

Things at Lecompte only got more complicated after the Rock Island got to town in 1907. Their main line ran on the west side of town, out of the aerial photo to the left. Fortunately, based on the schedules of the time, not many folks rode the Rock into or out of Lecompte. For the intrepid passenger who had endured the two hour, 13 mile ride from Lecompte to Long Leaf, the RR&G main passed east of the sawmill, and the Crowell offices and Commissary, while the Watkins Road (Mopac later) passed to the west. There was a connection between the two, but probably you simply got off and walked when the caboose came to a stop north of the mill, after which the mixed rattled on to Ashmore arriving there at 2:15 pm, just short of 7 hours after starting its 44 mile round trip journey.

At the end of 1913, things changed. Crowell & Spencer had formed a new lumber company, Meridian Lumber and had built a new mill at Meridian, LA, on the Rock Island, 12 miles southwest of Long Leaf. The RR&G extended service to Meridian over tracks of the Crowell and Meridian trams. This change, coupled with abandonment of service to Ashmore, left the RR&G looking like a lazy V. with the apex at Long Leaf, and the tails at Lecompte and Meridian.

Of course, this also caused changes in the way that the RR&G operated. Now for the first time, the daily trains operated out of Long Leaf. For this reason the building that is now the machine shop at Long Leaf was built. Originally a combination machine shop and engine house it still houses its 1913 belt driven machinery. Operating regular train service to Meridian also quickly caused a change in RR&G motive power. Southeast of Long Leaf, the existing tram line was a series of multiple short 2% hills that severely strained the capacity of little RR&G #1. In 1913, Meridian had purchased a second hand 4-6-0 #101, and although built in 1888, the engine still had 30% more power than #1, so a trade was made and sometime in 1914 #101 went to work for the RR&G.