

[Powhatan](#). Said by Gerard to signify "falls in a current of water," and applied originally to one tribe but extended by the English to its chief Wahunsonacock, and through him to the body of tribes which came under his sway. Also called:

Sachdagugh-roonaw, Iroquois name.

Connections. The Powhatan belonged to the Algonquian linguistic stock, their nearest relatives probably being the Algonquian tribes of Carolina and the [Conoy](#).

Location. In the tidewater section of Virginia from Potomac River to the divide between James River and Albemarle Sound, and the territory of the present eastern shore of Virginia. (See also [Maryland](#) and [District of Columbia](#).)

Subdivisions

Subtribes constituting this group are as follows:

Accohanoc, in Accomac and part of Northampton Counties. Va.. and probably extending slightly into Maryland.

Accomac, in the southern part of Northampton County, Va. Appomattoc, in Chesterfield County.

Arrohattoc, in Henrico County.

Chesapeake, in Princess Anne County. Chickahominy, on Chickahominy River.

Chiskiack, in York County.

Cuttatawomen, in King George County.

Kecoughtan, in Elizabeth City County.

Mattaponi on Mattaponi River.

Moraughtacund, in Lancaster and Richmond Counties.

Mummapacune, on York River.

Nansemond, in Nansemond County.

Nantaughtacund, in Essex and Caroline Counties.

Onawmanient, in Westmoreland County.

Pamunkey, in King William County.

Paspahugh, in Charles City and James City Counties.

Pataunck, on Pamunkey River.

Piankatank, on Piankatank River.

Pissasec, in King George and Westmoreland Counties.

Potomac, in Stafford and King George Counties.

Powhatan, in Henrico County.

Rappahannock, in Richmond County.

Secacawoni, in Northumberland County.

Tauxenent, in Fairfax County.

Warrasqueoc, in Isle of Wight County.

Weanoc, in Charles City County.

Werowocomoco, in Gloucester County.

Wicocomoco, in Northumberland County.

Youghtanund, on Pamunkey River.

Villages

Accohanoc, on the river of the same name in Accomac or Northampton Counties.

Accomac, according to Jefferson (18i,l), about Cheriton, on Cherrystone Inlet, Northampton County.

Acconoc, between Chickahominy and Pamunkey Rivers, in New Kent County.

Accoqueck, on Rappahannock River, above Secobec, in Caroline County.

Accossuwinck, on Pamunkey River, King William County.

Acquack, on the north bank of Rappahannock River, in Caroline County.

Appamattoc, on the site of Bermuda Hundred, in Prince George County.

Appocant, on the north bank of Chickahominy River, in New Kent County.

Arrohattoc, in Henrico County on the James River, 12 miles below the falls at Richmond.

Askakep, near Pamunkey River in New Kent County.

Assaomeck, near Alexandria.

Assuweska, on the north bank of the Rappahannock in King George County.

Attamtuck, between the Chickahominy and Pamunkey Rivers in New Kent County.

Aubomesk, on the north bank of the Rappahannock in Richmond County.

Aureuapeugh, on Rappahannock River in Essex County.

Cantaunkack, on York River in Gloucester County.

Capahowasic, about Cappahosic in Gloucester County.

Cattachtico, on Pamunkey River in King William County.

Cawwontoll, on the north bank of the Rappahannock River in Richmond County.

Chawopo, at the mouth of Chipok Creek, Surry County.

Checopissowo, on Rappahannock River above Tobacco Creek, in Caroline County.

Chesakawon, above the mouth of Corotoman River, in Lancaster County.

Chesapeake, according to Jefferson on Linnhaven River in Princess Anne County, a small stream flowing north into Chesapeake Bay.

Chiconessex, about Wiseville, in Accomac County. Chincoteague, about Chincoteague Inlet, in Accomac County.

Chiskiack, on the south side of York River, about 10 miles below the junction of the Mattaponi and Pamunkey.

Cinquack, near Smiths Point on the Potomac, in Northumberland County.

Cinquoteck, in the fork of Mattaponi and Pamunkey Rivers, in King William County.

Cuttatawomen,

(1) on the Rappahannock River at Corotoman River in Lancaster County;

(2) about Lamb Creek on the Rappahannock, in King George County. Gangasco, near Eastville, in Northampton County.

Kapawnich, on the north bank of the Rappahannock, about Corotoman River in Lancaster County.

Kerahocak, on the north bank of the Rappahannock River in King George County.

Kiequotank, on the eastern shore of Accomac County, north of Metomkin.

Kupkipcock, on Pamunkey River in King William County. Machapunga,

(1) in Northampton County;

(2) on Potomac River.

Mamanahunt, on Chickahominy River, in Charles City County.

Mamanassy, at the junction of Pamunkey and Mattaponi Rivers in King and

Queen County.

Mangoraca, on the north bank of the Rappahannock in Richmond County.

Mantoughquemec, on Nansemond River, in Nansemond County.

