

Pam 10n
Mem
0973

Cunningham, Winfield S. 2
Narrative of Captain W.S.
Cunningham, U.S. Navy relative to
events on Wake Island in December,
1941 and subsequent related events.

NARRATIVE
of
CAPTAIN W. S. CUNNINGHAM, U. S. NAVY
RELATIVE TO EVENTS ON WAKE ISLAND IN DECEMBER, 1941
AND SUBSEQUENT RELATED EVENTS

1. On November 15, 1941, Captain (then Commander) Cunningham received orders to proceed to Wake Island from Pearl Harbor, and to take charge of "all naval activities" on Wake Island. (Appendix "A", copy of orders.)
2. On November 28, 1941, Commander Cunningham arrived at Wake Island and found the following naval activities there based:
 - a. A detachment of the First Marine Defense Battalion, consisting of fifteen officers and three hundred seventy three enlisted men, commanded by Major J. P. S. Devereux, U. S. Marine Corps.
 - b. Two submarines, temporarily assigned, operating in the waters around Wake.
 - c. A detachment of four officers and thirty enlisted men from Patrol Wing Two, under the command of Commander C. Keene, U. S. Navy.
 - d. A group of naval personnel consisting of seven officers and thirty enlisted men, assigned as support for the detachment of marines and as pre-commissioning personnel for the prospective naval air station.
 - e. A group of approximately one thousand two hundred civilian construction workers under the general superintendent, Mr. Nathan D. Teters.
 - f. On December 4, 1941, Marine Fighting Plane Squadron 211, a squadron of twelve planes, with eleven officers and forty-nine enlisted men, commanded by Major P. A. Putnam, U. S. Marine Corps, was flown ashore at Wake from the carrier Enterprise, and reported to Commander Cunningham for duty. Some of the personnel had arrived at Wake November 28, 1941 aboard the USS Wright.
3. All these naval activities were without qualification, fully subject to the authority of Commander Cunningham; the subordinate commanders enjoyed no independence of authority or action whatever. No other situation could legally exist, and throughout the defense of Wake, no question ever arose as to whether Commander Cunningham was in fact as well as in law, the Island Commander in every sense of the word, or whether he exercised the authority natural to and flowing from his assignment as officer "in charge of all naval activities at Wake."

4. On December 8, 1941 (Wake time) when news of the attack upon Pearl Harbor reached Wake, Commander Cunningham ordered all military personnel to their battle stations. Such an order could not emanate from any other source, since he was the only personality vested with the necessary authority. No subordinate commander could legally issue orders to any activity other than his own.
5. Commander Cunningham at all times retained completely the authority vested in him. He delegated none of his powers at any time. The only powers which were or could be exercised by subordinate commanders were in routine matters concerning their own units, such as is customary and traditional. This does not imply that he was not receptive to suggestions and advice from others; many such suggestions were received by him, and many of them adopted, from whatever source.
6. Operations of the Fighting Plane Squadron were throughout the duration of such operations controlled directly by the Island Commander, who was an aviator with nearly seventeen years continuous naval aviation experience.
7. On the early morning of December 11, 1941 (a moonlit night), surface ships were observed by lookouts to be approaching the island. This information was relayed to the Island Commander by Major Devereux together with a request to illuminate with searchlights. The ships commenced firing on the island and drew closer. When they were reported close in, Commander Cunningham gave the order to open fire. As a result of effective fire from short range, combined with air attacks from four planes still in commission, two enemy ships were sunk.
8. Early on December 23, 1941, enemy forces were again reported close to the island, in landing boats. This time the night was dark, and in a short time the Japanese had succeeded in putting ashore a large number of well trained special naval landing personnel. The Island Commander had been advised by the Commander in Chief that no friendly vessels were in the vicinity, and had been ordered to keep the Commander in Chief advised as to the progress of the engagement. Reports from various points on the atoll began to indicate that the situation of the defenders was serious. It was then that Commander Cunningham sent a dispatch stating that "The issue is in doubt." It is to be noted that no dispatches other than routine, could be released, and none were, except by Commander Cunningham.

