

1793

The Remarkable Adventures of Jackson Johonnet, of Massachusetts (1793)

Jackson Johonnet

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THE REMARKABLE ADVENTURES OF JACKSON JOHONNET

This is a spurious captivity narrative that enjoyed much popularity in the mid-1790s and was thereafter incorporated into the “canonical” body of accounts of white imprisonments, tortures, sufferings, and escapes from the Native Americans.

The narrative tells the story of “Jackson Johonnet,” a young man of 17 who leaves his family’s farm in Falmouth, Massachusetts (now Maine), to seek his fortune in Boston. Unable to get work, he falls prey to the wiles of an army recruiter, enlists, and is despatched to the “West” (in this case Ohio) to serve with the army. He is almost immediately captured by Indians, taken to their villages on the upper Miami, and witnesses the torture and death of fellow captives. He escapes with an associate and makes his way back to the army in time to participate in the notorious and disastrous battle known variously as the Battle of the Wabash or St. Clair’s Defeat. Numerous points in the narrative contradict established facts in the history of the 1791 campaign, and other events seem to be embellishments supplied by someone unfamiliar with the western geography or actualities of Indian warfare.

The work was first published in *Beers’s Almanac and Ephemera ... for 1793*, and it proved exceedingly popular, spawning at least eight reprint editions in the following two years. Its publication followed two years of unsuccessful military campaigns against a coalition of Native Americans in Ohio, led by Little Turtle and Blue Jacket, that included Miami, Shawnee, Kickapoo, Piankashaw, Wea, and Delaware tribes. The Northwest Territory was rendered unsafe for settlement, and President Washington and Congress were endeavoring to increase the standing army and provide for defense of the frontier. The “Johonnet” narrative packed much action and adventure in a relatively short space, and its portrayal of the Indians served to justify the efforts for the military conquest of their territories then under preparation.

False and trumped-up allegations invented to justify a military invasion!—Americans of the twenty-first century should count themselves fortunate that nothing of that sort could ever happen today.


T H E
REMARKABLE ADVENTURES
O F
JACKSON JOHONNET,
O F
M A S S A C H U S E T T S ;
Who served as a Soldier in the Western Army, in the Massachusetts Line, in the Expedition under
General H A R M A R,
AND THE UNFORTUNATE
General S T . C L A I R .
CONTAINING
An Account of his CAPTIVITY, SUFFERINGS,
and ESCAPE from the
KICKAPOO INDIANS.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF,
And published at the earnest Importunity of his Friends,
FOR THE BENEFIT OF
A M E R I C A N Y O U T H .

PRINTED AT BOSTON,
For SAMUEL HALL, No. 53, Cornhill.

MDCCXCIII.

T H E
REMARKABLE ADVENTURES
O F
JACKSON JOHONNET.



THERE is seldom a more difficult task undertaken by man, than the act of writing a narrative of a person's own life ; especially where the incidents border on the marvellous. Prodiges but seldom happen, and the veracity of relaters of them is still les frequently vouched for ; however, as the dispensations of Providence towards me have been too striking not to make a deep and grateful impression, and as the principal part of them can be attested to by living evidences, I shall proceed, being confident that the candid reader will pardon the inaccuracies of an illiterate soldier, and that the tender hearted will drop the tear of sympathy, when they realize the idea of the sufferings of such of our unfortunate country folks as fall into the hands of the western Indians, whose tender mercies are cruelties.

I was born and brought up at Falmouth, Cascobay, where I resided until I attained to the seventeenth year of my age. My parents were poor, the farm we occupied small and hard to cultivate, their family large and expensive, and every way fitted to spare me to seek a separate fortune ; at least these ideas had gained so great an ascendancy in my mind that I determined, with the consent of my parents, to look out for means of supporting myself.

Having fixed on the matter firmly, I took leave of my friends and sailed on the 1st of May, 1791, on board a coasting schooner for Boston. Being arrived in this capital, and entirely out of employ, I had many uneasy sensations, and more than once sincerely wished myself at home with my parents ; however, as I had set out on an important design, and as yet met with no misfortune, pride kept me from this act, while necessity urged me to fix speedily on some mode of obtaining a livelihood.

