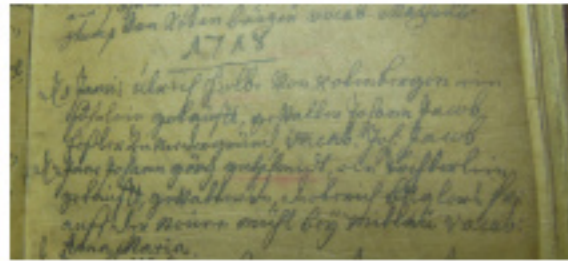




HOW THE HOLWICKS CAME TO AMERICA

This is the story of Johann Jacob Holben and how he came to America. He is the ancestor of all the Holwicks (we changed how we spelled the name after we came here.) Johann Jacob was born in the small village of Rothenbergen in Germany on Christmas Day in 1717, more than three hundred years ago.

The pastor of the church wrote down his birth in a book – the book and the church still exist today.



For many generations his family lived in Rothenbergen and farmed the land, living off of what they grew. His family had eleven children and Johann Jacob was in the middle with the youngest being 14 years younger than him, and the oldest being 18 years older than him. His mother kept having children for 33 years!



This is the church on the hill that Johann Jacob would have attended with his family. The tower was built more than 500 years ago!

It was hard to live in Germany back then. Their farms were small and land was very expensive. There were many wars and one of them lasted 30 years and killed half of the people in that area. Afterwards people were very scared and turned to superstition. They thought that witches were causing all their problems and so they rounded them up and did away with them. Two of Johann Jacob's great-grandmothers died this way.



Witches on trial in Germany



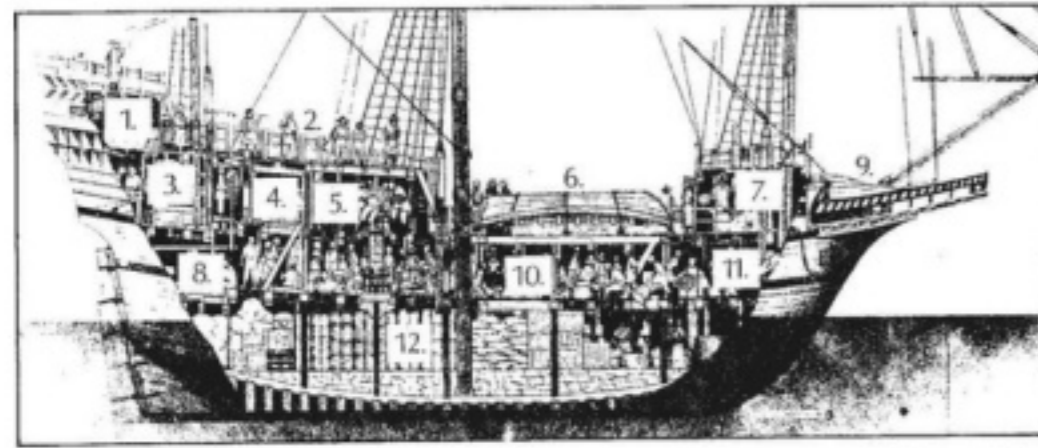
The destruction of the 30 Years War



Over in America, a man named William Penn had started a colony called Pennsylvania ("Penn's Woods"). He had a lot of good land but no people to live on it so he invited Germans to come and buy some of his land for only a little money. Thousands of them decided to go, included three of Johann Jacob's brothers.



Finally they landed in the richest city in America, Philadelphia, at Mifflin's Wharf. All the men marched to the courthouse and swore they would be loyal to the King of England. Johann Jacob was able to sign his own name on the document – not everyone could read and write back then. Those who were poor had to go back to the boat until someone gave them enough money to pay for their voyage; in return, the person had to be their servant for many years. If someone in your family died on the journey, you had to pay for them, too.



- | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Captain's Charrhouse | 4. Steerag... | 7. Fo'c'sle | 10. The Tween Decks |
| 2. Quarterdeck | 5. Capstan | 8. The Tiller Flat | 11. Anchor Windlass |
| 3. Great Cabin | 6. Main Deck | 9. Beakhead | 12. Main Hold |

It was a very hard journey with ships that had no motors, only sails, and the trip often lasted seven weeks. Many people died on the way over, including one of his brothers. The two who survived found that Pennsylvania was all they hoped it would be, and wrote a letter back telling Johann Jacob to come over and join them.

