

William Anthony Hawthorn (1906-1942) and descendants



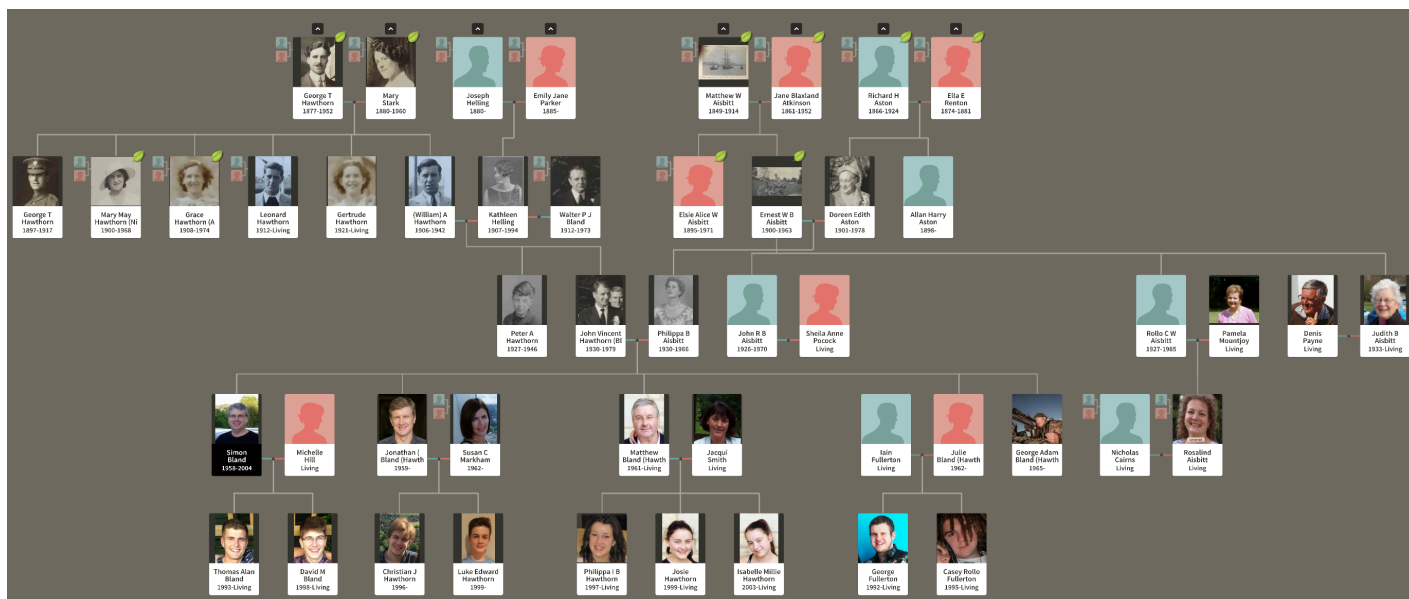
1930s: William Anthony (right) and brother Leonard Hawthorn

Notes from Joss Hawthorn (August 2017), jbh@aao.gov.au

With thanks:

Kathleen Hawthorn/Bland, née Helling (grandmother)
Carole Davis, née Austen

Family tree:



Much of what I know of the Hawthorn family comes from my grandmother Kathleen (née Helling) and very recently from Carole Davis (née Austen), daughter of Grace Hawthorn and Charles Austen. On the one hand, Kathleen was uncompromising and not an easy person to deal with; on the other hand, she had a remarkable memory and most “facts” I have been able to check to date appear to be true.



Kathleen grew up in Acton, London as an only child to a 24-year career policeman Joseph Helling, whom she adored, and her mother Emily Jane Parker. I have a newspaper cutting from the early 1920s describing how Joseph saved the life of a drowning woman (Appendix C). Many times, Kathleen told me the story of how Joseph went under cover in Eire to capture or kill two Irishmen (Kennedy, Brown) who killed a British politician, Sir Henry Morris. She insists they lived in a boarded up house in Stratford upon Avon for 6 months after the killings; this address seems to corroborate, but I cannot find a reference to Sir Henry’s death at the hands of the IRA. The Helling family descend from the Hellons, the Orangemen who came over with William of Orange in the 17th century. Kathleen was a staunch “protestant” her entire life. She would not attend the wedding of one of my brothers because it was held in a Catholic church, for example.

