



GERMANS FROM RUSSIA  
**GRHC**  
HERITAGE COLLECTION  
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**Finding Aid to the  
Curt Renz  
Collection  
2010.03**

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## OVERVIEW

**Donor:** Curt Renz

**Accession Date:** 22 April 2010

**Collection Number:** 057

**Quantity:** 0.5 linear feet

**Summary:** A leather-bound book of German language sermons and lessons brought from Germany to Russia, dating to 1733, and one devotional card.

**Languages:** German & English

**Links:**

- [Finding Aid to the Curt Renz research materials \(2012.10 & 2013.05\)](#)
- [A Companion to Albert Eisenbeiss' Familien und Sippenbuch Hoffnungstal/Bessarabien](#), compiled by Curt Renz
- Curt Renz on the [NDSU Library Catalog](#)
- ["Curt Renz's Corner"](#) (Germans from Russia Heritage Society)

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**Citation:** Curt Renz Collection, 057, Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, NDSU Libraries, Fargo, ND.

## BIOGRAPHY

Johann Georg Wenzel was born on August 6, 1780, in Wüstenrot, Germany. He died on September 10, 1859, in Hoffnungstal, Bessarabia. Gottlieb Reinhold Wenzel, son of Johann Georg Wenzel, was born on May 4, 1807, in Wüstenrot, Germany. He died on October 10, 1871, in Hoffnungstal, Bessarabia. The Wenzel family immigrated to Russia from Germany in 1817.

Michael Peter Wenzel, son of Gottlieb Reinhold Wenzel, was born on December 14, 1848, in Hoffnungstal, Bessarabia. He died on June 27, 1923, in Eureka, South Dakota. The Wenzel family immigrated to the United States from Russia in 1886.

Magdalena Wenzel, daughter of Michael Peter Wenzel, was born on October 1872, in Hoffnungstal, Bessarabia. In January 1893, Magdalena Wenzel married Konrad Renz. Magdalena (Wenzel) Renz died on August 29, 1949, at the age of seventy-six.

Conrad Renz was born on February 4, 1896, to parents Konrad and Magdalena (Wenzel) Renz. Conrad died on December 26, 1988. Fred Renz, son of Conrad Renz, was born on August 18, 1941, in Herreid, South Dakota.

Curt Renz, cousin of Fred Renz, was born on May 18, 1940, in Eureka, South Dakota.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT

The **Curt Renz Collection** consists of a leather-bound book of German language sermons and lessons brought from Germany to Russia; and one devotional card. Upon further research, GRHC staff was able to determine that the book was published in 1733.

The book of sermons is bound in leather with two leather and brass clasps and brass boss inlays on the covers. The book was rebound at some early date, but the exact date is unknown.

Inscribed in English on the inside front cover is: "Brought to Russia by Gottlieb Wenzel about 1812 from Germany. Brought from Russia by Michael Wenzel, a son of Gottlieb Wenzel to the United States in 1886. Came in possession of Magdalena Renz, a daughter of Michael Wenzel, June 26, 1923." Inscribed on the flyleaf in German is: "Hoffnungstal 1885 [1886?]."

The first section of the book has no title and ends on page 604. The second part begins on page 605. The third section starts on page 1130.

Curt Renz, the collection donor, wrote, "This book of sermons and lessons was brought to Russia in 1817 by Johann Georg Wenzel and used on the Karlstal estate located near Odessa by the laity on Sundays or other religious holidays when there was no pastor available. When the Karlstal estate was disbanded in 1841, the 25 families resettled in other villages, the majority were resettled in the newly organized village of Hoffnungstal in Bessarabia. Johann Georg Wenzel took the book of sermons with him when he moved to Hoffnungstal and, when he died, the book passed on to his son Gottlieb Reinhold Wenzel. His son, Michael Peter Wenzel brought the book with him when he and his family emigrated to the Dakota Territory in 1886 and , when he died, his eldest child, Magdalena Wenzel, inherited the book."

Included along with the book of sermons was one devotional card, which is also in German. the devotional card is a color litho and is 3 ¾" x 2 ½". There is writing on the back that is not

legible. The image is of Jesus, and on top of the devotional card reads, "Jesus Christus, verse Joh. 17, 19-20."

## **BOX AND FOLDER LIST**

<b>Box/Folder</b>	<b>Contents</b>
<b>1/1</b>	Finding aid, inventories, and historical information
<b>1/2</b>	Devotional Card [2010.03.02]
<b>1</b>	Book of Sermons: Otho, Johann Jacob. <i>Evangelischer Kranken-Trost: Aus allen Sonn- und Fest-täglichen Evangelien dergestalt aufgesuchet, Daß in einer jeden Predigt der Eingang und Schluß mit denckwürdigen alt- und neuen Geschichten und Christlichen Valet-Reden allerhand vornehmer Personen gemacht.</i> Nürnberg: Endter, 1733. [2010.03.01]