



The Armies Collide!

Fall 2007

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Chickamauga Campaign

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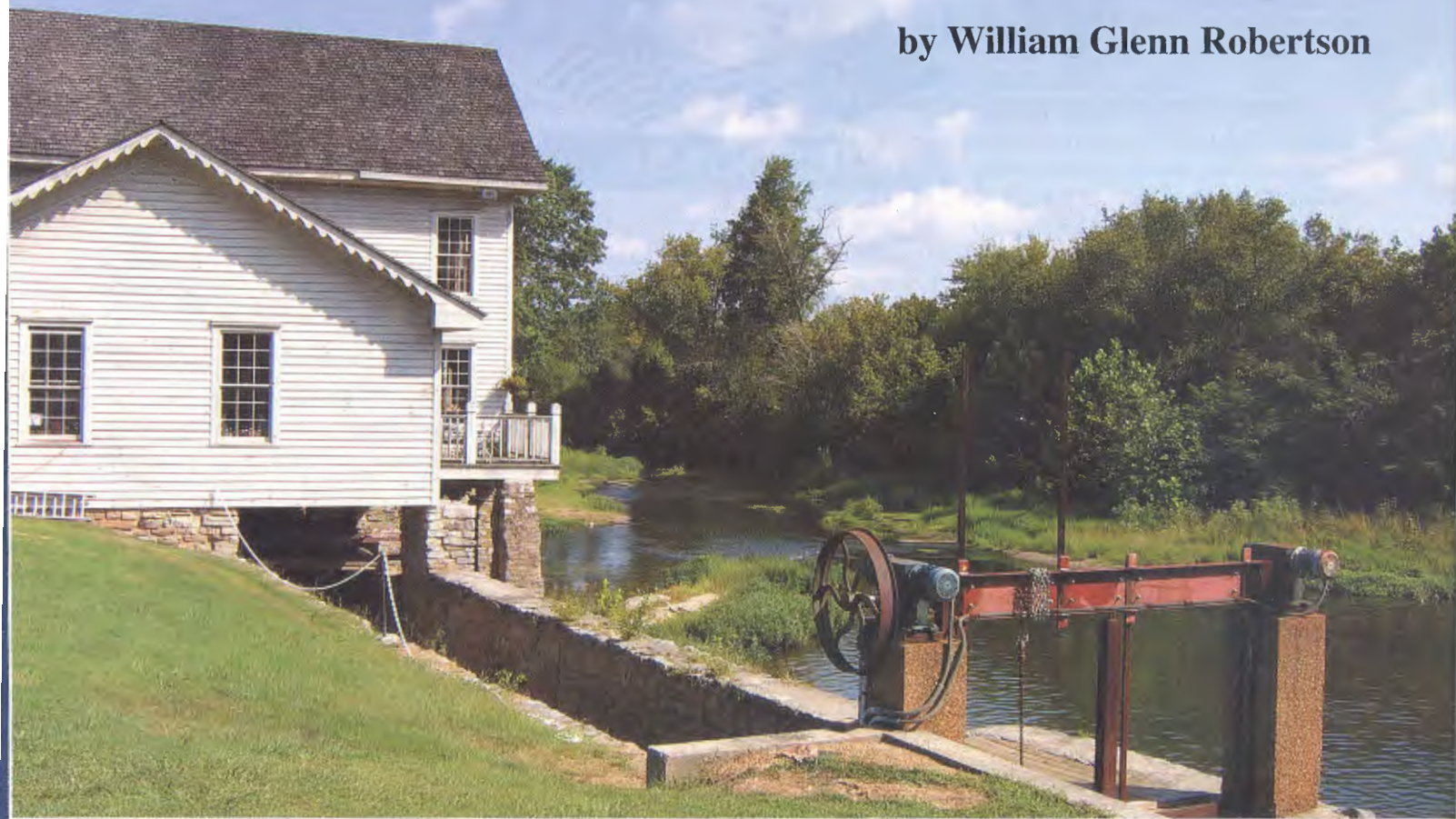
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THE CHICKAMAUGA CAMPAIGN

by William Glenn Robertson



Dave Roth of B&G

The Armies Collide

Bragg Forces His Way Across Chickamauga Creek

The failure of Gen. Braxton Bragg's bold effort to cripple the Federal XIV Corps in McLemore's Cove on September 11, 1863 (see Maps, Pp. 10-11) did not break the offensive spirit of either the Army of Tennessee or its commander. After a few hours of fitful rest, Bragg was again issuing orders as early as seven o'clock the morning of the 12th. At that hour he directed Brig. Gen. Bushrod R. Johnson to continue shielding the army's supply line by blocking any Federal push toward Dalton, Ga. If Johnson's small brigade proved insufficient, he was to call upon the two brigades from Joe Johnston's army arriving at Resaca, 13 miles south of Dalton (see Map, Pg. 12). Next, Bragg turned his attention back to McLemore's Cove and Dug Gap, instructing the trusted Will Martin to picket the Pigeon Mountain gaps with part of his cavalry division

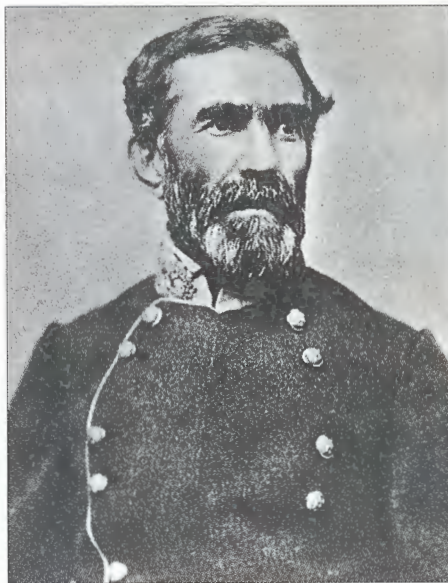
and bring the remainder to La Fayette, Ga. (see Pg. 51). By 8:30 a.m., Bragg had decided upon the next offensive action to take. Believing that Maj. Gen. Thomas L. Crittenden's XXI Corps might be vulnerable, he resolved to send forces north from La Fayette to strike any elements of that corps that could be found. Accordingly, Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk was told to move Frank Cheatham's large five-brigade division ten miles north on the Chattanooga road to Rock Spring Church (see Pg. 64). As soon as Polk's other division, Thomas C. Hindman's, could rest and cook rations, it was to follow Cheatham. Believing that he had set Polk in motion, Bragg turned to the task of rearranging his cavalry screen north of Rock Spring Church. Brig. Gen. Frank Armstrong's cavalry division, which had been slowly pressed back beyond Lee and Gordon's

Mills on the previous day by elements of Thomas J. Wood's Federal division, was to remain in contact with the Federals in its front. On Armstrong's right, Brig. Gen. John Pegram was to deploy his two brigades in an arc stretching southeast toward the hamlet of Villanow, Ga., on the direct route from La Fayette to Resaca. When he learned around noon that Armstrong had broken contact with the Federals at Lee and Gordon's Mills, Bragg sternly sent him forward again. If too much ground were given up unnecessarily, Bragg would not have enough space in which to maneuver successfully.¹

Dr. Robertson's article is annotated. See Pg. 27 for his Endnotes, and Pg. 14 for an Order of Battle.

ABOVE: The rebuilt Lee and Gordon's Mills on West Chickamauga Creek.

If Bragg expected Polk to act expeditiously, he was sorely mistaken. Although Cheatham's Division had made only a leisurely march on the previous day and a warning order for movement had been in effect since midnight, Polk did not issue direct instructions to Cheatham until 9:30 a.m. At least one brigade, Otho F. Strahl's, did not leave its camps until 10:00 a.m. Polk himself did not ride for Rock Spring Church until 4:00 p.m. and took two hours to get there. Maj. Gen. William H. T. Walker's Reserve Corps, consisting of his own and St. John R. Liddell's divisions, departed for Rock Spring some time after Cheatham, but at least they had the excuse of being at Dug Gap the previous day. Thus the road north was filled all day with marching troops, who raised a huge dust plume seen far and wide. The Confederates tramping toward Rock Spring did not yet include Hindman's Division. At 1:30 p.m. Polk ordered Hindman to have his men cook three days' rations and "refresh" before setting out for Rock Spring as well. Those two processes took well into the evening, and Hindman's command was still in the vicinity of La Fayette at 10:30 p.m. on the 12th. Meanwhile, Bragg received reports from his cavalry screen indicating Federal movement across his front from east to west. In late afternoon John Pegram reported that he had



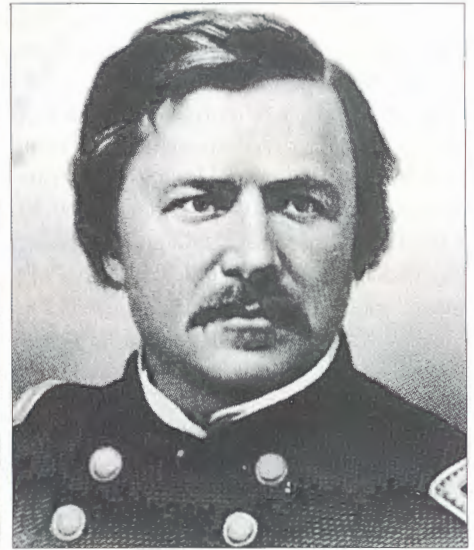
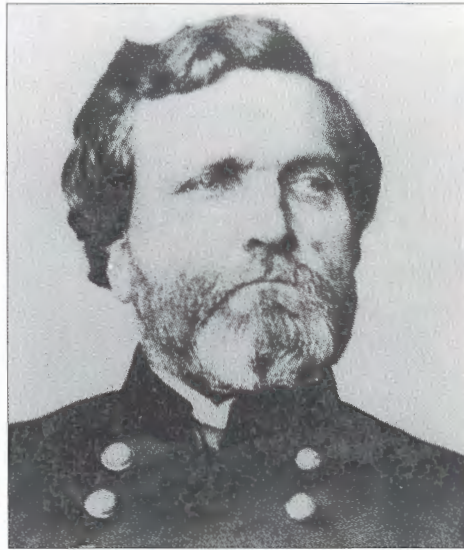
Braxton Bragg, CSA

been driven back by elements of John T. Wilder's mounted infantry brigade and John M. Palmer's infantry division. At 6:00 p.m. Bragg dispatched a message to Polk reporting that information and directing the corps commander to attack at dawn. If those Federal elements could be destroyed, Bragg could fall on the remainder of the XXI Corps and destroy it too. McLemore's Cove may have been a failure, but amazingly, in Bragg's estimation, a similar opportunity was now presenting itself.²

Once again, while Bragg plotted the destruction of one of Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans' major elements, that officer remained convinced that he could still retain the initiative. When the first news of Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas' check at Davis Crossroads (see Pg. 54) in McLemore's Cove arrived the previous night, Rosecrans and his staff assumed that Bragg was finally making a firm stand, but by late morning on September 12 the army high command, now including Assistant Secretary of War Charles A. Dana, had come to think otherwise. The withdrawal of the Confederate force from McLemore's Cove the night of September 11-12 was now seen as a temporary measure designed only to check pursuit while the retreat to Rome, Ga., continued. If that were true, the Federals must concentrate quickly to attack the Army of Tennessee before it escaped. Rising earlier than his norm but later than some might feel prudent, Rosecrans began to issue instructions to his scattered corps at 10:30 a.m. First went a message to Maj. Gen. Alexander McD. McCook, which explained Thomas' momentary delay and ordered the XX Corps commander to move to Thomas' support with two divisions, leaving one division on Lookout Mountain with his trains. Forty-five minutes later, Rosecrans dispatched orders to Thomas. Gratuitously characterizing

Lee and Gordon's Mills was a Union position at the time of the events described in this issue, the third on the campaign. (See also Pg. 42.)





Union commanders in the Chickamauga Campaign (left to right): William S. Rosecrans, George H. Thomas, and Alexander McD. McCook.

James Negley's withdrawal of his division from McLemore's Cove on September 11 as one of "prudence," not "necessity," Rosecrans ordered Thomas to contact McCook, who would be marching to join him. He further told the XIV Corps commander (Thomas) that Crittenden would soon be at Lee and Gordon's Mills with the consolidated XXI Corps and would attack the Confederate flank. Rosecrans would be managing Crittenden's attack himself, but he needed information from Thomas in order to do so. If all moved quickly, the Confederate army could yet be brought to battle before it escaped southward. Just to be sure of overwhelming force in the forthcoming "general battle," Rosecrans telegraphed Gordon Granger at Bridgeport, Ala., to come to Chattanooga, bringing along three Reserve Corps brigades plus John King's brigade of Absalom Baird's division.³

Rosecrans sent no orders to Crittenden because that officer was already under instructions of the previous afternoon to concentrate the XXI Corps around Lee and Gordon's Mills. Crittenden planned to use three roads to bring Palmer's and Horatio Van Cleve's divisions and Wilder's brigade back from their positions beyond Ringgold, Ga., to a junction with Wood's two lonely brigades at the Mills. At 1:00 a.m. Crittenden issued instructions to the three affected commanders. Van Cleve was to gather everyone's trains and head west from Ringgold toward the La Fayette-Rossville Road via Peeler's Mill and Reed's Bridge over Chickamauga Creek (see Pg. 65). Palmer was to give Van Cleve time to get underway, then take a road trending toward the southwest. Upon entering the valley of

Pea Vine Creek (see Pg. 65), Palmer would pause near the home of a man named Gilbert and block any Confederate horsemen seeking to approach the trains from the south. Wilder was to return to Ringgold from Tunnel Hill, Ga., report to Crittenden, then take the direct road from Ringgold to La Fayette. Such a move would cover Palmer's front while he remained at Gilbert's and his left flank when he turned west and resumed his march to Lee and Gordon's Mills. After daylight the movement commenced without initial difficulty. Palmer began by covering Van Cleve on the edge of Ringgold while the latter gathered the trains and began the slow march west. Then, with William B. Hazen's brigade in the lead, Palmer advanced to Gilbert's, arriving shortly after 9:00 a.m. There he paused, according to his orders to block Pea Vine Valley. Crittenden himself arrived nearby around 10:45 a.m. and authorized Palmer to push Hazen's brigade ahead toward Lee and Gordon's Mills. As Crittenden reported to Rosecrans several times, all indications continued to be that the Confederates were still en route to Rome and there was no cause for concern.⁴

At Lee and Gordon's Mills, Thomas Wood nervously waited for orders. At 6:00 a.m., with a heavy fog covering the valley of Chickamauga Creek, he wrote Rosecrans that he needed instructions from someone. Earlier written orders had directed him to head east to link with Crittenden, but the courier had verbally directed him to continue his advance southward. Either way, the bridge over the Chickamauga had been burned by the retreating Confederates and would need heavy reconstruction. Until the fog lifted he could do nothing. Just as

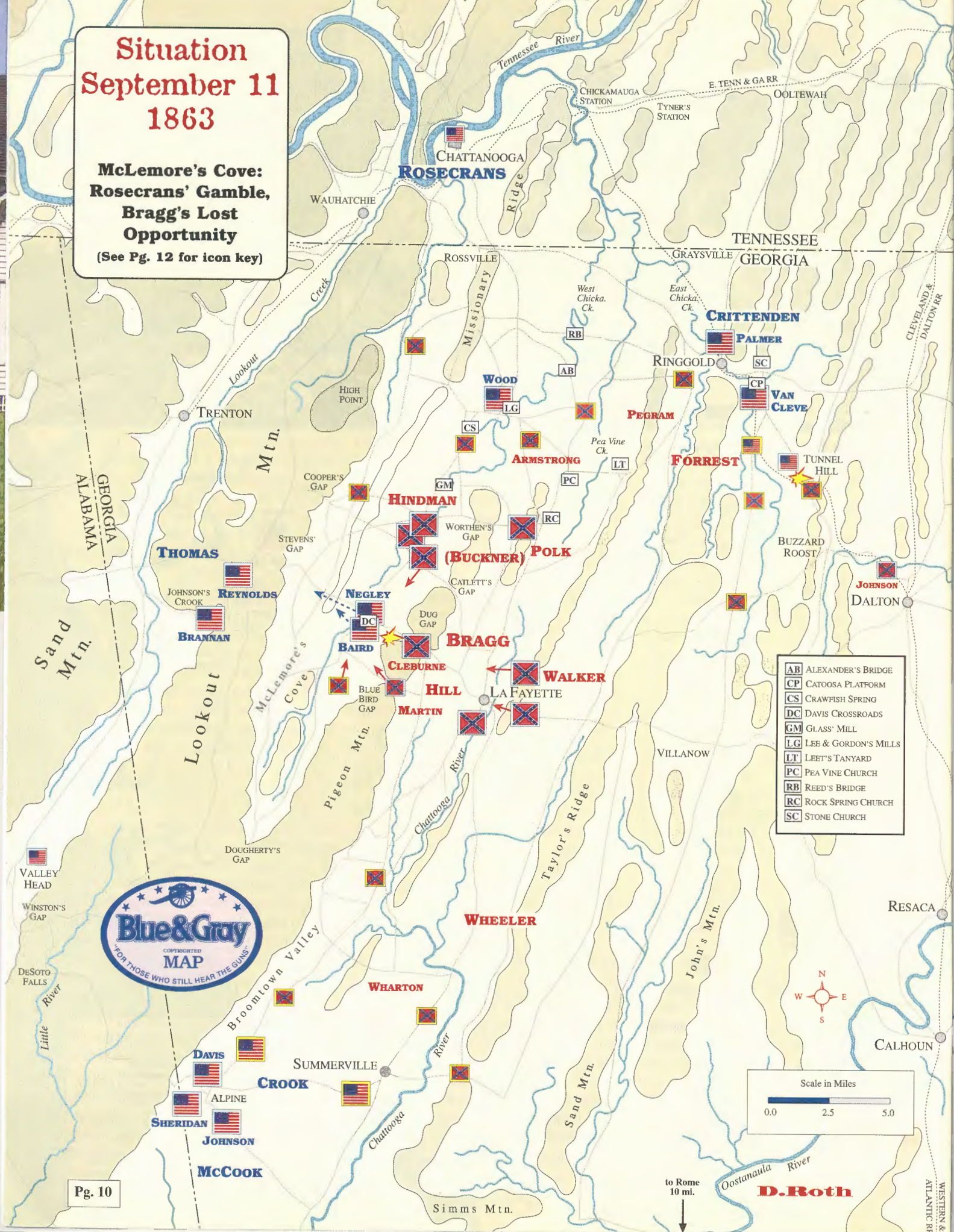
the fog began to dissipate around 8:00 a.m., a squad of mounted infantrymen appeared with a message from Crittenden ordering him to remain in place at the Mills and await the arrival of the corps. While waiting, Wood sent four companies of Charles G. Harker's brigade across the creek, where they stumbled into a much larger Confederate cavalry force backed by artillery. When Harker and the remainder of his brigade came up to support the reconnaissance party, the Confederates withdrew from view. By 1:00 p.m. Hazen's brigade arrived at the Mills, having brushed away other Confederate horsemen. Some time thereafter, Crittenden himself reached Wood's position. At 4:00 p.m. he sent a message to Palmer, ordering that officer to resume his march to the Mills as well. Before moving, Palmer was to make a reconnaissance up Pea Vine Creek with Charles Cruft's brigade. In less than an hour, cannon shots were heard to the southward, causing Crittenden to send Hazen's brigade on a reconnaissance as well. Neither brigade encountered much opposition from the handful of Confederate cavalymen watching them, and they soon rejoined their parent command. At dusk Palmer's division bivouacked across the Chickamauga from Lee and Gordon's Mills. In a message to General Rosecrans, Crittenden continued to insist that the Confederate army was in full retreat and would not stand short of Rome. The only caveat to his rosy view of the situation was that he had not yet heard from John T. Wilder and his brigade.⁵

Following is a Map Section.
The Main Text resumes on Pg. 19.

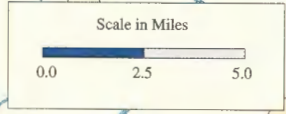
Situation September 11 1863

**McLemore's Cove:
Rosecrans' Gamble,
Bragg's Lost
Opportunity**

(See Pg. 12 for icon key)



AB	ALEXANDER'S BRIDGE
CP	CATOOSA PLATFORM
CS	CRAWFISH SPRING
DC	DAVIS CROSSROADS
GM	GLASS' MILL
LG	LEE & GORDON'S MILLS
LT	LEET'S TANYARD
PC	PEA VINE CHURCH
RB	REED'S BRIDGE
RC	ROCK SPRING CHURCH
SC	STONE CHURCH



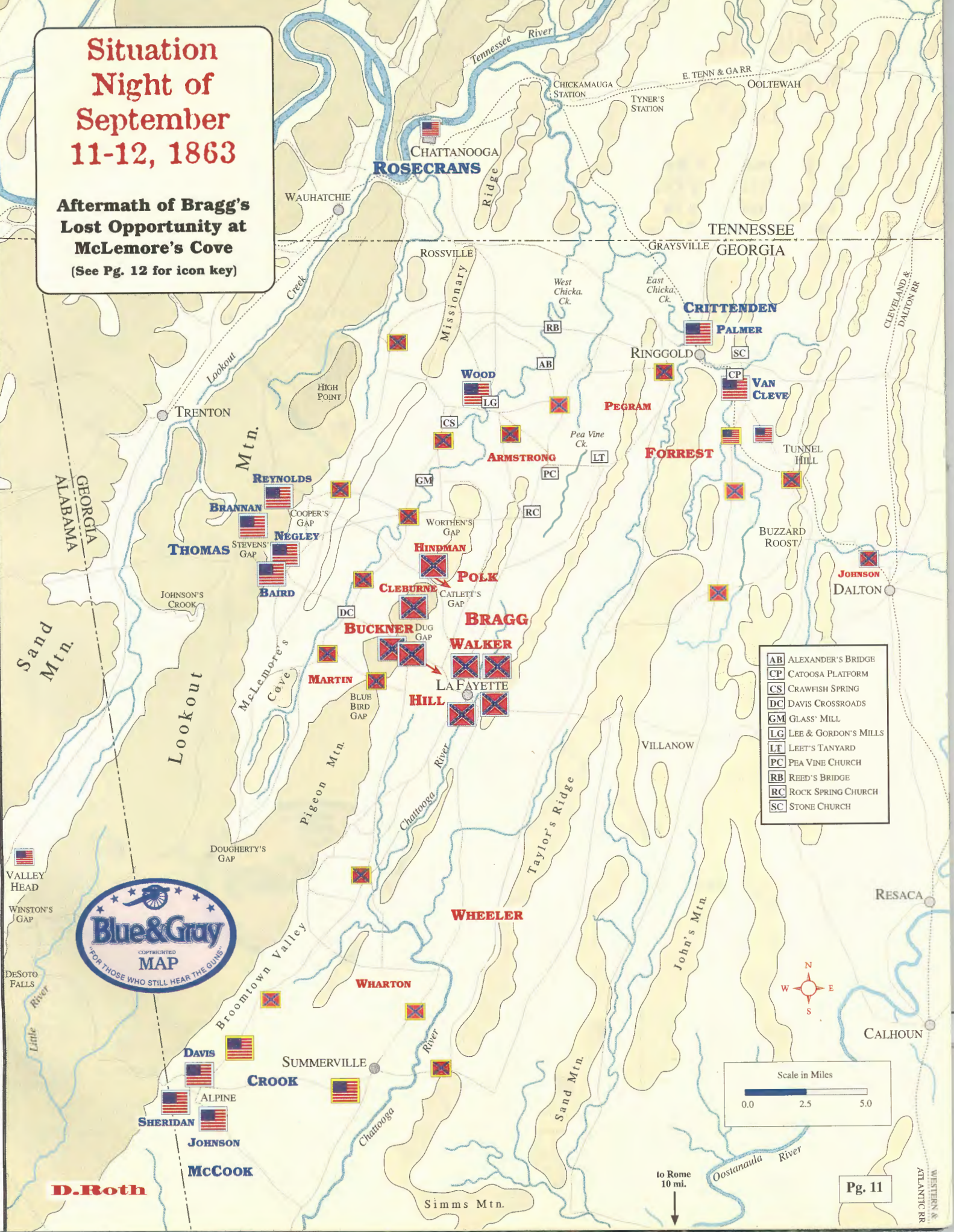
to Rome
10 mi.

