OPERATION LYON VALLEY

2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

1st Marine Division | Republic of Vietnam | 16–24 August 1970

FIELD	DETAIL
Operation Name	Operation Lyon Valley
Dates of Operation	16–24 August 1970 (Cosmas and Murray; previously listed as 27 July – 24 August)
Mission Purpose / Objective	5th Marines' second named operation of summer 1970: stop food moving from the northern Arizona to the 38th NVA Regiment's mountain base areas by blocking trails and destroying camps and caches in the mountains on the southwest edge of the Arizona.
Locations / Cities	Mountains southwest of the Arizona Territory; southwestern Arizona; An Hoa; Quang Nam Province
TAOR	Mountains southwest of the Arizona Territory; Quang Nam Province
UTM Coordinates	Not recorded.
USMC Units Involved	5th Marines. 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines command group with Company F and Company H (Capt John W. Moffett from 13 August 1970); Company L, 3/5 under 2/5 control 16–22 August as a screening force.
2/5 Companies Participated	Company F; Company H; H&S Company. The 2/5 command group with Company F and Company H (Capt John W. Moffett).
Mission Results	16 Aug: Companies F and H and the battalion command group were landed by helicopter into mountain landing zones and pushed northeast along the trails toward Company L, which screened the northern face of the mountains. The trails showed heavy use; the companies found bunkers, fighting holes, rocket-launching sites and antiaircraft positions, including a captured 12.7mm machine gun. Company F killed 3 NVA in two small firefights. 22 Aug: F and H reached the northern foot of the mountains and flew back to An Hoa. 23 Aug: with minimal preparation fire, F and H landed by helicopter in the southwestern Arizona to catch enemy troops hiding there; they captured one NVA soldier and a large quantity of food. The operation ended 24 August.
USMC KIA	0 (no Marine combat casualties). Company F: 0; Company H: 0; H&S Company: 0.
USMC Wounded	0 from combat; 11 Marines incapacitated by heat stroke and accidents. Breakdown by 2/5 company: not recorded.
Enemy KIA	5 enemy killed
Enemy Wounded	Unknown; 1 prisoner, 13 base camps destroyed, 2 weapons and over 3 tons of food captured

NOTES & SOURCE REFERENCES

UPDATED 16 SEPTEMBER 2026 FROM PRIMARY SOURCES. CONFIRMED H COMPANY PARTICIPATION. Cosmas and Murray's official history states that "On 16 August, Companies F and H of the 2d Battalion with a battalion command group were inserted by helicopter into mountain landing zones." The 2/5 Command Chronology for August 1970 records the operation "in the Southern Arizona mountains with noteworthy results."

The August roster lists 1stLt L.C. Villalobos commanding Company H 1–12 August and Capt John W. Moffett from 13 August 1970. Corrected dates: 16–24 August 1970. The captured documents on Front 4's reorganization came from Lyon Valley together with Pickens Forest and Dubois Square. The record does not say whether Company E, Company G took part.

Primary sources: 2/5 Command Chronology, August 1970 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048130); Graham A. Cosmas and Terrence P. Murray, U.S. Marines in Vietnam: Vietnamization and Redeployment, 1970-1971 (HQMC, 1986), p. 83. Originals: National Archives, RG 127 (National Archives II, College Park MD 20740; Marine Corps History Division, Quantico VA 22134).