H COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

JANUARY 1968 — AN HOA TO PHU BAI

Compiled from the 2/5 Command Chronology for January 1968

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 1968
Commander	Captain G. R. Christmas, commanding Company H for the whole period 1–31 January 1968
Higher HQ	2nd Battalion, 5th Marines — LtCol George C. McNaughton 1–2 January, then LtCol Ernest C. Cheatham Jr.; 5th Marines; from 13 January under Task Force X-Ray at Phu Bai
Area of Operations	An Hoa TAOR, Quang Nam Province (1–13 January); Phu Bai and the Truoi River area, Thua Thien Province (13–31 January)
Combat Posture	Offensive — TAOR patrolling at An Hoa, then movement north and security operations south of Hue
Base of Operations	An Hoa Combat Base to 13 January; Phu Bai from 13 January
Corps Area	I Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam

2. Commander's Summary

January 1968 was the month 2/5 left An Hoa. LtCol Ernest C. Cheatham Jr. took the battalion on 3 January, and Captain G. R. “Ron” Christmas commanded Hotel Company throughout. “While still in An Hoa, booby traps and mines continued to be a problem,” the chronology records, but the Marines had learned: 14 were found and destroyed between 1 and 13 January, many with the help of the Vietnamese An Hoa Complex Security Guard. On 6 January a Hotel Company platoon on a combat patrol near AT 975509 came under heavy small-arms, automatic weapons and rifle-grenade fire.

On 13 January the battalion moved from An Hoa to Phu Bai in Thua Thien Province, arriving at about 1000, and came under Task Force X-Ray. Hotel Company's patrols now worked the country south of Hue. A squad patrol set off a booby-trapped M-26 grenade on 15 January, and on the night of 20 January a Hotel Company platoon perimeter near ZD 003032 took eleven rounds of 60mm mortar fire.

On 31 January, as the Tet Offensive broke, LtCol Cheatham sent Captain Christmas's company to relieve Combined Action Platoon H-8 at the Truoi River bridge south of Hue, reinforced by the

command group and Company F. The battalion killed 18 enemy and took one prisoner there, losing three killed and 13 wounded. Two days later Hotel Company would cross into Hue City.

3. Operations Overview

Operation / Activity	Dates	Description
An Hoa TAOR operations	1–13 January 1968	Patrols and ambushes around An Hoa; 14 mines and booby traps found and destroyed in 13 days.
Move to Phu Bai	13 January 1968	The battalion moved from An Hoa to Phu Bai and came under Task Force X-Ray; related planning papers refer to Operation Checkers.
Relief of CAP H-8, Truoi River bridge	31 January 1968	H COMPANY PARTICIPATED — lead company. Company H relieved Combined Action Platoon H-8, reinforced by the command group and Company F. 2/5 killed 18 enemy and took 1 prisoner; 3 Marines killed, 13 wounded.

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 1968. Only entries naming Company H, or bearing directly on it, are listed. Grid references and times are as recorded.

Date	Activity / Events
1–13 Jan	At An Hoa: 14 mines and booby traps found and destroyed, with the An Hoa Complex Security Guard helping to locate them.
6 Jan	A Hotel Company platoon on a combat patrol near AT 975509 came under heavy small-arms, automatic weapons and rifle-grenade fire from an enemy force of unknown size; an LZ was secured and the wounded evacuated.
13 Jan	The battalion moved from An Hoa to Phu Bai, arriving at about 1000.
15 Jan	A member of a Hotel Company squad patrol detonated a booby-trapped M-26 fragmentation grenade; the wounded Marine was evacuated and the area searched.
20 Jan	On the night of 20 January a Hotel Company platoon defensive perimeter near ZD 003032 received eleven incoming 60mm mortar rounds.
Late Jan	Security operations south of Hue from Phu Bai; the battalion journal records Hotel Company reporting incoming mortars and calling artillery, and two dead VC found near a Hotel Company OP.
31 Jan	Company H was sent to relieve CAP H-8 at the Truoi River bridge, reinforced by the command group and Company F. A reaction force was alerted when movement was

Date	Activity / Events
	heard at the bridge; Company H found a dead VC and a rocket launcher. Battalion results: 18 enemy killed, 1 prisoner; 3 Marines killed and 13 wounded.

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 1968 (Texas Tech items 1201048097 and 1201048098), with Shulimson's official history for the Truoi River action.

2. The earlier version placed the company on “Arizona Territory patrol operations.” From 13 January to 25 July 1968 the battalion was in Thua Thien Province, around Phu Bai, Hue and Route 1, more than 80 kilometres north of the Arizona Territory. The dated entries here replace the invented ones.

3. HUE. The old file had Hotel Company making an “initial entry” into Hue on 31 January. Its entry into the city was on 2 February; on 31 January it was at the Truoi River bridge. See the February 1968 file.

4. COMMANDER. The January organisational data lists Captain G. R. Christmas for 1–31 January 1968.

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 1968 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048097).

— Second part of the January 1968 file (Texas Tech item 1201048098).

SECONDARY SOURCES

— Shulimson, Jack, et al. U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Defining Year, 1968. History and Museums Division, HQMC, 1997.

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

— Related files in this collection: Battle_of_Hue_Tet_Offensive.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 1968