[Template:About](/wiki/Template:About" \o "Template:About) [Template:Redirect](/wiki/Template:Redirect) [Template:Redirect](/wiki/Template:Redirect) [Template:Redirect](/wiki/Template:Redirect) [Template:Pp-move-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-move-indef) [Template:Infobox person](/wiki/Template:Infobox_person) **Pocahontas** (born **Matoaka**, known as **Amonute**, and later known as **Rebecca Rolfe**, [Template:Circa](/wiki/Template:Circa) 1596–1617) was a [Native American](/wiki/Native_American_tribes_in_Virginia)<ref name=VIwriting>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>[[1]](#cite_note-1)<ref name=Poca>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> notable for her association with the colonial settlement at [Jamestown, Virginia](/wiki/Jamestown,_Virginia). Pocahontas was the daughter of [Powhatan](/wiki/Chief_Powhatan), the [paramount chief](/wiki/Paramount_chief)[[2]](#cite_note-2) of a network of tributary tribal nations in the [Tsenacommacah](/wiki/Tsenacommacah), encompassing the [Tidewater region](/wiki/Tidewater_region) of [Virginia](/wiki/Virginia). In a well-known historical anecdote, she is said to have saved the life of an Indian captive, Englishman [John Smith](/wiki/John_Smith_(explorer)), in 1607 by placing her head upon his own when her father raised his war club to execute him. Some historians have suggested that this story, as told by Smith, is untrue.[[3]](#cite_note-3) Pocahontas was captured by the English during Anglo-Indian hostilities in 1613, and held for ransom. During her captivity, she converted to [Christianity](/wiki/Christianity) and took the name Rebecca. When the opportunity arose for her to return to her people, she chose to remain with the English. In April 1614, she married tobacco planter [John Rolfe](/wiki/John_Rolfe), and in January 1615, bore their son, [Thomas Rolfe](/wiki/Thomas_Rolfe).[[4]](#cite_note-4) In 1616, the Rolfes traveled to London. Pocahontas was presented to English society as an example of the ["civilized savage"](/wiki/Noble_savage) in hopes of stimulating investment in the Jamestown settlement. She became something of a celebrity, was elegantly fêted, and attended a [masque](/wiki/Masque) at [Whitehall Palace](/wiki/Whitehall_Palace). In 1617, the Rolfes set sail for Virginia, but Pocahontas died at [Gravesend](/wiki/Gravesend,_Kent) of unknown causes. She was buried in a church in Gravesend in the United Kingdom, but the exact location of her grave is unknown.[[4]](#cite_note-4) Numerous places, landmarks, and products in the United States have been named after Pocahontas. Her story has been romanticized over the years, and she is a subject of art, literature, and film. Her descendants, through her son Thomas, include members of the [First Families of Virginia](/wiki/First_Families_of_Virginia), [First Lady](/wiki/First_Lady_of_the_United_States) [Edith Wilson](/wiki/Edith_Wilson), American Western actor [Glenn Strange](/wiki/Glenn_Strange), and astronomer [Percival Lowell](/wiki/Percival_Lowell).[[5]](#cite_note-5)

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## Early life[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

Pocahontas's birth year is unknown, but some historians estimate it to have been around 1596.[[4]](#cite_note-4) In *A True Relation of Virginia* (1608), Smith described the Pocahontas he met in the spring of 1608 as being "a child of [Template:Sic](/wiki/Template:Sic) years old".[[6]](#cite_note-6) In a letter written in 1616, he again described her as she was in 1608, but this time she had grown slightly to "a child of twelve or thirteen years of age".[[7]](#cite_note-7) Pocahontas was the daughter of [Powhatan](/wiki/Chief_Powhatan), paramount chief of [Tsenacommacah](/wiki/Tsenacommacah), an alliance of about thirty [Algonquian-speaking](/wiki/Eastern_Algonquian_languages) groups and petty chiefdoms in [Tidewater, Virginia](/wiki/Tidewater_region) [[8]](#cite_note-8) Her mother, whose name and specific group of origin are unknown, was one of dozens of wives taken by Powhatan; each wife gave him a single child and then was sent back to her village to be supported by the paramount chief until she found another husband.[[9]](#cite_note-9) Pocahontas's childhood was probably little different from that of most girls who lived in Tsenacommacah. She learned how to perform what was considered to be women's work, which included foraging for food and firewood, farming, and searching for the plant materials used in building thatched houses.[[10]](#cite_note-10) As she grew older, she helped other members of Powhatan's household with preparations for large feasts.[[9]](#cite_note-9) Serving feasts, such as the one presented to John Smith after his capture, was a regular obligation of the *Mamanatowick*, or paramount chief.[[11]](#cite_note-11)

