

WHO LOVED HIM

THE SPY

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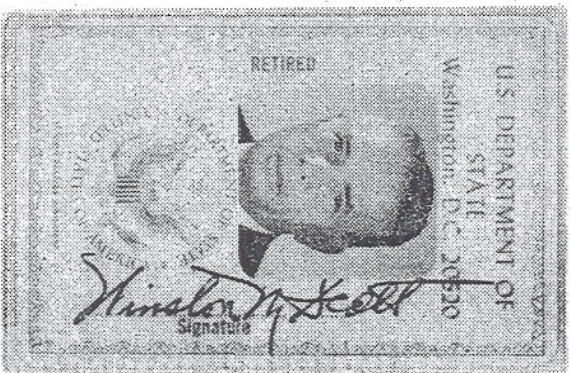
It was September 1955. In the back yard of 117 Prince St. in Old Town Alexandria, a newborn baby boy, swaddled in a blanket, was handed to the man who would become his father. Winston McKinley Scott was 46, handsome, self-assured, his eyes as impenetrable as the secrets they protected. The new dad looked appropriately nervous, appropriately grave, appropriately proud. His wife, Paula, beautiful and doomed, hovered nearby. A Kodak Brownie camera clicked.

And so the moment still lives, 40 years later. Michael Scott extracts the black-and-white photograph from one of many family albums scattered on the floor of the study in his California home. In the picture, Michael is the baby. Today he is an easygoing middle-aged guy in jeans and a baseball cap who directs made-for-TV movies. His adoptive parents are both dead.

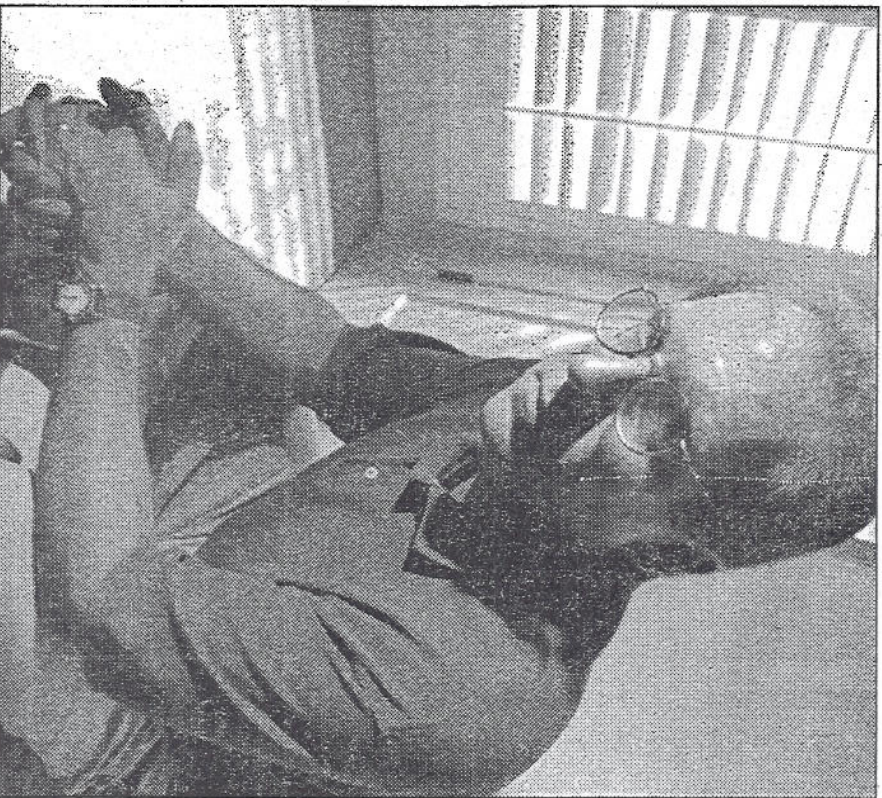
Old pictures. Passports. Birth certificates. A slender volume of love poems that his father once wrote. Michael Scott keeps them all in plastic boxes, his connections to a childhood he is just now beginning to understand. Michael Scott has been digging into his past.