For LONDONDERRY,
 The Ship Francis and Elizabeth,
 GEORGE NORTH, Commander, Burthen
 350 Tons, mounted with Eight Guns,
 Men answerable:
WILL sail in Thirty Days: Takes
 Flax-seed or Freight, at Ten Shillings per Hogshhead.
 Any Person having occasion to ship that Way, may apply
 to Walter Goodman, of Philadelphia, or to the Master of
 the said Ship, now lying at Mifflin's Wharff.

Pennsylvania Gazette, 28 October 1742

In 1742 at the age of 25 that is what he did. He would have traveled down the Rhine River to Rotterdam in the Netherlands, then sailed to a port in England called Deal. From there he got on a ship called the "Francis & Elizabeth" with 200 other passengers, most of them Germans like him.



Germans land in Pennsylvania



Mifflin's Wharf is now filled in. It was near One Water Street Apartments and the Benjamin Franklin Bridge.

Apparently many people did not like this system because a newspaper that advertised the return voyage of the "Francis & Elizabeth" also has a lot of ads asking for the return of runaway servants. It also had ads for the sale of black slaves. Johann Jacob did not have to become a servant, probably because his family helped pay his way over.

RUN away from John M^cMackin, of Buckingham Township, Bucks County, an Irish Servant Lad, about eighteen Years of Age, five Foot four Inches high, named Henry Bleakly, but he has changed his Name to John Sempell, and pretends to be looking for Creatures, or to be lost: Had on when he went away, an old felt Hat with a Hole burnt in the Brim, old linnen Cap, or else very short Hair, an old greasy Jacket much patch'd with Cloth almost of the same Colour, an old coarse Shirt very much patch'd, Buck-skin Breeches had no Buttons at the Knees, light blue Stockings broke at the Heels, old Shoes with Thongs in them; a full Face, and a little out-mouth'd, thick Lips, and holds his Face very high. Whoever takes up and secures the said Servant, so that his Master may have him again, shall have Twenty Shillings Reward, and reasonable Charges, paid by
John M^cMackin, ©

Pennsylvania Gazette, 28 October 1742

To be Sold, by Christopher Clymer,
A Parcel of likely young Negro Men,
and a Parcel of Woollen dry Goods, newly imported.

Johann Jacob Holben traveled 67 miles to some new land that had just been purchased from the Indians. There were no roads, just Indian trails. These went along the top of the hills to avoid the swamps below and people who might attack you. The road to his farm is now called Holben Valley Road. His land was nothing but forest and few other European people were there - he was one of the first settlers in what became the village of Weisenberg, Pennsylvania.



He began cutting down trees and built a log cabin. Within a year he also found a wife named Catharina who was also a German. Almost everyone in that area was, and they all spoke German. Johann Jacob and Catharina started having kids right away and had six in all, two girls and four boys.



There were no machines back then. All the work was done with animals and your own hands.





*The original church was built from logs.
This is their fourth building.*

They were a hard-working family and very religious. Johann Jacob was a Reformed Christian (like the Presbyterians) and right after he built his log cabin, he helped build a church. He was a young man but they made him an elder in the church which was a very important decision. The church has had several buildings but it still serves God today.



Johann Jacob tried to live a moral life. Since the roads were so bad, many farmers had trouble selling their grain far away so they turned it into whiskey. Many farmers became alcoholics but not Johann Jacob. He stayed sober so he could build a better life for his children. It wasn't easy but after 25 years he had fifty acres of cleared land, three hundred acres of woodland, three horses, and three cows.



Pennsylvania could be just as dangerous as Germany. Their little log cabin did not have a front door. Instead, the family would climb up an outside ladder into the loft where they slept.

There is a family legend that wolves from the forest would howl at night, and sometimes they tried to climb the ladder into the cabin, or clamber up the log walls. The family had to fight them off!



There were also Indian attacks. When Johann Jacob arrived in 1742 there was a peace treaty between the settlers and the Indians but ten years later more fighting began.



