



Screaming Eagle Vietnam Diary



by Spec. 4 Thomas Rutledge

October 4 - "No Slack" troopers of Co. B, 2nd Bn. (Ambl.), 327th Inf., while on a search and clear operation near FB Arsenal, engaged an unknown size enemy force killing three enemy soldiers, capturing three AK-47 rifles, and a quantity of explosive charges.

October 5 - "Drive On" soldiers of Co. B, 2nd Bn. (Ambl.), 501st Inf., discovered an enemy cache in an old artillery crater south of FB Brick. Included in the cache were nine AK-47 rifles, 28 RPG rounds, 24 RPG booster charges, 1000 rounds of .30 caliber machine gun ammunition, 10 82mm mortar rounds, over 380 pull-type fuses for satchel charges, and an assortment of personal supplies.

In other action today, A Trp., 2nd Sqdn. (Ambl.), 17th Cav., killed six NVA soldiers and captured two 60mm mortar tubes in Quang Tri Province.

October 7 - Troopers of Co. E, 2nd Bn. (Ambl.), 501st Inf., observed an enemy force southwest of FB Brick. The Screaming Eagles killed three enemy with small arms fire. Artillery fire called into the area killed an additional 11 enemy soldiers.

October 9 - B Trp., 2nd Sqdn. (Ambl.), 17th Cav., observed an enemy machine gun position while flying armed aerial reconnaissance missions in the

mountains west of FB Birmingham. The aircraft attacked the position, killing six NVA soldiers and destroying the 12.7mm machine gun.

October 15 - C Btry., 4th Bn. (Ambl.), 77th Aerial Rocket Artillery, flying in support of the 1st Inf. Regt. (ARVN), killed seven NVA soldiers in the mountainous jungles near FB O'Reilly. The "Griffins" were flying aerial reconnaissance of a suspected enemy supply trail.

October 22 - Helicopter gunships of C Trp., 2nd Sqdn. (Ambl.), 17th Cav., engaged an enemy force in the open terrain west of FB Birmingham killing 15 enemy soldiers.

November 1 - COL Donald Siebert, Hempstead, N.Y., assumed duties as chief of staff of the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) in ceremonies at division headquarters.

In November, five days of torrential rains and high winds from Typhoon Joan caused extreme flooding in the lowlands of the Republic of Vietnam's two northern provinces. Flying continuous emergency evacuation and supply missions, helicopters of the 101st evacuated 6,800 refugees and distributed over 140 tons of food and supplies to the flood victims. In all, Screaming Eagle aviators flew 482 missions totaling more

than 215 hours in extremely adverse weather conditions.

November 12 - "Currahees" of Co. B, 1st Bn. (Ambl.), 506th Inf., discovered a bunker complex and arms cache northwest of FB Rakkasan. The Screaming Eagle troopers uncovered 825 pounds of TNT, 18 automatic rifles, eight telescopic sights, two .45 caliber pistols, two 9mm automatic pistols, 23 bolt action rifles, 41 CHICOM anti-personnel mines, 271 82mm mortar rounds, one 60mm mortar round, two 81mm mortar rounds, over 14,600 AK-47 rounds and a large quantity of fuses in the triple canopy mountains. The "Currahees" destroyed the bunker after evacuating the cache.

November 14 - Cobras from C Btry., 4th Bn. (Ambl.), 77th Aerial Rocket Artillery, engaged an enemy force travelling on a high-speed trail near the Laotian border with high explosive rockets and fleshette rounds killing 10 NVA soldiers. The "Griffins" were flying in support of the 1st Inf. Regt. (ARVN) near FB O'Reilly.

November 22 - The division's 3rd Brigade received the **Valorous Unit Award** in a ceremony at Camp Evans. LTG James W. Sutherland, XXIV Corps commander, presented the award to the "Triple Threat" brigade for extraordinary heroism in the A Shau Valley during combat operations in 1969.

December 8 - "Rakkasans" of Co. B, 3rd Bn. (Ambl.), 187th Inf., discovered five enemy bunkers while on a search and clear mission in the foothills northwest of FB Jack. The Screaming Eagles found seven submachine guns of unknown type and one RPG launcher inside the bunkers. The "Triple Threat" soldiers evacuated the weapons and destroyed the bunker site.

December 17 - Cobra gunships from C Trp., 2nd Sqdn. (Ambl.), 17th Cav., flying extensive aerial reconnaissance missions in the A Shau Valley engaged an enemy force with high-explosive rockets and minigun fire killing 16 NVA soldiers.

December 18 - Aircraft from the 2nd Sqdn. (Ambl.), 17th Cav., in separate encounters throughout northern MR I, killed eight enemy soldiers and destroyed three 12.7mm machine guns.

December 19 - In continued extensive aerial reconnaissance throughout northern MR I, Cobra gunships of the 2nd Sqdn. (Ambl.), 17th Cav., killed 21 NVA soldiers and destroyed two 12.7mm machine guns and two 60mm mortar tubes.



