

Geo. Ade on British and American Foibles

Old Stories Revised—Pocahontas and Captain Smith—Why the Savage Americans Wanted to Soak the Visiting Englishman—A Wise Guess at What Really Started Rough House and Why the Beautiful Maiden Stood for the Topsy Foreigner, Who Was Toasting Her Native Land.

The true story of Captain John Smith and Pocahontas has never been told. The only version given to the world was written by Captain John himself, and in this narrative he gets all the best of it. He is it.

Somewhat or other when a fastidious foreigner writes a book about America he always gives the author the long end of it.

John was a great hand to plug his own game. He hated himself not. He

smiled, thereby converting a plain chronology into a pleasing romance. In the case of Captain John Smith we have a right to take these same liberties. With a few sound historical data as a basis we may proceed to elaborate the story of what happened to him in America. It is a practical cinch that Captain Smith was not essentially different from all the other Englishmen who have come out into the darkness of the New World at various times to look us over.

We know just how the captain carried over here, because the records show that he was a typical British Tourist. It is known that on the way over he was very cocky—told the captain how to steer the ship and used to stand out on deck finding fault with the ocean, the sky, the porpoises, the crew, the passenger list, the cooking, the manner of auctioning off the pools, the ventilation of the smoking room and anything else that came under his observation.

It is a fair guess that Powhatan and his friends tried to give the captain a good time. Any Britisher with a handle to his name who lands in America is sure to be smothered with Social Attentions.

The poor dubby American in London dines every day on Cold Shoulder and sleeps at night under a Wet Blanket, but let some Younger Son named Ponsby (pronounced Punsby) arrive in New York and eight or ten millionaires meet him at the dock and ask him up to the house. And when he does one of those velvet-hand touches they reach for the red check book and come across without a whimper. On the other hand, let a man from Guthrie, Oklahoma, go broke in their midst and they will give him a nice folder map showing the best Route for walking home.

Powhatan was probably a self-made American with an Accent and a fine line of stable manners, and it was only natural that he would knuckle under

said they should adopt a sensible system, based on Farthings, Bobs and Quids.

That evening he was invited to dinner again, and when the natives told him that they would dine at 6 o'clock he said it was a most outrageous hour and that he was not accustomed to dining before eight-thirty. All during dinner he mentioned that the room was too hot and the drinks were too cold. He muffed every joke that came into his territory and professed a complete ignorance of local history. Then after dinner he sat around and told what Lord Somebody had said to him while they were up country shooting grouse, and that settled it.

Late at night the chief and a few of the wise men of the village held a pow-wow.

"I deem it advisable to maintain friendly relations with all of the great Powers," said Powhatan, in opening the conference, "but there is a limit to human endurance. Even a peaceable Indian may be goaded to madness if he is walked on too often. The distinguished Englishman has come among us. We have decorated his wigwam with flowers and fed him on wild turkey. How does he repay us? He is keeping a Diary and getting ready to roast us in a book to be issued in the early autumn. What shall we do to protect ourselves?"

Some suggested scalping. Others thought that burning at the stake with a slow fire would be about the proper punishment. One of the head men suggested a Combination of the two, and said that they could lend variety to the performance by shooting poisoned arrows into the victim while he was writhing in the death agony. Another thought that running the gauntlet would be a fair compromise, and still another asked, "Why not have him dragged by wild ponies?"

After giving due consideration to all of their suggestions the great chief spoke as follows:

"The trouble is you are all trying to ring in on my private vengeance. I am the one who has suffered most and I want everybody else to stand back and let me hand him one Joke that he will understand. Tomorrow I will select the largest and warriest war club in the village, and I will spread our noble guest out in front of me and then I won't do a thing to him."

When Captain John Smith, F. R. S., learned next morning that he was to be taken to the public square and mailed to death with a club, he entered a Formal Protest in the name of the Crown.

He knew that the first duty of a British Subject anywhere or at any time and no matter what happens, is to enter a Formal Protest.

Then he said he wished to notify the English Consul, but there was no English Consul within 3,000 miles.

He thought some of writing another letter to the London Times, but the mail service was very irregular, and while he was still making a dignified effort to get his name on the Committee on Public Safety pounced on him and carried him to the place of execution.

Powhatan, club in hand, was waiting and did a war dance around the prostrate form of the well-known Traveler and popular Author.

"This may never happen again in all history," said he, "but for once the humble native American is going to get back at the tall-browed Writer who comes over here to play horse with our crude Institutions. Captain Smith, you are going away from here. I don't know where you will land, but I am willing to gamble that you will kick on either place; but we will have the satisfaction of knowing that no matter what your Impressions may be you won't be able to go back home and put them into a Book. I have written to be pleasant with you and you have patronized me. We know that we are the simple Children of the Wilderness, but we don't like to have any man with your kind of whiskers come along and rub it in on us. For that reason, I shall take much pleasure in soaking



"I SHALL ATTEMPT IT," SAID THE CAPTAIN.

got out five or six books and they were all about himself. In his earlier works he told about carving up the Turks and Bulgarians, often converting an ordinary battlefield into a reeking slaughter house. Wherever he went, he would fight with one hand and take notes with the other.

When he started for America, in 1606, he was ill primed to do the Kipling act. He had swell contracts with the publishers right in his pocket and was already framing up what he would say when the newspaper boys came around to pump him.

It was certainly tough luck for him that the Kodak had not been invented. The captain was cut out for a half-tone hero.

The modern historian takes a few established facts, and, using them as pegs, proceeds to hang up fustions of

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Also his pictures show that he had bushy whiskers, parted in the middle. No wonder people wanted to hand him something.

