

'First Strike' Troops Maul NVA

HUE — "First Strike" battalion paratroopers from the 2nd Brigade killed 174 enemy during a three-day assault against Ap Dong Lam village northwest of here recently during Operation Carentan II.

Although the Viet Cong and NVA regulars had received written orders to stay in their fortified positions and fight at all costs, only a few snipers remained when the Screaming Eagles of the 1st Bn. (Abn), 562nd Inf. swept through the village on the morning of the third day.

Supported by artillery, helicopter gun ships, tactical air and naval guns, paratroopers

from A Co., commanded by Capt. Terrance N. Spiegelberg, Seattle, Wash., charged in from the surrounding rice paddies to breach the Communist perimeter three times in the first two days of fighting.

Each time, the men of "First Strike" met fierce resistance from enemy machine-guns, mortars, automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenades (RPG) hidden by the enemy in treelines encircling the village.

"The enemy had good fortifications, modern weapons and plenty of ammunition," Spiegelberg said. "The bunkers were arranged so the insurgents could cover each other."

On the second morning, A Co. paratroopers switched from a column to a line formation, fighting their way to the first hedgerow with the 1st and 2nd platoons abreast.

"I haven't used so many fundamentals of combat since basic training," said Lt. Geoffrey L. Scanlon, Ft. Wright, Ky., 1st Platoon leader. "It was like the practice assault, only this time nobody was shooting over our heads."

Hand grenades from both sides soon filled the air in a close-in battle for 25 yards of rice paddy between two of the hedgerows. Three paratroopers had their helmets blown off

from automatic weapons fire, but remained unscathed.

"We could have charged them and taken the village right then," Spiegelberg said,

"but it would have cost us too many men. We knew exactly where they were after our probe, so we pulled back and

(Continued on Page 4)



Tressel Walkers

Pfc. Dave Watson, Cincinnati, Ohio, and Pfc. Jerry R. Hinesman, Reading, Pa., lead paratroopers of the 1st Brigade over one of the many obstacles found during Operation Carentan II north of Phan Bai recently. Both are members of the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 562nd Inf.

(Photo by Spec. 4 Ben Croxson)

The Screaming Eagle

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Shock Force Recon Patrol, Arty Smash Large VC Unit

PHAN THIEP—A paratrooper from a "Currahee" reconnaissance element stopped counting advancing Viet Cong at 125 near here recently during a mission within the 1st Brigade troopers' area of Operation McLean.

The 3rd Bn. (Abn), 568th Inf. reconnaissance team was conducting a search mission when they spotted a reinforced enemy company and called in supporting artillery fire that killed more than 90 insurgents.

Point man Pfc. Tim Keller, Wallingford, Conn., stopped the patrol when he spotted 20 VC off to the right of some railroad tracks going toward the mountains west of here. Sgt. Jerry Ford, Miami, Fla., im-

mediately called in artillery on the enemy.

As the small band of paratroopers moved down the tracks, Spec. 4 James Attwood, Newport, Ky., spotted a Viet Cong running across the tracks ahead of them. Soon two more insurgents appeared and spotted the Screaming Eagles.

VC Killed

The "Currahee" patrol opened up on the enemy, killing all of them. They captured two AK-47's and one carbine.

Moving on, Sgt. Sam Jacobs, San Antonio, led the paratroopers across a dry rice paddy and into a small treeline where they discovered several used trails. Soon they saw a lone Viet Cong at a water hole taking a drink.

He looked up and saw Jacobs before trying to run away. He was killed before finishing his second step.

The patrol pushed on through a graveyard, into a creekbed and out onto another dry rice paddy to set up for the night.

During the night, Ford spotted six NVA regulars moving in their direction. Artillery fire was called in while Ford and his men waited in silence.

After the shells landed on target, Staff Sgt. Jerry Oches, Seattle, Wash., saw 12 more enemy carrying AK-47's coming out of the creekbed and onto the trail. Six more enemy joined them and the group stopped and waited.

By this time Jacobs decided (Continued on Page 4)

Bien Hoa Battle Nets 35 Enemy For 2/506

BIEN HOA — Paratroopers of the 3rd Brigade killed 35 North Vietnamese Army regulars and suffered light casualties in a hard-fought battle near Bien Hoa recently.

Paratroopers from C Co., 2nd Bn. (Abn), 568th Inf. were searching the thick jungles along the Dong Nai River for enemy rocket launching sites.

"We spotted freshly cut trees and halted the rest of the company," said Platoon Sgt. Joe Steed, Charleston, S.C. "Our CO then ordered us to make a reconnaissance of the area in all directions."

Before Steed and Pfc. John Keller, Newman, Calif., had taken 20 steps, they were fired at by an NVA carrying an RPG rocket launcher.