December 22 - More than 19,000 Screaming Eagles and personnel representing commands throughout northern MR I were treated to two hours and 15 minutes of laughter, song and beautiful women in the 20th Annual Bob Hope Christmas Show held at Camp Eagle. Featured in Hope's seventh consecutive Southeast Asian Christmas present were singer-dancer Lola Falana, country-western singer Bobbi Martin, Cincinnati Red's catcher Johnny Bench, the Golddiggers, Miss World - Jennifer Josephine Hosten, singer Gloria Loring, the Ding-A-Lings and Les Brown and his "Band of Renown."

January 13 - Cobra helicopters of the 2nd Sqdn. (Ambl.), 17th Cav., flying reconnaissance missions throughout the 101st AO and Quang Tri Province killed 13 enemy soldiers and destroyed one crew-served weapon.

In other activity today, "Rakkasans" of 3rd Bn. (Ambl.), 187th Inf., discovered a large enemy grave site northwest of FB Jack containing 14 NVA bodies. The enemy soldiers were believed to have been killed in a recent artillery strike in the area.

January 14 - A "pink team" from A Trp., 2nd Sqdn. (Ambl.), 17th Cav., while on an aerial reconnaissance mission in Quang Tri Province, observed five enemy soldiers walking along a supply trail. The team killed all five soldiers.

January 15 - MG John J. Hennessey, Chicago, departed the division to become Commandant of the Command and General Staff College and Commanding General of Ft. Leavenworth, Kan.

Continuing its extensive aerial reconnaissance, A Trp., 2nd Sqdn. (Ambl.), 17th Cav., engaged two enemy machine gun positions, killing four NVA soldiers and destroying two 12.7mm machine guns in Quang Tri Province.

January 16 - In aerial combat operations, A Trp., 2nd Sqdn. (Ambl.), 17th Cav., continued to seek the enemy and destroy machine gun positions near the Laotian border. Gunships from the Quang Tri skywarriors destroyed three 12.7mm machine guns and killed nine enemy soldiers in encounters throughout the day.

January 17 - Pilots of A Trp., 2nd Sqdn. (Ambl.), 17th Cav., observed two enemy machine gun positions in the mountains of Quang Tri Province. In the ensuing action, eight NVA soldiers were killed and the 12.7mm machine guns were destroyed.

Also today, "Rakkasans" of Co. C, 3rd Bn. (Ambl.), 187th Inf., were joined by Cobras of the 4th Bn. (Ambl.), 77th Aerial Rocket Artillery, to destroy an enemy bunker complex. The Screaming Eagles discovered the complex on a search and clear operation in the mountains northwest of FB Jack. Nine NVA soldiers were killed and the complex was destroyed through a combined effort of the "Triple Threat" infantrymen and the "Griffin" pilots.

January 18 - A Trp., 2nd Sqdn. (Ambl.), 17th Cav., ended its sixth consecutive day of contact in Quang Tri Province by killing five NVA soldiers and destroying two 12.7mm machine guns. Cav gunships killed 41 enemy soldiers and destroyed 10 crew-served weapons in the six-day period.

January 24 - Screaming Eagles of Co. A, 1st Bn. (Ambl.), 501st Inf., discovered a large weapons cache west of Hue consisting of 39 SKS rifles, 12 AK-47 rifles, two carbines, and three submachine guns. The weapons were evacuated by the "Geronimo" troopers.

February 1 - MG Thomas M. Tarpley, Quincy, Ill., became commanding general of the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) in ceremonies at the division's Camp Eagle headquarters.

February 2 - The chill of the monsoon rains could not dampen the spirits of





4,500 Screaming Eagles as they endured adverse weather conditions to enjoy a soul-filled show featuring Miss Black America, black beauty queens from three other states, and an entourage of talented rock musicians. Miss Black America, 19 year-old Stefanie Clark of Washington, D.C., was assisted by her "Royal Court" comprised of Miss Black Alabama, Brenda Duff; Miss Black North Carolina, Sylvia Smith; and Miss Black Utah, Inas Slade.

February 10 - "No Slack" troopers of 2nd Bn. (Ambl.), 327th Inf., reopened **FB Rendezvous** near the **A Shau Valley**, marking the first time any battalion size unit has been there since September 1969.

Also today, Screaming Eagles from 1st Bn. (Ambl.), 327th Inf. and 2nd Bn. (Ambl.), 502nd Inf., provided road security for the engineers of 326th Engr. Bn. (Ambl.) as they began work on the **13 mile stretch of Route 547 from FB Bastogne to the A Shau Valley**.

In other action, "Griffins" from B Btry., 4th Bn. (Ambl.), 77th Aerial Rocket Artillery, engaged an enemy position near **FB Barnett** killing three NVA soldiers and destroying one 12.7mm machine gun.

February 11 - 105mm Howitzers from A Btry., 2nd Bn. (Ambl.), 320th Arty., were airlifted to **FB Rendezvous** to provide support for 101st forces in the area.

