H COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

AUGUST 1969 — DURHAM PEAK AND HILL 65

Compiled from the 2/5 Command Chronology for August 1969

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 August 1969
Commander	Captain R. W. Poolaw, commanding Company H for the whole period 1–31 August 1969
Higher HQ	2nd Battalion, 5th Marines — LtCol James H. Higgins 1–20 August, Maj R. E. Loehe 21–23 August, LtCol J. T. Bowen from 24 August; 5th Marines; 1st Marine Division
Area of Operations	The Que Son Mountains south-east of An Hoa (1–11 August); Hill 65, central Dai Loc District, and the north-east Arizona (12–31 August)
Combat Posture	Offensive — Operation Durham Peak, then company reconnaissance in force from Hill 65
Base of Operations	Hill 65 (from 12–14 August)
Corps Area	I Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam

2. Commander's Summary

“1–11 August 1969, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines operated in the Que Son Mountains southeast of An Hoa in connection with Operation DURHAM PEAK. 12–31 August, 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines occupied Hill 65 in central Dai Loc District in the Quang Nam Province RVN and conducted company size reconnaissance-in-force operations in the northeast portion of the Arizona Area.” Captain R. W. Poolaw commanded Hotel Company for the whole month.

On Durham Peak the battalion blocked near Hill 848 in the centre of the area, its 106mm recoilless rifle platoon firing from the hill. Resupply by helicopter drop was difficult and malaria rates were high. The withdrawal began on 8 August and 2/5 was lifted to An Hoa; on 14 August it relieved 3/7 on Hill 65.

The battalion changed hands three times in the month: LtCol James H. Higgins to 20 August, Major R. E. Loehe for three days, and LtCol J. T. Bowen from 24 August.

3. Operations Overview

Operation / Activity	Dates	Description
Operation Durham Peak	1–11 August 1969	H COMPANY PARTICIPATED. 2/5 blocking near Hill 848; lifted to An Hoa from 8 August.
Hill 65 and the north-east Arizona	12–31 August 1969	Company-size reconnaissance-in-force operations from Hill 65 in central Dai Loc District.

4. Chronology of Company H Activities

Compiled from the narrative summary and the chronological sequence of events in the 2/5 command chronology for August 1969. Only entries naming Company H, or bearing directly on it, are listed. Grid references and times are as recorded.

Date	Activity / Events
1–7 Aug	Blocking positions near Hill 848 in the Que Son Mountains; helicopter-drop resupply; high malaria rates.
8 Aug	The Durham Peak withdrawal began; 2/5 was lifted to An Hoa.
14 Aug	2/5 relieved 3/7 on Hill 65.
21–24 Aug	Major R. E. Loehe commanded the battalion 21–23 August; LtCol J. T. Bowen took command on 24 August.
Late Aug	Company-size reconnaissance in force into the north-east Arizona from Hill 65.

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 August 1969 (Texas Tech item 1201048118).

2. COMMANDER NAMED. The earlier version said the commander was “not confirmed in available sources.” The battalion's organisational data names him, as given above.

3. DURHAM PEAK DATES. The old file ran Durham Peak to 13 August for the company; the chronology ends the battalion's part on 11 August.

4. NO COMPANY ENTRIES. The August journal scan does not yield legible Hotel Company entries.

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 August 1969 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048118).

SECONDARY SOURCES

— Smith, Charles R. U.S. Marines in Vietnam: High Mobility and Standdown, 1969. History and Museums Division, HQMC, 1988.

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

— Related files in this collection: Operation_Durham_Peak.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, August 1969