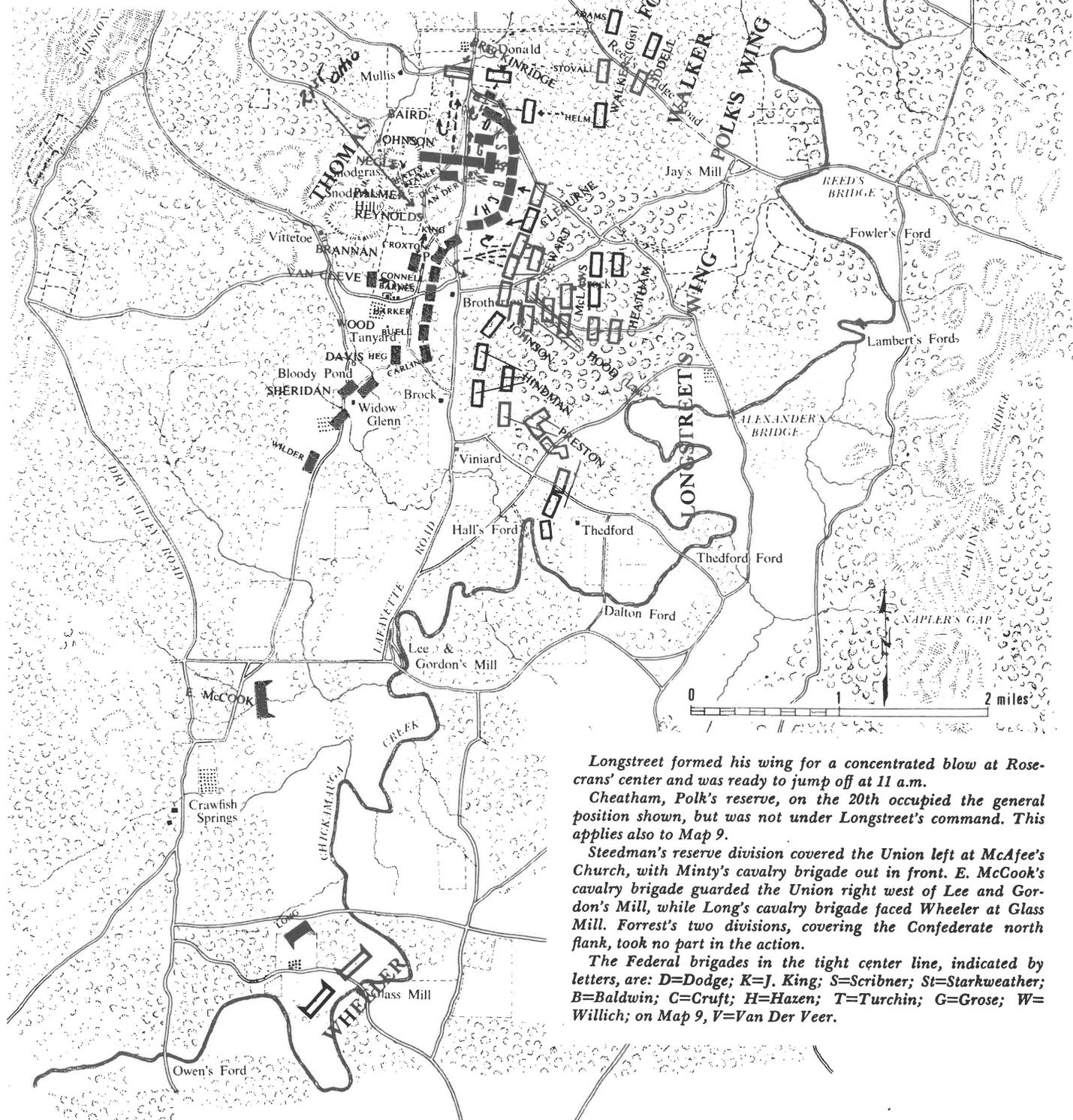
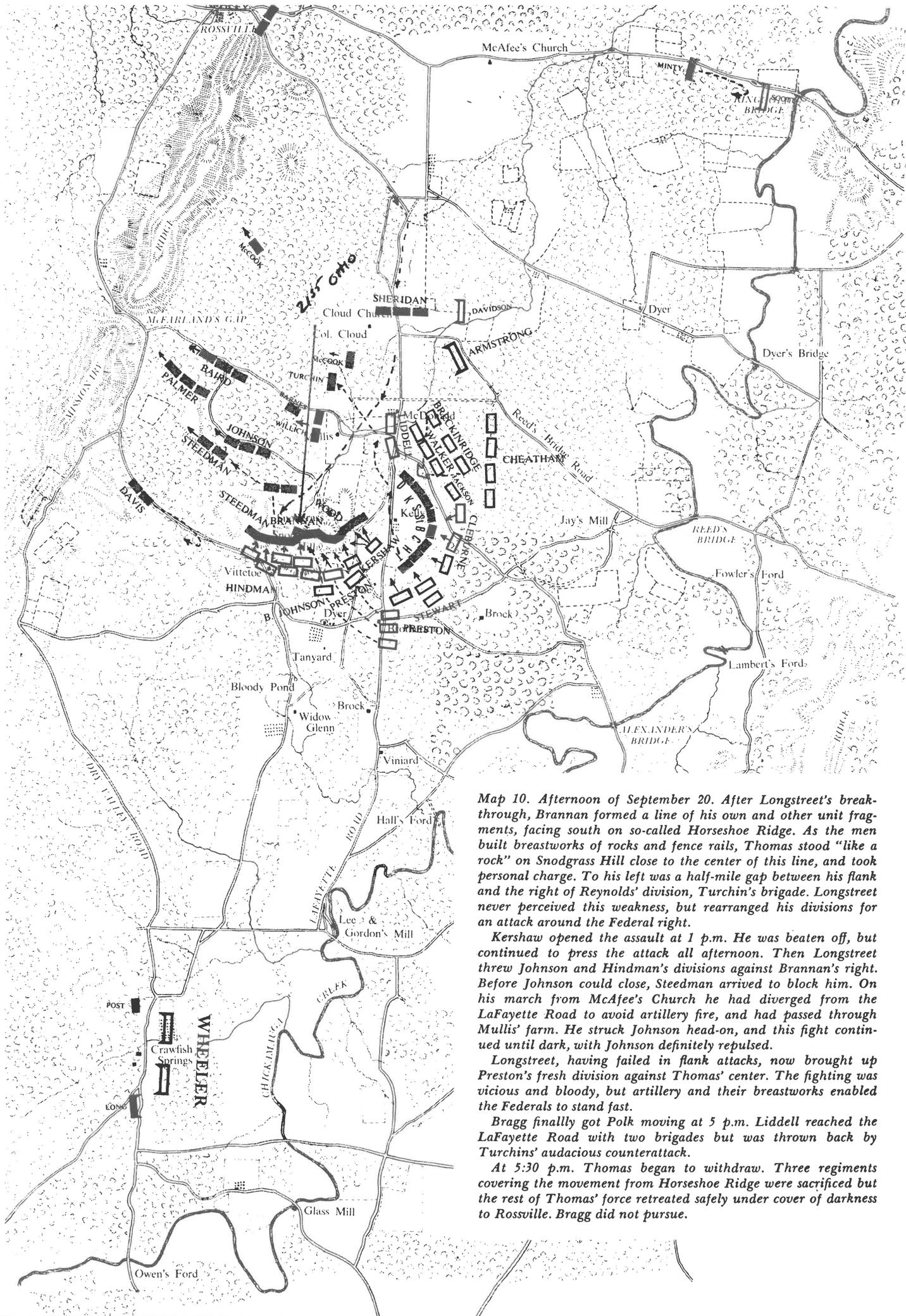