My mind was severely agitated on this subject one morning, when a young officer came into my room, and soon entered into conversation on the pleasures of a military life, the great chance there was for an active young man to obtain promotion, and the grand prospect opening for making great fortunes in the western country. His artifice had the desired effect ; for after treating me with a bowl or two of punch, I enlisted, with a firm promise on his side to assist me in obtaining a serjeant's warrant before the party left Boston.

An entire new scene opened before me ; instead of becoming a serjeant, I was treated severely for my ignorance in a matter I had until then scarcely thought of, and insultingly ridiculed for remonstrating against the conduct of the officer. I suffered great uneasiness on these and other accounts of a similar kind, for some time ; at length, convinced of the futility of complaint, I applied myself to study the exercise, and in a few days became tolerably expert. The beginning of July we left Boston, and proceeded on our way to join the western army. When we arrived at Fort Washington I was ordered to join Capt. Phelon's company, and in a few days set out on the expedition under General Harmar. Those alone who have experienced, can tell what hardships men undergo in such excursions ; hunger, fatigue and toil

were our constant attendants ; however, as our expectations were raised with the idea of easy conquest, rich plunder, and fine farms in the end, we made a shift to be tolerably merry : For my own part, I had obtained a serjeancy, and flattered myself I was in the direct road to honour, fame and fortune. Alas ! how fluctuating are the scenes of life ! how singularly precarious the fortune of a soldier ! before a single opportunity presented in which I could have a chance to signalize myself, it was my lot to be taken in an ambuscade, by a party of Kickapoo Indians, and with ten others constrained to experience scenes, in comparison of which our former distresses sunk into nothing. We were taken on the banks of the Wabash, and immediately conveyed to the upper Miami, at least such of us as survived. The second day after we were taken, one of my companions, by the name of George Aikins, a native of Ireland, became so faint with hunger and fatigue that he could proceed no further ; a short council was immediately held among the Indians who guarded us, the result of which was that he should be put to death : This was no sooner determined on, than a scene of horror began : The captain of the guard approached the victim, who lay bound upon the ground, and with his knife made a circular incision on the skull ; two others immediately pulled off the scalp ; after this they each of them struck him on the head with their tomahawks ; they then stripped him naked, stabbed him with their knives in every sensitive part of the body, and left him weltering in blood, though not quite dead, a wretched victim to Indian rage and hellish barbarity.

We were eight days on our march to the upper Miami, during which painful travel, no pen can describe our sufferings from hunger, thirst, and toil. We were met at the entrance of the town by above five hundred Indians, besides squaws and children, who approached by a most hideous

yelling made by our guard, and answered repeatedly from the village.—Here we were all severely beaten by the Indians, and four of our number, viz. James Durgee, of Concord, Samuel Forsythe, of Beverly, Robert Deloy, of Marblehead, and Uzza Benton, of Salem, who all fainted under their heavy trials, were scalped and tomahawked in our presence, and tortured to death with every inflicted misery that Indian ingenuity could invent.

It was the 4th of August when we were taken, and our unhappy companions were massacred the 13th. News was that day received of the destruction of L'Anguille, &c. by General Harmar, numbers of scalps were exhibited by the warriors, and several prisoners, among whom were three women and six children, carried through the village, destined to a Kickapoo settlement further westward. The fifteenth of August four more of my fellow prisoners, viz. Lemuel Saunders, of Boston, Thomas Thap, of Dorchester, Vincent Upham, of Mystic, and Younglove Croxall, of Abington, were taken from us, but whether they were massacred or preserved alive, I am unable to say. After this nothing material occurred for a fortnight, except that we were several times severely whipped on the receipt of bad news, and our allowance of provisions lessened, so that we did not fall an immediate sacrifice to the fire or tomahawk, but Heaven had otherwise decreed.

On the night following the 30th of August, our guard, which consisted of four Indians, tired out with watching, laid down to sleep, leaving only an old squaw to attend us; Providence so ordered that my companion had by some means got one of his hands at liberty, and having a knife in his pocket, soon cut the withes that bound his feet, and that which pinioned my arms, unperceived of the old squaw, who

sat in a drowsy position, not suspecting harm, over a small fire in the wigwam.