9. At about 6:00 a.m., the Island Commander received a telephone call from Major Devereux. In this report he stated the case of the defenders in the darkest terms, and concluded with the opinion that they could not hold out much longer. He was questioned by Commander Cunningham as to whether in his opinion surrender was justified in order to save further and useless loss of life. He replied only, "The decision is yours to make." Commander Cunningham then told Major Devereux that he authorized surrender of the island, if he felt that it could no longer hold out. (See appendix "B", paragraphs 5 and 6 of statement of Captain Keene.)

10. No action was taken by Commander Cunningham to effect the surrender, as he still entertained hopes that the island would survive the attack. Some time after the conversation as above, Major Devereux called again. He reiterated that the situation of the defenders was dire in the extreme, that his own position occupied by a considerable portion of the ground troops was being hardpressed, and that he could not hold out much longer. He then asked Commander Cunningham whether he had contacted the Japanese by radio. He was answered in the negative. As it was then full daylight, the indication to the Japanese of the decision to surrender was made by displaying white sheets.

11. After capture, about one thousand two hundred of the military and civilian personnel were taken to Shanghai, and confined in a camp. On March 11, 1942, Commander Cunningham and four other escaped from this camp. They were recaptured the next day and after a lengthy investigation, followed by a court martial, were later confined in the Shanghai Municipal Jail. On October 6, 1944, Commander Cunningham along with seven others, escaped from this jail. Cunningham and four others were recaptured the same night, investigated and court martialled again, and for the remaining ten months of the war were confined under rigorous conditions in military prisons at Shanghai, Nanking and Peiping.

12. Commander Cunningham returned to the United States on September 7, 1945. He was promoted to Captain on September 10, 1941. He found that he had been awarded a Navy Cross in a citation signed by Secretary Knox, the citation reading, "For distinguished and heroic conduct in the line of his profession in the defense of Wake Island, 7-22 December, 1941."

13. Captain Cunningham also discovered, greatly to his astonishment, that as a result of a large volume of publicity released by the Marine Corps, Major Devereux had been presented to the public as the de facto officer in command of the defense of Wake. Captain Cunningham's position in connection with the defense had been almost wholly obscured. This was a development which no one on Wake, having knowledge of the actual situation there, would have dreamed of. It appeared further that a moving picture on Wake Island, prepared with Marine Corps technical advice, and released under Navy auspices, had conveniently disposed of the naval commander by injury or death, and had presented the player taking the part of Major Devereux (called in the picture Major Molyneux, or some such transparent pseudonym) as a person of heroic stature who had conducted and led the defense singlehanded.

14. When Major Devereux was at the end of the war located in Japan another barrage of publicity was released, usually describing him as "The leader of the defense of Wake Island," "The heroic defender of Wake," etc. Cunningham contacted the Vice Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral R. S. Edwards, and Rear Admiral H. B. Maller, head of naval public information. It was put to these officers that the public was being subjected to a continuing hoax as to who had commanded the defense of Wake, and that it was time for the Navy Department to curb this propensity on the part of the Marine Corps, which appeared to function independently in matters of publicity.

15. On or about September 25, 1945, Captain Cunningham was present in the group which met Colonel Devereux at the Union Station on the occasion of his first arrival in Washington. When Devereux saw Cunningham, he drew him aside and said in words to this effect: "Captain, I want you to know that I shall do everything in my power to clear up the misconception which exists as to who was in command on Wake."

16. The monograph "Defense of Wake" on page 10 contains the following statement: "One of Commander Cunningham's first actions, logically, had been to direct Major Devereux, as senior Marine officer present, to undertake coordination of all military activities of the defense battalion detachment and VMF-211, and this arrangement was to remain in force throughout the defense of Wake." No such action was taken by Commander Cunningham. The only coordination ordered was

for the Defense Battalion to assist the squadron in giving it logistic support. On page 23, last paragraph, it is represented that Major Devereux exercised control over the operations of the squadron. No such authority was ever delegated to him. The absurdity of Commander Cunningham's turning over control of flight operations to a non-aviator must be patent. Of course, it is possible that Major Devereux might have made suggestions regarding the launching of flights, but, if so, they had no force or effect as orders.

