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Powhatan.

Powhatan will ever remain the most interesting of the many famous Indian chiefs who are so closely associated with the early life on this continent. Jealous of the encroachment of the whites upon his territory, for many years the colonies were made to feel his enmity. Eventually, however, the chief of the Powhatans became reconciled to the English, chiefly through the instrumentality of his beautiful daughter, Pocahontas.

Powhatan was born about the middle of the sixteenth century, and although at first he was hereditary chief of eight Virginia tribes, finally, by his sagacious methods, he found himself chief of 30 tribes, counting close to 8000 warriors. When the English first saw him he was nearly 60 years of age. He lived sometimes at a village called Powhatan, near where Richmond now stands, and sometimes at Wer-o-wo-comoco, on the York river. Here is Captain John Smith's description of Powhatan's appearance at the time the two first met in 1607:

"He is a tall, well-proportioned man, with a sour look; his head somewhat

gray; his beard so thin that it seems none at all; of a very able and hardy body to endure any labor."

Pocahontas was born about the year 1594, and was one of 11 girls and 20 sons. We know nothing about any of his sons except Nateguas, whom the English claimed to be the handsomest, comeliest and boldest among all the savages. Powhatan had many wives—exactly how many is difficult to state—and when tired of one he would present her to a member of his tribe whom he considered to be the most deserving.

Powhatan seems to have had an unusually varying disposition. Sometimes he posed as Smith's dear friend; sometimes he clamored for his life. More than once he sent provisions to save the Jamestown colony from starving; again he planned that colony's massacre.

When Captain Newport was dispatched to trade with Powhatan, at a period when the colonists were starving, the chief interrupted his proposition with an angry grunt:

"It is not the wish of so great a chief as myself to trade like a peddler. Place

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