H COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

FEBRUARY 1968 — HUE CITY

Compiled from the 2/5 Command Chronology for February 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	1–29 February 1968
Commander	Captain G. R. Christmas, 1–13 February 1968; 1st Lieutenant W. L. Harvey, 14–29 February 1968
Higher HQ	2nd Battalion, 5th Marines (LtCol Ernest C. Cheatham Jr.); 5th Marines; Task Force X-Ray, 1st Marine Division
Area of Operations	Hue City south of the Perfume River, Thua Thien Province
Combat Posture	Offensive — street and house-to-house fighting in Operation Hue City
Base of Operations	Hue City (the MACV compound area and the university district)
Corps Area	I Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam

2. Commander's Summary

February 1968 was the Battle of Hue. At about 1100 on 2 February Hotel Company crossed the An Cuu Bridge into the city in a “Rough Rider” convoy with Army quad-.50 trucks and Ontos, fought through fire near the MACV compound and joined 1/1 by midday. Over the next week it fought building by building through the university district south of the Perfume River.

On 4 February, from 0700, the company attacked the Public Health building complex from the Hue University building, blasting through walls and courtyards with 3.5-inch rockets and 106mm recoilless rifles, and covered Company F's assault on the Treasury; one Hotel platoon freed about 175 civilians, two Americans among them. On 5 February Companies G and H seized the Sports Club and the University Library and turned toward the hospital complex; Hotel assaulted across the street under Golf's covering fire and found a main enemy defensive position ringed with bunkers. On 6 February it was halted by heavy fire at the Provincial Headquarters until tanks and CS helped carry it; five ARVN prisoners and two prison officials were liberated.

Captain Christmas, who won the Navy Cross in Hue, commanded until 13 February, when 1st Lieutenant W. L. Harvey took the company for the rest of the month. The house-to-house fighting went on through February; Operation Hue City formally ended on 2 March.

3. Operations Overview

Operation / Activity	Dates	Description
Operation Hue City	2–29 February 1968 (2/5 in Hue 2 February – 10 March)	H COMPANY PARTICIPATED — assault company. Task Force X-Ray; 2/5 (LtCol Ernest C. Cheatham Jr.) with Companies E, F, G and H, 1/1 and the ARVN 1st Division. Hotel Company's objectives included the Public Health complex, the University Library, the hospital complex and the Provincial Headquarters.

4. Chronology of Company H Activities

Compiled from the narrative summary and the chronological sequence of events in the 2/5 command chronology for February 1968. Only entries naming Company H, or bearing directly on it, are listed. Grid references and times are as recorded.

Date	Activity / Events
2 Feb	At about 1100 Company H crossed the An Cuu Bridge into Hue in an armed convoy with Army quad-.50 trucks and Ontos, fought through fire near the MACV compound, and joined 1/1 by midday.
3 Feb	Company H, on the south-west side of the Hue University building (#187), attacked toward the Public Health complex while Company F attacked the Treasury (#70); Hotel took heavy automatic fire and three B-40 rockets. By 031758H its 1st Platoon was on its objective, using small arms, 3.5-inch rockets, 106mm recoilless rifles and 81mm mortars; a B-40 launcher was captured.
4 Feb	At 040700H Company H attacked the Public Health building complex from the university and took it; one platoon freed about 175 civilians, including 2 Americans. At 041825H it fired on armed enemy crossing the street near YD 767218.
5 Feb	At 050855H Companies G and H seized the Hue Sports Club and the Hue University Library (YD 765217), then moved south-west toward the hospital complex. Hotel took heavy fire and five B-40 rounds, called artillery and 81mm, and under Company G's covering fire assaulted across the street into a building at YD 7664 2165 (8 USMC WIA). At 051645H it entered a main enemy defensive position encircled by bunkers.
6 Feb	At 060141H Companies H and G attacked to seize the hospital complex (YD 767216). At 060950H Hotel Company was halted by intense fire at the Provincial Headquarters; tanks and CS were brought up. Five ARVN military prisoners and two prison officials were liberated.
7 Feb	At 070930H Company H seized buildings #179 and #221 near YD 764213 without contact; the search found enemy equipment.
13–14 Feb	Captain G. R. Christmas relinquished command; 1st Lieutenant W. L. Harvey commanded Company H from 14 February.

Date	Activity / Events
Mid–late Feb	Continued clearing south of the Perfume River as 2/5 fought on through the city.

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 February 1968 (Texas Tech item 1201048100), with Shulimson's official history.

2. COMMANDERS. The February organisational data lists Captain G. R. Christmas for 1–13 February and 1st Lieutenant W. L. Harvey for 14–29 February 1968.

3. CASUALTIES. The chronology does not give a Hotel Company total for the month; the 147 Marines killed in the whole battle is a figure for all Marine units.

4. THE NAVY CROSS. The old file listed a “Navy Cross action” on 5 February as a separate operation. Captain Christmas's Navy Cross was earned in the Hue fighting; the chronology's own entries for 5 February are given above.

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 February 1968 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048100).

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

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