D. Roth

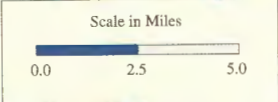
WESTERN &
ATLANTIC RR

Situation Night of September 11-12, 1863

Aftermath of Bragg's
Lost Opportunity at
McLemore's Cove
(See Pg. 12 for icon key)



AB	ALEXANDER'S BRIDGE
CP	CATOOSA PLATFORM
CS	CRAWFISH SPRING
DC	DAVIS CROSSROADS
GM	GLASS' MILL
LG	LEE & GORDON'S MILLS
LT	LEET'S TANYARD
PC	PEA VINE CHURCH
RB	REED'S BRIDGE
RC	ROCK SPRING CHURCH
SC	STONE CHURCH



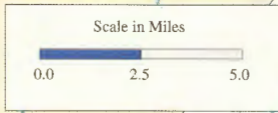
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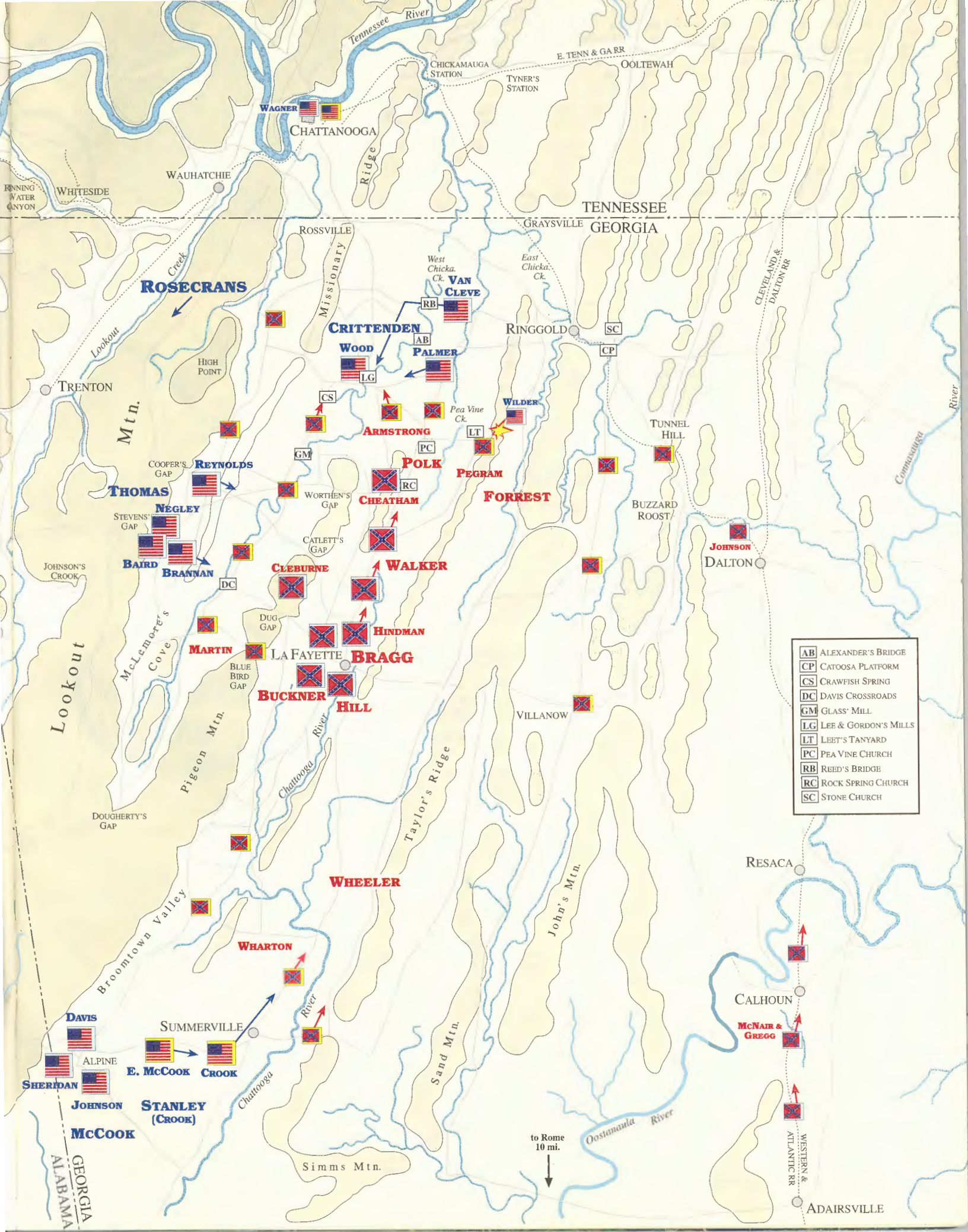
Situation September 12 1863

**Bragg Aims At A New
Target: Crittenden's Corps,
Rosecrans Tries to
Consolidate His Army**



Supply Depot	Construction Project
Troop icons outlined in light blue are infantry (or predominantly infantry, including mounted infantry). Those outlined in yellow are cavalry.	
Division	
Any Presence Below Division	





AB	ALEXANDER'S BRIDGE
CP	CATOOSA PLATFORM
CS	CRAWFISH SPRING
DC	DAVIS CROSSROADS
GM	GLASS' MILL
LG	LEE & GORDON'S MILLS
LT	LEET'S TANYARD
PC	PEA VINE CHURCH
RB	REED'S BRIDGE
RC	ROCK SPRING CHURCH
SC	STONE CHURCH

to Rome
10 mi.

WESTERN &
ATLANTIC RR

ADAIRSVILLE

ORDER OF BATTLE

The following abbreviations relate to the fate of officers during the entire campaign, not just the portion covered in this issue: c—captured; i—ill; w—wounded; mw—mortally wounded; k—killed. Included are troops present during events described in this issue.

ARMY OF THE CUMBERLAND

Maj. Gen. William S. Rosecrans

Headquarters

1st Battalion Ohio Sharpshooters; 10th Ohio Infantry (Provost Guard); 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry (Escort).

XIV CORPS

Maj. Gen. George H. Thomas
9th Michigan Infantry (Provost Guard);
1st Ohio Cavalry, Co. L (Escort).

First Division

Brig. Gen. Absalom Baird

First Brigade, Col. Benjamin F. Scribner: 38th Indiana, 2nd Ohio, 33rd Ohio, 94th Ohio, 10th Wisconsin.

Second Brigade, Brig. Gen. John C. Starkweather: 24th Illinois, 79th Pennsylvania, 1st Wisconsin, 21st Wisconsin.

Third Brigade, Brig. Gen. John H. King: 15th U.S., 1st Battalion; 16th U.S., 1st Battalion; 18th U.S., 1st Battalion; 18th U.S., 2nd Battalion; 19th U.S., 1st Battalion.

Artillery: 1st Michigan Light, Battery A; 4th Indiana Light Battery; 5th U.S., Battery H.

Second Division

Maj. Gen. James S. Negley

First Brigade, Brig. Gen. John Beatty: 104th Illinois, 42nd Indiana, 88th Indiana, 15th Kentucky, 3rd Ohio.

Second Brigade, Col. Timothy R. Stanley (w), Col. William L. Stoughton: 19th Illinois, 11th Michigan, 18th Ohio, 69th Ohio.

Third Brigade, Col. William Sirwell: 37th Indiana, 21st Ohio, 74th Ohio, 78th Pennsylvania.

Artillery: Illinois Light, Bridges' Battery; 1st Ohio Light, Battery G; 1st Ohio Light, Battery M.

Third Division

Brig. Gen. John M. Brannan

First Brigade, Col. John M. Connell: 82nd Indiana, 17th Ohio, 31st Ohio, 38th Ohio.

Second Brigade, Col. John T. Croxton (w), Col. William H. Hays: 10th Indiana, 74th Indiana, 4th Kentucky, 10th Kentucky, 14th Ohio.

Third Brigade, Col. Ferdinand Van Derveer: 87th Indiana, 2nd Minnesota, 9th Ohio, 35th Ohio.

Artillery: 1st Michigan Light, Battery D; 1st Ohio Light, Battery C; 4th U.S., Battery I.

Fourth Division

Maj. Gen. Joseph J. Reynolds

First Brigade, Col. John T. Wilder: 92nd Illinois, 98th Illinois, 123rd Illinois, 17th Indiana, 72nd Indiana.

Second Brigade, Col. Edward A. King (k), Col. Milton S. Robinson: 80th Illinois, 68th Indiana, 75th Indiana, 101st Indiana, 105th Ohio.

Third Brigade, Brig. Gen. John B. Turchin: 18th Kentucky, 11th Ohio, 36th Ohio, 89th Ohio, 92nd Ohio.

Artillery: Indiana Light, 18th Battery; Indiana Light, 19th Battery; Indiana Light, 21st Battery.

XX CORPS

Maj. Gen. Alexander McD. McCook
2nd Kentucky Cavalry, Co. 1 (Escort).

First Division

Brig. Gen. Jefferson C. Davis

First Brigade, Col. P. Sidney Post: 59th Illinois, 74th Illinois, 75th Illinois, 22nd Indiana.

Second Brigade, Brig. Gen. William P. Carlin: 21st Illinois, 38th Illinois, 81st Indiana, 101st Ohio.

Third Brigade, Col. Hans C. Heg (mw), Col. John A. Martin: 25th Illinois, 35th Illinois, 8th Kansas, 15th Wisconsin.

Artillery: Minnesota Light, 2nd Battery; Wisconsin Light, 5th Battery; Wisconsin Light, 8th Battery.

Second Division

Brig. Gen. Richard W. Johnson

First Brigade, Brig. Gen. August Willich: 89th Illinois, 32nd Indiana, 39th Indiana, 15th Ohio, 49th Ohio.

Second Brigade, Col. Joseph B. Dodge: 79th Illinois, 29th Indiana, 30th Indiana, 77th Pennsylvania.

Third Brigade, Col. Philemon P. Baldwin (k), Col. William W. Berry: 6th Indiana, 5th Kentucky, 1st Ohio, 93rd Ohio.

Artillery: Indiana Light, 5th Battery; 1st Ohio Light, Battery A; Ohio Light, 20th Battery.

Third Division

Maj. Gen. Philip H. Sheridan

First Brigade, Brig. Gen. William H. Lytle (mw), Col. Silas Miller: 36th Illinois, 88th Illinois, 21st Michigan, 24th Wisconsin.

Second Brigade, Col. Bernard Laiboldt: 44th Illinois, 73d Illinois, 2nd Missouri, 15th Missouri.

Third Brigade, Col. Luther P. Bradley (w), Col. Nathan H. Walworth: 22nd Illinois, 27th Illinois, 42nd Illinois, 51st Illinois.

Artillery: 1st Illinois Light, Battery C; Indiana Light, 11th Battery; 1st Missouri Light, Battery G.

XXI CORPS

Maj. Gen. Thomas L. Crittenden
15th Illinois Cavalry, Co. K (Escort)

First Division

Brig. Gen. Thomas J. Wood

First Brigade, Col. George P. Buell: 100th Illinois, 58th Indiana, 13th Michigan, 26th Ohio.

Second Brigade, Brig. Gen. George D. Wagner: 15th Indiana, 40th Indiana, 51st Indiana, 57th Indiana, 97th Ohio.

Third Brigade, Col. Charles G. Harker: 73rd Indiana, 3rd Kentucky, 64th Ohio, 65th Ohio, 125th Ohio.

Artillery: Indiana Light, 8th Battery; Indiana Light, 10th Battery; Ohio Light, 6th Battery.

Second Division

Maj. Gen. John M. Palmer

First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Charles Cruft: 31st Indiana, 1st Kentucky, 2nd Kentucky, 90th Ohio.

Second Brigade, Brig. Gen. William B. Hazen: 9th Indiana, 6th Kentucky, 41st Ohio, 124th Ohio.

Third Brigade, Col. William Grose: 84th Illinois, 36th Indiana, 23rd Kentucky, 6th Ohio, 24th Ohio.

Artillery: 1st Ohio Light, Battery B; 1st Ohio Light, Battery F; 4th U.S., Battery H; 4th U.S., Battery M.

Third Division

Brig. Gen. Horatio P. Van Cleave

First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Samuel Beatty: 79th Indiana, 9th Kentucky, 17th Kentucky, 19th Ohio.

Second Brigade, Col. George F. Dick: 44th Indiana, 86th Indiana, 13th Ohio, 59th Ohio.

Third Brigade, Col. Sidney M. Barnes: 35th Indiana, 8th Kentucky, 21st Kentucky, 51st Ohio, 99th Ohio.

Artillery: Indiana Light, 7th Battery; Pennsylvania Light, 26th Battery; Wisconsin Light, 3rd Battery.

RESERVE CORPS

Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger
1st Missouri Cavalry, Co. F (Escort)

First Division

Brig. Gen. James B. Steedman

First Brigade, Brig. Gen. Walter C. Whitaker: 96th Illinois, 115th Illinois, 84th Indiana, 22d Michigan, 40th Ohio, 89th Ohio. Ohio Light Artillery; 18th Battery.

Second Brigade, Col. John G. Mitchell: 78th Illinois, 98th Ohio, 113th Ohio, 121st Ohio. 1st Illinois Light Artillery, Battery M.

Second Division

No Commander Named

Second Brigade, Col. Daniel McCook: 85th Illinois, 86th Illinois, 125th Illinois, 52nd Ohio, 69th Ohio. 2nd Illinois Light, Battery I.

CAVALRY CORPS

Maj. Gen. David S. Stanley (i)
Brig. Gen. Robert B. Mitchell

First Division

Col. Edward M. McCook

First Brigade, Col. Archibald P. Campbell: 2nd Michigan, 9th Pennsylvania, 1st Tennessee.

Second Brigade, Col. Daniel M. Ray: 2nd Indiana, 4th Indiana, 2nd Tennessee, 1st Wisconsin. 1st Ohio Light, Battery D (one section).

Third Brigade, Col. Louis D. Watkins: 4th Kentucky, 5th Kentucky, 6th Kentucky.

Second Division

Brig. Gen. George Crook

First Brigade, Col. Robert H. G. Minty: 3rd Indiana (battalion), 4th Michigan, 7th Pennsylvania, 4th U.S.

Second Brigade, Col. Eli Long: 2nd Kentucky, 1st Ohio, 3rd Ohio, 4th Ohio.

Artillery: Chicago Board of Trade Battery.

ARMY OF TENNESSEE

Gen. Braxton Bragg

Headquarters

Dreux's Co., Louisiana Cavalry (Escort);
Holloway's Co. Alabama Cavalry (Escort)

POLK'S CORPS

Lt. Gen. Leonidas Polk
Greenleaf's Co., Louisiana Cavalry (Escort)

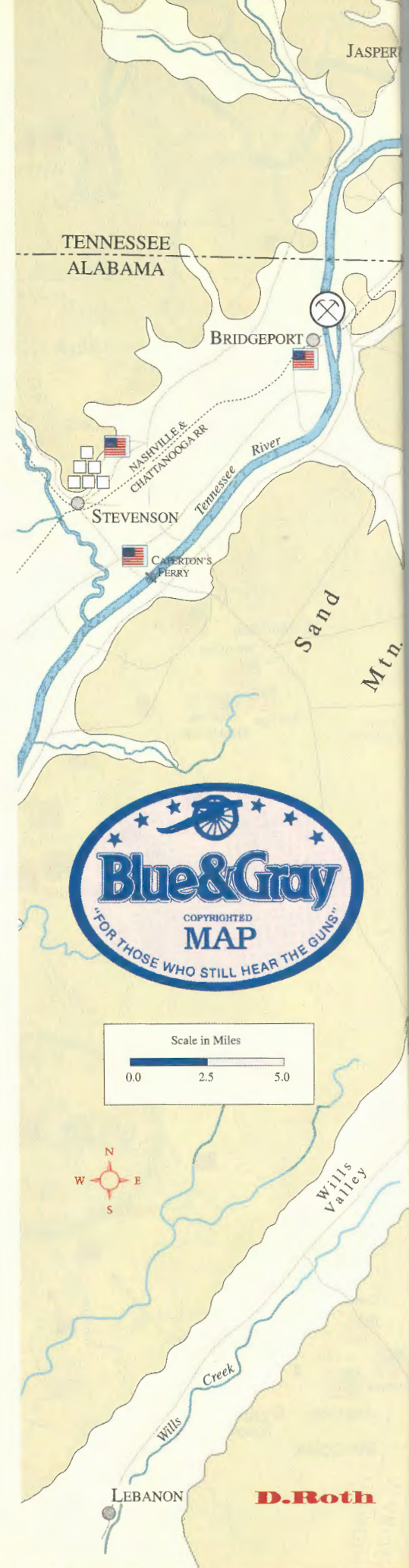
Cheatham's Division

Maj. Gen. Benjamin F. Cheatham

Jackson's Brigade, Brig. Gen. John K. Jackson: 1st Georgia, 5th Georgia, 2nd Georgia Battalion Sharpshooters, 5th Mississippi, 8th Mississippi.

Smith's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Preston Smith (k), Col. Alfred J. Vaughan, Jr.: 11th Tennessee, 12th-47th Tennessee, 13th-154th Tennessee, 29th Tennessee, Dawson's Battalion Sharpshooters.

Continued on Pg. 16



Maney's Brigade, Brig. Gen. George Maney: 1st-27th Tennessee, 4th Tennessee (Provisional Army), 6th-9th Tennessee, 24th Tennessee Battalion Sharpshooters.

Wright's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Marcus J. Wright: 8th Tennessee, 16th Tennessee, 28th Tennessee, 38th Tennessee, 51st-52nd Tennessee, 22nd Tennessee (Murray's) Battalion.

Strahl's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Otho F. Strahl: 4th-5th Tennessee, 19th Tennessee, 24th Tennessee, 31st Tennessee, 33rd Tennessee.

Artillery, Maj. Melancthon Smith: Carnes' (Tennessee) Battery; Scogin's (Georgia) Battery; Scott's (Tennessee) Battery; Smith's (Mississippi) Battery; Stanford's (Mississippi) Battery.

Hindman's Division

Maj. Gen. Thomas C. Hindman (i),
Brig. Gen. Patton Anderson.
Lenoir's Co. Alabama Cavalry (Escort)

Anderson's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Patton Anderson, Col. J. H. Sharp: 7th Mississippi, 9th Mississippi, 10th Mississippi, 41st Mississippi, 44th Mississippi, 9th Mississippi Battalion Sharpshooters. Garrity's (Alabama) Battery.

Deas's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Zachariah C. Deas: 19th Alabama, 22nd Alabama, 25th Alabama, 39th Alabama, 50th Alabama, 17th Alabama Battalion Sharpshooters. Dent's (Alabama) Battery.

Manigault's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Arthur M. Manigault: 24th Alabama, 28th Alabama, 34th Alabama, 10th-19th South Carolina, Waters' (Alabama) Battery.

HILL'S CORPS

Lt. Gen. Daniel H. Hill

Cleburne's Division

Maj. Gen. Patrick R. Cleburne
Sanders' Co. Tennessee Cavalry (Escort)

Wood's Brigade, Brig. Gen. S. A. M. Wood: 16th Alabama, 18th Alabama, 33rd Alabama, 45th Alabama, 32nd-45th Mississippi, 15th Mississippi Battalion Sharpshooters.

Polk's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Lucius E. Polk: 1st Arkansas, 3rd-5th Confederate, 2nd Tennessee, 35th Tennessee, 48th Tennessee.

Deshler's Brigade, Brig. Gen. James Deshler (k), Col. Roger Q. Mills: 19th-24th Arkansas, 6th-10th Texas, 15th Texas Cavalry (dismounted), 17th-18th-24th-25th Texas Cavalry (dismounted).

Artillery, Maj. T. R. Hotchkiss (w), Capt. Henry C. Semple: Calvert's (Arkansas) Battery, Douglas's (Texas) Battery, Semple's (Alabama) Battery.

Breckinridge's Division

Maj. Gen. John C. Breckinridge
Foules' Co. Mississippi Cavalry (Escort)

Helm's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Benjamin Helm (mw), Col. Joseph H. Lewis: 41st Alabama, 2nd Kentucky, 4th Kentucky, 6th Kentucky, 9th Kentucky.

Adams's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Daniel W. Adams (w/c), Col. Randall L. Gibson: 32nd Alabama, 13th-20th Louisiana, 16th-25th Louisiana, 19th Louisiana, 14th Louisiana Battalion Sharpshooters.

Stovall's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Marcellus A. Stovall: 1st-3rd Florida, 4th Florida, 47th Georgia, 60th North Carolina.

Artillery, Maj. Rice E. Graves (k): Cobb's (Kentucky) Battery, Graves' (Kentucky) Battery, Mebane's (Tennessee) Battery, Slocumb's (Louisiana) Battery.

RESERVE CORPS

Maj. Gen. William H. T. Walker

Walker's Division

Brig. Gen. States R. Gist

Gist's Brigade, Brig. Gen. States R. Gist, Col. Peyton Colquitt (k), Lt. Col. Leroy Napier: 46th Georgia, 8th Georgia Battalion, 16th South Carolina, 24th South Carolina.

Ector's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Matthew D. Ector: Stone's (Alabama) Battalion Sharpshooters, Pound's (Mississippi) Battalion Sharpshooters, 29th North Carolina, 9th Texas, 10th Texas Cavalry (dismounted), 14th Texas Cavalry (dismounted), 32nd Texas Cavalry (dismounted).

Wilson's Brigade, Col. Clandius C. Wilson: 25th Georgia, 29th Georgia, 30th Georgia, 1st Georgia Battalion Sharpshooters, 4th Louisiana Battalion.

Artillery: Ferguson's (South Carolina) Battery, Howell's (Georgia) Battery.

Liddell's Division

Brig. Gen. St. John R. Liddell

Liddell's Brigade, Col. Daniel C. Govan: 2nd-15th Arkansas, 5th-13th Arkansas, 6th-7th Arkansas, 8th Arkansas, 1st Louisiana (Regulars).

Walthall's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Edward C. Walthall: 24th Mississippi, 27th Mississippi, 29th Mississippi, 30th Mississippi, 34th Mississippi.

Artillery, Capt. Charles Swett: Fowler's (Alabama) Battery, Warren Light Artillery (Mississippi Battery).

BUCKNER'S CORPS

Maj. Gen. Simon B. Buckner
Clark's Co. Tennessee Cavalry (Escort)

Stewart's Division

Maj. Gen. Alexander P. Stewart

Bate's Brigade, Brig. Gen. William B. Bate: 58th Alabama, 37th Georgia, 15th-37th Tennessee, 20th Tennessee, 4th Georgia Battalion Sharpshooters.

Brown's Brigade, Brig. Gen. John C. Brown (w), Col. Edmund C. Cook: 18th Tennessee, 26th Tennessee, 32nd Tennessee, 45th Tennessee, 23rd Tennessee Battalion.

Clayton's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Henry D. Clayton: 18th Alabama, 36th Alabama, 38th Alabama.

Artillery, Maj. J. Wesley Eldridge: 1st Arkansas Battery; T. H. Dawson's (Georgia) Battery; Eufula Artillery (Alabama Battery); Co. E, 9th Georgia Artillery Battalion (or Everett's, formerly Billington W. York's Battery).

Preston's Division

Brig. Gen. William Preston

Gracie's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Archibald Gracie, Jr.: 43rd Alabama, 63rd Tennessee, 1st Alabama Battalion, 2nd Alabama Battalion, 3rd Alabama Battalion, 4th Alabama Battalion.

Trigg's Brigade, Col. Robert C. Trigg: 1st Florida Cavalry (dismounted), 6th Florida, 7th Florida, 54th Virginia.

Third Brigade, Col. John H. Kelly: 65th Georgia, 5th Kentucky, 58th North Carolina, 63rd Virginia.

9th Georgia Artillery Battalion, Major A. Leyden: Co. C (Wolihin's Battery), Co. D (Peoples' Battery), Jeffress' (Virginia) Battery.

Reserve Corps Artillery, Maj. Samuel C. Williams: Baxter's (Tennessee) Battery, Darden's (Mississippi) Battery, Kolb's (Alabama) Battery, McCant's (Florida) Battery.

Johnson's (Provisional) Division

Brig. Gen. Bushrod R. Johnson

Johnson's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Bushrod R. Johnson, Col. John S. Fulton: 17th Tennessee,

23rd Tennessee, 25th Tennessee, 44th Tennessee.

Gregg's Brigade, Brig. Gen. John Gregg (w), Col. Cyrus A. Sugg: 3rd Tennessee, 10th Tennessee, 30th Tennessee, 41st Tennessee, 50th Tennessee, 7th Texas, 1st Tennessee Battalion, Bledsoe's (Missouri) Battery.