This photograph is a copy of an original and has begun to fade. It was taken of Kathleen on the 6th June 1925, at 4pm to be precise, an irrelevant detail for her to add on the back of the picture which was typical of her. My strongest memory of Kathleen was her easy facility with men who found her charming. In the 1970s, she had boyfriends younger than her son John. Kathleen was a good singer and a great raconteur. She was not a particularly kind person, refusing my mother the chance to stay with her when my brother Matthew was at Great Ormond Street in 1964.

In December 1926, she married William Anthony Hawthorn (she referred to him as Bill or William; I refer to him below as WA) and had two sons, Anthony Peter (1927) and my father John Vincent Stanley Hawthorn (1930). At the outbreak of the war, my father John was shipped off to an aunt in Wales.



On my visit to see Carole Austen and Keith Davis in Cheltenham (Oct 2017), I was able to scan the photos above. The left is very precious: the only surviving family photo of WA, Kathleen, Peter and John as a baby. I think this may be Cliftonville, Margate which they used to visit often. The teenage boy is unidentified? Brother Leonard? The right photo is of WA with baby Peter back in London.



Peter stayed in Acton only to die from “miliary” tuberculosis at 19 years of age in 1946 (see Appendix A). Kathleen told me that he used to go fishing a lot and came back one night soaking wet and in a sorry state; she said that this was the prelude to his illness. Peter was kind and looked out for John as a young boy. I have a beautiful photo of them together at the age of 11 and 8, or so – see below. Peter’s death certificate (Appendix B) identifies his occupation as photographer, maybe inspired by his father working on Fleet Street? Carole Davis reports (Aug 2017) that cousin Sheila and her father Leonard visited Peter in hospital before he died. Sheila lives in Southampton, UK today.

John left home at 14 and served at HMS Ganges, Shotley by the water at Felixstowe, Suffolk. He completed the course at the age of 16. I have a copy of the discharge papers from 1947. Sadly, John was away from home when Peter died. John adored Peter and felt great sadness at his death. After this time, John enlisted in the Royal Navy which was to engage him in an interesting career until 1956. I have many original telegrams he sent Kathleen during those years from all over the world. I have a complete list of the ships (both royal and merchant) and submarines (2 years) he served on.

WA was a professional printer on Fleet Street. He died tragically in 16 January 1942 from lymphatic leukemia

(Appendix A), a fact I have long known from Kathleen that he died from a blood disorder. Kathleen told me that he served as a gunner on merchant ships taking food and munitions to Russia. She claimed that he was given the wrong blood-type injections for this new role and this somehow triggered the leukemia; it doesn't sound plausible to me unless the blood was tainted. A short while later he was screaming in agony and she went with him in an ambulance to Acton hospital during heavy aircraft bombing. She said it was the worst experience of her life: he was screaming and the bombs were dropping around them. He died in hospital. Carole Davis reports (Aug 2017) that her mother, Grace, sister to WA, was close to him and felt his loss. John never told me of his feelings towards his father, not that I can recall.



I really like this dynamic photo of WA (left), brother Leonard (middle) who lived to 97 dying as recently as 2010!, Harry Newman (right); sister Gertrude is on the left. Harry and Dorothy Newman married Gertrude and Leonard Hawthorn, respectively. This is a wedding photo for Leonard and Dorothy (known as Boisie). I have quite a few group photos of WA now. In the Appendices, I show a large group shot of the Austen and Hawthorn families that were close and grew up together in London. WA is at the back left of the shot; Grandpa Austen who owned the travel agency on Bond St, Ealing (where the Austens lived) is to the left holding a cigar. The tall house had a den where the Hawthorns and Austens grew up playing together.

William is buried in Acton Cemetery in or near this churchyard (see Appendix).



In March 1943, Kathleen married Walter Bland, a gentle chartered surveyor that I remember well at their Acton house. Walter is seen standing beside Kathleen in the wedding picture below. He was well educated and collected magnificent tin soldiers. He had a gazebo at the Acton house full of glass cabinets with hand-painted soldiers from every Empire engagement. Kathleen sold these off after his death. Walter gave me his Latin primer, Haslett primer, 1920 dictionary, Shakespeare and complete set of Dickens, all of which I still have in my library in Sydney.

After the wedding, Kathleen informed John, a 13 year old, that he was to be adopted and should take the new name; this simple act is something he grew to regret because he sensed even as a teenager that the rest of the Hawthorn family were not impressed. I have a copy of the adoption order. After John

died in 1979, we changed our names back to Hawthorn as he had wished. (I publish as Bland-Hawthorn because I was registered as J. Bland at the beginning of my PhD; I am Hawthorn in my private life.)