Martoughquaunk, on Mattapony River in Caroline County.

Massawoteck, on the north bank of Rappahannock River in King George County.

Matchopick, on the north bank of the Rappahannock River in Richmond County.

Matchut, on Pamunkey River, in New Kent County.

Mathomauk, on the west bank of James River, in Isle of Wight County.

Matomkin, about Metomkin Inlet in Accomac County.

Mattacock, on the north bank of York River in Gloucester County.

Mattacunt, on the south side of Potomac River in King George County.

Mattanock, on the west side of Nansemond River, near its mouth, in Nansemond County.

Maysonec, on the north bank of the Chickahominy in New Kent County.

Menacupunt, on Pamunkey River, in King William County.

Menaskunt, on the north bank of Rappahannock River in Richmond County.

Meyascosic, on the north side of James River in Charles City County.

Mohominge, near the falls of James River, in Richmond County.

Mokete, on Warrasqueoc Creek, in Isle of Wight County.

Moraughtacund, near the mouth of Moratico River in Richmond County.

Mouanast, on the north bank of Rappahannock River, in King George County.

Mutchut, on the north bank of the Mattapony River in King and Queen County.

Muttamussinsack, on the north bank of Rappahannock River in Caroline County.

Myghtuckpassu, on the south bank of Mattapony River in King William County.

Namassingakent, on the south bank of Potomac River in Fairfax County.

Nameroughquena, on the south bank of the Potomac River in Alexandria County, opposite Washington, D. C.

Nansemond, probably about Chuckatuck in Nansemond County.

Nantapoyac, on the south bank of James River in Surry County.

Nantaughtacund, on the south side of the Rappahannock River in either Essex County or Caroline County.

Nawacaten, on the north bank of the Rappahannock River in Richmond County.

Nawnautough, on the north bank of the Rappahannock River in Richmond County.

Nechanicok, on the south bank of the Chickahominy in the lower part of Henrico County.

Nepawtacum, on the north bank of the Rappahannock in Lancaster County.

Onancock, near Onancock in Accomac County.

Onawmanient, probably on Nominy Bay, in Westmoreland County.

Opiscopank, on the south bank of the Rappahannock River in Middlesex County.

Oquomock, on the north bank of the Rappahannock River in Richmond County.

Orapaks, in New Kent County, between the Chickahominy and Pamunkey Rivers.

Ottachugh, on the north bank of the Rappahannock River in Lancaster County.

Ozatawomen, on the south bank of the Potomac River in King George County.

Ozenic, on Chickahominy River in New Kent County.

Pamawauk, perhaps identical with Pamunkey.

Pamuncoroy, on the south bank of Pamunkey River in New Kent County.

Pamunkey, probably near West Point in King William County.

Papiscone, on the north bank of the Rappahannock in King George County.

Pasaugtacock, on the north bank of York River in King and Queen County.
Paspahagh,

(1) on the south bank of Chickahominy River in Charles City County;

(2) on the north bank of James River in Charles City County.

Passaunkack, on the south bank of Mattaponi River in the northwestern part of King William County.

Pastanza, on or near Potomac River, possibly on Aquia Creek, in Stafford County.

Pawcocomac, on the north bank of Rappahannock River at the mouth of the Corotoman in Lancaster County.

Peccarecamek, an Indian settlement reported on the southern Virginia border, perhaps mythical.

Pemacocack, on the west bank of Potomac River in Prince William County about 30 miles below Alexandria.

Piankatank, on Piankatank River in Middlesex County.

Pissacoac, on the north bank of Rappahannock River above Leedstown in Westmoreland County.

Poruptanck, on the north bank of York River in Gloucester County.

Potaucac, in New Kent County between the Chickahominy and Pamunkey Rivers.

Potomac, about 55 miles in a straight line from Chesapeake Bay, on a peninsula in what is now Stafford County, formed by Potomac River and Potomac Creek.

Powcomonet, on the north bank of Rappahannock River in Richmond County.
Powhatan, on the north bank of James River at the falls on ground now forming an eastern suburb of Richmond.

Poyektauk, on the north bank of Rappahannock River in Richmond County.

Poykemkack, on the north bank of Rappahannock River in Richmond County.

Pungoteque, in Accomac County, probably near Metomkin Inlet.

Quackcohowaon, on the south bank of the Mattapony in King William County.

Quioucohanock, probably on an eminence now called Wharf Bluff just east of Upper Chipoak Creek in Surry County.

Quiyough, on the south bank of Aquia Creek near its mouth, in Stafford County.
Rappahannock, at the mouth of a creek on Rappahannock River in Richmond County.

Rickahake, probably in Norfolk County.

Righkahauk, on the west bank of Chickahominy River in New Kent County.

Ritanoe, probably Powhatan, in Virginia or North Carolina.

Roscows, in Elizabeth City County.

Secacawoni, at the mouth of Coan Creek on the south bank of the Potomac in

Northumberland County.

Secobec, on the south bank of Rappahannock River in Caroline County.