17. The repulse of the Japanese attempt to land on the morning of December 11, 1941, was the most creditable to the defenders of any performance throughout the defense. Credit for the handling of this action has been given to Devereux by Marine Corps publicity, and has been assumed by Devereux in his writings. That such credit has been falsely accorded and assumed will be seen by reference to Appendix "C", reports of Major (then Gunner) John Hamas, who supports in full the statements made in paragraph 7 above. These statements are also substantiated by Captain (then Lieutenant Commander) E. B. Greey, (CEC), U. S. Navy. (See Appendix "D".) Colonel Devereux's version of the action of December 11, is set out in Appendix "E", and was offered in contradiction of Cunningham's official report. The reader is invited to compare it with the statements of Major Hamas, his own talker at the time, and of Captain Greey. Footnote 21 on page 23 of the monograph "Defense of Wake" contains the statement that "all pertinent documents support Colonel Devereux." When questioned as to what these "pertinent documents" were, the Marine Corps' historical section produced only Devereux's own unsupported statements, plus other so-called "documents" which were meaningless as evidence, yet the historians were able to print in an official document that Cunningham was unreliable as a source for their history. It would have required little effort on their part to have obtained the facts, and to have avoided the discredit which must be accorded their production. They preferred rather, on the sole basis of Colonel Devereux's assertions, to discredit Captain Cunningham.

18. Whether Cunningham, in the opinion of one of the witnesses best qualified to judge, exercised actual command over the forces on Wake, may be estimated by reference to Appendix "F", statement of Captain Keene, dated May 14, 1948. Another witness, who, though a civilian, was in a position, and qualified by natural talents and former military service, to form an opinion, was Mr. Nathan D. Teters, superintendent of construction on Wake in December, 1941. His impression of the identity of the officer in command may be gathered by reference to Appendix "G".

19. A presidential unit citation, copy of which may be found on the back cover of the monograph "Defense of Wake," was awarded to the Wake detachment of the First Defense Battalion and Marine Fighting Squadron 211. No reference is made in the citation to the contributions of naval and civilian personnel to the defense, and these contributions were material. While the names of Majors Devereux and Putnam are prominent in this citation, the name of the officer in over all command, Commander Cunningham, was omitted. This omission has been called to the attention of the Secretary of the Navy. His response was, that the Secretary was fully aware that Cunningham was in command, but since President Roosevelt, who had signed the citation, was now dead, the citation could not be withdrawn or corrected.

20. The monograph "Defense of Wake" was, like all foregoing publicity prepared by the Marine Corps, and released in December, 1947. This publication clearly implies that Devereux was, in all but name, the functioning commander of the defense of the island. Commander Cunningham is referred to principally to discredit his veracity in the report made by him to the Navy's historical section. (See footnotes, pages 13 and 23.) This monograph was prepared and released without any reference whatever to the officer in chief command of the defense, and contains statements which are demonstrably incorrect. The fact that the officer in chief command was ignored in the preparation of a putatively historical document on the subject of a military action must constitute a precedent in such matters. It would appear, further, that in a case where the officer in command was being given the treatment that Cunningham received in this document, the requirements of fair play would call for him to be given an opportunity to make timely objection to the sorry part assigned to him.

21. By this time the reader may have asked the question, "So what?" or something similar. It may be considered of little importance that Captain Cunningham has suffered injuries to his pride, and to his reputation as a naval officer and as a man. If it were true that he had been in fact the ineffective, incompetent, and irresolute non-entity depicted by Marine Corps propaganda, official or in newspaper publicity, he would have little room for complaint. But if he was otherwise, then there have been serious violations of the principles of decency, honesty, and fair play. These violations are of fundamental importance. In this case we have the spectacle of a naval officer of thirty-two years honorable service whose rights have, unless he is badly mistaken, been wantonly violated, and whose attempts to secure redress met with indifference if not hostility.

