OPERATION MISSISSIPPI

2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

1st Marine Division | Republic of Vietnam | 29 November – 7 December 1966

FIELD	DETAIL
Operation Name	Operation Mississippi
Dates of Operation	291000H November – 071730H December 1966 (D-Day was set for 25 November and postponed each day by weather until 29 November)
Mission Purpose / Objective	Reconnaissance in force and search and destroy operation under the 9th Marines (Operation Orders 124-66 and 125-66; 2/5 Frag Order 30-66). 2/5 was to land by helicopter in the Que Son District objective area, attack west through the mountain pass to the eastern end of Antenna Valley, and find, capture or destroy enemy forces, supplies, equipment and documents. It was also to be ready to withdraw by helicopter or on foot.
Locations / Cities	Que Son and Duc Duc districts, Quang Nam Province; the mountain pass into eastern Antenna Valley; Dai Phong (1) hamlet; Son Phu (1) hamlet; Hill 90
TAOR	9th Marines area; Que Son – Antenna Valley; Quang Nam Province. 2/5 had been assigned the An Hoa TAOR on 27 November 1966.
UTM Coordinates	Landing zone: AT 985354 – AT 988355. Company G ambush, 29 Nov: AT 986356. Night line of the command group and Companies G and H, 29 Nov: AT 953366 – AT 967360. Company F night position on Hill 90: AT 936366. Company H: AT 933376 (30 Nov), AT 924375 (1 Dec), AT 915387 (under fire), AT 914388 (4 Dec). VC rice cache in five bins: AT 930402 (4 Dec). (Sheets 6640 III and IV.).
USMC Units Involved	Controlling HQ: 9th Marines. 2nd Battalion (-)(Rein), 5th Marines (LtCol W.C. Airheart): Company F (Rein) (Capt G.S. Burgett), Company G (Rein) (Capt J.M. Gruner), Company H (Rein) (Capt J.J. Doherty). Attached: H&S Company (-), detachments of the 3d Shore Party and 3d Engineer Battalions, scout dogs, interrogator-translator and counterintelligence teams. Battery E, 2/11 in direct support; Battery F, 2/12 reinforcing.
2/5 Companies Participated	Company F; Company G; Company H; H&S Company. Companies F, G and H (all Rein) with H&S Company (-).
Mission Results	29 Nov: the battalion was lifted from An Hoa into the objective area under sniper fire; one Marine hit in the helicopter later died of wounds. Company G was pinned by a reinforced VC platoon with two .50-caliber machine guns until air strikes silenced one gun (2 USMC KIA, 4 WIA, 3 VC KIA). That night Companies G and H held the trail line west of the landing zone. 30 Nov – 3 Dec: the battalion pushed west through the pass, which was lined with fighting holes about every 20 meters. Company H set up at AT 933376 and ran patrol sweeps. About 200 civilians asked to be relocated. Company H's position at AT 915387 took automatic-weapons fire from an estimated VC squad; it moved on the enemy under 81mm fire and the VC fled. 4 Dec: the command group with Companies F and H searched for a VC rice store, took sniper fire near AT 914388, and found rice in five bins at AT 930402. Heavy rain and immersion foot slowed the bagging and helicopter lift of the rice. 7 Dec: the battalion returned to An Hoa and at 1730 came under 1st Marine Division control.

USMC KIA	2 KIA (Company G, 29 Nov) and 1 died of wounds; the after action report's casualty table is partly illegible.
USMC Wounded	Partly illegible in the after action report (Company G alone had 4 WIA on 29 Nov). 49 non-battle casualties, mostly immersion foot.
Enemy KIA	Partly illegible in the after action report; at least 4 VC killed in recorded contacts
Enemy Wounded	Unknown. Captured: 50.6 tons of rice, grenades, mines and booby traps, uniforms, medical kits and documents. VC suspects and ralliers were detained for interrogation.

NOTES & SOURCE REFERENCES

UPDATED 16 SEPTEMBER 2026 FROM PRIMARY SOURCES. CONFIRMED H COMPANY PARTICIPATION. This is a new file, built from 2/5's Combat Operation After Action Report for Mississippi (14 December 1966), filed with the December 1966 Command Chronology. The report lists Company H (Rein) under Capt J. Doherty in the task organization, and its day-by-day narrative records Company H's positions and contacts. Mississippi was the battalion's first operation after the DMZ. The warning order reached 2/5 on 22 November 1966 while it was still at Dong Ha under the 4th Marines in Operation Prairie. Leading elements began the airlift to An Hoa at 0800 on 23 November, and at 1100 that day 2/5 (-) came under the 9th Marines. 2/5 COMPANIES THAT DID NOT TAKE PART: Company E. Company E stayed at An Hoa.

RESULTS. Helicopters lifted 1,076 troops, evacuated 383 refugees by air, and carried out 50.6 tons of VC rice. About 2,000 civilians were relocated from the valley by the end of the operation. Enemy forces in the area were reported as the 3d NVA Regiment and elements of the 1st VC Main Force Regiment, including its 90th Battalion; most contacts were with 1 to 14 enemy. While 2/5 (-) was on Mississippi, the An Hoa TAOR was held by the battalion's Company E with companies of 1/26, 1/1 and 3/9 attached. Operation Mississippi is not described in Shulimson's official 1966 history, so the chronology is the principal source.

Primary sources: 2/5 Command Chronology, December 1966, including the Combat Operation After Action Report for Operation Mississippi dated 14 December 1966 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048075). Originals: National Archives, RG 127 (National Archives II, College Park MD 20740; Marine Corps History Division, Quantico VA 22134).