F COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

APRIL 1968 — CAO DOI TUNNEL (BATTALION CP)

Compiled from the 2/5 Command Chronology for April 1968

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

1. Unit Overview

Unit Designation	Foxtrot Company (F Co), 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division
Reporting Period	1–30 April 1968
Commander	Capt M. P. Downs (1–30 April)
Higher HQ	2nd Battalion, 5th Marines (LtCol E. C. Cheatham Jr.); 5th Marines; 1st Marine Division
Area of Operations	Cao Doi tunnel (battalion CP)
Combat Posture	Combat operations, patrols and security (2 combat entries)
Base of Operations	Cao Doi tunnel (battalion CP)
Corps Area	I Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam

2. Commander's Summary

The battalion’s entries for April 1968 place it most often at or near Cao Doi tunnel (battalion CP) (3 of 3 entries with a named place or grid).

Company F was commanded by Capt M. P. Downs (1–30 April); the battalion by LtCol E. C. Cheatham Jr. (1–30 April).

No entry in the April 1968 record names Company F by itself. The 15 battalion entries listed below applied to the whole battalion, Company F included.

3. Operations Overview

Operation / Activity	Dates	Description
Operation Houston	26 Feb – 12 Sep 1968	Battalion at Cao Doi (ZD055028) guarding the Division MSR (Highway 1) in Operation Houston; a reinforced platoon outpost on Bach Ma (ZC054915) until 17 April
Operation Baxter Garden (Lam Son)	19–26 Apr 1968	Battalion to an LZ near YD803251; at 1015 helilift back to Cao Doi; Baxter Garden ended.

4. Chronology of Company F Activities

Compiled from the checked transcriptions of the 2/5 command chronology for April 1968 in the hotel25vv research database. No entry names Company F; the battalion-wide entries are listed. Times and grid references are as recorded; each entry ends with its source page.

Date	Activity / Events
1 Apr	Battalion at Cao Doi (ZD055028) guarding the Division MSR (Highway 1) in Operation Houston; a reinforced platoon outpost on Bach Ma (ZC054915) until 17 April [2/5 ComdC Apr 1968, PDF p. 3]
19 Apr 16:35	Companies set blocking positions: Echo Objective 5, Hotel Objective 6, Bravo 1/5 Objective 4; Charlie and Delta 1/27 blocking near YD815245 [2/5 ComdC Apr 1968, PDF p. 21]
19 Apr 20:07	Bravo 1/5 (YD860229) took 20 60mm rounds from YD864218 — 7 USMC WIA, 7 not evac [2/5 ComdC Apr 1968, PDF p. 21]
20 Apr 09:05	A Bravo 1/5 platoon patrol (YD881235) hit by an estimated enemy platoon at YD880231 with CS grenade and 82mm mortars; airstrikes and gunships — 8 USMC KIA, 13 USMC WIA, 7 not evac, 12 NVA/VC KIA, 11 KBA, 4 SKS, RPD captured [2/5 ComdC Apr 1968, PDF p. 21]
21 Apr 09:50	Tanks, Ontos and amtracs attached to 2/5 [2/5 ComdC Apr 1968, PDF p. 22]
21 Apr 10:35	Phase II: search and destroy north toward Phase Line Apricot [2/5 ComdC Apr 1968, PDF p. 22]
21 Apr 11:00	Bravo 1/5 back to 1/5 [2/5 ComdC Apr 1968, PDF p. 22]
21 Apr 17:28	A corpsman set off a booby trap at YD898236 — 1 WIA [2/5 ComdC Apr 1968, PDF p. 22]
21 Apr	Echo, Hotel moved from Not stated to Not stated on foot. 21–22 Apr April: The battalion swept north and southeast with tanks and amtracs through heavily booby-trapped hamlets; on 22 April Echo lost 14 wounded to two booby traps in two hours and Hotel 7 more. (From the monthly “by Company” summary, written from the chronology page images.) [2/5 ComdC Apr 1968, PDF p. 22]
22 Apr 17:00	Night positions at YD948195 on Phase Line Apple [2/5 ComdC Apr 1968, PDF p. 26]
24 Apr 09:30	H&S at YD943195 reported 2 Marines missing; ARVN said VC had captured them near YD992144 and were holding them at YD986132 [2/5 ComdC Apr 1968, PDF p. 27]

Date	Activity / Events
25 Apr 08:05	Command group found and burned 2,500 lb of rice at YD854250 [2/5 ComdC Apr 1968, PDF p. 28]
25 Apr 19:00	Enemy hit a tank blocking force; 17 NVA/VC KIA found — 14 USMC WIA not evac, 17 NVA/VC KIA, 3 B-40s captured [2/5 ComdC Apr 1968, PDF p. 27]
26 Apr	Battalion to an LZ near YD803251; at 1015 helilift back to Cao Doi; Baxter Garden ended. Results: 20 NVA and 29 VC killed, 11 detainees, 1 POW; 13 Marines killed (Echo 4, Hotel 1, Bravo 1/5 8), 40 wounded evacuated, 21 not evacuated, 2 missing [2/5 ComdC Apr 1968, PDF p. 29]
26 Apr	2/5 (battalion) moved from Not stated to Cao Doi tunnel (battalion CP) (ZD 055 026) by helicopter. 26 Apr April: The battalion was flown back to Cao Doi. (From the monthly “by Company” summary, written from the chronology page images.) [2/5 ComdC Apr 1968, PDF p. 29]

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 Apr 1968 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048102).

2. HOW IT WAS COMPILED. No entry names Company F; the chronology lists the battalion-wide entries instead.

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 Apr 1968 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048102)

SECONDARY SOURCES

— Shulimson, Jack, Leonard A. Blasiol, Charles R. Smith and David A. Dawson. U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Defining Year, 1968. History and Museums Division, HQMC, 1997.

— “Foxtrot 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. | Foxtrot Company, 2/5 Marines, April 1968