

Anchorage - February 19, 1948

Mr. J. T. Cunningham
Acting General Manager

This in reply to your letter of February 17 regarding rear coupler on Engine 555 braking off at Broad Pass.

The following information received from Mr. M. T. Hughes, Master Mechanic:

"This class engine is equipped with coupler castings which bolt to beam back of tank. This, as you know, has caused considerable trouble in the past, especially when used as a Snow Fleet engine. At times these engines have very rough handling. It would be impossible at time of inspection to observe whether bolts had cracks or fractures without removing them completely from casting.

I have a statement from Road Foreman of Engines Walls which I am attaching to this letter. He states he was with this engine when they left Curry on February 12, 6:45 A.M. He claims there was nothing wrong with this coupler at that time. This engine worked two days on the Snow Fleet and I understand coupler broke off February 13 at 10:15 P.M. Undoubtedly these bolts had broken during these two days of service and lost out, as Walls states the back of this engine was covered with snow and ice making the loss invisible to the engine crew until coupler dropped."

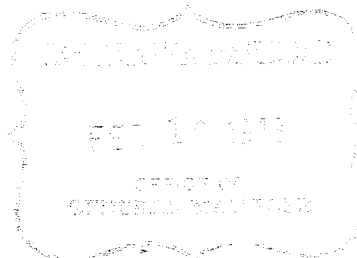
We are having spring pocket couplers installed on these engines as they come through the Back Shop for repairs. This, I believe, will eliminate any further trouble of this nature.

C. A. Benedict

C. A. Benedict
Supt. of Motive Power
& Equipment

TH:dee
Mech.

Encl.



Anchorage, Alaska
February 12, 1948

Mr. J. C. Hughes
Master Mechanic

Referring to AX 472 reporting coupler
casting falling off Engine 555, this engine left
Curry roundhouse at 6:45 a.m. February 12, 1948
in good shape. Having been used on the snow
fleet two days without being in a roundhouse for
thorough inspection, also covered with ice and
snow at the time we traded it off for Engine 703
at Ercod Pass 10:15 p.m. February 13, it was
impossible to notice that two of these bolts
were missing.

This accident was not due to rough
handling of train.

W. H. Wells
Eng.

W. H. Wells
Traveling Engineer

W. H. Wells

Anchorage - February 17, 1948

MR. G. A. BENEDICT:

Please note AX 472 reporting that a drawbar fell off engine 555. The report also states that only two bolts were holding this drawbar in place.

Please furnish a complete report covering this accident together with an explanation on why, by proper inspection, it could not have been determined that some bolts were missing.

J. T. Cunningham
Acting General Manager

JTC:mf