### Names[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

At the time Pocahontas was born, it was common for Powhatan Native Americans to be given several personal names, have more than one name at the same time, have secret names that only a select few knew, and to change their names on important occasions. Bestowed at different times, the names carried different meanings and might be used in different contexts.[[12]](#cite_note-12) Pocahontas was no different. Early in her life she was given a secret name, Matoaka, but later she was also known as Amonute. Matoaka means "Bright Stream Between the Hills"; Amonute cannot be translated.[[13]](#cite_note-13)[[14]](#cite_note-14) The name Pocahontas was a childhood nickname that probably referred to her frolicsome nature; according to the colonist [William Strachey](/wiki/William_Strachey), it meant "little wanton",[[15]](#cite_note-15) some interpret the meaning as "playful one".[[11]](#cite_note-11) The 18th-century historian [William Stith](/wiki/William_Stith) claimed that "her real name, it seems, was originally Matoax, which the Indians carefully concealed from the English and changed it to Pocahontas, out of a superstitious fear, lest they, by the knowledge of her true name, should be enabled to do her some hurt."<ref name=Stith1>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> According to the anthropologist Helen C. Rountree, Pocahontas "revealed [her secret name] to the English only after she had taken another religious—baptismal—name, Rebecca".[[16]](#cite_note-16) Pocahontas's Christian name, Rebecca, may have been a symbolic gesture to [Rebecca](/wiki/Rebecca) of the [Book of Genesis](/wiki/Book_of_Genesis) who, as the mother of [Jacob](/wiki/Jacob) and [Esau](/wiki/Esau), was the mother of two "nations", or distinct peoples. Pocahontas, as a Powhatan marrying an Englishman, may have been seen by herself and by her contemporaries as being also, potentially, the mother of two nations.[[17]](#cite_note-17)

### Title and status[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

Pocahontas has been considered in popular culture to be a [princess](/wiki/Princess). In 1841, William Watson Waldron of [Trinity College, Dublin](/wiki/Trinity_College,_Dublin), in Ireland, published *Pocahontas, American Princess: and Other Poems*, calling Pocahontas "the beloved and only surviving daughter of the king".[[18]](#cite_note-18) Indeed, Pocahontas was a favorite of her father's—his "delight and darling", according to the colonist [Captain Ralph Hamor](/wiki/Ralph_Hamor)[[19]](#cite_note-19)—but she was not in line to inherit a position as a [*weroance*](/wiki/Weroance), subchief, or *mamanatowick* (paramount chief). Instead, Powhatan's brothers, sisters, and his sisters' children all stood in line to succeed him.[[20]](#cite_note-20) In his *A Map of Virginia* John Smith explained how matrilineal inheritance worked among the Powhatans: [Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

### Mother[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

The identity and exact group origin of Pocahontas's mother has never been known, but her status would have been lowly. In his *Relation of Virginia* (1609), the colonist [Henry Spelman](/wiki/Henry_Spelman_of_Jamestown), who had lived among the Powhatan serving as an interpreter, noted Chief Powhatan's many wives. Each wife gave the paramount chief one child, after which she not only resumed her status as a commoner but was also sent back where she had come from.[[21]](#cite_note-21) However, some historians even theorize her mother died during childbirth.[[22]](#cite_note-22)

## Interactions with the English[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

### John Smith[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[thumb|upright=1.3|In this](/wiki/Image:Pocahontas-saves-Smith-NE-Chromo-1870.jpeg) [chromolithograph](/wiki/Chromolithography) credited to the New England Chromo. Lith. Company, ca. 1870, Pocahontas saves the life of John Smith. The scene is idealized and relies on stereotypes of Native Americans rather than reliable information about the particulars of this historical moment. There are no mountains in Tidewater Virginia, for example, and the Powhatans lived not in [tipis](/wiki/Tipi) but in thatched houses. And the scene that Smith famously described in his [*Generall Historie*](/wiki/The_Generall_Historie_of_Virginia,_New-England,_and_the_Summer_Isles) (1624) did not take place outdoors but in a [longhouse](/wiki/Longhouse).

Pocahontas is most famously linked to the English colonist [Captain John Smith](/wiki/Captain_John_Smith), who arrived in Virginia with a hundred other settlers in April 1607. After building a fort on a marshy peninsula poking out into the [James River](/wiki/James_River), the Englishmen had numerous encounters over the next several months with the Natives of Tsenacommacah, some of them friendly, some hostile. Then, in December 1607, while exploring on the [Chickahominy River](/wiki/Chickahominy_River), Smith was captured by a hunting party led by Powhatan's younger brother (or close relative) [Opechancanough](/wiki/Opechancanough) and brought to Powhatan's capital at [Werowocomoco](/wiki/Werowocomoco). In his 1608 account, Smith described a large feast followed by a long talk with Powhatan. He does not mention Pocahontas in relation to his capture; in fact, in this account, he does not meet Pocahontas for the first time until a few months later.[[23]](#cite_note-23) In 1616, however, Smith wrote a letter to [Queen Anne](/wiki/Anne_of_Denmark) in anticipation of Pocahontas's visit to England. In this new account, his capture included the threat of his own death: "... at the minute of my execution", he wrote, "she [Pocahontas] hazarded the beating out of her own brains to save mine; and not only that, but so prevailed with her father, that I was safely conducted to Jamestown."[[7]](#cite_note-7) Early histories did establish that Pocahontas befriended Smith and the Jamestown colony. Pocahontas often went to the settlement and played games with the boys there.[[24]](#cite_note-24) When the colonists were starving, "every once in four or five days, Pocahontas with her attendants brought him [Smith] so much provision that saved many of their lives that else for all this had starved with hunger."[[25]](#cite_note-25) As the colonists expanded their settlement further, the Powhatan felt their lands were threatened, and conflicts arose again.

