OPERATION BAXTER GARDEN (LAM SON)

2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

1st Marine Division | Republic of Vietnam | 19–26 April 1968

FIELD	DETAIL
Operation Name	Operation Baxter Garden (Lam Son)
Dates of Operation	190800H – 261200H April 1968
Mission Purpose / Objective	Rice-denial search and destroy operation (5th Marines Operation Order 301-68; Task Force X-Ray Frag Order 21-68). Phase I: find and destroy enemy forces, supplies and positions, and block in support of other allied forces. Phase II: attack southeast to Phase Line Apple.
Locations / Cities	Phu Thu Peninsula, Phu Vang District, central Thua Thien Province, immediately east of Hue
TAOR	Phu Thu Peninsula, Phu Vang District, Thua Thien Province
UTM Coordinates	Company H platoon contact: YD 858204 (enemy at YD 863204), 20 Apr. Company H booby-trap incidents: YD 867199 (20 Apr); YD 883247 and YD 894236 (21 Apr); YD 901233 (22 Apr); YD 914208 (22 Apr); YD 960180 (23 Apr). Company E contact: YD 850231 (19 Apr).
USMC Units Involved	2nd Battalion (-)(Rein), 5th Marines: Company E (19 Apr 0800 – 26 Apr 1200), Company H (190800H – 222000H, then 222000H – 261200H), H&S Company; Company B 1/5; Companies C and D 1/27; tanks, anti-tank and amtrac elements attached 21 April; two ARVN battalions in support.
2/5 Companies Participated	Company E; Company H; H&S Company. Company E 19–26 Apr; Company H 19–22 and 22–26 Apr; H&S Company named in the task organization.
Mission Results	19 Apr: at 1200 Company H attacked Objective #5 and set up night positions on Objective #6; Company E killed 4 NVA in a contact at YD 850231. 20 Apr: an Company H platoon patrol took about 1,000 rounds of fire from 10–15 enemy at YD 863204; Company H platoons began hitting booby traps on gates, bridges and paddy dikes. 21 Apr: Company H moved to Objectives #4 and #12 and crossed Phase Line Green; a platoon hit two mines. 22 Apr, 0435: an Company H Marine set off a booby-trapped grenade at YD 901233 (7 WIA evacuated, 1 not evacuated), and more booby traps followed during the attack toward Phase Line Apple. Most Marine casualties came from mines and booby traps. About 2,500 lb of rice was captured.
USMC KIA	Whole operation: 13 (Shulimson). Company B 1/5, 20 Apr: 8 KIA.
USMC Wounded	Whole operation: 125 (Shulimson). Company H: at least 15 WIA from booby traps on 20–22 April (journal).
Enemy KIA	Shulimson: 55. 2/5 after action report: 49 NVA/VC KIA confirmed.
Enemy Wounded	Unknown; 11 detainees; captured 6 AK-47s, 4 SKS, 2,500 lb rice

NOTES & SOURCE REFERENCES

UPDATED 16 SEPTEMBER 2026 FROM PRIMARY SOURCES. CONFIRMED H COMPANY ENGAGEMENT. The Combat After Action Report for Baxter Garden (2/5 Command Chronology, April 1968) lists Company H in

the task organization throughout, with a day-by-day record of its attacks and heavy booby-trap losses. Shulimson's official history describes the operation as a rice-denial sweep of the Phu Thu Peninsula by 2/5 with two ARVN battalions: 13 Marines killed and 125 wounded, 55 enemy killed. Before the operation, 2/5 pulled its platoon off Bach Ma on 17 April. The record does not say whether Company F, Company G took part.

Primary sources: 2/5 Command Chronology, April 1968, including the Combat After Action Report for Baxter Garden (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048102); Jack Shulimson et al., U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Defining Year, 1968 (HQMC, 1997). Originals: National Archives, RG 127 (National Archives II, College Park MD 20740; Marine Corps History Division, Quantico VA 22134).