



## ***SFHM RESEARCH PAPER-11***

### **LOCOMOTIVE PHOTOGRAPHS BY LUCIUS BEEBE AND CHARLES CLEGG AT LONG LEAF, LOUISIANA, IN 1945**



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**Cover photo:**

Crowell and Spencer Lumber Company locomotive #200 at Long Leaf, Louisiana. Photo taken by Charles Clegg in November 1945.

**Photo credits:**

Photographs are courtesy of the Charles Clegg Collection, California State Railroad Museum, Sacramento, CA.

**Abstract:**

It is unusual to locate good quality photographs of the steam-powered locomotives that serviced the thousands of sawmills operating across the South during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Crowell family sawmill operations at Long Leaf, Louisiana, were photographed a number of times due to the lengthy operation of the sawmill complex. When Lucius Beebe and Charles Clegg came to Long Leaf in 1945, the use of steam-powered locomotives was being phased out. Many of those photographed had been removed from service. We are fortunate then to have this collection of excellent quality photographs made by noted photographers.

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## **LOCOMOTIVE PHOTOGRAPHS BY LUCIUS BEEBE AND CHARLES CLEGG AT LONG LEAF, LOUISIANA, IN 1945**

Everett W. Lueck

Lucius Beebe was a wealthy New York and then San Francisco society columnist with a passion for trains in addition to gourmet foods, fine wines, and strong spirits. Before World War II, he had published a pair of books that began his effort in documenting the history of steam-powered locomotives using photography. During the war, he conceived the idea of documenting America's vanishing short lines, and at the same time trying to find the last wood burning steam locomotive in active common carrier (not logging or industrial) service. Beginning in 1944, he and his partner, Charles Clegg, began touring the nation by any means possible (he never does say how he did it) documenting short lines. This effort culminated in the book, *Mixed Train Daily: A Book of Short-line Railroads*, which was first published in late 1947 and revised a version was printed in 1961 (Beebe and Clegg 1947, 1961).

In November of 1945 (we think based on comments in the book), Beebe and Clegg visited Long Leaf and shot a series of photos, only a few of which made it into the book. Courtesy of the California State Railroad Museum and Clegg's sister, who preserved all of Clegg's photos (he was a photographer by profession), we can see what they saw at Long Leaf in 1945.

Beebe was a well-known society columnist at the time, and most railroads rolled out the red carpet for the two men. Beebe also promised each railroad official that hosted them a copy of the forthcoming book. As far as anyone is aware, none were ever received.

At some point, Beebe and Clegg heard about Long Leaf and the Red River & Gulf Railroad (RR&G), so they decided to visit. They did not find any running wood burning steam locomotives at Long Leaf, but Charles Clegg did take several memorable photographs, only two of which found their way into their book.

The following photos are those taken on that November day in 1945. Captions provide some understanding of the locomotives' significance to the Crowell Lumber Company and the Red River and Gulf Railroad.



**Clegg shot several photographs at Long Leaf Junction. This one of Crowell Shay's #1 and #2 made it into the book. The rest of the shots at Long Leaf Junction did not.**



**A larger shot of Shay #1 and the animal transport car in front of it, along with the log cars in the foreground.**





**Clegg next concentrated on the north half of the Long Leaf Junction yard where the Red River and Gulf locomotives #105 (left) and #104 set in repose, followed by log cars loaded with track material salvaged from the Kurthwood line.**



**Swinging his camera just a bit to the right, Clegg caught #104 and the train of log bunks as well as something else. Hidden behind the switch stand is a pair of persons coming down the Kurthwood line in a motor car.**

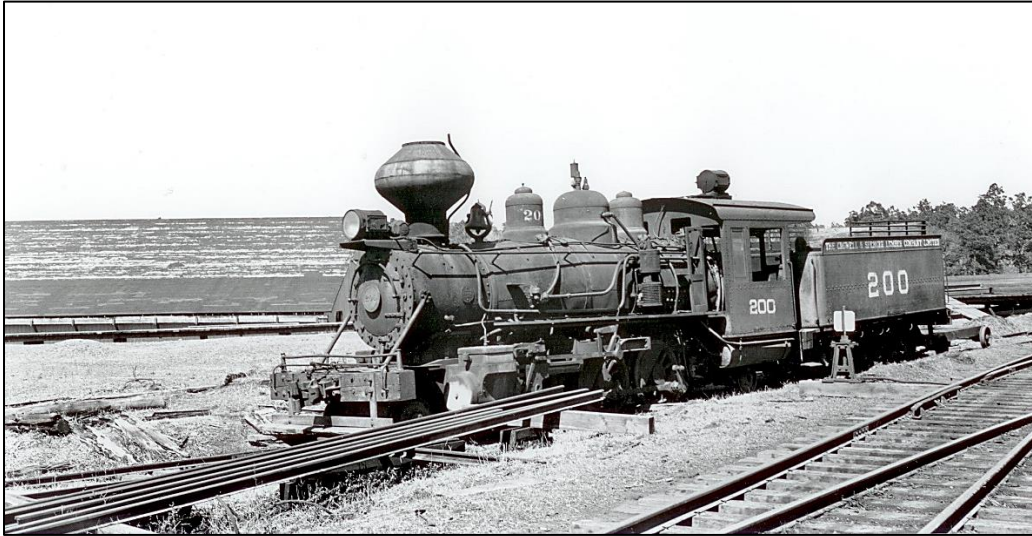


**An enlargement of the motor car with passengers coming around the curve on the west leg of the wye and heading south into the town Long Leaf itself.**



**Clegg's final shot at the junction was of RR&G engines #105 (left) and #104 in storage in the yard. Engine #105 had not run since September 1942, and now was the property of the salvage company which was scrapping the Kurthwood line. Engine #104 had been out of service even longer, having been run little since the end of passenger service in 1926. Engine #105 was fated to be scrapped, but #104 was sold the next year to Paulsen Spence, who ran it on the Louisiana Eastern at Amite, LA. It is now in Duluth, GA at the Southeastern Railway Museum.**





Moving to Long Leaf itself, at the mill, Clegg took this shot of Crowell & Spencer #200 parked next to the engine house. It also made the book, but it is captioned as being a Red River and Gulf locomotive, which gave future historians no end of troubles.



Just as they were ready to leave, Crowell Long Leaf #400, (still lettered for Crowell & Spencer some 6 years since the corporate change over) showed up with the daily log train from Meridian and dumped its logs into the log pond.



**In this enlargement of the previous shot, we can see the cabbage head stack of #200 above the empty log cars. The gentleman in the hat and dark suit is R.D. Crowell Sr. President of the Crowell Long Leaf Lumber Co, and the RR&G Railroad. On the far right, walking toward the camera in his favorite riding boots and pants, is Lucius Beebe.**

## **CLOSING THOUGHTS**

The history of lumbering in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century is a fascinating one. Thousands of sawmill towns were responsible for bringing the rural South into the industrial age (Barnett and Lueck 2020). Steam-powered locomotives and milling equipment drove this accomplishment and much of this history has been lost. This photographic collection is important to help understand this phase of the development of our southern culture.

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