In late 1609, an injury from a gunpowder explosion forced Smith to return to England for medical care. The English told the Powhatans that Smith was dead. Pocahontas believed that account and hence after, stopped visiting Jamestown. Much later, she learned that he was living in England when she traveled there as the wife of John Rolfe.[[26]](#cite_note-26) Historical records do not suggest that Smith and Pocahontas were lovers. When Smith first arrived to Virginia, Pocahontas was around the age of eleven. Although texts substantiate claims of friendship, they do not suggest a romance between Smith and herself.[[27]](#cite_note-27) The romance is featured only (but repeatedly) in fictional versions of their relationship (such as the 1995 [animated film by Walt Disney Pictures](/wiki/Pocahontas_(1995_film)) and the 2005 Terence Malick film, [*The New World*](/wiki/The_New_World_(2005_film))). The first romance was written about them in the early 19th century, suggesting the story's mythic appeal.

#### Modern views on Smith's near execution[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

Eight years after his original account, in his [*Template:Not a typo*](/wiki/Template:Not_a_typo), Smith expanded upon the story. Writing about himself in the third person, he explained that after he was captured and taken to the paramount chief, "two great stones were brought before Powhatan: then as many as could layd hands on him [Smith], dragged him to them, and thereon laid his head, and being ready with their clubs, to beate out his braines, Pocahontas the Kings dearest daughter, when no intreaty could prevaile, got his head in her armes, and laid her owne upon his to save him from death ..."[[28]](#cite_note-28) The anthropologist Helen C. Rountree has argued that Smith's first "version of events [i.e., that he was interviewed by Powhatan] makes sense, given how eager the Indian leadership was to find out why the English had come and stayed in Virginia." It's a popular opinion among historians that Smith's story was, in fact, a lie.[[29]](#cite_note-29) Some scholars have argued that the absence of the episode in Smith's earlier works should not be definitive evidence that it did not happen. Historian [J. A. Leo Lemay](/wiki/J._A._Leo_Lemay), for instance, noted in his 1992 book that, as Smith's earlier writing was primarily concerned with geographical and ethnographic matters, he had no reason then to recount the story of Pocahontas.[[30]](#cite_note-30) Stan Birchfield has written that "Smith's writings are perfectly consistent with the truthfulness of the episode."[[31]](#cite_note-31) In *True Travels* (1630), Smith told a similar story of having been rescued by the intervention of a young girl after having been captured in 1602 by [Turks](/wiki/Ottoman_Empire) in Hungary. The historian [Karen Ordahl Kupperman](/wiki/Karen_Ordahl_Kupperman) has suggested that he "presented those remembered events from decades earlier" when telling the story of Pocahontas.[[32]](#cite_note-32) A different theory suggests that Smith may have misunderstood what had happened to him in Powhatan's [longhouse](/wiki/Longhouse). Rather than the near victim of an execution, he may have been subject to a tribal ritual intended to symbolize his death and rebirth as a member of the tribe.[[33]](#cite_note-33)[[34]](#cite_note-34) However, this theory is not well supported by evidence of Powhatan rituals or those of other North American Native groups.[[35]](#cite_note-35) The historian Margaret Williamson Huber has argued that Powhatan, in this case, was being politically pragmatic by attempting to bring Smith, and so the English, into his chiefdom. According to Huber, Powhatan attempted to offer Smith rule of the town of Capahosic, which was close to Powhatan's capital at Werowocomoco. In this way, the paramount chief hoped to keep Smith and his men "nearby and better under control".[[36]](#cite_note-36)

### Capture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

[thumb|left|In his engraving *The abduction of Pocahontas* (1619),](/wiki/Image:The_Abduction_of_Pocahontas.jpg) [Johann Theodor de Bry](/wiki/Theodor_de_Bry) depicts a full narrative. Starting in the lower left, Pocahontas (center) is deceived by the [*weroance*](/wiki/Weroance) Iopassus, who holds as bait a copper kettle, and his wife, who pretends to cry. At center right, Pocahontas is put on the boat and feasted. In the background, the action moves from the Potomac to the York River, where negotiations for a hostage trade fail and the English attack and burn a Native American village.[[37]](#cite_note-37)

