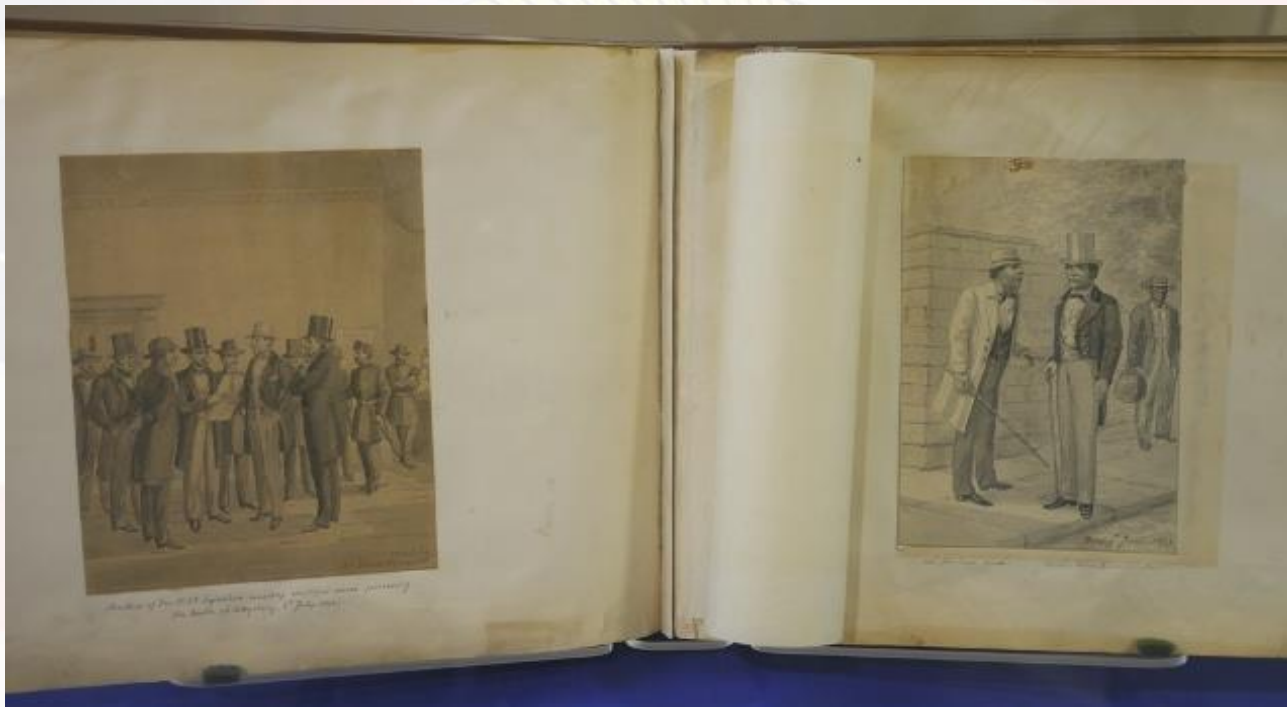


**West Virginia Sesquicentennial
Exhibit
June 20, 2013**

Special Section:
West Virginia Artists

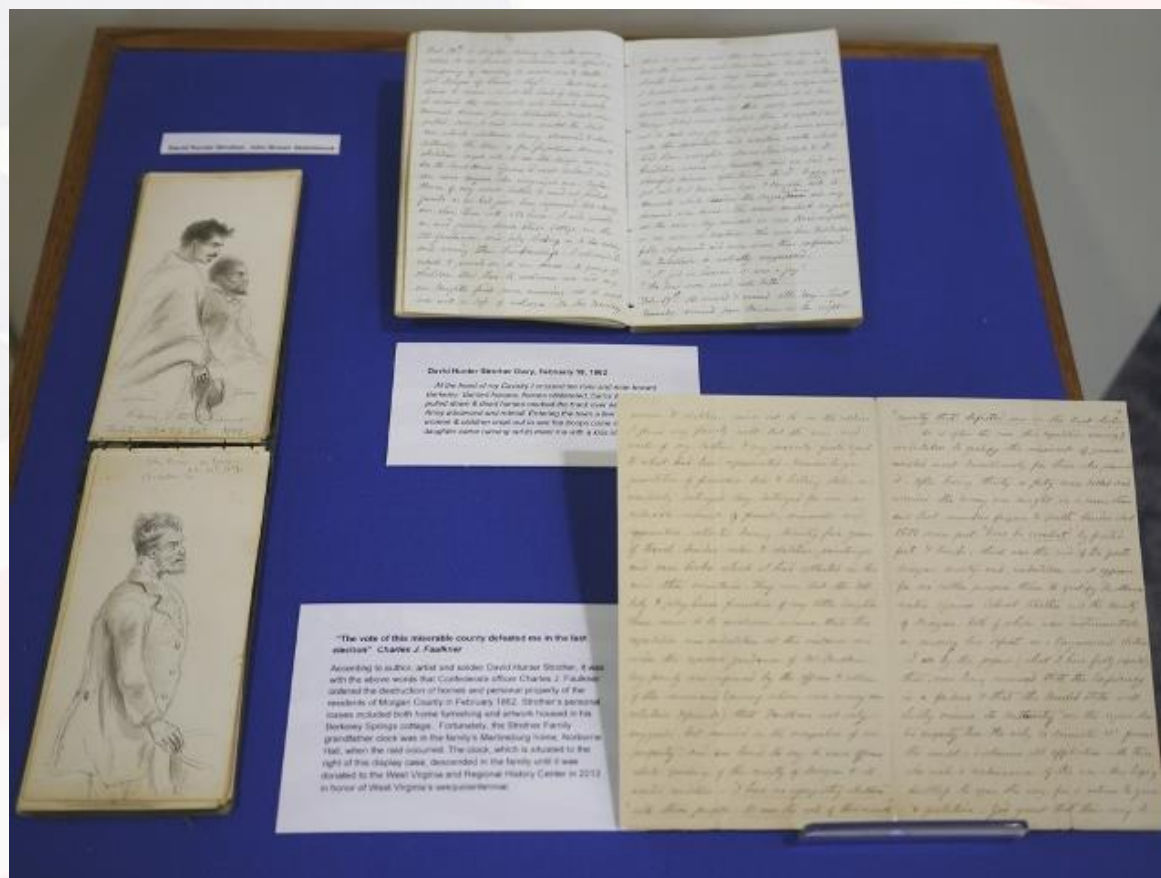
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Joseph H. Diss Debar