McNair's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Evander McNair (w), Col. David Coleman: 1st Arkansas Mounted Rifles (dismounted), 2nd Arkansas Mounted Rifles (dismounted), 25th Arkansas 39th North Carolina, 4th-31st and 4th Arkansas Battalion (consolidated), Culpeper's (South Carolina) Battery.

CAVALRY

Maj. Gen. Joseph Wheeler

Wharton's Division

Brig. Gen. John A. Wharton

First Brigade, Col. C. C. Crews: Malone's (Alabama) Regiment, 2nd Georgia, 3rd Georgia, 4th Georgia.

Second Brigade, Col. Thomas Harrison: 3rd Confederate, 3rd Kentucky, 4th Tennessee, 8th Texas, 11th Texas, White's (Tennessee) Battery.

Martin's Division

Brig. Gen. William T. Martin

First Brigade, Col. John T. Morgan: 1st Alabama, 3rd Alabama, 51st Alabama, 8th Confederate.

Second Brigade, Col. A. A. Russell: 4th Alabama, 1st Confederate, Wiggins' (Arkansas) Battery.

FORREST'S CORPS

Brig. Gen. Nathan Bedford Forrest
Jackson's Co. Tennessee Cavalry (Escort)

Armstrong's Division

Brig. Gen. Frank C. Armstrong

Armstrong's Brigade, Col. James T. Wheeler: 3rd Arkansas, 2nd Kentucky, 6th Tennessee, 18th Tennessee Battalion.

Forrest's Brigade, Col. George C. Dibrell: 4th Tennessee, 8th Tennessee, 9th Tennessee, 10th Tennessee, 11th Tennessee, Shaw's Battalion, O.P. Hamilton's Battalion, and R. D. Allison's Squadron (consolidated), Huggins' (Tennessee) Battery (formerly Freeman's), Morton's (Tennessee) Battery.

Pegram's Division

Brig. Gen. John Pegram

Davidson's Brigade, Brig. Gen. H. B. Davidson: 10th Confederate, 1st Georgia, 6th Georgia, 6th North Carolina, Rucker's Tennessee Legion, Huwald's (Tennessee) Battery.

Scott's Brigade, Col. John S. Scott: Detachment of John Hunt Morgan's command, 1st Louisiana, 2nd Tennessee, 5th Tennessee, Robinson's (Louisiana) Battery (one section).

From Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia

Longstreet's Corps

Lt. Gen. James Longstreet

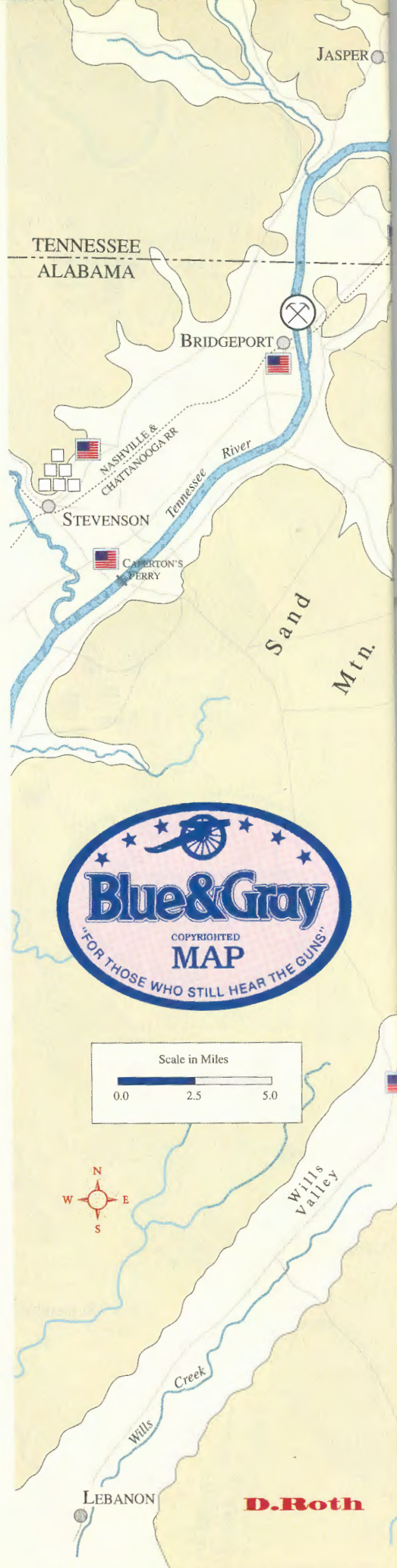
Hood's Division

Maj. Gen. John Bell Hood

Robertson's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Jerome B. Robertson: 3rd Arkansas, 1st Texas, 4th Texas, 5th Texas.

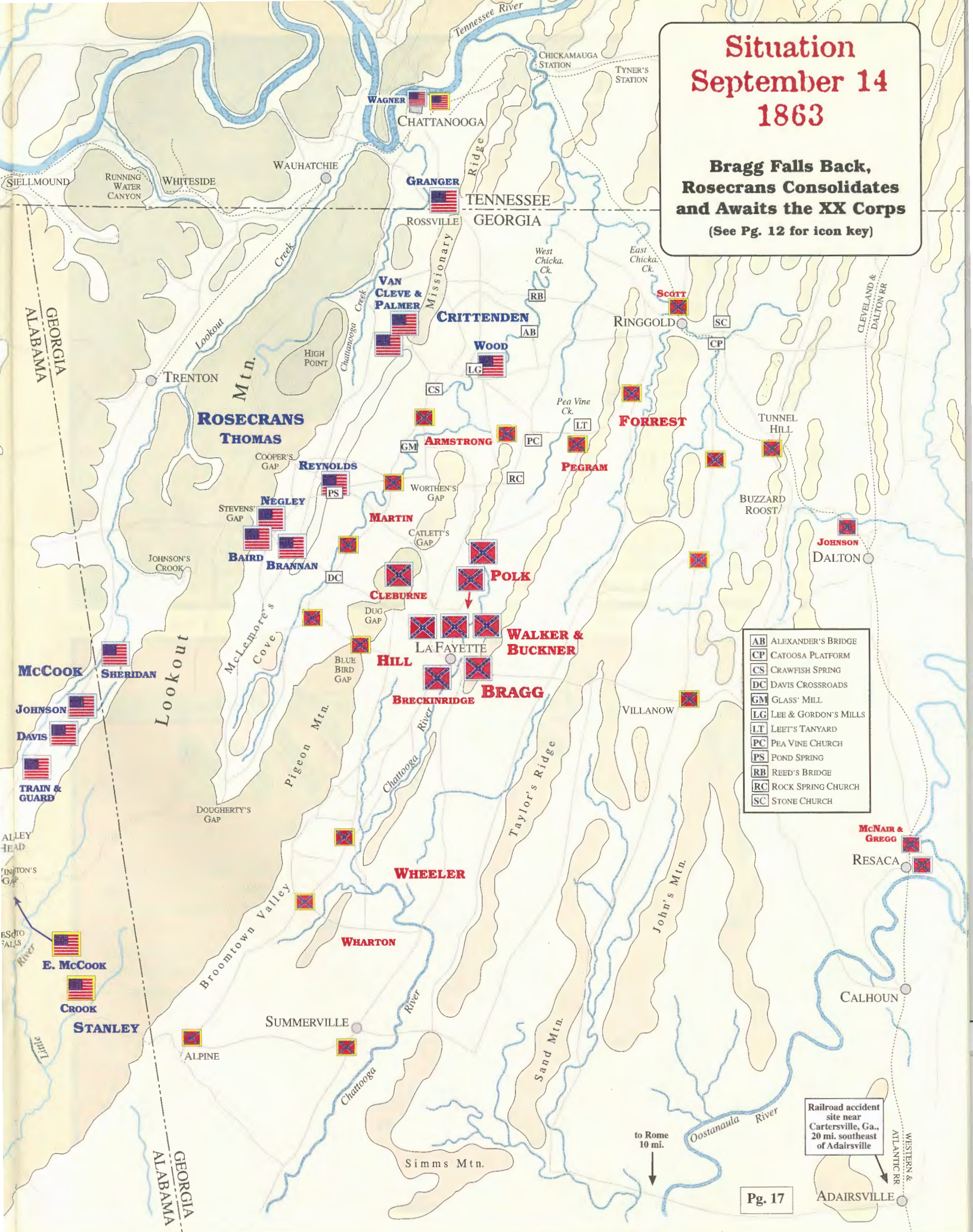
Benning's Brigade, Brig. Gen. Henry L. Benning: 2nd Georgia, 15th Georgia, 17th Georgia, 20th Georgia.

Law's Brigade, Brig. Gen. E. M. Law: 4th Alabama, 15th Alabama, 44th Alabama, 47th Alabama, 48th Alabama.



Situation September 14 1863

**Bragg Falls Back,
Rosecrans Consolidates
and Awaits the XX Corps**
(See Pg. 12 for icon key)



AB	ALEXANDER'S BRIDGE
CP	CATOOSA PLATFORM
CS	CRAWFISH SPRING
DC	DAVIS CROSSROADS
GM	GLASS' MILL
LG	LEE & GORDON'S MILLS
LT	LEET'S TANYARD
PC	PEA VINE CHURCH
PS	POND SPRING
RB	REED'S BRIDGE
RC	ROCK SPRING CHURCH
SC	STONE CHURCH

Railroad accident site near Cartersville, Ga., 20 mi. southeast of Adairsville



Bragg's infantry corps commanders (left to right): Leonidas Polk, D. H. Hill, Simon B. Buckner, and William H. T. Walker.

Following Crittenden's earlier instructions, Wilder withdrew from his position at Tunnel Hill and returned to Ringgold. There he turned south on the Ringgold-La Fayette Road. The 17th Indiana led the column, followed by the 72nd Indiana, 98th and 123rd Illinois. Behind them, Col. John Scott's Confederate troopers from Pegram's Division followed closely, keeping just out of range but within distant sight. Several miles out of Ringgold, the advance guard of the 17th Indiana struck a Confederate outpost and drove it south until a strong Confederate force appeared in front, blocking the road just east of a gap through the Chickamauga Hills (now called Pea Vine Ridge). As Wilder's remaining regiments began to arrive, the Confederates withdrew to the ridge. Quickly joining the 17th Indiana, Col. Abram O. Miller formed most of his 72nd Indiana on its left. Sending four companies even farther to the left, he hoped to flank the Confederates, who proved to be the 6th Georgia Cavalry, Rucker's East Tennessee Legion, and Huwald's Battery. Dismounting, the four companies of the 72nd raced for the ridgetop, where they met the Confederates head-on. In the violent confrontation that ensued, the Spencer rifles of the Federals proved the arbiter of the field and the Confederates were forced southward. At Leet's Tanyard, just west of the gap in the hills, a road junction permitted Wilder's brigade to head west toward Lee and Gordon's Mills via Pea Vine Church. Laying out their seven dead on Leet's porch and taking their eight wounded along, Wilder's men advanced westward as night began to fall. Bumping into Confederate infantry, Wilder halted, lit

false campfires, found a reluctant guide, and moved cross-country in the darkness. Navigating safely with Confederates seemingly all around them, Wilder's brigade finally reached Lee and Gordon's Mills around midnight.⁶

The stiff fight at Leet's, which cost Pegram's Division more than 50 casualties, and his earlier detection of Palmer's division a few miles north at Gilbert's, led the Confederate cavalry commander to report the Federal positions to Bragg's headquarters at La Fayette. Pegram's report in turn triggered Bragg's 6:00 p.m. order for Polk to attack the Federals at dawn the next day. At 8:00 p.m. Bragg again urged Polk to attack at first light, identifying Polk's target as the Federal infantry column less than a mile north of Pea Vine Church. Thirty minutes later, Bragg ordered Hindman's Division, still at La Fayette, to accelerate its preparations and march to join Cheatham and Walker. At that very moment a heated argument was breaking out at Rock Spring Church. Walker had just arrived, and found Polk and his subordinates drafting a message to the army commander. Wholly negative in tone, the message announced that Polk's line was too extended, the enemy was advancing on him via three roads, he needed more troops, his generals counseled a defensive posture, and he could not attack in the morning. Walker's arrival with Brig. Gen. St. John R. Liddell reopened the discussion, which quickly became contentious and lasted until Walker exhausted himself. Polk at 10:25 p.m. dispatched Lt. W. B. Richmond of his staff to Bragg with the original message. Racing through the night, Richmond arrived at La Fayette at 11:00 p.m. At wit's end, Bragg

responded tartly at midnight that Polk and his officers were unaware of the larger context within which he had issued the attack directive. Threatened from both west and south, Bragg declared he would cover those directions with cavalry only, assuming all risks. He would dispatch Simon B. Buckner's corps to Rock Spring Church, but Polk should most emphatically not wait for its arrival. Immediate action was required. Thirty minutes later Bragg repeated the midnight message: "Let no time be lost." With that, Braxton Bragg had done all he could until sunrise.⁷

As September 12 came to a close with the Army of Tennessee once more poised to mount an offensive against a portion of the Army of the Cumberland, the scattered Federal corps were slowly beginning the process of consolidation. By midnight, Horatio Van Cleve's division and the corps trains had reached Lee and Gordon's Mills, making Thomas Crittenden's XXI Corps complete and located in one place for the first time in days. At the foot of Stevens' Gap (see Pg. 57), George Thomas had at last consolidated his XIV Corps as well. The two brigades of Joseph J. Reynolds' division fanned out from Cooper's Gap and had begun to approach Catlett's Gap in Pigeon Mountain. During the morning John M. Brannan's division crossed Lookout Mountain and descended into the perimeter held by Baird's and Negley's divisions. Acting under verbal orders from Thomas, Brannan at 2:00 p.m. probed forward to Davis Crossroads with his own division and one of Baird's brigades. There the Federals found only a few Confederate graves and several of their own unburied dead. Far to



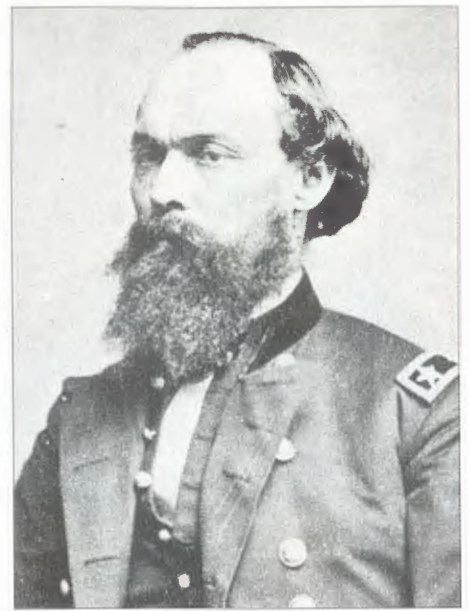
Thomas L. Crittenden, USA

the south at Alpine, Ga. (see Pg. 51), Alexander McCook continued to fret. At 7:30 a.m. he wrote Thomas that he had sent out cavalry probes toward La Fayette and feared that he was in a "false position." By the afternoon he was feeling better, writing Rosecrans that he had received the previous day's suggestion to close on Thomas but that he expected the cavalry probe would find the Confederate army gone toward Resaca. Brig. Gen. George Crook commanded the probe because Maj. Gen. David S. Stanley, commanding the Cavalry Corps, had finally taken to his bed because of severe dysentery. Crook had not reported by midnight when McCook received Rosecrans' peremptory message of 10:30 a.m. to move to Thomas' support with two divisions via the quickest route. Concentration, not pursuit, was now the order of the day in the Army of the Cumberland.⁸

The unit upon which all else depended if Rosecrans' scattered forces were to consolidate in a timely manner was Alexander McCook's XX Corps. Virtually all of the corps was located around Alpine, on the east side of Lookout Mountain, on the morning of September 13 (see Map, Pg. 14). Only Sidney Post's brigade of Jefferson C. Davis' division remained west of the mountain at Valley Head, where Post guarded and facilitated the passage of the massive corps baggage and supply trains over the mountains. Looking at his map, McCook intended to move his corps back up Lookout, then take a northward trending road to Dougherty's Gap, where a narrow track zigzagged down the mountain into the

head of McLemore's Cove. From there, it would be relatively easy to join Thomas' right, perhaps within 36 hours. McCook issued the orders promptly, but nothing else worked on schedule. First, hundreds of heavily laden ammunition and supply wagons had to be dragged up the rough pathways to the top of the mountain. Their slow progress meant that the infantry and artillery could not begin the climb until the afternoon, quickly rendering McCook's optimistic timetable inoperative. As his corps toiled up the steep slope, McCook began to reconsider his plan to march via Dougherty's Gap. What if Thomas did not hold the floor of McLemore's Cove, and the Confederates did? During the afternoon McCook received a copy of a September 12 message from army headquarters to Thomas that could be interpreted to indicate Thomas did not control the Cove. By 5:00 p.m. McCook had changed his mind. Believing that it was too risky to descend into McLemore's Cove via Dougherty's Gap, and unaware of a road running along the top of Lookout Mountain to Stevens' Gap, McCook redirected his divisions back the way they originally had come, via Winston's Gap and Wills Valley. The new route would require several additional days to effect the concentration of the XIV and XX corps, but Alex McCook could see no acceptable alternative.⁹

Unaware of McCook's troubles, William Rosecrans had decided to join George Thomas in order to orchestrate offensive operations against the Confederates at La Fayette. Before leaving Chattanooga, he drafted several messages to Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger at Bridgeport. Explaining the concentration plan, he called upon the commander of the Reserve Corps to expedite the movement of three brigades from the Bridgeport-Shellmound area to Chattanooga. Upon reaching the city, Granger was to be prepared to support Crittenden's corps, moving to the sound of the guns without orders if necessary. As for Crittenden himself, Rosecrans feared that the large dust cloud Thomas had seen rising from behind Pigeon Mountain on the previous day might indicate an imminent Confederate attack on the XXI Corps. Accordingly, at 12:20 p.m., he issued minute instructions to Crittenden, forbidding movement south from Lee and Gordon's Mills. Instead, Crittenden was to leave Wood's division at the Mills and take the remainder of the corps westward to the slopes of Missionary Ridge, to parry a



Gordon Granger, USA

possible Confederate thrust between the XXI and XIV corps. Wood was to hold his position as long as possible, withdrawing to Rossville if necessary. Wilder's brigade was to be detached from Crittenden and returned to Thomas' control, being replaced by Robert Minty's small cavalry brigade now arriving at Chattanooga. In his haste to depart, Rosecrans permitted Crittenden's instructions to be drafted without specifying a time of execution. Leaving Lt. Col. Christopher Goddard, his assistant adjutant general, in charge of the headquarters in Chattanooga, Rosecrans gathered Chief of Staff James Garfield, his senior aide Maj. Frank Bond, and Assistant Secretary of War Dana, then departed for XIV Corps headquarters at the foot of Stevens' Gap. His route would take him up Lookout Mountain and along its top to Cooper's Gap, thence down to the floor of McLemore's Cove. He would thus be out of communication with anyone for approximately ten hours.¹⁰

Rosecrans' cautionary orders to Crittenden were too late. Confident that few Confederate forces were nearby, the XXI Corps commander decided on the morning of September 13 to launch a series of probes across his front to confirm his judgment. On his right, he ordered the newly arrived 4th United States Cavalry regiment to push southward from Crawfish Spring into McLemore's Cove. On his left, he directed John Wilder to return to the vicinity of Leet's Tanyard and Pea Vine Church to see if Pegram's cavalry was still in that area. Wilder was to be supported by Charles

Cruft's brigade from John Palmer's division. In the center, Crittenden ordered Horatio Van Cleve to advance southward on the La Fayette Road to develop any Confederates who might be coming from that quarter. Van Cleve was to take at least one brigade, and more if he desired. The reconnaissances began around 10:00 a.m. The ride of the 4th U. S. Cavalry yielded little: two prisoners gained at the cost of one Federal killed. Similarly, Wilder and Cruft encountered only a handful of Confederate cavalry pickets. After skirmishing for a while, they too returned to Lee and Gordon's Mills. Only in the center did the reconnaissance develop a larger Confederate presence. At 11:30 a.m. Crittenden dictated a note to Rosecrans describing his confident state of mind and the measures he had taken, then rode to visit Palmer. As soon as he departed, headquarters personnel at Lee and Gordon's Mills heard cannon fire coming from the southeast. Within an hour Crittenden was back at headquarters, where he again drafted a dispatch for Rosecrans. Although Van Cleve had not yet reported, Crittenden was elated, writing: "I am confident that there is no considerable force of infantry near me at this time . . . I am satisfied they are not about to attack me here today. Indeed I think I can whip them if they do—all of them."¹¹

The Confederate force so cavalierly dismissed by Thomas Crittenden at 12:30 p.m. at that moment consisted of half of Bragg's army: the divisions of Cheatham, Hindman, Walker, and Liddell, with two more divisions, Stewart's and Preston's, within supporting distance. But why did they make so little impression on the XXI Corps commander? The answer again lies in the dysfunctional command climate of the Army of Tennessee. Braxton Bragg had taken a few hours of fitful rest after sending Leonidas Polk peremptory orders around midnight to attack at first light. The target was John Palmer's division, which had been reported on the previous afternoon to be virtually alone in Pea Vine Valley. Palmer, of course, was not there by the time Bragg issued the orders to Polk, having reached safety at Lee and Gordon's Mills around dark on September 12. Unaware that Palmer had

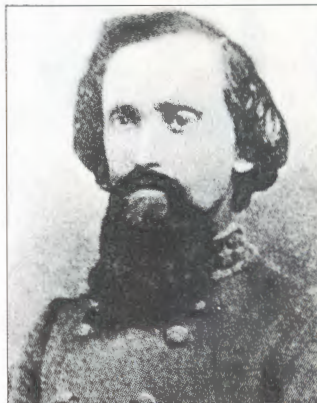
escaped, Bragg set off from La Fayette at 5:00 a.m., September 13, to ensure that Polk acted. Arriving at Polk's position just north of Rock Spring Church, he found nothing happening. Polk was still in the process of arranging his massive line, which was several miles long, when John Pegram arrived with news that the Federals (Palmer's division) had vanished in the direction of Lee and Gordon's Mills. By late morning, new information from the cavalry indicated that a Federal force was advancing southward on the La Fayette Road. While the bulk of Polk's force ponderously reoriented itself toward the northwest, one of Cheatham's brigades was ordered forward to meet the Federal thrust.

Brig. Gen. Otho F. Strahl's brigade thus encountered Horatio Van Cleve's leading unit, the brigade of Brig. Gen. Samuel Beatty, little more than two miles north of the Confederate concentration. Strahl quickly replaced the cavalry skirmishers with his own infantry, deployed two guns from Stanford's Mississippi Battery, and opened fire on the Federal column.¹²

For several hours Strahl and Beatty maneuvered against each other in the valley of Crawfish Creek without significant result. Hoping to entice the Federals incautiously forward upon Polk's hidden line, Strahl withdrew slowly southward one mile. The Federals followed, but equally cautiously. When Strahl fell back an additional half mile, Beatty did not take the bait and remained stationary. Strahl then moved forward again, but stopped short of his original position. All the while, skirmishers traded shots across the open fields and Stanford's Battery dueled with the 3rd Wisconsin Battery supporting Beatty.

Losses were light on both sides, with Beatty losing only two men mortally wounded, plus two officers seriously wounded. Among the latter was Capt. Lucius H. Drury, Van Cleve's chief of artillery. Each battery had one man injured. Strahl's losses are unknown but were no doubt minuscule. Van Cleve's two remaining brigades, George Dick's and Sidney Barnes',

were drawn up in line behind Beatty as supports and received numerous overshots from the Confederate artillery but lost no men. Polk's other units remained out of sight and thus incurred no casualties either. By 2:00 p.m. it was all over. Around 2:30 p.m. Crittenden received Rosecrans' notes of



Otho F. Strahl, CSA

12:20 and 12:25 p.m. telling him not to advance farther south, so he ordered Van Cleve to return to Lee and Gordon's Mills. As he did so, Van Cleve reported: "Am satisfied there is no force near other than a small cavalry rear guard. . . . There are no rebels of any account near us, or they would have re-enforced their pickets." Van Cleve's withdrawal preempted an advance by Walker from Polk's right.

