

MG Willie Leo Scott - Artillery OCS Class 33-42

Major General Willie Scott spent his life leading men. He led them on the battlefield during World War II, and he led them on the football field and basketball court as coach at Hardin-Simmons. His years of education included both college and military training, and his early career was intermixed with coaching and serving in the Armed Forces.

Willie Leo Scott was born April 13, 1920 in Blue Ridge, Texas and was reared in Hamlin. After graduation from Hamlin High School in 1938, he entered Wayland College, where he earned a reputation in basketball and football, graduating in 1940. He received his Bachelor of Science degree from Hardin-Simmons University in 1947 and his Master of Arts degree in 1949.

He started his military career in 1938 by enlisting in a National Guard Unit, Battery A, 131st Field Artillery Battalion, 36th Infantry Division, located at Plainview, Texas. He was mobilized with that unit when the 36th Infantry Division was called into Federal Service in 1940. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant upon graduating from Artillery Officer Candidate School Class 33-42 and was given command of Battery B, 174th Field Artillery Battalion in 1943. He commanded his battery for 27 months, taking it overseas to the European Theatre during five major campaigns of World War II.

General Scott returned to the United States in October 1945, and was separated from active duty as a Major in January 1946. He then enrolled in Hardin-Simmons University to complete his degree. Upon graduation in 1947, he accepted a Regular Army commission and was assigned to the 193rd Engineer Construction Battalion on Guam. He served a year on Guam and resigned his commission and returned to Hardin-Simmons University.

In 1948, General Scott resumed his career with the National Guard when he joined the 131st Field Artillery Battalion, now located in Abilene. He was assigned as commanding officer of Battery A, the same unit he had joined as a private in 1938. General Scott remained at HSU as a member of the athletic coaching staff from 1950 until he resigned to take a State Air Defense job in 1962. While at Hardin-Simmons, he coached football, basketball, and golf and served as assistant athletic director. During his coaching career, he was twice named Southwest Border Conference Coach of the Year.

General Scott started his Air Defense Career by attending the Air Defense Career Course at Fort Bliss. He graduated from the Associate Course Command and General Staff College in December 1963.

Major General Scott, then a Colonel, was ordered to Extended Active Duty in October 1966 as an Air Defense Officer serving with the U.S. Army Air Defense Command. General Scott was appointed as Assistant Adjutant General of Texas in January 1971 and was appointed Brigadier General, Adjutant General's Corps in March 1971.

In 1974, Scott was appointed one of three men from the National Guard to serve on a committee of 29 representing all branches of the service to make a study of the armed

forces of the nation. He was appointed Adjutant General of Texas in 1979 and confirmed by the U.S. Senate to rank from that date. General Scott retired as Major General, Adjutant General of Texas in 1985.

He received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Hardin-Simmons in 1974, and in 1982, he was inducted into HSU's Athletic Hall of Fame and an Endowed Athletic Scholarship was established in his name. He received the Distinguished Service Award from Huston-Tillotson College in 1982, and the Distinguished Alumnus Award from Wayland Baptist University in 1983.

Among General Scott's many military decorations and awards are the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Legion of Merit. While a student at Hardin-Simmons, Scott played football, was Captain of the varsity basketball team, and served as Student Body President. In 1947 he married his college sweetheart Billie Sue White, who was also a 1947 graduate of Hardin-Simmons. They had two children, Aliceson Scott Coates, and Richard Scott.

Despite his first-hand experience of the atrocities of war and of fighting his way from the beaches of France toward Germany with General George Patton's armored division, Scott harbored no hard feelings toward his former enemies in battle and encouraged other Americans not to harbor ill-will as well. He said, "When the war's over, the war's over."