Pocahontas' capture occurred in the context of the [First Anglo-Powhatan War](/wiki/Anglo-Powhatan_Wars), a conflict between the Jamestown settlers and the Native Americans that began late in the summer of 1609.[[38]](#cite_note-38) In the first years of war, the English took control of the [James River](/wiki/James_River), both at its mouth and at the falls. Captain [Samuel Argall](/wiki/Samuel_Argall), in the meantime, pursued contacts with Native American groups in the northern portion of Powhatan's paramount chiefdom. The [Patawomecks](/wiki/Patawomeck), who lived on the [Potomac River](/wiki/Potomac_River), were not always loyal to Powhatan, and living with them was a young English interpreter named [Henry Spelman](/wiki/Henry_Spelman_of_Jamestown). In March 1613, Argall learned that Pocahontas was visiting the Patawomeck village of Passapatanzy and living under the protection of the weroance Iopassus (also known as Japazaws).

[[39]](#cite_note-39) With Spelman's help translating, Argall pressured Iopassus to assist in Pocahontas's capture by promising an alliance with the English against the Powhatans.[[39]](#cite_note-39) They tricked Pocahontas into boarding Argall's ship and held her for ransom, demanding the release of English prisoners held by her father, along with various stolen weapons and tools.[[40]](#cite_note-40) Powhatan returned the prisoners, but failed to satisfy the colonists with the number of weapons and tools he returned. A long standoff ensued, during which the English kept Pocahontas captive.

During the year-long wait, she was held at [Henricus](/wiki/Henricus), in modern-day [Chesterfield County, Virginia](/wiki/Chesterfield_County,_Virginia). Little is known about her life there, although colonist Ralph Hamor wrote that she received "extraordinary courteous usage".[[41]](#cite_note-41) Linwood "Little Bear" Custalow, in a 2007 book, asserted that Pocahontas was raped during this time, citing oral tradition handed down over four centuries. According to Helen Rountree, "Other historians have disputed that such oral tradition survived and instead argue that any mistreatment of Pocahontas would have gone against the interests of the English in their negotiations with Powhatan."[[42]](#cite_note-42) At this time, the minister at Henricus, [Alexander Whitaker](/wiki/Alexander_Whitaker), taught Pocahontas about [Christianity](/wiki/Christianity) and helped her to improve her English. Upon her [baptism](/wiki/Baptism), Pocahontas took the [Christian name](/wiki/Christian_name) "Rebecca".[[43]](#cite_note-43) In March 1614, the standoff built up to a violent confrontation between hundreds of English and Powhatan men on the [Pamunkey River](/wiki/Pamunkey_River). At Powhatan's capital of Matchcot, the English encountered a group of some senior Native American leaders (but not Powhatan himself, who was away). The English permitted Pocahontas to talk to her countrymen. Pocahontas reportedly rebuked her father for valuing her "less than old swords, pieces, or axes", and told the Powhatan she preferred to live with the English.[[44]](#cite_note-44)

### Possible first marriage[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

Current Mattaponi tradition holds that Pocahontas's first husband was Kocoum, brother of the Patawomeck *weroance* Japazaws, and that Kocoum was killed by the English after her capture in 1613.[[45]](#cite_note-45) Today's Patawomecks believe that Pocahontas and Kocoum had a daughter, Ka-Okee, who was raised by the Patawomecks after her father's death and her mother's abduction.[[46]](#cite_note-46) However, Kocoum's actual identity, location and even existence have been widely debated among scholars for centuries, with several historians[Template:Who](/wiki/Template:Who) arguing that the only mention of a "Kocoum" in any English document is taken from a brief statement written ca. 1616 by [William Strachey](/wiki/William_Strachey) in England that Pocahontas had been living married to a "private captaine called Kocoum" for two years.[[47]](#cite_note-47) Since 1614 is certainly when she married John Rolfe, and no other records even hint at any previous husband, it has accordingly been suggested that when Strachey wrote of the "private captaine called Kocoum" he was mistakenly referring to Rolfe himself, with the reference being later misunderstood as one of Powhatan's officers.[[48]](#cite_note-48) There was a Powhatan military rank called *kokoraws*, sometimes translated 'captain', and scholarly debate has also raged[Template:Attribution needed](/wiki/Template:Attribution_needed) whether Strachey could have meant this as one of his famously divergent spellings, as a gloss to 'Captayne'. In addition, the date of Strachey's original statement has been widely disputed by numerous authors attempting either to make the case, or refute, that Pocahontas had been previously married. If there was such a marriage and Kocoum was not murdered, it likely ended, according to Powhatan custom, when Pocahontas was captured.[[49]](#cite_note-49)

### Marriage to John Rolfe[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[thumb|](/wiki/Image:Baptism_of_Pocahontas.jpg)[John Gadsby Chapman](/wiki/John_Gadsby_Chapman), *The Baptism of Pocahontas* (1840). A copy is on display at the [US Capitol](/wiki/US_Capitol).