With the Federal departure, there was nothing more to be done, so Bragg and his staff dejectedly returned to La Fayette by 5:00 p.m.¹³

Although the opportunity that Bragg believed existed on September 13 had already vanished by the time he arrived on the field, an aggressive stance by Polk's large force might have accomplished more than was actually achieved. Van Cleve had brought all of his division east of Chickamauga Creek and at least two of Palmer's brigades were east of the creek as well, one of them some distance away supporting Wilder's probe toward Leet's. Wood's division only had two brigades present. A rapid advance by Polk's command could have caught several brigades with their backs to Chickamauga Creek, scattered Crittenden's corps, panicked its commander, and seriously disrupted the largest Federal force blocking the direct route to Chattanooga. But none of that was to be. Upon his return to La Fayette, Bragg learned that D. H. Hill's command had engaged a Federal cavalry probe from the direction of Alpine. Acting under Alexander McCook's orders, George Crook had pushed far enough to capture infantry pickets from Maj. Gen. John C. Breckinridge's division. With that information in hand, he had withdrawn the way he had come, but not before he had created great anxiety for Hill, who remained fixated on a possible Federal advance from the south. Dismissing Hill's concerns, Bragg sourly went to bed. He had now tried twice to defeat isolated portions

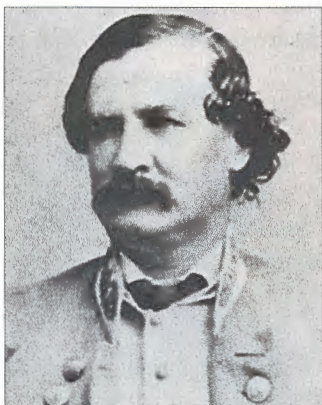


George F. Dick, USA

of the Army of the Cumberland and had absolutely nothing to show for it except exhausted, dispirited troops. With each failure, the maneuver box in which Bragg could operate grew smaller as the Federals began to concentrate. Bragg's disappointment affected his staff as well, George Brent confiding to his diary that night: "We cannot stay here much longer, we must beat the enemy or get back to our communications and feed our troops."¹⁴

The one bright spot in an otherwise gloomy picture for Braxton Bragg was a message awaiting him at La Fayette. Gen. Joseph E. Johnston was reporting that reinforcements from Virginia were arriving in Atlanta en route to the Army of Tennessee. Johnston asked for the return, therefore, of the brigades of John Gregg and Evander McNair, which were just beginning to arrive at Resaca. Disregarding Johnston's plea, Bragg and his staff could only wonder how many reinforcements there were, and why the Richmond authorities had not officially notified them. Perhaps all was not lost yet. Fortunately for Bragg's slumber, he was unaware of a tragedy unfolding at that very hour on the Western & Atlantic Railroad south of Cartersville, Ga.—a tragedy that would delay whatever reinforcements were then riding the rails toward him. That morning a train pulled by the engine *Senator* had left Atlanta carrying hundreds of John Gregg's Tennesseans to the Resaca railhead. Men from the 10th, 30th, 41st, and 50th Tennessee Infantry regiments packed the train, riding wherever they could find a place—inside the cars, on top, or on the engine and tender. Just south of Acworth, a car derailed, and the train was delayed for most of the day. Finally, after dark, the *Senator* and its train again headed north. All went well until a few miles south of Cartersville when, at 9:00 p.m., the *Senator* struck head-on the locomotive *Chieftain*, which was pulling a southbound train of sick Confederate soldiers. The wreck killed as many as 15

of Gregg's men and injured more than 50 others. At least one soldier was trapped in the wreckage for several hours until death mercifully released him. The wounded were gathered in a shed until daylight, then evacuated southward. As for the Western & Atlantic Railroad, Bragg's vital lifeline, it would funnel no more reinforcements to the Army of Tennessee for an indefinite period. The troops from Virginia would have to wait.¹⁵



Benjamin F. Cheatham, CSA

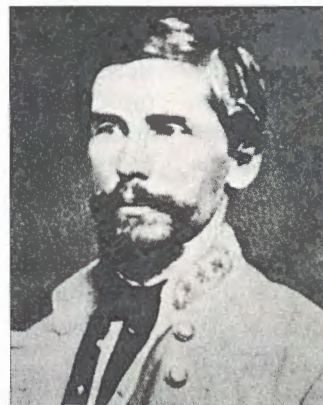
After two disappointing performances by subordinates within four days, Bragg elected to use September 14 (see Map, Pg. 16) to rearrange his forces and gather more information on the location of the widely scattered Federal corps. He ordered Polk to bring Cheatham's, Hindman's, Walker's, and Liddell's divisions back to La Fayette from Rock Spring Church. Buckner's two divisions had already returned to La Fayette on the previous day. D. H. Hill's corps continued to guard the gaps in Pigeon Mountain with Cleburne's Division and screened La Fayette's southern approaches with Breckinridge's Division. During the day Hill continued to insist that he faced a significant threat from the direction of Alpine. On the other hand, Polk reported during the afternoon that the Federals were concentrating around Lee and Gordon's Mills and Crawfish Spring (see Pg. 57). He defended his dilatory performance on the previous day by asserting that Crittenden's entire corps had been advancing upon him and his subordinates had all counseled a defensive stance. Doubtless, these excuses carried little weight with Bragg. Turning to more technical matters, he sent a staff officer, Col. J. P. Jones, to Resaca to coordinate the work of the quartermaster, commissary, and ordnance officers at the army's railhead.



John Gregg, CSA

Jones also received authority to regulate the flow of the reinforcements soon to arrive from Mississippi and Virginia. With his next move already beginning to take form in his mind, Bragg ordered the commander of the Atlanta depot to send the newly arriving brigades to Dalton, not Resaca. Clearly, Bragg was looking northward toward Chattanooga for his next offensive thrust. To Adjutant General Samuel Cooper in Richmond, Bragg confided by telegraph that he would continue to press against a strangely passive enemy. To Joe Johnston, he promised to return the borrowed brigades of John Gregg and Evander McNair as soon as the troops from Virginia arrived. From Hindman, he demanded a full account of that officer's recent activities in McLemore's Cove.¹⁶

While Bragg pondered his next move, the Army of Tennessee slowly responded to his new instructions. Never in a hurry, Polk started his leading elements southward



Patrick R. Cleburne, CSA

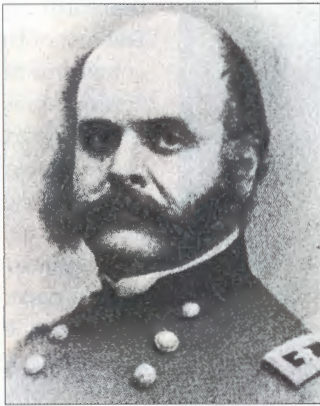
toward La Fayette around midmorning. The now familiar La Fayette Road was exceedingly dry and dusty, making the slow march extremely uncomfortable. Rumors that reinforcements would soon be arriving from Virginia, however, did much to keep morale high. The first units reached La Fayette in mid-afternoon, where they went into camp, cooked rations, issued shoes, and generally relaxed. Patton Anderson's brigade, the rear guard, dragged into town at sunset, thereby completing the army's concentration. On Pigeon Mountain, some of Patrick Cleburne's men also heard the rumor that reinforcements were coming from Virginia, while others continued to damn Bragg for placing Hindman in charge during the McLemore's Cove fiasco. D. H. Hill continued to fulminate to all who would listen about the Federal hordes about to erupt from Alpine. Farther afield, Col. John Scott's cavalymen of Forrest's Corps entered Ringgold again. Col. Hypolite Oladowski, the army's ordnance officer, issued orders that no more ammunition was to be unloaded at Resaca, but kept on the rail cars for quick movement. Of course, activity on the Western & Atlantic track southward was nil because of the wreck near Cartersville the previous night. At the crash site, the 30th Tennessee Infantry of

Gregg's Brigade worked all day clearing the mess and evacuating the casualties. In Atlanta, Brig. Gens. Henry L. Benning and Jerome B. Robertson agreed that Robertson's Brigade would be the first of Lt. Gen. James Longstreet's men to depart northward when service was restored that evening. Behind them, thousands of Confederate soldiers en route to the Army of Tennessee were strung out on railroad tracks as far away as North Carolina.¹⁷

On September 14 news of the movements of Longstreet's contingent

reached Federal General-in-Chief Henry Halleck in Washington. Hearing that considerable numbers of Confederate troops from the Army of Northern Virginia had gone to Petersburg, Halleck began to be concerned about their destination. Initially worried about the safety of Federal garrisons around Norfolk, Va., he also prudently dispatched orders to Maj. Gen. Stephen

Hurlbut at Memphis and Maj. Gen. Ambrose E. Burnside at Knoxville, to reinforce the Army of the Cumberland if at all possible. Delays in transmission kept Hurlbut from receiving this message for eight long days. Burnside, however, received it much sooner, but declined to act. Now with Thomas at the foot of Cooper's Gap in McLemore's Cove, William Rosecrans would be on his own for the foreseeable future. Still, from Rosecrans' perspective, there was no cause for alarm. In several messages dispatched in late morning, both Rosecrans and Assistant Secretary of War Charles A. Dana opined that the Confederates were evacuating La Fayette. While the source of this optimism at army headquarters is unknown, it possibly stemmed from the perceived Confederate withdrawal in the face of Crittenden's probe, as well as Crittenden's own optimistic reports. Whatever the cause, the mood of the army's senior leaders was upbeat. Only McCook's unfortunate choice of routes to join Thomas marred the rosy view of the situation. When a message arrived from the XX Corps commander explaining his reasoning for taking the long but safe route north through Wills Valley instead of the much shorter route along the top of Lookout Mountain, Rosecrans was displeased. In a gentle but pointed rebuke,



Ambrose E. Burnside, USA

Chief of Staff Garfield advised McCook to return to Valley Head, ascend Lookout Mountain, and use the route via Dougherty's Gap into McLemore's Cove. When another message from McCook arrived at 9:00 p.m. indicating no change in course, Rosecrans gave up and had Garfield instruct McCook to continue on his original path. Either way, the army could do nothing until McCook's corps reached Thomas.¹⁸

By now well aware that the Army of the Cumberland was impatiently awaiting his arrival in McLemore's Cove, Alexander McCook came under increasing pressure as September 14 progressed. At 4:20 a.m. he wrote to Garfield, plaintively listing all the circumstances that had caused him to take the Winston's Gap-Wills Valley-Johnson's Crook route. The excruciatingly slow movement of his trains up Lookout Mountain, the apparent lack of security in McLemore's Cove, the

inadequate knowledge of roads on top of Lookout Mountain, and Thomas' seeming approval of the safe route through Wills Valley all were used by McCook to justify his course of action. In McCook's view, he was doing the best he could to comply with Rosecrans' intent. During the day, the XX Corps painfully began to retrace its steps over Lookout Mountain. Brig. Gen. William H. Lytle of Sheridan's division

received orders to gather his own brigade plus Col. Joseph Dodge's brigade of Richard Johnson's division and Col. Sidney Post's brigade of Davis' division into a division-sized guard for the corps trains. Everyone else was to cross the mountain, descend to Valley Head, and march northward toward the Stevens' Gap crossing of Lookout Mountain at Johnson's Crook (see Pg. 54). Sheridan

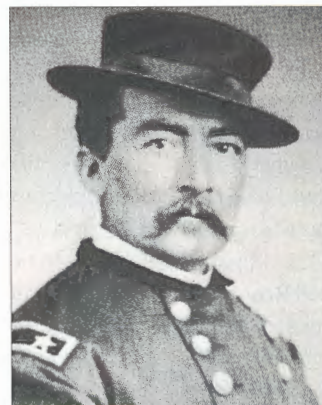
led with his two remaining brigades, followed by Johnson's, then Davis'. By the end of the day Sheridan's leading elements were approaching the mouth of Johnson's Crook, while Johnson's and Davis' four brigades had reached Long's Spring, four miles north of Colonel Winston's (see Pg.

54) at Valley Head. McCook himself halted on the road between Sheridan's and Johnson's divisions. There at 5:30 p.m. he received Garfield's rebuke and instructions to return to Valley Head and ascend the mountain there. With some heat McCook replied, again justifying his route by claiming to be under Thomas' control on a course approved by the latter. Expressing opposition to changing his current plans, McCook stated he would cease movement until clarification arrived. During the evening his mental confusion increased, causing him first to order Lytle and the trains down to Colonel Winston's, then to countermand the movement.¹⁹

Alex McCook was not the only Federal corps commander in a quandary on September 14. Before leaving Chattanooga on the previous day, Rosecrans had ordered Thomas Crittenden to leave Wood's division at Lee and Gordon's Mills and take his remaining two divisions westward to the top of Missionary Ridge. Ostensibly an effort to prevent the Confederates from interposing between the XXI and XIV corps and racing to Chattanooga behind Crittenden, the message got caught up in the confusion incident to Rosecrans' movement from Chattanooga to Cooper's Gap. Part of the army staff, under Lt. Col. Christopher Goddard, the assistant adjutant general, had remained behind in Chattanooga when Rosecrans departed, and it was Goddard who attempted to explain to Crittenden what was wanted. By 4:40 a.m. on September 14, part of the confusion had been resolved: Crittenden was to move

to Missionary Ridge with the divisions of Palmer and Van Cleve, although he was clueless as to the reason. By 10:30 a.m. Crittenden was in position, but there was no water on the ridge and no enemy in sight. Throughout the remainder of the day, Crittenden bombarded army headquarters with requests to seek water and to explain his mission. Eventually, on his own, he sent the troops down to the

valley of Chattanooga Creek, effectively separating them from Wood's small force at Lee and Gordon's Mills. Finally, around 7:30 p.m., Crittenden received a 2:45 p.m. message from Garfield sending the corps back to the banks of Chickamauga Creek upstream from Wood's position. With night



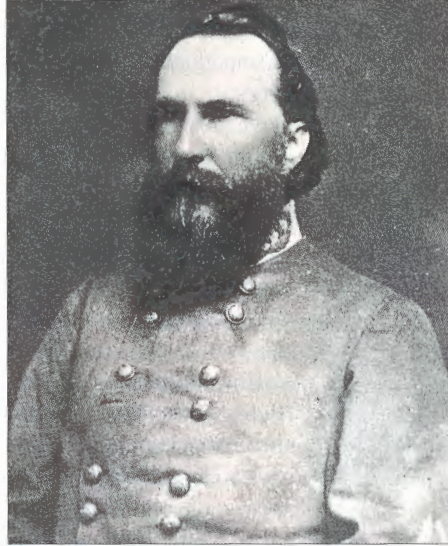
Philip H. Sheridan, USA

upon him, Crittenden elected to wait until the next day before moving. Meanwhile, his troops foraged happily in new territory, while at the same time being perplexed about the cause of their movement.²⁰

While McCook and Crittenden were in motion, other elements of the Army of the Cumberland made only minor adjustments in their position on September 14. In the XIV Corps sector at the foot of Cooper's and Stevens' gaps, George Thomas' four divisions rested and improved their situational awareness. Absalom Baird's First Division moved not at all, but rejoiced in the arrival of its third brigade, John King's. Negley's Second Division also rested comfortably in place. John Brannan's Third Division probed gently forward to Chickamauga Creek with a reinforced brigade, while Joseph Reynolds' Fourth Division stretched eastward and took position at Pond Spring. During the afternoon, John T. Wilder's mounted infantry brigade joined Reynolds' division, nominally its parent unit. At the north end of the army's front, Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger arrived from Bridgeport with three brigades. By the end of the day most of Granger's regiments were concentrated at Rossville, after an arduous march over the nose of Lookout Mountain and a trek across Chattanooga Valley. With their wagon train far behind, many of the men proceeded to take advantage of the foraging opportunities offered by the surrounding countryside. Far to the south, at the other end of the Army of the Cumberland's advanced line, the Cavalry Corps followed the XX Corps up Lookout Mountain from Alpine. Growing progressively sicker by the day, Stanley himself rode in an ambulance across the mountain and down to Valley Head. There he reported by courier to Rosecrans that George Crook would attempt to secure Dougherty's Gap on the morrow while Edward McCook's division would return to its old camps near Valley Head for forage. Forecasting that his health would not improve for a while, Stanley also informed Rosecrans that he would relinquish command of the cavalry to Brig. Gen. Robert Mitchell on the next day. Formerly in the lead, the Cavalry Corps of the Army of the Cumberland would now trail the infantry for the remainder of the campaign.²¹

With General Rosecrans' main force apparently remaining supine in McLemore's Cove, Braxton Bragg believed he could still dictate events on September 15 (see Map, Pg. 54). Calling his corps commanders to a

meeting at La Fayette, he laid before them a proposal to advance northward toward Chattanooga, which gained their unanimous approval. A witness, Lt. Col. George Brent, noted that Bragg seemed "sick and feeble," and privately expressed his own misgivings about the proposal. Nevertheless, at Bragg's direction Brent drafted Special Orders No. 244, which would shape events for the next few days.



James Longstreet, CSA

In general terms, the Army of Tennessee would shift its center of gravity toward the north, using the Western & Atlantic Railroad to concentrate all arriving reinforcements at Ringgold. Thus the brigades of Bushrod Johnson and Henry Benning, both supposed to be at Dalton, would move to Ringgold. Similarly, the brigades from Mississippi, Gregg's and McNair's, would detrain there also. Brig. Gen. States Rights Gist's command, no longer needed at Rome, would join the Ringgold concentration as soon as it could arrive by rail via Kingston. All other troops coming from Virginia were to detrain at Ringgold as well. That village was also selected to be the army's advanced supply depot, and additional staff officers were dispatched there to superintend rail movements and prepare campsites for the new arrivals. Finally, Bragg notified both Samuel Cooper in Richmond and Joseph Johnston in Mississippi that he would soon be advancing on Chattanooga.²²

Grateful for a day without movement, the bulk of the Army of Tennessee spent September 15 cooking rations, washing uniforms, speculating on future movements, and discussing the imminent arrival of James Longstreet's command. In

most units morale was high, but occasional pockets of dissatisfaction still festered. Maj. Gen. William H. T. Walker wrote a note to his wife on September 15 expressing his unhappiness at the small size of the Reserve Corps and the lack of immediate offensive action. Within the army's medical community, even the hint of offensive action was enough to galvanize competing bureaucracies into motion. Army of Tennessee Medical Director E. A. Flewellen sent a senior surgeon to Resaca to organize a receiving and shipping facility there for wounded until the Medical Director of Hospitals, Samuel Stout, a very competent but rear-echelon commander, could assume control of its operations. Flewellen expected that Ringgold soon would become the new casualty collecting point because the army's wagons would go there for supplies, carrying wounded as they went, so he desired Stout to bring the Resaca operation under his wing as soon as possible. Whoever controlled them, all sick and injured already at Ringgold should be shipped to the rear. Trains carrying these unfortunates met at every turnout trains ferrying troops northward. In addition to those units already named in Special Orders No. 244, others were closing in on the theater of war. During the day Brig. Gen. Evander Law's command began to arrive at Atlanta; the brigade of Brig. Gen. Benjamin G. Humphreys (formerly that of William Barksdale, mortally wounded at Gettysburg) reached Augusta, Ga.; and during the evening Brig. Gen. Joseph B. Kershaw's brigade passed through Savannah en route to Macon. Still more of Longstreet's brigades were behind them, but could Bragg afford to wait for their arrival?²³

By the afternoon of September 15 it had become apparent to Henry Halleck in Washington that a significant Confederate force, estimated at three divisions, was en route from Virginia to reinforce the Army of Tennessee. Confirmation arrived in the form of a report from an agent moving northward from Atlanta who had seen the southbound troop trains. Halleck sprang into action, firing off a flurry of telegrams to virtually all commands west of the Appalachian Mountains. First, Halleck informed Rosecrans of the Confederate movement, unnecessarily ordered concentration of all troops in the Department of the Cumberland, and promised aid from Stephen Hurlbut at Memphis and William T. Sherman at

Vicksburg. The next telegram went to Ambrose Burnside in Knoxville, who was ordered to bring troops to the front to assist Rosecrans. Another telegram went to the Adjutant General of Ohio, calling for troops to reinforce Burnside. Still more messages flashed to John Pope in Wisconsin and John M. Schofield in St. Louis, each calling for the shipment of troops southward. Unfortunately, the response to this burst of activity was generally negative. Some, like Pope, were too far away to do anything in a timely manner. Others, like Burnside and Schofield, were unwilling to risk their own positions by sending troops to a fellow department commander in need. Indeed, Schofield baldly replied to Halleck that his own situation precluded providing any assistance whatsoever. Burnside said nothing, but also did nothing. Halleck's efforts had come too late: Rosecrans and the Army of the Cumberland were on their own.²⁴

Within the XIV Corps enclave in McLemore's Cove, the strain of waiting for the tardy XX Corps was beginning to be apparent. Rosecrans was suffering from an unspecified illness, probably early stages of exhaustion, and few orders emanated from either him or his staff. Unlike previous messages, which had been carefully crafted and timed, the few sent on September 15 were fragmentary, poorly drafted, and untimed. Two such messages were dispatched to McCook. The first, signed by Garfield, approved McCook's halt, and promised new orders. The second, signed by Maj. Frank Bond, Rosecrans' senior aide-de-camp, gave McCook permission simply to "come ahead." Neither would be of much assistance to the XX Corps commander, who had decided to leave his toiling divisions and search personally for Rosecrans. By early afternoon, the army commander had decided that he needed to move nearer Chattanooga and Thomas Crittenden's XXI Corps. At 1:15 p.m. Rosecrans, Garfield, Bond and other headquarters elements left Thomas and rode north toward Crawfish Spring, where Crittenden had been directed to place a division. Similarly, the bulk of the headquarters elements still in Chattanooga under Lt. Col. Christopher Goddard also broke camp and headed for Crawfish



James A. Garfield, USA

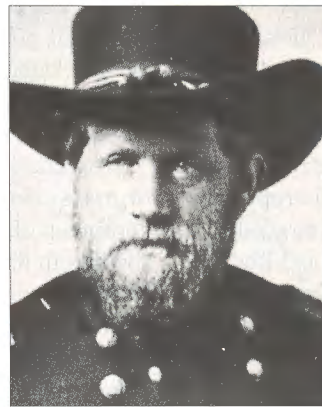
Spring as well. A few junior officers and clerks remained behind in Chattanooga as an administrative cell. At least one senior officer, Goddard, continued to believe that the Confederates were gone from La Fayette.²⁵

Well before Rosecrans arrived at Crawfish Spring, Thomas Crittenden had returned to the valley of Chickamauga Creek with the divisions of John M. Palmer and Horatio Van Cleve. Retracing their steps over Missionary Ridge, the two divisions reached Crawfish Spring by late morning. There Van Cleve went into camp, approximately two miles west of Thomas Wood's position at Lee and Gordon's Mills. Palmer turned southeast and spread his division along Chickamauga Creek upstream from Wood's right, where he guarded a series of fords across the sluggish stream. During the afternoon Palmer's right brigade, Brig. Gen. William B. Hazen's, encountered pickets from Joseph Reynolds' division of the XIV Corps in the vicinity of Pond Spring. Thus two of Rosecrans' infantry corps had made a reasonably firm link. Unfortunately, neither could move nearer Chattanooga without widening the distance between

them and the still missing XX Corps. That corps on September 15 remained on the far side of Lookout Mountain and, indeed, made little progress toward the remainder of the army. Sheridan's division, leading the corps in Wills Valley, moved only seven miles to the foot of Johnson's Crook and did not ascend Lookout Mountain. At Long's Spring, four miles north of Valley Head, Richard Johnson's division moved not at all, obeying McCook's halt order to the letter. During the afternoon, the trailing division of Jefferson C. Davis, also at Long's Spring, received orders to reverse

its course to Valley Head and ascend the mountain there. Davis sent his artillery up the mountain, but camped his infantry at the foot to issue rations. The XX Corps trains remained on Lookout Mountain at Little River, guarded by Lytle's and Dodge's brigades, while Post's brigade garrisoned Valley Head. McCook himself, unsure how to proceed, set off over Lookout Mountain at Johnson's Crook in search of General Rosecrans. During the evening he arrived at Thomas' headquarters to find Rosecrans gone. Meanwhile McCook's XX Corps was scattered from Johnson's Crook to Valley Head to Little River. There would be no link with Thomas this day.²⁶

By the end of September 15, William Rosecrans had made some progress in the difficult task of concentrating his far-flung army in the complex mountainous terrain south of Chattanooga. Crittenden and Thomas had connected, and army headquarters was near Crittenden to give him any necessary guidance. The position of McCook's corps was a problem, but the Confederates were not inclined to act aggressively or even show themselves in strength. Down at Valley Head, David Stanley relinquished command of the Cavalry Corps to General Mitchell. George Crook with Eli Long's brigade had reached Dougherty's Gap at the head of McLemore's Cove and would probe down into the Cove on the next day. Edward McCook's cavalry division had descended Lookout Mountain and was in camp several miles south of Valley Head, preparing to move north. At the other end of Rosecrans' line, George D. Wagner's brigade of Wood's division garrisoned Chattanooga, where engineer assets were gathering in order to construct a substantial bridge across the Tennessee River. At Rossville, Gordon Granger camped with three brigades of the Reserve Corps. Unknown to Rosecrans, Granger's draconian orders against foraging had led to a near-mutiny but calmer heads had resolved the situation



