Dona Corr and Ida Longpre are Marie Louise Plourd’s daughters. Plourd communicates only in French throughout the interview.

Ida Longpre: It was Mary deRosier. She was Marie Rose, she used to be Rose. See my husband’s mother was a Rose.

B. Frey: Now is that related to Charlie and Dan? That’s their mother?

IL: No, that would be their aunt.

BF: Now, how do you spell her last name?

IL: deRosier? d-e-R-o-s-i-e-r.

M. Johnson: Is her English name Rose taken off of deRosier?

IL: No, it was Mr. deRosier. deRosier.

Dona Corr: (unintelligible) the roses.

IL: I don’t remember what his first name was.

Anyway, the old Pete Scheffer—the old, old one—he came from Canada to work for a living and I suppose people didn’t correspond much or there weren’t any mail in those days and they lost track of him. When young Pete grew up, he decided to find his dad, and he found him in the Frenchtown Valley. Then they sent for his mother, and that’s how they all settled into the Frenchtown Valley. Now Pete Scheffer was married, and he married an Indian lady. Like Mama says she was a quarter breed. Would you call that quarter breed?

DC: Yes, that’s one-fourth.

IL: She didn’t live very long. I don’t know what she died of; she died young.

DC: Childbirth.
IL: I don't know what it was, and she lost...the little daughter died too. Then after a few years Pete Scheffer went back to Canada, and he was married again. Then he brought his wife back to the States.

DC: Do you know the name of his wife?

(speaking in French)

Marie Louise Plourd: (speaking in French)

IL: He married his cousin. Her name was Alice Scheffer, married Pete Scheffer. They raised their family here—

DC: In Huson.

IL: —in Huson.

DC: Did they raise their family in the place where Richardson is living now?

IL: Yes I think so.

DC: (speaking in French)

MLP: (speaking in French)

IL: She's telling that in French, what I related to you.

DC: She thinks that he homesteaded the ranch where Tom lives. But on the other hand he also owned the—

(speaking in French)

MLP: (speaking in French)

IL: (speaking in French)

DC: I use French around the home.

IL: (speaking in French)

MLP: (speaking in French)

IL: It dates further back than that. The Ledoux—it was a stagecoach place.
BF: I read that in one of the old history books.

DC: That was before she came

IL: Yes, that was way before. Maybe it was Aunt Mary who told me that. That used to be one of the old relay stations, and I think the location of it was where Jim Richardson is now. That was known as the Ledoux something.

DC: Yes, it was the Ledoux place. But Mary said that Scheffer owned the land. He just let him stay there, like Aunt Clara and Mrs. Mott. The land that her house was built on before they leased it to them, it belonged to Scheffer.

MJ: What were you discussing with her, just so they know?

DC: We were discussing what Ida’s talking about whether Mr. Ledoux had a roadhouse or not. She says, No, he didn't, but Ida says he did. But you see this could have happened before 1900.

BF: I think it did.

DC: At that time when she came it wasn’t there anymore. When Ralph Scheffer was married, I remember that. Old man Scheffer, Pete Schaeffer, gave him the ranch where Tom lives now. And he moved on the place where Richardson is to finish raising his family—old man Scheffer, old man Pete. It turns out it belonged to Ledoux, what I just said to her. There he finished raising his family when he moved there Jeanette wasn’t married, Mary wasn't married. There was Tom, Tom’s uncle, and then there was the young one, Nate. One of the younger brothers, his name—

BF: You mean the Scheffer family?

IL: Scheffer children.

DC: Mary was the oldest. And then it was—

IL: Ralph.

DC: Yes. Then there was—

IL: Tom.

DC: There was an Edgar. Tom was older than Edgar.

IL: His name was Elmer—
DC: There was Jeanette.

IL: —and Jeanette. Elmer was the youngest. I thought that

DC: I thought that Elmer and Tom were the youngest.

BF: Now, Jeanette’s the one that was married to Jack Ray.

IL: Yes, she’s Mrs. Jack Ray. You both contact Jack Ray, he’s very friendly and he’s just going to love it.

DC: Oh brother. Just remind him, “Tell us the truth. Make up a good story.”

IL: Well, he can embellish it and make it a sound good.

DC: Oh boy, we just love that.

IL: We all love that, and he’ll love it too. He lives at the Elks.

BF: That’s Loretta’s husband?

IL: Yup, I remember now. Did you know that Loretta is my husband’s sister? She was a Longpre girl. They’re Pete Longpre’s children.

