

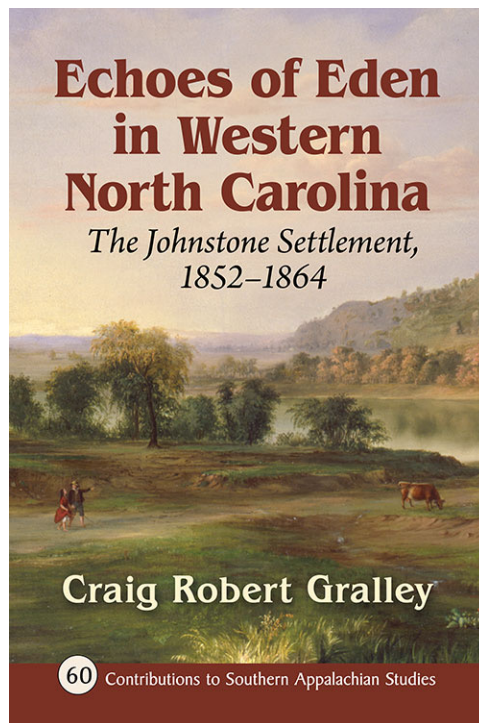
# Press Kit

## Echoes of Eden

*in Western North Carolina*

**The Johnstone Settlement, 1852–1864**

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*A wealthy Southern enclave. A community vanished.  
A story buried for 170 years — until now.*

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**Craig Robert Gralley**

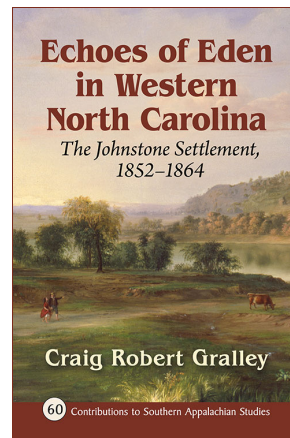
McFarland & Company • Contributions to Southern Appalachian Studies, No. 60

## BOOK ONE-SHEET

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### BOOK OVERVIEW

Echoes of Eden in Western North Carolina uncovers the extraordinary rise and disappearance of the Johnstone Settlement, a secluded mountain enclave created in the 1850s by some of Charleston's wealthiest rice-planting families. Fleeing yellow fever epidemics, a collapsing rice economy, and fears of slave rebellion, the Johnstones, Rutledges, Humes, Gadsdens, Ewbanks, and Hanckels brought more than 150 enslaved men, women, and children to Dunn's Rock, where they built a full-time community complete with institutions that supported a life of privilege. Within little more than a decade, the settlement vanished, its story buried for 170 years — until now. This book offers the first full account of this compelling and unknown chapter of Southern history.



### KEY SELLING POINTS

- First full historical account of the Johnstone Settlement
- A “local” history that reveals a national transformation
- Illuminates the lives of 150+ enslaved people
- Set against epidemics, economic collapse, and Civil War pressures
- Draws on meticulous research and new archival material
- Connects the settlement’s dissolution to the founding of Brevard
- Free on-line Discussion Guide for Educators
- “Reads like a novel”

### BOOK DETAILS

**Price:** \$39.95

**ISBN:** 978-1-4766-5863-6

**Format:** Paperback

**Publisher:** McFarland & Company

**Series:** Contributions to Southern Appalachian Studies (No. 60)

**Signed Copies:** [www.craiggralley.com](http://www.craiggralley.com)

## AUTHOR BIO

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Craig Robert Gralley is an author, historian, and former senior CIA executive manager whose career included serving as Chief Speechwriter for three directors and consulting for the Agency's history staff. He holds advanced degrees in Government from Georgetown University and in Writing from Johns Hopkins University. Gralley is the author of two acclaimed books on espionage and has appeared on NPR's *Morning Edition*, contributed to national media outlets, and consulted on the feature film *A Call to Spy*. His latest book, *Echoes of Eden in Western North Carolina*, uncovers the remarkable rise and disappearance of the Johnstone Settlement, a secluded mountain community created by elite Charleston families in the 1850s. Drawing on meticulous research and original sources, Gralley brings to light a captivating untold Southern story.



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### SHORT BIO

*Craig Robert Gralley is a former CIA senior executive, author of two acclaimed espionage books, and consultant to the film A Call to Spy. Craig has appeared on NPR's Morning Edition and contributed to national media.*

## ENDORSEMENTS & PRAISE

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*“A forgotten and remarkable story ... This is ‘local’ history at its best.”*

— **Dr. Dan Carter**  
**Educational Foundation Professor of History, Emeritus**  
**University of South Carolina**

*“Meticulously researched. A thoughtful and thorough account set against the political and economic upheaval of the Civil War .”*

— **Dr. John Johnstone, Settler Descendant**

*“Echoes of Eden reads like a novel ... A well-researched must read.”*

— **Galen Reuther,**  
**Former President of Historic Flat Rock, Inc.**  
**Author, *Flat Rock, Little Charleston of the Mountains***

## EXCERPTS FROM THE BOOK

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*“All were facing a personal or professional crossroads. Nearly half had lost children to disease.”*

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*“On arriving at Dunn’s Rock they chose new occupations for which they had little experience.”*

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*“When the economic and social pressures of the Civil War began to mount, tolerance gave way to animosity.”*

## SAMPLE Q&A

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### **Q1. What first drew you to the story of the Johnstone Settlement?**

The mystery of its disappearance and the absence of scholarship. Despite being founded by some of Charleston's most prominent families, the settlement had all but vanished from public memory.

### **Q2. Why did these elite families flee Charleston?**

They were escaping yellow fever epidemics, a collapsing rice economy, and rising fears of slave rebellion — a perfect storm that pushed them toward reinvention in the mountains.

### **Q3. What surprised you most in your research?**

Their dramatic reinvention. As the book notes, “a lawyer became a hotelier... a merchant taught school... a planter established a sawmill.”

### **Q4. How did the Civil War contribute to the settlement's collapse?**

Mounting pressures eroded local tolerance. Confederate deserters and desperate locals targeted the settlement, forcing residents to scatter.

### **Q5. What do you hope readers take away?**

That local history often reveals national transformation — and that forgotten stories can reshape our understanding of place.

## **FREE DISCUSSION GUIDE: FOR STUDENTS, CHURCHES, AND COMMUNITIES**

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### **COMPANION DISCUSSION GUIDE**

The Johnstone Settlers gave voice to challenges that still echo today—managing divisions in race and cultural; political loyalty; and migration.

A free, downloadable guide expands the book’s relevance for today and is suitable for classrooms, church groups, and community programs. Book clubs also will find the Guide provocative. It explores three major themes:

**1**

**The Church and Slavery**  
*Moral and Ethical Dilemmas*

**2**

**The Civil War**  
*Divided loyalties and Mountain Identity*

**3**

**Migration**  
*Then and Now*

**Download at: [www.craiggralley.com](http://www.craiggralley.com)**  
*Free for schools, churches, and community use.*

## SPEAKING & EVENTS

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*Author at the podium*



*Transylvania County Library talk*



*Highland Books talk*

## CONTACT

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# Craig Robert Gralley

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