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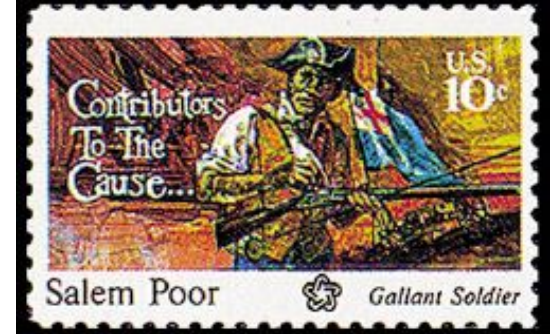
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# Salem Poor

By Mary Lynn Bushong

Salem Poor was born a slave in the late 1740s, but he did not stay one. While details of his life at the beginning and end are scanty, he has been remembered for his patriotic service.

He was thought to have been purchased as an infant in Salem, Massachusetts. He was raised in the Abbott household. At some point, Salem Poor became the property of John Poor, and it was from him that Salem purchased his own freedom in 1769 for twenty-seven pounds. Salem was around twenty years old. In November 1771, Salem married Nancy Parker, and they had at least one child.



In 1775, Salem left his family behind to fight in the Revolutionary War. Serving under General Washington, Salem was active as a minuteman. He helped construct the fortifications for the Battle of Bunker Hill. His bravery in that battle was noticed by more than one officer. He was cited by fourteen officers for his bravery and heroism. He was the only man singled out for his bravery in that battle.

Salem Poor fought with the patriots at Saratoga and Monmouth as well. He also spent a winter at Valley Forge in 1777-1778 after he re-enlisted for three more years.

Life was not easy for Poor after the war. His term of service was up in 1780. Nothing is known about him after that until 1793 when he was listed as living in an alms house (he was homeless) in Boston and again when he died in 1802. Even though his life was not easy, he served America when he was needed, and he served with distinction.

Salem Poor

## Questions

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. What is the main idea of this lesson?
- A. Salem Poor served the colonial army with distinction.
  - B. Salem Poor was born a slave.
  - C. Salem Poor served as a minuteman.
  - D. Salem Poor died without a home.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Poor was a spy for the Continental Army.
- A. false
  - B. true
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Poor was still waiting for his freedom when he died.
- A. false
  - B. true
4. In what battle was Poor cited for his bravery and heroism?

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