"We scrambled for cover and returned their fire," Steed said. "They were shooting at us with rockets and automatic weapons. One of our M-79 grenades exploded and I saw at least three NVA go down."

A fierce firefight raged for 45 minutes following initial contact with an NVA reinforced platoon.

First Sgt. Grover Wolford, Fayetteville, N.C., took control of the three "Currahee" platoons while C Co. commander, Capt. James B. McMonigle, Lewiston, Idaho, coordinated with supporting artillery units.

"First Sgt. Grover jumped from position to position, pulling the wounded back to safety," said Sgt. Clifford Singleton, Norwood, Ohio.

Spec. 4 Benedicto Cruz, Chicago, a company medic, also kept moving around during the firefight, helping the wounded.

The Screaming Eagles were able to gain fire superiority and the NVA regulars began to fall, three and four at a volley.

Artillery support from the 155-mm guns of A Btry., 204th Arty. proved too much for the enemy who began to pull back.

Air strikes were then called in on the fleeing NVA. The ground shook as 750-pound bombs tore into the bunkers. Helicopter gunships also raked the retreating enemy.

Lt. Col. David E. Grange, Ronkonksma, N.Y., the "Currahee" battalion commander, was with C Co. during the operation. "It was an excellent idea Captain McMonigle had to send out small reconnaissance patrols to probe the enemy force instead of going straight in," he said.

"We caught the NVA right in the middle of building a base camp for at least a company," Steed said. "It's a good thing we uncovered them before they were dug in. I doubt that the enemy will return to this area for awhile."



Battle Line

Paratroopers of the 1st Brigade engage entrenched NVA regulars recently during Operation Carentan II in northern I Corps. The Screaming Eagles are from the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf.

(Photo by Spec. 5 Richard McLaughlin)

Assault Routs VC; 15 Killed

HUE—Paratroopers of the 2nd Brigade captured an enemy-held village and routed an NVA company in a two-day battle north of here recently along the banks of the Song Huong River during Operation Carentan II.

Using a two-pronged helicopter assault, airborne infantrymen from A and D Co.'s, 1st Bn. (Abn), 501st Inf. supported by U.S. Navy patrol boats, attacked the entrenched enemy, killing 15 and detaining 18 more for questioning.

Entering the village along the edge of the Song Huong, D Co.'s 1st platoon ran into heavy resistance from bunker positions in an old French fort.

"I came in on the second lift and when we touched down it was a very hot LZ," said Spec. 4 Warner T. Hulse, Marion, Ind. "Everyone on the ground yelled for us to get down as soon as we came in."

As the paratroopers assembled in a rice paddy, the Communists started throwing grenades at them from their bunkers. After pulling back, artillery was requested. Throughout the night the big guns pounded the enemy.

At dawn, Air Force Phantom fighters unloaded high explosive bombs on the enemy positions as D Co. commander, Capt. Guy Holland, St. Louis, radioed corrections to a Forward Air Controller (FAC) flying above them.

Minutes after the bombing runs, D Co. paratroopers, supported by helicopter gunships, advanced through the still dewy rice paddy to the trassine.

Against minor resistance they swept through the fort and nearby village within an hour, blowing enemy bunkers as they advanced.

Captured in the battle were four SKS rifles, four AK-47's, five RPG rockets and several hundred rounds of small arms ammunition.

2/501 Smashes Attack; NVA Leave 12 Behind

HUE—Infantrymen from the 2nd Brigade claimed 13 enemy dead and three detained after a pre-dawn attack on their positions north of here recently.

The battle began at 4 a.m. when a fierce volley of AK-47 rounds followed the sound of exploding Bangalore torpedoes. The Communists were trying to break through the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 501st Inf. perimeter.

They started running through the holes in the wire carrying high explosive satchel charges. They were headed for the big 155mm howitzers of B Btry. (Abn), 521st Arty.



Well Done

Receiving the Bronze Star with "V" device from Maj. Gen. O. M. Barsanti, division commander, is Staff Sgt. Michael D. Ashton, Jefferson, Ore., a member of D Co., 2nd Bn. (Abn), 501st Inf. He was cited for bravery during 2nd Brigade action in northern I Corps at the end of their phase of Operation Job Start.

(Photo by Spec. 4 Tony Vigilante)

2/11th Arty Supports 101st I Corps Action

CAMP EAGLE — Fifty years ago "Calamity Jane," a 155mm howitzer of the 11th Field Artillery Regiment, was awarded the honor of firing the last shot of World War II in recognition of the unit's outstanding war record.

Today, the namesake of "Calamity Jane" and other 155mm gun sections of the 2nd Bn., 11th Arty. provide quick and accurate fire support for the paratroopers of the 101st Airborne Division engaged in combat operations in northern I Corps and the Phuoc Vinh region northwest of Saigon.

The battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Walter V. Applegate, Worthington, Ohio, deployed to Vietnam in November, 1966.

Since that time, it has fired more than 350-thousand rounds of 155mm ammunition in support of American ground troops of

the 1st, 4th, 9th, 28th, 101st, 32D and Americal Divisions.

In December, 1967, the battalion was attached to the 101st at Bien Hoa and Song Bo. The Viet Cong quickly felt the sting of the "Dragons" during Operation San Angelo as the 155mm howitzers played an important role in repulsing a Viet Cong Tet assault on Song Bo City.

Currently headquartered at the 101st command post here, the battalion continues to provide effective medium artillery support from nearby fire bases.

"Calamity Jane" and her sister 155's stand ready for the call of "fire mission" from the Screaming Eagles.

NVA Unit Easy Prey For 1/501

HUE — Pushing across water-logged rice paddies, paratroopers from the 2nd Brigade surprised an NVA force in a battle that resembled a duck shoot north of here recently.

Summoned to assist a reconnaissance element, members of C Co., 1st Bn. (Abn), 501st Inf. force-marched three and one-half kilometers to a small village being held by an NVA platoon.

The company of paratroopers splashed across a rice paddy and spotted several enemy in the water, armed with AK-47's.

The NVA force was trying to encircle and close in on the reconnaissance element when C Co. surprised them amidst the water and rice.

"We would shoot at them and they would duck down in the water," said Sgt. John Hearn, Rockford, Ill.

When the shooting stopped and the water calmed down, four NVA bodies were found and one insurgent was detained.

Division Airlift

In March 1969, the 101st Airborne Division participated in PUERTO PINE, a mass airlift during which 3900 troops and 40,000 tons of equipment were airlifted to Puerto Rico.

Commander's Corner

M.G. O. M. Barsanti



Traffic safety and the observance of all traffic and speed laws have been of great concern to me for some time. As a commander, I have the responsibility to insure adequate measures are being employed to foster obedience and respect to these regulations. But more important than mere respect for these regulations, I must guarantee that the safety of every paratrooper of the 101st Airborne Division is not jeopardized because of careless traffic habits.

In Vietnam, safety depends on the caution and care that you, both as a driver and passenger, exercise when you are in a military vehicle. It will make no difference what type vehicle you are utilizing—a jeep, two-and-one-half ton truck, or an APC. In the interest of the safety of the majority, I will not excuse or tolerate improper, careless, or dangerous operation of vehicles.

By experience you have learned that Vietnamese roads are narrow, mostly unpaved, and treacherous. They are a far cry from the system of superhighways and excellent secondary roads that you were accustomed to in the United States. Caution and safety were required there. In Vietnam, you must intensify your appreciation and understanding of safe driving habits. Usually this means go slow, don't pass, and stay to the right!

Day in and day out, the roads in and around Camp Eagle are crowded with motor scooters, private autos and military vehicles. Great patience and care in negotiating this traffic are most important. Your lives and the lives of Vietnamese civilians in the area are at stake. They frequently do not understand the destructive power of motor vehicles, but you do—or should—and I expect you to understand, give way and be patient.

The great number of Vietnamese who walk or drive along the road should be used as an indication of restraint and caution needed when you drive. Villages and hamlets dot the countryside. They are not so different from ours. We are obliged to show our respect for Vietnamese laws; obey them, respect them, and stay out of conflict with them.

When you drive in the division area or in any other base camp, observe the posted speed limits. The daily activity in the base camps and the numerous vehicles that use our roads demand control of speed. Our limits are low, but adequate. They provide safe speeds for drivers and lessen the danger to pedestrians in the area. Minimum speeds limits dust and thus contributes to safety, health and sanitation objectives.

I cannot emphasize too greatly my desire for you to exercise good judgment whenever and wherever you drive in Vietnam. Defensive driving—anticipating a mistake that someone else will make—will insure your safety, the safety of your passengers, and of course, the safety of the Vietnamese people working next to you.

We are here to help the Vietnamese. Americans are looked upon as an example of a highly developed society. Our example is important to their image of us. The vehicle you are driving can be used as an instrument to improve their thinking. Do not turn your vehicle into a weapon of death and destruction, or you will be helping the enemy.

Being a good driver—a soldier who respects and obeys all traffic laws—doesn't cost you a thing. But it is something to be proud of.



Jungle Heat

The agony of war can be seen in the face of Pfc. Clarence Moragne, Philadelphia, of the 3rd Bn. (Abn), 187th Inf. Moragne and Spec. 4 Kenneth Kolyuk, Sacramento, Calif., are near exhaustion after hacking their way through more than 8,000 meters of dense jungle near Phuoc Vinh. The 3rd Brigade troopers were part of a company sweep to seek out enemy strongholds.

(Photo by Staff Sgt. Earl Van Aalstine)



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