During her stay in [Henricus](/wiki/Henricus), Pocahontas met [John Rolfe](/wiki/John_Rolfe). Rolfe's English-born wife, Sarah Hacker, and child, Bermuda Rolfe, died prior to his journey to Virginia. He had successfully cultivated a new strain of [tobacco](/wiki/Tobacco) there and spent much of his time tending to his crop. He was a pious man who agonized over the potential moral repercussions of marrying a heathen. In a long letter to the governor requesting permission to wed her, he expressed both his love for her and his belief he would be saving her soul claiming he was: [Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

Pocahontas' feelings about Rolfe are unknown. She married him on April 5, 1614. Though frequently the wedding is placed at Jamestown, there is in fact no surviving record indicating where the ceremony took place. Possible sites include Henricus, Bermuda City, and Jamestown. [Richard Buck](/wiki/Richard_Buck_(chaplain)) presided. They lived for two years on Rolfe's plantation, [Varina Farms](/wiki/Varina_Farms), which was located across the [James River](/wiki/James_River_(Virginia)) from the new community of Henricus. Their son [Thomas](/wiki/Thomas_Rolfe) was born on January 30, 1615.

Their marriage was not successful in winning the English captives back, but it did create a temporary climate of peace between the Jamestown colonists and Powhatan's tribes for 8 years. This period of time was termed the "Peace of Pocahontas";[[27]](#cite_note-27) in 1615, Ralph Hamor wrote: [Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

### England[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

[thumb|upright|The](/wiki/Image:Sedgeford_portrait.jpg) [Sedgeford Hall Portrait](/wiki/Sedgeford_Hall_Portrait), once thought to represent Pocahontas and Thomas Rolfe, is now believed to actually depict the wife (Pe-o-ka) and son of Osceola, Seminole Indian Chief.[[50]](#cite_note-50)

The Virginia Company of London had long seen one of its primary goals as the conversion of Native Americans to Christianity. With the conversion of Pocahontas and her marriage to an Englishman – all of which helped bring an end to the [First Anglo-Powhatan War](/wiki/Anglo-Powhatan_Wars) – the company saw an opportunity to promote investment. The company decided to bring Pocahontas to England as a symbol of the tamed New World "savage" and the success of the Jamestown settlement.[[51]](#cite_note-51) In 1616, the Rolfes traveled to England, arriving at the port of [Plymouth](/wiki/Plymouth) on June 12.[[52]](#cite_note-52) They journeyed to London by coach, accompanied by a group of about eleven other Powhatans, including a holy man named [Tomocomo](/wiki/Tomocomo).[[53]](#cite_note-53) John Smith was living in London at the time and while Pocahontas was in Plymouth, she learned he was still alive.[[54]](#cite_note-54) Smith did not meet Pocahontas, but wrote to Queen [Anne](/wiki/Anne_of_Denmark), the wife of [King James](/wiki/James_I_of_England), urging that Pocahontas be treated with respect as a royal visitor. He suggested that if she were treated badly, her "present love to us and Christianity might turn to ... scorn and fury", and England might lose the chance to "rightly have a Kingdom by her means".[[7]](#cite_note-7) Pocahontas was entertained at various society gatherings. On January 5, 1617, she and Tomocomo were brought before the king at the old [Banqueting House](/wiki/Banqueting_House,_Whitehall) in the [Palace of Whitehall](/wiki/Palace_of_Whitehall) at a performance of [Ben Jonson's](/wiki/Ben_Jonson) [masque](/wiki/Masque) [*The Vision of Delight*](/wiki/The_Vision_of_Delight). According to Smith, King James was so unprepossessing that neither Pocahontas nor Tomocomo realized whom they had met until it was explained to them afterward.[[54]](#cite_note-54) Although Pocahontas was not a princess in the context of Powhatan culture, the Virginia Company nevertheless presented her as a princess to the English public. The inscription on a 1616 engraving of Pocahontas, made for the company, reads: "MATOAKA ALS REBECCA FILIA POTENTISS : PRINC : POWHATANI IMP:VIRGINIÆ", which means: "Matoaka, alias Rebecca, daughter of the most powerful prince of the Powhatan Empire of Virginia". Many English at this time recognized Powhatan to be the ruler of an empire, and they presumably accorded to his daughter what they considered appropriate status. Smith's letter to Queen Anne refers to "Powhatan their chief King".[[7]](#cite_note-7) [Samuel Purchas](/wiki/Samuel_Purchas) recalled meeting Pocahontas in London, writing that she impressed those she met because she "carried her selfe as the daughter of a king".[[55]](#cite_note-55) When he met her again in London, Smith referred to Pocahontas deferentially as a "Kings daughter".[[56]](#cite_note-56) Pocahontas was apparently treated well in London. At the masque, her seats were described as "well placed",[[57]](#cite_note-57) and, according to Purchas, [John King](/wiki/John_King_(bishop)), [Bishop of London](/wiki/Bishop_of_London), "entertained her with festival state and pomp beyond what I have seen in his greate hospitalitie afforded to other ladies."[[58]](#cite_note-58) Not all the English were so impressed. According to Helen C. Rountree, "there is no contemporary evidence to suggest ... that Pocahontas was regarded [in England] as anything like royalty." Rather, she was considered to be something of a curiosity and, according to one observer, she was merely "the Virginian woman".[[20]](#cite_note-20) Pocahontas and Rolfe lived in the suburb of [Brentford](/wiki/Brentford), [Middlesex](/wiki/Middlesex), for some time, as well as at Rolfe's family home at Heacham Hall, [Heacham](/wiki/Heacham), [Norfolk](/wiki/Norfolk,_England). In early 1617, Smith met the couple at a social gathering, and later wrote that when Pocahontas saw him, "without any words, she turned about, obscured her face, as not seeming well contented", and was left alone for two or three hours. Later, they spoke more; Smith's record of what she said to him is fragmentary and enigmatic. She reminded him of the "courtesies she had done", saying, "you did promise Powhatan what was yours would be his, and he the like to you." She then discomfited him by calling him "father", explaining Smith had called Powhatan "father" when a stranger in Virginia, "and by the same reason so must I do you". Smith did not accept this form of address because, he wrote, Pocahontas outranked him as "a King's daughter". Pocahontas then, "with a well-set countenance", said:

[Template:Quote](/wiki/Template:Quote)

Finally, Pocahontas told Smith that she and her fellow Native Americans had thought him dead, but her father had told Tomocomo to seek him "because your countrymen will lie much".[[54]](#cite_note-54)

## Death[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[thumb|Statue of Pocahontas in](/wiki/Image:Pocahontas_gravesend.jpg) [Saint George's church](/wiki/St_George's_Church,_Gravesend), [Gravesend](/wiki/Gravesend), [Kent](/wiki/Kent)|180x175px In March 1617, Rolfe and Pocahontas boarded a ship to return to Virginia; the ship had sailed only as far as [Gravesend](/wiki/Gravesend,_Kent) on the [river Thames](/wiki/River_Thames) when Pocahontas became gravely ill.[[59]](#cite_note-59) She was taken ashore and died in John Rolfe's arms at the approximate age of twenty-two. It is not known what caused her death, but theories range from [smallpox](/wiki/Smallpox), [pneumonia](/wiki/Pneumonia), or [tuberculosis](/wiki/Tuberculosis), to her having been poisoned.[[60]](#cite_note-60) According to Rolfe, she died saying, "all must die, but tis enough that her child liveth".[[61]](#cite_note-61) Her father Powhatan died within the year of her own death and after this, the "Peace of Pocahontas" began to disintegrate.

Her funeral took place on March 21, 1617, in the parish of [Saint George's](/wiki/St_George's_Church,_Gravesend), Gravesend.[[62]](#cite_note-62) The site of her grave is thought to be underneath the church's chancel, though since that church was destroyed in a fire in 1727, her exact gravesite is unknown.[[63]](#cite_note-63) Her memory is honored with a life-size bronze statue at St. George's Church by [William Ordway Partridge](/wiki/William_Ordway_Partridge).[[64]](#cite_note-64)

## Descendants and legacy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:Refimprove section](/wiki/Template:Refimprove_section) Pocahontas and her husband, [John Rolfe](/wiki/John_Rolfe), had one child, [Thomas Rolfe](/wiki/Thomas_Rolfe), who was born in January 1615. The following year, Thomas's parents travelled to London. Pocahontas has many descendants through her son Thomas, including members of the [First Families of Virginia](/wiki/First_Families_of_Virginia) , American Western actor Glenn Strange, and astronomer and mathematician [Percival Lowell](/wiki/Percival_Lowell), whose achievements include helping discover Pluto.

Descendants of many First Families of Virginia trace their roots back to Pocahontas and her father, [Chief Powhatan](/wiki/Chief_Powhatan), including Edith Bolling Galt Wilson, wife of [Woodrow Wilson](/wiki/Woodrow_Wilson); [George Wythe Randolph](/wiki/George_Wythe_Randolph); Admiral [Richard E. Byrd](/wiki/Richard_E._Byrd); Virginia Governor [Harry F. Byrd](/wiki/Harry_F._Byrd); fashion-designer and socialite Pauline de Rothschild.[[65]](#cite_note-65)[Template:Unreliable source?](/wiki/Template:Unreliable_source?)