22. From the beginning of the war to the end the wife of Captain Cunningham carried on a valiant but losing campaign to have action taken to clear up the subject under discussion. While she met with many rebuffs, she was encouraged by several high ranking officers, including the Commander in Chief, Admiral King, to believe that those in authority would take timely action to acknowledge the part taken by Commander Cunningham. (See Appendix "H".) The record shows that these assurances have not been realized.

23. It is, therefore, submitted that the rectification of the history of the defense of Wake Island is a matter of sufficient importance to warrant the interest of those to whom the subject is referred, and it is earnestly and respectfully requested that they examine the supporting documents and references furnished with this narrative.

NAVY DEPARTMENT
BUREAU OF NAVIGATION
WASHINGTON, D.C.
10618

Refer to No.
Nav-31-LEV

Nov. 29 1941

From: The Chief of the Bureau of Navigation
To: Commander Winfield S. Cunningham, U.S.N., U.S.S. Wright
Via: Commanding Officer

Subject: Orders of October 31, 1941, modified.

1. Your orders of October 31, 1941, are so far modified that upon detachment you will proceed to Pearl Harbor, T.H., and report to the Commandant, Fourteenth Naval District, for temporary duty involving flying as officer in charge of all naval activities on Wake Island.
2. When directed by the Commandant, Fourteenth Naval District, you will regard yourself detached; will proceed and carry out the remainder of the above mentioned orders.
3. The delay for a period of ten days authorized in the above mentioned orders is hereby canceled.
4. These orders constitute your assignment to duty in a part of the Aeronautic Organization of the Navy and your existing detail to duty involving flying continues in effect.

/s/ C. W. Nimitz

(Confirming despatch of
November 15, 1941.)

Copy to:
C.O., U.S.S. Wright. Cdt., 14th Nav. Dist. Cdr., Patrol Wing 1.
Cdr. Aircraft, Scouting Force. C.O., Nav. AirSta., Johnston Island,
Bu. Aero.

APPENDIX "A"

File No. 43910

800 A Ave.
Coronado, Cal.
December 20, 1945.

From: Captain Campbell Keene, U. S. Navy
To: Secretary of the Navy
Via: Captain W. S. Cunningham, U. S. Navy
(Commander WAKE ISLAND)

Subj: Activities of TASK GROUP 9.2 (WAKE BASE DETACHMENT) at WAKE ISLAND, November 29 - December 23 1941, report on.

1. —
2. —
3. —
4. —

5. About one hour after daylight on the morning of December 23, 1941, I picked up the telephone and found both Commander Cunningham and Major Devereux on the wire. Major Devereux was at this time reporting that he was being hard pressed at his Command Post by the Japanese and that he did not believe he could hold out much longer. Commander Cunningham told him, if he did not feel he was able to continue fighting, to surrender. A discussion then ensued as to the advisability of surrendering or continuing the battle. During this discussion, Major Devereux said, "You know WILKES (ISLAND) has fallen." Commander Cunningham answered in the affirmative. Major Devereux then stated he did not feel he should make the decision to surrender, that that decision should be made only by the Commanding Officer, Commander Cunningham himself. After a slight pause, Commander Cunningham informed Major Devereux that he authorized surrender of the island and for him to take the necessary steps to effect it. Major Devereux answered that he was not certain of his ability to contact the Japanese Commander and asked Commander Cunningham also to attempt to make contact with the enemy. Commander Cunningham answered that he would see what he could do.

6. Details of the surrender, which occurred subsequent to the above conversation, are known to me only by hearsay and I feel they should be reported on by those who have first hand knowledge of the events as they occurred. I would like to point out that, although I had heard reports of the fighting which had been going on during the night and knew the situation was serious, no thought of surrender had entered my mind up to the time I overheard the above mentioned conversation. It is obvious that there had been prior conversations between the two Commanders of which I had no knowledge.

