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Pocahontas real story

Matoaka als Rebecka Daughter to the mighty Prince Powhatan, Library of Congress, 2006691548, original 1616. The illustration shows a portrait of Pocahantas as Mrs. John Rolfe, from a portrait painting done in London. Pocahontas is one story that has been manipulated throughout history. From the Disney film Pocahontas, released in 1995, to the 2005 film The New World, Pocahontas’ story has been morphed into something that does not accurately portray or represent historical events. Pocahontas, whose real name is Matoaka, is often depicted as a young woman and love interest in films. However, she was only a young child, born of Chief Powhatan Wahunsenaca, when she came into contact with John Smith and the other Jamestown English colonists in 1607. Pocahontas left behind no known written text, and everything gathered about her story comes from the writings of John Smith and other Englishmen. John Smith talked about his captivity under the Algonquins and discussed Pocahontas’ role as a messenger between her father and the colonists, but he made no reference to Pocahontas saving him from captivity until much later. Matoaka’s father arranged a marriage with Kocoum, a warrior who was the younger brother of Chief Japazaw. Chief Powhatan Wahunsenaca knew Chief Japazaw well, and the marriage was an attempt to keep the young girl safe. They had hoped that the couple would find safety and refuge in Kocoum’s home village. However, their plan did not work as well as they had hoped and at the age of fifteen Pocahontas was kidnapped by English colonists.She was moved to England, converted to Christianity, and married John Rolfe. She died before she reached twenty and left behind a single son, who was of mixed blood. This was a rare instance of intermarriage, which would not become a widespread practice in English colonies thereafter. Matoaka’s story was not one of romance between a Native woman and a white man. It was a tragic story of a girl who played the role as peacekeeper and became caught in the economic and political webs of settlers and Natives in early colonial American history. Pocahontas saving the Life of Capt. John Smith, Library of Congress, 95507872, New England Chromo. Lith. Co., Printed ca 1870 Want more interesting historical, geographic, and world culture stories? Visit InterestingShit.com for more mind-blowing stories.They fell rapturously in love, despite an age and cultural difference as wide as the Atlantic Ocean, but lived happily ever after in history books, bedtime tales and a gorgeous Disney movie with a soundtrack from Vanessa Williams.Except maybe not. For starters, her name was Amonute or Matoaka, depending on how close a person was related or acquainted with her.The daughter of Wahunsenaca — known to most of the world as Chief Powhatan — was given the nickname of Pocahontas, which means “playful one” or “little wanton” for her mischievous nature or possibly “spoiled child” or “naughty one” given her favoured status with her father. She likely grew up away from her father for a few years, with her mother’s tribe, though very little is known of her mother.The pivotal moment in Pocahontas’ story was likely fully misunderstood, both by historians and by Captain Smith himself.John Smith Was Using Some ‘Alternative Facts’In his diaries decades after the fact, Smith said he was forced to the ground and his head held onto two large rocks while others prepared to “beate out his braines” until Pocahontas put her head on his to stop the pummelling.While Captain John Smith claimed he believed Pocahontas’ father, Chief Wahunsenaca, was going to “beate out his braines” on rocks while surrounded by men from the Powhatan tribe, it’s possible this was part of an elaborate and misunderstood adoption or welcoming ceremony.It’s believed Pocahontas was about 10 years old when this happened, whereas Smith was in his late 20s.Historians have determined that what Smith was saved from wasn’t so much impending death as it was a misunderstood (by him) adoption or welcoming ceremony by Wahunsenaca to bring Smith into his tribe. Of course, if you’re forced onto the ground and your head held into place on large rocks while people speak a different language in a very animated manner, you might assume the worst too.Pocahontas likely didn’t fall madly in love with the man more than twice her age but her relationship with the English settlers did prove beneficial, as she took the settlers supplies during an awful winter in which their