Many times the Indians attacked because they were treated very badly by the settlers. It is estimated that there were 15,000 Indians in Pennsylvania in 1730 but by 1790 they had dwindled to only 1,300. Some were killed or driven off by the settlers but thousands died from smallpox, a disease brought to America by the Europeans.

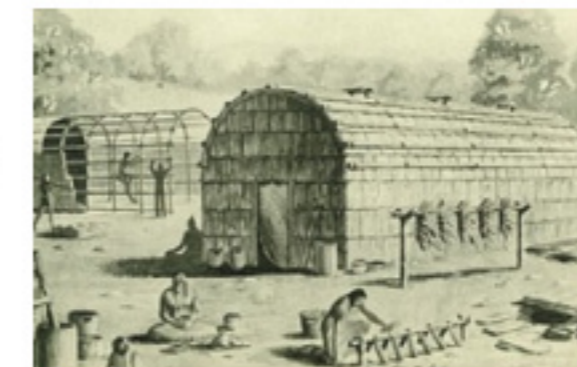


Weisenberg (red circle) was in Iroquois Indian territory

The settlers also cheated the Indians. An infamous swindle was called "The Walking Purchase." The Indians agreed to sell some settlers land just east of Weisenberg, as much land as a "man could walk through in a day and a half of sunlight" or 18 hours. The settlers agreed, then found a man who could run very fast. They made a special path for him through the woods and cut down any trees or bushes in his way and he covered 65 miles. The settlers got ten times as much land as the Indians expected. Because of many mean things like this, the Indians did not like or trust the whites.



Iroquois lived in bark houses instead of teepees



In 1757 Indians attacked a German home just five miles away and killed and [CENSORED] ten settlers, including six children. Six years later twenty settlers were killed on the other side of Weisenberg but Johann Jacob's village was always safe.

After a while the Indians were driven away and the land had peace. But new trouble was brewing. Great Britain wanted to squeeze more money from the colonies in America so they raised taxes. The people in America rebelled and fought the British in a war called the American Revolution. We decided we wanted to be a free country so on the Fourth of July in 1776 our leaders signed the Declaration of Independence. It was translated into German for all the settlers in Pennsylvania.



Battle of Lexington and Concord

*Declaration of Independence
in German for Pennsylvania*



We had to fight a war to become a country. All four of Johann Jacob's sons joined the local army called the Pennsylvania militia. They only had to serve for two months a year and that way they could still take care of their farms. Over the next seven years the Holben boys did not do any fighting but protected their region from Indians who were being paid by the British to cause trouble.



*Pennsylvania
Militiaman*

After the war was over most of the Holben clan stayed near Weisenberg. In 1794 Johann Jacob Holben died and was buried near the church he loved. They just took a rough flat stone from a field and scratched his name on it. Many of the gravestones in that cemetery are written in German. Most of his children settled in Weisenberg and there are descendants who live there to this day.



But a few of them did what many Americans have always done – they moved west to find new opportunities. One son, Johann Wendel Holwich (notice the name change) settled in Canton, Ohio, which became a major manufacturing center. His son Jonathan began spelling the last name HOLWICK with a "k". Jonathan stayed in Canton but his son Daniel moved further west to Illinois.



*Some of Jonathan's other
descendants stayed in Canton and
built a coffee grinder factory. Your
family has one of these.*



The Holwick family in 1906 on their farm.



Maynard fell in love with a beautiful young woman named Mildred Maxfield. They got married and had two children. The first one died as a baby. The second one was my father, William Bruce Holwick.



Most of the Holwicks in Illinois were farmers. They often ran a store on the side to make a little extra money. Farming was very hard work out in the hot sun. The little boy on the horse is my grandfather, William Maynard Holwick. He hated life on the farm and headed to the big city of Chicago as fast as he could.



He only had an 8th-grade education, but he was very smart and hardworking. He got a job with the Illinois Central Railroad. Railroads were a big business back then.



