E COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

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

Compiled from the 2/5 Command Chronology for May 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	1–31 May 1966
Commander	Capt J. L. Cooper (from 1 May 1966)
Higher HQ	2nd Battalion, 5th Marines (LtCol R. H. Uskurait; LtCol Walter Moore); 5th Marines; 1st Marine Division
Area of Operations	Battalion area: Hill 69 (battalion CP, Chu Lai), Thanh My Trung (1) (Echo patrol base), Hill 22 (Hotel, Chu Lai)
Combat Posture	Combat operations, patrols and security (48 combat entries)
Base of Operations	With the battalion: Hill 69 (battalion CP, Chu Lai)
Corps Area	I Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam

2. Commander's Summary

The battalion’s entries for May 1966 place the battalion most often at or near Hill 69 (battalion CP, Chu Lai) (6 of 7 entries with a named place or grid), and also at Thanh My Trung (1) (Echo patrol base), Hill 22 (Hotel, Chu Lai). None of Company E’s own entries names a place.

Company E was commanded by Capt J. L. Cooper (from 1 May 1966); the battalion by LtCol R. H. Uskurait (from 1 May 1966); LtCol Walter Moore (from 23 May 1966).

The battalion’s command chronology names Company E in 51 entries this month (48 combat, 2 movement, 1 organization).

On 3 May 1966: A Golf patrol’s contact developed into a joint operation lasting until evening, with artillery and air support.

On 4 May 1966: After taking small-arms fire, the Marines called artillery; the opposing group fled.

On 4 May 1966: Marines returned fire and pursued a trail through the area, reporting one enemy wounded.

3. Operations Overview

Operation / Activity	Dates	Description
With the battalion: Hill 69 (battalion CP, Chu Lai) operations	May 1966	No named operation appears in this month's entries for the company; activities are listed in the chronology below.

4. Chronology of Company E Activities

Compiled from the checked transcriptions of the 2/5 command chronology for May 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
3 May 10:30	A Golf patrol's contact developed into a joint operation lasting until evening, with artillery and air support. One Marine was killed and six wounded; several enemy-loss figures were estimates rather than confirmed counts. The first reinforcements could not cross an open rice paddy under heavy fire. Helicopters brought Echo and the rest of Golf into the action. Two Echo Marines were wounded in flight, and a helicopter crew chief was also wounded. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 9; Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 52]
4 May 08:53	Two unarmed men carrying documents were detained and flown to the interrogation team; no interpreter was available with the patrol. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 9]
4 May 09:00	Marines observed a small group from their position and requested artillery. The subsequent search found no one; the reported wounds remained unconfirmed. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 9]
4 May 09:01	The patrol found extensive damage and two fresh graves. The report classified the dead as probable enemy losses. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 9]
4 May 09:10	After taking small-arms fire, the Marines called artillery; the opposing group fled. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 9]
4 May 10:00	Marines returned fire and pursued a trail through the area, reporting one enemy wounded. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 9]
4 May 10:30	The patrol fired back and saw one man running away, but did not establish further contact. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 9]
4 May 10:45	While receiving intermittent automatic-weapons and machine-gun fire, Marines collected roughly 1,500 pounds of rice and demolished tunnels. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 9]

Date	Activity / Events
4 May 12:00	Small arms, artillery and an air strike were used against six observed men. A search found no results to confirm. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 9]
4 May 12:15	The entry describes an electrically detonated device and a recently vacated machine-gun position; part of the transcription is obscured. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 10]
4 May 12:30	The sweep demolished four tunnels in one area and a cave at a second reported grid. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 10]
4 May 13:10	Echo observed seven men during its continuing sweep and called supporting fire. The result was not established. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 10]
4 May 15:42	Marines called artillery and napalm on a camouflaged group. They later found blood trails; the estimated enemy casualties were not independently confirmed. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 10]
4 May 19:00	The patrol described the wounded person as a Viet Cong nurse carrying a medical kit. Marines also found a large underground room and arranged helicopter medical evacuation. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 10]
5 May 00:05	The company returned fire, after which the opposing position fell silent. One Marine was wounded and evacuated by helicopter. At first light, Golf searched the firing area. A woman pointed out a fortified house with trenches and punji pits; Marines used grenades in the pits and an Ontos destroyed the house. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 10; Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 56]
5 May 13:50	Following a strike on a trench line, the patrol found bloodstains and detained four men. One carried ammunition and a Thompson magazine; casualty estimates were not confirmed by bodies. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 10]
6 May 02:00	After movement below the position, a Marine challenged an approaching person and fired. Two Marines were wounded and evacuated; the report does not fully explain how both were struck. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 11]
7 May 06:00	The company used artillery and requested air support, searched the area and sent three detainees to the interrogation team. The entry describes several contacts through the morning rather than one continuous firefight. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 11]
7 May 19:10	Rifle and mortar fire were returned toward two observed men. The results were unknown. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 11]
8 May 08:45	One man was captured and another entered a cave, throwing a grenade. Marines fired into the cave, reported him killed and destroyed it. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 11]
8 May 09:15	The group returned fire but could not pursue because of its support duties. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 12]
9 May 08:50	A direct hit was observed, but the patrol could not search the distant target to verify the effect. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 12]