population dwindled rapidly. She was seen as a peaceful envoy and welcomed by the English for her role in saving Smith’s life (though, again, it’s unlikely his life was in danger).Within a few years, the relationship between the English and the Powhatan tribes began to turn sour and at one point Pocahontas disappeared for few years, possibly married to a fellow tribesman named Kocoum with whom she had a son.Pocahontas as a bargaining chipIn 1613, Pocahontas was lured aboard a British ship and held hostage as a way to force her father to resume trading with the settlers. By 1614, she was baptized into the Anglican church with the name Rebecca and, perhaps reluctantly, married farmer John Rolfe. The two had a son, Thomas, the following year.After being taken hostage or kidnapped for a long stretch of time, Pocahontas was baptized into the Anglican church and given the name Rebecca, as depicted in this painting.Pocahontas, Rolfe and their son travelled to England with a group of about a dozen members of the Powhatan tribe and it’s believed she was quite the social butterfly during their stay. It was during this time the famous portrait of Pocahontas in the red puffy dress or coat and fashionable hat was painted, one of the earliest and most prominent illustrations of her.This is the Pocahontas the world first knew, a woman called Rebecca married to an English farmer who had a son named Thomas.Early in 1617, she was set to return to the colonies with Rolfe but instead remained in Gravesend, England, suffering from unknown illnesses. She died there, at roughly the age of 21, and is buried there. Her father died shortly thereafter and whatever truce had been struck between colonists and Native Americans disintegrated.Despite the Disney-fied story, Pocahontas, whose real name was Matoaka, never loved nor showed any real affection for Captain John Smith. She married British settler John Rolfe in 1614.Historians also suggests Pocahontas saw her one-time rumoured love Captain Smith while in England; she’s said to have shunned and ignored him and wanted nothing to do with him.For what it’s worth, Smith didn’t write or mention anything about that aggressive and terrifying ceremony until the 1620s, when Pocahontas and her father had died and couldn’t tell their side of the story. (Then again, would anyone have asked them? Probably not.)This statue of Pocahontas stands in Gravesend, Kent, in England, as a tribute to her and the role she played in helping to save the English settlers in Virginia in the early 1600s.There was no grandmother tree, no pesky hummingbird, no impish raccoon in Pocahontas’ real life; no passionate romance between a love-struck girl and a strapping older British captain. But that doesn’t make for quite as entertaining a movie, does it?Loved the story? We post stories every day, multiple times a day. Like us on Facebook for the latest stories, interesting videos, and jaw-dropping photos. Many people have seen the famous Disney movie about a Native American princess and the good-looking blonde man from America. Well, here’s a bit of heartbreaking news; the famous movie, called Pocahontas, isn’t historically accurate. In fact, there is very little in the movie that is true. What was the true story of Pocahontas? Captain John Smith and Pocahontas in the watercolor painting. Source: Wikimedia Commons What was Pocahontas’s Real Name? To begin Pocahontas’s real story, it is only logical to start with the first thing about her: her name. The American Indian Princess’s name wasn’t Pocahontas; it was a nickname meaning “playful one,” because of her bubbly personality. She was given this nickname because her people and her father all feared that upon learning her real name, Amonute, which means “little brave warrior,” the English settlers of Jamestown would try to bring the beloved young princess harm. Pocahontas Statue. Credit Source: Tony Fischer, Flickr Captain John Smith was first introduced to Pocahontas’s story in a battle of taking prisoners between the Powhatan tribe and the people of Jamestown. John was taken prisoner by the chief of the tribe and Pocahontas’s father, Powhatan. After learning that John was an important person in Jamestown, Powhatan ordered for his execution, but there is no record of the execution happening as John was in stories that happened after the execution was supposed to take place. The True Story of Pocahontas: Pocahontas saves Captain John SmithSource: Wikimedia Comons How did Pocahontas save John Smith? In the movie, Pocahontas saves John Smith and tells her