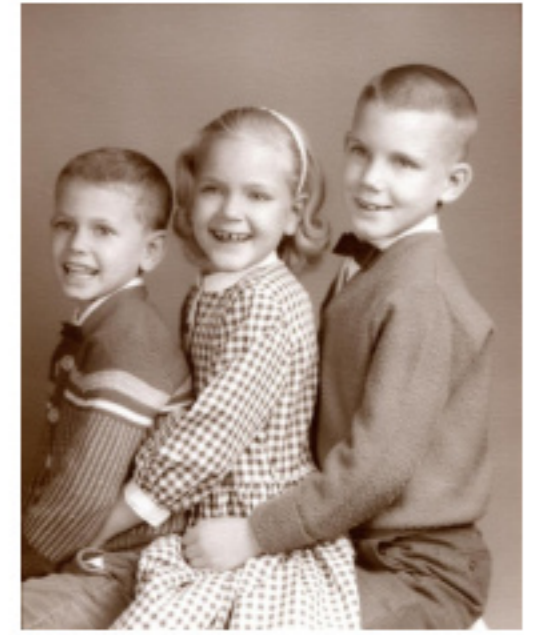
Grandpa and Grandma always seemed old-fashioned to us. They lived on the South Shore of Chicago and took us to Rainbow Beach when we visited them. They could see Lake Michigan from their apartment.



My father, William Bruce Holwick, grew up in Illinois, Iowa and Kentucky. They moved wherever the Illinois Central Railroad wanted his dad to work. Dad was born in exciting times. Gangsters firing Thompson submachine guns terrorized Chicago and the Great Depression put millions of people out of work, though Grandpa Holwick always had a job.



Your grandfather, William David Holwick, was born in 1955 in Japan. Their Japanese house had paper walls. His Japanese babysitter called him a Fat Little Elephant. When he was two years old they took a ship to the United States. He threw up the whole way.



The most exciting event was World War II. He lied about his age to join the Army and was sent to the Pacific just after the war ended. He came back to go to college and met his sweetheart, Margaret Ann Holwick. They eloped, which made his parents very sad. They moved to Japan, where I was born, and spent many years in Germany.



David became an Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts and loved to go camping. He went to high school in Heidelberg, Germany. Their graduation (and prom) took place in a castle. When he was a junior in high school he asked Jesus to be his Savior and began studying the Bible.



In 1969 he was sent to the war in Vietnam. They flew around in helicopters and two of the ones he was in crashed. He worked mostly with Vietnamese soldiers instead of Americans. Some of his friends died in the war.



David went to a Christian college and seminary to become a preacher. While at seminary he met a young girl who was studying to be a nurse. He married her and they lived in a tiny attic apartment in Ipswich, Massachusetts. Soon they moved to churches in Ohio (where your father was born) and then to New Jersey where they stayed for 29 years.





Your father, William Daniel Holwick, was born in Ohio in 1987. He had lots of hair but his head flopped around a lot. As a little boy he liked to wear costumes, just like you do.

Daniel had a big heart and loved to serve people, like these boys in Haiti.



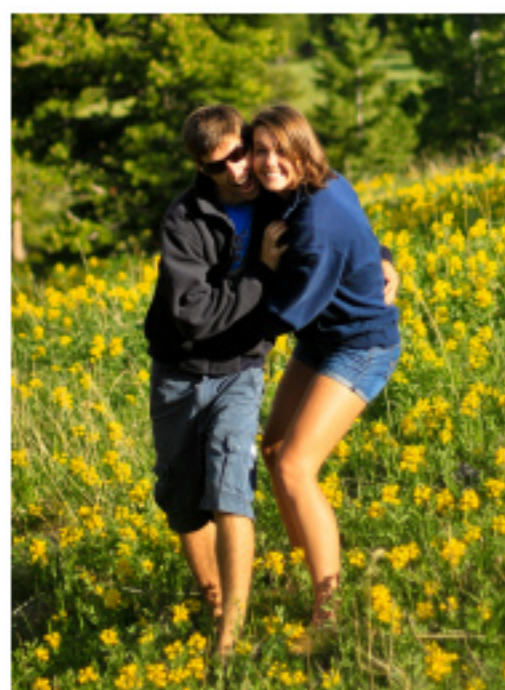
In 2014 we got exciting news - a baby was on the way! Grandma and Grandpa Holwick flew out to Lakewood just in time to be there for Weston's birth. He was the seventh William in our family.



