



July 2, 2014

## TOURING SULLIVAN COUNTY'S MUSEUM

... while dusting

In July of 2011 we featured an article about a coverlet located in the Baldwin House of the museum's complex. The existence of this beautifully threaded throw prompted the following response from Harry T. Hunsinger that was originally written for the Columbia County Historical & Genealogical Society. His title is "1842 Coverlet Returns to PA, Oklahoma coverlet visits Nescopeck, Pa." You'll see the "thread" to Sullivan County as you read on.

"How often do we see a woolen coverlet made in 1842 survive 172 years of use and travel, then return to the same village it was hand-woven, by Daniel Goodman?"

"This story begins in the spring of 2013 when I was contacted by the Columbia County Genealogical Society to assist a group of people from Oklahoma searching for their family roots here in Pennsylvania. Since my Hunsinger family was intermarried with the Dresher family from Luzerne County, I agreed to help Tom Dresher and his family with some research and travel assistance. At this first meeting in Berwick, Tom Dresher went to his car trunk and retrieved a large beautiful woolen coverlet woven by Daniel Goodman from Nescopeck Township, Luzerne County. It was woven in dark blue and red colors with Pennsylvania Dutch symbols including the traditional stylish distelfink birds. It was strikingly beautiful with strong flavor of the early Pennsylvania Germans. In the corner of this coverlet was woven the words: Made by Daniel Goodman Nescopeck Co For G. and L. Thrasher Penn 1842.

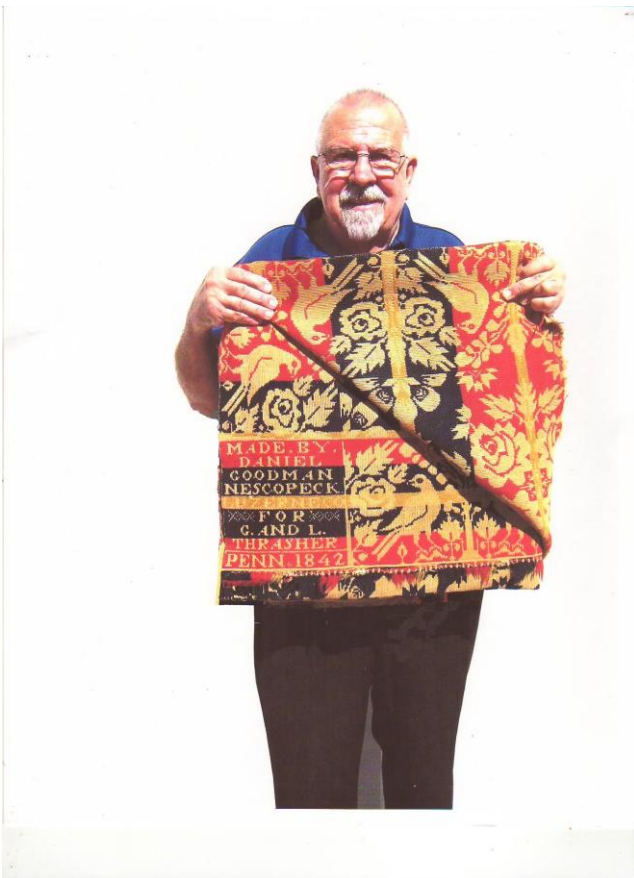
"Thomas 'Tom' Dresher explained that this coverlet was handed down to him from his direct line ancestor George Drescher b: 28 July 1839 in Mifflin Twp., Columbia County PA. After exchanging genealogical information we discovered that this George Drescher b: 1839 was the son of George Drescher (1785-1845) and his wife Lydia Miller. George Thresher/Drescher and his wife Lydia Miller lived near Mountain Grove, Sugarloaf Twp., Luzerne County in the 1840 census. They had a large family when George Drescher died 24 June 1845, leaving Lydia as a widow with thirteen children. The will of George Drescher is registered at Wilkes-Barre, PA.

"As expected, the family split up and many of the older boys moved west. Before the 1850 census three of the older Dresher children, namely John Dresher B: 1831 married Lydia Ann Eckrote and moved to Lockport, St. Joseph County, Michigan where they remained. Another son Daniel Dresher b: May 1833 married Martha and lived at Lockport, Michigan later moving to Petosky, Emmet County, Michigan. Finally, the other son George Dresher b: 1839, married Anna Gaines in Ottawa County, Kansas, later moving to Labette County Kansas. This movement of George Dresher b: 1839 to Kansas took away the family of our Thomas Dresher who was eager to discover the origin of his family here in Pennsylvania.

"The first item on the local trip agenda was to visit the Sullivan County Historical Society Museum at Laporte. This Dresher family already knew about another coverlet that the museum had in its collection, which was also woven by Daniel Goodman. As it turns out, the coverlet at Laporte was identical to the Tom Dresher coverlet except the name on the corner is L. Thrasher 1842. After a discussion with the curator Melanie Norton, she explained this coverlet was a wedding gift for Lydia Thrasher as she married Paul Hunsinger in Mountain Grove, Luzerne County, PA. In August of 1845 Paul Hunsinger and Lydia Thrasher got married and before 1850 they moved to Cherry Township, Sullivan County, later to Bradford County, Pa. This Lydia Thrasher b: 1821 is the sister of the above George Dresher b: 1839 who moved to Kansas after his father George Drescher died in 1845. So you can see the connection between these two coverlets made in 1842. They were both made

for George and Lydia Thrasher family at the same time in Nescopeck Township. This is a remarkable occasion where two old coverlets made in 1842 actually are reunited after 171 years. After visiting the Museum in Laporte, the Dresher family went to see the Old Zion Church and the adjacent “Thrasher” Cemetery near Dushore where Paul Hunsinger and his wife Lydia Thrasher are buried. The following day, Tom Dresher and his family were taken to the Mountain Grove Church and cemetery in Black Creek Township where they quickly found the headstone of their long lost ancestor George Drescher b: 6 Nov. 1785, d: 14 June 1845. After taking many photographs and showing much satisfaction, the Dresher party soon retired to a local restaurant to savor the success of their trip from Oklahoma. It was a distinct pleasure for me to assist the Dresher family, as I understand the need to discover the past.”

The weaver of these two, and many more, coverlets – Daniel Goodman, was the son of a weaver Peter Goodman-Gutman and Christina Krause. From German ancestry, Peter (named after his father, Peter S.) was born in 1751 in Berks County, Pa., he shows up in the 1783-89 census as being in Hereford Twp., Berks County. His background states that he was in fact a coverlet weaver, as was his son Daniel (b: 1795, subject weaver herein discussed) and Daniel’s son Peter S. Both Peter (b: 1751) and his wife Christina died in Danville, Montour County, Pa. As yet little more can be discovered about Daniel except that this legacy of woven wool depicts a talent worthy of seeing. And you can!, by visiting the Baldwin House during this summer on a Thursday, Friday or Sat. from 1 to 5 p.m



Tom Dresher holding ancestor's coverlet