

Mountain Masters: Slavery Sectional Crisis Western North Carolina

John C. Inscoe

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Antebellum Southern Appalachia has long been seen as a classless and essentially slaveless region - one so alienated and isolated from other parts of the South that, with the onset of the Civil War, highlanders opposed both secession and Confederate war efforts. In a multifaceted challenge to these basic assumptions about Appalachian society in the mid-nineteenth century, John Inscoe reveals new variations on the diverse motives and rationales that drove Southerners, particularly in the Upper South, out of the Union. Mountain Masters vividly portrays the wealth, family connections, commercial activities, and governmental power of the slaveholding elite that controlled the social, economic, and political development of western North Carolina. In examining the role played by slavery in shaping the political consciousness of mountain residents, the book also provides fresh insights into the nature of southern class interaction, community structure, and master-slave relationships.



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