Daniel also liked music. His band was called Wellsville and he liked to sing about how everyone in New Jersey was dying. The girls would scream and throw themselves at the stage as he banged his head back and forth. But a beautiful girl in the band would poke the girls with her violin bow...



What a beautiful family you have! But you and Kinsley have very expensive tastes. All your grandparents want you to have the best of everything. But above all, we want you to love your parents and the LORD, just like we do.



Her name was Kara and Daniel followed her out to Colorado. They had a wonderful wedding in our church in New Jersey - Kara was a gorgeous bride! Daniel sang a song he wrote for her. They moved back to Colorado and Daniel raced around in an ambulance helping people.



It took seven generations and 180 years for the Holwicks to move west (red line). It took Weston only 4 years to go even farther from west to east!

We are glad you moved closer to us.

Page 1 "This is the story..." Johann Jacob Holben went by "Jacob." Rothenbergen is a small village in the town of present-day Gründau, about 25 miles northeast of Frankfurt am Main. Leiblos and Niedergründau are also villages in the town. The Bergkirche (Hill Church) is on the hill in nearby Niedergründau. There has been a church there since at least 1217 but the current sanctuary dates to 1840. The tower is much older and was constructed in 1557 and has a sundial that Johann Jacob would have seen himself. The birth records are held at the church office at Paul-Gerhardt-Straße 2, 63584 Gründau, Germany, phone: +49 6051 14060. The half-timbered buildings are the market square in Gelnhäusen, just to the east of Rothenbergen.

Page 2 "It was hard..." The 30 Years War killed 8 million people, many of them German. It started off as a religious war pitting Protestant against Catholic but ended up as a power play over which nation would control Europe. The area of Rothenbergen lost over half its population and nearby areas lost even more. The witch craze in Europe resulted in 40,000 to 60,000 executions. Elizabeth Holbe and Anna Heinrich and four other women were beheaded for witchcraft at the Leiblos townhall on 21 June 1653.

Page 3 "Over in America..." The first three brothers came over in 1737 (one of them, Silvester, may have been their cousin instead of a brother). The brother who died, Johannes Holben, had a lot of company: the captain of their ship related that on another voyage, four ships had 425 deaths between them. Another captain said that in 1738 there were 1,600 deaths on 15 ships. Even so, Germans continued to arrive in large numbers, up to 75,000. Not all Americans appreciated this. Benjamin Franklin wrote in the 1750s that "Those who come hither are generally of the most ignorant Stupid Sort of their own Nation." They were unable to adapt to the local values: "Not being used to Liberty, they know not how to make a modest use of it." And they were endangering New England's whiteness: "[T]he Spaniards, Italians, French, Russians and Swedes, are generally of what we call a swarthy Complexion; as are the Germans also, the Saxons only excepted." In short, they were not to be liberally admitted to Pennsylvania, because as Franklin argued, "Why should *Pennsylvania*, founded by the *English*, become a Colony of *Aliens*, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of our Anglifying them, and will never adopt our Language or Customs, any more than they can acquire our Complexion." <<https://qz.com/904933/a-history-of-american-anti-immigrant-bias-starting-with-benjamin-franklins-hatred-of-the-germans/>>

Page 4 "Finally they landed..." Philadelphia was the major city in the North at the time, larger than New York City. The loyalty oath and passenger registration was something new, and a boom to us genealogists. The king he swore loyalty to was George II, the father of George III who reigned during the Revolution. The oath was taken at the State House, now called Independence Hall.

Page 5 "Apparently many people..." Indentured servants found it easy to melt into the general population, especially if they headed to the western frontier. Blacks could not melt in as easily. Slavery was legal in both North and South at this time. Weisenberg was surrounded by areas already settled by Europeans but the immediate vicinity was frontier because the Indians had not been persuaded to sell until a late date.

Page 6 "He began cutting..." Holbens spoke German for about the next 100 years. Many of the old tombstones in the Weisenberg cemetery are in German. Thomas Jefferson complained in 1817, "In our German settlements, they preserve for a long time their own languages, habits, and principles of government." The Holben land was farmed continuously up until around 2005. It has now reverted to woodland.

