

PRINCE SIMBO
1737-1810

Prince Simbo was an enslaved man who was sold several times before 1772. He belonged to Dorothy Buckely. When he asked her permission to marry a free “Indian Maide,” Phebe, she allowed it as long as Phebe became an indentured servant of Buckely’s for the remainder of Simbo’s life. Prince Simbo was an African-American soldier from Glastonbury, CT who fought in the Revolutionary War in the 7th Connecticut Regiment.

Simbo was involved in significant battles at Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth. In November of 1777 just before marching into Valley Forge Simbo carved a cow horn he used to carry gun powder. Simbo’s powder horn is a beautiful example of scrimshaw, a common practice of engraving personal images and scrollwork on mammal bones and is currently held in the Smithsonian’s National Museum of African American History. He was encamped at Valley Forge and records show that blankets were purchased for him and a fellow black soldier by the officers, which was a common practice for both white and black soldiers. Two years later Simbo suffered an injury at the Jockey Hollow encampment leading to a furlough and a change in status to the Invalid Corps.

After the war Simbo returned to Glastonbury where he lived with five other free people in the 1790 census. His death and that of his wife Phebe are recorded in the records of the First Congregational Church in 1810 and 1815 respectively.

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