

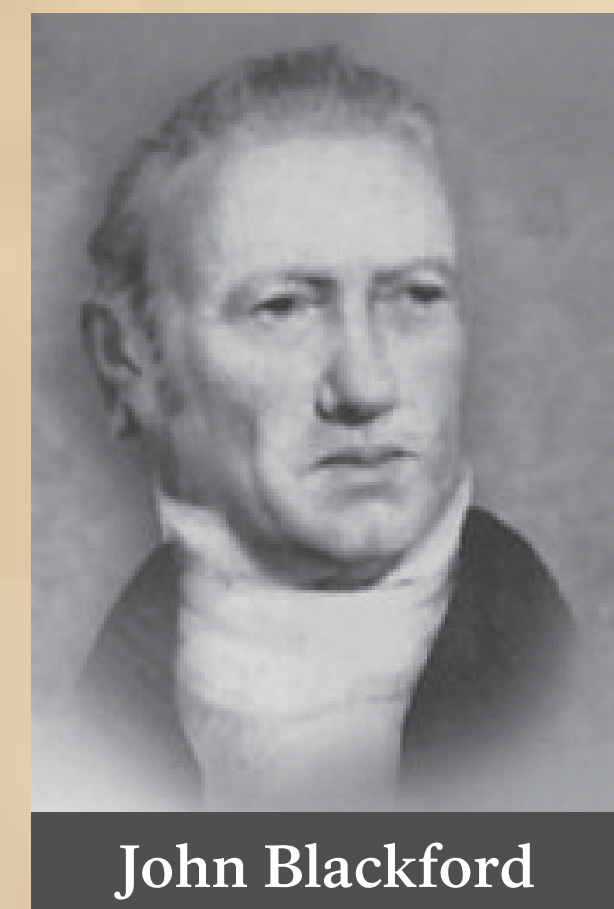


The People of Ferry Hill

Several members of the Blackford family—who built and ran Ferry Hill—kept diaries and records, providing detailed insights into their lives and business interests on the plantation. Among those who chronicled their experiences were plantation owner John Blackford, his son Franklin, and his daughter Helena’s adopted son, Henry Kyd Douglas.

There are no records from the enslaved people at Ferry Hill, and no portraits of them remain. Most of what we know about those enslaved at the plantation is from what their enslavers wrote. John Blackford kept a journal that describes how harshly he treated them. At the time of his death in 1839, his workforce included 18 enslaved people: 5 men, 4 women, and 9 children.

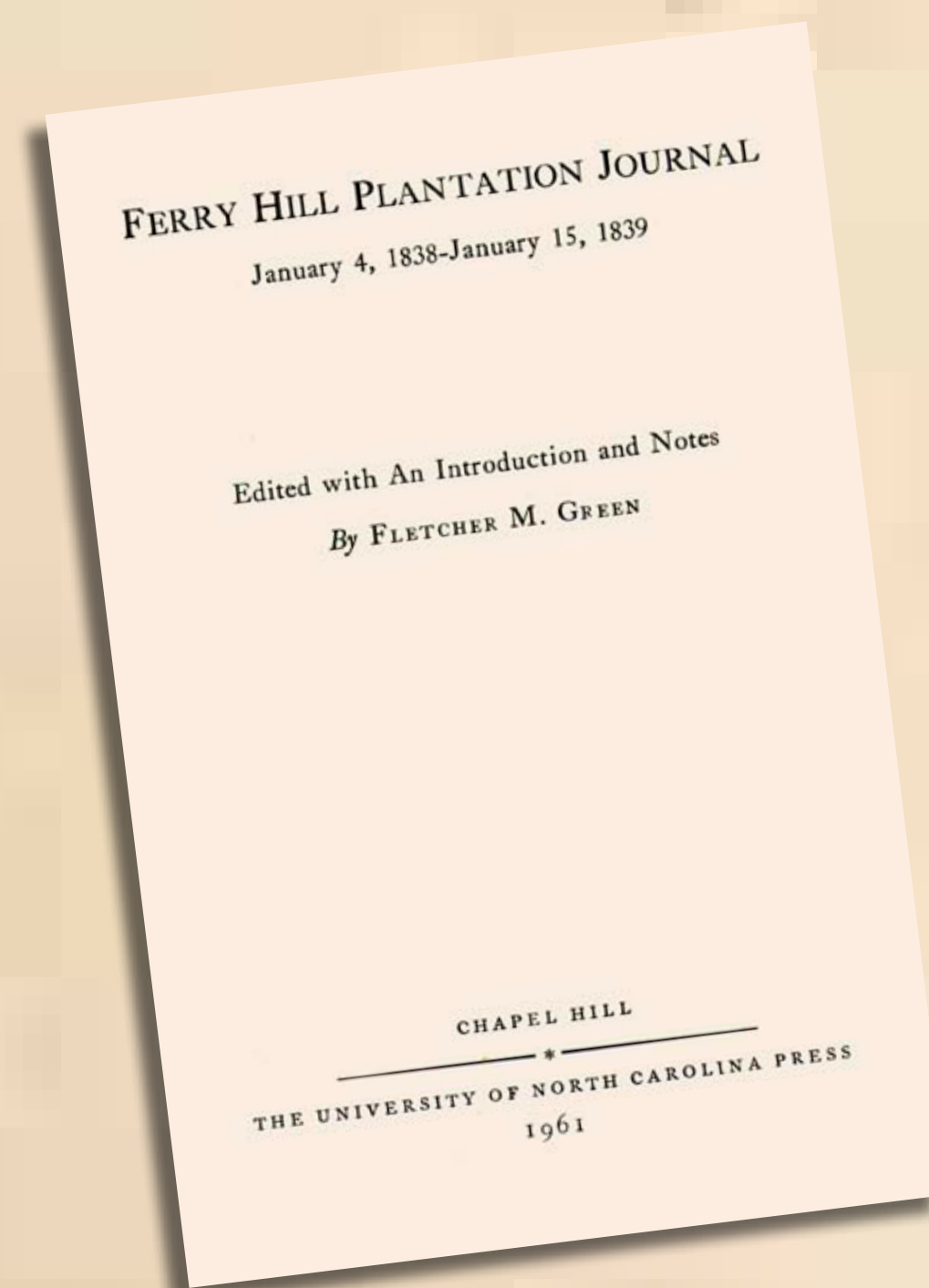
We only know some of the names of those he enslaved because they appear on an inventory of property that his estate would ultimately auction off. While history has captured the story of John Blackford and his descendants, we do not know the fate of the people they enslaved at Ferry Hill.