Two descendants of Pocahontas have become [First Ladies of the United States](/wiki/First_Ladies_of_the_United_States), [Edith Wilson](/wiki/Edith_Wilson) and [Nancy Reagan](/wiki/Nancy_Reagan). Edith Wilson was very proud of her heritage. She was born and raised in Virginia, and through her father, William Holcombe Bolling, was a ninth-generation descendant of Pocahontas.[[66]](#cite_note-66) Her "blood" was introduced to the Randolph family of Virginia via the marriage of her great-great-granddaughter, Jane Bolling, to [Richard Randolph](/wiki/Richard_Randolph).

In July 2015, the [Pamunkey Indian Tribe](/wiki/Pamunkey), descendants of the [Powhatan](/wiki/Powhatan) chiefdom, of which Pocahontas was a member, became the first [federally recognized tribe](/wiki/Federally_recognized_tribe) in the state of Virginia.[[67]](#cite_note-67) As well, in 1907, Pocahontas became the first Native American woman (and indeed the first Native American) honored on a US stamp.[[68]](#cite_note-68)<gallery class=center widths="180px" heights="120px" > File:Edith Wilson.jpg|thumb|First Lady [Edith Wilson](/wiki/Edith_Wilson), a descendant of Pocahontas. File:00OPocahontas.jpg|thumb|

Pocahontas stamp, reissue of 1907

File:Matoaka Whittle Sims.jpg|thumb|Matoaka Whittle Sims, born 1844, [Pittsylvania County, Virginia](/wiki/Pittsylvania_County,_Virginia), descended on both sides from namesake Pocahontas </gallery>

## Cultural representations[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[thumb|upright=0.56|A 19th-century depiction](/wiki/Image:Pocahontas_1883.jpg) [thumb|upright=0.45|The](/wiki/File:Pocahontas_Disney.png) [Disney version of Pocahontas](/wiki/Pocahontas_(character)). After her death, increasingly fanciful and romanticized representations of Pocahontas were produced. The only contemporary portrait of Pocahontas is [Simon van de Passe's](/wiki/Simon_van_de_Passe) [engraving](/wiki/Engraving) of 1616. In this portrait, he tried to portray her Virginia- Native American features. Later portraits often portrayed her as more European in appearance.

The myths that arose around Pocahontas's story portrayed her as one who demonstrated the potential of Native Americans to be assimilated into European society. For example, the [United States Capitol](/wiki/United_States_Capitol) displays an 1840 painting by [John Gadsby Chapman](/wiki/John_Gadsby_Chapman), *The Baptism of Pocahontas*, in the Rotunda. A government pamphlet, entitled *The Picture of the Baptism of Pocahontas*, explained the characters in the painting, and praised the Jamestown settlers for introducing Christianity to the "heathen savages".

In another development, Pocahontas's story was romanticized. Some writers preferred accounts of a love story between her and John Smith. The first to publish such a story at length was John Davis in his *Travels in the United States of America* (1803).[[69]](#cite_note-69) Perhaps the first surviving stage dramatization of the Pocahontas story was [James Nelson Barker's](/wiki/James_Nelson_Barker) [*The Indian Princess; or, La Belle Sauvage*](/wiki/The_Indian_Princess_(play)). In the 19th century, [John Brougham](/wiki/John_Brougham) produced a [burlesque](/wiki/Burlesque), [*Po-ca-hon-tas, or The Gentle Savage*](/wiki/Po-ca-hon-tas,_or_The_Gentle_Savage).

The Jamestown Exposition celebrated the 300th anniversary of the Jamestown settlement in 1607 as the first permanent British colony in America. It was held in Norfolk from April 26 to December 1, 1907. Three stamps were issued; the 5-cent portrays Pocahontas, a friend to the colony, noted for saving John Smith's life. Her engraved portrait is modeled from Simon Van de Passe in 1616 which appeared in a book published by John Smith in 1624. The 5-cent paid large weight and foreign destination rates; about 8 million were issued.[[70]](#cite_note-70) Several [films about Pocahontas](/wiki/Pocahontas_(film)_(disambiguation)) have been made, beginning with a silent film in 1924. [*Captain John Smith and Pocahontas*](/wiki/Captain_John_Smith_and_Pocahontas) was released in 1953 with [Jody Lawrance](/wiki/Jody_Lawrance) as the title role heroine. [The Walt Disney Company's](/wiki/The_Walt_Disney_Company) 1995 animated feature [*Pocahontas*](/wiki/Pocahontas_(1995_film)) presented a fictional love affair between Pocahontas and John Smith. In addition, Pocahontas teaches Smith respect for nature. The sequel, [*Pocahontas II: Journey to a New World*](/wiki/Pocahontas_II:_Journey_to_a_New_World), depicts her journey to England and her meeting and falling in love with John Rolfe. The main plot of James Cameron's 2009 film [*Avatar*](/wiki/Avatar_(2009_film)) is closely based on [*Pocahontas*](/wiki/Pocahontas_(1995_film)). In 2005 [Terrence Malick](/wiki/Terrence_Malick) directed [*The New World*](/wiki/The_New_World_(2005_film)),[[71]](#cite_note-71) a movie depicting the founding of the [Jamestown](/wiki/Jamestown_Settlement), Virginia settlement and depicts the role that Pocahontas had on the colony and its people, the movie featured [Q'orianka Kilcher](/wiki/Q'orianka_Kilcher) as Pocahontas. [*Pocahontas: The Legend*](/wiki/Pocahontas:_The_Legend) is the second feature film based on her life.