Date	Activity / Events
9 May 15:20	The company saw good coverage of the target area but could not assess the result on the ground. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 12]
10 May 11:05	One man was seen fleeing north; the sweep found no further evidence of the opposing force. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 12]
10 May 18:20	The platoon returned fire and called artillery, then searched after contact broke without finding the opposing men. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 12]
11 May 06:15	Marines fired on a group led and followed by armed men. Afterward, they discovered that a dead person, a wounded person and a detainee had their hands tied. The report's casualty labels are inconsistent; those people should not all be treated as confirmed combatants. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 12]
11 May 06:20	The company returned machine-gun, rifle and grenade-launcher fire but found no enemy during the sweep. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 13]
11 May 07:25	Two platoons swept after artillery, fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters struck an observed armed group. Dense vegetation prevented them from finding evidence of the group afterward. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 13]
11 May 09:40	Both men were evacuated by helicopter. The stakes were destroyed with a grenade. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 13]
11 May 11:45	The company returned eight incoming shots and swept the area without locating the shooter. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 13]
11 May 19:30	Echo's security force was involved in an evening contact near grid 413107. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 136]
11 May 20:15	Echo's security force was involved in an evening contact near grid 409099. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 136]
12 May 09:10	Marines exchanged heavy fire and swept the area. The platoon leader attributed the civilian casualties to opposing fire; the woman and child were evacuated. Another Echo platoon set off a device without Marine casualties. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 13]
12 May 10:15	The patrol searched the tunnel, found no sign of occupancy and destroyed it. The final digit of the recorded time is unreadable. Echo searched the tunnel, found no sign of occupancy, and used twelve blocks of C-4 to destroy it. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 13; Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 63]
13 May 06:46	Marines returned machine-gun and rifle fire, then swept dense brush without finding the enemy. The wounded Marine did not require evacuation. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 13]
13 May 07:22	The patrol searched the area after a short contact, reporting an unconfirmed enemy death and demolishing a concealed position. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 13]
13 May 09:08	The company used demolition charges to collapse tunnels, with no indication that they had been recently occupied. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 14]

Date	Activity / Events
13 May 12:00	Under heavy fire from the east bank, Echo crossed and continued the fight with artillery and aircraft support. Three wounded Marines and two women, one wounded, were evacuated. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 14]
13 May 16:45	The patrol returned fire and followed three fleeing men, reporting two wounded and one captured. Dense brush prevented it from accounting for everyone. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 14]
14 May 08:17	The company exchanged automatic-weapons and rifle fire and requested two artillery missions. Its subsequent search found no opposing force. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 14]
14 May 14:20	The Marines found pressure devices attached to two 60-mm rounds and demolished them in place before continuing. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 14]
16 May 05:45	A blocking force came under close machine-gun fire near trenches. An assisting patrol also met heavy resistance. Artillery covered the withdrawal of the opposing groups, and helicopters evacuated the Marine casualties. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 15]
16 May 06:40	The patrol returned five incoming rounds and continued its assignment. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 15]
16 May 07:15	Marines took two men into custody after returning fire. The entry says one was killed while trying to escape; the other went to 1/5 for questioning. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 15]
16 May 11:05	The patrol searched after engaging about fifteen observed men but found no further evidence of them. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 15]
17 May 17:55	A Marine tripped the device in the company's bivouac area. All five casualties were evacuated by helicopter. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 16]
19 May 12:30	By midday the companies occupied their reassigned sectors. The battalion command post remained in place, with 1/5 adjoining the reduced area to the north and east. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 16]
20 May 01:00	The patrol fired illumination and rifles after seeing three men cross a rice paddy. The first-light search found no further contact. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 17]
28 May 07:00	2/5 issued Fragmentary Order 5-66 for Operation Intruder. Reinforced Golf, less part of its strength, would conduct the reconnaissance in force. Echo, also less part of its strength, remained in battalion reserve to exploit any contact. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 18]
28 May during the operation	Reinforced Golf moved into the suspected area with tanks, Ontos, artillery and mortar support. An aerial observer was on station. Echo remained in reserve while Golf searched the valleys. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 18]
28 May	At 2130 on May 27, Ly Tin District Headquarters passed on an uncategorized report of about 300 Viet Cong in valleys west of the battalion's positions. They were said to be wearing utilities and carrying a 57mm recoilless rifle, 60mm mortars, machine guns and antitank mines. This was the force reported by intelligence, not an enemy strength established by contact. The battalion called for 192 artillery rounds against the

Date	Activity / Events
	reported area, followed by harassing and interdiction fire through the night. The chronology places the valleys between BT 403079 and BT 403067, and between BT 411073 and BT 402079; those references describe the suspected area rather than confirmed enemy positions. The next morning, reinforced Golf, less some of its strength, went in as the reconnaissance-in-force element. Tanks, Ontos, artillery and mortars supported the search, and an aerial observer was on station. Echo, also less some of its strength, remained in battalion reserve, ready to exploit any contact. The chronology records the Intruder order at 0700 on May 28 and the operation's termination at 1700. Golf found neither an enemy force nor signs of recent enemy traffic after searching the suspected area. Intruder did not confirm the intelligence report or produce a battle with the reported force. The battalion nevertheless valued the ground reconnaissance and the experience coordinating infantry and supporting arms in an area it had seldom entered. [Command chronology · May 1966, including Wyoming after-actio, PDF p. 18]

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).

2. HOW IT WAS COMPILED. Every entry in the research database whose units name Company E (Echo) for May 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)

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, May 1966