Map 8. Morning of September 20, until 11 a.m. It had been a miserable, frosty night during which the Federals in particular were able to find little water. Rosecrans, abandoning the offensive, contracted his lines into a tight defense, and set his men to work felling trees to build breastworks.

Bragg formed his army into two wings under Polk and Longstreet. Polk was to attack at daylight, starting with Breckinridge's division on the right and continuing successively by brigade. But Hill, irritated at being placed under Polk and claiming that the orders didn't reach him, took more than two hours to prepare for the attack, while Polk lolled on a porch reading a newspaper. The attack didn't get off until shortly before 10, and became a close-in envelopment instead of the more promising wide sweep around Rosecrans' left flank. Although Liddell had limited success, most of the brigades recoiled when they met the volleys at Thomas' log breastworks. Helm, Lincoln's Confederate brother-in-law, was killed when his brigade was enfiladed by heavy fire at close range.



Longstreet formed his wing for a concentrated blow at Rosecrans' center and was ready to jump off at 11 a.m. Cheatham, Polk's reserve, on the 20th occupied the general position shown, but was not under Longstreet's command. This applies also to Map 9. Steedman's reserve division covered the Union left at McAfee's Church, with Minty's cavalry brigade out in front. E. McCook's cavalry brigade guarded the Union right west of Lee and Gordon's Mill, while Long's cavalry brigade faced Wheeler at Glass Mill. Forrest's two divisions, covering the Confederate north flank, took no part in the action. The Federal brigades in the tight center line, indicated by letters, are: D=Dodge; K=J. King; S=Scribner; St=Starkweather; B=Baldwin; C=Cruft; H=Hazen; T=Turchin; G=Grose; W=Willich; on Map 9, V=Van Der Veer.



