

# Dorothy Hunt, Unsolved Watergate Puzzle

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The mid-40-year-old woman with the pleasant face seemed the any other suburban housewife that December day she kissed her family goodbye and boarded United Flight 633.

Three hours later she was Amy Siefert, dead in the wreckage, her loved ones heirs to \$250,000 in flight insurance and a legacy of shame, doubt, fear and notoriety.

As the world soon came to know, Dorothy Winifred Hunt, 37, wife, mother of four, mistress of a Maryland politician, housewife, spinster, and sometime writer, was not at all what she seemed to be.

Beside her body in the smoking wreckage at Chica-

go's Midway Airport last Dec. 9 was found a purse stuffed with \$10,000, mostly in \$100 bills—evidence of a chain of espionage and blackmail stretching all the way to the White House.

In the months since her death, others enmeshed in the scandal have come to tell their stories under the harsh white TV lights at the Senate Watergate committee hearings.

They say Dorothy Hunt was the accomplice of her husband, convicted Watergate bugger Edward Hunt, 44, who says she was a beguiling woman who carried much money to the other Watergate defendants. They say she was a blackmailer who tried to squeeze \$450,000 out of the

White House and managed to get \$25,000.

Such was her drive, they say, that only death could have stopped her.

Of all the characters in the Watergate cast, only Mrs. Hunt can say nothing. And so despite what others testify, she remains a mystery, at least in motivation, even to friends and family.

"It makes me sick because she's not here to defend herself," says her cousin, Phyllis Cantstead of suburban Oak-Cageo. "It's all so very mysterious. The more I hear of sisters and how they can get so when you live so far away? They say those things, but she was with the CIA, well not to my knowledge..."

Continued on Page 23

Wreckage of plane in which Dorothy Hunt died. Associated Press Wirephoto

Continued From Page 5

While she lived, the person she was, and the things she did were known to very few people: her husband, a couple of White House officials and the sad-faced New York policeman, Anthony Ulasewicz.

Ulasewicz told the Watergate committee last month that he secretly had passed money to Mrs. Hunt through a complicated, precision-timed scheme that involved hiding airport locker keys in telephone booths.

"She followed instructions explicitly," said Ulasewicz admiringly.

From "Big Tony," a slick undercover operator who spoke unceringly of "that army" that went into the Watergate and got caught, this was high praise.

"I would inform her that I am not to negotiate. I was simply in a position to deliver whatever was necessary. However," Ulasewicz marvelled, "she interjected herself early and continually."

"She would mention the fact that she had lost her own job due to this, and that should be taken into consideration . . . and that she thought that perhaps \$10,000 or \$15,000 might. No matter how many times I

would try to stop her she would continue with that.

"She started with this suggestive way and then got into it heavier each time!"

Ulasewicz said she never made any threats, never indicated what might happen if she didn't get the money. Still, Big Tony knew that she was big trouble.

After slipping her the money the first time, he said, "It was like a down payment because it was obvious that the \$75,000 was not going to cover into what we were getting."

Under pressure from Mrs. Hunt, through Ulasewicz, Nixon's lawyer, Herbert Kalmbach, forked over \$40,000, then \$43,000, then \$13,000 and finally \$53,000 last Sept. 19.

Three months after that, Mrs. Hunt was dead—to be remembered by Watergate committee investigators who tracked her movements as "the ice-water woman" and "one cool babe."

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The beginnings of Dorothy Hunt's dangerous and finally deadly odyssey start in Paris in 1943, an espionage crossroads at the height of the Cold War.

According to Tad Szulc, a former New York Times foreign correspondent with extensive intelligence contacts who is now writing a book on her husband, she was then a secretary—for the Central Intelligence Agency.

Not Employed.

A spokesman for the CIA, after checking with the agency's personnel office, at The Post's request, said flatly that "Mrs. Hunt was never an employe of the CIA." He acknowledged that former CIA Director Richard Helms had said during the televised Watergate hearings that Mrs. Hunt had been employed as a secretary, but said after checking the records, "I don't know what Mr. Helms was referring to."