I ruminated but a few moments on our situation; there was no weapon near us, except my companion's knife, which he still held; I looked on him to make him observe me, and the same instant sprang and grasped the squaw by the throat to prevent her making a noise, and my comrade in a moment dispatched her for the world of spirits. He then seized a tomahawk, and myself a rifle, and striking at the same instant, dispatched two of our enemies; the sound of these blows awakened the others, but before they had time to rise, we renewed our strokes on them, and luckily to so good effect as to stun them, and then repeating the blow we sunk a tomahawk in each of their heads, armed ourselves completely, and taking what provisions the wigwam afforded, we committed ourselves to the protection of Providence, and made the best of our way into the wilderness.

The compass of a volume would scarce contain the events of our progress through the wilderness, but as they were interesting to none but us, I shall only observe generally, that the difficulties of the journey were too great to have been endured by any who had less interest than life at stake, or a less terrible enemy than Indians to fear. Hunger, thirst and fatigue were our constant companions, and of a truth we could declare that wearisome nights were appointed unto us: We travelled hard day and night, except the few hours absolutely requisite for repose, that nature might not sink under her oppression, at which period one constantly watched while the other slept. In this tiresome mode we proceeded until the 15th of September, having often to shift our direction on account of impassable bogs, deep morasses and hideous precipices, without meet-

ing any adventure worthy note. On the morning of the 15th, as we were steering nearly a north course in order to avoid a bog that intercepted our course S. E. we found the bodies of one old man, a woman and two children newly murdered, stript and scalped. This horrid spectacle chilled our blood ; we viewed the wretched victim, and from what we could collect from circumstances, we concluded that they had been dragged away from their homes, and their feet being worn out, had been murdered inhumanly and left weltering in their blood. We were at a great loss now to determine what course to steer ; at length we pitched on a direction about northwest, and walked on as fast as possible to escape the savages, if practicable. About noon this day we came to a good spring, which was a great relief to us, but which we had great reason, a few minutes after, to believe would be the last of our earthly comforts. My companion, Richard Sackville, a corporal of Capt. Newman's company, stepped aside into a thicket on some occasion, and returned with the account that a few rods distant he had discovered four Indians with two miserable wretches bound, sitting under a tree, eating ; and that if I would join him, he would either relieve the captives or perish in the attempt : The resolution of my worthy comrade pleased me greatly ; and as no time was to be lost, we sat immediately about the execution of our design : Sackville took the lead, and conducted me, undiscovered, within fifty yards of the Indians. Two of them were laid down, with their muskets in their arms, and appeared to be asleep ; the others sat at the head of the prisoners, their muskets resting against their left shoulders, and in their right hands each of them a tomahawk, over the head of their prisoners : We each chose our man to fire at, and , taking aim deliberately, had the satisfaction to see them both fall ; the others instantly started, and seeming at a loss to determine from whence the

assault was made, fell on their bellies, and looked carefully around, to discover the best course to take ; meantime we had recharged, and shifting our position a little, impatiently waited their rising ; in a minute they raised on their hands and knees, and having, as we supposed, discovered the smoke of our guns rising above the bushes, attempted to crawl into the thicket on the opposite side. This gave us a good chance, and we again fired, at different men, and with such effect that we brought them both down ; one lay motionless, the other crawled along a few yards ; we loaded in an instant, and rushed towards him, yet keeping an eye on him, as he had reached his comrade's gun, and sat upright in a posture of defence. By our noise in the bushes he discovered the direction to fire ; alas ! too fatally, for by his fatal shot I lost my faithful comrade and friend Sackville. At this moment the two prisoners, who were close pinioned, endeavoured to make their escape towards me, but the desperate savage again fired, and shot one of them dead ; the other gained the thicket within a few yards of me : I had now once more got ready to fire, and discharged at the wounded Indian ; at this discharge I wounded him in the neck, from whence I perceived the blood to flow swiftly, but he yet undauntedly kept his seat, and having new charged his guns, fired upon us with them both, and then fell, seemingly from faintness and loss of blood. I ran instantly to the pinioned white man, and having unbound his arms, and armed him with the unfortunate Sackville's musket, we cautiously approached a few yards nearer the wounded Indian, when I ordered my new comrade to fire, and we could perceive the shot took effect, yet the savage lay motionless. As soon as my companion had reloaded, we approached the Indian, whom we found not quite dead, and a tomahawk in each hand, which he flourished at us, seemingly determined not to be taken alive. I felt