February 12 - Screaming Eagles from 326th Engr. Bn. (Ambl.) began four days of work on Route 547 between **FB Veghel** and **FB Rendezvous**.

February 15 - 326th Engr. Bn. (Ambl.) completed work on Route 547. This was the first time that the road was passable since the summer of 1969.

February 18 - "No Slack" troopers from Co. E, 2nd Bn. (Ambl.), 327th Inf., employed anti-personnel mines against an unknown size enemy force killing four enemy soldiers. Captured in the encounter were three AK-47 rifles, one RPG launcher, miscellaneous demolitions, and a quantity of medical supplies.

February 21 - "Rakkasans" of Co. E, 3rd Bn. (Ambl.), 187th Inf., repelled an enemy sapper attack on their night defensive position at **Firebase Scotch**, northwest of Quang Tri. The action resulted in seven NVA soldiers being killed, four AK-47 rifles, one AK-50 machine gun, one RPG launcher, and 40 grenades being captured, and numerous blood trails leading back into the dense elephant grass surrounding their position.

February 24 - Flying in support of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) thrust into Laos (Operation Lam Son 719), "Griffins" from 4th Bn. (Ambl.), 77th Aerial Rocket Artillery, killed 37 NVA, destroyed a 14.5mm antiaircraft gun and four 12.7mm machine guns.

In other action today the CP of the 3rd Brigade established headquarters at **Camp Carroll**.

February 25 - Screaming Eagles from 2nd Bn. (Ambl.), 502nd Inf. and 1st Bn. (Ambl.), 501st Inf., moved north to take over AO previously the responsibility of ARVN units to enable the RVNAF to bolster their forces in Laos.

February 25 - In extensive search and clear operations northwest of Quang Tri, Co. A, 3rd Bn. (Ambl.), 187th Inf., discovered a large enemy cache and bunker complex containing 30 60mm mortar rounds, 65 82mm mortar rounds, 10,000 7.62mm small arms rounds, 20

RPG rounds, one RPG launcher, five Light Anti-tank Weapons, six cases of grenades, 50 anti-personnel mines, blasting caps, and 10 cases of TNT. Utilizing the enemy's own explosives, the "Rakkasans" destroyed the cache and the bunker complex.

February 27 - Pilots from 4th Bn. (Ambl.), 77th Aerial Rocket Artillery, killed 20 NVA near the Laotian border while flying in support of Operation Lam Son 719.

Also today, 2nd Sqdn. (Ambl.), 17th Cav., helicopter gunships were credited with killing 11 NVA soldiers in northern Military Region 1.

February 28 - Troopers from Co. B, 1st Bn. (Ambl.), 502nd Inf., engaged an enemy force while on patrol near **FB Barracuda**. The ensuing action resulted in two enemy killed, two AK-47 rifles captured, and 20 pounds of rice destroyed.

March 1 - "No Slack" soldiers from 2nd Bn. (Ambl.), 327th Inf., took up new positions in the northern sector of MR 1 to assist 101st forces already operating in the area.

March 3 - The 101st assumed tactical responsibility for all of northern Military Region 1 as the 1st Bde., 5th Inf. Div. (Mech.) and all units under its operational control (OPCON) passed OPCON to the Screaming Eagles.

March 8 - "Geronimos" of Co. D, 1st Bn. (Ambl.), 501st Inf., engaged four enemy soldiers in the rolling hills north of Quang Tri, killing all four and capturing three weapons. The Screaming Eagle element was operating just south of the DMZ in support of Operation Lam Son 719.

March 9 - In continued operations north of Quang Tri, "Geronimos" of Cos. A and D, 1st Bn. (Ambl.), 501st Inf., uncovered two enemy caches totaling 329 60mm mortar rounds, one 82mm mortar round, seven RPG rounds, and 500 rounds of .30 caliber small arms ammunition.

March 14 - Shortly after being inserted into the **Rockpile** area northwest of Quang Tri, "Geronimos" of Co. C, 1st Bn. (Ambl.), 501st Inf., discovered an enemy supply trail. Employing mechanical ambushes and small arms fire, the Screaming Eagle element killed nine NVA soldiers, captured 18 rucksacks of rice, and seven rifles.

March 24 - "Currahees" of Co. B, 2nd Bn. (Ambl.), 506th Inf., killed nine enemy soldiers in separate actions during the day. Five AK-47 rifles and one RPG launcher were captured as a result of encounters north of **Firebase Vandergrift**.

March 29 - "Geronimos" of Co. D, 1st Bn. (Ambl.), 501st Inf., discovered two enemy caves while on search and clear operations northwest of Quang Tri in support of Operation Lam Son 719. The caves contained 35 82mm mortar rounds, 82 82mm mortar fuses, 60 60mm mortar rounds, nine 75mm recoilless rifle rounds, a quantity of pull-type fuses, and various other enemy equipment.