John Blackford

Family residents of Ferry Hill:
John Blackford
+Elizabeth Knode

Their children:
Mary Abigail
Franklin
John Hancock
Jannett Yates
Henry Van Swearingen
William Moore
Virginia Lafayette
Helena (Helen)
+ Robert Douglas



FERRY HILL PLANTATION JOURNAL
January 4, 1838-January 15, 1839

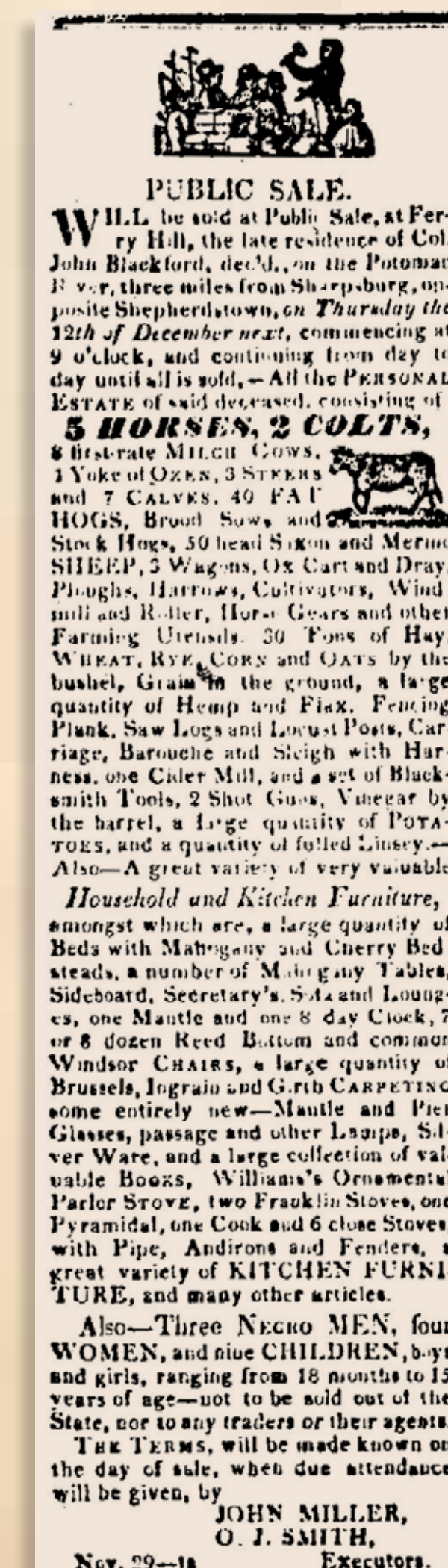
Edited with An Introduction and Notes
By FLETCHER M. GREEN

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Historian Fletcher Green, who found John Blackford’s diary in the attic of the Ferry Hill mansion, published selections as the Ferry Hill Plantation Journal. Previously, Green had edited and published selections from the diary of Henry Kyd Douglas, who was the stepson of Blackford’s daughter, Helena.

When John Blackford died, his estate auctioned off 16 of those enslaved at Ferry Hill. Blackford transferred ownership of Edmund and Julius (in his will) to his son Franklin.

Reprint from *Hagerstown Mail*, November 29, 1839



PUBLIC SALE.
Will be sold at Publix [sic] sale, at Ferryhill, the late residence of Col. John Blackford ... 12 December next, commencing at 9 o’clock, and continuing from day to day until all is sold.

... “Also”—three Negro men, four women, and nine children, boy and girls, ranging from 18 months to 15 years of age—not to be sold out of the state, nor to any traders or their agents.

Honoring those individuals whose lives our history has obscured, in hopes that we dignify their memory:



Known enslaved residents of Ferry Hill (1816-1864):

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| John Lewis | Enslaved children |
| Charlotte | Caroline |
| Edmund (Ned) | Mary |
| Julius (Jupe) | Kate |
| Daphney | David |
| Murphy | George |
| Will | Ann |
| Enoch | John |
| Hannah | Warren |
| Isaiah | Danny |
| Moll | Jinny |
| Bidle | 3 unnamed children |
| Malinna | |
| Maria | |
| 7 unnamed adults | |