane loved Lemmons , but was exhausted from the effort of running it . Kingsley expected her to do most of the cooking and domestic work , for the family plus assorted guests , as well as drive him around and do the finances and much of the gardening . Women for Kingsley were " for bed and board , " as Jane put it . She ended up on Tryptizol and Valium . Sargy Mann said that Lemmons was " wonderful for everyone but Jane . "

Jane left the marriage in 1980 because she realized that Kingsley did not like her ; her lawyer gave him a letter the day she was expected back from a health farm . Neither of them remarried , and they never spoke to each other again . " [ T ] he big house disappeared , " Martin wrote , " and so did love . "