

Somerset Plain

In their new airmobile role, the Screaming Eagles exercised their new wings with a combat assault by 2/502nd and 2/327th into the A shau Valley, the North Vietnamese stronghold west of Hue. Designed to cut off supply routes from the west, the operation began with an airlift of two battalions from the 1st Brigade. The next day two battalions of the 1st ARVN Division air-assaulted into the area secured by the 2nd Bn., 327th Abn. Inf. near Ta Bat airfield.

The Paratroopers met scattered contact throughout the operation. Two bitter tastes of allied power first by the ARVN units and then by the 1st Bn., 327th Abn. Inf. discouraged any future contacts. The NVA who had not fled the area were forced to de-escalate to small harassing attacks on the bordering fire bases with mortar and artillery fire.

On August 21, the allied troops were airlifted from the valley floor. During the 17 day operation, 181 NVA were killed and four taken prisoner. The Screaming Eagles also captured 58 individual and crew-served weapons.

As the paratroopers left the picturesque valley, the NVA sanctuary was a shambles. Base camps were destroyed, roads obliterated and caches uncovered. The remaining NVA were left in a valley ringed with artillery and littered with mine fields to discourage its future tactical value.

Source: 101st AIRBORNE DIVISION'S 1968 YEAR BOOK