father it’s because she loves him. In reality, it is only a theory that Pocahontas did in fact save the well-known captain. However, it is confirmed that after this alleged event took place, the chief of the tribe, Powhatan, told Smith that he could be a part of the tribe in exchange for, “two great guns and a grindstone.” Once this deal was in effect, John Smith was released to go back to Jamestown. Soon thereafter, Powhatan sent food to the starving people of Jamestown. Here lies Captain John Smith. His English portrait and biography in Virginia. Source: Wikimedia Commons Despite the act of kindness from Powhatan and his people, the settlers of Jamestown continued to take members of the Powhatan tribe as prisoners. Pocahontas was a part of this prisoner war as well. On at least one occasion, Pocahontas traveled to Jamestown in order to negotiate terms of release for her people. After several years, Pocahontas turned 14 years old, which meant she was of marriageable age. According to the Jamestown records, Pocahontas married a man named Kocoum, who was described as a private captain, which leads modern historical experts to believe that he may have had control over a small group of men. Historical experts also believe that Pocahontas may have married for love, not political gain, because her husband was not of high rank like she was. English portrait of Pocahontas 1616; Source: Wikimedia Commons For several years after her marriage, Pocahontas was not mentioned in Jamestown records. However, that all changed in 1613 when Captain Samuel Argall learned that she was living among her husband’s tribe instead of her own, where she could be protected by one or two of her father’s bodyguards. Argall knew that things between Jamestown and the Powhatan Indians were still very strained, so he came up with a plan. Captain Samuel Argall and Pocahontas Argall made a deal with a man named Iopassus, who was the brother to the chief of the Patawomeck Indians, the tribe of Pocahontas’s husband. They lured Pocahontas onto a Jamestown ship, and Iopassus left the ship with several trinkets that he earned in exchange for Pocahontas. She was then taken back to Jamestown where she learned the English language, customs, and religion. While learning all of these things, she met John Rolfe, and they fell in love quickly, according to Jamestown records. Real baptism of Pocahontas; Source: Wikimedia Commons Pocahontas’s Christian Baptism Pocahontas was baptized Christian under the name “Rebecca” and married John Rolfe a few months later. This led to a peace between the Powhatan Indians and Jamestown called “the Peace of Pocahontas”. The Rolfes soon had a son, whom they named Thomas. Pocahontas’s Later Life and Death Once learning about Pocahontas’s situation, The Virginia Company of London, who paid for the settlement of Jamestown, decided that Pocahontas, a Native American, being converted to a Christian English woman could help advertise Jamestown. Pocahontas and the Rolfe family were then brought to England, where they toured for many months. When they were ready to return to Virginia, however, Pocahontas became seriously ill. Pocahontas died of an unspecified disease on March 21, 1617. Beautiful watercolor painting of Pocahontas and her Native American tribeSource: Wikimedia Commons 2. Smithsonian Magazine. 3. Pocahontas Time. All rights reserved. This essay or any portion thereofmay not be reproduced or used in any manner whatsoeverwithout the express written permission of the publisher. Categories: History, Social Studies Tagged as: america, disney, english, History. John Smith, native american, pocahontas, princess, social science, Social Studies, united states “The Real Pocahontas” is an interesting Pocahontas biography, comparing the historic native American princess Pocahontas to Walt Disney’s Pocahontas movie. Excellent family tree of Pocahontas descendants and some ancestry. The Real Pocahontas Pocahontas Descendants Pocahontas Links Pocahontas Books The only life portrait of Pocahontas (1595–1617) and the only credible image of her, was engraved by Simon Van de Passe in 1616 while she was in England, and was published in John Smith’s Generall Historie of Virginia in 1624. She appears stiff in Jacobean court attire, but the costume probably hid tattooing and provided the chaste image wanted by the Virginia Company, which sponsored her trip and probably commissioned the print. These are the facts about Pocahontas that are known for sure. As a child in 1607, she played with the Jamestown settlers’ children in the