What he has stumbled into are shadowy catacombs of Cold War intrigue.

Before he died, Michael Scott's father wrote his memoirs. Now Michael wants to read them. There's just one problem. The CIA has them and won't cough them up. It seems Michael Scott's father had a more interesting job than Michael ever knew.



By Jefferson Morley
Washington Post Staff Writer



BY TODD BIGELOW FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Michael Scott has discovered that his adoptive father was not, as the son once believed, a State Department functionary. He was a spy, and not a minor one. Winston Scott was a master of American espionage, for more than a decade the CIA's chief operative in Mexico City.

In the 1960s, Mexico City was the Casablanca of the Cold War, a sanctuary. See CIA SON, F5, Col. 1

From far left, the adoption scene: Win and Paula Scott and baby Michael in their backyard on Prince Street; Michael today.

**Winston McKinley
Scott, loving father
and master spy. His
ID card, far right,
described him as a
Foreign Service
officer retired from
the State
Department.**



ary for spies, revolutionaries, assassins and provocateurs. Scott was, by all accounts, a brilliant proconsul, the confidant of three Mexican presidents, a personal favorite of Lyndon Johnson's, the object of leftist death threats, a puppet master of the counterintelligence craft. He presided over hundreds if not thousands of covert CIA operations during the time of dramatic defections, intricate surveillance projects, treacherous covert operations and, intriguingly, Lee Harvey Oswald's suspicious visit to Mexico City shortly before the Kennedy assassination.

"When you do something like this," says the son of his research, "the path you are walking along may lead to something that's going to destroy the image of the person who you want to think highly of. That's always a risk."

You would not be reading about any of this if Michael Scott's research had remained private. But it hasn't, because some time ago Scott found out about something he desperately wanted to see, whatever it revealed: a 221-page memoir his father wrote in 1970 and 1971, just before his death.

Winston Scott had intended to have it published someday. It may contain, Michael says, important information about his adoption, his mother's death, and elements of Michael's early life. As Win Scott's heir, Michael Scott believes, it belongs to him.

Except the government has it. Senior CIA officials had raced to Winston Scott's house in the hours after his death and smooth-talked it away from his widow, who surrendered it unread. They've kept it ever since, and now won't cough it up. The Agency says it has no choice, that the father's reminiscences are too volatile, too candid about CIA sources and methods, too potentially damaging to relations with other countries.

And so it is that Michael Scott's understandable impulse to learn about his father and himself has come into dramatic collision with the government's inevitable impulse to protect its secrets. The result is *Scott v. Central Intelligence Agency et al.*, and it is one remarkable lawsuit.

On the one hand, the issues it raises are not unprecedented: We saw them with the Pentagon Papers case. Is the government really protecting information that might prove harmful to the United States? Or is it just protecting its own dignity, sparing itself the embarrassment of having to account publicly for past malfeasance?

The days when the government enjoyed a presumption of innocence and goodwill are long gone. At a federal court hearing in Washington early this month, a Justice Department lawyer gravely told U.S. District Judge Charles Richey that the documents Michael Scott is seeking concerning his father are so sensitive that they can be described to the judge only by a senior CIA official behind closed doors. The court seemed unmoved.

"Then bring him in here and we'll do it," Richey said, glowering.

Scott's lawyer, Mark Zaid, a Washington-based specialist in Freedom of Information Act litigation says that "The CIA's attitude in this case illustrates that the Cold War secrecy mentality still exists."

For his client though, the case is ultimately less about state secrets than family secrets—a simple effort at self-discovery by one man who happened, through no fault of his own, to be delivered at birth into what the CIA might

call a "compromised situation."

