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Carentan II

Carentan I terminated on March 31, with the launching of Operation Carentan II. The new operation was conducted in the same area, northwest from the coastal plains; south from Hue; due west to the A Shau Valley.

Operation Carentan II proved to be a testing point for the Screaming Eagles. North Vietnamese regulars challenged Paratrooper forces almost daily. The normal tactic of hit and run was absent from the enemy's fighting strategy. The Screaming Eagles passed their test defeating the enemy on every front in every encounter. The Screaming Eagles earned a reputation among the enemy units. Those who wear the Eagle on their shoulder were to be avoided.

The mission of Carentan II was to continue driving hostile forces from the area around Hue, and to begin clearing operations toward the A Shau Valley for a possible future raid into that area. The first major battle occurred on the famous "Street without Joy." The 2nd Squadron, 17th Airborne Cavalry began sweeping the area destroying bunker complexes and other fortifications that had long been NVA strongholds. Assisting in the "Street" sweep were 2nd Brigade troopers from the 2nd Bn., 501st Abn. Inf. A sweep of the Phong Dien village after a night cordon and artillery bombardment resulted in 66 enemy dead.

During the same period, other 2nd Brigade troopers were completing a week-long reconnaissance-in-force along the Song Bo River, three miles northwest of Hue. Army aviation, artillery, tactical air, and the airborne troopers combined to kill 200 enemy and capture 44 weapons.

Another cordon operation around the village of Dong Xuyen, three miles north of Hue, netted paratroopers from the 1st Bn., 501st Abn. Inf., 53 enemy killed in three days of bitter fighting.

Meanwhile, "Always First" troopers from the 1st Brigade launched Operation Delaware west of Camp Eagle.

Source: 101st Airborne Division's 1968 Year Book

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Operation Carentan II was initiated on 1 April as an extension of Carentan I rather than as an entirely new operation. The mission remained the same with the additional requirement to extend the Division AO to the west to include the areas and responsibilities previously held by the 2d and 3d Brigades of the 1st ACD. This mission was designed to facilitate the 1st Cav drive to open Hwy 9 and the relief of the Marines at Khe Sanh Combat Base. The AO extension generally included the area between Hwy QL-1 and the Gulf of Tonkin from Camp Evans northwest to Hai Lang.

Source: 101st Air Cavalry Division July 1968
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