

A Paranoid's Guide to History
INRECO doc #17
Section 31.4lk
Fiction Division

THE BIRTH OF UNCLE SAM

Cast

SAM WILSON
EBENEEZER WILSON
CAPTAIN
MADAMOISELLE´

Troy, New York, 1812.

EBENEEZER: If it ain't my brother, Sam Wilson.
What you doin' there, Sam?

SAM: Who's that? Oh well if it ain't me brother
Ebenezer— Pardin' me, Eeb, hat got caught in
the grinder yesterdee and the sun's affectatin'
the eyes. How's the slaughterin' goin'?

EBENEEZER: We'll have some fresh carcass to ye
this very afternoon.

SAM: Good news. Our fightin' boys need must
eat! We'll pack that meat straight up upon
receivment. Say, Eeb, whaddya make'a me new
invenshun? Lookee here at this barrel here.

EBENEEZER: Ain't thatta pretty sight. Whatter
them there, some alphabits?

SAM: Sure is. This one here's a "Yuh," and
right next to it all chummylike is what we call
a "Ess." I jes attach a horseshoe ta this stick
here and dip it in this bucket—like that—and
vee-oh-la!

EBEENEZER: Huh. Sure's a pity the camera ain't
been invented yet!

SAM: Don't worry, I got it all mesmerized.

EBENEEZER: Say, Sam, what them letters say there anyhee?

SAM: Well these here are the first letters of the two words of the name of this glorious land we call our hometown nation, these bein' the United States.

EBENEEZER: Oh. Though for a minute maybe you was signin' yer meat!

SAM: Ebenezer you always was the one fer crazy ideas. 'Sides, order'a do that, I reckon I'd require the letter knowed as "Doubleyuh, " our daddy's last name bein' Wilson, spelled as such. Why, a Doubleyuh problee take a whole year ta bend the right direcshun. This meat just won't keep for a whole year.

EBENEEZER: Huh. Well I reckon I'd better get this load to the dock, if it's all ready.

SAM: All yers. Give ma howdies ta the Cappin', will ya?

EBENEEZER collects meat barrels, each one stamped "U.S.," and heads toward the dock, where he encounters a ship's CAPTAIN.

EBENEEZER: Speak'a the royal geezer, there he is! 'Hoy there, Cappin'!

CAPTAIN: Well good day to you, Ebenezer. What fine-looking barrels you have with you ! Are they indeed what I hope and expect them to be?

EBENEEZER: If ya think it's yer meats for the fightin' boys!

CAPTAIN: May the Sovereign Lord bless and keep you and your good brother Sam and all of Troy. Aromatic indeed, these barrels. Cow this time ?

EBENEEZER: I swear it!

CAPTAIN: It will require my most supreme rhetorical powers to refrain my crew from

voiding these barrels of their tempting contents *en voyage a la guerre*.

EBENEEZER: Whoa, pickin' up a little Rooskie there, are ya?

CAPTAIN: The tongue to which you allude remains strange to me. It was the language known as French in which I just now indulged.

EBENEEZER: What? They got *two langiges* over there? What fer?

CAPTAIN: Why, the French and the Russian are two entirely different peoples!

EBENEEZER: Yikee! What'sa difference?

CAPTAIN: The French enjoy a superior cuisine, while the Russian have the better digestion.

EBENEEZER: Why ya talkin' to 'em anyhee?

CAPTAIN: I find it useful to understand all species of man, especially while in port. They may not all have Christian morals, but there are those who do quite well without.

EBENEEZER: Oh that's sure OK. For a minute there I thought ye might be goin' turncoat on us.

CAPTAIN: Heaven forbid. I would rather the Good Lord plunge my crew to their deaths in the murky deep— Say, what are those strange markings thereupon the meat barrels? I had not taken you for a Masonite, Ebenezer!

EBENEEZER: Naw, that's upside down there. If ya stand on yer head y'can see that them there are alphabits. My brother sure can spell real good, caint he?

CAPTAIN: "U. S." Dear heaven, most ingenious. Let's see now. The "S" surely stands for "Samuel." But why the precedent "U"? Don't tell me please, for I relish a good puzzle. Let's see. Oft have I heard your brother comment

that, due to his capacity as edible meat supplier to our valiant troops abroad, he feels most like an uncle to those brave lads. Perhaps this "U" denotes the word "Uncle." Am I right, Ebenezer? Is "Uncle Sam" his kindly appellation, stamped here upon his meat barrels?

