COMMANDO VETERANS ARCHIVE

Captain (later Major) Roy R. Cooke MC
Operation Flipper

Major with Fine War Record

Died Of Infantile Paralysis

The death occurred on Thursday at the age of 36 of Major Roy R. Cooke, of 42, Warrington - road, Harrow, who became a master at Orley Farm School 15 months ago after a distinguished war career. Major Cooke died in Hendon Isolation Hospital only a few hours after he had been admitted with infantile paralysis.

Major Cooke joined the Royal West Kent Regiment in 1938, and as a Commando officer with the Eighth Army took part in the raid on Rommel's headquarters. His gallantry during that raid won him the Military Cross. He was taken prisoner in 1941, shortly after the raid, and remained captive in various prison camps until 1945, when he was released by the Americans. During that period he made numerous escapes and once after being recaptured was shot and left for dead. On another occasion he was free for six months, and travelled from North to South Italy before he was recaptured—almost within sight of the British lines.

War Trial Witness

After Major Cooke's release in 1945 he became a principal witness in the first trial of Italian war criminals. He was then engaged on war crimes service in Austria, and remained there until 1948. In May, 1948, Major Cooke became a master at Orley Farm School. He played Rugby for the Harlequins and was captain of Surrey.

The cremation took place at Golders Green on Monday, when among the mourners was Mr. J. P. M. Ellis, headmaster of Orley Farm School.

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