The designer of the West Virginia State Seal, Joseph H. Diss Debar (1820-1905) served as West Virginia's first Commissioner of Immigration among many other posts and activities. A talented sketch artist, Diss Debar documented a wide assortment of places and events in West Virginia history during the Civil War and statehood period. The title of the sketch on the left, "Members of the W. Va. Legislature receiving doubtful news pending the Battle of Gettysburg, 3d July 1863," reveals the anxious hours spent by the leaders of the nation's 35th state, which had come into being less than two weeks before the Battle of Gettysburg. They knew full well that their state's very existence depended on a Union victory.

David Hunter Strother



Strother's John Brown Sketchbook, October 18 (left)

Strother's Diary, February 18, 1862 (top)

"...At the head of my Cavalry I crossed the river and rode toward Berkeley. Burned houses, fences obliterated, barns & cottages pulled down & dead horses marked the track over which Jackson's Army advanced and retired. Entering the town a few frightened women & children crept out to see the troops come in.... My own daughter came running out to meet me with a kiss of welcome."

Who was David Hunter Strother?

Born in Martinsburg, he served as a topographer and a cavalry officer in the Union army during the Civil War. He was also a magazine writer and illustrator, known by his pseudonym, Porte Crayon.

"The vote of this miserable county defeated me in the last election"

Charles J. Faulkner (bottom)

According to David Hunter Strother, it was with the above words that Confederate officer Charles J. Faulkner ordered the destruction of homes and personal property of the residents of Morgan County in February 1862. Strother's personal losses included both home furnishing and artwork housed in his Berkeley Springs cottage. Fortunately, the Strother Family grandfather clock was in the family's Martinsburg home, Norborne Hall, when the raid occurred. The clock, which is situated to the right of this display case, descended in the family until it was donated to the West Virginia and Regional History Center in 2012 in honor of West Virginia's sesquicentennial.

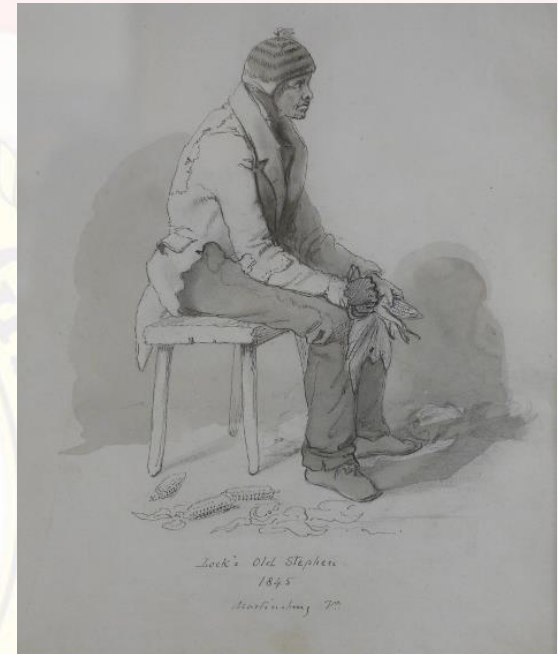
David Hunter Strother



The Strother Family grandfather clock descended in the family until it was donated to the West Virginia and Regional History Center in 2013 in honor of West Virginia's sesquicentennial.

"Lock's Old Stephen"

David Hunter Strother (1816-1888) was one of many western Virginians with deep Virginia roots who were traumatized by the thought of having to betray either state or country. Strother eventually chose to side with the Union only after being forced to make a decision at gunpoint.



Like many Virginians, Strother grew up with the institution of slavery. While he was not an abolitionist, his many drawings of African Americans, like "Lock's Old Stephen," contain a dignity and sense of realism that was rare in artists' depictions of blacks in his day. When Strother covered John Brown's Raid for *Harpers Weekly* in October 1859, he cast the abolitionist as a lunatic. His views towards both Brown and slavery changed dramatically during the course of the Civil War. In a speech written after the war, he cast Brown as a visionary martyr who had set in motion events that brought to an end an evil institution and contributed to a more righteous and stable America.