

UNCLE SAM



American Symbol



- **Uncle Sam**, popular symbol for the United States, usually associated with a cartoon figure having long white hair and chin whiskers and dressed in a swallow-tailed coat, vest, tall hat, and striped trousers.
- He has been part of advertising for over 100 years, appearing on products ranging from cereal to car insurance. He's recruited Americans for military service and encouraged them to support the war effort. He makes regular appearances in political cartoons in newspapers across the country.



THE LEGEND

On this day in 1813, the United States gets its nickname, Uncle Sam. The name is linked to Samuel Wilson, a meat packer from Troy, New York, who supplied barrels of beef to the United States Army during the War of 1812. Wilson (1766-1854) stamped the barrels with “U.S.” for United States, but soldiers began referring to the grub as “Uncle Sam’s.” The local newspaper picked up on the story and Uncle Sam eventually gained widespread acceptance as the nickname for the U.S. federal government.



Samuel Wilson



THE MOST FAMOUS IMAGE

- Perhaps the most famous image of Uncle Sam was created by artist James Montgomery Flagg (1877-1960). In Flagg's version, Uncle Sam wears a tall top hat and blue jacket and is pointing straight ahead at the viewer. During World War I, this portrait of Sam with the words "I Want You For The U.S. Army" was used as a recruiting poster. The image, which became immensely popular, was first used on the cover of Leslie's Weekly in July 1916 with the title "What Are You Doing for Preparedness?" The poster was widely distributed and has subsequently been re-used numerous times with different captions.



FACTS AND FIGURES

- More than four million copies of Flagg's **Uncle Sam** poster were printed between 1917 and 1918.
- The artist, James Montgomery Flagg, used his own image when drawing **Uncle Sam**.
- Congress passed a resolution in 1961 that recognized Samuel Wilson as the inspiration for the symbol **Uncle Sam**
- There are two memorials to Uncle Sam, both of which commemorate the life of Samuel Wilson: the Uncle Sam Memorial Statue in Arlington, Massachusetts, his birthplace; and a memorial near his long-term residence in Riverfront Park, Troy, New York.
- In 1989, "Uncle Sam Day" became official. A Congressional joint resolution designated September 13, 1989, the birthday of Samuel Wilson, as "Uncle Sam Day".



FAMOUS POSTERS AND PICTURES



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ATTENTION!**