/s/ Campbell Keene

APPENDIX "B"

08216-1
MC-978308

End-3

Vista, Calif.
8 Mar., 1948

From: John Hamas, Major, USMC., (Ret.)
Vista, California, (08216)
To: Captain W. S. Cunningham, USN (56074)
Via: (1) Commandant, U. S. Marine Corps
(2) Chief of Naval Air Technical Training Center,
Memphis 15, Tennessee

Subj: "The Defense of Wake."

1. Returned. Inviting attention to the inclosed copy of my report dated 12 Oct., 1945, Page #4 and 5, to Lt. Col. J. P. S. Devereux, c/o Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps, Washington, D. C.

2. According my recollections in regard to point "A" Par #1, it was Captain Wesley M. Platt, C.O. Kuku point, Wilkes Island who requested permission to use searchlights as the enemy ships approached the island. I notified Major Devereux. The Major requested Commander Cunningham's permission to illuminate the enemy warships. Commander Cunningham ordered not to use searchlights, or open fire until further order.

Point "B" Par. #1 is clearly explained in my report.
It was I who notified Major Devereux, about Commander Cunningham's order to "Open Fire" and it was I who repeated the order to Kuku, Peacock and Toki Points.

3. In regard to Par., #2 basic letter, it is further stated that I did make a personal remark to Commander Cunningham on 11th Dec. 1941 (Wake Island time) in the officer's mess canteen in Camp One that: "You told us to cut loose at them; and, boy did we cut loose at the dirty sons of the bitches."

/s/ John Hamas

APPENDIX "C(1)"

Excerpt from report of 2nd Lt. John Hamas (08216), USMC to
Lt. Col. J. P. S. Devereux, USMC, dated 12 Oct., 1945.

11 December

Early after midnight, while on duty at the new Bn. Cp., Captain Platt reported ships on the horizon; notified Major Devereux. Major asked to notify Commander Cunningham. Later the Major, in company with Major Potter, got out of the "dugout" and with the aid of night glasses observed the ships on the horizon. Jap ship; opened fire on the islands of Wake and Wilkes. Captain Platt informed us that Lieutenant McAlister reported range 4,600 yards from Kuku Point closest position of one of the Jap destroyers. Lieutenant Barninger from Peacock Point also reported ships on the horizon. Major Devereux ordered me to notify Commander Cunningham. Commander receiving the message said: "What are we waiting for, John? Open fire. Must be Jap ships all right." "Open fire" repeated to Kuku, Toki and Peacock Points.

APPENDIX "C(2)"

From: Captain E. B. Greey, CEC, USN.
To: Historical Section, Division of Public Information, Marine
Corps Headquarters, Washington, D. C.
Via: (1) Chief of Naval Air Training.
(2) Captain W. S. Cunningham, USN.
(3) Chief of Naval Air Technical Training.
(4) Chief of the Bureau of Personnel.

Subj: Monograph, "The Defense of Wake Island" - Comments on.

1. —
2. —

(c) Page 23 - footnote 21.

Commander Cunningham's post-war report is correct. For the first few days of hostilities, Commander Cunningham, Commander Keene and Lieutenant Commander Greey continued to occupy cottage "C". On the morning of 11 December 1941, about three hours before dawn, the field telephone connected with the J-line brought a call for Commander Cunningham. His portion of the conversation which was overheard by the undersigned was in substance to withhold all fire until the ships were close to the island. Upon completion of the call, Commander Cunningham advised us that ships, which undoubtedly were hostile, had been sighted by the lookout in the tower. He directed we alert certain personnel and immediately departed for the communications center which at that date was located in the magazine used later for the Island Command Post. Orders to Battery Commanders would have been given by Major Devereux.

