

# THE CONCRETE HERALD

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## LETTER TELLS OF TRIP TO DIABLO IN SNOWS OF 1907

A trip from Marblemount to Diablo, which was impossible by road a few weeks ago, was not too easy by trail in 1907. Reading of the Diablo road being closed by snow slides prompted Glee Davis of Sedro-Woolley to dig out a letter written by his mother, which describes a trip home through the snow. The Davis place was located on the flat just below Diablo – a portion of which is now under the waters of Gorge Lake.

### A LETTER TO THE EDITOR—

Dear Mr. Dwelley:

Enclosed is a copy of a letter that my mother had written to my sister Idessa, whom she had been visiting for a month at the latter's first teaching job near Bellingham.

My mother always kept quite a diary and at times would ask for her letters returned when it contained something of special interest for future reference.

The weather conditions we have been having prompted me to copy this and hope you can find a place for it in the Herald. The letter was much longer, describing many spots along, but I have cut out some as it is already quite long.

I have criticized myself many times for leaving Goodells that morning. I thought I new the Goat Trail at that time, and too there was no communication, nor the Navy to send out search parties for one.

Yours truly,  
Glee G. Davis

Cedar Bar, Feb. 7, 1907

“Dear Dessa,

Glee met us at the Marblemount store at noon January 28<sup>th</sup>. The stage has been run, mounted on a sled as it has been cold for so long. We got our belongings together and started up river and arrived at the Talc Mine before dark, and they gave me the same cabin as when I went down. Both of the Alvord men out in Seattle for awhile, and only three men are working there. The snow broke the roof of the mill down. Leaving there we walked the six miles to Babcocks cabin where I cooked supper while Glee shoveled the snow off the roof. Mr. Babcock is working at the Talc, and his barn has already been broken down by the snow.

“We went on the next 3 miles to Goodells after dark, and it began snowing before we got there. I saw a light up the trail and told them but they thought I was mistaken. Soon the man from the Butcher cabin up Ruby Creek came in, he said it was more than he would ever undertake again. He said he did not see anyone at Cedar Bar and we wondered if Jack Ring was still at our place.

“In the morning we started out in deep snow that had fallen during the night and could hardly see the old tracks. Took us one hour to go the one mile to the canyon, but thought that might be the worst part, then another three hours to the Mason bridge, about two miles more. The slides were numerous and in some places we could hardly find the trail. These slides are awful to climb over for nearly everyone would take us in the river if

we slipped. I would go in above my knees until Glee finished making me a pair of bear-paw snow shoes from vine maple limbs and leather strings he always carried, this was at the big slide below the Mason bridge. I walked much better with them and Van kept up in our tracks, he was not heavy enough to go down, but it was awful hard for Glee to break trail, and carrying about fifty pounds and I quote a bundle.”



THE SKAGIT TRAIL AT DEVIL'S ELBOW  
"The Devil's Corner was icy but not dangerous when we were careful . . ."

“At Smooth-rock Cr., while Glee was still working on my snow shoes I was ahead and could not locate the trail and when Glee came I was way up the slide several rods too far. The icicles were the grandest sight I ever saw. We intended to make some beef tea but had lost our cup still in a pinch we could have emptied our can of baking powder in a paper and make tea in that. We were all wet through for the snow had fallen all day. By the time

we found it was not going to be any better we were too far from Goodells to turn back. Glee had to help us in several places. The Devil's Corner was icy but not dangerous when we were careful. Twice I got an avalanche of snow from a big fir tree on me, it nearly suffocated me but I just stood still and let it come. Glee decided he could not trust himself to get home for in case he did give out we could not go on alone, so we decided on the safe way and at four o'clock we built a fire under a big bluff at foot of the long hill, two and a half miles from home. We got wood and ate bread and butter, a can of deviled ham, and some figs.

“From four p.m. to seven a.m. we were in our rock shelter with our fire on the outside. Toward morning the snow came off the bluff about 300 feet high and came near putting our fire out several times, but we slept some. We could hear snow slides all night. It began to rain about five a.m. and we started at seven. Our tracks of the night before could hardly be seen. We kept right up to Glee and were thirty minutes going up the long hill. We hurried all we could for fear of the slides and were so glad to find that Two-mile creek had not slid at all. As the rain came on the snow it was hard breaking trail. Glee went ahead at the hanging bridge and across part way and came back to tell me that we could get over, and really we were so wet and tired we would have been unable to do anything else. Every big rock where there might be shelter was full of snow and ice.

“We got to midway point where the trail blasted into the rock, afraid every second that the ice would break and fall, then here the trail seems to have been broken off, but we are not sure. We clung to the bluff till we reached the last section of the bridge and I could not see how we could get over for the snow and ice was much higher than the bridge railings and up to a sharp point, but by bracing himself against the bluff he got over the worst, where should he have slipped he would have gone

between the bluff and the bridge and it was all ice to the river about sixty feet. He put his pack down and threw his snowshoes over a drift at far end of the bridge. I was standing where a misstep would have put me in the river, when here came a shower of snow from the top of the bluff. It took my breath and told Glee that I never could get over, he came back and reached my hand and by bracing with one hand on the bluff he got me over.

“Then we were over long bridge but just one continual slide to Ferry bar. When we got to the fishing hole we saw such a lot of smoke up at our place and were afraid that the house was on fire, the snow looked all brown through it. Glee put his back down and went as fast as he could, afraid that a tree had fallen on the house. He kept calling to Jack Ring but got no answer till he got to the fence and could see the house, then Ring came out to see him tumble against the fence. He ripped pants and tore his suspenders off in that one half mile, and took him fifty minutes. Ring came down to meet us at the dirt bridge and Glee was only forty minutes making the round trip for his pack, having the trail broken made all the difference. Ring was burning wet bark and Glee’s tree up in the garden was still burning so both made lots of smoke. I was one hour and twenty-five minutes from the fishing hole. I got my feet in hot water and drank a cup of tea and ate some beans then I went to bed.

“Glee was afraid to have me go to sleep, but I only slept an hour, then woke and drank more tea and talked, awhile and then slept good all night. We were five hours coming that last two and a half miles, got here past twelve o’clock so saw Cedar Bar in January if only for one half day. Glee will let his traps go for awhile. He says to tell Frank that it is the worst he ever saw or heard of. Jack and Glee fell a tree near the bunkhouse to have wood handy and he will get back to cutting out more lumber for the new house that he will build up where he has been

clearing off trees and logs. My hens are fine and laying some.

“McMillan and Frenchy are at Ruby Creek and Jerome and Cochren at the Skagit Queen. Jim and three others at the head of Thunder Creek. Tommy Rowland was alright at Christmas. We don’t know when we will get any mail but will send this out with Ring as soon as he can go over the trail.

(signed, Mama)”



Note: The bluff we camped under was about five hundred feet north of tunnel No. 2, and down near the river. The Long bridge was at tunnel No. 3. The mail was brought by just whoever was traveling the trail, it was on March 28, that Chas. and Geo. Emery brought our first since January 31.