John joined HMS Ganges training centre in Portsmouth at 14 or 15 yrs of age, apparently by misreporting his age. He served in the navy until becoming blind in one eye from being hit by an SOS firework in Durban, South Africa in 1956. (I did not find out about his eye until 1975 when I was playing badminton with him at Stursdon, Kent; he kept missing simple return shots on his right side.) John had enhanced musculature (like his super fit uncle, George Hawthorn), did gymnastic rings, water polo and boxing for the navy. Impressively, he was in the Field Guns Crew at Earl's Court in 1953 (coronation year) and 1954, and performed with the gymnastics ladder team there also. We still have various photos and medals from those years. There are youtube videos of those days although many of the young men look indistinguishable at the low resolution of the films.

Here are some warm photos from John's navy days, what he often called some of the best (and worst) days of his life. I have more of these stored in old diaries. The bottom left photo is John smoking in Rome, I think, and the way I remember him. To the bottom right is John at Seletar, Singapore (HMS Terror training camp, 1951), now known as Sembawang Camp.



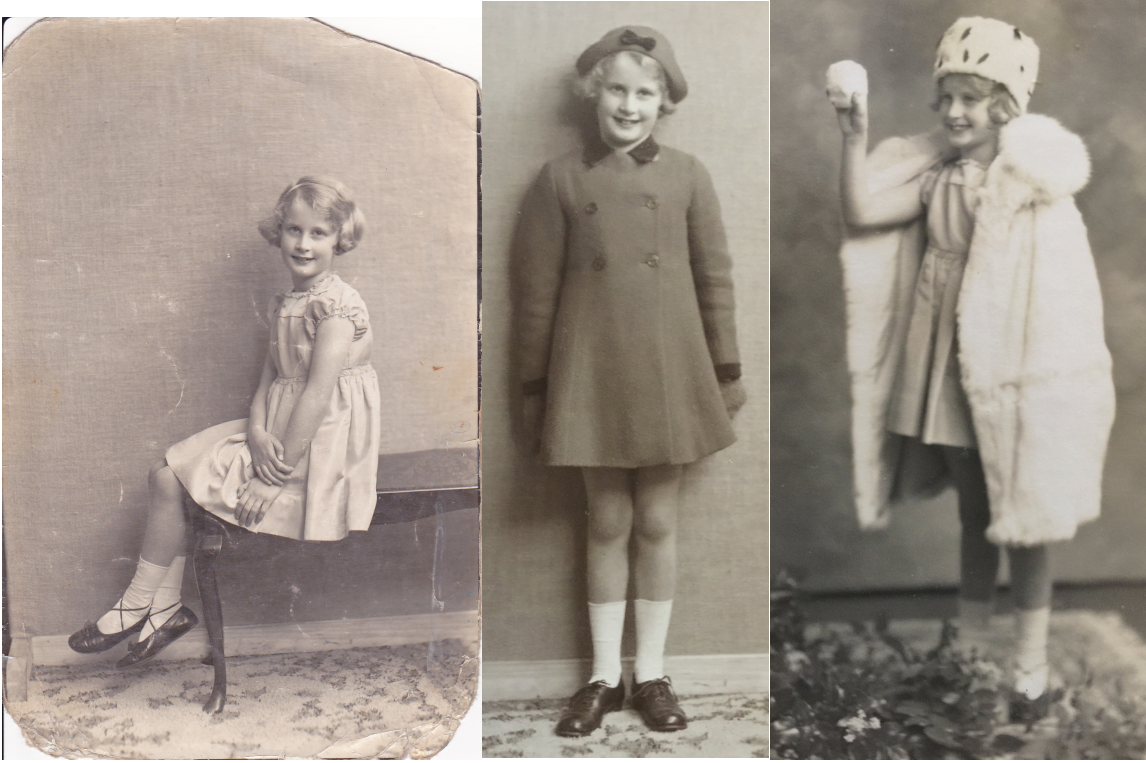
In 1956, he was billeted out of the navy and thereafter trained as a farmer near Newdigate, Surrey. There he met Philippa Aisbitt who was working on a farm there. When I visited Newdigate in the 1980s, they remembered Philippa and her girlfriends well and said that she was due to marry one of the local

eligible bachelors, a lawyer. I have wonderful photos of Philippa riding with the fox hunt; the local pub took the picture off the wall and said "You should have it." They remember John appearing seemingly "out of nowhere" and marrying Philippa within a short time in 1957. One of the women, Diana Brooker, visited me in Sydney in about 2000 and confirmed these stories.

