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

DECEMBER 1968 — AN HOA COMBAT BASE

Compiled from the 2/5 Command Chronology for December 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 December 1968
Commander	Capt P. A. Vandenberg (1–31 December)
Higher HQ	2nd Battalion, 5th Marines (LtCol J. W. Stemple); 5th Marines; 1st Marine Division
Area of Operations	An Hoa Combat Base, Fire Support Base Pike (Hill 214)
Combat Posture	Security, movement and support (no combat entry recorded)
Base of Operations	An Hoa Combat Base
Corps Area	I Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam

2. Commander's Summary

H&S Company’s entries for December 1968 place it most often at or near An Hoa Combat Base (4 of 5 entries with a named place or grid), and also at Fire Support Base Pike (Hill 214).

H&S Company was commanded by Capt P. A. Vandenberg (1–31 December); the battalion by LtCol J. W. Stemple (1–31 December).

For December 1968 this report lists 10 entries (8 organization, 2 movement): 0 naming H&S or one of its sections (the battalion command post, the 106mm section, S-2, S-5), and 10 battalion-level entries recorded by the battalion headquarters.

On 7 December 1968: 2/5 (battalion) moved from Phu Loc (6) and Liberty Bridge to An Hoa (Operation Taylor Common, phase I sweep) (AT 873 473) (means not stated).

On 13 December 1968: Helilifted to Hill 214 (ZC194450) southwest of An Hoa; command group, Golf and two 12th Marines batteries built Fire Support Base Pike; companies patrolled within 2,000 m.

On 13 December 1968: Battalion moved from Not stated to Hill 214 (ZC 194 450) by helicopter.

3. Operations Overview

Operation / Activity	Dates	Description
Operation Meade River	20 Nov – 9 Dec 1968	Final phase of Operation Meade River, 1-6 December; across the Suoi Co Ca the battalion dug into soft mud while air strikes hit the Hook (S3 p.
Operation Taylor Common	6 Dec 1968 – 8 Mar 1969	Operation Taylor Common phase I: multi-battalion sweep from Phu Loc (6) and Liberty Bridge to An Hoa, 7-8 December; one POW from the Group 44 training cadre

4. Chronology of H&S Company Activities

Compiled from the checked transcriptions of the 2/5 command chronology for December 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
1 Dec	Final phase of Operation Meade River, 1-6 December; across the Suoi Co Ca the battalion dug into soft mud while air strikes hit the Hook (S3 p. 433) [2/5 ComdC Dec 1968, PDF p. 3]
6 Dec 18:00	Battalion back under the 5th Marines [2/5 ComdC Dec 1968, PDF p. 3]
7 Dec	Operation Taylor Common phase I: multi-battalion sweep from Phu Loc (6) and Liberty Bridge to An Hoa, 7-8 December; one POW from the Group 44 training cadre [2/5 ComdC Dec 1968, PDF p. 4]
7 Dec	2/5 (battalion) moved from Phu Loc (6) and Liberty Bridge to An Hoa (Operation Taylor Common, phase I sweep) (AT 873 473) (means not stated). From 7 December the battalion began Operation Taylor Common, sweeping from Phu Loc (6) and Liberty Bridge to An Hoa, and on 13 December it was flown to Hill 214 southwest of An Hoa to build Fire Support Base Pike. (From the monthly “by Company” summary, written from the chronology page images.) Corrected 18 Nov 2026: this record had the battalion flown to Fire Support Base Pike on 7 December, but its own source says the battalion began the Taylor Common sweep from Phu Loc (6) and Liberty Bridge to An Hoa on 7 December and was flown to Hill 214 on 13 December, which is its own move. Means of the sweep not stated. [2/5 ComdC Dec 1968, PDF p. 3]
9 Dec	Regimental reserve 9-12 December; three memorial services [2/5 ComdC Dec 1968, PDF p. 4]
13 Dec	Helilifted to Hill 214 (ZC194450) southwest of An Hoa; command group, Golf and two 12th Marines batteries built Fire Support Base Pike; companies patrolled within 2,000 m [2/5 ComdC Dec 1968, PDF p. 3]

Date	Activity / Events
13 Dec	Caves and bunkers used as rest camps found in the area [2/5 ComdC Dec 1968, PDF p. 3]
13 Dec	Battalion moved from Not stated to Hill 214 (ZC 194 450) by helicopter. Helilifted to Hill 214 (ZC194450) southwest of An Hoa; command group, Golf and two 12th Marines batteries built Fire Support Base Pike; companies patrolled within 2,000 m. Official history (1969 volume): “Pike (Hill 214), opened by the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines on 13 December,” in the Taylor Common pattern of helicopter assault onto a prepared hilltop. [2/5 ComdC Dec 1968, PDF p. 3; U.S. Marines in Vietnam · High Mobility and Standdown, 1969, PDF p. 102]
25 Dec	The Commandant of the Marine Corps visited FSB Pike on Christmas Day for a scout-dog briefing; LtCol Stemple with him (S3 p. 441) [2/5 ComdC Dec 1968, PDF p. 4]
25 Dec	Foxtrot and Hotel had sharp short engagements with small NVA units on the slopes west and south of Pike (S3 p. 442) [2/5 ComdC Dec 1968, PDF p. 4]

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 1968 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048110); U.S. Marines in Vietnam · High Mobility and Standdown, 1969.

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 Dec 1968 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048110)
- U.S. Marines in Vietnam · High Mobility and Standdown, 1969

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