

ever we made up a sleigh-ride party, we were always accompanied by Louis Ducharme, as we expected to dance wherever we stopped, whether by day or by night.

The resources of our small community were meagre. There were no churches, and few schools. Once a month a mail arrived, carried on the back of a man who had gone to Chicago, where he would find the mail from the East, destined for this place. He returned as he had gone, on foot, via Milwaukee. This day and generation can know little of the excitement that overwhelmed us when the mail was expected — expectations that were based on the weather. When the time had come, or was supposed to have come, that the mail carrier was nearing home, many of the gentlemen would start off in their sleighs to meet him. The arrival of the mail, coming as it did in such long intervals, held much that was sad as well as glad. For two years I received but two letters a year from Mackinac, one coming in the winter, another in the spring, so isolated at that time was the dear old island from all the world.

It is unnecessary to say what was the chief and popular amusement of this frontier community. We were all young, with a few exceptions, and as a matter-of-course dancing took the lead. Dancing and sleigh-rides made the winter's round; we never danced in summer. Fiddlers were most plentiful in those days, and the music, if not of the highest order, was enjoyed. The military had a full band, but the only parties at which they played were those which the officers gave; and very handsome parties they were, too.

Our parties were mostly impromptu affairs. One gentleman would meet a friend and would propose to go to another friend's house that evening, to have a dance. Word would be sent to the latter, and he in turn would notify his wife. If her house were small, she would clear out one room for the dance. I never knew a lady to start any of these parties herself, although always ready to join in them. At these impromptu affairs, the friends would assemble as soon after supper as possible, say about seven o'clock. They would be accompanied by Louis Ducharme,