for my own part determined to take him alive, if possible, but my new comrade prevented me by shooting him through the body. I now inquired of my new companion what course we ought to steer, and whence the party came, from whose power I had relieved him ; he informed me with respect to the course, which we immediately took, and on the way let me know that we were within about three days march of Fort Jefferson ; that he and three others were taken by a party of ten Wabash Indians four days before, in the neighbourhood of that fort ; that two of his companions, being wounded, were immediately scalped and killed ; that the party, at the time of taking him, had in their possession seven other prisoners, three of whom were committed to the charge of a party of four Indians ; what became of them he knew not ; the others being worn down with fatigue, were massacred the day before, and which I found to be those whose bodies poor Sackville discovered in the thicket ; that the other two Indians were gone towards the settlements, having sworn to kill certain persons whose names he had forgotten, and that destruction seemed to be their whole drift.

My comrade, whose name on inquiry I found to be Gregory Sexton, formerly a resident of Newport, Rhode-Island, I found, to be an excellent woodsman, and a man of great spirit, and so grateful for the deliverance I had been instrumental in obtaining for him, that he would not suffer me to watch for him to sleep, but one hour in the four and twenty, although he was so fatigued as to have absolute need of a much greater proportion ; neither would he permit me to carry any of our baggage.

From the time of being joined by Sexton, we steered on a S. E. course, as direct as possible, until the 18th towards night, directing our course by the sun and the moss on the trees by day, and the moon by night ; on the evening of the

18th, we providentially fell in with an American scouting party, who conducted us safely, in a few hours, to Fort Jefferson, where we were treated with great humanity, and supplied with the best refreshments the fort afforded, which to me was very acceptable, as I had not tasted any thing, except wild berries and ground nuts, for above a week.

This fort is situated in a fertile country, within a few miles of the spot where Braddock's defeat took place. I walked over the ground where the action happened, a few days after our arrival at Fort Jefferson, and viewed it very attentively ; having a companion with me who was able to describe the different positions of the English army on that very unhappy day. In many places we observed human bones strewed on the ground, which remained unconsumed, and excited melancholy sensations. Many of the trees around still shew the scars of balls which grazed them in the action : Alas ! how little did I think at the time of viewing these things, that an army of Americans, nearly equal in number to general Braddock's, was destined in a few days to experience a similar defeat, and fly across this melancholy spot : This however was the case, and myself, so often in danger, and so repeatedly the subject of signal deliverances, was by destiny to be an actor in the tremendous scene ; and once more, almost miraculously, to escape alive, while death, in its most dreadful shape, appeared in every direction, and seemed to be insatiable in his desire for victims.

The week after our arrival at Fort Jefferson, I was able to return to my own regiment, which, the latter end of October, joined the western army, on an expedition against the Indians of the Miami Village, the place in which I had suffered so much, and so recently, and where I had beheld so many cruelties perpetrated on the unfortunate Americans. It is easier to conceive than describe the perturbation of my

mind on this occasion—the risk I should run, in common with my fellow soldiers, seemed heightened by the certainty of torture that awaited me in case of being captured by the savages. However, these reflections only occasioned a firm resolution of doing my duty vigilantly, and selling my life in action as dear as possible, but by no means to be taken alive, if I could evade it by any exertion short of suicide.

My captain shewed me every kindness in his power on the march, indulged me with a horse as often as possible, and promised to use his influence to obtain a commission for me, if I conducted well the present expedition ;— poor gentleman ! little did he think he was soon to expire, gallantly fighting the battles of his country ! I hasten now to the most interesting part of my short narrative, the description of Gen. St. Clair's defeat, and the scenes which succeeded it.