The Paper Chase

By Michael Scott's first birthday in 1956, Win and Paula Scott were living in a grand house on Paseo de la Reforma, the main boulevard of Mexico City. There was a palm tree in the middle of the open-air living room, and a tremendous kitchen with two refrigerators, one of which was mostly devoted to Michael's food. The Scotts, worried about the water in Mexico City, bathed the boy with bottled drinking water.

Michael's earliest childhood memories of Win are fond and magical. He recalls his father holding him up at an embassy function in the summer of 1962 to shake hands with the president of the United States, John F. Kennedy. His recollections of Paula are minimal.

"I wish I had more memories of her," he says squinting. "The ones I have are very vague. I've been told she was drinking a lot then."

In September 1962, one week after Michael's seventh birthday, Paula Scott died of undisclosed causes. Morgan Scott, Win Scott's brother, now a psychiatrist in Virginia, believes his sister-in-law committed suicide. Michael finds that plausible.

"All I know," he says, "is that it was within the power of anyone in my father's position to present it any way he wanted to, and I don't mean that in a negative way. She was from a very Catholic family and suicide was considered a shameful thing." He believes his father's memoirs might shed light on what happened.

Win Scott, a romantic who abhorred loneliness, remarried three months later. His Peruvian-born bride was Janet Leddy, a mother of five who had just divorced a long-time colleague of Scott's. Their wedding was a sensation in the Mexican social scene. While few people knew that the groom was the CIA station chief in the country, the identity of the chief witness to the civil ceremony—the man who signed the marriage certificate—was no secret. It was Adolfo Lopez Mateos, the president of Mexico.

Win Scott was a workaholic, but on weekends he would let Michael tag along to his office in the U.S. Embassy a few blocks down Paseo de la Reforma.

"I remember to get to his whole wing of the office you had to step through this vault door, like a bank vault," Michael recalls. "As a kid I thought, 'This is kind of bizarre.'"

Win gave him a camera and had his subordinates develop the film in the CIA darkroom in the embassy.

All the while, Michael did not know his father worked for the CIA, though he did recognize the names of some famous visitors to their house.

"Allen Dulles came to visit one time and we all went to the salt baths. I remember driving down there and noticing how gnarly Dulles' hands were. He had arthritis or gout and the salt baths were supposed to be good for that."

But Michael is the first to acknowledge that his memories of his father may be lovingly selective. He calls on his stepbrother, George Leddy, who is a guest lecturer in Latin American studies at UCLA and who is the same age as Michael, to fill in the details.

"In October 1968, Mexico City was just about shut down," Leddy recalls. It was a time of political turmoil. "There were tanks in the streets and all the schools were closed. In the midst of this crisis, Allen Dulles and Richard

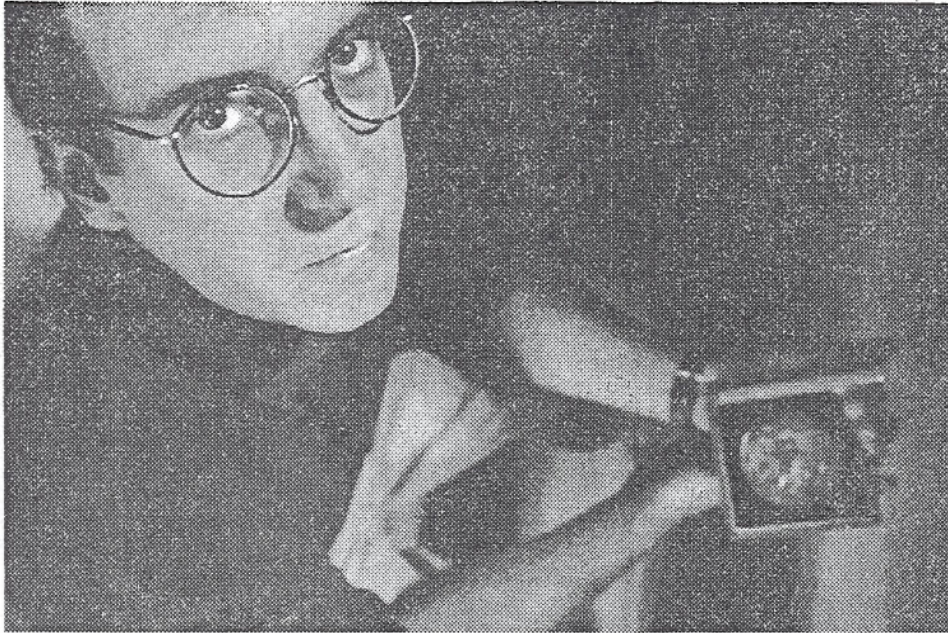
Helms came to see Win Scott, I assume to consult with him about what the U.S. should do. I remember because they couldn't find a catering service that they could trust, so when they had a party I had to pour the drinks."

