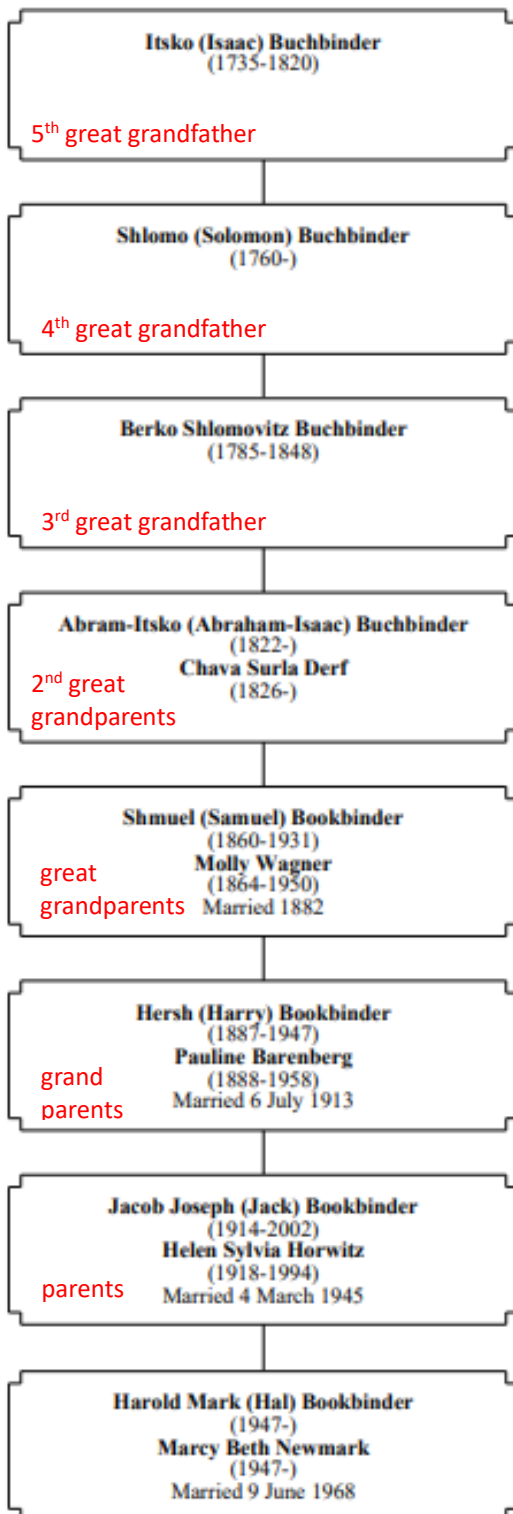


My 5th Great Grandfather's Name
Hal Bookbinder



The oldest document that I possess on my Buchbinder ancestors is the 1850 Revision list (Ревізские скáзки, Revizskie skazki) for Dubno, Volhynia, Russia. Dubno is now in Rivne Oblast, Ukraine. My 2nd great grandfather, Abram-Itsko Buchbinder (1822) was shown along with his deceased father, my 3rd great grandfather, Berko Shlomovitz Buchbinder (1785-1848).

The first revision list was ordered by Peter the Great and taken in 1719. Later revision lists were accomplished in 1743, 1761, 1781, 1794, 1811, 1815, 1833, 1850 and 1856. Some original books have survived, but many have not. Surviving 1850 Revision Lists for Volhynia are held by the Zhytomyr, Ukraine Regional Archive. I am not aware of the existence of any earlier revision lists for Volhynia.

The civil records office in Dubno burned to the ground during World War II. All records were lost. I had heard of this and confirmed it with the Dubno town leaders when I traveled there in the summer of 2018. During my trip, I conducted research in the Rivne Regional Archive but found that they held no relevant records from Dubno prior the Polish period between World War I and World War II.

The 1850 Revision List showed that the population of the Russian Empire was 68.5 million. The U.S. population, per the 1850 Census, was 23.2 million, including 3.2 million slaves. Russia would free its serfs in 1861, several years before the Emancipation Proclamation.

In 1897, the Russian Empire conducted its first, and only, "All-Russia Census". The books covering Dubno do not seem to have been preserved. This census shows that, at the turn of the 20th Century, Russia contained 5.2 million Jews; 4.9 million (94%) of whom lived in the Pale of Jewish Settlement.

Revision lists have an advantage over censuses in that they not only show those living at the time, but also show those who had run off, been exiled, conscripted, or had died since the prior revision list. Thus, my 3rd great-grandfather, Berko Shlomovitz Buchbinder, who had died in 1848, was included on the 1850 Revision List. His middle name, Shlomovitz, indicates that his father's name was Shlomo.

Thus, the 1850 Revision List provides the names of my 2nd, 3rd, & 4th great-grandfathers, along with the birth year of my 2nd great grandfather and the birth and death of my 3rd great grandfather. As Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr. says towards the end of each episode of "Finding Your Roots", "The paper trail had now run out ...". So, I could only hypothesize the given name of my 5th great-grandfather. Below is the page from the Revision List showing the males of my family.