Page 7 "They were a hard-working family..." Johann Jacob was made an elder in the church about a year after he settled there and was only 26. Most Germans were Lutheran; the Reformed Christians were influenced by John Calvin, who was centered in Switzerland. The Weisenberg Church started as a union church with both theologies but now is exclusively Lutheran. The Reformed church has another building in a nearby village. Holwicks were Presbyterian up to my generation, though my father and grandfather were only minimally committed. Some dispute the reasons behind the rise of whiskey in America. "Supposedly," writes historian Andrew Barr, "it was impractical for the backwoodsmen to haul bulky consignments of grain over the mountains," so they turned it into more easily transported whiskey. "This was a myth created by their descendants. There is no evidence of backwoods whiskey being sold in eastern Pennsylvania in the eighteenth century. . . . The backwoodsmen drank it all themselves." <https://www.history.org/Foundation/journal/Summer08/whiskey.cfm> The contents of the will is found at <<https://wc.rootsweb.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=dbooz&id=I0125>>.

Page 8 "Pennsylvania could be just as dangerous..." The wolf story comes from "History of Counties of Lehigh and Carbon in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania," by Mathews and Hungerford, 1884, page 449 in section "Weissenberg Township." My father, Col. W. B. Holwick, had reservations about its veracity because Germans have always loved wolf stories, as the Grimm Fairy Tales attest. However, this family story goes way back in time. The Holben log cabin no longer exists but in the 1970s we visited the homestead and an old log structure stood in ruins there; apparently it had been built by one of Jacob's sons.

Page 9 "There were also Indian attacks..." Indian attacks were rather numerous for a sparsely settled area, up till 1764. The attack "on the other side of Weisenberg" was in 1763 at Fort Deshler near Allentown, about 14 ½ miles away. The number killed was actually 26, and perpetuated by Indians who had been abused by settlers. <<http://www.usgwarchives.net/pa/1pa/1picts/frontierforts/ff8.html>>

Page 11 "After a while the Indians..." Most Germans supported the American Revolution because they had no close ties to England. However, they tended to join the local militia instead of the regular army because the militia service was only a few months a year and allowed them to take care of their fields. Wendel, our ancestor, was only a private. His brother Lorentz was a sergeant and gave this account of his service in 1838: he "marched to Germantown, the British being in Philadelphia and were marching from place to place in the neighborhood but was not in any battle". He was called up again in 1778 and stationed in the "Whoyiming Country in the northern part of Northampton County and then in Luzern County against the Indians". In 1780 he was mustered again and "marched behind the Blew Mountain where he was stationed along the Mahoney Creek against the savage Indians". The 3rd Company, 3rd Battalion (later the 6th Battalion) consisting of approximately 50 men was formed from the Weisenberg area. Lorentz was a sergeant in the Battalion while Jacob was in the 4th Class, Theobald in the 6th Class and Wendel the 7th Class. <The Early History of the Johann Jacob (Holbe) Holben Family.pdf>

Page 12 "After the war..." Jacob's stone has deteriorated significantly in the last 40 years due to lichen. Local historians apparently mistook Johann Jacob for his son and put a Revolutionary War marker around his stone. The father would have been in his sixties at the close of the war, much too old to be a fighter. Since his son's grave no longer exists it is appropriate to have a marker here. Holwick Coffee Grinders were manufactured by Bramwell .C. Holwick in the early 1900s; he is Weston's first cousin, six times removed. Daniel's grave is in Zeigler Cemetery in Marshall, Illinois.

Page 13 "Most of the Holwicks..." This is the coolest Holwick photo we have, showing the first three Williams. My grandfather, William Maynard Holwick, got free tickets for life to ride on the Illinois Central Railroad. My parents sent me on a train from St. Louis to Chicago to visit him and grandma when I was a young boy. I remember how old-fashioned it seemed, with lots of clickity-clacks and swaying. The dining car had small tables with linen and old black waiters. Grandpa Holwick was very racist and thought blacks should be limited to certain jobs; they were never to be his equal. When blacks were allowed to join his Presbyterian Church in Chicago, he left and never returned.

