OPERATION HENDERSON HILL

2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

1st Marine Division | Republic of Vietnam | 23 October – 6 December 1968

FIELD	DETAIL
Operation Name	Operation Henderson Hill
Dates of Operation	23 October – 6 December 1968 (whole operation). 2/5 took part from 23 October until it left for Operation Meade River on 20 November 1968.
Mission Purpose / Objective	Continue Mameluke Thrust in the same area under a new code name. Find the North Vietnamese 90th Regiment, reported to have moved into the Arizona Territory, and interdict its infiltration routes.
Locations / Cities	Arizona Territory; An Hoa; east of Liberty Road; Go Noi Island sector; Quang Nam Province
TAOR	Arizona Territory, An Hoa and Go Noi sectors; Quang Nam Province
UTM Coordinates	Company H platoon securing amtracs, contact: AT 91x496 (late October; partly illegible in the scan). Company H booby trap: AT 949499.
USMC Units Involved	5th Marines. 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines (LtCol James W. Stemple) with Companies E, F, G and H (Capt P.A. Vanderberg to 29 Oct; Capt Ronald J. Drez from 30 Oct); 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines.
2/5 Companies Participated	Company E; Company F; Company G; Company H. 2/5 (LtCol James W. Stemple) with Companies E, F, G and H.
Mission Results	23 Oct: the 2/5 command group and two companies were patrolling east of Liberty Road when ordered to disengage. They trucked to An Hoa, met MajGen Youngdale, and made a helicopter assault into the Arizona Territory; small-arms fire closed the primary landing zone, but the battalion reached its objectives before nightfall. In sweeps over the following days 2/5 and 3/5 had little contact but captured a 24-page enemy document laying out the "Winter-Spring 1968–69 Campaign." Late October: an Company H platoon securing amtracs was hit by small-arms fire and grenades, and an Company H Marine set off a booby-trapped grenade at AT 949499. The operation continued in the An Hoa and Go Noi sectors into November.
USMC KIA	Whole operation: 35 (previously recorded figure). Breakdown by 2/5 company: not recorded.
USMC Wounded	Not recorded.
Enemy KIA	Whole operation: 700 (previously recorded figure)
Enemy Wounded	Unknown; 94 captured (previously recorded figure)

NOTES & SOURCE REFERENCES

UPDATED 16 SEPTEMBER 2026 FROM PRIMARY SOURCES. CONFIRMED H COMPANY PARTICIPATION. The 2/5 Command Chronology for October 1968 records that "on 23 October 1968, the Battalion began participation in Operation HENDERSON HILL," and its journal records Company H platoon actions late in the month. Shulimson's official history describes 2/5's helicopter assault into the Arizona and the capture of the 24-page enemy campaign document. Capt Ronald J. Drez took command of Company H on 30 October 1968. 2/5

left Henderson Hill on 20 November 1968 for Operation Meade River. The record does not say whether H&S Company took part.

Primary sources: 2/5 Command Chronologies, October and November 1968 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive items 1201048108 and 1201048109); Jack Shulimson et al., U.S. Marines in Vietnam: The Defining Year, 1968 (HQMC, 1997), pp. 422–423. Originals: National Archives, RG 127 (National Archives II, College Park MD 20740; Marine Corps History Division, Quantico VA 22134).