John M. Palmer, USA



Joseph J. Reynolds, USA

peacefully. As for the enemy, scouts from Thomas' XIV Corps found little opposition at the gaps in Pigeon Mountain, leading to the belief that the Confederates were withdrawing from La Fayette. On the XXI Corps front Thomas Crittenden prudently dispatched Col. Robert Minty's small cavalry brigade across the Chickamauga with instructions to probe toward Leet's Tanyard. During the day Minty advanced only to Peeler's Mill on Pea Vine Creek but dispatched scouts in all directions. In the evening they returned, reporting Confederate cavalry at Ringgold and Leet's, Longstreet at Dalton, and Buckner at Rock Spring. This message was reported to Crittenden near midnight, where it was dismissed out of hand.²⁷

Normally a late sleeper, Rosecrans could hardly have stayed in bed on the morning of September 16. Some time around 8:00 a.m., a message arrived from Henry Halleck in Washington. Dispatched by telegraph at 4:30 p.m. the previous day, the message made good time to Chattanooga and thence by courier to Crawfish Spring. The news was potentially grim: James Longstreet and three of his divisions were en route from Virginia to join the Army of Tennessee and had been for some time. Shortly after 8:00 Rosecrans' staff began to disseminate that unwelcome news to the major components of the army and to issue orders in response. At 8:05 a.m. Maj. Frank Bond ordered Thomas to concentrate the XIV Corps between Gower's Ford and Bird's Mill on the Chickamauga east of Pond Spring. Ten minutes later Garfield ordered George Wagner in Chattanooga to expedite work on a bridge over the Tennessee along the city's waterfront. At 8:25 a.m. Rosecrans himself replied to Halleck, stating that local indications were that Halleck's information was probably correct. With some urgency, Rosecrans pressed the general-in-chief to "push Burnside down" from Knoxville. As the morning progressed, the flow of messages from Crawfish Spring continued. Robert Mitchell was ordered to send Edward McCook's cavalry division northward to army headquarters as soon as possible. Finally, Gordon Granger received

instructions to have the commander at Stevenson, Ala., disassemble the pontoon bridge at Caperton's Ferry, move it upstream to Battle Creek, southwest of Jasper, Tenn., and relay it there. Granger was also told that Col. Robert Minty's small cavalry brigade occupied an advanced position beyond the Chickamauga southeast of Rossville with orders to probe toward Ringgold.²⁸

Rosecrans' mention of Minty's force was a harbinger of his thinking about both his own army's potential vulnerability and his offensive options. He preferred to take the initiative, but the delay in bringing McCook's corps over Lookout Mountain momentarily prevented any offensive action. Nevertheless, he continued thinking about what he might do when the various parts of the Army of the Cumberland were finally reunited. He shared his thoughts with Assistant Secretary Dana, who passed them along to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton in a telegram at 1:00 p.m. According to Dana, Rosecrans' scheme of maneuver involved concentrating his forces by the evening of September 17,

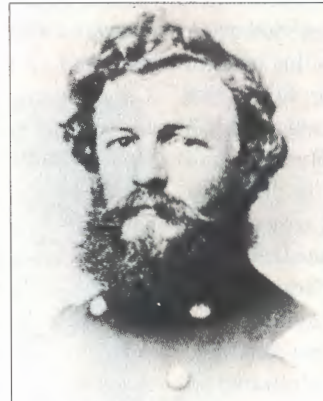


Richard W. Johnson, USA

pretending to remain encamped in the Chickamauga valley, but actually moving at night around the north end of Pigeon Mountain and falling upon Bragg's army at La Fayette on the next day. As the hours passed, however, McCook's continued failure to close on Thomas' position began to turn Rosecrans' offensive proposal into a fantasy only. As more and information became available, it was

apparent that the Army of Tennessee was indeed concentrated at La Fayette. Further, several reports indicated that a significant Confederate force under James Longstreet was fast approaching by rail, which would carry it to the vicinity of Dalton or Ringgold. If that force were large enough, it could threaten Rosecrans' left at Lee and Gordon's Mills or interpose between Rosecrans and Chattanooga. Thus Maj. Gen. Gordon Granger's three brigades at Rossville began to assume a larger role in

Rosecrans' thinking as the afternoon of September 16 wore on. Similarly, Colonel Minty's small cavalry brigade outposting the valley of Pea Vine Creek southeast of Granger's position and northeast of Crittenden's, also was seen as a means to gain early warning of Confederate intentions. If only Alex McCook's three divisions would appear at the foot of Stevens' Gap, Rosecrans would again have freedom of maneuver, but until they arrived, everyone else would have to mark time.²⁹



Robert H. G. Minty, USA

The commander of the Army of the Cumberland was not alone in chafing at the delay. Knowing that his command's inability to close on Thomas' XIV Corps was creating problems for the entire army, Alexander McCook spent the afternoon fretfully riding along Thomas' line selecting positions for his divisions to occupy when they did arrive. In mid-afternoon he was cheered by the arrival of Sheridan's two brigades from the top of Stevens' Gap. While those tired soldiers bivouacked behind John Brannan's division, McCook dispatched staff officers to find the divisions of Davis and Johnson. By nightfall Davis' two brigades had reached the top of Stevens' Gap, ready to descend in the morning, but Johnson's two brigades were twelve miles behind Davis on the mountain road. Still farther south, Col. Sidney Post labored to escort the massive corps train northward from De Soto Falls (see Pg. 51). Finally, Brig. Gen. William Lytle, with his own and Col. Joseph Dodge's brigade, was poised at Dougherty's Gap, ready to enter McLemore's Cove from the south. There would be no concentration of the XX Corps in McLemore's Cove on September 16, but the next day looked more promising. It could hardly come soon enough for Colonel Minty, who spent a most anxious day alone with his small cavalry brigade in the drainage of Pea Vine Creek, several miles east of the bulk of Rosecrans' army. The only unit of consequence east of Chickamauga Creek, Minty's brigade would be the first to know if Confederate forces indeed were attempting to outflank the Army of the Cumberland in the direction of Chattanooga.

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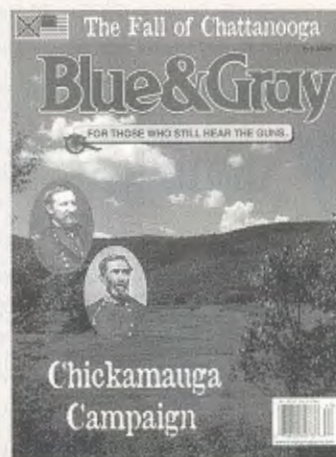
Endnotes

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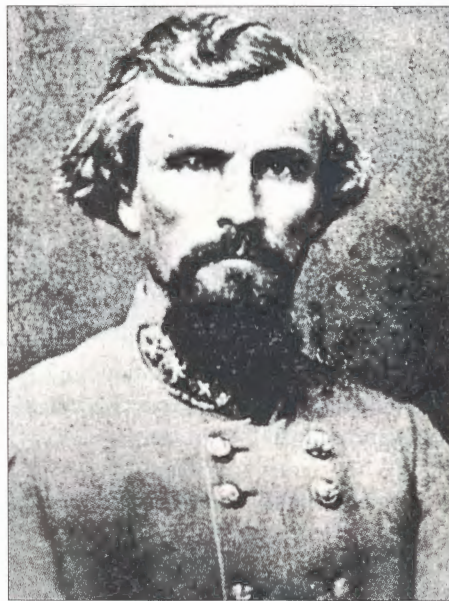
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Facing increasingly aggressive probes by Confederate cavalry detachments, Minty at noon abandoned his advanced position at Peeler's Mill and withdrew most of his command west of Pea Vine Ridge. He retained a line of pickets along Pea Vine Creek in the valley, but saw his position becoming more precarious by the moment. Alex McCook and the XX Corps could not arrive too soon for Robert Minty.³⁰

While the Army of the Cumberland lay supine on September 16 awaiting the arrival of the XX Corps, Braxton Bragg at La Fayette contemplated resuming the offensive. By the middle of the day Bragg had made up his mind. He would commence an advance toward Chattanooga, forcing Rosecrans either to fight or withdraw. Gradually, Special Orders No. 245 took shape, although the process was slow, halting, and occasionally contradictory. Its key elements were: Buckner's and Walker's corps to move at daylight on September 17 to a line stretching northward from Pea Vine Church along Pea Vine Creek; Polk's Corps to move at 8:00 a.m. and take position on a line from Pea Vine Church west to Chickamauga Creek at Glass' Mill; Forrest's Cavalry Corps to cover the front and right flank of the army; Hill's Corps to remain near La Fayette, blocking the Pigeon Mountain gaps and watching the roads to the south; and Joe Wheeler's Cavalry Corps to drive through Dug and Catlett's gaps, push the Federals back, take prisoners, and join Polk at Glass' Mill. The order also tried to return detached units to their proper commands, directing Bushrod Johnson's brigade at Ringgold to report to Buckner, and States Rights Gist's brigade to leave Rome and rejoin Walker's Division. No objective was specified, but several parts of the order gave indications that the army's center of gravity was shifting toward Ringgold. Crossings of the Chickamauga as far north as Reed's Bridge were to be seized by Confederate cavalry, although no units were specifically tasked to do so. In recognition of the fact that several brigades from Virginia were either present or soon to arrive at Catoosa Platform (see Pg. 64), southeast of Ringgold, the order charged the senior brigadier there with moving upon Reed's Bridge at 10:00 a.m., leaving one brigade behind to guard the railhead. Finally, the army's trains were to head east, crossing behind Taylor's Ridge for safety.³¹

Having promulgated Special Orders No. 245 to implement the advance, Bragg crafted General Orders No. 180, an address to the men of the Army of Tennessee. After reviewing the recent history of the campaign, he noted the arrival of reinforcements, and praised his soldiers for their efforts to date. In words calculated to generate emotion and inspire the men to greater exertions, he closed with:

Your generals will lead you; you have but to respond to assure us a glorious triumph over an insolent foe. I know what your response will be. Trusting in God and the justice of our cause, and nerved by the love of the dear ones at home, failure is impossible and victory must be ours.



Nathan Bedford Forrest, CSA

Having at last resolved to act decisively with his entire force, Bragg busied himself the remainder of the day attending to administrative and procedural matters of little import. Only in the matter of logistical affairs at Ringgold did he rise above the mundane. Because the destruction of several railroad bridges just south of Ringgold by Forrest's retreating cavalry meant no trains could advance beyond Catoosa Station, the army's chief engineer was tasked to rebuild the structures as soon as possible. Anticipating that the rebuilding process would not be arduous, both the army's ordnance and medical departments declared that Ringgold would be the base for their operations. With the brigades of Brig. Gens. Jerome B. Robertson and Henry L. Benning already at Catoosa, and that of Evander Law due that evening, the

Ringgold-Catoosa Station area was looming ever larger in Confederate planning. Blissfully unaware of the details, but heartened by word of the continuing arrival of James Longstreet's men, the soldiers of the Army of Tennessee washed their clothes, cooked several days' rations, and prepared to advance on the morrow. With their preparations made, most lay down for a night of fitful sleep, as did their commander.³²

Around 3:00 a.m. on September 17, Bragg was awakened by a visitor, Maj. Osmun Latrobe of Longstreet's staff. The exact details of the news Latrobe brought are unknown, but according to Lt. Col. George Brent, Latrobe announced that Longstreet would soon arrive. Presumably, Latrobe had information on not only Longstreet's appearance but also about the number of brigades enroute and their estimated time of arrival. If so, the information would be the first official confirmation of the size of the reinforcement from Virginia that Bragg had received. Whatever the specific nature of the information might have been, it was enough to galvanize Bragg to modify his plans. Shortly after 3:00 a.m. Maj. Kinloch Falconer of Bragg's staff sent orders to Polk, Hill, Buckner and Walker suspending the advance outlined in Special Orders No. 245. At the same time, the corps commanders were called to headquarters for an 8:00 a.m. meeting. More distant commanders, such as Wheeler, Forrest, and Bushrod Johnson, were also notified of the suspension. The delay did not receive the approval of George Brent, who wrote in his diary about "uncertainty and vacillation." Indeed, others may have objected also, because in late morning the orders for the advance were renewed with some modifications (see Map, Pg. 58). Now, Buckner and Walker were to take position between Rock Spring and Pea Vine Church, rather than stretch farther north in Pea Vine Valley. Polk was to wait until Buckner and Walker had departed, then move north to a line running from Worthen's Gap in Pigeon Mountain to a linkage with Buckner near Rock Spring. Hill received orders to move north at dawn the next day, having been relieved at the Pigeon Mountain gaps by Wheeler's cavalry. After informing President Jefferson Davis that he would "press" the enemy, Bragg departed La Fayette at 2:00 p.m. for Leet's Tanyard, eleven miles northeast.³³

Bragg and his staff reached the mill and tanyard complex of Reverend Arthur Leet around 5:00 p.m. Behind him his army slowly filed into position. First came Walker's Reserve Corps, with his own and Liddell's Division. Walker was followed by Buckner's Corps, with the divisions of A. P. Stewart and William Preston. Behind them straggled Polk's Corps, the leading elements of which did not leave La Fayette until nearly 5:00 p.m. Although Polk had a shorter distance to go than Buckner and Walker, the last elements of Hindman's Division did not reach their bivouacs until well after midnight. Hindman himself was ill and absent, having devolved the command of

the division to Brig. Gen. Patton Anderson. For all, the march was difficult, conducted in choking clouds of dust raised from the parched roads. Nevertheless, the troops were generally in high spirits, aware that the long period of waiting was nearly at an end. Behind them, D. H. Hill's corps still manned the defenses of the Pigeon Mountain gaps. During the day vigorous skirmishing took place at Catlett's Gap, initiated originally by Wheeler's cavalry and continued by James Deshler's brigade of Cleburne's Division. Elsewhere in Cleburne's command, Bragg's battle address was read to the troops, eliciting a positive response. At the other end of the long Confederate line, at Catoosa Platform, where six Confederate brigades were camped around the railhead, men were

cooking rations and organizing themselves for battle when a wagon train from Ringgold stampeded through their midst. Bushrod Johnson quickly pushed forward toward the town with his old brigade, now under Col. John Fulton, and easily drove off a Federal column approaching the town from the west. The other brigades, Gregg's, McNair's, Robertson's, Benning's, and Law's, hastened to join the fight but their services were not needed. Nevertheless, Bragg at Leet's Tanyard that night ordered John Pegram's cavalymen to reinforce the units

at Ringgold. It appeared that the Federals were finally stirring, and at an unfortunate time for Bragg's plans.³⁴

For most of the Army of the Cumberland, September 17 represented another day of waiting, characterized by small adjustments only in their positions along Chickamauga Creek. On Rosecrans' left, Thomas Crittenden's XXI Corps was spread along the creek from Lee and Gordon's Mills to Gower's Ford, an airline distance of six miles, with corps headquarters in the vicinity of Pond Spring. From left to right the order of divisions was: Wood, Van Cleve, and Palmer. George Thomas' XIV Corps

stretched from Gower's all the way to Stevens' Gap, another six miles. As the day began, only Sheridan's division of the XX Corps, minus Lytle's brigade, had reached the floor of McLemore's Cove, and it lay in position behind Thomas' right. Rosecrans had desired for several days that the army be concentrated, with McCook's corps occupying the foot of Stevens' Gap, Crittenden's units collected around Lee and Gordon's Mills, and Thomas connecting the two. The delay in McCook's arrival, however, prevented the execution of Rosecrans' design until the

afternoon of September 17. Around noon two brigades of Davis' division reached the foot of Lookout Mountain, followed later that afternoon by William Lytle's brigade of Sheridan's division and Joseph Dodge's brigade of Richard Johnson's division. Johnson's two remaining brigades did not appear on the valley floor until well after nightfall, having marched 25 miles. Nevertheless, by afternoon, enough of McCook's units had appeared for Thomas to begin relieving some of Crittenden's men along Chickamauga Creek. Negley's and Baird's XIV Corps divisions replaced

Palmer's XXI Corps division north of Gower's Ford, permitting Palmer's men in turn to bump Van Cleve's division northward. Because of continuing Confederate cavalry probes along the entire front, but especially in the sector facing Dug and Catlett's gaps, McCook felt compelled to hold Sheridan and Davis in a defensive posture facing Pigeon Mountain. While not handled without considerable confusion, friction, and exasperation, the concentration of the Federal army was at last close to accomplishment.³⁵

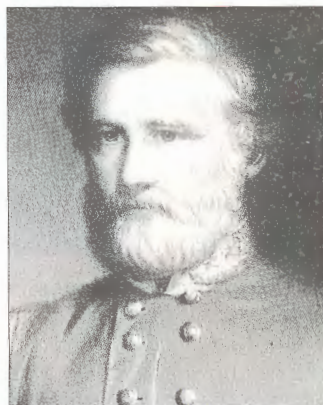
During the day William Rosecrans remained at his Crawfish Spring headquarters in the James Gordon house (see Pg. 57). Unlike the previous day, when Halleck's morning message about Longstreet's arrival had galvanized both Rosecrans and his staff into uncharacteristic early motion, little activity was evident at the Gordon house until the afternoon. Even then, no critical orders emanated from the Army of the Cumberland's command group. Crittenden was told at 3:00 p.m. to move XXI Corps

headquarters north and collocate it at Crawfish Spring with the army's headquarters, another sign of Rosecrans' distrust of Crittenden's military capacity. Otherwise, the orders dispatched to the army's senior leaders were characterized by a defensive, almost passive quality. All corps commanders were enjoined to mark all roads leading to the rear, ensure

that their picket lines were connected, report their combat strengths, post lookouts on high points, and forward any information received to higher echelons. Across the entire front, both scouts and casual observers noted a huge dust cloud moving northward from the direction of La Fayette. Before nightfall the cloud appeared to stop and gradually dissipate, as if the marching feet causing it had halted and camped for the night. Although casually remarked upon by Charles Dana in a 5:00 p.m. message to Washington, the cloud seemingly prompted no action by Rosecrans. At 7:30 p.m. the army commander informed both Thomas Wood at Lee and Gordon's Mill and Gordon Granger at Rossville that he had heard nothing from Robert Minty's cavalry brigade in the Pea Vine Valley. Both generals were told to immediately communicate with



Patton Anderson, CSA

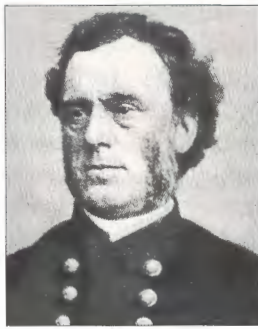


Henry L. Benning, CSA



Evander M. Law, CSA

Minty and forward whatever news he had gathered. They were also told that John Wilder's mounted infantry brigade had been sent to Minty's right, at Alexander's Bridge on the Chickamauga (see Front Cover and Pg. 65). Perhaps the aggressive Wilder might learn something useful.³⁶



James Steedman, USA

In point of fact, another of Rosecrans' far-flung elements did learn something useful on September 17. Unwilling to sit passively at Rossville without information of what might be in his front, Gordon Granger determined to execute a reconnaissance in force toward Ringgold. At 3:00 a.m. he dispatched Brig. Gen. James Steedman with six regiments and a battery eastward. Following the road traversed days before by Crittenden's corps, Steedman crossed West Chickamauga and Pea Vine creeks, passed Graysville and East Chickamauga Creek, and finally came in view of Ringgold. Unlimbering his guns on a hill west of the village, Steedman proceeded to scatter the few Confederates in view. Fearing to advance too far eastward, he contented himself with watching the panicked flight of men and wagons until a dust cloud suddenly began to materialize in the vicinity of the gap in Taylor's Ridge just east of Ringgold. Soon

the arrival of Confederate shells just short of his position caused Steedman to retreat. He leisurely withdrew the way he had come, camping for the evening just west of Pea Vine Creek. There his men relaxed, making campfires and cooking dinner. Unknown to Steedman, he had been followed by elements of Col. John Scott's brigade of Confederate cavalry

and Lt. William Everett's Battery. Suddenly shells burst in Steedman's camp. While doing little or no damage, the bombardment caused momentary confusion among the startled Federals. Steedman soon restored order, the Confederates dared not push farther, and quiet slowly returned to the valley. Clearly there were significant numbers of Confederate troops near Ringgold and their aggressive stance hardly indicated a defensive mentality. Rosecrans would not learn of this action until the next day, and by then he would have even more information of Braxton Bragg's intentions.³⁷

Dawn on September 18 found Braxton Bragg's Army of Tennessee poised to launch its third attempt to bring the Army of the Cumberland to battle (see Maps, Pp. 59-63). Walker's Reserve Corps lay in Pea Vine Valley between Leet's Tanyard and

Pea Vine Church. To his left, Buckner's Corps waited along the road between Pea Vine Church and Rock Spring. On Buckner's left and rear, Polk's Corps marked time around Rock Spring and Anderson's house.* South of Polk, Hill's Corps still guarded the Pigeon Mountain gaps. Nine miles northeast of Bragg's headquarters at Leet's Tanyard, around Catoosa Platform and Ringgold, Bushrod Johnson with six brigades prepared to rejoin the main army via Pleasant Grove Church and Leet's. Before light, Bragg's staff had crafted and distributed a circular delineating the army commander's concept for the day's movements. Believing that the flank of Rosecrans' army lay at Lee and Gordon's Mills, Bragg ordered Polk's Corps to demonstrate in that vicinity while Buckner's Corps crossed Chickamauga Creek downstream at Thedford's Ford and Walker's Corps forced a crossing even farther downstream at Alexander's Bridge. John Pegram's division of Forrest's Cavalry Corps was to cover Buckner's and Walker's movements, while Frank Armstrong's division, also from Forrest, would screen Polk. The movement was to begin at 6:00 a.m. and, although unstated, Bragg's expectation was that the crossings would be

* The Virginia-born Dr. Peter Anderson owned a house a short distance west of Rock Spring Church.

Lee and Gordon's Mills on West Chickamauga Creek. It served as a grist mill and a saw mill.



completed early in the afternoon. If Buckner and Walker were successful, Polk could cross at Dalton's (or Hunt's) Ford (see Pg. 65), next above Thedford's, being replaced by Hill in front of Lee and Gordon's Mills. By nightfall, a significant portion of the Army of Tennessee would be west of the Chickamauga, threatening Rosecrans' left flank and blocking the La Fayette-Rossville road. The Army of the Cumberland would then have to fight or see itself forced away from Chattanooga and back into McLemore's Cove.³⁸

The Confederate advance was hardly underway when problems developed. For some distance, possibly as much as two miles, Walker's and Buckner's commands were forced to use the same road. Walker, in the lead, thus delayed Buckner's advance as both columns struggled to disentangle themselves and march north to their respective objectives. Even worse, Bushrod Johnson's command around Catoosa had not been included in the first September 18 Circular, and thus began the day operating under Special Orders No. 246 of September 17. That order, like its predecessor No. 245, told Johnson to move to Leet's Tanyard via Pleasant Grove Church. Probably soon after the first September 18 Circular was dispatched, Bragg realized that Johnson's relatively large force would be wasted marching away from the action and could be better employed extending the range of Confederate crossing sites northward. Accordingly, Bragg's staff drafted a message to Johnson ordering him to return to Ringgold and take a road leading west toward the Reed's Bridge crossing of the Chickamauga. There Johnson was to make a lodgment west of the creek, like Walker and Buckner were to do upstream (or south) at Alexander's Bridge and Thedford's Ford, respectively. The same message went to Bedford Forrest, who was to cover Johnson's advance. Unaware of the 6:00 a.m. start time stated by the original Circular, Johnson had begun to move toward Leet's an hour earlier. He led with his own provisional division, consisting of the brigades of Col. John Fulton (Johnson's old command), Evander McNair, and John Gregg. In addition, one of the three brigades of James Longstreet's command at Catoosa—the Texas Brigade under Jerome Robertson—also marched with Johnson. Brig. Gen. Evander Law's Alabamians had not yet cooked their rations, so they did not leave with Johnson, nor did Henry Benning's Georgians, who remained

behind to protect the Catoosa railhead. Passing through Ringgold before turning southwest, Johnson's command was three miles down the road toward Leet's when a courier brought the message to reverse course. Dutifully, he complied, but the reversal took time.³⁹

Bragg's change of plan for Johnson's column was consequential. Believing that the northernmost force should cross first to facilitate the advance of Walker's and Buckner's corps to the south, Bragg expected Johnson's seizure of Reed's Bridge to trigger the remaining parts of the plan.