The wedding photo below shows John and Philippa, and my cousins Jane (left) and Jill Tassell. John's mother Kathleen is to his right with her second husband Walter. Philippa's mother and father are to her left, Doreen and Ernest. Philippa's sister Judith (to her left) is still alive in 2017 (84) and living in Aldeburgh, Suffolk.



John and Philippa had five children (Simon, Jonathan – that's me!, Matthew, Julie, George). After 1958, John worked at a series of farms. His first was in Wing, Buckinghamshire. Then we moved to Netherswell Manor Farm below Stow-on-the-Wold in 1964. This was the last period we were all together as a happy family – I remember those days so well. My father smoked heavily which was unfortunate for my asthmatic mother; I remember her unceasing coughing in her last months. I don't know whether people understood the connection. Tragically, Philippa died of an extreme asthma attack on March 25th 1966 (Lady Day); she is buried today at the "cemetery at the top of the hill" above Netherswell, something of a site of pilgrimage even to this day for our family. She left behind a 7, 6, 4, 2 and 1 yr old. It is no exaggeration to say that Philippa was universally loved. She had a very sweet and loving disposition; people remember her very fondly even to this day. These photos from her time at the Rookery, Middleton Tyas, capture something of her spirit:



John was helped for a year with the children by his mother-in-law Doreen and brother-in-law Rollo who moved into the cottage next door. In 1967, John applied to run a sheep station in Adelaide, South Australia but the Australian Embassy would not grant him a visa without a wife. This was the era of the "Ten Pound Pom" when Australia's "white only policy" was to heavily recruit Europeans to fill the country, but they wanted whole families to ensure they were not a burden on the state.

Instead, Simon, Jonathan and Matthew were sent in 1967 to the Fegan's childrens home in Broadstairs, Kent. Julie and George returned with Doreen to Canterbury, Kent where Doreen and her son Rollo cared for them. In 1970, Simon and I were sent to Kingham Hill Boarding School in the Cotswolds, coincidentally just 5 miles from the Netherswell Manor farm. Matthew joined us in 1972 and George followed in 1975. John continued to farm in places near to us, first in Kent then later in middle England and the Cotswolds.

Julie moved to Bury-St-Edmunds to attend a girl's school and was cared for by Judith and her husband Canon Denis Payne. John died at 48 in 1979. We all went on to higher education and ultimately married. I spent a decade working in universities and observatories in the US (Hawaii, Texas) and most of my adult years in Australia. Today, I live in Sydney, Australia; Matthew lives in Kent; Julie lives in Poole, Dorset; and George lives in Kalispell, Montana after having spent many years in Honolulu, Hawaii. Simon died in 2004 but with his wife Michelle had two boys Tom (23) and David (20). Matthew and his partner Jackie have three girls, Pippa (19), Josie (17) and Isabelle (14). Julie and Iain have sons Casey (22) and George (24). I married Susan and have two boys Christian (21) and Luke (17). George does not have children. I am happy to report that all nine offspring (ages in the range 14 to 24) are just delightful. The oldest George will be the first to marry next Easter in 2018 (Salzburg, Austria). I get back to the UK two or three times a year so I maintain contact with them.

Appendices

APPENDIX A: William Anthony Hawthorn's Burial Site

Gunner William W Hawthorn

[Memorial](#)[Photos](#)[Flowers](#)[Share](#)[Edit](#)

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Birth: unknown
Death: Jan. 16, 1942

Inscription:
Royal Artillery


Note: 1128530

Burial:
[Acton Cemetery](#)
Acton
London Borough of Ealing
Greater London, England
Plot: Row A. Sec. S. Coll. grave 153.

Maintained by: [IWPP Custodial Account](#)
Originally Created by: [International Wargraves](#)
...
Record added: Sep 18, 2007
Find A Grave Memorial# 21644724




Added by: [julia&keld](#)



Cemetery Photo
Added by: [Martin Tolley](#)

APPENDIX B: William Anthony and Peter Hawthorn Death Certificates

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF DEATH



GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

Application Number 6244489-1

REGISTRATION DISTRICT		MAIDSTONE	
1946	DEATH in the Sub-district of Malling		in the County of Kent


Columns:-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
No.	When and where died	Name and surname	Sex	Age	Occupation	Cause of death	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar
275	Eleventh October 1946 Roston Hall Sanatorium, Aylesford, Ks	Peter Anthony Hawthorn	Male	19 Years	of 120, Litchfield Street, London W.12. a Photographer	is Military Tuberculosis. Certified by P. Temple Wise M.D.	F. E. Hughes Matron Roston Hall Aylesford	Twelfth October 1946	P. B. Pence Registrar

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Deaths in the District above mentioned.