On the 3d of November we arrived within a few miles of the Miami Village. Our army consisted of about 1200 regular troops, and nearly an equal number of militia. That night of the 3d, having reason to expect an attack, we were ordered under arms about midnight, and kept in order until just before day light ; at which time, scouts having been sent out in various directions, and no enemy discovered, we were dismissed from the parade to take some refreshment. The men in general, almost worn out with fatigue, had thrown themselves down to repose a little : But their rest was of short duration, for before sunrise the Indians began a tremendous attack upon the militia, soon threw them into disorder, and forced them to retire before them precipitately, into the very heart of our camp.

But alas ! what were my feelings, when starting from my slumbers, I heard the most tremendous firing all around, with yellings, horrid whoopings, and expiring groans in

dreadful discord sounding in mine ears. I seized my arms, ran out of my tent with several of my comrades, and saw the Indians with their bloody tomahawks and murderous knives butchering the flying militia. I flew towards them, filled with desperation, discharged my firelock among them, and had the satisfaction to see one of the tawny savages fall, whose tomahawk was at that instant elevated to strike a gallant officer, who was then engaged sword in hand with a savage in front. My example, I have reason to think, animated my companions. Our own company now reached the place we occupied, and aided by the regulars of other companies and regiments, who joined us indiscriminately, we drove the Indians back into the bush, and soon after formed in tolerable order, under as gallant commanders as ever died in defence of America. The firing ceased for a few minutes, but it was like the interval of a tornado, calculated, by an instantaneous, dreadful reverse, to strike the deeper horror. In one and the same minute, seemingly, the most deadly and heavy firing took place in every part of our camp ; the army, exposed to the shot of the enemy, delivered from the ground, fell on every side, and drenched the plains in blood, while the discharge of our troops, directed almost at random, I am fearful did but little execution. Orders were now given to charge with bayonets, we obeyed with alacrity ; a dreadful swarm of tawny savages rose from the ground and fled before us ; but alas ! our officers, rendered conspicuous by their exertions to stimulate the men, become victims to savage ingenuity, and fell so fast, in common with the rest, that scarce a shot spent in vain.—Advantages gained by the bayonet were, by this means, and want of due support, lost again, and our little corps obliged, in turn, repeatedly to give way before the Indians.—We were now reduced to less than half our original number of regular troops, and less than a fourth

part of our officers, our horses all killed or taken, our artillery men all cut off, and the pieces in the enemy's hands ; in this dreadful dilemma we had nothing to do but to attempt a retreat, which soon became a flight, and for several miles, amidst the yells of Indians, more dreadful to my ears than screams of hateful fiends to my ideas, amidst the groans of dying men, and the dreadful sight of bloody massacres on every side, perpetrated by the Indians on the unfortunate creatures they overtook, I endured a degree of torture no tongue can describe, or heart conceive ; yet, I providentially escaped unhurt, and frequently discharged my musket, as I am persuaded, to effect.

Providence was pleased to sustain my spirits and preserve my strength, and although I had been so far spent previous to setting out on the expedition, as to be unable to go upon fatigue for several days, or even to bear a moderate degree of exercise, I reached Fort Jefferson the day after the action, about ten in the morning, having travelled on foot all night to effect it.

Thus have I made the reader acquainted with the most interesting scenes of my life ; many of them are extraordinary, some of them perhaps incredible, but all of them founded in fact, which can be attested by numbers. Gen. St. Clair, in consequence of my sufferings, and what he and others were pleased to call soldier-like exertions, presented me with an ensign's commission, on joining the remains of my old company, in which station I mean to serve my country again, as far as my slender abilities will permit ; trusting that the same kind, protecting Providence, which hath covered my head in the day of battle, and shielded me repeatedly in the hour of danger, will dispose of me as to infinite wisdom seems best ; and if I die in the cause of my country,

may the remembrance of my sufferings, escapes, perseverance through divine support and repeated mercies received, kindle a flame of heroism in the breast of many an American youth, and induce him, while he reads the sufferings of his unfortunate countrymen, to exert himself to defend the worthy inhabitants on the frontiers from the depredations of savages ; whose horrid mode of war is a scene to be deprecated by civilized nature, whose tender mercies are cruelties, and whose faith is by no means to be depended on, though pledged in the most solemn treaties. The reader will permit me to close a short, but to me an extremely interesting narrative, with a few lines composed, as a song, by my worthy comrade Sackville, a few days before his death, during his hour to watch while I slept.