Bushrod Johnson, CSA

Johnson's inadvertent start in the wrong direction, however, meant that he would be later to reach Reed's than expected, and that delay would cascade southward. In order to keep his own command in the lead, Johnson turned the entire column rather than simply reversing the order of march, taking more time. Soon thereafter, another courier from Bragg found Johnson, bringing both a message to "proceed without further delay" and a second Circular. The latter represented Bragg's final intent for the day's operations, and set out what each column was to do after gaining the west bank of the Chickamauga. In Johnson's case, it required him to cross at Reed's Bridge, turn south by the "most practicable" route and "sweep up" the Chickamauga toward Lee and Gordon's Mills. Walker was to cross at or near Alexander's Bridge, unite with Johnson's column, and press the enemy flank vigorously. Buckner was to cross at Thedford's Ford and join the other columns in their movement southward to force the

Federals away from Lee and Gordon's Mills. Polk was to demonstrate at Lee and Gordon's, then cross there or just downstream as circumstances dictated. Hill was to cover the Confederate left and, if the Federals reinforced at Lee and Gordon's, strike them on their right flank. Wheeler was to hold the gaps in Pigeon Mountain and cover the army's left and rear. The army's trains were to move to safety east of Taylor's Ridge. These orders now in hand, Johnson resumed his march, passed again through Ringgold, and took the road toward Reed's Bridge.⁴⁰

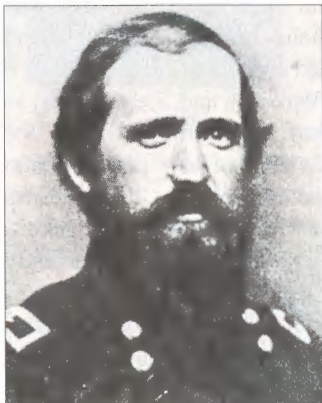
The movement of so many thousand Confederate troops along the dusty dirt roads of Catoosa County, Ga., did not go unnoticed by their Union opponents. As early as 6:00 a.m., shortly after sunrise, Federal signalmen high on Lookout Mountain detected clouds of dust rising east of Pigeon Mountain. For some reason, Rosecrans' staff interpreted the dust clouds as being made by cavalry, causing Chief of Staff Garfield to query George Thomas at 9:00 a.m. for news. Even then the dust cloud was gradually moving beyond the Federal left at Lee and Gordon's Mills. Soon Confederate activity was even more obvious in front of the positions held along Chickamauga Creek by Crittenden's XXI Corps. At 10:30 a.m. Thomas Wood at Lee and Gordon's reported skirmishers advancing upon his positions along the creek bank. These skirmishers belonged to Hindman's Division, now commanded by Patton Anderson because of Hindman's illness, and they were preceded by some of Frank Armstrong's cavalrymen. Implementing Bragg's instructions to Polk's Corps to demonstrate in front of the XXI Corps positions, the Confederate brigades of Arthur M. Manigault, Zachariah Deas, and Patton Anderson (now under Col. J. H. Sharp) deployed into battle lines and sent forward clouds of skirmishers. The noise level for both sides soon increased significantly as each brought batteries into play. From somewhere within Hindman's command a small sharpshooter unit of nine picked men unlimbered their heavy Whitworth target rifles and began to wing highly accurate shots toward any exposed Federals. Although artillery fire wounded one of the squad and damaged his rifle, the others succeeded in seriously discomfiting several mounted men behind Wood's barricades. Otherwise, neither side much damaged the other.⁴¹

As the clock advanced toward noon, William Rosecrans remained unsure of just what the visible Confederate movements portended. Nevertheless, he thought it only prudent to concentrate his infantry corps into a more compact formation and prepare the troops for another movement to the left.

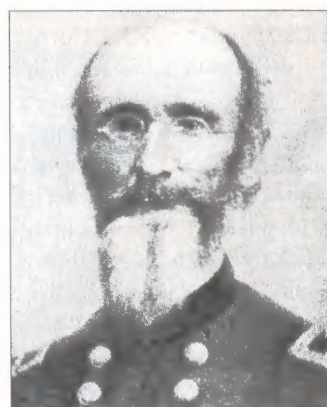
At 10:45 a.m. Garfield wrote to Thomas, ordering him to close on Crittenden, and to McCook, telling him to close on Thomas as the latter moved north. Fifteen minutes later, Garfield sent a message to cavalry commander Robert B. Mitchell advising him that the infantry corps were sliding north and that the cavalry should conform, meanwhile guarding Stevens' Gap and the route

to the army's trains. At 11:45 a.m., as Federal signalmen on Lookout Mountain continued to report the progress of the massive dust cloud toward the lower Chickamauga crossings at Reed's and Alexander's bridges, Rosecrans became more specific in his directives to the XXI Corps. Crittenden was told to pull Horatio Van Cleve's division from the center of the corps position and place it on Wood's left, replacing Van Cleve with John M. Palmer's division. Thomas, in turn, would have to backfill Palmer's position, upstream from the Glass' Mill crossing of the Chickamauga. At 12:15 p.m. Maj. Frank Bond, Rosecrans' senior aide-de-camp, informed Alex McCook that he should be prepared to have his corps take Thomas' place because of a possible Confederate

movement to turn the Federal left. Not long after, at 12:40 p.m., Garfield gave a clear indication that Rosecrans was beginning to make sense of the disparate pieces of information he had been receiving all morning. In a message to George Thomas, Garfield reported that Col. Robert Minty's cavalrymen were heavily engaged in the vicinity of Reed's Bridge, and that a major Confederate turning movement was probably in progress. If true, Thomas would have to be prepared to move at any moment to Crittenden's support.⁴²



Robert B. Mitchell, USA



Horatio Van Cleve, USA

Having divined Bragg's plan by 12:40 p.m., Rosecrans and Garfield proceeded to have second thoughts immediately thereafter. Twenty minutes later, in a message to McCook, Garfield expressed indecision about whether the Confederate movement to the left was a feint or a serious

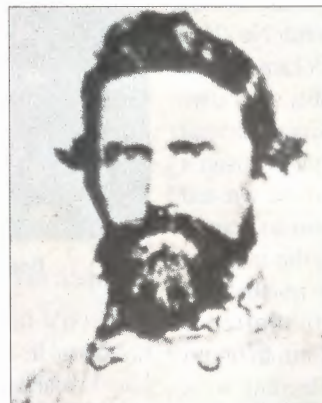
flanking attempt. He counseled McCook to ensure that the brigade guarding Stevens' Gap and the army's trains worked with Mitchell's cavalry to secure the mountain road that ultimately led back to Bridgeport, Ala. Twenty minutes after that, the chief of staff urged George Thomas to expedite his movement to close on Crittenden's right flank. At 1:30 p.m. Rosecrans himself

dispatched a message to Henry Halleck in Washington. In it he described his situation calmly as an attempt by the Confederates to "overthrow" him, but characterized Bragg's movements so far as no more than demonstrations. From Halleck he sought assistance in getting aid from commanders far from the scene: Ambrose Burnside in Knoxville, and Ulysses S. Grant on the Mississippi. Neither of these commanders could provide any meaningful help in the crisis that was fast building on Rosecrans' left flank, and Rosecrans himself was having trouble in

getting the forces on his right to close to the north in a timely manner. Although Palmer told XIV Corps elements that he would displace toward Lee and Gordon's Mills at 2:00 p.m., it would be well after dark before that occurred. Perhaps the physical strain of campaigning for weeks on end had taken its toll, or perhaps all did not see the urgency in the developing situation, but the Army of the Cumberland was proving to be a balky machine in this, its hour of crisis. Whatever the Confederates were trying to do on

Rosecrans' left flank, the two mounted brigades of Robert Minty and John Wilder would be the first to stand in their way.⁴³

By 11:00 a.m., Bushrod Johnson had passed through Ringgold a second time and marched three miles westward on the direct road to Reed's Bridge. There, in the vicinity of Peeler's Mill, another courier from Bragg, Capt. R. H. S. Thompson, met Johnson with another message to expedite his movements so as not to endanger the crossings upstream. Learning from local citizens that Federal troops were nearby, Johnson prudently decided to change his formation from administrative march column into line of battle. Again, a necessary action took time to accomplish. Finally, with his own division formed across the road and Robertson's Brigade in line behind it as a reserve, Johnson was ready to resume the advance. At that moment he was joined by a reserve artillery battalion of two batteries commanded by Jerome Robertson's son, Felix. Bedford



Jerome Robertson, CSA

Forrest also rode up with his large escort and a battalion of Kentucky cavalrymen, all that remained from John Hunt Morgan's disastrous raid into Indiana and Ohio. Now, with four infantry brigades, five batteries, and the equivalent of a regiment of cavalry, Johnson was confident he could deal with whatever enemy force he encountered at Reed's Bridge. Not far beyond

Peeler's, skirmishers from the 17th Tennessee Infantry reached Pea Vine Creek, an insignificant stream even in a wet season. A few hundred yards behind the creek, however, some of Robert Minty's Federal cavalry videttes were alert, and fired the first shots of the Battle of Chickamauga at Johnson's leading elements. When the picket reserve proved too weak to check the Tennesseans' progress, Minty's men withdrew toward Pea Vine Ridge in their rear. Each side now prepared for serious action. Johnson, already in line of battle, deployed six artillery pieces. In turn, Minty formed on Pea Vine Ridge with the 4th Michigan Cavalry, a battalion of the 4th United States Cavalry, and a section of the Chicago Board of Trade Battery.⁴⁴

With less than a thousand men, Minty was outnumbered more than five to one by

Johnson's enlarged command, and 20 to two in artillery pieces. Armed with single-shot breech-loading carbines, Minty's men could fire faster than Johnson's, but the range of their weapons was considerably less than that of the Confederate rifles. Unless Johnson lost his nerve, Minty would be forced to give ground—and soon. Urged on by still another preemptory message from Bragg, Johnson was in no mood to tarry, and he sent his entire line across Pea Vine Valley and up the slopes of Pea Vine Ridge. From his elevated position on the ridge, Minty could see the strength of the force opposing him in front, as well as another dust cloud moving north toward more crossings of the Chickamauga downstream from his location. Dispatching requests for aid to Granger, Wilder, Wood, and Crittenden, Minty delayed Johnson as best he could, but was soon forced to relinquish the crest of the ridge. Withdrawing to a road junction east of Reed's Bridge, Minty there received two regiments and a section of guns from John Wilder. Knowing that a Confederate crossing downstream to his left would

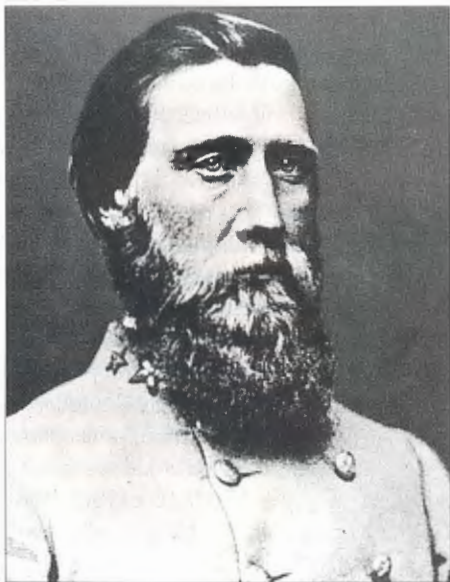
render his efforts at Reed's Bridge futile, he dispatched Wilder's reinforcement northward toward Dyer's and Red House bridges. In front he once more attempted to retard Johnson's progress as the Confederates descended the western slope of Pea Vine Ridge. Placing his gun section and a battalion of the 4th U. S. Cavalry in an ambush position near a ford just upstream from the bridge, Minty sent the remainder of the 4th U. S. across the bridge while he shielded the movement with the 4th Michigan Cavalry and the 7th Pennsylvania Cavalry. Reed's Bridge was narrow, permitting no more than two riders abreast to cross at the same time, so Minty's timing would have to be perfect if he were to extricate his command safely. With the Confederates unwilling to halt, Minty reluctantly ordered a withdrawal across the bridge. There was barely enough time to cross his command before Johnson's men reached the creek, and no time to damage the bridge significantly.⁴⁵

Momentarily checked by the fire of the Chicago Board of Trade section, which then quickly scrambled to safety across the ford,

Johnson's men soon found themselves on the bank of Chickamauga Creek. Col. John Fulton's brigade, in the center of Johnson's line, faced the bridge itself, while Gregg's and McNair's brigades extended the line to left and right, and Robertson's Texas Brigade waited in rear. Behind them, believing a battle imminent, the surgeons of McNair's Brigade began to establish a field medical aid station. Minty's brigade now reconstituted itself on a slight ridge 750 yards west of the bridge and prepared to continue its resistance to the Confederate advance. With the size of his opponent now clearly apparent, Johnson could see that the advantage would be his if he could get across Chickamauga Creek. As Johnson unlimbered a section of Bledsoe's Missouri Battery in preparation for a crossing, Bedford Forrest rode calmly across the bridge and took the measure of the defenders. Returning to the Confederate side of the stream, he sent the 23rd Tennessee Infantry across its fire-swept planks. The remainder of Fulton's brigade followed, and soon Johnson's entire division was across the stream and formed in an open field facing Minty's handful of

Robert Minty's Union cavalymen contest the overwhelming numbers of Bushrod Johnson's force at Reed's Bridge on September 18.





John Bell Hood, CSA

cavalrymen. At this moment a commotion was raised in Robertson's Brigade, as the men welcomed their old leader from the Army of Northern Virginia, Maj. Gen. John Bell Hood. Reaching Catoosa Platform during the morning, Hood, his left arm still in a sling from his Gettysburg wound, had ridden hastily to join Johnson's column and assume command. With the cheers of his Texans ringing in his ears, Hood rode forward seeking Johnson. He found the division commander just as Johnson was preparing to cross the bridge. Johnson produced Bragg's most recent circular and the two discussed what was to be done next. Meanwhile, Bledsoe's Battery began to hammer Minty's position on the ridge to the west, shooting a wheel off one of the Chicago Board of Trade Battery's guns.⁴⁶

With the Confederates across Reed's Bridge in force and himself absurdly outnumbered by Johnson's command, Minty saw little option but to withdraw southward toward the main army. There was now no reason to have Wilder's two regiments continue to contest the downstream crossings, so he called them to rejoin him. By the time they did so, he had learned that Wilder's command itself had been forced from its position a mile to the south covering Alexander's Bridge. Realizing that further delay would ensure the destruction of his small command, Minty reluctantly gave the order to retreat. Mounting their horses, the cavalrymen quickly placed distance between themselves and Johnson's now exultant Confederates. Even the Chicago Board of Trade was able to carry off its damaged gun, dragging it safely away with only one wheel. Minty's

command departed via William Jay's steam sawmill and the Brotherton Road to the La Fayette-Rossville road, thence southward in search of friendly units. Behind them, Johnson's men advanced first to the ridge recently held by Minty then to the clearing at Jay's Mill. By this time Hood had assumed command from Johnson, although he was in completely unfamiliar territory with mostly unfamiliar subordinates. At Jay's the road divided, the left-hand fork heading due south toward Alexander's Bridge and the right-hand fork leading southwest to the main La Fayette-Rossville road at George Brotherton's farm. Aware of the need to make space for the commands of Walker and Buckner once they achieved their own crossings of the Chickamauga, Johnson began to direct his leading elements down the Brotherton Road. Suddenly Hood countermanded the order, directing instead that Johnson place one regiment of Gregg's Brigade in front of the column as skirmishers and follow with the remainder down the road leading toward Alexander's Bridge. By the time the units were rearranged to Hood's satisfaction, it was near sunset. Reed's Bridge had been gained by 3:00 p.m. and Minty had departed not long afterward, but at last Johnson's column (now Hood's) was finally implementing Bragg's intent to turn the Federal left.⁴⁷

South of Reed's Bridge, William H. T. Walker's crossing of the Chickamauga proved even more difficult than Johnson's. As was his custom, Walker had moved promptly, but the inadequate road network and the encounter with Buckner's Corps slowed his advance. At last free of Buckner, Walker gradually marched northward east of Pea Vine (now Boynton) Ridge, then turned west through Napier's Gap and headed directly toward Alexander's Bridge. In front of his column, elements of John Pegram's cavalry division screened the advance. The bridge had been held since the previous day by Col. John T. Wilder's mounted infantry brigade, operating directly under the orders of army headquarters. One of his regiments, the 92nd Illinois, had been detached for several days and was still in McLemore's Cove. Wilder thus controlled only four regiments, the 17th and 72nd Indiana, and the 98th and 123rd Illinois, plus Capt. Eli Lilly's 18th Indiana Battery. Emplacing Lilly's six 3-inch Ordnance rifles on high ground just in front of Alexander's house 400 yards north of the bridge, Wilder screened the



John T. Wilder, USA

creek bank with pickets while his main body supported them from the high ground to the rear. Ever since their arrival, Wilder's men had found the foraging to be excellent, particularly beyond the Chickamauga. Thus, early on September 18 foraging parties from the 72nd Indiana again crossed the stream and returned with copious amounts of plunder, causing others to follow their example in late morning. Chased back by outriders of John Pegram's cavalry and cut off from the bridge, they swam the creek to safety. Wilder, meanwhile, had been importuned by Minty for assistance and had sent seven companies of the 72nd Indiana, all of the 123rd Illinois, and two of Lilly's guns to Minty's aid. Thus, only the 17th Indiana and the 98th Illinois remained to defend the position. While the 98th Illinois watched Smith's Ford upstream, Wilder positioned the 17th Indiana to support Lilly's guns at the Alexander house. From the artillery position, the ground sloped gently downward across open fields and pastures to the skirt of timber along the Chickamauga.⁴⁸

Arriving within a mile of Alexander's Bridge, William H. T. Walker utilized a time-tested selection method in determining which unit would make the assault. Controlling both his own and Liddell's Division, Walker, around 2:00 p.m., assigned Liddell to make the attack. In turn, Liddell controlled his own brigade, now under Col. Daniel C. Govan, and the brigade of Brig. Gen. Edward C. Walthall. Following Walker's precedent, Liddell assigned Walthall's Brigade to seize Alexander's Bridge. Forming his five regiments into line, from right to left the

24th, 27th, 29th, 30th and 34th Mississippi Infantry, Walthall began his advance with the road on his left as a guide. Problems soon developed, first because the brigade's left moved faster than its right, and second because the road soon made a sharp turn to the right, throwing the left two regiments into an open field beyond it. Those movements brought the bridge squarely in front of the 29th Mississippi, Walthall's center regiment. Defending the bridge were 37 members of Co. A, 72nd Indiana, most of whom had been among the foragers forced to swim back across the creek. Unwilling to risk braving the quarter-mile of open ground rising to the Alexander house, the detachment, led by two sergeants, elected to stand its ground at the bridge itself. Pulling up the bridge planking, they used part of it to build an impromptu fort and threw the remainder into the stream. From behind their plank barricade they poured a heavy fire from their Spencer rifles into the ranks of the hapless 29th Mississippi. Almost equally exposed, in a field on Walthall's left, was the 34th Mississippi, which took accurate fire from Lilly's guns at the Alexander house and probably some from elements of the 98th Illinois as well. Still, Walthall's men persisted in pressing the assault and within 45 minutes had reached the now visibly unusable bridge.⁴⁹

By 3:00 p.m. Wilder could clearly see that the large number of Confederates facing him could cross the Chickamauga at fords both above and below Alexander's Bridge. Indeed, Walker's orders had specified that if Alexander's Bridge was unusable, he could cross approximately one mile downstream at Byram's Ford. Knowing that to remain longer would risk the safety of his two regiments and Lilly's gun sections, Wilder decided to withdraw toward the southwest. Left behind was the detachment of the 72nd Indiana at the bridge, which was told to follow as best it could. Most of their horses having been shot, these unfortunate men fell back from their fortification on foot by

two and three. Amazingly, the detachment suffered only two wounded, although some of the men did not rejoin their regiment for several days. As he withdrew, Wilder, at 3:30 p.m., sent a message to Rosecrans describing his and Minty's departure, explaining that he had done his best, and that he was falling back toward Wood's position at Lee and Gordon's Mills. He did not go quite so far, however, halting and forming a line across the road a mile from Alexander's and well short of the La Fayette-Rossville Road. Behind him, Walker's Reserve Corps turned northward toward Byram's Ford, where its leading elements crossed the Chickamauga around 5:00 p.m. The fight at Alexander's

Bridge had cost Walker 105 casualties, principally in the 29th and 34th Mississippi, and although he had the bridge, it would be some time before it could be used by wheeled vehicles. Byram's Ford with its steep and increasingly sloppy approaches was a poor substitute for a bridge. Nevertheless, as darkness fell, another of Bragg's columns had placed significant numbers of Confederates on the west bank of Chickamauga Creek.⁵⁰

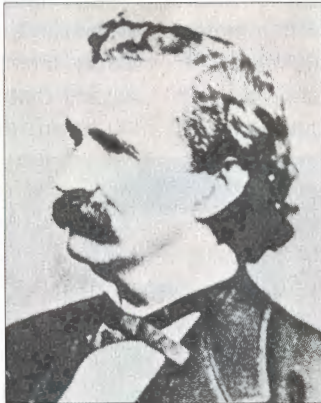
The circular that sent Johnson and Walker into battle at Reed's and Alexander's bridges also called for a crossing upstream of those positions at Thedford's Ford. Only in this location was the crossing easy, but according to Bragg's design it was not to be exploited until the downstream crossings had occurred. Reaching the ford around 2:00 p.m., Buckner assigned Maj. Gen. Alexander P. Stewart the task of leading the corps across the Chickamauga. Buckner's engineer, Maj. James Nocquet, found good positions for the brigades of Brig. Gens. Henry D. Clayton and William B. Bate overlooking the ford and soon their skirmishers engaged the handful of Federal

soldiers on the opposite bank. Bate, on the right, also brought his artillery, the Eufaula Battery, into action against Eli Lilly's 18th Indiana Battery at the Alexander house with some success. Return shots caused a few casualties in both Clayton's and Bate's brigades, and even struck near Stewart and cavalry commander John Pegram, but Lilly soon departed as Wilder withdrew to the southwest. While Bate occupied the attention of the few 98th Illinois soldiers still contesting the ford, Clayton put several companies across the creek slightly upstream. The Federals quickly withdrew, leaving Thedford's Ford in Stewart's hands. Without word of success downstream, however, and with orders not to bring on a general engagement, Buckner and Stewart did not immediately exploit the crossing. Upstream, Brig. Gen. William Preston approached Dalton's (Hunt's) Ford with equal caution. Finding no significant Federal presence, Preston nevertheless waited for further instructions. Even though both objectives were in his hands by mid-

afternoon, Buckner chose not to exceed his orders. Until he learned that Johnson and Walker were successfully across the Chickamauga, Buckner would hold his corps at the creek's edge, quietly awaiting developments elsewhere.⁵¹

Unaware of the full extent of the Confederate crossings of Chickamauga Creek beyond his left flank,

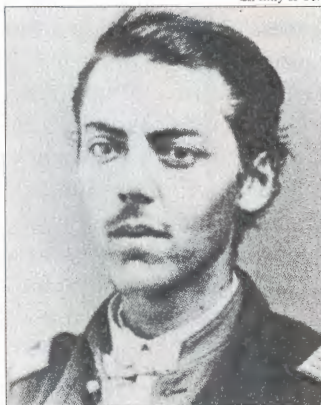
William Rosecrans nevertheless began to respond by mid-afternoon to the fragmentary reports reaching Crawfish Spring. The signal stations on Lookout Mountain continued to observe distant Confederate movements, mostly beyond the Federal left, as well as the noise of artillery fire emanating from the lower Chickamauga crossings. As reports from Minty began to indicate his deteriorating situation, Garfield at 3:45 p.m. sent word to Gordon Granger at Rossville to dispatch additional support to assist Minty's withdrawal. Thereafter, the orders from army headquarters were all concerned with expediting the movement of both Thomas' and McCook's corps northward. Thomas was to quickly relieve those portions of the XXI Corps still around Glass' Mill and be prepared to move even farther north if



Edward C. Walthall, CSA



A. P. Stewart, CSA



Eli Lilly, USA

Eli Lilly & Co.

