

"A Plausible Man: The Storied Life of Fugitive Slave and Transatlantic Agitator, John Andrew Jackson"

Dr. Susanna Ashton

**Tuesday, Sept 10, 5:30 PM / EHHP Alumni Center,
86 Wentworth Street, College of Charleston
Public Lecture, Reception, & Booksigning**

What voices get heard and which ones disappear? What memories do we construct about South Carolina history and how do new voices change those constructed histories? In 1848, when Jackson escaped from his Sumter, SC plantation labor camp and made his way North, he was seeking a life of liberty. He didn't expect to end up in Canada or spend a decade in the British Isles, or to find friends and enemies in some of the highest literary circles in the US and the loftiest pulpits in the UK. He learned to read and write and authored an important memoir. Yet his story is incomplete without understanding why and how he returned to South Carolina after the Civil War to work for the next 40 years to build up the lives of the freemen he had left behind. In her talk on Jackson's life, Dr. Ashton will explore why some of these stories are known and others disappeared. She'll retrace how, through census data and newspaper advertisements, she stumbled upon Jackson's remarkable story and put together the evidence that proves he hid with Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Most of all, she will share the story of a man who refused to give up on South Carolina.

Dr. Susanna Ashton, Chair of the Department of English at Clemson University, is writing a biography of John Andrew Jackson. Her research has been profiled on CNN, The New York Times, MSNBC and many other outlets. She is visiting C of C Sept 10-12 as the English Department's Visiting Scholar. Her talk on Jackson is co-sponsored by History, Southern Studies, the Carolina Lowcountry & Atlantic World (CLAW) program, and African American Studies.