E COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

APRIL 1966 — HILL 69 (BATTALION CP, CHU LAI)

Compiled from the 2/5 Command Chronology for April 1966

1st Marine Division · III Marine Amphibious Force · I Corps, Republic of Vietnam

1. Unit Overview

Unit Designation	Echo Company (E Co), 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division
Reporting Period	1–30 April 1966
Commander	Capt J. S. Cooper (in post from 18 March 1966); Capt J. L. Cooper (from 13 April 1966)
Higher HQ	2nd Battalion, 5th Marines (LtCol R. H. Uskurait); 5th Marines; 1st Marine Division
Area of Operations	Hill 69 (battalion CP, Chu Lai), Tam Ky (Colorado base)
Combat Posture	Combat operations, patrols and security (2 combat entries)
Base of Operations	Hill 69 (battalion CP, Chu Lai)
Corps Area	I Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam

2. Commander's Summary

Company E’s entries for April 1966 place it most often at or near Hill 69 (battalion CP, Chu Lai) (1 of 1 entries with a named place or grid), and also at Tam Ky (Colorado base).

Company E was commanded by Capt J. S. Cooper (in post from 18 March 1966); Capt J. L. Cooper (from 13 April 1966); the battalion by LtCol R. H. Uskurait (in post from 22 February 1966).

The battalion’s command chronology names Company E in 2 entries this month (2 combat).

On 26 April 1966: Wyoming took 2/5 beyond the Chu Lai defenses to search for Viet Cong forces and their positions.

3. Operations Overview

Operation / Activity	Dates	Description
Operation Wyoming	260730H April 1966 – 011922H May 1966 (2/5 after action report)	Wyoming took 2/5 beyond the Chu Lai defenses to search for Viet Cong forces and their positions.

4. Chronology of Company E Activities

Compiled from the checked transcriptions of the 2/5 command chronology for April 1966 in the hotel25vv research database. Only entries naming Company E are listed. Times and grid references are as recorded; each entry ends with its source page.

Date	Activity / Events
26 Apr–01 May	Wyoming took 2/5 beyond the Chu Lai defenses to search for Viet Cong forces and their positions. Echo, Foxtrot and attached elements were to land by helicopter at Landing Zone Eagle, sweep through their assigned area, and be ready to reinforce 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines. By 9:15 on April 26, the helicopter landing was complete. The work ahead would be done on foot. The plan explicitly called for a sweep north and northwest along the Tam Ky River after landing. Echo was reported north of LZ Eagle at BT 332195 on April 26. The following days' command-post reports trace the operation southeast through the search area. By April 30 the command post was at BT 381131 and moving toward truck pickup. There was reason to expect an organized enemy. Intelligence passed down from the 1st Marines during April placed the A-19 and A-21 local-force companies, each estimated at 120–150 men, and the 300th Main Force Battalion, estimated at 300–350, in the objective area. These were Viet Cong formations; the brief did not identify a North Vietnamese Army unit. They were estimates of forces that might be encountered, not a count of the men actually faced by 2/5. A suspected A-19 position lay near Xuan Ngoc (2), but the sweep did not reach that area until its final day. Contact proved mostly to be harassing fire, more frequent around Xuan Ngoc (1) and (2), rather than a sustained fight with the expected formations. Hamlets contained trenches, fighting holes and wire. Hedgerows restricted sight and movement, while heat and humidity wore down the Marines crossing the low hills, fields and irrigation channels. Hidden explosives exacted a heavy price. On the first evening, Foxtrot detonated what appeared to be a booby-trapped mortar round: one Marine was killed and five wounded, one of whom later died. The next afternoon, a similar device wounded eight Echo Marines. The sweep also dismantled defensive positions. On April 29, Echo reported destroying 25 tunnel complexes, 15 punji traps and eight spider traps; a later entry that day recorded another 40 bunker/tunnel networks destroyed. Helicopters kept the force supplied and carried casualties out for treatment throughout the operation. MAG-36 supplied the helicopter support, with UH-34D transports and VMO-6 armed UH-1E escorts. HMM-362 flew the reconnaissance-team insertion; HMM-261 and HMM-362 extracted 3/1 at the operation's end, and HMM-363 also flew logistics missions. These were roles across the operation, rather than an aircraft-by-aircraft assignment to 2/5. The battalion's supply flights normally came morning and afternoon, using two UH-34Ds, with extra missions when needed. Sixteen requests brought evacuation aircraft to casualties, including one mission at night. For Marines needing more care than corpsmen could give in the field, the evacuation destination was the 1st Medical Battalion at Chu Lai. The final results were more limited than a decisive defeat of an enemy formation: two Viet Cong were reported probably killed, seven possibly wounded, and one suspect captured. The

Date	Activity / Events
	qualifications matter—these were the battalion's estimates, not confirmed enemy losses. Its U.S. casualty return listed one killed in action, one who died of wounds and 17 wounded. Lieutenant Colonel Robert H. Uskurait judged the assigned mission accomplished: the helicopter assault and search had gone forward as planned, and the operation had challenged Viet Cong control. His report also acknowledged civilian casualties. But he recommended returning with operations that would clear and hold the area, supported by Popular Forces and People's Action Teams. Wyoming had completed a sweep and destroyed positions; it had not established lasting control. That makes it a limited tactical success, rather than a conclusive victory. The execution log places the final return to Hill 69 on April 30; the report's cover gives May 1 as the end date. The support map places K/4/11 at its reported Wyoming grid, BT 397148. C/1/11 is shown at BT 517057 as its April 29 displacement destination. The supply staging helipad was between FLSG-B and MAG-36. USS Taylor provided naval gunfire support. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 28; Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 29]
28 Apr 11:00	During Echo's village search, Marines destroyed two caves. The Navy chaplain suffered a slight foot wound but remained in the field. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 32]

5. Notes and Caveats

This file was built on 22 November 2026 in the same format as the Company H reports, directly from the checked, page-cited transcriptions of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines command chronologies. The notes below record its sources and where the record is thin.

1. SOURCE. The entries come from Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-action report (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048069); Command chronology · MAG-36, April 1966 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201078268); Command chronology · April 1966 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048068); Operation Wyoming · division situation reports (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201014035).

2. HOW IT WAS COMPILED. Every entry in the research database whose units name Company E (Echo) for April 1966 is listed in date and time order, with the page of the chronology it was read from. Entries that name only another company are left out.

3. COMMANDER. Company and battalion commanders are taken from the monthly organisation data (Section I of each chronology) as recorded in the battalion leadership ledger.

4. CASUALTIES. Casualty figures are not totalled here. Individual losses appear in the entries as recorded; for authoritative totals see the casualty tables in the original chronology.

5. ORIGINALS. National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 127, Records of the United States Marine Corps. For full records contact National Archives II, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park MD 20740, or Marine Corps History Division, Quantico VA 22134.

6. Sources

This document was compiled from the following primary and secondary sources:

PRIMARY SOURCES

— Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-action report (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048069)

— Command chronology · MAG-36, April 1966 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201078268)

— Command chronology · April 1966 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048068)

— Operation Wyoming · division situation reports (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201014035)

SECONDARY SOURCES

— Shulimson, Jack and Charles M. Johnson. U.S. Marines in Vietnam: An Expanding War, 1966. History and Museums Division, HQMC, 1982.

— “Echo Company.” Hotel 2/5 Combat Marines. https://hotel25vv.com

Document prepared for historical research purposes. For authoritative casualty figures, unit rosters, and engagement details, consult original 2/5 Command Chronology records at NARA RG 127. | Echo Company, 2/5 Marines, April 1966