necessary. McCook was to follow Thomas and tie into his right. In addition, McCook was to maintain contact with Robert Mitchell's cavalry and ensure that Stevens' Gap and the road to the Bridgeport bridges remained secure. To Rosecrans and Garfield, Bragg's design to turn the Federal left was becoming increasingly obvious, but even more disastrous would be the loss of the logistical umbilical cord to the Stevenson, Ala., depot. Therefore, Granger was told to use Reserve Corps units scattered along the army's line of communication to defend key sites to the last extremity. Ponderously, the Army of the Cumberland began to respond to this flurry of orders. In the XXI Corps sector, as the afternoon progressed, Van Cleve's division left its Glass' Mill positions on Wood's right, passed behind him, and extended the Federal line north beyond Wood's left at Lee and Gordon's Mills. Palmer's division slid into Van Cleve's old positions and prepared to relinquish them to Thomas' corps as soon as it could arrive. As the hours passed, Rosecrans began to consider an even more radical response to the Confederate flanking gambit, so at 5:40 p.m. he called George Thomas to headquarters to discuss it.⁵²

While Rosecrans pondered his options, John Bell Hood and Bushrod Johnson continued their march southward from Jay's Mill. Ahead of them, John Wilder arrayed his two regiments across the path leading to the La Fayette-Rossville Road. There he received welcome reinforcements from the XXI Corps. Responding to earlier calls for assistance, Thomas Wood brought two regiments of Col. George Dick's brigade of Van Cleve's division to extend Wilder's line southward. Just before dusk, Robert Minty arrived with his own brigade and Wilder's two remaining regiments. Minty took position on the right of Dick's infantry. The reinforcements arrived none too soon, as John Gregg's leading regiments were soon upon them. Meeting Wilder's skirmishers, Gregg pressed forward in the darkness. The attack struck Dick's 59th Ohio and 44th Indiana, causing them to displace a short distance to the rear. Wilder then cobbled together a new line at the east edge of a field owned by a citizen named

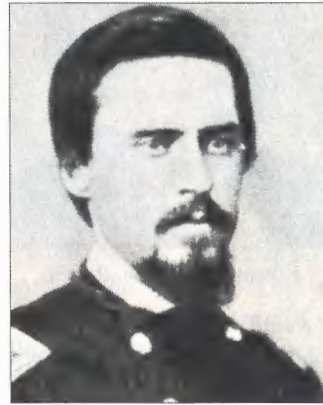
Tabler Viniard. Unwilling to push farther against unknown but stiffening opposition, Gregg halted the attack around 9:00 p.m. Behind him, the brigades of Fulton, McNair, and Robertson formed line of battle facing west and lay down to rest in the dark woods. Beyond them, in the edge of the Viniard field and surrounding woods, Wilder's brigade, Dick's two regiments, and Minty's cavalymen also waited for morning. Wilder's horses had been taken to the rear, carrying with them the men's blankets and haversacks, so his troopers lay cold and hungry among the trees, alone with their thoughts and fears about what the morning would bring. Although they may not have been aware of the larger picture and their place in it, Wilder's and Minty's troopers could have taken considerable consolation from the fact that they had played a large role in thwarting Braxton Bragg's grand design. They had not held the Confederates east of Chickamauga Creek, but they had delayed Bragg's three flanking columns significantly and halted them short of the La Fayette-Rossville road, thereby buying time for Rosecrans to craft a response.⁵³

Although Hood and Johnson had halted for the night, highly significant events involving elements of Gordon Granger's Reserve Corps were transpiring in their rear. Robert Minty's calls for assistance in mid-afternoon had led Granger to dispatch Col. Daniel McCook's brigade to his aid around 4:00 p.m. At the same time, Granger had ordered Brig. Gen. Walter Whitaker to take his brigade to Red House Bridge over the Chickamauga and secure it. That left Granger with only Col. John Mitchell's brigade and two attached regiments, all of which had just returned from James Steedman's expedition to Ringgold. Upon receipt of Garfield's message to cover Minty's withdrawal, Granger had dispatched Mitchell's four regiments to join McCook's brigade already on the way to Reed's Bridge. None of Granger's moves

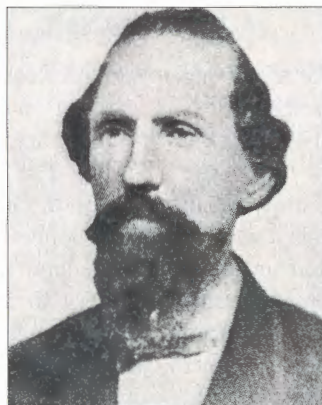
had worked out as he had intended. Whitaker was halted short of Red House Bridge by an aggressive display by Col. John Scott's brigade from Pegram's Division of Forrest's command. McCook arrived in the vicinity of Jay's Mill after dark and, hearing noise ahead, halted several hundred yards from the Reed's Bridge-Jay's Mill road junction. Sending scouts forward in the gloom, McCook learned that a wagon train was turning southward at the junction and heading toward Alexander's Bridge. Unsure of the size of the train guard, McCook decided to wait for an easier target. Soon, along came the surgeons and medical staff of McNair's Brigade. McCook's scouts halted them, and called them forward individually. Although some were suspicious and at least one went in the opposite direction, eventually 22 Confederates were captured

and carried to McCook for interrogation. All cheerfully admitted that they were part of McNair's Brigade. When Mitchell's brigade arrived, McCook deployed them in support of his own troops, covered his position with pickets, and waited for morning. Gordon Granger meanwhile rode to Crawfish Spring to meet personally with Rosecrans.⁵⁴

At the headquarters of the Army of the Cumberland, Rosecrans continued to monitor the movements of the XIV and XX corps northward. The plan of the afternoon had been for Thomas to relieve Palmer's division around Glass' Mill and Crawfish Spring so Palmer in turn could pass behind Wood and Van Cleve in another extension of the army's line north of Lee and Gordon's Mills. Leading Thomas' corps northward was Maj. Gen. James Negley's division, which was supposed to relieve Palmer's division before dark. When Negley arrived at Palmer's position, he found Palmer absent surveying the ground at his new location and the brigade commanders without orders to be relieved. Adamantly refusing to relinquish his position without formal authority, Brig. Gen. William B. Hazen flippantly dismissed Negley's concerns, causing the division commander to complain at army headquarters. Negley was ill with dysentery and Hazen was tired of the constant



Daniel McCook, USA



Evander McNair, CSA

shuffling of units, so a minor altercation that could have been handled easily with good will instead escalated to the attention of Rosecrans, in the presence of numerous other general officers. Under great stress himself, Rosecrans intervened on Negley's behalf. Until the situation was clarified, Negley's command waited impatiently at Crawfish Spring. Eventually the relief was accomplished and Palmer's three brigades marched northward, but not until well after midnight, leaving all concerned angry and frustrated. En route to his new position, Hazen stopped to pay his respects at army headquarters and was roundly and publicly castigated by the army commander. After three weeks of active campaigning, the physical and mental toll inflicted upon the senior leaders of the Army of the Cumberland was beginning to be visible to all.⁵⁵

The principal reason Rosecrans was especially edgy when he saw Hazen was that he had just placed a large bet upon a course of action that was fraught with potential consequences. During the afternoon he had simply expected to sidle northward less than a corps front by reversing the order of Crittenden's divisions

and sliding the XIV and XX corps a similar distance to their left. As the news from Wilder and Minty became increasingly grim, a new idea began to coalesce in Rosecrans' mind. What if he kept Thomas' corps, which was already in motion, marching northward beyond Crittenden's left? Such a move would bring the main army's left within four miles of the Reserve Corps position at Rossville as well as covering another route to Chattanooga via McFarland's Gap in Missionary Ridge. By 5:00 p.m., when Charles Dana sent his last message of the day to Washington, Rosecrans was still undecided. He needed advice from George Thomas and shortly thereafter called him to Crawfish Spring. Leaving his troops toiling along the dusty roads, Thomas arrived at army headquarters at the Gordon house after night had fallen. The exact words that passed between the two men are unknown, but the decision reached was soon apparent to all. Leaving Negley's division to replace Palmer's men as originally planned, Thomas would continue marching northward through the night with the divisions of Absalom Baird, John Brannan, and Joseph Reynolds.

Unaware that their destination had changed, the men of the XIV Corps only knew that they had a long night ahead of them. The day had been chilly and the evening proved to be disagreeably cold. The dust, which had plagued both armies throughout the campaign, continued to rise in choking clouds, adding to the universal discomfort. Finally, to warm themselves while they waited for the units ahead to clear the road, the soldiers began to kindle fires along the rail fences lining the road. Soon the fences themselves caught fire, lighting the path of the ghostly marchers as they trudged through the smoke and dust.⁵⁶

By midnight the two armies that had maneuvered for positional advantage for three long weeks were finally concentrated and within striking distance of each other. For the Army of Tennessee, the day had been a partial success. Bragg had hoped to be pressing upon the Federal left flank in the vicinity of Lee and Gordon's Mills by mid-afternoon. His flanking columns had not yet succeeded in that task, but were finally poised to do so early on the morrow. Hood and Johnson were halted less than

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600 yards from the La Fayette-Rossville road with four infantry brigades and five batteries, while their rear was screened by Henry B. Davidson's cavalry brigade of Pegram's Division. North of them, William H. T. Walker was pushing three of his four brigades forward from the Byram's Ford crossing to bivouacs around the ruins of the Alexander house, while his remaining brigade guarded the corps ordnance train east of the Chickamauga. Southeast of Hood's position, Simon Buckner crossed Clayton's Brigade of Stewart's Division at Thedford's Ford and Archibald Gracie's brigade of Preston's Division at Dalton's (Hunt's) Ford before midnight. Thus Bragg had gotten nine infantry brigades safely across Chickamauga Creek by the time September 18 ended, and they were within striking distance of the Federal positions around Lee and Gordon's Mills. Early the next morning, one brigade of Walker's, four of Buckner's, two of Longstreet's, and the five brigades of Cheatham's Division from Polk's Corps could quickly join their compatriots on the Chickamauga's west bank. If the Federal flank remained at Lee and Gordon's Mills, as Bragg believed, the Army of Tennessee would still be able to execute his long-held desire to drive the Army of the Cumberland to its destruction in McLemore's Cove.⁵⁷

In contrast to the optimism that pervaded the Army of Tennessee, William Rosecrans

and the Army of the Cumberland had found September 18 to be a day of frustration. At some point during the day, nine of the ten divisions comprising the army's three principal corps were in motion, and at least five of them would continue to march northward throughout the night. Only Thomas Wood's division had remained stationary at Lee and Gordon's Mills. For more than a week Wood's division had represented the left of the main Army of the Cumberland. Now with the rearrangement of the XXI Corps divisions and the night march of the XIV Corps, Wood's position by the morning of September 19 would represent the army's right-center. Ever since James Negley's near disaster in McLemore's Cove on the September 11, Rosecrans had been trying to concentrate the XIV, XX, and XXI corps. Now that the concentration was virtually complete, he could begin to maneuver the Army of the Cumberland in front of Chattanooga to secure the fruits of the army's labors. If only the Confederates would grant Rosecrans a little more time, he could end the campaign with Chattanooga in Federal hands at no more than nominal cost. Still, the proximity of the two armies was worrisome; the simplest inadvertent encounter could trigger a full-scale battle before either commander was ready for it. Both Bragg and Rosecrans knew that conditions were

ripe for just such an unplanned conflagration, but neither was aware that the spark to ignite it was already burning. The explosion that would occur with the morning light of September 19, 1863, would instantly cast aside all the best-laid formulations of the two commanders and force them to plan anew. The great battle that would eventually take its name from the languid stream the Indians called the "River of Death" was about to begin.⁵⁸

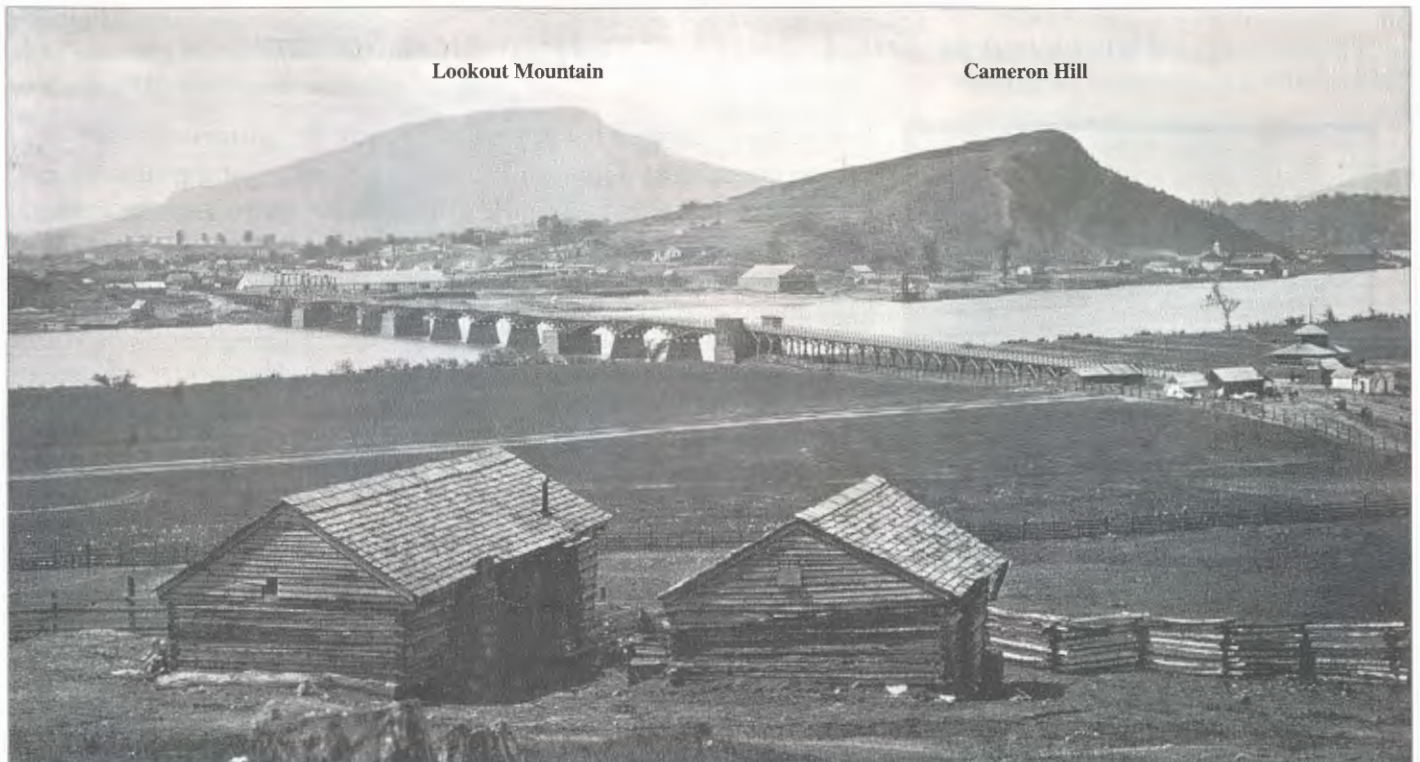
About the Author

WILLIAM GLENN ROBERTSON is the Deputy Director, Combat Studies Institute, U. S. Army Combined Arms Center, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. A native of Virginia, he holds a Ph.D. from the University of Virginia, and is the author of two books: *Back Door to Richmond: The Bermuda Hundred Campaign*, and *The Petersburg Campaign: The Battle of Old Men and Young Boys*. He is also the author of numerous articles on Civil War topics. He resides in Leavenworth, Kansas, with his wife and son. This is Dr. Robertson's third installment of a projected five-issue treatment on the Chickamauga Campaign (see Pg. 66 to obtain the first two installments, or visit our website listed below).

Blue & Gray acknowledges the valuable assistance of James Ogden, Historian, Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park. Tour Assistant for the project was Lt. Col. B. Kevin Bennett, U. S. Army, Retired, Granville, Ohio.

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The Chattanooga waterfront in 1864. At the time of the events described in this issue, Union General George D. Wagner commanded here.



“is one of the few rivers in America that flows almost its entire length on top of a mountain.” The area was a camping ground for McCook’s column during its march north.

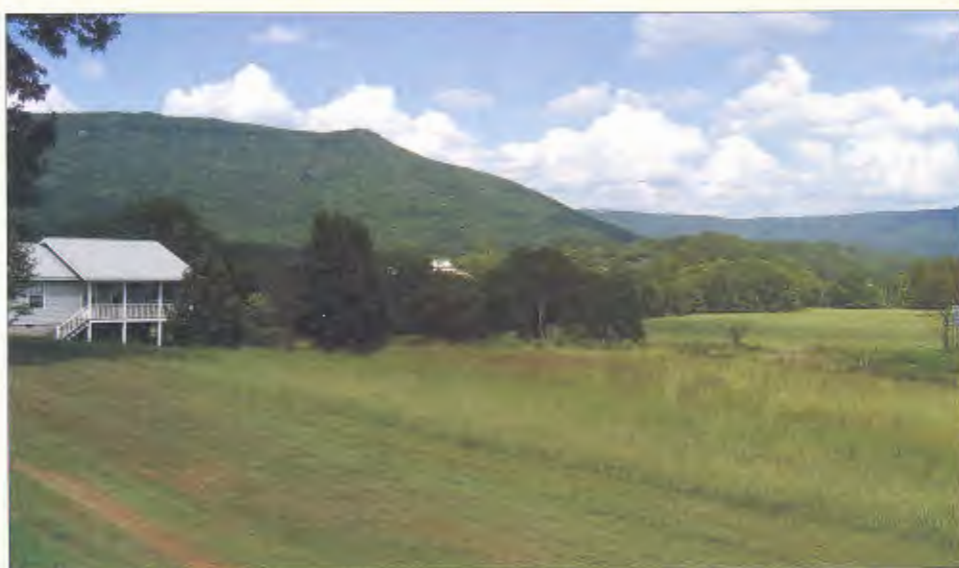
5. Colonel Winston’s

Located in the town of Valley Head, Ala., located off US 11 about 15 miles south of Rising Fawn, Ga. Today it is a bed and breakfast called The Winston Place, fronting on the railroad.—Built ca. 1831, the house



(inset) is on the National Register of Historic Places. Colonel Winston’s, located in the Wills’ Valley, was on the route traveled by McCook’s XX Corps to join the army in McLemore’s Cove, and was passed more than once by some units during the bungled and confused march. The B&B is operated by Lt. Col. Wellborn Matthews, U. S. Army, Retired. He can be contacted at 256-635-6381 or 888-494-6786, or write P. O. Box 165, Valley Head, AL 35989.

Dave Roth of B&G



6. Johnson’s Crook

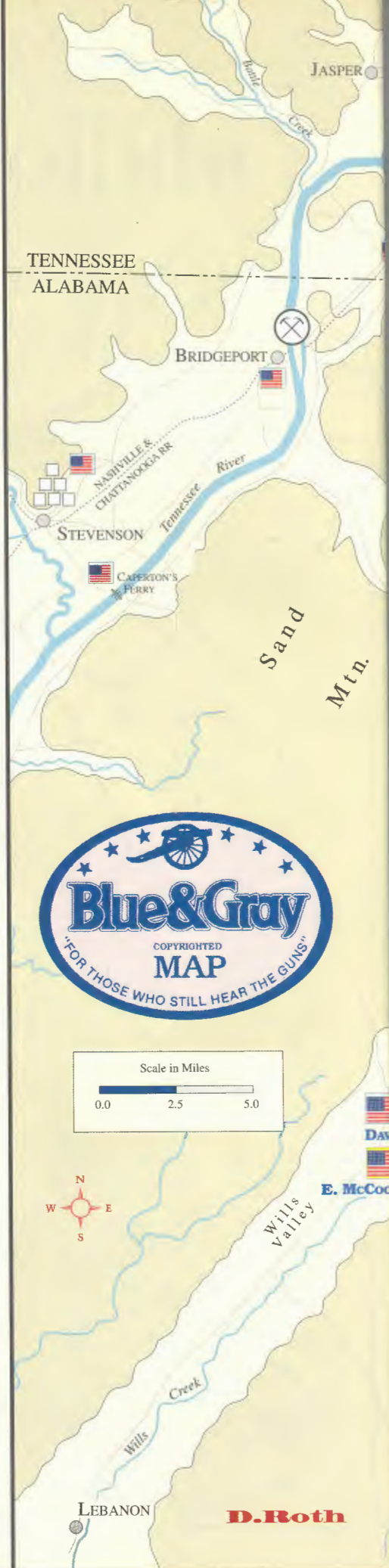
Best viewed from Rising Fawn, Ga., located off US 11 and Ala. Rt. 117 southwest of Chattanooga and about 15 miles north of Valley Head, Ala.; the photo above was taken from Lambert Lane off US 11 in Rising Fawn.—This hook-shaped topographical feature in Lookout Mountain provides a convenient and less precipitous approach onto the mountain. In the photo, looking northeast, the mountain range in the foreground makes a bend and is connected to the range visible in the background. By this route Phil Sheridan’s division of McCook’s corps arrived in McLemore’s Cove.

7. Davis’ Crossroads

Rt. 193 west of LaFayette crosses Pigeon Mountain (but not through wartime Dug Gap). The intersection with Rt. 341 is Davis’ Crossroads.—The Widow Davis house is pictured at right. The crossroads was the focal point of operations in McLemore’s Cove, which on September 11 resulted in nothing more than a skirmish. During events described in this issue, the Crossroads was between the two opposing armies.

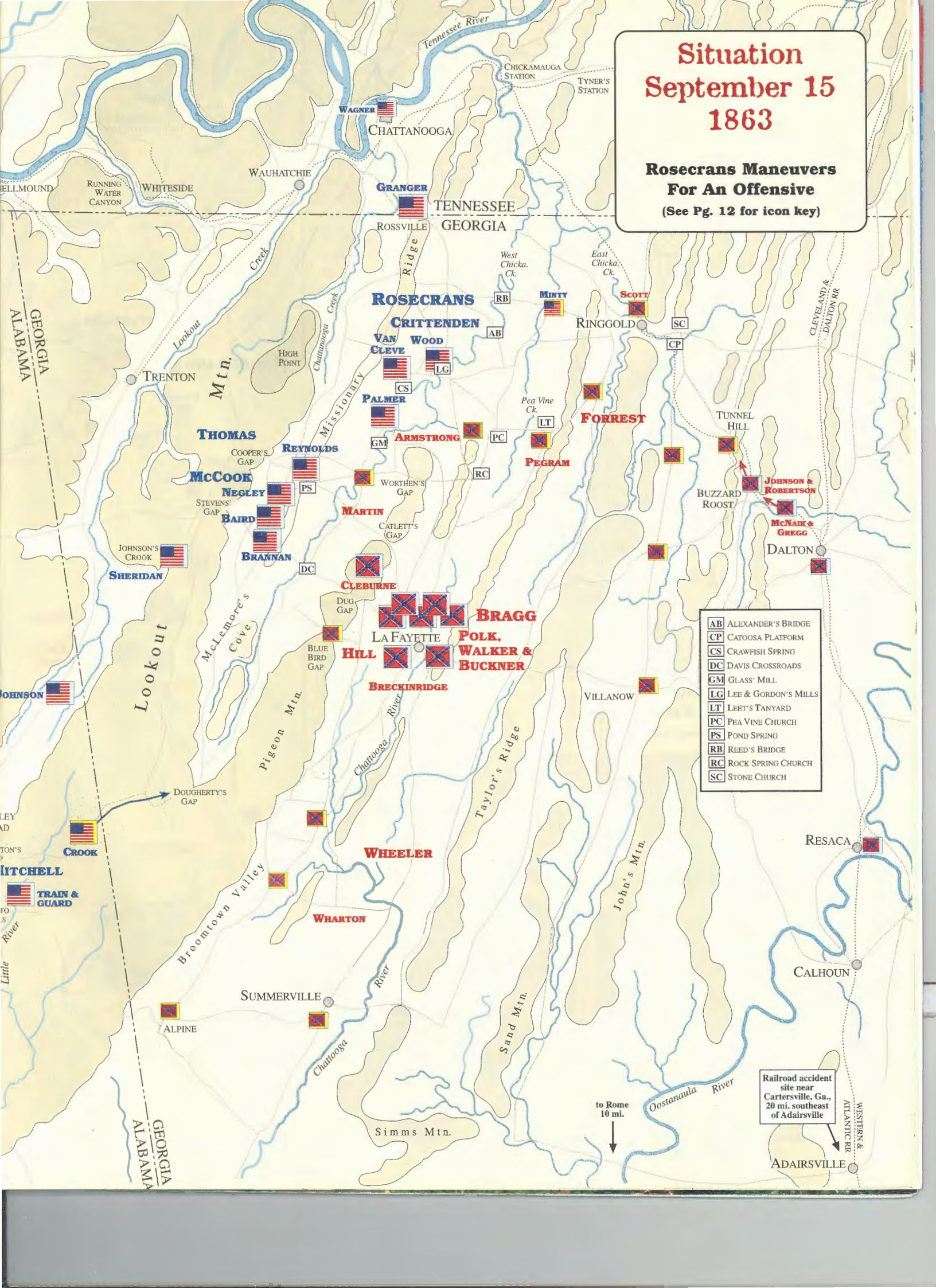


Dave Roth of B&G



Situation September 15 1863

**Rosecrans Maneuvers
For An Offensive**
(See Pg. 12 for icon key)



AB	ALEXANDER'S BRIDGE
CP	CATOOSA PLATFORM
CS	CRAWFISH SPRING
DC	DAVIS CROSSROADS
GM	GLASS' MILL
LG	LEE & GORDON'S MILLS
LT	LEET'S TANYARD
PC	PEA VINE CHURCH
PS	POND SPRING
RB	REED'S BRIDGE
RC	ROCK SPRING CHURCH
SC	STONE CHURCH

Railroad accident site near Cartersville, Ga., 20 mi. southeast of Adairsville

to Rome 10 mi.