BF: Gee, it would be nice to get them together too.

IL: I can give you all the names of Pete Longpre’s children. Fred [Fred Longpre, Ida’s husband] is sick so he didn’t come today. He had the flu, and he didn’t want to come. He would have liked this.

BF: Oh yes.

DC: He would have loved it.

IL: Did I give you all the names of all the Schaeffer children? Mary and Ralph and Edgar and Tom and Jeanette and Elmer and Tom. I think that’s all them.

BF: We can try and contact some of the grandchildren like Tom. He hasn’t shown any interest so far.

DC: Yes, I was surprised not to see him there that Sunday. I would thought that everyone would show up of all who’s left in the valley there.
IL: Yes, I was surprised the Fiers weren't interested, and Henry LaVoy. Very interesting. Pete Viscon, what was he doing? He wasn't there.

DC: Of course Mrs. Crane, their oldest sister, wasn't. Did Eva go?

IL: No, Eva didn't go. I don't think she was offered a ride. I think she might have gone, if she had been offered a ride. But I didn't dare take my car over.

MJ: Could we get a little information about you? When you were born?

IL: Where I was born? When?

DC: You tell the story.

MJ: If you don't mind—your age?

IL: I don't mind. I brag about my age. You will too should you be so lucky to live that long. I was born in a ranch house in Frenchtown.

DC: Not in.

IL: No, on a farm. We were three mile—

DC: Four.

IL: Four miles, was it east of Frenchtown?

DC: Yes, it would be east.

IL: It was east of Frenchtown, and I was born in 1903. They named me Marie Clotilde Ida Plourd.

BF: That's a long name.

DC: Don't tell them my full name.

BF: You can tell it. We've got to hear that before.

IL: I was the second daughter. Dona is older. We're about 18 months apart—about a year and a half—and we grew up together and all our memories are tied together. I grew up in the valley, and the first school I attended was the Miron School and the second one was the O'Keefe School. Then I went to the academy—the Catholic academy in Frenchtown. When it opened, I was in the fifth grade. I went there right through the tenth grade. For my eleventh year, the
schools in Frenchtown consolidated and the ninth and tenth was as far as the sisters taught us, so I took the eleventh grade in Frenchtown. My last year, being that these schools were not accredited and they were anxious for us to graduate from an accredited school so in case we cared to attend the universities. So I graduated in 1921 from the Sacred Heart Academy here [Missoula, Montana].

Then the following year I spent one year at the Missoula Business College. Then I was married. In 1929 my husband and I moved to the Bitterroot Valley at Stevensville, and we have lived there ever since. I have three children. I have one boy and little two girls. They're all married and have families. We are now retired, and I am speaking to you and enjoying it.

BF: Very nice.

MJ: You kind of mentioned that you two are very close. Can you tell us of some of your games or mischievous acts you used to pull on your mother or on your father? Or what you did in your spare time when you were little?

IL: Well for the most part we were like other children, we tried to be good. But, you know, we got into trouble a lot with the nuns in the Frenchtown school.

DC: Tell them about the nuns and the Frenchtown school.

IL: One of the instances I happened to be standing close to two nuns who were our teachers and we knew one sister, Theresa. She was the one who took care of us and she had this clapper, and she was telling the other sister, she said, "Sister, I just hate that those noisy peasants are having so much fun." (laughs) She says, "I just hate to call them in, but I have to. I've already given them five minutes extra."

DC: Five or ten minutes extra.

IL: The other sister says, "Yes, they are noisy." She says, "There's something unique about them besides being noisy."

Sister Theresa says, "What is that?"

Well she says, “Out of the whole 100 of them, there isn’t one nitwit in the bunch.” (laughs) As I recall it they used to boast about us. They used to love to teach in Frenchtown. They were just a small group of sisters, and they were their own bosses. They spoiled us quite a bit too. They were very good to us. In fact too good, because then we went to other schools where there were rules that the sisters (unintelligible)

[End of Side A]
DC: Now when we went to the O'Keefe School before the Frenchtown school was consolidated we were in the fourth and fifth...third... We started in the O'Keefe School about the second grade, didn't we?

IL: I think, yes, it must have been about the third grade.