In his desire to be the entire Works he overplayed his hand and finally the other colonists combined against him, put him under arrest and locked him in the hold, whereupon he wrote a letter of indignant protest to the London Times, sealed it in a bottle and dropped it overboard.

The Virginia coast was sighted on April 26, 1606. Fortunately it was a clear day. If it had been a foggy day, and the coast had not been sighted, the whole continent of North America would have been compelled to struggle along for 300 years without any First Families.

Those who belong to the Second Families never get any mention in the Pedigree Certificate. There is no place or show money in the Aristocracy. Those who are not bell-cows merely trail.

As soon as the colonists sighted the Virginia coast they opened their sealed orders and learned that Captain John Smith, who was at that moment locked up below with the live stock, had been named as one of the council of seven to govern the new settlement.

They disobeyed the Royal Command and kept him out of the council for several weeks. Why did they afterward relent and give him a place on the governing board? Because when they had started the building of Jamestown they discovered that Smith was the only man who knew how to work the Indians for supplies.

It is interesting to note that even in that remote period the Celebrity from abroad knew how to get his board for nothing.

The first lesson taught the native Americans was that they should esteem it a privilege to organize Dinners for all British Subjects who happened along.

Captain John Smith began to get busy exploring Chesapeake Bay and staking out large tracts of land which he claimed for the Crown. It annoyed him a good deal to find that the Indians had jumped in and squatted on this Real Estate a few centuries before his arrival. Sometimes when he would be surveying for a boulevard right through an Indian village the natives would attempt to interfere with his plans. He resented this interference, but he never lost his temper to such an extent that he stopped boarding with them.

In 1607 he went up to visit Powhatan, who was a Big Chief in his own tribe and had been cutting a wide swath in Virginia, but who didn't stack up very high alongside of an Englishman with whiskers.

Powhatan lived in a town known as Werowocomoco, near the junction of Carter's Creek and York Run. It is believed that Captain Smith did not like the name of this town, because it was outlandish and American, the same as Oshkosh and Kalamazoo, which are the only American towns well known in London. He wanted to change the name of the place to Smith Lodge, Smithton-on-the-Smith.

When Powhatan held out for a good old Indian name, because it was home-made, the captain made a note that the Americans were a vain and stubborn lot, with an undue pride in their own shabby Possessions.

to the captain. The captain had a cold, gimlet eye, and he seldom smiled—in fact, he had all the earmarks of a very doggy Swell.

Nothing suited him. He kicked on the food. All that Powhatan could offer him at that time were the natural products of Virginia and the Chesapeake region, such as Lynn Havens on the half shell, terrapin, canvasback duck, venison, bear meat, a few varieties of fish, prairie chicken and cake made of the native maize and called Pone. When this simple repast was spread before the captain he moaned and said he wished he could be back at his Club in London, where he could draw up to a nice Bloater with a boiled potato on the side.

After dinner he was interviewed. He said that America seemed Crude, but full of promise. The inhabitants were lacking in repose and refinement and they used too much leech water and had a perverted Sense of Humor.

When he turned into his Teepee that night he set his boots outside, and when he awoke in the morning and found that they had not been neatly varnished during the night he let out an



THE RECORDS SHOW THAT HE WAS A TYPICAL BRITISH TOURIST.

awful roar and said it was a beastly country and that he was horribly annoyed.

That day Powhatan invited him out to see some of the native games. The simple children of the west had one pastime which consisted of swatting the ball and then running.

A number of the local fans were out to witness the game. They made a great deal of noise in rooting and seemed to enjoy the contest, but Captain Smith looked on with a dead and fishy eye and said that he much preferred Cricket. Then he became peevish because tea was not served at the ball game.

That afternoon he landed on Powhatan for a slight Loan, and when the chief offered him wampum he kicked on the currency of the country and

you good and plenty."

Powhatan raised his hickory club, and as he did so there was a piercing scream, and his beautiful daughter Pocahontas sprang between him and the recumbent victim.

"Do not strike him, father," she pleaded. "Spare him, for my sake."

"Let me give him just one," begged the chief, "it is coming to him."

"You must not take his life," said father. "I have been talking with him and have shown him my Bank Account, and he has promised to get me into London Society."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Powhatan, dropping his club. "How could a native American ever hope to break into that exclusive circle?"

Then Captain Smith spoke up.

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"I assure you that an American heiress can do very well in London," said he, "that is, if she leaves her parents at home."

"And will you really take my poor child over there and have her mingle with the Smart Set and be presented at Court and all that," asked the eager chief, releasing the bonds of the captive.

A STITCH AT A TIME.

"I shall attempt it," said the captain, arising and dusting himself off and once more assuming his air of haughty superiority. "Even an American may get on in London if the coin holds out and he has the right kind of backing."

And that is how it happened that Captain John Smith escaped, even after the club was lifted over his head, and how Pocahontas succeeded in meeting and marrying the gallant young Roife and actually going to England to be presented at court.

After Powhatan got hold of Captain Smith's book he was sorry that he hadn't swung the club before Pocahontas showed up on the scene. He was hoping that Captain Smith would come back again, but the author never showed up after he had written his Roast. They never do.

"What is the secret of your beautiful work?" asked a friend of a friend, looking at an exquisite piece of crochet work wrought by the lady to whom the question was addressed. "There is no secret about it," replied the lady; "I only make a stitch as perfect as possible, and careful to put it in the right place. There is not a wrong stitch in all that work. If I make a mistake, I

ravel it out and correct it." One perfect stitch at a time. So the fabrics of lace worth fabulous prices are made, and the exquisite embroideries are wrought. So also the costly garments of men and women are put together, one stitch at a time. The noblest lives are lived, no moment wasted carelessly, or viciously spent. Faithful in small things or that which is least.—Thomas D. Brown.

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