"Dulles came a second time," Michael says softly. "I had totally forgotten that."

In June 1969, Win Scott retired at age 60. The follow-

son was a morbid errand not unfamiliar to James Angleton. Seven years earlier, in October 1964, the counterintelligence chief had undertaken a similar quest. A woman named Mary Meyer, who had been one of President Kennedy's mistresses, was murdered mysteriously on the C&O Canal towpath. A few days later, Angleton, who was skilled at picking locks, broke into the dead woman's house in search of a diary that she was known to have kept. He was discovered there by Mary Meyer's sister

THE WASHINGTON POST



Michael Scott holding his father's Distinguished Intelligence Medal, the CIA's highest honor: The search for his father's story has led him into the shadowy world of Cold War intrigue.

BY TODD BIGELOW FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

ing year, Michael and George, both 15, were dispatched to Connecticut to enter the 10th grade at a boarding school. Michael received typed letters, almost daily, from his father in Mexico City. In them, Win Scott never mentioned that he was writing his memoirs, actively seeking a publisher, and making CIA Director Richard Helms very, very nervous.

On April 26, 1971, when Michael was working in the student cafe, he was summoned to the dean's office. His stepbrother was already there. The two boys were told that their father had died. They quickly arranged to fly to Mexico City.

"I forget what happened," Michael says, "but we missed the plane."

A Morbid Mission

James Jesus Angleton didn't miss his plane.

Angleton, the chief of counterintelligence and one of the most powerful figures in the CIA, had known Win Scott since they were both in London in the mid-'40s. He had been asked to talk to Scott about the manuscript and was planning to do so when he heard the news that Scott was dead. Angleton put aside his antipathy for all things Mexican (he was half Mexican himself and ashamed of it) and flew to Mexico City. He had but one goal in mind: to secure the memoirs.

Retrieving the memoirs of a well-connected dead per-

Toni Bradlee and her then-husband, Ben Bradlee, later executive editor of the Washington Post. When the diary finally turned up a few days later, the Bradlees handed it over to Angleton.

By comparison, obtaining Win Scott's memoirs was easy. Angleton didn't have to pick any locks. All he had to do was gain the cooperation of Scott's widow, Janet.

There are two accounts of what happened in the Scott family home on the afternoon of April 28, 1971. One comes from a recently declassified CIA cable written the next day by John Horton, who was the CIA's Mexico City station chief at the time. This cable is based on what Angleton told Horton right after the visit. (Horton is retired and living in Maryland; he declined to be interviewed for this article.) The other account comes from Michael Scott and George Leddy and is based on what Janet Scott has told her family and closest friends over the years. Janet Scott, a former CIA employee herself, also declines to talk to reporters.

Both versions of the Angleton visit indicate the same thing: that it was a tense, unpleasant meeting.

Angleton is now dead. At the time he was a tall, gaunt man whose once-handsome features had been pinched down to a sinister aspect by alcoholism and a profession that required a certain amount of paranoia. Janet Scott was a self-educated woman of diverse interests, who just 24 hours earlier had buried her husband in the American-British cemetery in Mexico City. She knew Angleton

through Win and didn't care for him. She liked him even less as she listened to his cordially brutal message.

