E COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

DECEMBER 1969 — 2/5 FIELD COMMAND POST IN THE ARIZONA

Compiled from the 2/5 Command Chronology for December 1969

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 December 1969
Commander	1stLt J. H. Stiehl (1–31 December)
Higher HQ	2nd Battalion, 5th Marines (LtCol J. T. Bowen); 5th Marines; 1st Marine Division
Area of Operations	2/5 field command post in the Arizona, Liberty Bridge, Hill 42, Henderson Hill
Combat Posture	Combat operations, patrols and security (29 combat entries)
Base of Operations	2/5 field command post in the Arizona
Corps Area	I Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam

2. Commander's Summary

Company E’s entries for December 1969 place it most often at or near 2/5 field command post in the Arizona (10 of 24 entries with a named place or grid), and also at Liberty Bridge, Hill 42, Henderson Hill.

Company E was commanded by 1stLt J. H. Stiehl (1–31 December); the battalion by LtCol J. T. Bowen (1–31 December).

The battalion’s command chronology names Company E in 36 entries this month (29 combat, 4 movement, 2 civic, 1 personnel).

On 1 December 1969: Platoon returning from an ambush at AT 831481 took in an NVA rallier in blue uniform with an AK-47, 2 magazines, 10 rounds, a pack, rain suit and ChiCom grenade — 1 Chieu Hoi.

On 2 December 1969: Platoon at AT 835466 killed an NVA in green uniform running toward a river — 1 NVA KIA.

On 2 December 1969: Echo at AT 832472 killed an NVA with small arms, M-60 and M-79 when he ran into the company's blocking position — 1 NVA KIA.

3. Operations Overview

Operation / Activity	Dates	Description
Operation Butterfly	27 and 31 December 1969 are the dates on which the 2/5 chronology records Company E on Butterfly operations. Butterfly was a rice-denial technique used by the 5th Marines in late 1969, not a single operation.	On the "Butterfly" operation at AT 943508, 936517, 930570 and 928500, an Echo platoon found 40 rice seedling beds — Destroyed

4. Chronology of Company E Activities

Compiled from the checked transcriptions of the 2/5 command chronology for December 1969 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
1 Dec 08:15	Platoon returning from an ambush at AT 831481 took in an NVA rallier in blue uniform with an AK-47, 2 magazines, 10 rounds, a pack, rain suit and ChiCom grenade — 1 Chieu Hoi [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 14]
1 Dec 09:00	Echo in its day position at AT 845495 received 21 refugees asking to go to Duc Duc — Refugees evacuated [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 14]
1 Dec 13:00	Echo in its day position at AT 845495 took in an NVA rallier (a corpsman) in civilian clothes and blue uniform with medical supplies — 1 Chieu Hoi [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 14]
December day unstated	Memorial service for Echo Company. [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 5]
2 Dec 08:45	Platoon at AT 830469 found an M-26 grenade in a C-ration can with a trip wire in the bushes — Destroyed in place [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 16]
2 Dec 09:15	Setting in a new position, the Echo CP at AT 821485 found a 500-lb bomb — Destroyed by EOD [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 16]

Date	Activity / Events
2 Dec 09:30	Platoon at AT 835466 killed an NVA in green uniform running toward a river — 1 NVA KIA [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 16]
2 Dec 09:35	Echo at AT 832472 killed an NVA with small arms, M-60 and M-79 when he ran into the company's blocking position — 1 NVA KIA [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 16]
2 Dec 10:15	Echo at AT 827472 found a 60mm round with a trip wire — Destroyed in place [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 16]
2 Dec 11:45	Platoon at AT 835474 moving south: a Marine tripped a 60mm round lying on a trail — 3 USMC WIA evac [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 16]
2 Dec 12:35	Platoon at AT 831471 killed an NVA in green utilities running 100 m in front — 1 NVA KIA [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 16]
2 Dec 12:50	Platoon at AT 831470 killed an NVA running northeast about 300 m away with a pack, an AK-47 and 2 ChiCom grenades — 1 NVA KIA [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 16]
2 Dec 15:30	Squad at AT 845477 killed an NVA in green uniform; a pack, plastic and medical gear found — 1 NVA KIA [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 16]
3 Dec 07:20	Platoon at AT 848487 destroyed a bunker — Destroyed [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 20]
3 Dec 10:30	Echo in its day position at AT 848487 received 11 refugees — Sent to Duc Duc [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 20]
3 Dec 10:45	Squad in a day position at AT 862493 killed 2 NVA in green uniforms near a bunker — 2 NVA KIA [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 20]
3 Dec 11:30	Squad returning from an ambush at AT 863494 killed an NVA carrying a pack, a diary, Chinese writing, a Russian battle dressing, a U.S. canteen and a wallet — 1 NVA KIA [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 20]
3 Dec 13:35	Platoon on patrol at AT 846476 destroyed a dud 8-inch round — Destroyed [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 20]
3 Dec 15:15	Platoon in a daytime ambush at AT 840472 killed an NVA in green uniform who was trying to set a booby trap (an M-26 in a C-ration can with a trip wire) — 1 NVA KIA [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 20]
3 Dec 16:00	Platoon on patrol at AT 843475 found a VC/NVA believed killed by an air strike — 1 body found [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 20]
3 Dec 16:45	Echo at AT 849488 learned from a VC/NVA that rice in great quantities was at AT 864570 — Information [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 20]
7 Dec 15:55	Platoon on patrol at AT 934479 with a dog handler: the dog tripped a booby trap — 1 routine evac and 1 dog priority evac [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 32]
9 Dec 19:15	Squad moving to an ambush site at AT 942500 tripped an M-26 booby trap with a trip wire — 2 USMC WIA emergency evac [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 38]
15 Dec 19:35	Squad returning from a listening post at AT 963513 tripped a booby trap with a trip wire — 1 USMC WIA routine evac [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 56]
22 Dec 19:15	Squad on the way to an ambush site at AT 925540 tripped a pressure-type M-26 booby trap — 1 USMC WIA routine evac [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 72]
24 Dec 19:35	On watch on Liberty Bridge at AT 922533, an Echo Marine tried to throw an M-26 grenade into the water when it went off early — 2 USMC KIA, 2 USMC WIA (1 priority, 1 emergency evac) [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 76]

