H COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

OCTOBER 1970 — OPERATION IMPERIAL LAKE

Compiled from the 2/5 Command Chronology for October 1970

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 October 1970
Commander	Captain John W. Moffett, commanding Company H for the whole period 1–31 October 1970
Higher HQ	2nd Battalion, 5th Marines (LtCol T. M. Hamlin); 5th Marines; 1st Marine Division
Area of Operations	An Hoa, Liberty Bridge and Liberty Road (1–14 October); LZ Baldy and the Que Son Mountains (from 15 October)
Combat Posture	Offensive — Operation Imperial Lake: quick reaction platoons and base-camp searches in the Que Sons
Base of Operations	An Hoa to 14 October; LZ Baldy Combat Base from 15 October
Corps Area	I Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam

2. Commander's Summary

“From 1–14 October the Battalion (-) was located at An Hoa Combat Base, Liberty Bridge, and Liberty Road. The Battalion rear was located at Baldy Combat Base. On 15 October the command was relocated to Baldy Combat Base.” 2/5 left An Hoa, handed over to the ARVN, and went into Operation Imperial Lake in the Que Son Mountains.

Hotel Company, under Captain John W. Moffett, was in action at once. On 21 October its 3rd Platoon was landed four miles south-east of Fire Support Base Rainbow and found more than 1,000 pounds of rice buried in urns. On 22 October two Hotel quick-reaction platoons killed four NVA and found a bunker complex; the same day the 3rd Platoon's corpsman, HM2 Randall L. Hackett, found he was sitting on a Composition B booby trap, and Captain Moffett held the detonator while Hackett rolled clear.

Late in the month Tropical Storm Kate cut off resupply, and Companies F and H lived on short rations or none. On 26 October Hotel's 2nd Platoon followed an enemy communication wire into a deserted battalion-size base camp and spent three days recovering arms, ammunition and booby-trap material.

3. Operations Overview

Operation / Activity	Dates	Description
Move from An Hoa to LZ Baldy	1–15 October 1970	The battalion command relocated to Baldy Combat Base on 15 October.
Operation Imperial Lake	From October 1970	H COMPANY PARTICIPATED. 5th Marines operation in the Que Son Mountains; Hotel's actions of 21–26 October are recorded by name in the official history.
Operation Tulare Falls I	2–15 October 1970	H COMPANY DID NOT PARTICIPATE. Army Task Force Saint under 5th Marines control. See Operation_Tolare_I.docx.

4. Chronology of Company H Activities

Compiled from the narrative summary and the chronological sequence of events in the 2/5 command chronology for October 1970. Only entries naming Company H, or bearing directly on it, are listed. Grid references and times are as recorded.

Date	Activity / Events
1–14 Oct	The battalion (-) at An Hoa, Liberty Bridge and Liberty Road; the rear at Baldy.
15 Oct	The battalion command relocated to Baldy Combat Base.
21 Oct	Hotel's 3rd Platoon landed four miles south-east of FSB Rainbow and found more than 1,000 lb of rice in urns.
22 Oct	Two Hotel quick-reaction platoons killed 4 NVA and found a bunker complex. HM2 Randall L. Hackett found he was sitting on a Composition B booby trap; Captain Moffett held the detonator while he rolled clear, and the device was destroyed.
Late Oct	Tropical Storm Kate cut off resupply; Companies F and H lived on short rations or none.
26–28 Oct	Hotel's 2nd Platoon followed an enemy communication wire into a deserted battalion-size base camp and spent three days recovering arms, ammunition and booby-trap material.

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 October 1970 (Texas Tech item 1201049002), with Cosmas and Murray's official history.

2. AN HOA HANDOVER. The old file dated the handover of An Hoa Combat Base to 15 October. The battalion's command moved to Baldy that day; the handover to the 51st ARVN Regiment ran through September and October.

3. COMMANDER. Capt John W. Moffett for 1–31 October 1970.

4. SIX-MAN PATROLS. The old file's “LZ Baldy six-man patrol / QRF tactic” is broadly consistent with the quick-reaction platoon work described here.

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 October 1970 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201049002).

SECONDARY SOURCES

— Cosmas, Graham A. and Terrence P. Murray. U.S. Marines in Vietnam: Vietnamization and Redeployment, 1970–1971. History and Museums Division, HQMC, 1986.

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

— Related files in this collection: Operation_Imperial_Lake.docx, Operation_Tolare_I.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, October 1970