S O N G.

[*To the tune of*—"LIBERTY TREE."]

AMERICANS, rise at the voice of distress,
Tis a virtue to succour the brave :
The force of your arms distant realms shall confess,
Join'd with those whom your valour may save.

Savage nations shall learn by your conduct to rise
Above the untractable state,
Drop their customs of malice, and learn from the wise,
To be civiliz'd, gentle and great.

But those who presume against reason and right,
To spread terror, destruction and fire,
Shall perceive the advantage of art in the sight,
Shall be taught real worth to admire.

The wilderness then shall bloom forth as the rose,
Tall forests give place to rich grain,
While unity, peace and contentment disclose
Their beauties to crown the domain.

The native delighted—secured in his claim,
And instructed to stick to his word,
Shall abandon the tomahawk, arrow and flame,
And the hoe shall take place of the sword.

Our eagle shall then his wide pinions extend,
To the ocean that rolls in the west,
Dissension and discord be brought to an end,
And the world be permitted to rest.

Notes

- 1.9 General HARMAR] Josiah Harmar (1753-1813) was commander-in-chief of the United States Army from August 1784 until March 1791. In October 1790, Harmar led a force of about 1100 militia and 300 regulars to the upper Miami River, destroyed several villages, and fought several inconclusive engagements, including a disastrous one on October 21 at the junction of the St. Mary's and St. Joseph's rivers, where the army lost over 180 men. The expedition failed to achieve the desired objective of intimidating and pacifying the Indians. The Native coalition was led by Little Turtle (or Mishikinakwa), a Miami, and Blue Jacket (or Weyapiersenwah), a Shawnee.
- 1.11 General ST. CLAIR] Arthur St. Clair (1734-1818), a veteran of the Revolutionary War and past President of the Continental Congress, was in 1791 both the governor of the Northwest Territories (1787-1802) and commander-in-chief of the United States Army (March 4, 1791-March 5, 1792). He succeeded Gen. Harmar as the commander of the U.S. Army, and was succeeded in turn by General Anthony Wayne, who eventually defeated the Indians in Ohio at the Battle of Fallen Timbers, August 20, 1794.
- 4.29-30 Fort Washington] At the site of present-day Cincinnati, Ohio; constructed by Gen. Harmar in 1789.
- 6.11-12 destruction of L'Anguille ... Harmar] On August 7, 1791, a force under Lt. Col. James Wilkinson (sent by St. Clair) destroyed the large town of Kenapecomaqua on the Eel River, killing 9 Natives and capturing 34. American forces under Col. John Harden (sent by Gen. Harmar) had been defeated at the Eel River villages Oct. 19, 1790; and in August 1791 Harmar was no longer in command of the army.
- 10.7-8 Fort Jefferson] Near the site of present-day Greenville, Ohio; the fort was not constructed until mid-October 1791.

- 11.8 Braddock's defeat] July 9, 1755, on the Monongahela River, about seven miles south of its confluence with the Allegheny (at present-day Pittsburgh, PA). That site is roughly 275 miles east of Fort Jefferson, not the "few miles" the narrator claims; so this paragraph seems to suggest an impossibility.
- 12.15 Gen. St. Clair's defeat] St. Clair had marched north from Fort Washington with about 2,000 men on September 17, 1791. Along the route he established and garrisoned Fort Hamilton, Fort St. Clair, and Fort Jefferson, reducing his force to around 1400. He reduced it further on November 1, by despatching the 1st Regiment to retrieve a group of militia deserters and prevent them from plundering the supply train. On the morning of November 4, while encamped on a branch of the Wabash near the present Ohio-Indiana border, the army was attacked and overrun by Native forces. Two bayonet charges by regulars held off the attack briefly, and the army began a retreat which quickly became an outright flight. Fewer than 300 survivors reached Fort Jefferson (thirty miles away) the following day. About 250 women had accompanied the army; at least 50 were killed, and most of the rest taken prisoner. American military losses in the battle amounted to one quarter of the whole United States Army. The engagement is sometimes known as the Battle of the Wabash.
- 12.18-19 1200 regular ... militia.] In fact, St. Clair's whole force was closer to 1200 soldiers, not the 2400 this suggests.
- 15.10-14 The reader will ... I slept.] This sentence and the following "Song" were not printed in *Beers's Almanac ... for 1793*, and represent a later addition, by whose hand is not known.