DC: Third grade, and we had Old Prince, the buckskin horse that my aunt had won from the priest. The priest sold horses. It had been raffled. My dad built us...Didn't I tell you that? He built us a seat, a safe box on two wheels on a cart—a cart wheel axle. We had a box where we could...In the back of the box we could put some hay for our horse. We used to take a sack of hay with us to feed the horse during the day. We'd sit on the seat, and I was always the driver. I drove, and we went clear over the hill there—I know that I told you about that—straight up the alley that goes past Fred Deschamps place over the hill to the Flathead Road now. Is where we had to go. I remember telling you that we used to run races with the train.

IL: We used to let him run down the hill—that steep hill—and it was so rocky we'd bounce around. Well, if that old horse had stumbled, we would have never stopped rolling. (laughs) One time our dad saw us, and he did give a pretty good lecture. He said, "Now if you little rascals don't stop that you’re going to walk." So when he was around, we didn't do that anymore, but we didn't realize that we might get hurt.

DC: We were that young that we didn’t hardly know what danger was only when somebody wanted us to.

I remember one time a blizzard started when we were at the school with our horse, and it was during the wintertime. We’d been travelling to school in a cutter, though, one of those cutters. It was a sled with a seat built in it, very comfortable. We had a buffalo robe to cover us. We started home in that storm, but we didn’t go over the hill. We had enough sense not to go over the hill. We could go around, too, by the Frontier Road that they have now, that’s called the Frontier Road that joins that Flathead Road and goes straight past Fred Deschamps place into Frenchtown. Old Fred Deschamps (unintelligible). We started that road, see. That's where we were born in the ranch house where old Fred Deschamps lives. That was our home. I remember the snow drifts before we got home, the snow drifts being so high that the cutters would go back and forth and I was driving. Sometime I stood up in the cutter to balance it against the other side, and Ida sat up, “Dona, my hands are cold.” (laughs)

I said, “For Pete’s sake, sit on them!” And our father really felt sorry for us. He knew that we must be on our way. He came over. He walked to join us then we felt safer when Dad was there.
IL: When he found us, we had wrapped the reins around the cutter front, and we had wrapped ourselves in the lap robe over our heads to keep the blizzard out. We were singing “Jingle bells, jingle bells,” and letting the horse take us home.

DC: He was taking us home.

MJ: What kind of chores did you have to do when you were really little?

DC: The chores we had to do. While I was going to the Frenchtown School in the fifth and sixth grade and from down on up, in the morning we'd get up and milk the cows and then take the cows way out to pasture.

BF: Before you went to school?

DC: Before we went to school.

BF: How early did you have to get up?

DC: About six. Then it took us an hour to go to school in Frenchtown. We had another horse to go to school in Frenchtown but the same cart though. The same cart. And we had a friend, Lucier—Armand Lucier's sister. The Armand Lucier's lived up right above us at that time. They hadn't before, but that time they lived there. So the Lucier boys, I don't know how they got to school. They got to school someway, but Dina always used to come with us. We didn't take the boys with us.

IL: I remember the Bourgard (?) girl riding with us. Alma.

DC: To Frenchtown?

IL: Yes, Alma and I went to school. That might have been during the years you weren't going.

DC: Because Ida, Alma didn’t go to school in Frenchtown. She went to school in Missoula.

IL: No, she went one or two years with us.

DC: You remember we used to take Yvonne Trahan?

IL: Yes.

DC: On the way we’d pick up in that cart, that cart for two, we’d take Dina Lucier, and she says Alma came. I don’t remember Alma. But we used to pick up Yvonne Trahan who lived—you can't see the house from the road at all—she lives on the old road that goes across the tracks to Eddie Marcher's (?) place.
IL: They both lived up there.

DC: That was the way the school bus used to travel to Frenchtown. It was through that road, through that lane that we traveled to Frenchtown across tracks there, you know. Right along with the Trahan, there was the Crane place and the Trahan family lived in the Crane place. Yvonne Trahan was the youngest of the family (unintelligible). (laughs) But I guess we (unintelligible)

IL: She couldn't teach us anything though.

DC: We would tease Yvonne. She was younger than we were, and we would tease her all the way down to school and back. I remember her mother stopping us one day and asking us to treat Yvonne—

IL: Decenter.

DC: —decenter. Nicer to her. Her mother was a great, big woman and bad tempered.

IL: She had (unintelligible) bunch of us every night.

DC: Oh yes, she had. Well, she knew better. So we started treating Yvonne okay. I remember an incident. We used to tease her, frighten her.