[Neil Young](/wiki/Neil_Young) recorded [a song about Pocahontas](/wiki/Pocahontas_(Neil_Young_song)) on his album [*Rust Never Sleeps*](/wiki/Rust_Never_Sleeps) (1979); like many other depictions it is based on Strachey's account and expresses the speaker's desire to sleep with her "as part of his romantic yearning to return to a pre-conquest, natural world".[[72]](#cite_note-72)

## Namesakes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

Numerous places and landmarks were named after Pocahontas:

* Pocahontas was the namesake for one of the richest seams of [bituminous coal](/wiki/Bituminous_coal) found in Virginia and [West Virginia](/wiki/West_Virginia), and the Pocahontas Land Company, a subsidiary of the [Norfolk and Western Railway](/wiki/Norfolk_and_Western_Railway).
* From 1930 into the 1960s, one of the [Norfolk and Western Railway's](/wiki/Norfolk_and_Western_Railway) named luxury trains was the "Pocahontas".
* The town of [Pocahontas, Virginia](/wiki/Pocahontas,_Virginia).
* [Pocahontas County, West Virginia](/wiki/Pocahontas_County,_West_Virginia).
* [Matoaca, Virginia](/wiki/Matoaca,_Virginia) is located in [Chesterfield County](/wiki/Chesterfield_County,_Virginia) on the [Appomattox River](/wiki/Appomattox_River). County historians say this is the site of the Native American village *Matoax*, where she was raised.
* [Matoaka, West Virginia](/wiki/Matoaka,_West_Virginia).
* [Amonate, Virginia](/wiki/Amonate,_Virginia).
* [Pocahontas, Iowa](/wiki/Pocahontas,_Iowa) is in [Pocahontas County](/wiki/Pocahontas_County,_Iowa).
* [Pocahontas, Arkansas](/wiki/Pocahontas,_Arkansas).
* [Pocahontas, Illinois](/wiki/Pocahontas,_Illinois).
* [Fort Pocahontas](/wiki/Fort_Pocahontas), an [American Civil War](/wiki/American_Civil_War) fortification in [Charles City County, Virginia](/wiki/Charles_City_County,_Virginia).
* Lake Matoaka, part of the campus of the [College of William and Mary](/wiki/College_of_William_and_Mary).
* [Pocahontas State Park](/wiki/Pocahontas_State_Park), Chesterfield, Virginia.
* MV *Pocahontas* is a [river tour boat](/wiki/Lower_Thames_and_Medway_Passenger_Boat_Company) operated from Gravesend in London, UK.
* Four [United States Navy](/wiki/United_States_Navy) ships named [Template:USS](/wiki/Template:USS) and one named [Template:USS](/wiki/Template:USS).
* [Pocahontas, Mississippi](/wiki/Pocahontas,_Mississippi).
* In [Henrico County, Virginia](/wiki/Henrico_County,_Virginia), a middle school has been named after Pocahontas and John Rolfe.
* [Matoaca High School](/wiki/Matoaca_High_School), located in [Chesterfield County, Virginia](/wiki/Chesterfield_County,_Virginia). Their teams are called The Warriors.
* [Pocahontas, Alberta](/wiki/Pocahontas,_Alberta).
* Pocahontas Park, Vero Beach. Fl.[[73]](#cite_note-73)

## Notes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

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* [Template:Cite Appletons'](/wiki/Template:Cite_Appletons') This article is mostly about Pocahontas.
* *Pocahontas, Alias Matoaka, and Her Descendants Through Her Marriage at Jamestown, Virginia, in April, 1614, with John Rolfe, Gentleman*, Wyndham Robertson, Printed by J. W. Randolph & English, Richmond, Va., 1887

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[Template:Commons category](/wiki/Template:Commons_category) [Template:AmCyc Poster](/wiki/Template:AmCyc_Poster)

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* [*Virtual Jamestown*](http://www.virtualjamestown.org/). Includes text of many original accounts
* ["The Pocahontas Archive"](http://digital.lib.lehigh.edu/trial/pocahontas/bib.php), a comprehensive bibliography of texts about Pocahontas.

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