REVIZSKIE SKAZKI (REVISION LIST)

РЕВИЗСКАЯ СКАЗКА.				
1850 года Октября 30 дня, Волынской Губернии Городъ <i>Дубна</i> Dubno October 30, 1850 Volinsk Gubernia Town of				
Семья.	МУЖЕСКИЙ ПОЛЪ.	По последней ревизии состояло и послѣ оной прибыло.	Изъ того числа вышло.	Наличъ налицо.
№	<i>Еврей</i> Male Jew	#5 Лѣта.	#6 Когда именно.	#7 Лѣта.
3. #1	<i>Берко Шломоовичъ Буабиндеръ.</i>	48	<i>Умеръ въ 1848.</i>	← Died in 1848
#2	<i>Берко Шломоовичъ: Абрамъ Ицко.</i> #3	11	" "	27
	<i>Шимонъ.</i> #4	1 1/2	<i>Умеръ въ 1837.</i>	← Died in 1837

#1 Berko Shlomovitch Buchbinder, my 3rd great grandfather
 #2 Berko's sons
 #3 Abram Itsko, my 2nd great grandfather
 #4 Shimon

#5 age on the prior revision list (July 16, 1833)
 #6 status change since prior revision list
 #7 age on this revision list (October 30, 1850)

The 1850 Revision List showed that Berko had two sons, Abram-Itsko (1822) and Shimon (1831-1837). In the Ashkenazi tradition, these two brothers likely carried on the names of honored ancestors. Possibly, the name of my 5th great-grandfather was Abram, Itsko, or Shimon.

This Revision List showed just one other Buchbinder household in Dubno. It was headed by Chiam Shmuelovitz Buchbinder. Chiam was 55 years old in 1850 and so was born in 1795. This made him a contemporary of Berko, who had been born in 1785. Their patronymic shows that they were not brothers, as Chiam's father was Shmuel, and Berko's father was Shlomo.

Czar Alexander I's edict of 1804 required all Jews living in the Pale to adopt unique permanent surnames. It is doubtful that the authorities would have permitted two unrelated families in one small town to adopt the same surname. Czar Nicholas I's edict of 1835 prevented Jewish surnames from being altered or changed.

My hypothesis is that Shmuel and Shlomo were brothers, and their father, who might have been known as 'Itzko der buchbinder' ('Isaac the bookbinder') had adopted the Buchbinder surname. If Shmuel and Shlomo were brothers, their sons, Chiam and Berko, would have been first cousins.

I now examined the names of the sons of Chiam. They are Itzko Shmuel (1833-1835), Shaya (1837), Yankel (1840), and Leibish (1844). The name "Shmuel" would appear to be carrying on the name of Chiam's father. The only other name that matches one of Berko's sons, is Itzko. My second hypothesis is that this name, which appears about the same time in both families, is the name of the common ancestor, my 5th great-grandfather.

REVIZSKIE SKAZKI (REVISION LIST)

РЕВИЗСКАЯ СКАЗКА.
 1850 года *Октября 30* дня, *Волынской Губернии* *Город*
Дубна **October 30, 1850** **Volinsk Gubernia** **Town of**

Семья.	МУЖЕСКИЙ ПОЛЪ.	По последней ревизии состояло и послѣ оной прибыло.	Изъ того числа выбыло.	Иныхъ на лицо.
№		Лѣтъ.	Когда именно.	Лѣтъ.
	<i>Переплетчикъ</i> #1			
#2	<i>Чамъ Шмуеловичъ Бухбиндеръ</i>	39	"	55
#3	<i>Чамъ Шмуеловичъ</i> #4	1	Умеръ въ 1835	
	<i>Шая</i> #5			13
	<i>Янкель</i> #6			10
	<i>Лейбисъ</i> #7			6

#1 Pronounced *Perepletchik*, which means "bookbinder" in Russian
 #2 Chiam Shmuelovich Buchbinder
 #3 Chiam's sons
 #4 Itzko Shmuel
 #5 Shaya
 #6 Yankel
 #7 Leibish

#8 age on the prior revision list (July 16, 1833)
 #9 status change since prior revision list
 #10 age on this revision list (October 30, 1850)

← Died in 1835

Переплетчикъ is the Russian translation of Buchbinder. The German/Yiddish word, Buchbinder, would be meaningless to the Russian ear. This Russian translation appears at the top of the page for the male Buchbinders. The prior image, showing my direct line, is actually on the bottom of the Revision List page. Women are shown on a separate page.

When I do not know the birth date, I estimate it to be 25 years prior to the birth of the first child. So, I estimated Shlomo to have been born around 1760 and Itsko to have been born around 1735. If my theory is correct, Itsko would have died prior to Abram-Itsko's birth in 1822. These estimates provide the approximate dates shown in the ancestor chart at the beginning of this article.

According to <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/dubno-jewish-history-tour>, several Jewish printing presses were established in Dubno starting in 1794. So, Itsko, and his sons, may well have been employed at one of these as bookbinders in 1804 and taken this occupation as the family surname that has come down to this day.

So, my thesis is that the given name of my 5th great-grandfather was Itsko and that, as the head of the family, in 1804, he selected the surname "Buchbinder", his profession. It would have been written in Cyrillic and Hebrew and if rendered in Latin letters would likely be in the German spelling, 'Buchbinder'. My family Anglicized it on arriving in the U.S. prior to World War I.