H COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

APRIL 1971 — RETURN TO CAMP PENDLETON

Compiled from the 2/5 Command Chronologies for 25 March – 13 April and 13 April – 30 June 1971

2nd Battalion, 5th Marines · 1st Marine Division, FMF · Camp Pendleton, California

1. Unit Overview

Unit Designation	Hotel Company (H Co), 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division
Reporting Period	1–30 April 1971
Commander	None listed. The battalion's organisation from 25 March 1971 shows H&S Company (Capt J. L. Hickman) as its only subordinate unit.
Higher HQ	2nd Battalion, 5th Marines (LtCol T. M. Hamlin, commanding officer of troops at sea); redesignated 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division (-)(Rein), FMF in April 1971
Area of Operations	Aboard USS Denver (LPD-9) at sea to 13 April; Camp Pendleton, California (Margarita area) from 15 April
Combat Posture	Not applicable — battalion in cadre status
Base of Operations	USS Denver; then the Margarita area, Camp Pendleton
Corps Area	Not applicable — at sea and at Camp Pendleton, California

2. Commander's Summary

In April 1971 the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines came home — but without its rifle companies. The chronology for 25 March to 13 April records the battalion “embarked aboard USS DENVER (LPD-9) entire period,” with H&S Company as its only unit, and an average strength of six officers and about 154 enlisted men.

“On the 15th of April, the Second Battalion disembarked from the USS DENVER (LPD-9) at North Island, San Diego and proceeded to the Vietnam Returnee Center at Camp Pendleton, California, and after processing, went to its present location in the Margarita area. Immediately after becoming settled, the majority of the personnel in the Battalion were allowed to go on leave.” The battalion CP moved into Building 33465.

The battalion was redesignated 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division (-)(Rein), FMF on authority of a CG 5th MAB message of 14 April. Hotel Company does not appear in its organisation.

3. Operations Overview

Operation / Activity	Dates	Description
Voyage home	22 March – 15 April 1971	The battalion cadre at sea in USS Denver.
Return to Camp Pendleton	15 April 1971	Disembarked at North Island, San Diego; processed at the Vietnam Returnee Center; moved into the Margarita area.
Redesignation	April 1971	2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division (-)(Rein), FMF.

4. Chronology of Company H Activities

Compiled from the 2/5 command chronologies for 25 March – 13 April and 13 April – 30 June 1971. No rifle companies appear in either.

Date	Activity / Events
1–14 Apr	At sea in USS Denver (LPD-9).
15 Apr	Disembarked at North Island, San Diego; to the Vietnam Returnee Center, Camp Pendleton, then the Margarita area. Most of the battalion went on leave.
Apr	Redesignated 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division (-)(Rein), FMF (CG 5th MAB message 140400Z April 1971).

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 25 March – 13 April and 13 April – 30 June 1971 portions of the 2/5 command chronology filed as Texas Tech item 1201049006.

2. NO HOTEL COMPANY IN THE ORGANISATION. From 25 March 1971 the battalion's organisational data lists no rifle companies at all: “Subordinate units — H&S Company.” The battalion came home as a cadre of about 150 Marines, most of its men having been transferred to other units before it sailed. There is therefore no Hotel Company commander, strength or activity to record for this month, and the earlier version's company narrative has been removed.

3. PRESIDENTIAL WELCOME AND UNIT CITATION REMOVED. The old file listed a “Presidential welcome and unit citation” on 30 April 1971. Nothing of the kind appears in the battalion's chronology.

4. III MAF TRANSFER. The old file's 14 April “III MAF transfer of forces” corresponds to the redesignation message of that date.

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 Chronologies for February–December 1971, filed together (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201049006): February 1971; 1–22 March 1971; 25 March – 13 April 1971 (at sea); 13 April – 30 June 1971 (Camp Pendleton).

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

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, April 1971