ALABAMA

ALABAMA

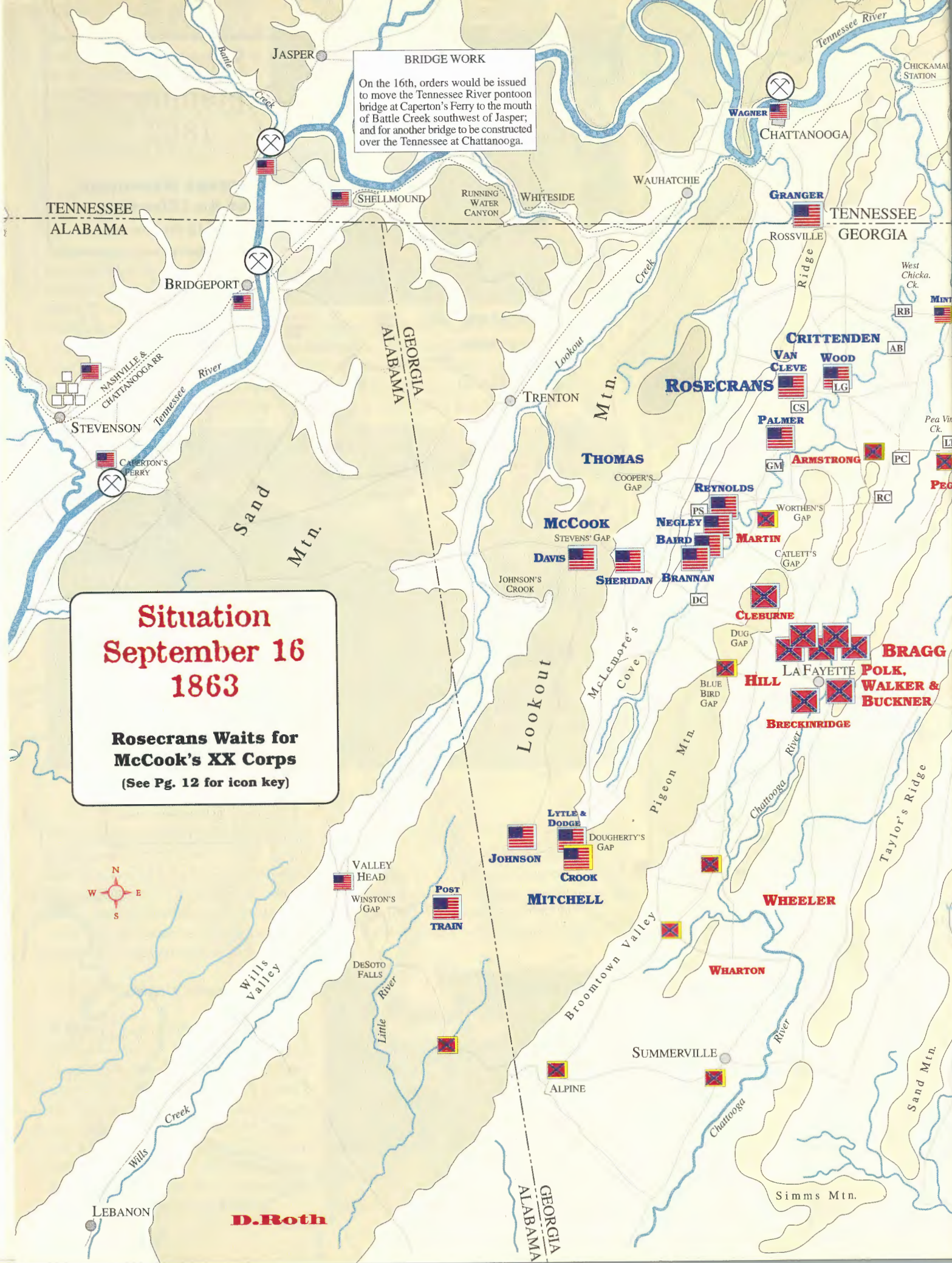
TENNESSEE
GEORGIA

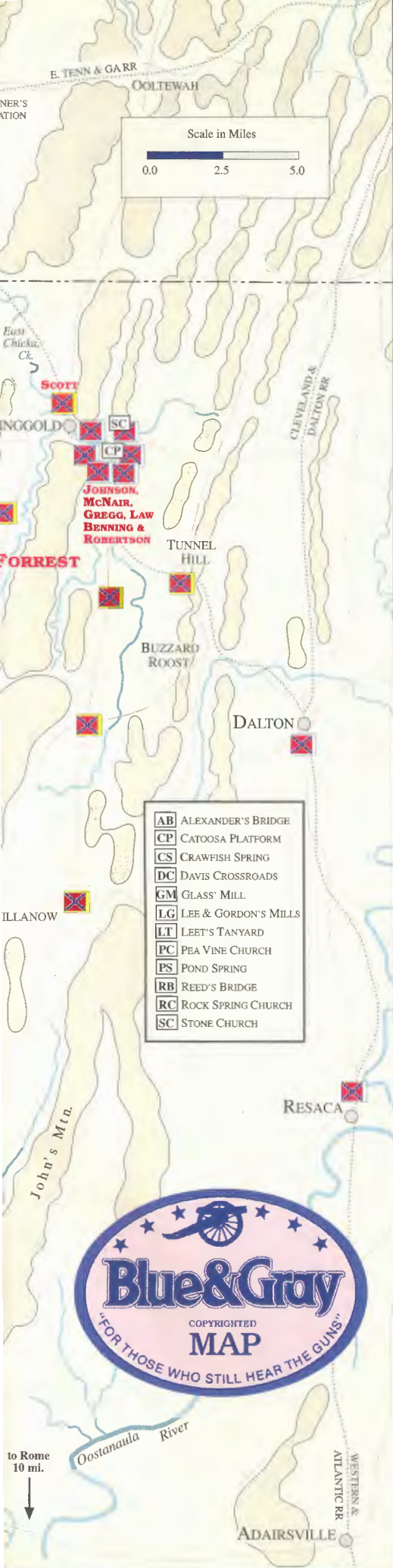
WESTERN & ATLANTIC RR
ADAIRSVILLE

BRIDGE WORK
 On the 16th, orders would be issued to move the Tennessee River pontoon bridge at Caperton's Ferry to the mouth of Battle Creek southwest of Jasper; and for another bridge to be constructed over the Tennessee at Chattanooga.

**Situation
 September 16
 1863**

**Rosecrans Waits for
 McCook's XX Corps**
 (See Pg. 12 for icon key)





8. Stevens' Gap

Proceed west from the Davis house and Crossroads on Rt. 193, which soon bends 90 degrees to the north; then in a short distance turn left onto Harold Stephens Rd. The road winds around to the Stevens' Gap Chickamauga Campaign marker at the intersection with Frick's Gap Rd.—The marker (inset) is not oriented to face the gap. Some 40,000 Yankees used this gap to reach McLemore's Cove.—Leave the marker by turning right onto Frick's Gap Rd. As you climb the ridge look to your left for a good view of Stevens' Gap. Follow Back Valley Rd. to Rt. 136 or Mack Coulter Rd. to Rt. 193.



Dave Roth of B&G

9. Crawfish Spring & Gordon-Lee Mansion

Rt. 341, Cove Rd., south of Gordon Ave. and across from the wartime Gordon-Lee Mansion (below), now a bed & breakfast, in the town of Chickamauga.—This spring (right) was a popular watering hole during the war. The spring gave its name to the small community that grew up around it, now called Chickamauga. Union Colonel John Sanderson, aide-de-camp to General Rosecrans, described Crawfish Spring: "The spring here is a magnificent one, affording an abundant supply, for man and beast of the entire army, of cool, soft, delicious water. It runs out of a hill and forms a very large creek." General Rosecrans made his headquarters for a time at the 12-room Gordon-Lee Mansion, then the home of James Gordon, who in partnership with James Lee prospered through the operations of Lee and Gordon's Mills. After the Battle of Chickamauga, September 19-20, the mansion served as a hospital.



Dave Roth of B&G



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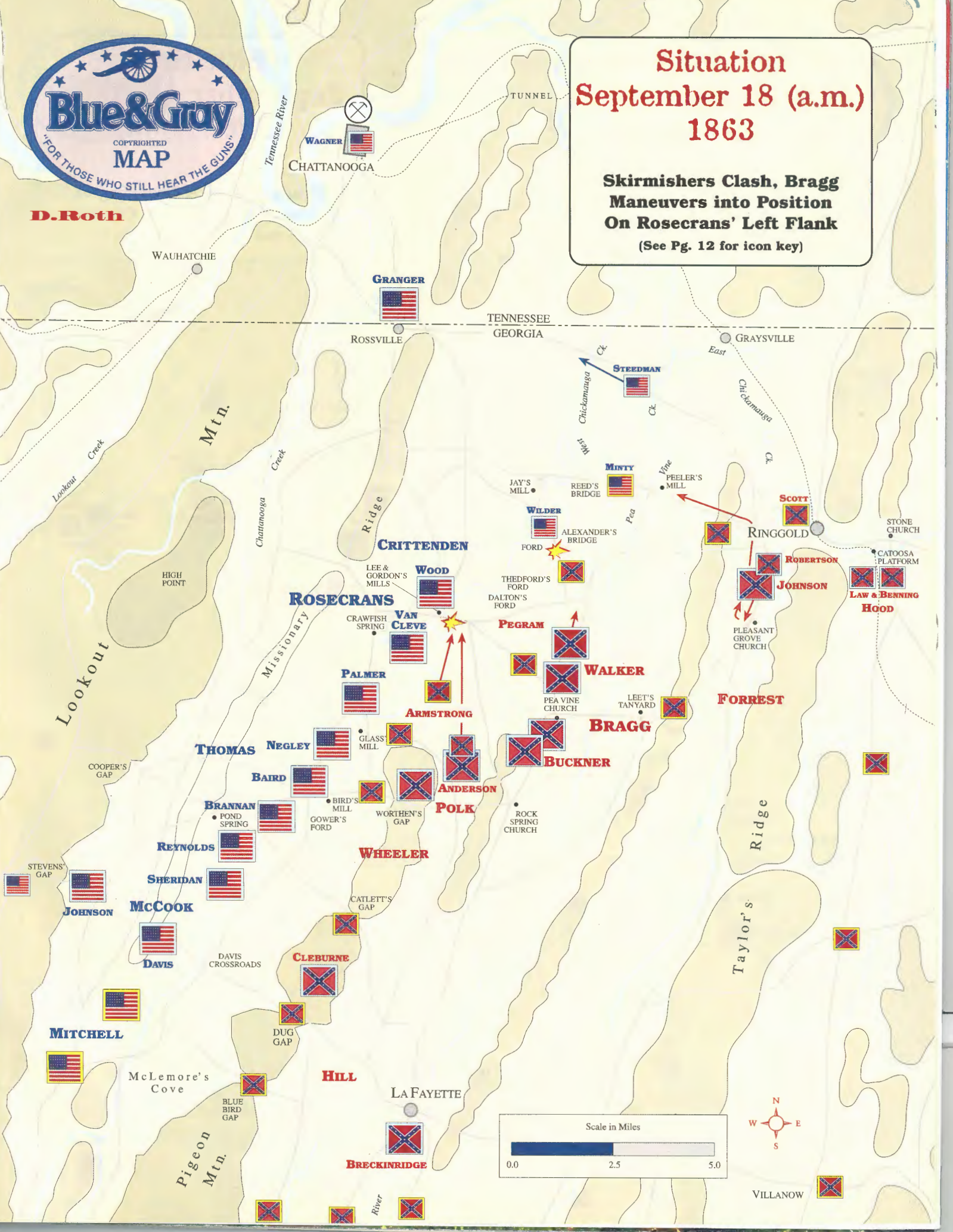


D. Roth

Situation September 18 (a.m.) 1863

Skirmishers Clash, Bragg Maneuvers into Position On Rosecrans' Left Flank

(See Pg. 12 for icon key)

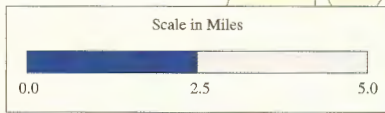
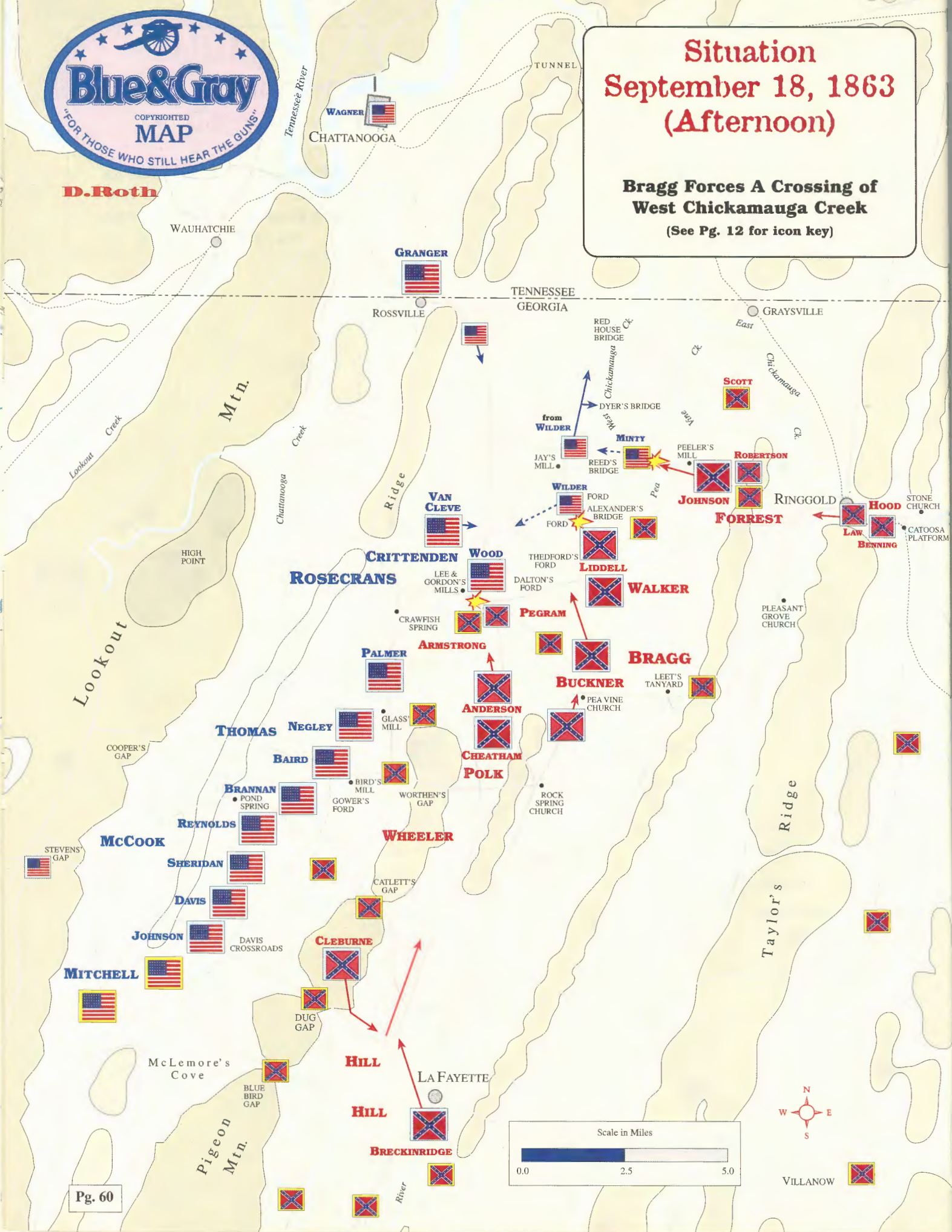




Situation September 18, 1863 (Afternoon)

**Bragg Forces A Crossing of
West Chickamauga Creek**
(See Pg. 12 for icon key)

D. Roth



VILLANOW



to ROSSVILLE

MITCHELL

STRANGE

McDONALD

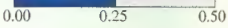
McDONALD

MULLIS

SAVANNAH CH.



Scale in Miles



SNODGRASS

KELLY

VITTETOE

YOUNGBLOOD

POE

WINFREY

BROCK

DYER

BROTHERTON

WINFREY

La Fayette Rd.

BROCK

WIDOW
GLENN

VINIARD

ALEXANDER



WILDER

LILLY (part)

ALEXANDER'S BRIDGE

LIDDELL

WALKER

THEDFORD

HUNT

THEDFORD'S FORD

HUNT

DALTON FORD

to NAPIER'S GAP
(in Pea Vine Ridge)

VAN CLEVE

WOOD

LEE &
GORDON'S MILLS

ANDERSON

CRITTENDEN

POLK

CHEATHAM

PALMER

PRESTON

BUCKNER

STEWART

**BATTLE
ACTION**
September 18
(Afternoon)

D. Roth

DYER

DYER'S MILL

DYER'S FORD

LILLY (part)
from WILDER
72 IN (part)

DYER'S BRIDGE

MINTY

4 MI

4 US

7 PA

JAY'S MILL

JOHNSON

REED'S BRIDGE

McNAIR

ROBERTSON

FULTON

GREGG

FOWLER

FORREST

FOWLER'S FORD

BYRAM'S FORD

17 IN

ALEXANDER

LILLY (part)

72 IN (part)

ALEXANDER'S BRIDGE

LIDDELL

WALKER

THEDFORD

HUNT

THEDFORD'S FORD

HUNT

DALTON FORD

to NAPIER'S GAP
(in Pea Vine Ridge)

VAN CLEVE

WOOD

LEE &
GORDON'S MILLS

ANDERSON

CRITTENDEN

POLK

CHEATHAM

PALMER

PRESTON

BUCKNER

STEWART

**BATTLE
ACTION**
September 18
(Afternoon)

D. Roth

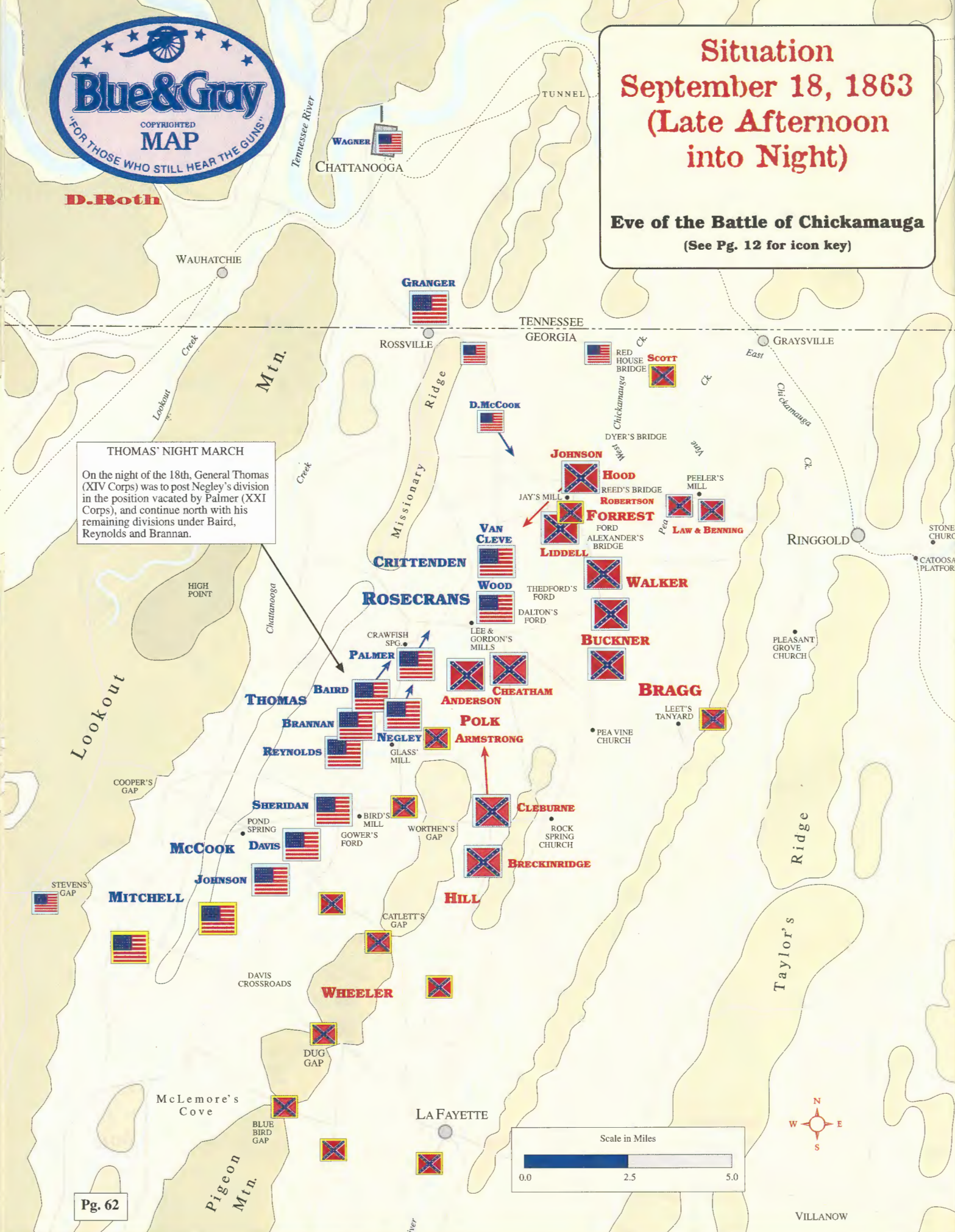


Situation September 18, 1863 (Late Afternoon into Night)

Eve of the Battle of Chickamauga
(See Pg. 12 for icon key)

D. Roth

THOMAS' NIGHT MARCH
On the night of the 18th, General Thomas (XIV Corps) was to post Negley's division in the position vacated by Palmer (XXI Corps), and continue north with his remaining divisions under Baird, Reynolds and Brannan.





to ROSSVILLE

MITCHELL

STRANGE

McDONALD

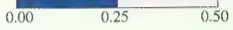
McDONALD

MULLIS SAVANNAH CH.

MULLIS



Scale in Miles



SNODGRASS

KELLY

D. McCook

JAY'S MILL

REED'S BRIDGE

VITTETOE

POE

YOUNGBLOOD

FORREST

FOWLER

FOWLER'S FORD

DYER

BROTHERTON

BROCK

WINFREY

LIDDELL

WALKER

BYRAM'S FORD

La Fayette Rd.

MINTY

PEGRAM

ALEXANDER

JOHNSON & HOOD

ALEXANDER'S BRIDGE

WIDOW GLENN

BROCK

VINIARD

WILDER

THEDFORD

DICK

HUNT

THEDFORD'S FORD

STEWART

to NAPIER'S GAP (in Pea Vine Ridge)

THOMAS (-NEGLEY)

CRITTENDEN

VAN CLEVE

BUCKNER

PALMER

WOOD

POLK

PRESTON

BATTLE ACTION

September 18 (Late Afternoon into Night)

NEGLEY

ANDERSON

CHEATHAM

D. Roth

to CRAWFISH SPRING

L&G MILLS

HUNT

DALTON FORD