Along came E. Howard Hunt, with the credentials of an official with the Economic Cooperation Administration, which was the first phase of the post-war Marshall Plan. Actually, Hunt was a "black operator" for the CIA.

Was Beautiful

Dorothy was beautiful, a curvy woman in her early 20s with dark hair and high cheekbones. Howard was quietly handsome, with an infectious grin and steady gray eyes. Within a year the secretary and the spy were married.

Szulc, who knew them both, says Dorothy Hunt in those days claimed to have been married once before—to a Spanish count.

No one knows for sure, and it may have been no more than a romantic fantasy. But in a curious way an intimation of it is picked up in one of the 40-plus novels written by Hunt. "The Foreign Affair," written under the pseudonym of John Baxter, is perhaps the most autobiographical of all of Hunt's books.

In it the hero, Michael

Prentiss, has a great love affair with the widow of a Spanish count killed while fighting in the Blue Division, the unit sent by Generalissimo Franco to fight with Germany against Russia.

Szulc says Mrs. Hunt also claimed to be a full-blooded Cherokee Indian. If so, it's news to her cousin, Mrs. Carlstead, who says their grandfather only "used to claim there was a little Indian in the line way back."

Mrs. Carlstead sees little in their family background that helped create the woman of romance and adventure that Dorothy Hunt came—or claimed—to be.

Born in Dayton, Ohio, her parents were divorced when she was very small. Perhaps as an escape from unhappiness in her home, Dorothy, as a very little girl, became a bookworm.

"She was always with a book," says Mrs. Carlstead. "I think that made her an introverted person—she would just rather be with a book than with people."

After graduating from Lakewood HS in Cleveland and two years at Bowling Green College Dorothy went to work, her family believed, for the State Dept. As far as they know, "she was a wonderful secretary who was great at stenography."

Relatives are equally mystified by reports of her activity in the months following the Watergate break-in. "I only know," says Mrs. Carl-

stead, "she was very unhappy with what Mr. Hunt was doing."

Mrs. Hunt also remains a puzzle to those who worked with her for 10 years at the Spanish Embassy. She was a part-time speech writer there for the ambassador until her husband's involvement in Watergate became known and she was dropped.

"I started to ask people here about her and nobody seems to know much," says one Spanish diplomat. "She was only part-time and that might explain it; still, 10 years is a long time. It's strange we didn't know more about her."

It's not just strange. It's embarrassing. Until a reporter called a few days ago, the embassy was ignorant of Mrs. Hunt's past connections

with the CIA. "Oh, yes?" exclaimed an official, looking nervously. "We didn't know that. It must have been step-by-step security on our part. She was here so long, we probably took her for granted."

Now, in death, Dorothy Hunt is taken for granted by no one. She remains the most intriguing, missing link in the chain connecting the White House to payoffs to "the Watergate defendants."

When Ulasewicz consulted with Fred Wiseman, his former secretary, about Mrs. Hunt, whom he knew as "the writer's wife," the audience widened and even the Watergate Senators returned—all except Sen. Lowell Weicker, who put the caper in chilling perspective.

"Do you know where Mr. Gordon Liddy is right now?"

Ulasewicz: "Yes, sir."

"Where?"

"He is in prison."

"Mrs. Hunt?"

"She is dead."

Sen. Weicker: "I think what we see here is not a joke."

Not a joke at all. Dorothy Hunt's husband is in jail, reportedly his health impaired by a stroke, his spirit crushed by confinement, his heart broken by the loss of his wife. Their children, Tiffany, 21; Kevin, 20; St. John, 18 and David, 9, are alone in a \$120,000 rambling white shingle Potomac, Md., home aptly named "Witch's Island. THANKS to the flight insur.

ance taken out... they are... their estate handled by the attorney of their godfather, columnist William F. Buckley. He has refused to talk to reporters about Mrs. Hunt.

Money had always been a concern of the Hunts, who had expensive tastes. Shortly after the Watergate break-in, when Hunt disappeared for a while, Mrs. Hunt called the boss of the public relations firm where her husband was working to see if he knew Hunt's whereabouts.

"She apologized for the trouble Howard was causing me," says Robert Bennett of Robert Mullin & Co. "She said she had to get in contact with Howard to talk about an important financial de-

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