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the 2nd day of February 2015

DYD 816215

See note overleaf




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WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY.

JB F

7284633 84108 04/14 3MTSSD 035202

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF DEATH



GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

Application Number 6244496-1

REGISTRATION DISTRICT		BRENTFORD	
1942	DEATH in the Sub-district of Acton		in the County of Middlesex


Columns:-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
No.	When and where died	Name and surname	Sex	Age	Occupation	Cause of death	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar
193	Seventeenth January 1942 Acton General Hospital Acton W.3	William Anthony Hawthorne	Male	35 Years	of 12, East Acton Lane Acton W.3 Lithographic Printer	Pulmonary Infarction due to lymphatic leukaemia Certified by Harold G. Broadbridge Esq. M.R.C.S. after PM without inquest	16 Hawthorne Avenue Widow of deceased 12 East Acton Lane Acton	Twelfth January 1942	P. B. Pence Registrar

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Deaths in the District above mentioned.

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the 2nd day of February 2015

DYD 816259

See note overleaf

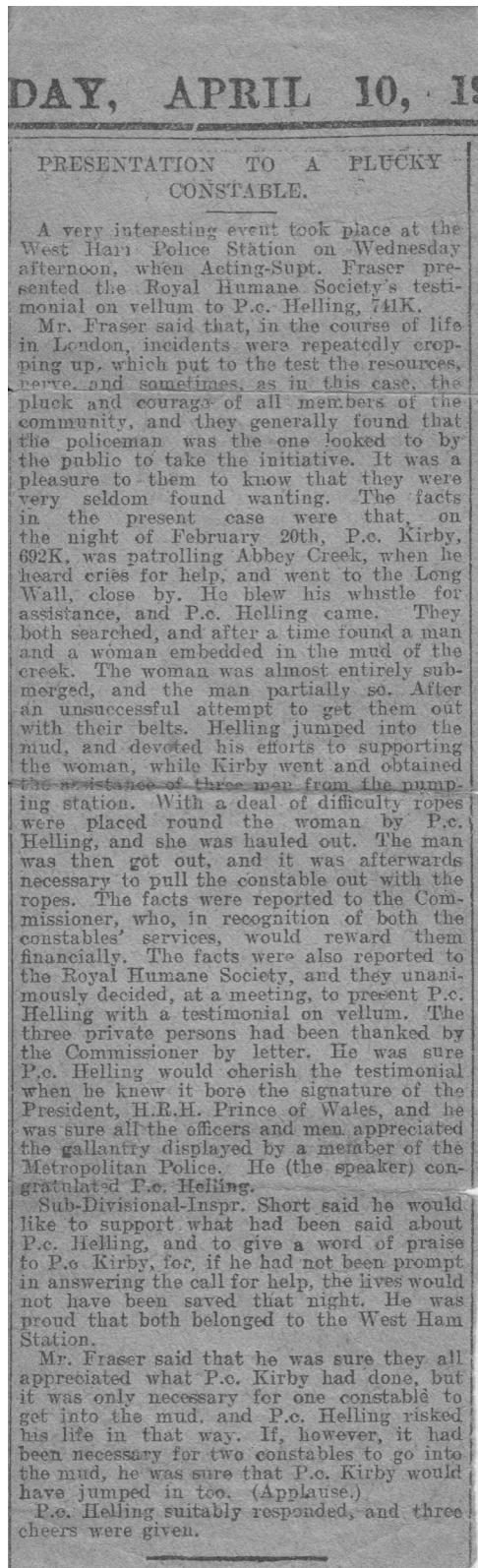


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7284633 84108 04/14 3MTSSD 035202

APPENDIX C: Joseph Helling



West Ham police station (64 West Ham Lane), 1895-1969. The National Archives lists Joseph Helling, warrant number 92742, as joining on 26 Dec 1905 and leaving on 23 July 1929. He was last posted to A Division as a Police Constable.

APPENDIX D: Austen and Hawthorn clans together and the key to their names



