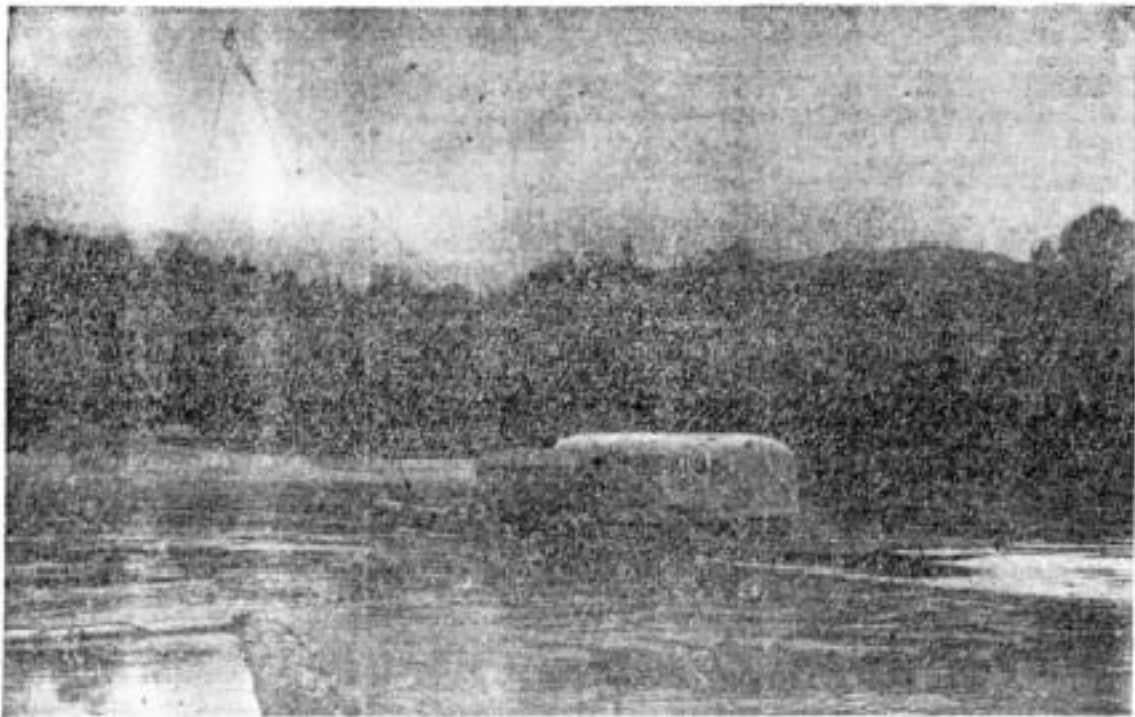


An Accident Here Would Dwarf the Chelan Tragedy



ON BOARD THIS SCHOOL BUS crossing the Skagit river on the Faber ferry above Concrete, 28 children cross daily to attend school. This together with the Concrete and Birdview ferries, plus private boat crossings, brings the total of school children crossing the river to attend school each day to 60. A bridge at or near Concrete would eliminate the danger and risk faced many times each year by children of school age, and others.

Danger To School Children Who Cross Skagit On Ferries Cited

(Editor's note: This is the second in a series of articles on the proposed bridge across the Skagit river near Concrete.)

Those who know the Skagit river and have seen it a raging torrent of swollen flood waters each year, can readily appreciate the danger faced by the 60 school children who must rely upon ferries 180 days out of the year to further their education.

From the lips of countless numbers of persons residing in the Concrete school area in the past few years, has come the warning: "The Chelan school bus tragedy would be dwarfed in comparison should one of our school buses ever topple into the Skagit river while crossing on the antiquated ferries."

That is one of the strong arguments being voiced today in favor of constructing a bridge across the river near Concrete which decision will be up to the voters of the county during the general election in November.

It was only a short while ago that parents of school children who have to cross the ferries to reach school, put their collective feet down and refused to allow their children to risk the crossing during high waters. That drew state-wide attention to the situation but there was little or no remedy that could be done without the actual construction of a bridge. This year, for the first time, these people and all residents of the county can voice their opinion in the form of a ballot.

Scow On Cables

The typical river ferry is a steel or wooden scow with railings on each side and a hinged ramp at each end. They operate solely by the power of the water against the side of the scow, the scow being swung on cables that permit it to be set at an angle against the current which pushes the scow sideways to the opposite landing. The entire mechanism hangs from a rolling trolley riding a taut cable stretching across the river from high poles on each side. Due to water variations, landings at each side of the river are impossible to maintain at one level. As a result the cars attempting to board or leave the ferry scow have considerable difficulty. Each ferry has a capacity load of five cars. As many as 45,000 crossings have been tabulated on one ferry in a single year.