Shamapa, on Pamunkey or York River.

Sockobeck, on the north bank of Rappahannock River in King George County.

Tantucquask, on Rappahannock River in Richmond County.

Tauxenent, about Mount Vernon in Fairfax County.

Teracosick, on the west bank of Nansemond River in Nansemond County.

Utenstank, on the north bank of Mattaponi River in Caroline County.

Uttamussac, on the north bank of Pamunkey River in King William County.

Uttamussamacoma, on the south bank of Potomac River in Westmoreland County.

Waconiask, on the north bank of Rappahannock River in King George County.

Warrasqueoc, on the south bank of James River at the mouth of Warrasqueoc Creek in Isle of Wight County.

Weanoc, below the mouth of Appamattox River at the present Weyanoke in Prince George County.

Wecuppom, on the north bank of Rappahannock River in Richmond County.

Werawahon, on the north bank of Chickahominy River in New Kent County.

Werowacomoco, on the north bank of York River in Gloucester County about opposite the mouth of Queen Creek.

Wicocomoco, at the mouth of Wicomico River in Northumberland County.

Winsack, on the north bank of Rappahannock River in Richmond County.

History. The Powhatan were visited by some very early explorers, including probably the Cabots in 1498. Their territory was well known to the Spaniards in the latter part of the sixteenth century and a Jesuit mission was established among them in 1570 though soon extinguished by the Indians. In 1607 the Virginia colony was planted on James River and from that time on relations between the Whites and Powhatans were of the most intimate character, friendly at first, but later disturbed by the exactions of the newcomers. Peace was restored for a time by the marriage of [Powhatan's](#) daughter [Pocahontas](#) to John Rolfe, and lasted until Powhatan's death in 1618. In 1622 Powhatan's second successor, Opechancanough, led an uprising against the colonists, as a result of which all of

the White settlements except those immediately about Jamestown were destroyed. War continued until 1636 when exhaustion of both sides led to peace, but in 1644 [Opechancanough](#) led another uprising as destructive as the first. He was captured and was killed the same year. The tribes made peace separately, and they were placed upon reservations, where they gradually dwindled away. In 1654 or 1656 the Pamunkey assisted the English in resisting an invasion of some inland people, but the allied army was severely defeated (see [Manahoac](#)). In 1675 these Indians were accused of having committed certain depredations, really caused by the Conestoga, and several unauthorized expeditions were led against them by Nathaniel Bacon. In August 1676, a great body of them gathered in a fort near Richmond which was carried by storm, and men, women, and children indiscriminately massacred. Peace was made with the survivors on condition that an annual tribute be paid by each village. In 1722 in a treaty made at Albany between the English and Iroquois, the latter agreed to cease their attacks upon the Powhatan Indians, but the Powhatans already had been greatly reduced and they continued to decline. Those on the eastern shore of Virginia, who had become very much mixed with Negroes, were driven away in 1831 during the excitement caused by the slave rising under Nat Turner. In 1785 Jefferson reported the Powhatan Indians reduced to two tribes, the Pamunkey and Mattapony, embracing only about 15 men, but he must have overlooked great numbers of these Indians, for at the present time there are several bands, including the Chickahominy, Nansemond, Pamunkey, Mattapony, Upper Mattapony, Rappahannock, Wicocomoco, Potomac, Powhatan, and Werowocomoco (Speck, 1925).

Population. The Powhatan population was estimated by Mooney (1928) as 9,000 in 1600; Smith (1884) allows them 2,400 warriors; in 1669 a census gave 528 warriors or about 2,000 population, the Wicocomoco being then the largest tribe. In 1705 the Pamunkey by themselves numbered 150 souls. Jefferson in 1785 represented the two tribes which he mentions as having but 15 men; Mooney, however, believed that there must have been a population of something like 1,000 because of the number of mixed-bloods still surviving. The census of 1910 returned 115 Chickahominy and 85 Pamunkey. The United States Office of Indian Affairs Report for 1923 includes still other bands, giving in all a population of 822, and Speck (1925) gives the names of 10 bands aggregating 2,118 in 1923. The census of 1930 returned only 203 Indians from Virginia but evidently missed nearly all except the Pamunkey.

Connection in which they have become noted. The Powhatan Confederacy is famous as embracing those Indians among whom the first permanent English settlement in North America was made; for the personal character of its chief, Powhatan, who had conquered about 24 tribes, in addition to the 6 under him at his accession, before the appearance of the Europeans; on account of the dealings of the Whites with both Powhatan and his brother Opechancanough, as well as the massacre of the settlers by the latter in 1622 and again in 1644; and not least from the fame attached to Powhatan's daughter, Pocahontas. There are post villages

named Powhatan in Jefferson County, Ala.; Lawrence County, Ark.; Natchitoches Parish, La.; McDowell County, W. Va.; a county and county seat of the name in Virginia; Powhatan Point in Belmont County, Ohio; and Powhatan in Brown County, Kans.