Date	Activity / Events
24 Dec	Echo moved from Not stated to An Hoa Combat Base (AT 873 473) by helicopter. Echo guarded the ARVN lift, flew to An Hoa for a one-day stand-down, and went under 3/5 until 24 December. [C-Dec, PDF p. (From the monthly “by Company” summary, written from the chronology page images.) [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 3]
27 Dec 18:00	On the "Butterfly" operation at AT 943508, 936517, 930570 and 928500, an Echo platoon found 40 rice seedling beds — Destroyed [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 82]
27 Dec 18:30	As the Butterfly operation lifted off at AT 928500, two helicopters at 20 ft took 20 rounds of AK fire; both were hit; one returned to the LZ at Liberty Bridge and stayed there — Crew left on the sister helicopter; security kept on the downed helicopter [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 82]
27 Dec 18:30	Echo moved from Last reported position (AT 943 508) to Liberty Bridge (AT 928 500) by helicopter. As the Butterfly operation lifted off at AT 928500, two helicopters at 20 ft took 20 rounds of AK fire; both were hit; one returned to the LZ at Liberty Bridge and stayed there. Result: Crew left on the sister helicopter; security kept on the downed helicopter. Starting point is Echo's last reported position (27 Dec 1800), not stated in this entry. [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 82]
28 Dec 16:45	Squad at AT 927507 took 40 rounds of AK fire from a tree line and had to leave the landing zone after 6 of 10 men were put in; gunships worked the tree line while a CH-46 took the 6 out — Squad extracted [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 84]
30 Dec 14:30	Echo in its day position at AT 923531 saw a VC/NVA body in faded green floating downstream; it caught between guide lines on the southwestern tower — Water too deep to reach the body [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 90]
31 Dec 12:45	Providing security for amtracs at AT 915545, an Echo squad uncovered 700 lb unhusked rice in two 3-ft-square boxes, 15 large cans and a bag — Rice sent to An Hoa [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 94]
31 Dec 16:00	On Operation Butterfly at AT 926504, 925505 and 971503, Echo landed at 3 landing zones and destroyed 5 rice seedling beds with 8 rolls of detonating cord — Destroyed [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 94]
31 Dec	Echo moved from Not stated to Not stated by helicopter. Echo flew “Butterfly” helicopter raids to destroy rice beds on 27 and 31 December. [C-Dec, PDF p. (From the monthly “by Company” summary, written from the chronology page images.) [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 6]
31 Dec	Echo moved from Not stated to Reported position (AT 926 504) by helicopter. 31 Dec December: 1600 AT 926504 On Operation Butterfly at AT 926504, 925505 and 971503, Echo landed at 3 landing zones and destroyed 5 rice seedling beds with 8 rolls of detonating cord Destroyed Journal PDF p. (From the monthly “by Company” summary, written from the chronology page images.) [2/5 ComdC Dec 1969, PDF p. 94]

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 2/5 Command Chronology Dec 1969 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048122).

2. HOW IT WAS COMPILED. Every entry in the research database whose units name Company E (Echo) for December 1969 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

— 2/5 Command Chronology Dec 1969 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048122)

SECONDARY SOURCES

— Smith, Charles R. U.S. Marines in Vietnam: High Mobility and Standdown, 1969. History and Museums Division, HQMC, 1988.

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