IL: I remember (unintelligible) that old horse that we used to drive to school. One time I met Mr. Lucier and he says, "How’s your horse getting along?"

I said, “Getting along just fine.”

He says, "He's been going to school long enough, he should be graduated." (laughs) After that I named my old horse the professor.

DC: We always had, our Dad was very good to us. He always furnished us a horse and a vehicle. We drove the old express for some time too, remember? To Frenchtown. He always furnished us with a horse and a vehicle. Well, sometimes the horse's bait wasn’t too safe to handle, but he always did. We never had to walk. Of course there were only girls, you see, he never had any boys.

IL: No brothers.

DC: Ida remained the lady, but I was the tomboy. Took care of the horses and rode the horses and filled the sacks with hay. We had to take the feed for the horse to ride along with us.
BF: Did you have a place to keep the animals?

DC: At the O’Keefe school they finally built a shed, but at first our horse was out just like in the fence. But we’d unhook the cart and everything. We’d just unharness him and tie him to the fence and give him his hay and he was all right until four o’clock in the afternoon. We harnessed him again and drive back.

Oh, I have here some pictures of my Model...an album. My first one I got in 1925. My dad and I bought (unintelligible) partnership a Model-T Ford. It’s here someplace. I was noticing it just a little while ago. I’ll never forget. We came— with the Model-T Ford one night—we came to Missoula to see a show, but what show was it?

IL: *Ten Commandments.*

DC: No, Ida, it wasn’t *The Ten Commandments.* It was the guy with the chariot race.

MJ: *Ben-Hur?*

DC: *Ben-Hur.* The show of *Ben-Hur.*

IL: We came to *The Ten Commandments.*

DC: Well, maybe, but this time we came to *Ben-Hur* and a blizzard started. And not having enough brains not to get started back home in a blizzard—we should have known better—we got out of the show, and we drove. We managed—the Lord was with us—we managed to drive all the way home through the drifts in the Model-T Ford. We made it all right, but boy I was afraid we weren’t going to make it that night. There was *ma mere* and I and my Aunt Clara and Ida. Mother was with us and Aunt Clara and you and I.

IL: You and I?

I was always part of the show, you know.

DC: That was around 1925.

MJ: What I’d like to do is, talk about Saint John’s Day and have you ask her as much as she can remember when she first came.

DC: (speaking in French)

MLP: (speaking in French)
DC: (translating from French for her Marie Louise Plourd) We celebrated St. John’s every year. That was the means of support for the priest, you see, the money that was made on this celebration.

MLP: (speaking in French)

DC: Her first St. John’s was in 1901. She came in 1900 and was married in 1901. That year...

MLP: (speaking in French)

DC: John Baptist Marceau and Mrs. Henry Bedard won the first prize for being the best waltzers at the dance that night.

IL: (unintelligible) best friend.

BF: Oh, really?

MLP: (speaking in French)

DC: Anna Boyer, that Leena’s older sister, won the first prize for being the prettiest baby at that same time.

BF: Anna Boyer, you said.

DC: Yes, Anna Boyer.

BF: Now who was the other dancer, the lady?

DC: The lady is Mrs. Henry Bedard. She was a Trahan. She was Yvonne’s sister.

IL: She was Orenc.

DC: Orenc Bedard.

IL: Orenc Trahan Bedard.

BF: How do you spell it?

IL: O-r-e-n-c.

DC: They gave prizes for all these things at that time.

MLP: (speaking in French)
IL: Her maiden name would have been Trahan, T-r-a-h-a-n.

DC: (speaking in French)

DC: Then there were races in the afternoon, but she doesn't remember who won the races. They always used to have a parade. Do you remember when George Deschamps was presented as a Little John Baptist at the first parade? He was the prettiest baby I’d ever seen. The prettiest little boy I’d ever seen.

MJ: What kinds of decorations does she remember?

DC: (speaking in French)

MLP: (speaking in French)

DC: They carried the French and the Canadian flag with the St. John's site (unintelligible) along with the...You see, they were all French speaking—Canadian French speaking.

IL: Oh, everybody talked French.

DC: And they carried that in the procession. They carried the flag and the American flag. The decorations were red, white, and blue bunting mostly. That was done in the place where they danced—in the hall where they danced. That was the old Hamel Hotel. They had a dance hall upstairs in the Hamel Hotel.

(Speaking in French)

MLP: (speaking in French)

DC: That hotel had a restaurant downstairs and a saloon downstairs.

[End of interview]