According to the recently declassified CIA cable, Angleton expressed regrets about her husband's death, quickly adding mention of "the benefits to which she was entitled" but stressing that "our current information is tentative." Janet Scott's recollection of this ominous introduction is more specific. She has told her family that Angleton threatened her, saying that the Agency was planning to put up a plaque in honor of Win Scott at CIA headquarters in Langley, but that it might not proceed if she didn't cooperate.

Angleton, according to the CIA's cable, went on to warn Janet Scott that publication of the memoirs would violate two secrecy agreements and damage U.S. relations with foreign governments. He warned her not to read it, saying, accurately, that it "discussed in an open way intimate matters of previous marriage." When Angleton said the Agency wanted all copies of the manuscript, Janet Scott hastened to cooperate. She found the manuscript the next day and immediately turned it over to station chief John Horton.

"We got two original drafts and two carbons of manuscript," Horton then reported in his cable to CIA Director Richard Helms. Horton also reported removing "three large cartons and four valises with file folders, notes and memoranda of classified station files" from Win Scott's study.

Horton closed with a word of cool candor to the now dry-eyed widow. According to his report, he acknowledged that Win Scott's friends "may feel Agency has pulled a fast one with manuscript." The Agency, he added, "was prepared to weather that one."

Around this time, Michael and his stepbrother arrived home. A kid whose biggest concern just a few days earlier had been making the Taft School golf team, had reached the end of his childhood. In the days following his father's death, he learned two family secrets.

Michael's stepmother took him aside and told him what he had previously suspected: that Win Scott was not his biological father. Michael had actually been adopted by Win and Paula shortly after his birth in 1955.

"It wasn't a shock," Michael says with characteristic equanimity. "We didn't look alike. He was very fair and I was darker. He had never told me about being adopted. Why not? I think because he was afraid I might love him less."

His stepmother also told him some people from the government had come by for his father's memoirs.

She didn't say who, or why.

A week later, Michael Scott flew back to Connecticut. At the same time, his father's papers were being sent by diplomatic pouch to CIA headquarters. Michael resumed his classes and quit the golf team. The paper legacy of Win Scott—loving dad, charismatic covert operator, and CIA loyalist—went into a super-secret archive, perhaps in the CIA director's office.

Missing Chapters

The story would end there, except for Michael's choice of career: investigating other people's lives. He became a documentary filmmaker, then a producer for NBC's "Unsolved Mysteries," and now a director. (His latest movie, "All She Ever Wanted," will air on ABC on April 14.)

"In 1985 I spent a lot of time with a couple whose daughter had been raped and murdered," he says softly. Their tragedy—the role of happenstance in the lives of good people—cast a harsh light on the contingency of his

own identity as Win Scott's son. The accidents of life, which had seemed generous to a teenager, became a little more frightening.

"One day, I just said to myself, 'You come in, you talk to somebody for three hours for an interview for a documentary, and you wind up knowing more about them than you do about yourself.' I realized that if I put 10 percent of the effort I put into talking to these other people, I could find out something pretty interesting and important for my kids. My wife, Barbara, pushed me to do it, saying these were things that any person should know about his family."

Sometime in the 1970s, Michael says, he figured out his father had been associated with American intelligence. He didn't think much of it at the time. But in March 1986 he wrote a letter to the CIA, seeking the manuscript his stepmother had told him about 15 years before. He received a friendly note back inviting him to come to CIA headquarters whenever he was in the Washington area. That summer, he was in West Virginia shooting a documentary and took a day off to drive into Langley. Two senior CIA public affairs officers ushered him through the doors famously emblazoned with the credo "The Truth Shall Set You Free."

His hosts praised his father generously. They talked about his Distinguished Intelligence Medal, the Agency's highest honor. They said the Agency had no problem giving him the manuscript, noting only that a few sensitive things about Lee Harvey Oswald had to be deleted. They handed him a sheaf of papers and Michael Scott left a happy man.