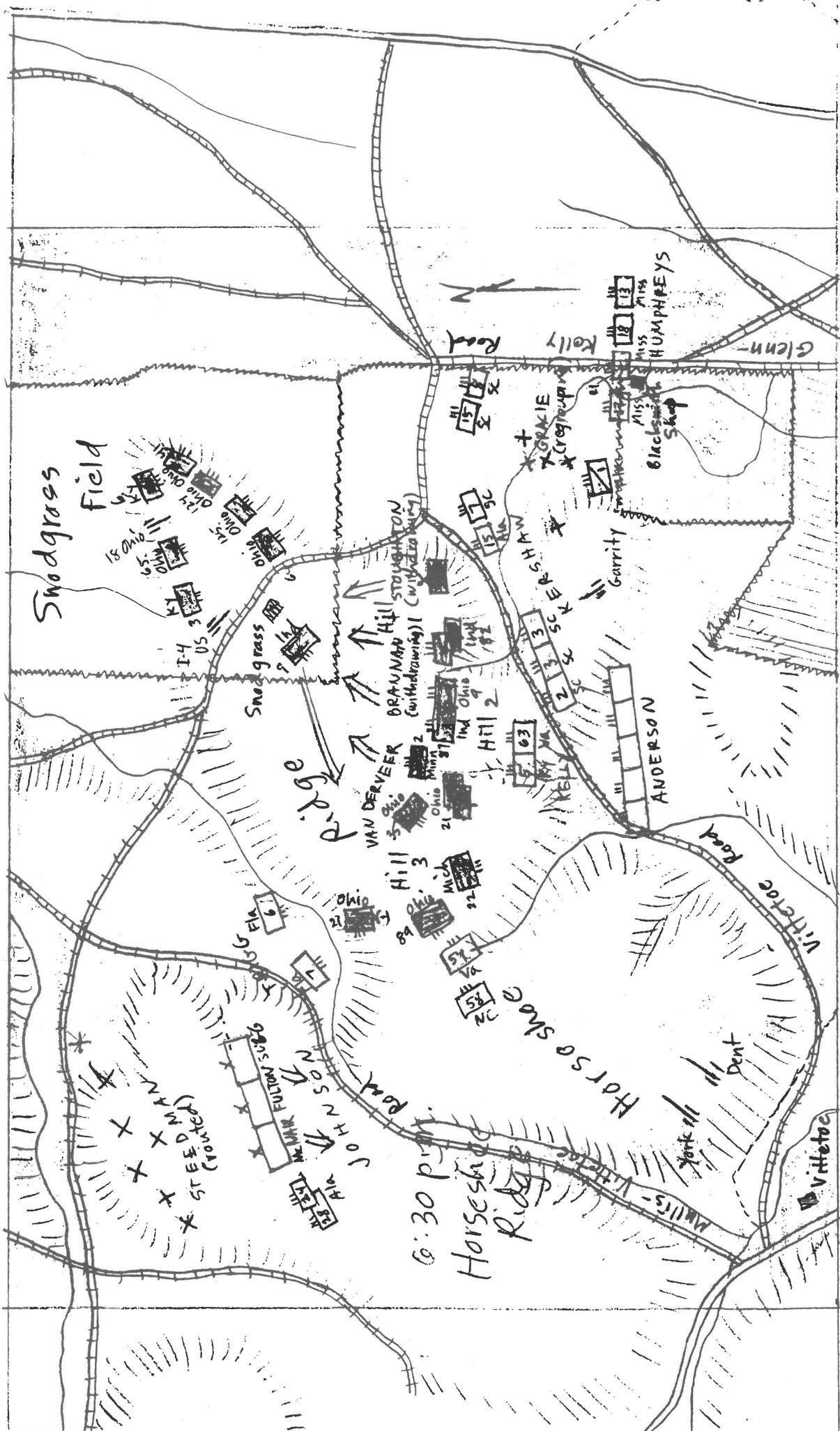
Map 10. Afternoon of September 20. After Longstreet's breakthrough, Brannan formed a line of his own and other unit fragments, facing south on so-called Horseshoe Ridge. As the men built breastworks of rocks and fence rails, Thomas stood "like a rock" on Snodgrass Hill close to the center of this line, and took personal charge. To his left was a half-mile gap between his flank and the right of Reynolds' division, Turchin's brigade. Longstreet never perceived this weakness, but rearranged his divisions for an attack around the Federal right.

Kershaw opened the assault at 1 p.m. He was beaten off, but continued to press the attack all afternoon. Then Longstreet threw Johnson and Hindman's divisions against Brannan's right. Before Johnson could close, Steedman arrived to block him. On his march from McAfee's Church he had diverged from the LaFayette Road to avoid artillery fire, and had passed through Mullis' farm. He struck Johnson head-on, and this fight continued until dark, with Johnson definitely repulsed.

Longstreet, having failed in flank attacks, now brought up Preston's fresh division against Thomas' center. The fighting was vicious and bloody, but artillery and their breastworks enabled the Federals to stand fast.

Bragg finally got Polk moving at 5 p.m. Liddell reached the LaFayette Road with two brigades but was thrown back by Turchin's audacious counterattack.

At 5:30 p.m. Thomas began to withdraw. Three regiments covering the movement from Horseshoe Ridge were sacrificed but the rest of Thomas' force retreated safely under cover of darkness to Rossville. Bragg did not pursue.



1/2 mile

16, 17, 18, 20

6:30 p.m.
Horseshoe Ridge