

Extracts from Charlevoix Letters.

(From a letter dated at Michillimackinac, April 5, 1721)

Volume II, Pages 63-65

Next day, the chiefs of the two nations paid me a visit; and one of the Otchagras showed me a Catalonian pistol, a pair of Spanish shoes, and I do not know what drug, which appeared to me to be a sort of ointment. All this they had received from one of the Aiouez, and the following is the occasion, by means of which these things fell into the hands of this person.

About two years ago, some Spaniards, who had come as they say, from New Mexico, with design to penetrate as far as the country of the Illinois, and to drive the French out of it, whom they saw with extreme regret approach so near the Missouri, descended this river and attacked two villages of the Octotatas, a people in alliance with the Aiouez, from whom it is pretended they draw their origin. As these Indians had no fire-arms, and being besides surprised, the Spaniards easily succeeded in their enterprize, and made a great slaughter of them. A third village of the same nation, and at no great distance from the two others, making no doubt that the conquerors would pay them a visit, laid an ambushcade for them, into which the Spaniards blindly stumbled. Others say, that the Indians having learned that the Spaniards had almost all of them got drunk, and were sleeping in great security, fell upon them in the night; and it is certain they cut the throats of almost every one of them.

There were two chaplains in this party, one of whom was killed in the beginning of the affair, and the other saved himself amongst the Missourites who kept him prisoner, and from whom he made his escape in a very dexterous manner. He happened to have a very fine horse, and the Missourites delighting in beholding him perform feats of horsemanship, he took the advantage of their curiosity, in order to get out of their hands. One day as he was scampering about in their presence, he withdrew insensibly to a distance, when clapping spurs to his horse, he instantly disappeared. As they made no other prisoner but him, it is not yet exactly known neither from what part of New Mexico these Spaniards came, nor

with what design; for what I first told you of the affair, was founded upon the reports of the Indians only, who perhaps had a mind to make their court to us by giving it to be understood, that they had done us a very material piece of service by this defeat.

All they brought me was the spoils of the chaplain who had been killed, and they found likewise a prayer-book, which I have not seen: this was probably his breviary. I bought the pistol; the shoes were good for nothing; and the Indian would by no means part with the ointment, having taken it into his head, that it was a sovereign remedy against all sorts of evils. I was curious to know how he intended to make use of it; he answered that it was sufficient to swallow a little of it, and let the disease be what it would the cure was immediate; he did not say however that he had as yet made trial of it, and I advised him against it. The Indians begin here to be very ignorant, and are very far from being so sensible or at least so communicative, as those who have more commerce with us.

Volume II Page 218

On the tenth about nine in the morning, after sailing five leagues on the Mississippi, we arrived at the mouth of the Missouri, which lies north-west and south-south-east. Here is the finest confluence, of two rivers that, I believe, is to be met with in the whole world, each of them being about half a league in breadth; but the Missouri is by far the most rapid of the two, and seems to enter the Mississippi like a conqueror, carrying its white waters unmixed across its channel quite to the opposite side; this colour it afterwards communicates to the Mississippi, which henceforth it never loses, but hurls with precipitation to the sea itself.



Shau-hau-napo-tinia was a noted chief of the Ioway tribe. His name means "Man who Killed Three Sioux". He was also called Moano-honga or Great Walker. His boy chum was killed at the age of 19 by the Sioux. Shau-hau-napo-tinia rushed into a Sioux village of 400 lodges killed one warrior and two squaws. He returned with their scalps. He went to Washington in 1837 when this portrait was made.