Only when he actually got around to reading the pages did he feel a bit foolish. The bulk of the manuscript was missing. The CIA had given him the first nine chapters,

about 90 pages, covering Win Scott's boyhood on a farm in Jemison, Ala., his semipro baseball career, his PhD in mathematics, his brief stint at the FBI, and his enlistment in the Navy and the beginning of his career in the Office of Strategic Services in 1944.

And right there, Michael had to stop reading. The next 115 pages of his father's book were missing, deleted virtually in their entirety in the name of national security. The CIA threw in one of the final chapters, which contained some general reflections about the intelligence business.

Scott was angry. "Right when the story began to get interesting, it stopped. In 1945, I at least wanted to get to 1955, when I came into the picture."

The Secrets

What exactly is so sensitive about Win Scott's unpublished memoirs, a quarter of a century old?

It's not what Scott knew about Lee Oswald. His chapter on the accused assassin was declassified in September 1993 along with a million pages of CIA documents concerning the Kennedy assassination. His eight-page description of the CIA's surveillance of Oswald in Mexico City does not constitute any kind of "smoking gun" in the long-running debate about the Kennedy assassination. Win Scott's personal conspiracy theory that Oswald might have been a Soviet agent is not supported by recently released KGB files on the subject. About the only thing that Scott's Oswald chapter proves is that, after 33 years and four official investigations, the CIA has yet to provide a

coherent account of what its officers knew about Oswald before the assassination.

Win Scott did write that Oswald was "a person of great interest" to the CIA during his visit to Mexico City between Sept. 27 and Oct. 2, 1963. That's a rather different story from the official line (as articulated in a 1978 for-the-record memo by one top official) that the Agency "had no real knowledge of his presence there."

Another possible explanation for the CIA's skittishness about the manuscript concerns other material that might have been seized with it. Scott, for example, stated unequivocally that his subordinates in the Mexico City station had photographed Oswald during his visit. The Agency denies that any picture of Oswald was ever taken in Mexico City.

Yet Stanley Watson, who served as Scott's deputy in Mexico City, said in secret sworn testimony to congressional investigators in 1978 that the Mexico City station's Oswald file contained two surveillance photos of Oswald. In his testimony (which was declassified only in December, Watson volunteered that Win Scott often kept sensitive files in his personal safe at home. This safe was cleaned out and its contents hauled away along with the manuscript after Angleton's visit in April 1971.

Might there be a long-suppressed photo of Oswald among the papers? Scott's lawyer, Mark Zaid, asked exactly that question in a motion filed in support of *Scott v. CIA et al.* The CIA replied in writing that there is no photo in its Win Scott archive.

Yet another possibility of what the Agency fears is what the manuscript might say about Kim Philby, the legendary Soviet spy who worked his way to the top of the British intelligence services. From the summer of 1949 to the summer of 1951, Philby was stationed in Washington,

lived on Nebraska Avenue and worked closely with top CIA officials—including Win Scott and James Angleton.

"Nobody in the CIA knew Kim Philby better than Win Scott," says Cleveland Cram, a retired CIA counterintelligence officer. "Nobody had worked with him so closely or so long."

Cram, a career officer who had worked in London for many years, was called out of retirement in 1978 to conduct a top-secret internal review of James Angleton's career. The counterintelligence chief had been forced to quit amid the CIA scandals of the mid-1970s. At one point, Cram says, he was shown 30 to 40 pages of the still-censored portion of Win Scott's manuscript and asked to comment on it. Cram says that Scott wrote about his early suspicions of Philby.

"Win tells a story [in the manuscript]," Cram recalls, "about going to a cocktail party and meeting a red-haired woman who was quite outspoken in her anti-Americanism. And he found out she was Philby's sister and he was shocked that someone so close to a top British intelligence official could be so openly communist."

After Philby was recalled by the British government under a cloud of suspicion in June 1951, Scott and Angleton both contributed to an assessment on whether he had been a spy. According to Cram, Win Scott concluded that Philby was almost certainly a Soviet spy; Angleton was noncommittal.