Textual Note

The Remarkable Adventures of Jackson Jobonnet, of Massachusetts first appeared in *Beers's Almanac and Ephemeris ... For the Year of our Lord 1793*, which was published in Hartford, Connecticut in 1792. Its compiler was Andrew Beers (1749-1824), who followed the common practice of embellishing his almanacs with entertaining anecdotes, sketches, poetry, and narratives. The *Remarkable Adventures* occupied 7½ pages, following the astronomical table for December 1793 and preceding the poem "A Song upon Bundling"; these are the 19th through the 26th of the almanac's 36 unnumbered pages.

The popularity of the Johonnet narrative is testified by its immediate reprinting in separate book form in seven separate editions in 1793—at Boston, MA; Keene, NH; Newburyport, MA (twice); Providence, RI; Windsor, VT; and Concord, MA. The 1793 Providence edition claimed to be a reprint of one issued in 1791 in Lexington, Kentucky, but no other evidence of that earlier form has been found. Further editions were issued at Walpole, NH, in 1795, and at Salem, MA, in 1802. The account was soon included in numerous anthologies of Indian captivity narratives, including *Affecting History of the Dreadful Distresses of Frederic Manbeim's Family, etc.* (Philadelphia, 1800), Samuel L. Metcalfe's *A Collection of Some of the Most Interesting Narratives of Indian Warfare in the West* (Lexington, KY, 1820), and others.

External evidence for the existence of "Jackson Johonnet" is altogether lacking. The family name does not appear in the 1790 census for Falmouth, Maine (then part of Massachusetts); nor has any trace of "Jackson Johonnet," other than the printed narrative, been found.

Internal evidence within the *Remarkable Adventures* suggests that the entire narrative is an invention, based in part upon published reports of the battle it describes (known generally as "St. Clair's Defeat"). The chronology and geography of the narrative contain several points that contradict the known facts: 1) Gen-

eral Harmar had been relieved of command of the western army in March 1791 (before Johonnet left Falmouth); 2) Fort Jefferson was not constructed until October 1791 (although the narrator claims to have arrived there September 18); and 3) the site of Braddock's defeat, near present-day Pittsburgh, PA, is roughly 275 miles east of the site of Fort Jefferson (near present-day Greenville, Ohio). Other portions of the narrative (such as the narrator's marksmanship with a musket at 40 yards, or the persistence of human remains after 36 years) also seem to test credulity.

Some features of the narrative do coincide with historical events: on August 7, 1791, American forces did destroy a large Indian town on the Eel ("L'Anguille") River (although these were from the command of St. Clair, not Harmar); and the two officers mentioned by name (Capts. Phelon and Newman) were with the army, but both died in the battle.

Wright Howes, in his *U.S.I.A.N.A. (1650-1950): A Selective Bibliography* (New York, 1962), characterizes the work as a "dubious narrative." Most scholars, however, seem to have taken the work at face value.

The text of this electronic edition is based on the Boston book publication of 1793. It was transcribed from digital page images (accessed online in the Sabin Americana collection) of the copy in the Huntington Library. It has been collated against the first appearance in *Beers's Almanac and Ephemeris ... For the Year of our Lord 1793* (copy in the American Antiquarian Society), accessed in the Readex Microprint Collection, Early American Imprints 1639–1800, Evans Number 24083. The spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and italics reflect those of the Boston book publication of 1793.

This electronic edition is set in IM Fell Great Primer, a typeface originally cut in the seventeenth century by Peter de Walpergen for John Fell, Bishop of Oxford, and digitized and furnished by Iginio Marini [<http://www.iginomarini.com/fell.html>].

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University of Nebraska–Lincoln
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