Do you know that Uncle Sam lived in New Hampshire and his house is still there?

Before you read:
personification - person representing a quality of an idea
depicted - shown
stern - strict
goatee beard - a small pointed beard on a man’s face, looking like a goat’s beard
recruitment - enlisting people into an army or navy
slaughtering - killing cattle for meat
shipment - transporting of goods
illusion - unreal image
clean shaven - no beard or moustache

Uncle Sam is a national personification of the United States and sometimes more specifically of the American government. He is depicted as a stern elderly white man with white hair and a goatee beard, and dressed in clothing that recalls the design elements of a flag of the United States—for example, typically a top hat with red and white stripes and white stars on a blue band, and red and white striped trousers.

The well-known “recruitment” image of Uncle Sam was created by James Montgomery Flagg, an illustrator and portrait artist. The image of Uncle Sam was shown publicly for the first time in 1916. More than four million copies of this image were printed between 1917 and 1918. The image was also used a lot during World War II.

Uncle Sam was named after a businessman, Samuel Wilson. During the war of 1812, Wilson was in the business of slaughtering and packing meat. He provided large shipments of meat for the American Army, in barrels that were stamped “U.S.”
Someone who saw the “US” stamp suggested, as a joke, that the initials stood for “Uncle Sam” Wilson. The meat shipments were from the USA, so it led to the idea that Uncle Sam symbolized the American government.

What is not very well-known about Uncle Sam is that the famous portrait of him is actually an illusion. Samuel Wilson didn’t look like the image of Uncle Sam. For example, he was always clean shaven.
Samuel Wilson was born in Massachusetts. When he was 14, his family moved to Mason, New Hampshire. There they settled in a hundred-acre farm. Later, Wilson and his brothers established their meat business in Troy, NY.

But the house where he spent some years of his childhood and where he got married is still in New Hampshire. Its owner, Jean-Pierre Mouraux, plans to live in the house and also make a museum.

Choose the correct answer:

Uncle Sam is a national personification of
a) the United States
b) elderly men
c) recruiters

In cartoons and posters Uncle Sam is dressed:

a) as a cowboy
b) in military uniform
c) in clothes with the elements of the American Flag

The well-known "recruitment" image of Uncle Sam appeared
a) in 1812
b) in 1916
c) during World War II

Samuel Wilson was
a) a soldier
b) a political leader
c) a businessman

In barrels stamped "U.S.", Wilson provided the American army with:

a) meat
b) beer
c) whiskey

3 (Uncle Sam) The joke was that the initials "US" stood for
a) United States
b) Uncle Sam (Wilson)
c) us

Samuel Wilson:

a) didn't look like the image of Uncle Sam
b) looked exactly like the image of Uncle Sam
c) looked like the image of Uncle Sam, only without the beard

Samuel Wilson was born
a) in New Hampshire
b) in New York
c) in Massachusetts

In New Hampshire his family lived
a) in Manchester
b) in Mason
c) in Concord
The owner of Samuel Wilson’s childhood house plans:
a) to live in the house
b) to make a museum of the house
c) to live in the house and to make a museum of it, at the same time.

Tell what you have learned about Uncle Sam and his house in NH:
- Why Uncle Sam is the personification of the United States;
- Who was Samuel Wilson;
- What part of his life he lived in New Hampshire;
- Where his childhood house is;
- What the present owner of the house wants to do with the house.

Sources:
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