"I think Jim was always worried about the other shoe dropping with Philby," Cram speculates. "I think he must have been afraid that something worse could come out about his closeness to Philby. What Win might write about Philby could have reflected very, very badly on Angleton."

The possibilities for what else lies in the manuscript are



From left: Win Scott, Michael Scott and Win's stepsons, George Leddy and Paul Leddy.

1970 PHOTO

vast. Scott's career did not begin in Mexico City. Before he was 40, he was the chief of U.S. intelligence operations in postwar London. He helped Allen Dulles do a study of the British intelligence services that was influential in the creation of the CIA, and he went on to supervise all covert operations in Europe in the early 1950s.

George Leddy thinks his stepfather knew about and wrote about the CIA's efforts to keep communists and socialists out of power in Italy and France after World War II. "If he did, that information would still be politically explosive today in those countries," Leddy says.

Likewise, what Scott wrote about his friendships with top Mexican political figures in the 1960s and about the Mexican crisis of 1968 would be big news in Mexico today. Many of those officials are still alive, and the Institutional Revolutionary Party is facing the strongest challenge to its rule since 1968.

As John Horton, the CIA officer who actually physically removed the manuscript from the Scott household, said, "Practically anything I told you about Win Scott would get into classified matters."

For Michael and his stepbrother, the darker, still largely unknown side of Win Scott's life is still forbidding territory. If they ever get the manuscript, Leddy expects to learn the worst about his stepfather. "He was my family and he was part of the repressive apparatus," Leddy says.

Recently declassified CIA files, for example, document

the kind of espionage trick that Win Scott excelled at. In 1963, to foment dissension, his agents planted phony documents on a Cuban government official indicating that Castro's vice minister of defense was a CIA agent. Security agents found the documents, and four wholly innocent people were convicted of treason and thrown in jail for years.

Michael's reaction to this side of his father is characteristically more charitable.

"I don't agree with everything he did in his life," he says, "but I think of my dad as committed to certain goals which were the goals of the U.S. government in that period. He believed in the U.S. and the pursuit of freedom. He should be judged in the context of the times."

'It Came to Little'

After hours of talking about every conceivable aspect of Win Scott's life and reaching no conclusions about the meaning of it all, Michael Scott is about to give up. His own sons are now swarming around him and so is the dog. His wife has returned from work. Ancient espionage is giving way to the normality of family life. Dinner will be ready soon.

Scott makes one last stab at explaining why his father wrote his manuscript. He refers to the last three chapters given to him by the CIA in February 1995. In these pages, a rambling Win Scott explained what he hoped would be the title of his autobiography:

"It Came to Little."

The Agency, he wrote, had failed to stem the spread of communism. And intelligence work, by its very nature, was dehumanizing, requiring clandestine officers to lead "schizoidal" lives. Perhaps referring to himself, he explained why clandestine officers should retire early.

"They arrive at a point in life—having met and dealt with so many dishonest people, and having, themselves, in their demanding and dominating (false) selves, lived a lie—where they mistrust almost everyone, look for the hidden meaning and motives behind even the most sincere statements of friends and loved ones."

Scott confessed deep regret at having sacrificed his personal life on the altar of intelligence work.

"I realize that I devoted myself far too completely to the work and gave too little time and attention to recreational and normal family life and activities," the retired spy wrote just months before his death. "And, I fully realize that in all those thousands of hours of work as I beavered away, 'I looked for much, and lo, it came to little' for me and my country."

"I think what he really feared in the end," says Michael quietly, "was that his true self had become depersonalized and his false self had become dominant." The intrigue, the conspiracies, the betrayals and the secrets of his father will never fail to interest Michael Scott, the filmmaker and the citizen.

But to Michael Scott, the son, the real struggle is to reconcile his father's two lives. Retrieving "It Came to Little" from the CIA's archives—all of it—may be the only way to rescue his old man from the twilight despair of the clandestine life, and restore him, a whole man, to the family that never fully knew him.