streets of Jamestown. Soon after, she befriended the captured English captain John Smith and probably pleaded with her father to spare his life. Thereafter, Smith and Pocahontas had a special, father-daughter relationship. Beginning in early 1608 Pocahontas led delegations of Indians who brought food to the near-starving Jamestown settlers. Then Pocahontas warned Smith of another plot to kill him. In 1610 she married an Indian named Kocoum. In 1613 she was kidnapped by Englishmen, and eventually was baptized into Christianity. In 1614 she married the Englishman John Rolfe; the couple had a child, Thomas. In the spring of 1616 the three Rolfes departed for England, where Pocahontas met King James I. Pocahontas and Rolfe were awarded funds to return to the colony to establish a college to Christianize the Powhatan Indians, but on beginning the trip home she died “unexpectedly,” in March 1617, at Gravesend, England, where she is buried. A portrait of Matoaka on a poster, painted by Simon van de Passe. Wikimedia Commons In 1995, Disney introduced children everywhere to a Native American princess married 400 years ago today — Pocahontas.The plot goes that Pocahontas, the beautiful daughter of Chief Powhatan, saves English adventurer John Smith from execution when British relations with the “savages” in the New World turned sour. Pocahontas even starts a romance with Smith, and the two almost sail away to Britain together at the end of the film. History, however, tells a different and darker tale.To start, Pocahontas was just a nickname, meaning “the naughty one” or “spoiled child.” Matoaka, as the Powhatan Nation’s website calls her, was taken prisoner at age 17 while on a social visit to the Jamestown colonists. They held her hostage there for more than a year.Matoaka had met Smith before her captivity, but sparks didn’t fly between them. Actually, John Rolfe — a cocky character in Disney’s second film — showed special interest in Matoaka. As a condition of her release, she agreed to marry him. On April 5, 1614, Matoaka became Rebecca Rolfe, and she soon had a son named Thomas. In 1616, the family, nicknamed the “Red Rolfes,” returned to England, where she was something of a celebrity.When Matoaka and Rolfe tried to return to Virginia in 1617, she, for whatever reason, left the ship at Gravesend in England. That same year, she died there at age 21. “It is unfortunate that this sad story, which Euro-Americans should find embarrassing, Disney makes ‘entertainment’ and perpetuates a dishonest and self-serving myth at the expense of the Powhatan Nation,” Chief Roy Crazy Horse writes.On top of that, controversy also arises about whether or not Matoaka saved John Smith.When Smith first wrote about his experiences with the Powhatan people (in two letters in 1607 and 1612), he characterized his time there as rather nice and never mentioned Matoaka saving his life.But in his book, “General Historie of Virginia,” published in 1624, Smith mentioned that Powhatan had tried to stone him to death, but Matoaka threw herself in the way to save him: [T]wo 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 prevail, got his head in her armes, and laid her owne vpon his to saue him from death.Skeptics find it odd that Smith wouldn’t write about the occurrence until 17 years later and after Matoaka’s death, when Europe started to take notice of her story. Indeed, the prevailing viewpoint is that Matoaka’s self-sacrifice never happened.Research from J.A. Leo Lemay, an English professor at the University of Delaware, however, makes the opposite case. As one of the first to fully analyze all the historical evidence, he found we have little reason to consider Smith’s later writing as untruthful. Some scholars might have even had political motivations for poking holes in his claims. On top of that, similar occurrences in other Native American tribes suggest that the attempted execution was a ritual to allow outside members into tribes.But other accounts show Matoaka and Smith didn’t have the special relationship Smith claimed. According to the Powhatan Nation, Matoaka disliked Smith, and when she saw him in London, she refused to speak to him and called him a liar. The debate continues about whether “Pocahontas” truly saved John Smith, but we do know her life didn’t look like what Disney portrayed. While the second movie introduced her real husband, John Rolfe, Matoaka’s short life ended in tragedy.NOW WATCH: The Truth About ‘The Most Interesting Man In The World’

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