/s/ E. B. Greey

APPENDIX "D"

PERTINENT DOCUMENTARY EXTRACTS FROM THE MARINE CORPS ARCHIVES REGARDING
DEFENSE OF WAKE

1. The following documents (hereinafter referred to as "references") are considered to be of historical pertinence with regard to the point in question:

- a. OinC HistSecDivPubInfo interview with Col James P. S. Devereux, USMC, 12 Feb 47.
- b. Ltr from Col James P. S. Devereux to CMC, 19 May 47.
- c. Encl. (B) to ltr from LtCol William W. Lewis, USMC, to DirPub Info, HDMC, 28 Feb 47.
- d. Report by 2d Lt. John Hamas, USMC, 12 Oct 45.
- e. Report by Major Clarence A. Barninger, Jr., USMC, 8 Oct 45.
- f. Encl. (B) to ltr from LtCol Clarence A. Barninger, Jr., to DirPubInfo, HQMC, 18 Feb 47.
- g. Encl. (A) to ltr from LtCol Wesley M. Platt, USMC, to DirPub Info, HQMC, 10 Mar 47.

2. From pages 1-2 of reference (a), the following statement is quoted:

"...he (Devereux) had not at any time requested permission to illuminate or open fire at extreme ranges, as Cunningham had stated in his report, nor had Cunningham ever thus refused permission. 'This was one of the few really smart things we did in the defense battalion,' Colonel Devereux added, 'and we should certainly get credit for having held our fire and let them come in.'"

3. Reference (b) commenting on your report, embodies the following statement:

"In the last paragraph of page 7 Captain Cunningham states that I requested permission from him to illuminate with searchlights which request he denied. He also states that he gave the order to commence firing by the shore batteries. Neither one of these statement is correct. It was not up to Captain Cunningham to conduct the ground defences; I therefore made no reference to him concerning this matter."

4. Reference (c), which consists of a written reply to questions propounded by the Historical Section to LtCol Lewis (who commanded Battery E, 1st Defense Battalion, on Wake) contains the following statement on Page 1:

"In the early morning of 11 December, Japanese surface craft were sighted off the island. Major Devereux ordered all batteries to hold fire."

5. Reference (d) is the report from Marine Gunner Hamas who was present in the 1st Defense Battalion command post with Colonel Devereux throughout the action of 11 December. Although the account is extremely detailed, and makes reference to Commander Cunningham in other connections, it contains no description of any preliminary attempt by Colonel Devereux to open fire or to illuminate prematurely.

6. Reference (e), a report by the officer who commanded Battery A, 1st Defense Battalion (one of the 5-inch batteries whose fire was being held by Major Devereux) contains the following statement:

"All stations were manned, but, as the ships were well out, camouflage was kept in place. Out of the murk the warships of the fleet began shelling the island. They crept in, firing as they came. Major Devereux ordered that fire was to be held until he gave the word."

7. Reference (h), in reply to questions propounded by the Historical Section, contains the following statement:

Major Devereux, now Colonel Devereux, stated that fire was to be held until he gave the word."

8. Reference (g), a reply by the officer who commanded the searchlight battery (Battery G, 1st Defense Battalion) on Wake, to questions propounded by the Historical Section, contains the following statement:

"On order of Colonel Devereux, no searchlights were used."

9. Examination of other documents reveals negative information which further tends to support Colonel Devereux's statements. No mention of any such transaction involving searchlights or refusal by Commander Cunningham to permit firing is made in the report of Colonel George H. Potter, USMC, who, as Colonel Devereux's executive officer, and commanding officer of the 5-inch seacoast group, was present at the 1st Defense Battalion command post and actually exercised fire-direction of these batteries throughout the action. It is further noted that Commander Cunningham's headquarters was reported to have been linked to the 1st Defense Battalion command post by the (common) J-line which also reached practically every Marine unit on Wake, includes in his report any reference to a premature attempt to fire or to illuminate the Japanese ships by searchlight, whereas several on the other hand report Colonel Devereux's insistence that fire be held until the proper time.

U. S. NAVAL AIR STATION
OLATHE, KANSAS
14 May 1948

Captain W. S. Cunningham
Naval Air Technical Training Center
Memphis 15, Tennessee

Dear Winfield:

I have read the pamphlet, "The Defense of Wake," released by Marine Corps Headquarters, and realize that the inference that you attained from reading it that actual command was exercised by Major Devereux was in general correct. I, in reading the pamphlet, also got the same impression.

