H COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

JANUARY 1967 — OPERATION TUSCALOOSA

Compiled from the 2/5 Command Chronology for January 1967

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

1. Unit Overview

Unit Designation	Hotel Company (H Co), 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division
Reporting Period	1–31 January 1967
Commander	Captain J. J. Doherty Jr., commanding Company H for the whole period 1–31 January 1967
Higher HQ	2nd Battalion, 5th Marines (LtCol W. C. Airheart); 5th Marines; 1st Marine Division
Area of Operations	2/5 An Hoa TAOR, Quang Nam Province — the An Hoa basin, Liberty Road, Phu Loc (6) and Nong Son
Combat Posture	Offensive — TAOR patrolling and ambushing; Operation Tuscaloosa, 24–28 January
Base of Operations	An Hoa Combat Base (battalion CP); company outposts at Phu Loc (6) and Nong Son
Corps Area	I Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam

2. Commander's Summary

January 1967 was Hotel Company's first full month in the An Hoa TAOR after Operation Mississippi. Captain J. J. Doherty Jr. commanded the company for the whole month under LtCol W. C. Airheart. The battalion ran Operation Lincoln in Antenna Valley from 5 to 9 January with Companies F and G; Hotel Company stayed in the TAOR, patrolling from An Hoa and the Phu Loc (6) outpost, where booby traps and snipers were the daily enemy.

The month's defining event was Operation Tuscaloosa, 24–28 January, in which Hotel and Foxtrot were the two assault companies. For two days the sweep met little but deserted hamlets. Then on the morning of 26 January, as the companies crossed the river on their return sweep, they ran into the R-20th Main Force Battalion dug in along the east-west road. Hotel Company followed Foxtrot across the river under heavy fire and advanced west along the road in a fight that lasted about nine hours and covered several thousand metres, with continuous air, artillery and 81mm support and both Sparrow Hawk platoons inserted as blocking forces.

Tuscaloosa cost the battalion 17 killed and 52 wounded, nearly all on 26 January, against 79 enemy killed confirmed and 64 probable; the report gives no breakdown by company. Several Navy corpsmen were among the dead. Hotel Company and Company D, 1/26 searched the battlefield on 27–28 January with little further contact, and the operation ended at 281700H.

3. Operations Overview

Operation / Activity	Dates	Description
Operation Lincoln	5–9 January 1967	H COMPANY DID NOT PARTICIPATE. A battalion search-and-destroy operation in Antenna Valley with Companies F and G; Hotel Company remained in the An Hoa TAOR. See Operation_Lincoln.docx.
An Hoa TAOR operations	1–23 January 1967	Patrols, ambushes and search-and-destroy sweeps from An Hoa and Phu Loc (6) around the grid squares AT 95 52 and AT 93 52, with repeated booby-trap finds.
Operation Tuscaloosa	240730H – 281700H January 1967	H COMPANY PARTICIPATED — one of the two assault companies. 2/5 (-)(Rein) with Companies F and H, Sparrow Hawk platoons from Companies G and E, and Company D, 1/26 under operational control 27–28 January. Heavy contact with the R-20th Main Force Battalion on 26 January. Battalion losses 17 KIA and 52 WIA; enemy 79 KIA confirmed, 64 probable.

4. Chronology of Company H Activities

Compiled from the narrative summary and the chronological sequence of events in the 2/5 command chronology for January 1967. Only entries naming Company H, or bearing directly on it, are listed. Grid references and times are as recorded.

Date	Activity / Events
4 Jan	At 041020H Company H (-) on search and destroy at AT 954524 took two rounds from one VC at AT 955525 and returned 25 rounds; the VC fled east. Later that day the company engaged an estimated VC squad near AT 947517. Operation Lincoln, planned to start at 040530H, was postponed 24 hours by weather.
8–10 Jan	At 080910H a Hotel Company platoon on search and destroy tripped an M-26 booby trap — 1 USMC WIA. On 10 January a squad found an M-26 grenade rigged with a trip wire and blew it in place; at 101050H Company H (-) at AT 955523 took fire and wounded one VC, who was dragged off, with one Marine wounded, non-evacuated. Operation Lincoln terminated at 091200H.

Date	Activity / Events
14 Jan	At 141500H a Hotel Company platoon was sent to check the site where an aircraft had crashed near AT 898482.
24 Jan	At 240730H Operation Tuscaloosa began. Company H swept from the vicinity of AT 962552, covered Company F at its river crossing, and with Company F set a mutual perimeter for the night; two female VC turned themselves in to Company H. At 242240H the Hotel Company perimeter received about 50 rounds.
25 Jan	Company H continued sweeping grid squares AT 9853 and AT 9953; one platoon swept the hamlets near AT 000545 and returned. At 252040H an enemy squad ran into a Hotel Company squad ambush at AT 976534; the ambush returned 200 rounds and five of 60mm and called artillery.
26 Jan	Heavy contact from the time Companies F and H crossed the river at about 0900: the R-20th Main Force Battalion, dug in along the road. Company H advanced through Company F moving west and assaulted along the road; at 261720H a Hotel Company platoon was detached to help Company F under heavy sniper fire near AT 949527. Company H and Sparrow Hawk #1 linked up at AT 948527 and set a defensive perimeter for the night.
27–28 Jan	Company D, 1/26 came under operational control at 0900 on 27 January. Companies F and H searched the previous day's battle area; Company H joined elements of H&S Company in the perimeter defence and ran night ambushes. On 28 January Company H swept south and east back toward the battalion CP. Operation Tuscaloosa terminated at 281700H.
29 Jan	At 291030H a Hotel Company platoon found an M-26 grenade rigged to a bamboo stick at AT 936528 and blew it in place.

5. Notes and Caveats

This file was rewritten on 21 September 2026 directly from the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines command chronology. The notes below record what changed and where the record is thin.

1. SOURCE. The 2/5 command chronology for January 1967 (Texas Tech item 1201048076), including the Combat After Action Reports for Lincoln and Tuscaloosa.

2. OPERATION SIERRA REMOVED. The earlier version of this file carried “Operation Sierra, 12 December 1966 – 21 January 1967” as a Hotel Company operation. Neither the December 1966 nor the January 1967 chronology mentions an operation of that name. It has been removed, as it was from the December 1966 file.

3. TUSCALOOSA CASUALTIES. The 17 killed and 52 wounded are battalion totals for the whole operation; the after action report does not break them down by company. The “sandbar island” detail in some accounts comes from John Culbertson's writing about Hotel Company, not from the report.

4. AREA OF OPERATIONS. The old file placed the company in the “Arizona Territory.” The chronology places it in the battalion's own An Hoa TAOR south of the Song Thu Bon for the whole month.

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

— 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines Command Chronology for January 1967 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048076).

SECONDARY SOURCES

— Telfer, Gary L., Lane Rogers and V. Keith Fleming, Jr. U.S. Marines in Vietnam: Fighting the North Vietnamese, 1967. History and Museums Division, HQMC, 1984.

— “Hotel Company.” Hotel 2/5 Combat Marines. https://hotel25vv.com/hotel-company

— Related files in this collection: Operation_Tuscaloosa.docx, Operation_Lincoln.docx.

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. | Hotel Company, 2/5 Marines, January 1967