H&S COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

MARCH 1968 — CAO DOI TUNNEL (BATTALION CP)

Compiled from the 2/5 Command Chronology for March 1968

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

1. Unit Overview

Unit Designation	Headquarters and Service Company (H&S Co), 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division; including the battalion command post, the 106mm section and the S-2 and S-5 sections
Reporting Period	1–31 March 1968
Commander	1stLt A. A. Dornbach (1–31 March)
Higher HQ	2nd Battalion, 5th Marines (LtCol E. C. Cheatham Jr.); 5th Marines; 1st Marine Division
Area of Operations	Cao Doi tunnel (battalion CP), Song Truoi Bridge, ARVN armory, Hue, Phu Loc District headquarters
Combat Posture	Combat operations, patrols and security (1 combat entries)
Base of Operations	Cao Doi tunnel (battalion CP)
Corps Area	I Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam

2. Commander's Summary

H&S Company’s entries for March 1968 place it most often at or near Cao Doi tunnel (battalion CP) (5 of 8 entries with a named place or grid), and also at Song Truoi Bridge, ARVN armory, Hue, Phu Loc District headquarters.

H&S Company was commanded by 1stLt A. A. Dornbach (1–31 March); the battalion by LtCol E. C. Cheatham Jr. (1–31 March).

For March 1968 this report lists 16 entries (11 organization, 3 movement, 1 combat, 1 logistics): 0 naming H&S or one of its sections (the battalion command post, the 106mm section, S-2, S-5), and 16 battalion-level entries recorded by the battalion headquarters.

On 2 March 1968: H&S position (YD759209) hit by a 60mm round — 2 USMC WIA.

On 25 March 1968: A CAP patrol found a B-40 launcher and 2 enemy dead at YD982048 and reported to the Hotel CP — 2 NVA/VC KIA.

On 31 March 1968: Battery E, 2/11 (ZD022022) took 25-30 82mm rounds and 57mm fire from YD973017 — 1 USMC WIA.

3. Operations Overview

Operation / Activity	Dates	Description
Operation Hue City (Battle of Hue)	1 Feb – 2 Mar 1968	Operation Hue City ended for 2/5
Operation Houston	26 Feb – 12 Sep 1968	A command group went from Hue to Cao Doi (ZD055026) to control Bravo 1/5, Echo and Foxtrot; Foxtrot moved to ZD053023; 2/5 began Operation Houston and took over security of part of Highway 1

4. Chronology of H&S Company Activities

Compiled from the checked transcriptions of the 2/5 command chronology for March 1968 in the hotel25vv research database. Entries naming H&S or its sections and all battalion-level entries are listed; entries naming only a rifle company are left out. Times and grid references are as recorded; each entry ends with its source page.

Date	Activity / Events
2 Mar 01:35	H&S position (YD759209) hit by a 60mm round — 2 USMC WIA [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 8]
3 Mar	Operation Hue City ended for 2/5 [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 8]
8 Mar	A command group went from Hue to Cao Doi (ZD055026) to control Bravo 1/5, Echo and Foxtrot; Foxtrot moved to ZD053023; 2/5 began Operation Houston and took over security of part of Highway 1 [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 9]
8 Mar	Battalion moved from Cao Doi tunnel (battalion CP) (ZD 055 026) to Cao Doi tunnel (battalion CP) (ZD 053 023) (means not stated). A command group went from Hue to Cao Doi (ZD055026) to control Bravo 1/5, Echo and Foxtrot; Foxtrot moved to ZD053023; 2/5 began Operation Houston and took over security of part of Highway 1. [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 9]
10 Mar 14:50	Bravo 1/5 found and destroyed 5 bunkers at ZD020013 [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 9]
10 Mar	Command post, Golf and Hotel moved from Hue to Cao Doi (ZD055026); Golf took the Truoi River Bridge (YD967063), Hotel the Rock Crusher area (ZD013025); 2/5 back under the 5th Marines [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 9]
10 Mar	Battalion moved from Cao Doi tunnel (battalion CP) (ZD 055 026) to Song Truoi Bridge (YD 967 063) (means not stated). Command post, Golf and Hotel moved from Hue to Cao Doi (ZD055026); Golf took the Truoi River Bridge (YD967063), Hotel the Rock Crusher area (ZD013025); 2/5 back under the 5th Marines. [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 9]

Date	Activity / Events
12 Mar	Command group, Echo, Hotel and Golf (-) began a 7-day search and destroy in the hills and jungle as part of Operation Houston [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 10]
18 Mar	2/5 began a search and destroy into the Bach Ma area (ZC057925), held by the NVA/VC since the early 1950s; the battalion was the first Marine unit to occupy it [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 12]
18 Mar	2/5 (battalion) moved from Not stated to Bach Ma (ZC 057 925) (means not stated). 18 Mar March: 2/5 moved into the Bach Ma area (ZC 057925), the first Marine unit to occupy it. (From the monthly “by Company” summary, written from the chronology page images.) [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 12]
March from 19 March	Long-range patrol rations introduced; field mess at the command post. [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 15]
25 Mar 18:20	A CAP patrol found a B-40 launcher and 2 enemy dead at YD982048 and reported to the Hotel CP — 2 NVA/VC KIA [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 13]
31 Mar 03:20	Battery E, 2/11 (ZD022022) took 25-30 82mm rounds and 57mm fire from YD973017 — 1 USMC WIA [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 13]
31 Mar 04:45	Seabees at ZD022022 hit by 82mm and 57mm fire — 5 USN KIA, 8 USN WIA, 3 USMC WIA [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 13]
31 Mar 07:20	An Army engineer team's vehicle hit a mine on Route 1 at ZD102009 — 4 USA WIA, 2 CAP WIA [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 12]
31 Mar 09:20	An H&S road-sweep vehicle hit a command-detonated mine at ZD065012 — 4 USMC WIA [2/5 ComdC Mar 1968, PDF p. 12]

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 Mar 1968 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048101).

2. HOW IT WAS COMPILED. H&S 2/5 is recorded in the chronology under several names: H&S, H&S (Bn CP), Bn CP, the 106mm section and the S-2 and S-5 sections. All are combined here. Because H&S was the battalion headquarters, every battalion-level entry not tied to a rifle company is included too. Entries are listed in date and time order, each with the page of the chronology it was read from; entries naming only Echo, Foxtrot, Golf or Hotel 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 Mar 1968 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048101)

— 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines Command Chronology for March 1968, as published on hotel25vv.com (Battalion Chronology page): https://hotel25vv.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/1968March-2-5CommandChronology.pdf

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.

— “2/5 Battalion Chronology.” Hotel 2/5 Combat Marines. https://hotel25vv.com/vietnam-war-chronology/battalion-chronology

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. | H&S Company, 2/5 Marines, March 1968