EBENEZER: Uh—

CAPTAIN: Is this his humble way of letting our fighting boys know that, however bastard and estranged they may be, they all have an "uncle" back home looking out for them?

EBENEZER: Well the "Yuh"—

CAPTAIN: Your brother is a very good man, of far-reaching principle.

EBENEZER: Uh, yup. He don't keep more'n a brisket.

CAPTAIN: I will be sure that his "nephews" receive his meat—and his message.

EBENEZER: Thanks, Cappin'. Oh, and any of this meat spoils on the ride over, just give it giftee-like to the Frogs—they can eat the flies!

CAPTAIN: You've a tactical mind, Ebenezer. And now I must take my leave. To the sea, I!

EBENEZER: Bone voltage!

The CAPTAIN sails the ocean.

CAPTAIN: Recede, great wave! Back, beast, back! Clouds, calm thyself. Is that Helios breaking yonder? Good morning to you, sweet dove—thank you— Ah! An anchorage. And now at last, after a long, fearsome voyage in which many storms have been endured and many monsters of the deep subdued, the Good Lord has seen fit to steer myself and my crew and our nourishy cargo safely to the shore of a distant land, where war rages in alignment with the passions of

men, whose nature it has ever been to strive for better comfort of kin and country, and indeed to communicate comfort's first cause to the benighted peoples of this achy earth, that same earth which, due to the persistence of luminary sea-crossers such as myself, we now know to be as round as an apple, and, like the apple, availing a finite quantity of bites. And therefore we, angel-brained inheritants of this our great blue fruit, war with even more diligence than our ancestors, who knew no end to the surface of their terranean home, and so did strive at their various aims with somewhat less urgency than ourselves. And now to my mission— What's this? An empty beach! But where is our army? Halloooo! American soldiers, I greet you! I have brought you delectables from your native land, sure to please your free-speaking tongues and stir your most equable digestion! Come hither, brave sons of liberty, and collect your due bounty! I assure you the meat secured in these barrels will batten your wills and gallop your limbs! Hallooooo! Anybody here?

Enter MADEMOISELLE.

MADEMOISELLE: Bonjour, Capitain.

CAPTAIN: Bonjour, mademoiselle. How goes the war?

MADEMOISELLE: One bruzzer of mine eez dead.

CAPTAIN: I'm so sorry—not for nothing, I dearly hope.

MADEMOISELLE: Not eef you value tears, Capitain. What is having you zer in zose packahge?

CAPTAIN: I arrive with food for my fighting countrymen: meat from New York's good ole town of Troy, our bastion of enlightened meat packing. This meat has been packed with the skill and affection of one of our motherland's brotherhood known by the name of "Uncle Sam."

You may perceive his signature on each and every barrel I bring.

MADEMOISELLE: Ah! Oncle Sam! Eet is very good of eem to zink of heez nephew. But alors, I am very sorree: zer are no Americain soldiers here.

CAPTAIN: What? But there's a war on! Are you sure?

MADEMOISELLE: I eez certain. I work at Ze Ouz of Appy Sailor, do you know eet?

CAPTAIN: The House of Happy Sailors? Why, you must be new there. I know that aptly apellated establishment quite well.

MADEMOISELLE: Zen you will understand what eet means zat we 'ave not seen a countrymain in many weeks—and zat one 'as no arms...

CAPTAIN: Well. Perhaps the information given me was defective in some way. I wonder where they all went?

MADEMOISELLE: Perhaps zey are weez Napoleon into Russia?

CAPTAIN: Zounds! *Merci, madame*. To Russia shall I follow in my stalwart ship. But which way? I see no signpost.

MADEMOISELLE: Zat way. But I do not zink zees meat will survive ze journey, Capitain, for it eez a very long distanz to Russia. Even meat zat eez living can be damahged.

CAPTAIN: Please pardonez-mois for just one moment while I kneel on this very spot and pray for divine suggestion...

MADEMOISELLE: Oh, but zat I can geev you very faster! Eef you and your crew and your meat weel come wiz me to ze Ouz of Appy Sailor, I zink you will make us very 'appy! We 'ave been 'aving too much of ze fondue, ze fromage, *comprend?* And eef we 'ave meat, zen we cain be

very 'appy, and we can make for you sree or
four days of very 'appy capitain, oui?

CAPTAIN: Very good. You have a practical mind,
mademoiselle. Surely we shall see you shortly
at the House of Happy Sailors.

MADMOISELLE: *Bon.* See you zer, Uncle Same! And
when you arrive, remember: I want you!

Curtain.
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