From your letter of 12 December, you request that I make some statement to indicate that you exercised actual command at the island. Inasmuch as I was very closely associated with you during the period 8 December to 23 December, I feel that I can make such a statement. You certainly did exercise actual command over the island as far as I could see. In fact, I felt at the time that you were rather dictatorial in your decisions, which, of course, was your right, in that you did not call officers, like Major Devereux, Major Putnam, and myself, into conference, at least not as far as I know. I am quite certain that no one wanted to assume your command prerogatives as commanding officer of the island during the period of the Japanese bombing, because I am sure that neither Major Putnam, Major Devereux, nor myself envied you your position as commanding officer. I remember well that you were advised by several officers to declare martial law and I believe that you were somewhat criticized for refusing to do so. This fact alone, in my mind, indicated that you exercised actual command over the island.

That Major Devereux recognized you as Commander of the island and, apparently, me as second in command, although you had not so appointed me, was evident to me when, about 15 December, he made the suggestion that you and I separate physically because, as he expressed it, should a bomb land on the magazine which we were occupying, it would remove the two most senior officers present on the island. This separation was, as you remember, accomplished a few days before the surrender when I moved a few hundred yards away to Mr. Teter's dug-out.

Very sincerely,

/s/ Campbell Keene
Campbell Keene

Campbell Keene
Captain, U. S. Navy,
Commanding Officer,
U. S. Naval Air Station
Olathe, Kansas.

APPENDIX "F"

N. D. TETERS
Manila
Philippine Islands

July 27, 1948

Capt. W. S. Cunningham
Commanding Officer
Naval Air Technical Training Center
Memphis 15, Tenn.

Dear Spiv,

* * * * *

Now, Spiv, as to Devereux, I am thoroughly in accord with your view that Devereux and the Marines have given you a bad time. Devereux wrote me several times after I returned home. After reading a few of his statements in the press and in the post, I decided I did not care to continue the correspondence. I would be happy to help you in any way that I can if you will air mail me a copy of the Marine publication, "Defense of Wake." I will see what I can do and return it to you. At the time of the action, December 11th, I was not in the communications dugout but in a small improvised dugout I used before we built the one that Commander Keene used with me. I have never seen any legitimate grounds for Devereux getting such a hell of a play. You were in command, Keene was your second, and I could never see where that point was open to argument. As I recall it Devereux never set in on the nightly staff meetings that we used to hold in my house, and as a matter of fact, he complained to me rather bitterly that you had not called him in to these meetings and also that you had not reviewed all of the dispatches between Wake and Pearl with him. If you will advise me on just what way I can help you, I will do my best. I do sincerely feel that you were treated shabbily. So please let me hear from you pronto and I will promise you an immediate reply.

* * * * *

Sincerely,

/s/ Dan

Marsman & Company, Inc.
Walled City, Manila
Philippines

APPENDIX "G"

COLINCH FILE

FF1/P16

Serial: 511

UNITED STATES FLEET
Headquarters of the Commander in Chief
NAVY DEPARTMENT

Washington 25, D. C.

27 Jan 1945

My dear Mrs. Cunningham:

I have your letter of 10 January concerning your husband, and am very sorry to hear that you have been made the victim of baseless rumors and misinformation.

With regard to the book "Battle Report - Pearl Harbor to Coral Sea," although the authors had access to some official documents in its preparation, the Navy Department was in no way responsible for its production nor for the accuracy of its statements. I wish to assure you that Commander Cunningham's part in the heroic defense of Wake Island will be given full acknowledgment and credit when it becomes possible to publish full official reports.

Please accept my sympathy with you in the present trying ordeal of uncertainty, and the earnest wish that one day your husband will be restored to you.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

/s/ E. J. King

Fleet Admiral, U. S. Navy.

Mrs. W. S. Cunningham,
Cedar Park, RFD 2,
Annapolis, Maryland.

APPENDIX "H"