

Pocahontas

By Reece Foree

We have all seen the Disney movie, but who was the real Pocahontas? The facts tend to get lost in the fiction. Even John Smith's accounts of what happened don't seem entirely truthful.

John Smith's writing say that Pocahontas saved him and then they were a promised couple, but in fact, Pocahontas really married John Rolfe. Unfortunately, the Disney movie portrays her in a way like John Smith's journal. At age 14-17 it is believed she was married to Kolcum, a Native American. She possibly had a child with him before she married John Rolfe. It was common practice for women to be married by this age.

John Rolfe was a Tobacco grower in Jamestown. Except, John Rolfe never had much success in tobacco growing. That is until Pocahontas showed him how to grow it. In the Disney movie, John Rolfe is never even mentioned! Also unmentioned in the Disney movie, was the fact that Pocahontas was not her name, it was both Matoaka and Amonute at different times. Pocahontas was just a nickname, meaning "naughty one".

Pocahontas went to England with her husband and child, young Thomas Rolfe. In the Disney movie, she never went to England. To be fair, Pocahontas goes to England in *Pocahontas II*. In real life, she never returned, dying of either a disease or poison in March 1617 at age 20, and is believed to have possibly buried at St George's Church, Gravesend, in England, but her grave is not found because the church was built again after a fire raged through the church.

Pocahontas, Matoaka, or Amonute, whatever you chose to call her, was a brave and courageous woman and it should be recognized that her deeds were not as Disney puts them, in fact, they were much harder. Her bravery and strength should be recognized today and learned from.