Page 14 "Maynard fell in love..." Mildred, my grandmother, was very cool. She was very short and kind to us. Both of them always seemed to dress and act like the 1940s never ended. A very vivid memory of me is when we got a phone call when Grandpa was 65 and had a heart attack. In those days a long distance phone call always meant something bad had happened. He recovered, lost weight, and they lived the rest of their lives in Clearwater, Florida. We kids loved to visit their condo there.

Page 15 "My father..." His tombstone in Arlington Cemetery lists three wars but Vietnam was the only one he really saw action in. Toward the end of his life he mentioned that he killed enemy soldiers by firing from the helicopter when Americans below were surrounded by Viet Cong. Many of the guns his kids now own were recovered from a Viet Cong weapons cache in the Mekong Delta. Most of his service in Vietnam was as an advisor to a South Vietnamese unit.

Page 16 "Your grandfather..." We moved 13 times by the time I was in high school. I really enjoyed Germany but missed the United States. Because of the Vietnam War, many Germans protested against Americans while we were there. The pulpit photo was staged – there are few photos of me behind a pulpit, but many videos done of me while I preached.

Page 17 "Your father..." Daniel was a wonderful little boy. The story of his head-banging is accurate, but the story of your mother poking hysterical girls with her bow is as grandpa remembered it and may not reflect actual reality.

Page 18 "In 2014..." We love having you two as our grandchildren (and Hunter, too). We are enjoying watching you grow up and can't wait to see what you both accomplish in life. There is much history behind you and much still to come!

14 Generations of Holwicks

Hans Holbe

Born between 1600-15, Isenburg, Hesse, Germany
Death date unknown, Germany

Hans Caspar Holbe

Born around 1632 in Rothenbergen, Hesse, Germany
Died 1665 in Rothenbergen, Hesse, Germany

Ulrich Holbe

Born June 14, 1676, in Rothenbergen, Hesse, Germany
Both grandmothers beheaded on June 21, 1653, as witches
Died 1740 in Lieblos, Hesse, Germany

Johann Jacob Holben

Born December 25, 1717, in Rothenbergen, Hesse, Germany
Emigrated to America in 1742
Died August 24, 1794, age 76, in Weisenberg Township, Pennsylvania
Farmer and first American

Johann Wendel Holwich

Born January 1, 1752, in Weisenberg Township, Pennsylvania
Died August 9, 1834, age 82, in Canton, Ohio
Farmer, veteran of Revolutionary War (Private in Pennsylvania militia)

Jonathan Holwick

Born July 20, 1792, in Weisenberg Township, Pennsylvania
Died November 24, 1876, age 84, in Canton, Ohio
Farmer and merchant. Ancestor of all Holwicks in America?

Daniel Holwick

Born March 22, 1825, in Canton, Ohio
Died September 16, 1910, age 85, in Clark County, Illinois
Farmer and merchant

William Franklin Holwick

Born June 13, 1852, in Stark County, Ohio
Died April 3, 1941, age 88, in Clark County, Illinois
Farmer and merchant

William Layman Holwick

Born November 3, 1877, in Clark County, Illinois
Died April 24, 1938, age 60, in Edgar, Illinois
Farmer and railroader

William Maynard Holwick

Born July 6, 1900, in Champaign, Illinois
Died December 25, 1982, age 82, in Clearwater, Florida
General Claim agent, Illinois Central Railroad

William Bruce Holwick

Born June 18, 1928, in Chicago, Illinois
Died December 19, 2013, age 85, in Clearwater, Florida
Colonel, United States Army (veteran of WWII and Vietnam)

William David Holwick

Born September 27, 1955, in Koizumi, Japan
Living in Boothbay, Maine (2019)
Retired Baptist minister (ABCUSA)

William Daniel Holwick

Born July 8, 1987, in Coshocton, Ohio
Living in Dover, New Hampshire (2019)
Emergency room registered nurse

William Weston Holwick

Born July 8, 2015, in Lakewood, Colorado
Living in Dover, New Hampshire (2019)
Preschool student



Rev. William David Holwick

Boothbay, Maine

June 2019